



## CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2024

### **Introduction**

I am honoured to have been voted in as Chair of Albrighton Parish Council in May 2023 to serve my second term of Office. I would first like to thank my Councillors for having trust and faith in my ability to work in the capacity of Chairman for another year. I would like to thank my former Vice Chair, former Councillor Stephanie French and my current Vice Chair, Councillor Colin Noakes. Their continued support of their roles in Council projects and aims has been a credit to work alongside them.

### **Albrighton Foodbank**

During my first term of Chairman I initiated a working relationship between Albrighton Parish Council and Albrighton Foodbank. I am pleased that this relationship continued during my 2<sup>nd</sup> term of Office to help support those in the village who are in financial need. During my 2<sup>nd</sup> term the process of the the Foodbank altered slightly to allow for a smoother process in obtaining food parcels and to ensure that the people who were in need are receiving the support they need from various organisations in the village.

The generosity of the community has been immensely appreciated during this time and I would like to thank Revd. Jess Harper & Sarah Jones and the Foodbank team for working in partnership with the Council during this last year. I am pleased to see the foodbank is now well supported for future years to come.

### **Warm Space**

Albrighton Parish Council has once again provided a Warm Space within the Library for the winter months of November to end of April. I am pleased that the Council agreed to have this initiative in place to help support those in financial difficulty or are looking for a safe and warm space. This has been well used by members of the community visiting the library for a warm drink, cuppa soup and those looking for a bit of company during the cold winter months.

### **Albrighton Parish Council Staff**

Having only joined us in March last year our new Clerk, Joanne, has settled in well and is well on her way to completing her CILCA training. Jo has been a massive help to me as Chairman over the course of the year and similarly ensuring the Council is acting in the best interests of the community and following the correct legal process in doing so.

Our existing staff members continue to work hard in their roles; thank you to Paul for ensuring the centre of the village is litter free; Kevin our Village Warden for all the hard work he does out and about in the Village with maintenance; our Library staff Sarah and Lauren who always welcome visitors with a smile and a helping hand; and lastly I would like to thank our Office Administrator, Olivia, who has worked hard and dedicated her time to APC splitting her working week both the Office and the Library.

## **War Memorial**

As you would have seen The War Memorial project is now in full swing, with the first stages being the removal of the structure on 10<sup>th</sup> April.

This the restoration process will see the wooden cross and the metalwork being carefully restored by specialists. We are hopeful this will take around 12-14 weeks to complete, so that the Memorial can be back in place for Remembrance Day in November.

I want to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate the War Memorial Working Group members for all their efforts for getting this project off the ground and through to fruition.

This is a group made up of members of both Albrighton Parish Council and Donington with Boscobel Councillors, as well as other representatives from the Albrighton Historic Society and Royal British Legion.

There has been an a lot of work carried out by them to get to where we are today, and I commend them for their efforts in what I know has been a long process and frustrating at times.

## **Loak Road/Worthington Drive Project**

Members of the Coronation Garden Working Group have been working on the project for the old Allotment site at Loak Road/Worthington Drive. Council agreed for this space to be created in recognition of King Charles III, naming this the 'King Charles III Coronation Garden'. Children from the local schools have assisted the Working Group members with the planting of fruit trees and creating natural habitats. The final stages of the Garden will be planting of wildflowers and a new bench to be placed in the not too distant future.

## **Albrighton Library**

Albrighton Parish Council took over the management of the Library back in 2016 and since then staff and the Council have worked hard to ensure its future running. I am pleased that Council have agreed to the opening of the Library on Wednesday's for a further 6 months until October time when Council will reconsider the opening hours. This means we are now open 6 days a week and are a central hub for the community. We have a lot of community based events throughout the month, ranging from Shropshire Council and their partners providing services on the third Tuesday of the month; Rhyme Time on the first Wednesday of the month; Blood Pressure Checks and Friendship Group every fourth Wednesday of the month; and now the introduction of a Mother and Baby Group on the second Wednesday of the month. I would like to thank our staff for supporting and organising these groups to provide much needed support and help to the community.

## **Organisation and Groups Supported with Grant Funding**

The Parish Council has supported a number of groups and organisations during the past year with Grant Funding towards projects. The budget set aside by the Finance and Grants Committee was £20,500 for the Financial Year 23/24, which included the underspend from the previous year of £2817.10. We as a Council are proud to have been able to assist these groups in providing their fantastic services and events to the Community. Further details of these Grants can be found on our website, but in brief, we have provided funding to the following:

- Albrighton Table Tennis club
- Albrighton With Donington Fayre
- The Red House (Also known as the Albrighton Village Halls Trust)
- St Marys CofE School
- St Marys Church
- Albrighton Allotments Association
- The Melville Club

- 1<sup>st</sup> Albrighton Scouts
- St Marys Nursery Group
- Citizens Advice Bureau

### **Closing**

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all the Councillors for their continued hard work and dedication in their voluntary role and for the support they have shown me this year as Chairman of the Council.

All residents are welcome to attend the Full Council meetings and Committee meetings of Albrighton Parish Council. Registered electors are welcome to speak during these meetings for an allocated time. The Full Council meetings take place the first Thursday of each month at 7.00pm at the Red House and various Committee Meetings take place during the month.

Thank you and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.