

Thurcaston & Cropston Parish Council

Memorial Hall Anstey Lane Thurcaston Leicester LE7 7JA
Telephone 0116 2367626 Email clerk@thurcastonandcropston.org.uk

Parish Clerk: Mrs. M. Lane

Minutes of annual Parish Meeting of the electorate held on Monday 17th April 2023 at 6.15pm in Memorial Hall.

Attended: Chairman, Mark Charles, Clerk, Marianne Lane, 3 Councillors as parishioners, 2 members of public & PCSO Mitch Jarvis.

1. Chairman's Welcome – **Chairman welcomed parishioners to the meeting.**
2. To confirm the minutes of Parish Meeting held on Monday 16th May 2022. **Confirmed.**
3. Chairman's Report

Chairman & Borough Councillors Report

It has been a challenging year at Charnwood Borough Council , considering the war in Ukraine , high inflation, high energy costs , the continuing refugee crisis, and the sad passing of our beloved Queen .

All these factors have added to increasing pressures on council budgets and the many issues faced by not only the council but all the residents of the borough. The council has set out to do everything it can to support residents whilst balancing the books and maintaining current services.

This year the Charnwood local plan has completed the public hearings section of its examination. We have had five weeks of scrutiny from the two planning inspectors conducting the examination. The inspectors will now consider what is before them and write to Charnwood within the next two months outlining the timetable for public consultation on the main modifications required to make the plan sound. This takes a further six weeks and is expected to commence in early summer. Once the final inspectors report has been received the council will consider and adopt it. This will give us control over unwanted and inappropriate development.

4. Police Report – **PCSO Mitch Jarvis spoke to 2 parishioners who are concerned with burglaries in the parish.**
5. Borough Councillor's Report – **See agenda item 3**

6. County Councillor's report – Cllr Deborah Taylor

As well as my work as Deputy Leader of Leicestershire County Council and Lead Member for Children, Families, Safer Communities, and Regulatory Services, I continue to work hard in my Division. I support many of my residents with their individual issues, I support all my parish councils, and try to be as visible and approachable as possible.

Below are some examples of the work I have been involved in or promoted in the past year.

I produce an annual report each year for the County Council. This is published in June. The link to my 2022 report is here:

<https://www.bradgateconservatives.org.uk/news/deborahs-annual-county-councillor-report>

Highway Fund

I have been working on all the items for my Highway Fund. I am hoping this will be completed by the end of 2023.

Work & Skills Leicestershire

This scheme is open to anyone who is seeking employment or training.

Work & Skills has already helped over 300 people since its launch last June.

Everyone who signs up to Work & Skills Leicestershire is offered one-to-one support and the opportunity to have a tailored work plan drawn up for them. Help is given with CV and letter writing skills, job searches, interview techniques, and much more.

To find out more, drop into one of the hubs, call 0800 988 0308 or visit www.leicestershire.gov.uk/work-and-skills

Simon Cole

I offered my sincere condolences to the family of the late Simon Cole, retired Chief Constable of Leicestershire Police. Simon was sadly found dead at his home on Wednesday 30th March 2022. We have lost an outstanding public servant whose mission in life was dedicated to making our communities stronger and safer.

Ukraine

A new team was set up by Leicestershire County Council to lead the effort to provide vital support for refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine.

The team worked closely with a range of partner agencies helping to make sure refugees had access to vital services and support including accommodation, safeguarding, healthcare, education, translation, and employment.

Further information about those schemes is available on the County Council's website:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/support-for-ukraine>

The Council also hosted a welcome desk at East Midlands Airport which provided initial advice, information, and humanitarian support to arrivals from Ukraine as soon as they landed in the UK.

Beacon Hill

Steps taken last year to protect a small section of the Leicestershire beauty spot are starting to produce an ecological boost.

The County Council temporarily closed Jewels' Hill in Beacon Hill Country Park – a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - to help replenish the heathland and protect the wildlife that uses it as a habitat.

Shire Grants

A pot of £600,000 is available for schemes and projects that help people who are struggling. Small grants of up to £3,000 or larger sums of up to £10,000 are available to help with costs including staffing, buying

equipment, and room hire for community projects, helping disadvantaged and vulnerable people in Leicestershire.

Leicestershire County Council has launched its SHIRE Community Grants Scheme again this year to support projects run by community groups, charities, not-for-profit enterprises, and town and parish councils.

New Technology

The homes of elderly and vulnerable adults in Leicestershire are being fitted with equipment such as fall detectors to help keep them safe 24 hours a day.

Care Technology (CT), sometimes referred to as telecare, involves monitoring and alert equipment to help people to remain independent in their home and in the community. This equipment will provide residents, their carers, family, and friends with the reassurance that help is available round-the-clock, seven days a week.

A Net Zero County by 2045

A major consultation was launched by Leicestershire County Council on proposals to make the county cleaner, greener and healthier. Residents, businesses, councils, universities, and others were urged to help shape ambitious plans to make Leicestershire a net zero carbon county by 2045.

The consultation focused on a net zero action plan which sets out key goals including:

- Reducing carbon emissions generated by transport;
- Reducing energy use in buildings – plus improving energy efficiency and adding new renewable energy generation;
- Supporting businesses to go green and grow the low carbon economy;
- Supporting communities to tackle climate change;
- Increasing the removal and storage of carbon in natural systems like soil and forests.

Finances

Leicestershire County Council's cabinet has asked senior finance officers to look at reducing capital expenditure and identify further potential savings in addition to those set out in February in its four-year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

National and global events since then have triggered a decline in the overall financial situation affecting all councils including Leicestershire.

With inflation already at 9% and expected to pass 11% by October – the costs of providing day-to-day council services, as well as crucial long-term major infrastructure projects to accommodate a growing county population, have surged.

For example, each 50p increase in the National Living Wage means an extra £10 million for the council to find.

Leicestershire, which is the worst-funded County Council, is continuing to lobby MPs and press the Government for a fairer way of funding local authorities but has warned it cannot afford to wait for reforms.

Further information is available here: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/news/extremely-tough-financial-decisions-ahead-for-county-council-as-spiralling-inflation-bites>

Census

New census data shows Leicestershire growing, with new population figures available by sex and age group. The overall population of Leicestershire has risen from 650,489 in the 2011 national census to 712,300 in the 2021 census (rounded to the nearest 100).

This is broken down by sex, with 351,700 men (49.4% of the population) and 360,600 women (50.6% of the population) living in the county.

The number of households in the county has risen by 11% from 267,434 in the 2011 census to 296,400 in the 2021 census (rounded to the nearest 100).

Further details can be found here: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/news/census-reveals-growing-county>

HAF

Parents and families are being encouraged to sign up for free holiday activity clubs running across

Leicestershire over the school holiday period.

Leicestershire Holidays Together is a Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme funded by the Department for Education, for children aged five to sixteen who are receiving benefits-related free school meals.

Leicestershire County Council is working with Active Together to deliver the programme, which will be held at venues across the county by schools, voluntary and community organisations, childcare providers, and sports clubs.

Cost of Living Increases

We are all suffering from the cost-of-living increases, and this impacts our daily lives. I just wanted to share some details about the support that is available locally through Leicestershire County Council covering:

- *Public Health*
- *Environment & Transport*
- *Adults & Communities*
- *Children & Families.*

At a partnership level across Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland (LLR) a 'social welfare cell' has been established under the Local Resilience Forum. The Group is chaired by Leicester Cathedral and draws membership from across LLR. The welfare cell seeks to maximise impact by adding value and supporting the work of partner/constituent agencies. Key areas of focus within the Group's Action Plan are understanding the impact of the crisis through data and analysis and supporting key organisations and partners to:

- Build financial capabilities through financial literacy and education
- Increase access to appropriate financial services and affordable credit
- Increase access to money and debt advice.

A website has been developed to show the full support on offer. Information is being added all the time and this will be a useful webpage to look for help and support: www.leicestershire.gov.uk/cost-of-living

Green Living Leicestershire

This scheme will fund help for Leicestershire residents to go green, reduce costs and tackle climate change. Some homeowners in Leicestershire will be eligible for efficiency improvements which will reduce energy costs as well as making households warmer and greener.

As part of the new 'Green Living Leicestershire' programme, eligible county residents will benefit from fully funded home improvements including loft and wall insulation, solar panels, heat pumps, and new efficient windows and doors.

'Green Living Leicestershire' is funded by £3.6 million provided by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, and administered through the Midlands Net Zero Hub (<https://www.midlandsnetzerohub.co.uk/>)

The eligibility criteria include households with an income of £30,000 or less per year or in receipt of means-tested benefits, and an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D, E, F or G. It will prioritise supporting low-income households heated by mains gas, those off the gas grid, and those at high risk of fuel poverty.

Bradgate Park Trust

I am really pleased that Bradgate Park Trust has been awarded a Green Flag Award. The award is an international mark of excellence for parks and green spaces.

I had a walk up to Old John to be part of the photo call to celebrate with staff and our big band of volunteers.



Video Highlights our Growing County

Leicestershire's population is set to grow by 20% over the next few years, highlighting the need for increased planning for the future. A new video is showcasing how we are shaping the county of tomorrow.

With new homes and business space being created across Leicestershire, we are supporting communities by putting the right infrastructure in the right place.

This includes investing £100 million over the last five years to create an extra 5,000 school places, including six new schools.

Over £15 million has also been invested in new residential accommodation, supporting older people with learning disabilities and those living with mental health conditions.

Link to the video: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/news/new-video-highlights-growing-county>

Reservoir Road, Cropston

Reservoir Road was closed following an issue with the water main pipe. Following this emergency road closure, an explosion occurred, and a female was injured.

There will now be an investigation by the Health and Safety Executive so the road closure could be extended. The road remained closed until the end of October 2022.

Recycling Batteries

People are being reminded to 'take charge' when it comes to the disposal of batteries. Leicestershire County Council is supporting the national campaign – led by the Environmental Services Association - to tackle the growing number of serious “zombie battery” fires started by carelessly-discarded batteries at its recycling facilities.

Both Coalville and Barwell recycling and household waste sites were forced to close temporarily earlier this year, after discarded batteries caused fires.

When batteries are thrown away with the general rubbish, or mixed with other recycling, hidden “zombie batteries” can easily ‘return from the dead’ and cause serious fires. Lithium-ion batteries are particularly prone to causing fires or explosions if they are not recycled properly.

Some battery types can ignite or even explode when they are damaged in waste collection and treatment processes. Once this happens, the batteries can set fire to other materials present in the waste, such as paper and cards, leading to serious incidents that, in some cases, put lives at risk and disrupt vital waste services. These batteries are most commonly found in products such as laptops, tablets, mobile phones, radio-controlled toys, Bluetooth devices, shavers, electric toothbrushes, power tools, scooters, and even e-cigarettes.

Residents should follow this advice:

- Never put batteries in your general waste or recycling bins
- Only recycle batteries using a proper battery recycling service, such as at your local recycling and household waste site, or battery collection point often found in supermarkets
- Remove batteries from broken devices if you can and recycle both the battery and the device separately.

If you cannot remove the battery, please recycle it with your old electricals.

Residents can find out where to recycle batteries responsibly in the county, and more about the dangers of Zombie Batteries, by visiting www.takecharge.org.uk

Parliamentary Boundaries

Parliamentary constituency boundaries are changing.

The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) is required by parliament to undertake an independent and impartial review of all constituencies in England, to rebalance the number of electors in each constituency. Constituency sizes currently vary widely due to population changes since the last boundary review. The new map proposed by the BCE will make sure each constituency has between 69,724 and 77,062 electors, so that each MP represents roughly the same number of electors. The 2023 boundary review also requires that the number of constituencies in England increase from 533 to 543.

Following feedback, the BCE has changed nearly half of the initial proposals published last year. The new revised proposals are now available to view via an interactive map on the consultation website:

www.bcereviews.org.uk This website also includes all the details on how to submit your comments.

Platinum Jubilee Sculpture

Five trees from the Platinum Jubilee Sculpture are to be planted in Leicestershire in honour of the Queen. The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) has selected five Leicestershire organisations to receive special trees from the Tree of Trees, the Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire announced.

Rowan, silver birch, and alder trees are among the five trees selected to come to the county. The five trees were among 350 saplings that formed the 69-foot-tall Tree of Trees sculpture in front of Buckingham Palace during the Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June.

The recipients who have been chosen to receive the trees are LOROS, Rainbows Hospice, Bradgate Park Trust, Abbey Park in Leicester, and Welland Park in Market Harborough.

They will be officially planted by each recipient in the coming months. The recipients will each plant a sapling in the pot embossed with the Queen's cypher, which will be gifted to another local organisation in the coming year. Every year, this will be repeated.

The trees are part of the living legacy in honour of the late Queen, joining over a million trees already planted across the UK as part of The Queen's Green Canopy - an initiative to plant trees to mark the Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

Young Person of the Year

The Lord-Lieutenant of Leicestershire, Mike Kapur, is celebrating the achievements of young people in Leicester and Leicestershire. The Lord-Lieutenant's award for young people recognises the very best examples of achievement by young people in Leicester and Leicestershire.

You can nominate a young person in one of four categories. Finalists will be invited to attend a special awards ceremony where the overall winner will receive a £500 prize.

The criteria for nominations are: -

- The young person is aged 13-19 living or attending full-time education in Leicester or Leicestershire
- The young person can be nominated by other young people, their school, parent/carer, or any other agency
- Joint or group nominations cannot be accepted
- Previous finalists should not be nominated again unless there is a fresh story to tell.

There will be a separate award for each category. From the winners of these categories, one person will be announced as Lord-Lieutenant's Young Person of the Year 2023.

The Award categories are: -

- Young Person of Courage of the Year
- Young Volunteer of the Year
- Young Artist of the Year (The Joe Humphries Memorial Award)
- Young Leader of the Year.

Further details can be found on the County Council website: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/>

Social Internet

The New Year is always a suitable time to stop and re-assess your finances, even more so with the cost-of-living increases. There is a lot of support out there, especially on the County Council website:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/find-help-with-cost-of-living>

Internet costs are one of the bills that does not get mentioned very much. We all rely heavily on the internet now and I wanted to highlight the help out there with these costs.

There are broadband social tariffs available. Social tariffs are special discounted deals available for certain low-income customers. They are generally cheaper than typical broadband tariffs, starting at just £12 per month. They are usually not subject to price rises or exit fees.

Social tariffs are designed to act as a safety net for households that may otherwise struggle to afford broadband services. Research by the telecom's regulator, Ofcom, has shown that an estimated 4.2 million households in the UK are eligible.

You are likely to be eligible for a social tariff if you receive a means-tested state benefit, such as Universal Credit, Pension Credit, or legacy equivalents. Available from BT, Virgin Media, Sky, Vodafone, Hyperoptic, Community Fibre, and others, social tariffs can help protect against digital exclusion.

It is worth having a conversation with your current provider to see if they offer a social tariff and to check if you are eligible. There are more details on the 'Which' website here: <https://www.which.co.uk/>

Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy

There was an item on the agenda for the Cabinet meeting on 10th February 2023 to discuss the PTPS.

The PTPS was adopted in October 2018 to ensure the delivery of value-for-money passenger transport services and to provide a robust and transparent framework for determining decisions on the provision of passenger transport services. A programme of service reviews in December 2018 was started, however, it was then paused in March 2020 due to the pandemic.

There is a budget deficit of approximately £1m going into the 2023/24 financial year when the bus recovery funding from the Government ends in March 2023.

The PTPS reviews of all supported bus services recommenced in September 2022. These reviews are being undertaken in four batches, the first of which is nearing completion and is likely to result in changes to these services, including the likely withdrawal of some of them.

Batch One includes the 154 and 125 bus services in my division.

Subject to the Cabinet's approval, a programme of focused local community engagement events and where necessary consultation on the PTPS review outcomes will be held during Spring/Summer 2023 with the implementation of the outcomes for the first batch of services being in place in Autumn 2023.

Speeding

We have an ongoing issue with speeding across many of our villages. It is an exceedingly difficult issue to address, and we need the community to support us.

There are many ways of doing this, one of the best ways is to have a Community Speed Watch (CSW) in our communities. Community Speed Watch is an educational scheme to help people reduce speeding traffic through their community and is run by volunteers, supported by the County Council. Further information is available on the link below if you are interested in starting a group in your community:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/road-safety/community-speed-watch-csw>

You can also report speeding vehicles in areas through the Road Safety Partnership. The link to their website is here: <https://www.speedorsafety.com/community>

Tree Planting for Ukraine

An oak tree has been planted outside of County Hall to mark one year of solidarity with Ukraine, since the Russian invasion of Ukraine. More than 500 households committed their support and over the last 12 months welcomed almost 1,000 guests from Ukraine, including 350 children.

Climate Change

Leicestershire County Council has teamed up with key partners and stakeholders from leading organisations to draw up an ambitious set of principles setting out Leicestershire's commitment to tackle climate change, nature decline and carbon reduction.

'The Leicestershire Climate and Nature Pact' is based on the principles of the Glasgow Climate Pact, signed by the UK government in November 2021. It supports national and international efforts to tackle climate change by bringing together the businesses and private sector, voluntary, community, and social enterprises,

universities, the education and research sector, the public sector, and the people and communities of Leicestershire, to drive local action and work towards a number of shared environmental aims.

The core requirements of the Pact include the need to act quickly on reducing the impacts of climate change, reducing carbon emissions to net zero, halting ecological decline, supporting climate recovery, and working together to deliver effective action on climate change.

The Pact was officially launched at a signing ceremony on Tuesday 28th February 2023, attended by representatives from more than 40 organisations who gathered to share their ideas on how to work together towards the common goal of making Leicestershire a net zero county by 2045.

The County Council is now calling upon other organisations and groups across the county to sign up to the Pact and play their part in combating climate change and nature decline.

The Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy and Action plan can be found on the Council's '[Net Zero](#)' [web pages](#), which have been developed to make the Council's Net Zero information and resources easier to access and to increase involvement with residents.

You can contact netzero@leics.gov.uk to find out more.

Tree Nursery

A new tree nursery is to be developed by Leicestershire County Council in partnership with the National Forest Company (NFC). The project is to develop a new community-focused nursery involving local groups and organisations to help collect seeds and grow new trees to plant across Leicestershire and the National Forest.

The project – which aims to produce around 20,000 trees per year - will be trialled for four years with ambitions to inspire other communities to start up tree nurseries.

Work on the site located in the heart of the National Forest at Hanging Hill Farm, Moira is due to start soon, with phase one of the project involving the development of the site, access, infrastructure, polytunnels and growing beds.

Seeds will be collected and planted later this year and the trees will eventually help to support the council's ambitious plans to increase the level of tree planting across Leicestershire and the drive to eventually plant 700,000 - one for every person in the county.

Send School

The County Council has been successful in its application bid to the Department of Education (DfE) for a 90-place school for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), in Quorn.

There is an increasing demand in the county for SEND school places and this funding from the DfE's Special Free School programme, will provide much needed school places.

The school is set to be built on County Council-owned land off Farley Way, Quorn, close to the A6, and will serve both the local community as well as the neighbouring Melton and north-west Leicestershire areas.

When opened, the school will have pupils from Key Stages 2-4 on its roll and will specialise in helping to meet the communication and interaction needs of children. It is also planned that the school will support pupils into post-sixteen progression.

Adult Numeracy Project

£3 million in government funding has been secured by the council. This will fund a three-year programme that will help adults in Leicestershire to improve their numeracy skills and enable businesses to upskill their workforces.

The 'Multiply' programme aims to level up opportunities for more people by increasing their confidence with numbers, giving them the tools needed to improve their job prospects and life chances. It also aims to improve the financial well-being of individuals and families by supporting them in managing money, becoming financially self-sufficient and ensuring parents support their children with numeracy-based homework.

Anyone aged 19 or over who fits the criteria will be eligible for these free courses - but there will be a particular focus on supporting hard-to-reach learners and those who may not traditionally engage with adult learning courses.

Digital Leicestershire Matters

The County Council already delivers a paper copy of Leicestershire Matters to all residents three times a year. There is now a new digital version as well, that is sent out approximately every couple of weeks and includes

up-to-date information on services and council news.

You can sign up using the link below.

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/news/digital-leicestershire-matters-sign-up>

Call for Tree Wardens

An appeal has gone out for more people to come forward and volunteer as tree wardens to help protect and maintain trees and wildlife.

Tree wardens are volunteers for the Council and are appointed by their parish council or other organisation to be a contact and support for all things tree related in their local area. They help protect trees by reporting pests, disease and vandalism and help look out for opportunities to plant more trees in the local community. They also campaign for grants to help fund more local tree planting and campaign to raise awareness about the key ecological role of trees and woodland.

Leicestershire currently has 93 tree wardens around the county, and the County Council has now launched a drive to encourage more people to come forward and volunteer for this rewarding role.

Anyone who would like to find out more about becoming a tree warden or to apply can also contact their local parish council or email treewardens@leics.gov.uk

7. Opens Spaces Committee Report.

Sandham Bridge / Mill Race Bridge

Restoration works have now been completed to Sandham Bridge by James Rowley. This has included replacing the lime mortar in between the stones on the walls, parapets and pedestrian cutwaters. The flagstones forming the floor of the bridge were also cleared of weeds, repaired or replaced where necessary.

Advice has been sought from James re. the best way to restore the surface of Mill Race Bridge which is now also owned by the Parish Council. A working party successfully removed the vegetation last year which exposed the original stone, but this has made the footpath across the bridge very uneven, necessitating a cautionary sign advising pedestrians to use an alternative route around the bridge.

Ongoing weeding of both bridges to be arranged by the OS group.

The Willow tree in the pond under Mill Race Bridge needs to be cut back again and the stump treated so that it can eventually be removed in a piece-meal fashion. At present it is too large to remove by tractor or digger and would cause substantial damage to the surrounding area. The use of eco-friendly stump plugs is to be investigated to ensure protection of the surrounding watercourse.

Wildflower Verge, Leicester Road Cropston

Following a very successful first season in 2022, there will be ongoing maintenance of the verge to ensure optimal growth of wildflowers. This involves just one cut of the grass in the autumn and removal of the clippings. Yellow Rattle seeds were scattered over the area last year to help prevent vigorous re-growth of grass, thus allowing the wildflowers to grow through more easily. Routine surveys, conducted by local resident Peter Smith have revealed a total of 40 different species of plants and grasses to date, including Lady's Bedstraw, Bird's-foot Trefoil, Field Woodrush and Germander Speedwell. Nine species of insects have also been identified including Common Blue Butterfly, Birch Catkin Bug and Buff-tailed Bumblebee. Several articles, kindly submitted by Peter, have appeared in the Parish magazine and all results sent to NatureSpot, the recording database website for Leicestershire and Rutland.

Signs have been placed on the verge to alert the Public and Contractor to the fact that this verge is now part of the Wildflower Verge scheme.

Jubilee Park Biodiversity Project

Further to a successful bid for a SHIRE Environment Grant, the Jubilee Park Biodiversity Project is progressing well. The Park received its first mowing at the beginning of April, in which areas were marked out between wide grass paths for tree planting and meadow species.

A working group, consisting of councillors Michael Jackson, Matt Green and Sue Graham and community volunteers John Cole and Dave Jones completed the planting of 100 saplings over the course of three days at the beginning of April 2023. These saplings were kindly donated free of charge by the Woodland Trust 'Trees for Schools and Communities Project'. Additional trees will be purchased using some of the SHIRE Grant money. The site will be monitored by councillors and community volunteers to help ensure survival of the trees.

Temporary signage has been put in place to inform visitors of the background to the project. Ultimately, the intention is to install four permanent information boards about the wildlife of the Park, a 'Welcome to Jubilee Park' sign and a finger post off Latimer Road directing visitors to Jubilee Park.

Wildlife, community input and public usage of the Park will be recorded on a monthly basis over the course of the project (i.e. to end Feb 2024) as part of the conditions of the SHIRE Grant application.

The current recreational areas comprising the children's play area, football area and basketball post will continue to be maintained in its entirety.

Friends of Jubilee Park

As part of the SHIRE Grant, it is intended to set up a 'Friends of Jubilee Park' to help with any tasks going forward and for general monitoring of the Park / reporting any damage etc. All volunteers welcome.

Platinum Jubilee Oak

An official commemoration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Oak Tree took place on 26th October, with the children of Richard Hill School in attendance, including the two prize winners of the Jubilee park competition, together with the Deputy Mayor of Charnwood, Cllr Margaret Smidowicz, the new Vicar of All Saints Church (Thurcaston with Cropston), the Reverend Matthew Gough, Marianne Lane, Mark Charles, Sylvia Cole, Michael Jackson, Andy Sharp, Sue Graham and the Editor of Thurcaston & Cropston Parish Magazine and photographer Richard Bradley. The area was strimmed and tidied beforehand by Contractor Jamie Torrance and a commemorative wooden plaque was installed. Sylvia kindly submitted an article about the commemoration to the Rothley Post and Your Local magazines.

Queen's Green Canopy

The Platinum Jubilee Oak Tree is now officially recognised and mapped as part of the Queen's Green Canopy scheme.

King Charles III Coronation Oak Tree

An Oak tree to commemorate the Coronation of King Charles III was planted in Jubilee Park in March 2023 by Jamie Torrance and a plaque, similar in format to that produced for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee will be installed shortly.

Jubilee Park Childrens Playground Equipment

This is currently under review to see what can be repaired / renewed with available funding.

Parish Noticeboards

Some noticeboards, including the one near to the Bradgate Arms Pub on Station Road, have deteriorated in recent years to the point where it has become difficult to attach notices to the disintegrating cork. Cllr. Matt Green has kindly refurbished the boards, by replacing the cork and repainting the frames.

Future Plans for the OS Committee

The aspirations cited below (although not an exhaustive list) will be subject to availability of funding and/or appropriate grants being obtained:

Street Furniture

A review of dog waste bins, seats and bus shelters will be conducted and action taken to improve these, if deemed necessary.

Hedgehogs R Us Highway Project

A project run by Linda Cook offering hedgehog gates for urban fencing across the Parish to help this rapidly declining species will be pursued. An impressive list of 58 PCs have already signed up across the Country, including some closer to home such as Burbage, Cosby, Mountsorrel, Misterton, Thurlaston and Leicester Forest East.

Expansion of Wildflower Verge Scheme

To be considered in future depending upon the success of the pilot scheme verge, Station Rd.

Parish Trail

A booklet produced by the Thurcaston and Cropston History Society some years ago detailed a walk around the two villages, giving some excellent background information on our most familiar areas and buildings. It is hoped that the OS Committee can expand on this in future and produce a number of information boards around the villages to compliment this booklet.

Parish Signs

Decorative village signs, helping to reinforce the identity of our Parish will be looked into for possible installation at the main entrances to Thurcaston and Cropston.

Ideas from our Parishioners

Thoughts and observations from our local residents on how we can enhance our open spaces are always welcome and can be reported to the OS Committee via our Parish Clerk Marianne Lane on tel. 0116 2367626, email clerk@thurcastonandcropston.org.uk , address: Memorial Hall, Anstey Lane, Thurcaston, Leicester, LE7 7JA.

8. Local issues brought to the meeting by electors. **2 parishioners attended as concerned about burglaries in Thurcaston.**

Meeting closed 6.45pm

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Mark Charles
Chairman of Thurcaston & Cropston Parish Council.