# Report from Ward District Councillor

# Dilys Neill.  November 2021

Our November Full Council Meeting has been postponed until 15th December in order to allow us to then enjoy our Christmas meal with officers. All our Council meetings, including planning & licensing meetings are now webcast. One item on the agenda for our next meeting will be a motion to request the DHCLG to allow more meetings to be held virtually.

Councillor Scarsbrook & I attended a “turf cutting” ceremony to mark the start of the building on the Chamberlayne House site. This was actually a photo opportunity as quite a lot of preparatory work has already been done. I was told that there haven’t been problems getting vehicles to the site though the Park residential area,& I haven’t had any complaints from residents. I have suggested to the site foreman that the developers apply for permits for the Maugersbury Rd Car park once a lot of tradespeople start work on the site. The houses should be finished by early simmer next year. They are being built to a high energy performance standard. Priority will be given to people from Stow or with a strong family or employment reason to live here. All the units will be for social rent.

I asked about Fisher House as I had heard concerned that several apartments had been left empty. I was reassured that this was because the individual units needed upgrading & there is no intention to redevelop that accommodation.

As you know, I have crossed swords with Bromford in the past & I have been working to improve relationships with them, not just with myself but with other ward members & officers. One of the crucial issues which we need to discuss is how older properties should be retrofitted to improve their energy performance. This is a relatively new specialty but crucially important to further the climate change agenda. In Cotswold District, there are a lot of listed buildings & others which while not listed contribute to the AONB. We have a “towards net zero carbon toolkit,” but I am pressing Cabinet members & our CEO to ensure that our planning officers get the training needed to understand retrofit issues. I would like to see a dedicated officer to advise on retrofit, or alternatively that the Council should engage with specialist consultants. We will be having a meeting with some of the Bromford directors to discuss how they will retrofit their properties.

I sent you the link to the SHELAA report produced a few week ago. There is virtually no land allocated in Stow at present, although other areas have had a lot of land put forward.

I continue to hear grumbling about the green waste collection. As you know, Ubico don’t have the staff or the vehicles to increase the frequency of collection or the number of bins. The green waste is processed near Swindon, so an eighty mile round trip for the vehicles. Prior to the lockdown, I was planning to look at the local composting site in South Cerney & I wonder if you would be interested in something similar in Stow.

Stow fair - the last fair went off without incident & it would be great if this could continue in the future. We will continue to have meetings of the Silver group before & after each fair. The field owners are still keen to sell the field, but this is an issue for Maugersbury Parish to consider.