People ask me what the role of a Councillor involves, and in truth its very varied. In my case my duties include being the Lead Member for Public Housing (the 5,500 properties Charnwood owns and our tenants), as well as scrutinising the work of Leicestershire County Council through my role there. The most important (and rewarding) role of a Councillor though is representing the people in our wards/divisions. If you need my help in any way please get in touch with me (contact details below).

Voter ID for elections

The Government has introduced a requirement for voters to show photo ID when voting at a polling station at some elections. This new requirement will apply for the first time in England at the local elections on Thursday 4 May 2023 and will include the borough and parish elections in Charnwood. The requirement is only for voters visiting polling stations. A list of the accepted forms of photo can be seen on Charnwood’s website: [www.charnwood.gov.uk/VoterID](http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/VoterID). Those without a suitable form of photo ID can apply for a free ID called a Voter Authority Certificate. Applications can be made online through [the Government website](https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate) or by completing a paper form (available from the website above, by emailing [electoral.services@charnwood.gov.uk](mailto:electoral.services@charnwood.gov.uk)  or by calling 01509 634546). Those who require a Voter Authority Certificate are encouraged to apply as soon as possible and the deadline to apply is 5pm on Tuesday April 25, 2023. Residents should first make sure they are registered to vote before applying.

Council waives road closure fees for coronation celebrations

Leicestershire County Council is offering free road closure applications for street parties being held to mark the Coronation of His Majesty the King later this year. The Coronation will take place on Saturday, 6th May and, across the weekend, including Monday, 8th May, there will be further opportunities for people to come together in celebration of the historic occasion.

On Sunday, 7th May 2023, the Coronation Big Lunch, at which neighbours and communities are invited to share food and fun together, will take place across the country. The council says its decision will help to support villages and communities who want to organise events. The applications for temporary traffic orders, which involve road closures if events are being held on the highway, usually cost in the region of £400 - £650.

The deadline for applications is Friday, 31 March 2023. Guidance, complete with an application form, is available at <http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/plan-an-event> or by emailing [eventsnetworkmanagement@leics.gov.uk](mailto:eventsnetworkmanagement@leics.gov.uk).

Grass overgrowing in the brook

A number of residents have contacted me regarding the amount of grass growing in the brook with concerns this could be making the flooding situation worse. I’ve worked very closely with the Parish Council and the Environment Agency (who are responsible for the brook) on this matter since it was first raised with me.

The Environment Agency’s position is that the vegetation in the brook doesn’t make the flooding worse than it otherwise would be and consequently they won’t pay for the brook to be dredged (a cost of many thousands of pounds). Myself and the Parish Council have therefore requested a site meeting with the Environment Agency to discuss exactly what we can do to remove the vegetation from the brook to allow the water to flow more freely (a number of options have been suggested, including arranging a community action day to do it and we are very keen to explore what’s possible). I will keep you all updated on this matter in future articles.

If you need my help with anything please do get in touch.

Cllr James Poland CC

Tel: 07764 966677

Email: [james.poland@leics.gov.uk](mailto:james.poland@leics.gov.uk)

Facebook: Cllr James Poland