

CHAIRS ANNUAL REPORT MAY 2026

Hello and welcome to my annual report. Firstly, it is with great sadness that I report the passing of Councillor Ken Mather, on 22nd October 2025, at the remarkable age of 91 years. Last year Ken gave up his position on the Parish Council after 50 years of service, first as Clerk then as a Councillor. Ken was a true gentleman in every sense of the word and it was a privilege to have known him and serve alongside of him, not only a friend, but a valued member of our Parish Council.

As Chair I would like to thank my fellow Councillors, Lloyd, Forshaw, Singh, Elphick and Woodroffe for their continued support. We are a good team and work well together on your behalf. Councillor Woodroffe has settled in nicely and made valuable contributions during his first year in post. Councillor Singh continues to maintain and update the website a task that I am more than willing to delegate to him so a special thank you to him.

We hold our meetings bi monthly on the 3rd Thursday of the month. The next meeting will be June. Please feel free to attend and we will be happy to hear your views or concerns regarding the village.

I personally must apologise for the cancellation of our Annual Christmas Pensioners Party. I had a very bad reaction to the flu vaccine and was completely incapacitated for 3 weeks. I did not have the time or the energy to do anything so the decision was made to cancel. Fingers crossed we will resume the festivities this coming year.

The play equipment on the Meadows continues to be enjoyed by both local children and the play group. It is inspected and minor repairs carried out by Councillor Elphick on a regular basis, thank you for that. Bins are provided for waste, and particularly dog waste, so please pick up and dispose of accordingly.

The Parish Council look carefully at all planning applications submitted. No new build this year.

We continue with our Best Kept Village Front Garden. Our thanks to Mr David Brown for his time and expertise, Vice Chair of Chorley in Bloom, for judging your beautiful gardens. It is a wonderful site seeing all the flowers in bloom so keep up the good work and maybe this year you are the winner!!!

Once again Story Homes have submitted an application to build houses on the former Camelot site. The first application was in 2014 then again 2016 when a steering group was formed, with the help of Chris Weetman an experienced Planning Officer, we opposed the development winning our case. The Parish Council is now faced with a new application of 350 houses on the site. Although it is in Charnock Richard this development will impact Heskin because of its location this side of the A49 and Motorway. The Parish Council have consulted with Charnock and Eccleston Parish Council's to employ Chris once again to oppose this recent application. Nothing has changed from the previous application only the number of properties. The access to this will be via Park Hall Road which is completely inadequate to accommodate such an increase in the volume of traffic. **The public enquiry will be held between the 9th and 12th of June at Chorley Town Hall.**

The fruit trees on the Town lane field are in full bloom and hopefully will yield a good crop, weather permitting. Please feel free to help yourself when the fruit is ready in autumn.

The Parish Council have successfully pressed for a Speed Indicator Device on Wood Lane to slow down the traffic approaching Withington Lane. We are grateful to the Borough Councillors and Chorley Council for providing the funding.

The Village Hall is an important facility in our village. It is independent run by a dedicated Committee and is in constant use. Thanks to Councillor Singh who obtained a substantial grant for solar panels, already in place, and improvement for the front of the hall to be completed in the near future.

I would like to wish John Wane, one of our length's men, all the best in his retirement. John Wane and John Donald have kept our village clean and tidy in all weather for many years. Thank you on behalf of the Councillors and residents. We have appointed Mr Roger Scovell to replace John so if you see him around the village don't forget to say hello.

The Parish Precept was kept at the same level as last year. We continue to maintain a healthy budget of around £3,000 for any unforeseen circumstances that may occur.

A big thank you on behalf of myself and fellow Councillors goes to our Clerk, Alan Whittaker. Alan has been a valued member of the Parish Council for the past 50 years. His commitment, dedication and experience in all things related to his position is to be commended. Alan is adept at liaising with various agencies and sourcing best value for the Council. His door is always open for anyone who is seeking help or advice, be it Council related or personal.

Last but by no means least I would like to thank you, our residents, on behalf of the Parish Council for your support of the position we hold. We are here to help with any of your concerns and will continue to serve you to the best of our ability for the year ahead. Remember we are only a phone call away or you can get in touch via our website.