



Tom Barkley- Annual Report 2021/22-County Councillor for System Ridgeway

The Division comprises of the Town of System and the Parish of Wanlip

Electoral Division Activities

I was delighted to be re-elected in May 2021 as County Councillor for the Division. It is a privilege to serve the community which has been my focus for many years. During the year somethings have started to return to life as we knew it before the covid pandemic. Many meetings are now being held in person but with hybrid and virtual meetings still taking place. Throughout the year I have continued to support my Parish Council and Parish meeting with regular in person visits and with written monthly reports.

The Pandemic has hit the local communities of Leicestershire hard and I am pleased that through Leicestershire County Council I have been able to assist the Community in obtaining grants for community groups.

Crime and anti-social behaviour have been tackled by working with the police and improvements have been achieved, with Neighbourhood watch groups set up and residents feeling more secure.

Flooding issues have been tackled and resolved, by input of new infrastructure to stop flooding and clearance of waterways and culverts

Highways and traffic issues throughout the division, traffic flow through Syston town and air pollution are issues which remain priorities. Highway maintenance has been carried out to maintain the road system throughout the division and regular monitoring of air quality.

I have been successful in obtaining 3 Mobile Vehicle Activated signs for areas where speeding has been an issue in Syston and also improvements agreed to the lighting on a pedestrian crossing in Central Syston

During the pandemic, many businesses have suffered, and I have been working with businesses, I have been able to signpost them into successfully applying for grants which have enabled them to survive in these unprecedented times

The growth of housing in Syston is a focus, with work undertaken to ensure that necessary infrastructure needed as a result of development, such as provision of School and health facilities within the town, is given priority and sufficient developer contributions raised to enable work to be carried out . Our local Member of Parliament Edward Argar has been particularly supportive in the issues I have raised. I run a monthly surgery to address residents' concerns, which has continued on Zoom during the pandemic and lockdown. A review of the town has been carried out and a business plan developed in consultation with residents and local businesses which is being implemented

I shall continue to work with local community groups to support and enhance their contribution within the division and in the town.

Climate Change

Climate change is a particular area of interest to me, I am on a Climate Change Project Board where significant strides have been made to help us achieve Carbon neutrality by 2030. The measures implemented have been timely, cost effective and enabled significant reduction in the carbon footprint saving the planet for future generations to enjoy. We are aiming for Carbon Neutrality throughout the County not just the council in due course by encouraging businesses to adopt climate friendly policies and actions.

Community Events

I have supported community groups in the town, which is fortunate to have a strong community spirit. The Local U3A group have operated and keep members together. Age (Concern) Syston and Syston and District Volunteer centre and Syston History Group have continued to serve the community and have received my support. Many residents in Syston take part in regular litter picking events

Priorities for the immediate future

- Working in Partnership with the police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in the division and making residents feel safe in their community
- Highways and traffic calming solutions in the division
- Tackling Climate change and working towards Carbon Neutrality throughout the County
- Engagement with the local health centre
- Engagement with Schools within my division
- Working with Local community groups to assist them
- Maintaining regular Councillor surgeries to address residents' concerns within the division
- Strategic Growth Plan
- Working to assist businesses in the recovery from the pandemic to preserve jobs and the local economy.

Council Activities – (Bodies served on at County Hall)

- Corporate Governance Committee (Chair)
- County Council
- Local Pension Committee (Chair)
- Scrutiny Commission

Local Committees/outside bodies

- Charnwood Health and wellbeing partnership
- Great Central Railway Liaison Group
- East Midlands Airport Independent Consultative group
- East Midlands Councils Leaders Board (Reserve)
- Deputy Leader Charnwood Borough Council and Lead member for Finance and Property services, Building Control and Audit & Risk
- Chairman – Syston Town Council
- Attendance at Parish Council meetings in the division, with monthly reports and updates provided.

Learning and Development

- Training at County Hall- briefings and updates
- Corporate Governance training
- Local Pension Committee training

Social Media

- Twitter and Facebook occasional user