# Brenda Seaton - Annual Review 2020/2021

## County Councillor for Thurmaston Ridgemere Division

Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to say that I hope you and your family have remained safe throughout this difficult period. The human and economic cost of coronavirus continues to disrupt our lives in ways we would not have imagined this time last year. The impressive vaccination rate combined with our successful Hands, Face and Space campaign has made a huge difference however we all need to act responsibly in the next few months until a large majority of the population is vaccinated.



BARKBY

The Division of Thurmaston Ridgemere comprises of Thurmaston, Barkby, Barkby Thorpe, Beeby, South Croxton and Hamilton Lea

The Thurmaston Ridgemere division embraces both rural and urban areas and is situated in east of Charnwood on the outskirts of Leicester City.

It is a very diverse division comprising of newly built communities, long established rural villages, retail shopping centres and industrial estates.

Over the last four years I have been extremely active in ensuring that the individual communities of Thurmaston Ridgemere receive the attention they deserve. In that time, I am pleased to say that I have been able to help and support countless residents with issues that have affected them personally, I have championed issues like foot paths, roads and taken part in environmental projects. Given guidance on planning issues and regularly meet with the police about ASB and rural crime as well as fly tipping and neighbour disputes.

I am especially proud to have initiated 'Helping our Community, Thurmaston' and of experiencing first-hand how our communities have pulled together at a time of great need for the most vulnerable in our villages. I have contacted many of my residents via letter this year as it seemed to be the only way for me to communicate in these uncertain times. As your active Local County Councillor for the past 4 years I was keen to make myself as contactable as possible. Before Covid 19 I held monthly surgeries at the Old School in Thurmaston however that building is no longer available and to be honest it was not very successful or central to the residents of Thurmaston Ridgemere therefore this year I will be looking at different ways I can meet residents. I have really increased me presence on Facebook and find that people are more open about their problems or issues online.

#### My actions to support residents include:

• Currently I am negotiating with Highways at LCC for much needed road improvements at the junction of Duck Pond Lane with Barkby Thorpe Lane. Over the last 5 years, road collisions at this junction have reached an unacceptable level and I am very pleased to say that speed reductions will be in force early in May this year. There are also plans to be drawn up to redesign the junction making it safer to pull out.

• I have also been in successful talks regarding a controlled pedestrian crossing between Thurmaston retail park and Asda. Although there have not been any serious casualties, the high footfall suggests it will only be a matter of time.

• When I first became your County Councillor, I identified the need for improved access to the play area at South Croxton. I am currently working up a funding application with the parish council for making the play area accessible to all, as well as upgraded play equipment and an improved football pitch.

• As well as ensuing that local roads are maintained in a timely manner I have liaised with South Croxton, Beeby and Barkby Parish regarding the clearing of encroaching foliage on many I pathways and bridle paths and making sure they appear on a regular work programme for the future.

• Church Hill Bridge remains an issue with heavy rain causing flooding. However, the whole area has now been mapped underground in order to investigate the best way forward.

• Chimney fumes from a factory on Earls Way are being investigated by Charnwood and residents are encouraged to complain every time the fumes are an issue.

• Thurmaston Roundabout is still causing accidents by drivers using the wrong lane when entering the old village. Unfortunately, Highways insist that the roundabout is correctly marked.

However, the main bulk of my work over the last 4 years has involved helping with matters relating to school admissions, housing, adult social care, children and families wellbeing, benefits and planning as well as being involved in issues such as rural crime and fly tipping.

I am pleased to have been given again the position of Cabinet Support for Children and Families enabling me to use my knowledge of the education system and my work within SEND and special schools.

#### Hamilton Lea

Hamilton Lea at present can only be entered from Hamilton Way or Sandhills Avenue and is an almost seamless continuation of Hamilton in Leicester City. However, the 14 roads and 248 houses that make up Hamilton Lea are actually in Leicestershire County and pay their council tax and have their bins emptied by Charnwood. Unfortunately, the developers have not completed all the planning requirements therefore Hamilton Lea has not been adopted by Leicestershire County Council. This means that issues like street cleaning, lighting and gritting in the winter will not be carried out by the county. I have been asking the developers when they intend to offer Hamilton Lea for adoption.

Although Charnwood have tried twice to establish a parish meeting by inviting interested residents to form a parish council. This would open an opportunity for raising funds from each household through their council tax to purchase play equipment, benches and maybe a Hamilton Lea village sign. If you would be interested in forming a committee, please contact me. You will be fully supported by Charnwood democratic officers.

#### Beeby

Beeby is a small Hamlet of 36 houses and the majority of the village is a conservation area. For a small village there has been quite a lot of development in the guise of farm buildings and a prospective commercial orchard. The Manor house on Main Street is a grade 2 listed building that has been seriously neglected and is subject to a planning application for a mixed-use development transforming the whole site and bringing much needed employment opportunities.

### Barkby Thorpe and Barkby

Although these two villages are made up of 16 roads the majority are small rural roads leading to farms but the village through roads are carrying more and more traffic using the rural roads to avoid using the main routes from and to Leicester City. The development that will be known as Thorpebury off Barkby Thorpe Road, Thurmaston has started after many delays. Along with representatives from BABTAG (Barkby and Barkby Thorpe Action Group) I have attended development meeting over the last 10 years with CEG (Commercial Estates Group) to ensure that any negative impact from the 3 separate developments will be mitigated as much as possible.

#### South Croxton

A dozen streets make up this rural village in Charnwood. The Parish Counil meets in the village hall that is run by a small committee and under usual circumstances host a number of community groups. I am currently working up a funding application with the parish council for making the play area accessible to all, as well as upgraded play equipment and an improved football pitch.

#### Thurmaston

The largest village in the district situated on the edge of Leicester City. Thurmaston has two shopping centres as well as a few industrial estates offering individual units, warehousing and large factories giving the area ample and diverse employment opportunities. I have lived in Thurmaston for nearly 40 years, as do my children and grandchildren. I have always been an active member of the community and the founding member of Thurmaston Action Group (TAG) encouraging and aiding other community groups to succeed by offering advice and sharing skills as well as practical support.