

Borough Councillor Report – Cllr Jill Houlbrook 13.06.22

I'd like to begin by thanking everyone involved in planning, organising, helping on the day and contributing in other ways to the Jubilee Fun Day. The community came together to celebrate a very special event and what a day we had.

I'm pleased to let you know that wildflower seeding has begun in Upton. The Zoo roundabout on A41 has been over seeded as there are some wildflowers naturally returning. Work on the green space on Dunham Way/Bolesworth Road was completed on Wednesday and local residents seem very happy.

Highways have last week investigated a hole that appeared on Stanton Drive. I recall the same thing happened a few years ago so I do hope this is not a recurring problem.

In addition I'm hopeful BT has resolved the matter of the hole on the corner of Marlow Avenue today. It's been there a while and residents have had enough.

I'd also to say a big thank you to Andy our Highways Network Steward who has been out and replaced the dislodged stop tap cover on Moston Road. He has also reported the issue to the water board for more permanent repairs.

On Saturday 25th June (weather permitting) Upton Baptist Church members will start work on restoring the Cheshire railings between the A41 and their grounds. This is really wonderful news. As the railings are very much part of Upton I've been discussing how I can help and I will be using part of my ward budget to help pay for the work.

We are hoping that maybe 4-6 members of our community would be willing to join the working party and to take along a paintbrush and/or a wire brush. We will meet at 10.30.

I recently reported to BT that the phone boxes on Weston Grove and Newhall Road are both in need of attention and repair. I'm very pleased to report that an engineer will attend both of these to carry out repairs and cleaning to bring the boxes back to an acceptable standard. Thank you Angela from BT.

I do have a site meeting arranged to look again at the problems inconsiderate parking cause around the Weston Grove area and I am aware these can be exacerbated on bin collection days. However it really doesn't take much for residents or visitors to consider if where they park causes an obstruction on the footway.

I regret that a recent survey carried out on Weston Grove has shown that the street traffic does not meet the criteria for a pedestrian crossing. I'm going to investigate with the school and the local authority the feasibility of a patrol person as safety must be a priority for our young people.

A group of learners from Upton High School Eco Team have won Chester Community Energy Ltd's Sustainability Competition for State Funded Secondary Schools in Cheshire West & Chester. 'The Light Savers' provided a fantastic entry for an LED lighting project for one of our classrooms and made a very engaging video to accompany their entry. I was delighted to attend the presentation and meet the learners. As a Governor as well as a local councillor I makes me very proud to know we have such engaged young people in our community.

I reported on 14th April that the leaves Ruston Drive need clearing. I have received a reply stating that leaf clearing takes place between October and February. My request will be added to the schedule so sorry but residents will have to wait!

There's more too - I've just received an update on a report I made on 22nd January 2022- nothing done as there's no action required. Really? I expect the litter and leaves have blown away by now four months later.

And also received today - another reported on 18th January on Flag Lane North no action will be taken. No surprise then Upton residents lose faith in the 'system'.

I am pleased to report that I've had a reply to the request for the repair to the hedge on Glastonbury Avenue. The streetcare team will plant some thicker bushes in the gaps but this won't be until autumn. This is good news although I am sorry about the wait.

Each year councillors are able to access £5,000 to use in their ward to support ideas and plans which benefit their community.

This is what I spent in the last financial year. If you have a project you feel would qualify please do let me know.

£100 towards Summer Reading Challenge
£400 towards Wealstone Lane Roundels
£300 for Chester Pride Café and Community Space
£199.66 for Upton Community Speed Watch
£200 towards enhancing the local shopping areas hanging baskets
£3,500 towards Lodge Gardens Environmental Improvements - Phase 2
£883 for the Cheshire West Crowd - Spacehive
£338.45 towards verge planting to protect from parking
£125 towards wildflower planting
£257.07 towards Cleaning up our Communities (Scouts)

It's great news that the Cycling Without Trishaws which joined our fund day last week, are now about and about in the Countess Country Park. To find out more please use this link <https://cyclingwithoutage.org.uk/chester/>

Last Friday was a great morning for a meeting in Lodge Gardens get a time line in place to push forward with the work on the border. I'm also pleased to say that work to tidy The Cockpit has been highlighted to CWaC. It's such a disappointment that the green spaces in Upton appear not to be a priority in the schedules.

Any members of our community who would like to get involved with the Lodge Gardens work are welcome to contact me for further details.

Residents quite rightly are concerned about the lack of changes to the old Gamekeeper site. This is the latest on the situation. The planning case officer had been waiting for the legal agreement to be finalised but the latest draft was received last week so it is now with our legal team. We have been here before, but it appears that the developers are now moving towards getting this resolved.

Jill Houlbrook