**CHAIR’S ANNUAL REPORT 2021/ 2022**

* Uckington parish council has continued to function as best it can within the constraints of the continuing Coronavirus, and has been conducting its business via virtual Zoom meetings and by collective email as well as face to face contact wherever possible.
* Our small parish continues to face three major challenges; namely the M5 Junction 10 Improvement Scheme, the Elms Park planning application and the so called Cyber Park development. We continue to be involved in the various consultations and submit our comments and feedback where able to do so. All three schemes represent a significant impact for our parish and we need to influence any decision making to the benefit of the area and our parishioners. As a direct consequence of these challenges, the parish council has engaged a consultant to assist with the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan and a steering group comprising councillors and concerned members of the public has been established and is holding regular meetings under the chairmanship of Nasir. Whilst such a plan would not in itself be able to prevent these schemes going ahead, it should enable our council to influence the on-going impact upon the parish, and also to specify policies and guidance on how any new development should be designed, orientated and located. Such a plan would also benefit the parish of Elmstone Hardwicke, and we are in the process of inviting a councillor to attend one of the steering group meetings and then hopefully provide feedback and recommend that our neighbouring parish council should join forces with Uckington.
* Unfortunately, the Parish Council Forum comprising Uckington, Elmstone Hardwicke, Boddington, Staverton, The Leigh and Stoke Orchard and Tredington has only been able to meet once over the past year with Tewkesbury Borough Council due to the Coronavirus restrictions, but it is hoped that these meetings will resume shortly on a regular basis, so that we can present a united front on the issues that face us all and also to be more widely consulted on parish matters.
* During the past twelve months Uckington Parish Council has continued to provide support to parishioners, sympathetically assessing various planning applications, and arranging maintenance to highways, footpaths, and watercourses and endeavouring to try and protect the environment in general. We have worked closely with Gloucestershire County Council and Highways to improve highway surfaces, drainage and signage in the Parish, and continue to do so. In particular we have tried to ensure that all the highway grips have been cut and the drainage gulleys are routinely cleaned and jetted as necessary and that serious potholes are filled as quickly as possible.
* We extend our thanks to Phil Awford our County Councillor, and Mark Williams our Borough Councillor for the guidance and assistance they have provided to our Parish Council throughout the year, and both are always welcome at any of our meetings.
* Unfortunately David Parfitt had to step down from the parish council due to other commitments, and for personal reasons I have also stepped down from both the position of Chair and from the council itself following February`s parish council meeting. This has meant that there are currently two vacancies and a proposal to merge with Elmstone Hardwicke has been tabled in order to share resources etc. Such a merger would have to be sanctioned by Tewkesbury Borough Council and an initial petition has been made to test the water.
* Whilst I have not ruled out a return to the council at some later date should a vacancy present itself, I have found it necessary to step down now and I would like to personally thank Ros, Peter and Nasir for all their support and enthusiasm throughout the year.
* Finally, and by no means least, I wish to extend my sincere thanks to Dave our Clerk to the Parish Council for providing his clerical and financial expertise, and also for ensuring that we adhere to correct protocol. You have all made my task as Chair a lot easier over the past 7 years. Thank you.