



Higham Parish Council Chair's report – May 2024

We have seen a few changes since the last annual meeting. Mike Tetley was the Chair this time last year but resigned in February and on behalf of the Parish Council I would like to thank Mike for his valuable contribution.

We also lost Jackie Meredith at the same time, which was devastating and I'm sure many of us are still feeling that loss. We marked her passing with a minute silence at the Parish Council meeting in February and a tribute was placed in the April edition of the Spout. Thank you to those who could be there to represent the Parish Council at her funeral in March and later in the Four Alls for a celebration of her life. Jackie and I joined the Parish Council around the same time. She was a friend as well as a Parish Councillor and was very committed to her Parish Council responsibilities and to the Village. I'm sure I speak for you all when I say that we miss her dearly.

I'm pleased to announce that we have been able to co-opt two new councillors: Alison Pickering and Samantha Hutchinson.

We've dealt with various planning applications over the past year. Some more contentious than others. They have included house extensions, tree felling requests and even a commercial dog walking venture. We've also been working closely with Fence Parish Council on the Planning Applications and Appeals for the Roaming Roosters site and I'd like to thank Robin Willoughby for his support in this matter.

Regarding the Pendle Local Plan, we also supported the park in becoming a designated green space and once again my thanks to Robin in arranging that for us.

Since our last annual meeting, the May Fair has taken place again as well as the Scarecrow Festival and I'd like to thank Terry for the superb work that he does to ensure that both events are a success.

The Senior Citizens party last December was one of the best that I have had the fortune to attend. Lucy always does a fabulous job, not only on the preparation but also on the night and a lot of work goes into making sure everyone has a good time. Thanks also to Terry and Patricia for keeping us well watered in the bar area!

Ian has been doing a sterling job in not only representing the Parish Council on the Village Hall Committee but on progressing the improvements to the space, not to mention the support he provides to managing the CCTV. We've had a few events take place in the Hall which have raised some much-needed funds and for which we are grateful.

We, unfortunately, did not progress to the second round of the Lancashire Best Kept Village event this year so have decided to take a year out, take stock and see if we can gather enough village support to enter next year.

We have recently rejoined the Lengthsman Scheme. There is a lot of outstanding maintenance this year though we are now hopefully steadily making our way through the list. Thanks to Terry for sorting out the Higham Sign and Threepenny Bit and to John and Ian for assessing the work that needs to be done on the field area. We were unable to get the gate repaired/replaced in time for 1st April, but plans are in place to get this resolved as soon as possible.

Richard has been continuing the work on the Biodiversity area and arranged the annual Playground inspection and subsequent report.

We are holding steady with our finances however, there is still a lot to be done before we can think about our plans for this year. We do need to continue to assess and improve the amenities of the village as best as we can, and I hope that we may be successful in getting some grant money to help us do this.

A huge thank you from me to all Parsh Councillors for all that you do to continue our important work. I know we try and give as much time as we can for the benefit of the Village in this voluntary role. There are times when you probably think it's not appreciated but you are making an important contribution and I want to acknowledge that.

Finally, thanks to Patricia in her role as Parish Council Clerk. Thank you for keeping us all on track. Not an easy task at times. You've been a good support to me personally over the last three months whilst navigating through the additional responsibility of the Chair role so thank you for everything that you do.

Kind regards

Diane Perrin
Vice Chair