

Cllr Barnes Annual Report 2023/2024

As my first full year as Little Dawley parish councillor, having originally been in Aqueduct ward, I have thoroughly enjoyed being councillor for the village that I live in. Whilst still taking an interest in the wider local area, I have enjoyed being able to focus on Little Dawley and have continued to observe the strong community spirit and pride in our area.

My work with the Dawley Hamlets Local Nature Reserve remains one of my favourite community projects. It's been good to see both the projects with Smallwoods and Buglife really come to fruition, with a huge community effort already showing signs of improved ecology. Recently, work experience students from my school were able to get involved in the project with a joint action day with Buglife and T&W; it was great to see youngsters getting involved in local community work. As events co-ordinator, I have continued to co-ordinate events and this year we have focused on both our summer and winter events with both being a success, along with a well-attended pond-dipping event.

In Little Dawley, I have seen the installation of dropped curbs, meaning large part of the areas are more accessible and easier for pram use. I have also looked at path improvements in Little Dawley in the area behind the Unicorn pub towards the Old Phoenix fields. This year has seen new owners, Denzil and Gina, contribute to our community with various fundraisers including getting a defibrillator installed- we thank them for this outstanding contribution to the village. Finally, I am looking forward to seeing our benches improved as part of a larger project in the parish council; speaking to local residents, we would also like to see additional benches in key points in the village.

In Horsehay, I was delighted to see the new gate installed- this was something we'd observed on our community buggy walks and now the gate is easier for prams to access. I have also continued to be involved in the Lightmoor Community Delivery Group as a representative for DHPC and had a productive walk with other members of the Delivery Group.

In Aqueduct, a significant development is the change of Castlefields Way speed to 30mph. This is something I began to campaign for when I first joined the council and therefore I am happy that this has finally happened. However, this change happened following a crash where local child Fleur would suffer from life-changing injuries. The community continue to feel strongly about the road safety in this area, and I hope that the council can see a way forward to ensure this road remains 30mph. With two serious collisions on the by-pass as well, I hope that road safety remains a priority for Dawley Hamlets Parish; this is particularly crucial with serious concerns in regards to the safety of Lightmoor road (now we have residents in the new estate here) and the long awaited improvements on St Luke's Road.

With many projects reaching a conclusion, there are still projects ongoing. For instance the Speedwatch continues to be ongoing as we continue to await the vetting process. Community members continue to be keen to take part in this and I am due to meet the co-ordinator from the police this month (April). Along with this, I am looking forward to seeing further community fundraisers with the Unicorn pub help to improve our area.