

# LAPWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

## CLERK'S REPORT MARCH 2023

The Parish Council met on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 7:30pm in the village hall. The meeting was attended by five Councillors, Cllr John Cooke (WCC), Cllr Illingworth (WDC), Cllr Hales (WDC) and two members of the public.

The Council has a Councillor vacancy following the resignation of Mr Stuart Mace; the Council would like to thank Stuart for his contribution to the Council and the Parish over the past 3 ½ years, with particular thanks for his efforts organising the regular litter picks in the Parish. If you are interested in joining the Council please contact the Clerk.

Following his visit to the Council last month, Mr Philip Seccombe, Warwickshire's Police and Crime Commissioner has sent the following message of support for the Lapworth Community Speed Watch group:

*"I'm strongly supportive of Community Speed Watch schemes as they can have a real deterrent effect and prompt a change in behaviour from motorists. The Road Safety Partnership has set an ambitious target of reducing by 50% the deaths and serious injuries that occur on our roads by 2030. That will require us all to become safer road users, which includes making sure that we drive within legal limits and at safe and sensible speeds for the road conditions.*

*The work undertaken by Community Speed Watch volunteers is a vital component of achieving this behaviour change and I am always keen to encourage more people to sign up as volunteers to help establish new schemes and to support the continued development of strong and healthy schemes such as in Lapworth."*

If you are interested in joining the Lapworth Speed Watch volunteers, please contact the Clerk.

The Council was pleased to approve a grant of £1974 to Lapworth Cricket Club for planned improvements to the facilities at their club house. The Council also approved a grant fund for local village groups planning a public event to celebrate the King's Coronation this May. If you are considering organising a public event or activity to commemorate this historic occasion, please contact the Clerk for details of how to apply for funding.

The Council have received more information about two new schemes launched by the Government to provide energy bills support to residents:

- The **Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding (EBSS AF)** is providing £400 in energy bills support for households without a direct relationship to a domestic electricity supplier who didn't qualify for the £400 rebate paid in Autumn 2022 – to apply for this visit [www.gov.uk/apply-energy-bill-support-if-not-automatic](http://www.gov.uk/apply-energy-bill-support-if-not-automatic)
- The **Alternative Fuels Payment Alternative Funding (APF AF)** is providing £200 in energy bills support for households and individuals who use alternative fuels for heating – to apply for this visit [www.gov.uk/apply-alternative-fuel-bill-support-if-not-automatic](http://www.gov.uk/apply-alternative-fuel-bill-support-if-not-automatic)

Residents can also apply for either fund by calling 0808 175 3287 where a representative will guide you through the application process.

A reminder that elections are being held for Lapworth Parish Council and Warwick District Council on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023. The Government has introduced a requirement for voters to show photo ID when voting at a polling station and this will apply for these elections. If you don't have accepted photo ID you can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate. For more information about voter ID contact the Electoral Services team at Warwick District Council ([elections@warwickdc.gov.uk](mailto:elections@warwickdc.gov.uk) or 01926 456105) or visit

[www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20657/voting\\_in\\_elections/1847/voter\\_identification](http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20657/voting_in_elections/1847/voter_identification)

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It has been confirmed that bus fares will continue to be capped at £2 for a further 3 months, bus passengers in Warwickshire will only pay a maximum of £2 for a single bus journey, regardless of the distance travelled, until 30 June 2023. In Warwickshire, the following operators are signed up to the scheme: Stagecoach, Arriva, National Express Coventry, National Express West Midlands, Pulhams, A&M Group - Flexibus (Service 9 only) and IndieGo PLUS Demand Responsive Transport (DRT).

The next meeting of Lapworth Parish Council will take place at the village hall on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 7.30pm.

Minutes and Agendas for meetings are on the Parish Council website [www.lapworthpc.org.uk](http://www.lapworthpc.org.uk)

Parish Clerk: Helen du Bois

Email: [clerk@lapworthpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@lapworthpc.org.uk) tel: 07712531873

### Statement from Lapworth Parish Council in response to correspondence regarding the northern extent of Lapworth Parish and the speed gate sign.

There has been a lot of recent communications with the Parish Council, as well as an anonymous flyer posted through letter boxes, about the location of the northern extent of Lapworth Parish Council. This is connected to a wish by some people to relocate the "speed gate" sign just ahead of The Boot to a small area of grass at Glasshouse Lane which they cite (incorrectly) as the boundary of Lapworth to ensure that the northern part of the parish is not "pushed out of Lapworth to be absorbed into West Midlands".

There is **no intention** from Warwickshire County Council, Warwick District Council or Lapworth Parish Council to move the existing parish boundary in anyway.

We consider there is no need to move the sign. Aside from the safety concerns and cost implications relating to this suggestion, there is already an existing "Lapworth please drive carefully" sign located by Sands Farm just south of the Rybrook Garage and Hockley Heath Park parish boundary.

The "speed gate" sign and road markings were put in place in April 2021 as part of a series of measures to reduce speed down to 30mph when entering the village. The location for the "speed gate" was selected after several visits by Warwickshire County Council highways staff who identified the highest risk road sections in Lapworth Parish. The hill going round the bend before the very busy Boot carpark was considered the most dangerous section and therefore top priority for a high visibility sign.

The stretch of road from the "gate" to the southern Lapworth parish boundary by Lapworth Garage is the most densely populated with many driveways, several much-used pedestrian crossing points (used by parents with pushchairs and children, dog walkers, etc), a narrow canal and railway bridge and many parked vehicles which often reduce traffic on the road to effectively one-way.

There is some confusion in the correspondence about the names of Lapworth and Kingswood particularly as the OS map shows Lapworth village as Kingswood. The village focus shifted south from the Early Medieval core around St Mary's church and expanded following construction of the canals

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and the Great Western London to Bristol Railway in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. A local station was built in 1854 with the name Kingswood but this was changed to Lapworth in 1902 to avoid confusion with another station. The village became known locally as Lapworth and this is reflected in the name of the village hall, the shop, the school and doctor's surgery.

Throughout the parish, like many other areas across the country, there are many narrow roads where pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and drivers compete to share the same space.

Speeding remains an issue despite the introduction of a 40mph limit, "reduce your speed" flashing signs, road markings, speed signs and regular speed traps near the village hall although Warwickshire statistics show accidents to be low compared to other areas of the county and therefore of low priority for action. The recent introduction of a Community Speed watch Team operated by volunteer members of the parish shows the Parish Council's commitment to help keep Lapworth as safe as it can be. Parking is a particular concern at certain times e.g., early morning and mid-afternoon outside the school, along Packwood Road and the Old Warwick Road by the shop and garage. The Parish Council have been in touch with the County Highways Department about refreshing road markings, cleaning signs, cutting back foliage and seeing what other actions are required.

A separate issue was highlighted with regards to the South Warwickshire Local Plan for the period up to 2050 is currently underway and as part of this - as in previous local plan consultations - landowners in Warwick and Stratford Districts are asked to identify possible development sites and over 500 landowners including owners in Aylesbury Road and Wharf Lane have responded. Just because a site has been put forward does not mean that it is automatically included. Sites will be rigorously assessed against national, regional and local planning policies over the next 12 months to see if they should be included in the long-term spatial strategy.

Everyone is asked to comment on the South Warwickshire Local Plan consultation document and on the sites put forward as these will shape Lapworth over the next 30 years.

Lapworth Parish Council