

Les Phillimore

County Councillor for Cosby and Countesthorpe Division

Annual Report 2023/24

Email: Les.phillimore@leics.gov.uk

The Division comprises of the Parishes of Cosby, Countesthorpe, Kilby, Foston and South Whetstone with a population of circa: 12,000

Electoral Division activities

As the new post-Covid world continues to evolve before and around us, my work as your elected County Councillor for the Cosby & Countesthorpe County Division continues unabated; as it should.

I believe that a key role of being a County Councillor is to not just be available and responsive to residents when they contact me directly, but to be fully engaged, visible, informative and supportive over the long-term on complicated resident concerns.

Very often, my work will be behind the scenes as much of the support that I provide relates to individuals or individual families whose confidentiality will always be respected and protected. The more visible elements of my work however are reflective of the safe, peaceful communities that make up my County Division.

As I live, work and relax within our County Division and my children grew up and were educated within it, the issues that affect my residents are the very same issues that do and have affected my family and friends and why I chose to become a Councillor – to champion our communities, to champion our desires, our aspirations, our hopes for the future and to help build a better place for us, for our children and for their children to live, work and relax within; put simply, to do what I can to make people's lives better.

A number of examples which I hope are seen as positive contributions to our communities are set-out by parish overleaf.

Aside of my Council work, I am in my final permissible term of office as the East Midlands Regional Chairman for the UK's largest member-led business group, The Federation of Small Businesses and will be stepping down when my final three-year term of office comes to an end later in 2024.

As a voluntary member of this business group and alongside my colleagues and staff, we continue to support and champion the needs, opportunities and aspirations of the small and medium size enterprises (SME's) across the UK.

My work in education and skills continues, particularly with my role on the Faculty of Business and Law Advisory Board at the De Montfort University; a voluntary role and alongside my part-time Tutor role within the faculty, we are helping build the skills, the businesses and the employees of the future.

Divisional matters: -

£50,000 INVESTED IN ROAD AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Very pleased to confirm that nearly all of my Members Highway Fund has been invested across our villages.

MVAS units (Speed signs) can only encourage drivers to comply with the speed limits but sadly, there are

some drivers who consider that speed limits do not apply to them so I will work with the Police on those.

My grateful thanks go to the Parish Councils, local residents and Highway Engineers that have helped choose which safety measures and where.

COSBY

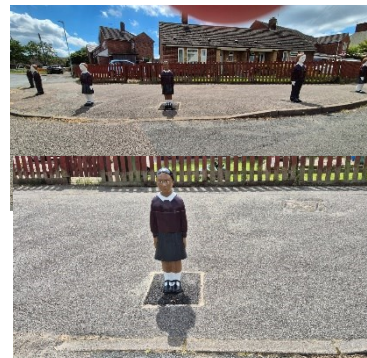
- **Safety bollards** installed opposite Cosby Primary School providing a safe refuge for children, parents and carers.

Delighted to finally see the installation of the missing Belinda opposite Cosby Primary school providing safe waiting areas for parents and carers and stop car drivers parking on this important pedestrian refuge area.



- **Two MVAS** units purchased which will be moved around a number of locations in Cosby.

- **Elderly Crossing sign** installed on Main Street. Unfortunately, the dropped kerb I had requested could not be installed following a road safety assessment.



COSBY & SOUTH WHETSTONE (Cambridge Road)

- **Three Mobile Vehicle Activated Cameras (MVAS)** now installed along Cambridge Road and encouraging drivers to adhere to the speed limit.



COUNTESTHORPE

- **Church Street** – The works for the dropped kerb on Church Street to assist wheelchair, strollers and mobility scooter users has finally been installed. For various reasons, the cost of this work was 7 times the standard cost and I am delighted that the Highways Officers understood the value of providing this essential modification to give safe access to wheel-chair and mobility scooter users set against very tight budgets.

- **Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS)** are installed and will be moved around the village to remind drivers of the 30mph limit.

- **Dragons Teeth** – installed on Peatling Road

- **Storm Henk** – following the flooding event on Mennecy Close, I was able to offer help and guidance to a number of properties quickly afterwards with my District Councillor colleague Cllr: Adrian Clifford to ensure that residents were aware of the need to register and the grants that were available whilst listening to residents' views of why and how their properties were flooded.

- Raising resident's concerns with the Highway Authority about the condition of **Hallcroft Avenue** and the potential impacts on the road surface should planning permission be granted off Willoughby Road.

- Supporting Countesthorpe Parish Council on any County Council responsibilities such as providing new **"ONE WAY"** signage on Central Street due to some driver-visitors not realising that Central Street is a One Way Street.

- **Countesthorpe Country Park**. Following Storm Henk, District Ward Cllr: Adrian Clifford and myself were given a guided tour by a local resident who explained in detail, their concerns about the maintenance of Countesthorpe Country Park.



As a park under multiple ownership, we will do what we can to address the issues raised, particularly around blocked watercourses.



KILBY

- **Speed Management** – Funding for four posts and two Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS) provided to be deployed around the village
- **Flooding** - I cannot imagine the trauma of a house flooding and have thrown my full weight behind residents and the Parish Council for a permanent engineering solution to this recurring nightmare on Spinney Road – Main Street.



- **The “marbled” RED road surface** – One of the first concerns referred to me as your County Councillor and I am delighted to advise that preparatory works have been completed with County Highways assuring me that a full resurfacing is scheduled for 2024.



- **Pavement Parking** – following repeated concerns about pavement parking, the issues have been discussed with the Police to follow-up.

South Whetstone

- **Strom Henk** – numerous properties in South Whetstone were flooded with considerable restoration and replacement work required.

Following an early public meeting organised by a resident, I have ensured that all affected residents are able to contact me directly and 6 months later, I make regular visits to those residents whilst supporting the County Flood Authority Officers to bring mitigation measures to the area to help prevent future flooding and keep residents informed of progress.

Drain gulleys have been cleared and inspected, photographs and videos of the flood and blocked water course provided and a multi-agency walk-around and meeting with residents was organised for 2nd February 2024.

- The parking restrictions campaign for Henson Close continues with non-residential highway parking continuing to cause endless issues for the residents of Henson Close.



Funding from my Members Highway Fund should have been set-aside for the formal consultation after which, the County Highway Authority after formal adoption of Henson Close should be able to introduce parking restrictions and bring some relief to the residents of Henson Close.

- I will continue to press for a Traffic Regulation Order to regularise 30mph along the entire length of Cambridge Road. I await the result and note that this is now included in the County Councils LCWIP programme.
- **Sewage flood** – Very happy to have intervened to get this appalling matter on Warwick Road resolved. I was extremely disappointed with the utility provider that I even had to intervene but that is why we are here – **to get things done.**

County Council activities - (Bodies served on at County Hall)

I continue to look forward to being able to play a full role within the County Council and to serving the people and businesses within the division to the very best of my ability.

- **Development Control and Regulatory Board (Planning)**

I was delighted to be appointed to the position of Chairman for the Development Control and Regulatory Board (DCRB) (Planning) and will seek to ensure that any planning decisions are as transparent and as scrutinised as much as is possible.

- **Environment and Transport Scrutiny and Overview Committee**

- **Wyggestons House Hospital Trust** where I serve as a Nominated Director-Trustee of this long-standing charity

Looking forward: -

Housing and Employment

One of the most significant challenges facing the South Leicestershire Divisions and one probably one of the least popular is the requirement to deliver significant housing and employment growth in South Leicestershire. The Strategic Growth Plan sets-out a very high-level concept document as to how this may be achieved and Blaby District Council as the Local Planning Authority, is in the process of developing their new Local Plan which will contain far more detail as to how those requirements can be met with the County Council as Statutory Consultees.

The Unmet Need for Leicester City Council poses a significant challenge to South Leicestershire Divisions and shines a spotlight on how essential good infrastructure will be required to support housing and employment growth. I continue to look forward to contributing to these debates fully in due course but always seeking to gain the greatest advantage for our Division and provide the strongest representation.

Children & Families, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) & Adult Social Care

The demands and associated costs of these critically important services continue to escalate and command around 80% of the County Councils total budget. As an essential and statutory service for which our ongoing campaign for Fairer Funding with Government, has to find a long-term solution to this provision both locally and nationally remains firmly a priority for the County Council.

As anybody who knows me or has ever sought my support in this most personal and important of areas, SEND will always find a sensitive and empathetic ear at my house; as will Adults with Social Care or additional needs.

Whatever our future holds, as your elected representative at Leicestershire County Council and with my collective Local Government, business and Higher Education activities and interests, I will listen to all sides of the debates and campaign for the very best outcomes for our Division, our district wards, our parishes, our skills, jobs and economy, our education, our elderly, our vulnerable, our communities and our future.

Passions and Other Interests

People who know me, know that I am passionate about everything that I do and at the forefront of my life are People, Business, Education, Skills and social justice, including: -

- The Director-e Ltd. A project dedicated to the Senior, Executive and Professional 3rd Age (Over 50's) who may find recruitment and employment challenging.
- The Federation of Small Businesses – the UK's largest member-led business group representing c: 160,000 SME's and the self-employed
- Higher Education - Part-time Tutor at De Montfort University coaching Postgraduate students through Business Research Projects and Member of the Faculty Advisory Board.

- Innovation and international collaboration – supporting new business ideas over the long-term
- Sadly, and as a result of unexpected family health issues being a priority since January 2024, my time supporting small businesses is planned to reduce during 2024 although I will continue to be able to help as a self-employed freelance consultant.

Local committees & Outside Bodies

- Cabinet Member at Blaby District Council holding the Housing, Community and Environmental Services Portfolio which includes the Blaby Youth Council
- Elected Volunteer Regional Chairman for the UK's largest business group, The Federation of Small Businesses
- I have served on Whetstone Parish Council for c: 30 years
- Voluntary Panel Member – De Montfort University Faculty of Business and Law Advisory Panel
- I also have the pleasure of being the Clerk to Cosby Parish Council ensuring that I am always working at the heart of the community.

Priorities for the immediate future

- Supporting my division and the county as the new normal continues to evolve
- Maintaining a watching brief over the Strategic Growth Plan.
- Engagement with Schools within my Division
- Supporting all tiers of local government, communities, community groups and businesses.
- Supporting the County Council as we design the services of the future.
- Supporting the Parish Councils and local business community

Learning & Development

- Attendance at numerous Members Weekly Briefings

Community Events

Over the electoral term, I attend as many parish council meetings as time permits and can often be found walking the streets, visiting local cafés and supporting as many of our community events as I can such as the: -

- Whetstone Parish Council Open Days
- Launch of the Countesthorpe Squirrels
- Cosby Yarn Bomb Community Day on the 27th August 2023
- Countesthorpe Festive Fronts competition
- Countesthorpe Follies Christmas Sing-Along
- Foston Christmas Tree Festival



Communications and Social Media

I am easy to find on Linked-In in particular, but also have a small number of business and personal accounts on Twitter and Facebook.

Primary contact as County Councillor – Email: Les.phillimore@leics.gov.uk

My Commitment to You: -

- Protect the vulnerable
- Support our communities
- Energise and rebuild our economy
- Build back greener
- Create the jobs and skills for tomorrow
- Campaign for Fairer Funding

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L M Phillimore CC', written on a light blue background.

L M Phillimore CC