

**Market Harborough Local Elections, May 6<sup>th</sup> 2021**  
**Candidates Statements**

Statement from Councillor Barry Champion, Conservative

My introduction to environmental issues began back in the 70's when my English teacher, Mr Porritt, gave up driving his classic Citroen into school and swapped it for a bicycle.

A little later he started to use a car again and when ribbed by classmates for dropping his values, he informed us that it used this new unleaded fuel that would change the future for motor transport. Mr Porritt was in fact Jonathan Porritt, an early prominent member of the Ecology party and Director of friends of the earth and life long environmentalist. He was also my favourite teacher, somewhat a mentor.

What that episode in life taught me, was that small changes (unleaded fuel) unheard of and virtually unobtainable at the time can bring about a complete shift in direction once it becomes readily available and useable (sold at every service station; every car sold able to use it etc.)

As an engineer, having worked for many years on the design of energy efficient products, watching the electrification of cars over the past twenty years has been a very similar experience to that of unleaded fuel. Yet again, it's not until the product is readily available and easy and convenient to use that change will take hold.

We are now at a point where new vehicles are coming on stream at a rapid pace, predominantly due to the advances in battery technology, but with range still far below that of an average fossil fuel car and a limited charging infrastructure , there is still a some way to go, but full electrification will eventually have a massive impact on reducing emissions.

So my biggest interest is in the technology and roll out of the electrification of our transport system. As such I have asked (if successful on May 6th) to be considered for the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee, where I feel I can be most effective in helping in some way to steer our community through this coming decade of rapid change.

In addition, as Chairman of the HDC Planning Committee, I have been instrumental in ensuring applications are now referenced against our climate change policies, that our enforcement teams ensure conditions relating to biodiversity and ecology are complied with and supporting renewable energy developments where suitable.

I have also asked to be considered (again if successful) for the Development Control and Regulatory Board, the LCC planning committee. This overseas public rights of way, tree preservation orders and minerals and waste, again all areas that I feel are important to be handled well as we progress to a cleaner future.