

A Message from Simon Stacey: the past 18 months have proved really challenging for us all and yet there have been many positives in the way that individuals, and our whole community, have come together to support each other.

Covid-19 has affected everything including the Parish Council and yet we have continued to meet (virtually) every month, dealt with urgent business, and delivered several positive outcomes including:

- ✓ Providing £500 for urgent repairs to St. Andrew's Church;
- ✓ Donated £200 to Hope House Hospice for vital PPE;
- ✓ Contributed £600 for urgent repairs to play area surfacing at Wallshead Way;
- ✓ Contributed £250 towards a community orchard in St. Andrew's Churchyard
- ✓ Presented 'Worthy Citizen' Awards for *Services to Education* to Mrs Susan Bryon (retiring teacher) and Mrs Janet Bennett (school governor).

2021 promises to be a better year - please tell us about your priorities for the Parish so that we can help deliver them.

Simon Stacey Chairman, Church Aston PC



Community Grant Awards 2021: we are delighted to report that the Parish Council has recently supported 14 local groups with grants totalling £2,500 for a variety of projects. Each of the Church Aston based scouting / guiding groups received £200 with contributions also made to: CA Thursday Club, St. Andrew's Church Hall, CA Short Mat Bowls Club, the Village Hall, 'Newport in Bloom', the Infant School and Hope House Hospice.

Applications far exceeded the budget however, Parish Councillors decided to increase funds to reflect their appreciation of the work of local volunteers and the special circumstances as groups re-start following a year of interrupted activity.



A few Snippets:-

- ✓ Improved signage in the junior play area;
- ✓ New dog waste bin provided at entrance to The Folly;
- ✓ Lobbied T&WC for drainage improvements in Pinewoods;
- ✓ Looking to improve seating in the play area;
- ✓ Pressing T&WC to resolve flooding along the former rail-line.

What is an Electoral Review? the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) are carrying out a review of electoral wards in the borough of Telford & Wrekin.

What does this mean and why should you be interested? Well let's pose the question a different way - *if there was even the slightest chance of the Parish element of your Council tax tripling from ~£38 (in Church Aston Parish) to ~£114 (in Newport TC area) (both per annum for band D Council Tax) would you be interested?*

LGBC electoral reviews are carried out fairly often especially in growing boroughs like Telford & Wrekin. The idea is to balance out the number of electors each Cllr represents. Newport (S&E) ward already has too few electors and so the LGBC are likely to rebalance this shortfall from new housing growth and possibly by extending their electoral boundary.

Whilst the above may be fine there is every likelihood that once the LGBC review is over Newport Town Council will press T&WC to carry out a Parish Boundary Review - the so called 'land grab' reported in local media about 18 months ago.

Some residents of Church Aston Parish (i.e. Mulberry Close, Richmond Close, Primrose Drive and Nos 45 to 90 Wallshead Way) vote for Newport (S&E) Borough Councillors. Whilst you may look to Newport for retail services we believe you are more likely to have community links in Church Aston via St. Andrew's Church, the Infant School, and through community groups using the Village Hall and the Church Hall.

Community identity is a key part of the electoral review criteria and that is why the Parish Council will be asking the LGBC to return these Newport (S&E) voters back into the Church Aston & Lilleshall electoral ward - aligning with the historical Parish boundaries, and protecting you from a potential 'land grab'.

Have your say too by emailing the LGBC at reviews@lgbce.org.uk You can find out more about the review at: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/west-midlands/shropshire/telford-and-wrekin>

Openness & Transparency..... every year the Parish Council's finance and governance arrangements are assessed by an independent local auditor before going through a rigorous audit carried out by a nationally appointed auditor (PKF Littlejohn). All relevant documents must be available for inspection by electors during a 6 week period. CAPC has adopted an open book policy making its finances & governance documents open to the public provided reasonable notice is given: contact the Clerk at churchaston@gmail.com or visit our website at www.churchaston-pc.gov.uk

❖ **Website & Facebook:** the Parish Council has a website: www.churchaston-pc.gov.uk and a face-book site: simply search for Church Aston Parish Council