

Lilford-cum-Wigsthorpe Thorpe Achurch
Annual Parish Meeting – Tuesday 10 May 2022

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

Good evening and welcome everyone to the Lilford-cum-Wigsthorpe Thorpe Achurch Annual Parish Meeting.

Whilst it is unfortunate that we do not currently have a suitable venue for us to hold this meeting within our Parish, at least this year we are not concerned if weather will hold like last year when we had to meet outdoors due to COVID.

I would like to start this evening by thanking our Parish Councillors for their commitment and contribution to the activities of the Parish Council. It is fantastic that we continue to have representation for all four villages on the Council including our smallest village, Wigsthorpe. I would also like to thank our District Councillors, Wendy and David Brackenby and Geoff Shacklock for their support and guidance during the course of the year which has been invaluable.

Notwithstanding the continued challenges of the pandemic, the Parish Council has remained very active and continued to drive the agenda to improve our community and protect our beautiful villages. It has achieved a lot during the year including:

1. **Raised walkway on the road from Thorpe to Aldwincle Road bridges** – lobbying Highways to repair the raised walkway rather than remove this, recognising its importance when the road is flooded and the historical interest of the structure.
2. **New noticeboard in Lilford** – the new Notice Board in Lilford has recently been installed and looks amazing. This means that Parish and Village notices are no longer eaten by the various insects living in the old notice board! I would like to thank Geoff Shacklock for his generous donation towards the replacement Notice Board and for Councillor Moffat for pursuing this project.
3. **Installation of a defib in Lilford** – supporting the funding of a new defib in Lilford next to the new Notice Board.
4. **Rights of way** – supporting residents by liaising with landowners and other Parishes about various rights of way including access to Thorpe Lakes.
5. **St John the Baptist Church gates in Achurch** – securing funding to sympathetically replace the gates from a very generous local benefactor, obtaining quotes from local carpenters and overseeing the works. I would like to thank Councillor Hopkinson for managing this.
6. **Remedial works to the phone kiosk in Wigsthorpe** – by arranging for this to be stabilised thereby protecting it for use by the village. And we understand that a local resident may use this as a small museum for local artefacts.
7. **Wellhead in Achurch** – working with the landowner to schedule works to repair parts of the wellhead and surrounding area which will hopefully start in July this year.

8. **Funding spring bulbs in Achurch** – which were planted by the Community and have looked amazing.
9. **Fly tipping** – working with the Waste Management team at NNC to promptly report fly tipping and securing signage to try to deter this.

The Council has also continued to consider a number of planning applications during the course of the year and as usual some have been more contentious than others.

We have also actively engaged with planning and development issues outside of the Parish frequently working collaboratively with other local Parishes. In particular, we have been involved in the STAUNCH campaign looking at the impact of the potential developments in Titchmarsh on our Parish and commented on the recent Manor Farm planning application. We have also made representations to Huntingdon District Council on the planned warehouse development at Elton.

The continued pandemic has not stopped the Parish being represented and having a voice at local groups including the Joint Action Group, the Police Liaison and the Rural Coordination Group. Thank you to Councillors Hopkinson and Healey and our brilliant Clerk, Nicki for making the time to attend these meetings.

We continue to have a limited level of public participation in Parish Council meetings with many residents preferring to pick matters up directly with the Councillors or by e-mail to our Clerk. I would encourage all local residents to have a voice. The Parish Council is here to serve the community.

Financially the Parish Council has a healthy reserve and the Council continues to manage its finances diligently with particular support from our PC Clerk Nicki Philips.

I would like to finish the meeting with a very special thank you to Nicki Philips the Clerk of the Parish Council. As I said last year, Nicki really is the backbone of our Parish Council. She has a wealth of experience and knowledge and uses this with good humour to ensure that we continuously look for ways to improve what we are doing for the local communities. So thank you Nicki. We really do appreciate you and everything you do for us.

Thank you again for attending the Annual Parish Meeting. I will now open the meeting up for any questions or comments. After we have concluded the Annual Parish Meeting we will start the Annual Parish Council Meeting and you are welcome to stay for this.

Justin