



Tom Barkley- Annual Report 2020/21-County Councillor for Syston Ridgeway

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

Electoral Division Activities

I had the privilege of being elected as the County Councillor for Syston Ridgeway division of Leicestershire County Council to serve the residents of the division . I am also a local Borough and Town Councillor.

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 and through Community action Charnwood have been able to arrange support for local residents and provide food parcels for those isolating .

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, including the mini roundabout in the centre of Syston, traffic flow through Syston town and air pollution are issues that I continue to raise and am trying to obtain developer contributions to enable improvements. Highway maintenance has been carried out to maintain the road system throughout the division and regular monitoring of air quality.

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 will be implemented over the next 4 years. 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. During the pandemic the activities of many groups have been curtailed, however via Zoom some such as the Local U3A group have operated and keep members together. Age (Concern) Syston and Syston and District Volunteer centre have continued to serve the community and have received my support. In conjunction with Leicestershire County Council and the Town Council I facilitated the provision of litter picking equipment for local litter picking groups. Many residents in Syston took part in the Great British Spring Clean an event organised in conjunction with Syston Town council.

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
- 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
- Chairman – Syston Town Council
- Leicestershire and Northants rail action committee
- Attendance at Parish Council meetings in the division, with monthly reports and updates provided.

Learning and Development

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

Social Media

- Twitter and Facebook occasional user