

# MAGGIE WRIGHT - Annual Report 2023/2024

County Councillor for Stoney Stanton and Croft Division.

The Division comprises the Parishes of Aston Flamville, Croft, Elmesthorpe, Huncote, Potters Marston, Sapcote, Stoney Stanton, Sharnford and Wigston Parva. Collectively known as the "Fosse Villages".



## Electoral Division Activities

Throughout the year I have attended as many Parish Council and Parish Meetings as possible in person and/or provided a written monthly report. The parishes continue to work well together under the umbrella of the Fosse Villages and the Development Forum, "Shaping our future". The Forum is now in its second year and exploring collectively how it can influence significant development proposals planned within the division. Traffic modelling, air quality and Biodiversity being a few examples of topics being explored. The Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan was upgraded during the year and provides an excellent platform for the villages to build upon.

The start of 2024 brought with it the devastating effects of Storm Henk. Several properties in Sharnford and Croft were internally flooded with narrow escapes in Stoney Stanton. Largely due to the self-help of residents and the Parish Council who manned pumps, sandbags and bailed out. As the effects of climate change are predicted to escalate in the future it is important, we are all flood prepared and resilient. One of my priorities for this coming year is to work with LCC as the Lead Local Flood Authority. To prepare business cases for submission to the Environment Agency to install mitigations to prevent the internal flooding of properties.

The Planning Inspectorate examination into the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange application concluded on 12th June 2024. A decision on the application by the Secretary of State is expected by

12th September 2024. This has followed an extensive Timetable which began with a formal consultation on 12 January 2022. I together with our two Local MPs, fellow District and County Councillors presented a petition in opposition to number 10, Downing Street on 17 October 2023. I spoke again in opposition on BBC radio Leicester and at the open hearing on 24 January 2024. I commend all residents, Action Groups and Parish Councils who have spoken up and made their voices heard. We await the decision.

The Community Liaison Group attached to the proposed development of Land West of Stoney Stanton continued to meet during the year. The developers visited and presented their proposals to the individual Fosse Village Parish Councils. Concerns remain regarding highways infrastructure, open space, provision of facilities and preserving existing village identities.

Huncote Leisure Centre and grounds has continued to experience serious issues due to leaking methane gas from the old landfill site. Further mitigations work has taken place during the 2023/24 which has enabled the footpaths to be reopened. However, the future of the BMX track is awaiting legal decisions to decide its future. It is likely the site will be returned to an open space area.

Nearly all my Member Highway Fund projects have been completed with the low-level lighting in Huncote and the provision of Vehicle Activated Signs in Sapcote being the final examples.

Traffic, parking and speeding within all villages of the division continues to be a major issue. We have witnessed several accidents and crashes on the B581 Station Road. Both within the Stoney Stanton village boundary and between the village with Elmesthorpe. I am working with the Parish councils, LCC Highways departments and the Police to look at potential traffic calming measures and reducing the speed limit between the villages which unfortunately does not reach Department of Transport criteria for a reduction.

The FoxConnect Demand Response bus service operates within the Division, and it is hoped it will continue after its 3-year funding trial comes to an end next year. Public transport services within all our villages have declined as demand levels struggle to recover since the COVID epidemic.

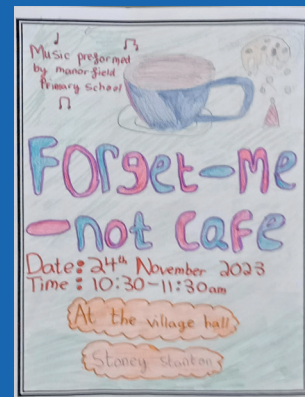
## Community Events

A great community spirit continues to exist within the villages and settlements. I will highlight a few. The "Big Help Out" volunteering continues within my local village. Many open spaces and the church have had a good spring clean; the village hall and bus shelter received a new coat of paint. Sapcote Parish Council have worked exceeding hard to bring back their carnival and introduce a Community Awards Scheme this year. Stoney Stanton held a scarecrow competition in September 2023 and will again celebrate their annual carnival in June and "Brass on the Grass" in July. I have also thoroughly enjoyed attending the Dementia Café events at Stoney Stanton village hall where we have been entertained by the children from Manor field primary school. The Bishop of Loughborough blessed the new extension at Sapcote primary school and Croft primary School received a visit from a new gritting lorry which they had named "Ready Spready Grit". Huncote and Sapcote community libraries thrive due to the hard work of volunteers. Croft Happy Circle and the Good Neighbour Scheme continues to support the elderly and vulnerable within the village.

I had the privilege in September 2023 to meet with the late Jenny Hook of Sapcote as she was interviewed by BBC radio Leicester. Jenny served for 45 years as a lollipop lady and helped children from All Saints Primary school cross the road safely at the crossroads by the coop. She is sadly missed by all.

I have chaired the Patient Participation Group at the Old School Surgery. Stoney Stanton for the last twelve months. The practice has 8,000 patients from residents at Sharnford, Sapcote, Elmesthorpe and Stoney Stanton. I thank the volunteer members of the group and the Parish Councils who have supported the group with donations.

Again, I was privileged to participated in the Remembrance Sunday Parade organised by the Croft Royal British Legion and Croft Parish Council.





## Priorities for the immediate future

- Continue lobbying to get the speed limit reduced between Stoney Stanton and Elmhurstorpe.
- Get traffic calming installed where appropriate.
- Develop the Shaping our Future Forum.
- Continue to highlight the need for connectivity for cycle and footpaths in rural areas.
- Support the FoxConnect Demand Response Service to become commercially viable when the government pilot finishes.
- Continue lobbying to help our villages become as flood resilient as possible.
- Continue to engage with Developers to shape our villages for the better if development comes.

## Council Activities

- Support Cabinet Member for Transport, Transportation and Flooding.
- Member of the Anglian Northern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
- Member of the Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. Member of the Innovations Committee.
- Chairman of Highways and Transportation and Flooding Communication Panel.
- Chairman of ESPO Management Committee 2023 to 2024.
- Member of Local Access Forum

## Local committees/Outside Bodies

- Thurlaston Parish Council member
- Deputy Leader at Blaby District Council. Portfolio Holder for Finance, People and Assets.
- Croft Quarry Liaison Committee member.

## Other bodies

- Chairman of the Old School Surgery Patient Participation Group.

