



RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

24th APRIL 2023

In May 2022 I had the privilege of being elected Chairman of the Parish Council for the period 2022-23. This is a position for which I have the greatest respect, it can be a challenging role but ultimately most rewarding.

I am now pleased to present my Annual Report to Council for consideration.

The Council have met, face to face, ten times during the year. The question of face to face and hybrid meetings is still a live issue. NALC, (National Association of Local Councils), is still in conversation with the Government attempting to have the law on meetings amended. Evidence gathered during the lock-down years showed that public participation in meetings improved when using 'Zoom'. Use of this application, (others are available), was also beneficial during the winter months and times of inclement weather, for both Councillors and public.

Councillors, that were available, also met twice to consider the Council's responses to the two consultation documents that were published for the South Warwickshire Local Plan. This plan could have a detrimental effect upon our Parish. Further information and links can be found on the PC website.

Last year I reported that the major outstanding Agenda item was the Council's Traffic Management Plan. At the heart of the plan is the aim of improving road safety for pedestrians and motorists alike, when using roads within the Village. It remains on the Agenda but I am pleased to say that since last November there have been positive moves, by WCC Highways, to meet a number of our demands. These were discussed during a site meeting with the WCC Assistant Director for Environment and Communities, together with three senior officers from the Highways Dept. The Council are due to receive detailed plans soon.

More good news surfaced in August 2022. WCC Highways 'found' £49.1k of S106 money that had been contributed by Ricardo PLC in 2004, for the improvement of bus stops and infrastructure within the village. Considering the fact that the Parish Council had, during the intervening years, financed the provision of two high quality bus stops it was agreed that the Council would request that this funding be used to improve the east bound stop opposite the end of Lewis Road. This proposal was forwarded to WCC. Agreement to the proposal was received in October.

Further good news was received in January. Many of you will be aware that the Friends of Radford's Green Environment, (FoRGE), have, for a number of years, been promoting a canal access project in co-operation with the Canal and River Trust. Lack of funding has been the major stumbling block for this project. The Parish Council, also supporting the scheme, made representations to Warwick District Council for £41k of S106 money, received by them as an Open Space contribution from a development in Radford, to be transferred to the PC and be ring fenced for the access project. This bid was successful. In January it was announced by WCC that grant funding had been obtained for development of the cycleway between Newbold Comyn and Radford Semele. Sustrans, a national transport charity and custodian of the National Cycle Network also announced grant funding success.

On 24th January WCC Cllr. Peter Butlin approved the use of this funding to improve the cycle network between Newbold Comyn and Radford Semele and the provision of two new canal access ramps and re-surfacing the towpath between the two ramps. The project will be delivered by a collaboration between WCC, WDC, Canal & River Trust and Sustrans. The project should be substantially completed by September 2023.

The financial agreement between Warwick District Council and the Parish Council, relating to the A C Lloyd, S106'Off-Site Play area' contribution remains under negotiation. Three other perennials, 56 Southam Road, WDC Canalside Development Plan and PROW W123, also remained on the Agenda.

The four Parish Council sub-committees have, as usual, been busy during the year. My grateful thanks to the Chairpersons and members of those Committees. Their achievements will be outlined in their own reports.

The Community Speedwatch Team is another success story. The group, under the guidance of Cllr. Roger Munn, is made up of volunteers and Councillors. They have made their presence felt monitoring the motorists that are breaking the speed limit through the village. It is hard to believe that Cllr. Mrs Malin first suggested this scheme at a PC meeting held on 2nd May 2016 but it failed to gain support at that time. I wonder what the effect of implementing Speedwatch seven years ago would have had for us today? My thanks to Cllr. Munn and the whole team for all your efforts this year.

My gratitude is also extended to County and District Councillors, Wallace Redford and Valerie Leigh-Hunt for representing the Parish during the year. Valerie is not standing in the forthcoming local election, I therefore extend my best wishes to you for the future.

I am, as always, extremely appreciative of the support and guidance that our Clerk, David Leigh-Hunt, gives to the Parish Council and to me, in particular, in my role as Chairman.

I offer my sincere apologies for any credits due that I have overlooked or for any notable omissions.

Finally I feel that I should comment on the death of our much-loved monarch Queen Elizabeth II, who passed away on 8th September 2022. Queen of the UK and Commonwealth for over 70 years, a truly remarkable reign. The outpouring of sadness was epitomised by the numbers who queued, for hours, to pay their respects at her lying in state. It is unlikely that we will see the like again.

We now look forward to the Coronation of King Charles III on 6th May.

Council, I table my report.

Stan Sabin

Chairman, Radford Semele Parish Council

11th April 2023