

# WAKES COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

## Chairwoman's Report

As I write, pre-Xmas 2021, the Omicron virus is spreading rapidly, and it looks likely that further restrictions will be re-introduced. These not only impact on the way we can live our lives but also on the council's ability to get things done in Wakes Colne. We keep trying!

At last, there is some better news on several fronts. In early December the much-needed pavement clearance, first reported three years ago, from the Village Hall to Wakes Colne Church, was finally and efficiently undertaken over three days by approved contractors, who had to install traffic lights for safe working. This cost WCPC £2,400, for which Cllr. Barber, our County Councillor, was able to obtain a refund from Essex County Council (ECC) of £1800, as in the past Highways had undertaken the job. We hope that residents who frequently use the footway can now walk more safely on a wider width pavement.

However, we all know that there is speeding above 30mph through the village on the A1124 and along Station Rd. The latest speed survey has given results in excess of the technical limit so we are waiting to see if this will be enough to help secure some funding for the VAS which WCPC has already decided to purchase. When we receive permission from Highways this will be permanently located near the village hall. We are also awaiting further developments on traffic calming in Station Rd, which is still being considered by Highways.

Progress has been made with flooding prevention barriers following a collaborative initiative by our Ward Councillor, Cllr. Chillingworth, and Wakes Colne and Chappel Parish Councils in consultation with Chris Eaton at the PO and shop. After consideration of various options, WCPC has purchased nine portable modules and a connection unit which, when deployed from the edge of the shop corner to the curtilage of the pavement, should offer an adequate defence against rising flood waters. The intention is that this year's locality budget, available to Cllr. Chillingworth from Colchester Borough Council, will

fund the cost of around £1600. The flood defences are being supplied to the shop/PO for as long as it remains a community asset.

Another work in progress is installation of 14 replacement solar lights which are not functioning along Station Approach. This is being funded by The Community Rail Partnership, through the good offices of Cllr. Barber. It will be beneficial to all rail users during the dark winter mornings and evenings.

The usual council business includes planning applications, ongoing major highways issues, also signage, applications for planters near the bus shelters, progress on a second defibrillator, footpath maintenance and maintaining the telephone book exchanges. We have a small group of volunteers and councillors which tries to meet monthly to keep footpaths clear; please join us. There is also still a vacancy for another councillor. Please contact the Clerk, [parishclerk@wakescolne.org](mailto:parishclerk@wakescolne.org), or via the website <https://e-voice.org.uk/wakescolne/> if you are interested or have any comments.

Thanks to all who help in whatever way to make Wakes Colne a better place to live. Mandy Sexton has been awarded The Wakes Colne Award for 2021 for her services over many years in editing and producing the Village Reporter and for chairing the Village Hall Committee. We hope the award will be able to be presented in person at the next WCPC meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January in the Village Hall. Let's hope that, despite the latest variant of the virus, 2022 will turn out to be a better year than 2021. WCPC wishes you all good health and wellbeing throughout the year.

Monica J. Taylor (Dr.), Chairwoman, WCPC