Borough Councillors Report 30.10.17 – Cllr Houlbrook

Upton is looking splendid in autumn colours and the berries and nuts are providing food for wildlife to help see the birds and small mammals through winter.

The planning application for 55 Daleside was due to be heard at planning earlier this month but has been delayed for more information from the developers. There is no committee date for the Moston Garage application but the application for the development at White Gables is due to be decided at planning on 5th December. There has been a great deal of interest in and concern about the plans to build 13 properties and to demolish the current house. I have arranged a meeting for residents on 8th November and I’d like to thank Upton High School for hosting and providing tea and coffee. The latest update I have on the Plush Spice application is that the case officer is still in discussions with the developers. There have been concerns about the fence that has been erected opposite the Tesco store on Weston Grove. A planning application has been submitted but planning permission has been refused and the householder advised about right of appeal.

You may have noticed that work has begun on Lodge Gardens. A working party spent three hours making a start on clearing the weeds and undergrowth and removing ivy from the sandstone wall. Since then I’ve met on site with Kerrie Brice to discuss what further work is required to bring the gardens up to standard and to reveal the remainder of the wall. It is obvious the wall requires attention by which I mean a professional repair not being stuck together with concrete as has previously happened. Kerrie and I also discussed what work is required at the Cockpit and I highlighted some trees which need cutting back. Kerrie is to contact Highways to ask that the owner of the property to prune the overhanging branches.

 I’ve been contacted by many residents who are worried about the overgrown vegetation by the railway bridge on Mill Lane. I have already brought the problem to the attention of our CWaC officers. The land is the property of British Rail and in truth they are responsible for keeping it in a safe condition but I’ve asked that the local authority takes immediate action to cut back the shrubs. The pavement is narrow at this point so I hope everyone will take care when using this area. During our recent litter pick it also became clear that the area is in need of a thorough clear.

In my last report I mentioned that the Friends Of Countess of Chester Health Park group is lobbying CWaC for a controlled crossing on Countess Way. The huge popularity of the park means an increase in the volume and variety of pedestrians crossing the busy road so we feel the current crossing is inadequate and dangerous. I understand that an traffic assessment will be carried out in the spring.

Following discussions about parking problems at the junction of Wealstone Lane and Appleton Road the dropped kerbs will be protected with an H Bar. Parking across a H Bar is a traffic offence. In addition children from Mill View School will, as part of the Parents’ Parking Charter, carry out a survey of local households asking for suggestions to improve the situation.

I have noticed that drivers often park across the dropped kerbs at the junction of Meadowsway and Upton Lane, so I have put in a request for H bars at the location too. This should also prevent parking on the corner which is obstructing access to and from properties on Upton Lane.

 Highways have confirmed that an H Bar will be painted at the dropped kerbs outside the Sanctuary properties for older people on Bolesworth Road. Unfortunately drivers were parking across the kerb making it impossible to be used.

Again each time the grass verges in Upton are cut, which seems to be irregularly and poorly, I receive complaints from residents. The quality of the work leaves much to be desired and after the latest cut community minded residents have reported poor grass cutting resulted in the destruction of the the white posts on Gatesheath Drive. This is annoyingly careless lack of attention to detail and so easily preventable. The posts will be replaced.

I’m using the SMYLE app as my reporting tool while I’m out and about in Upton. It’s so much easier and more convenient than a note pad and pencil. It’s very quick to download from the App Store.

Using SMYLE I’ve reported that many of the street signs in Upton are in need repair or cleaning and the new sign on Acres Lane that has been badly damaged. I hope whoever caused the damaged managed to get their vehicle repaired!

Again this month unfortunately I’ve needed to take up complaints on behalf of residents whose lives are being blighted by irresponsible dog owners.

It really is appalling that people to allow their dog to foul the pavement or on the driveway of a property and it's even worse when the people don’t pick after up after their dog.

I know there are lots of very responsible dog owners in Upton so thank you to people who care for our streets.

Again this month I’d like to thank the residents who spend time and effort keeping Upton looking clean and tidy. I really enjoyed our recent morning at the War Memorial and I hope everyone is proud of the transformation. I’d particularly like to thank a Darren and Peter for giving up their Saturday morning and to thank our residents who came along and worked so hard. A special mention to all the children who weeded and planted and I hope they enjoy watching their plants grow.

Last week local residents and our Localities officers turned out to plant daffodils on Caughall Road. Together we planted 1800 bulbs along the whole of the street in the grass verges. There are several bags of bulbs still to plant before winter and for the next planting session I’m hoping to focus on the area around Bolesworth and Halton Roads.

I am concerned because I understand cars have been damaged in recent days on Egerton Drive.

I continue to work with residents about ideas to mitigate against the speed and pavement parking in this area however these incidents were not mentioned to me. Any information will assist me in my discussions with Highways and the Police to highlight the need for speed and traffic controls.

There is disappointing news about the plans for the revival and renewal of the Youth Club building. As this is an agenda item we can discuss it more fully and I’ll be happy to answer questions.

I hope my report gives you a flavour of what I’ve been doing in Upton.

Jill Houlbrook

22.10.2017