

# Little Stanney & District Parish Council

www.littlestanney-pc.gov.uk

## Chairman's Report for the year 2014-15



Councillor Roy Greenwood (Chairman)  
Councillor David Astbury  
Councillor Linda Carter  
Councillor Paul Carter  
Councillor John Glazzard (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor John Jones  
Councillor Clive Lipscombe  
Councillor Peter Mountford  
Councillor Judith Thomas  
Pauline English (Parish Clerk)

**Meetings and Councillors:** At the meeting on 27 May 2014 I was elected Chairman and Councillor John Glazzard was elected Vice-Chairman for the year. For 2014-15 the Parish Council decided to hold meetings every month (except December) starting in April and this has made more time to deal with issues. The meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday in the month, at 7.30pm in Little Stanney Village Hall. We were pleased to welcome back Councillor Chris Dilworth who replaced Councillor Ken Whitehouse following his resignation due to ill health, but saddened by the death of Councillor Martin Roberts in January 2015. Martin had been a Councillor for many years and we will miss his presence at meetings.

**Finance:** We increased the precept to £7,000 in 2014-15 to enable us to continue to employ our Amenity Cleaner and to continue to ensure that we have sufficient reserves, especially now that we will have to make a contribution towards the cost of holding elections, yet another cost passed down to us by Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC). Our internal auditor, Wellfield Accounting Services, completed the audit of the Parish Council's accounts for 2013-14 in May and we subsequently received a clean report from our external auditors, BDO, following submission of the Annual Return. The internal audit for 2014-15 has just been completed with no issues being raised.

**Amenity Cleaning:** Graham Povey continues to provide us with an excellent service and fills every moment of his 10 hours a week. Our CWaC Ward Councillor, Graham Heatley, has provided us with a grant towards our costs for the past four years, which is most welcome. We must hope this continues after the forthcoming election. Not only does Graham collect rubbish from our streets and grass verges, often clearing up after the regular weekly refuse collection vehicles, he reports fly-tipping and other problems to CWaC by phone immediately he sees them and generally keeps an eye on the condition of the villages. He is definitely an asset we would find difficult to replace. One of our biggest ongoing problems is litter dropped by people who have visited the fast food outlets on Cheshire Oaks.

**Playing Field:** Following the annual inspection of the play equipment we were told that one item was getting to the point where it would be unsafe to use and that we should consider replacement in the immediate future. The cost of a new unit will be around £10,000 and we are looking for grant to help meet this cost. We eventually managed to make contact with Sanctuary Housing and the hedges around their site on Croughton Road were cut back, although the fences to the rear of their properties in Bunbury Close, which we were told would be repaired in March have still not been mended.

**Nature Park:** A new picnic bench was installed in April, funded by Ward Councillor Graham Heatley, after the existing bench was vandalised. The new one is metal and should be capable of withstanding any attempts to destroy it. There was some recurrence of the drugs activity reported last year, which we have reported to the police to enable them to keep an eye on the site. The perimeter hedge has been kept low so the site is visible from the road.

**Planning:** The Parish Council was consulted on 15 householder planning applications throughout the year, 14 of which were approved by Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC). The other application was withdrawn. We were also consulted, as a neighbouring authority, on a number of applications on the Ince Marshes site in Elton, to which we had no objections.

As Chairman I represent the Parish Council on the Ince Park Community Forum (organised by Peel Holdings) and attended a number of meetings throughout the year. Following the withdrawal of Covanta from the Biomass project last year, agreement has been reached with another partner, Northern Bio Power. Babcock Wilcox Volund are now the partners in the Energy from Waste Facility.

**Highways:** Several discussions were held during the year about the problems being faced by motorists using Junction 10 and the Cheshire Oaks traffic lights and by residents in Stanney Lane who had to put up with vehicles u-turning in the road or using their driveways to turn around, having missed the right turn at the traffic lights. In March we had a discussion with Kristian Marsh from the Highways Agency and Kieran Collins, Area Highways Manager CWaC. Councillor Justin Madders also attended the meeting and there was representation from the local community. The main aim of the current system is to ensure that traffic does not back up on the M53 slip road. Any changes to the system will have to ensure that this aim is not compromised, and cost will have to be factored in.

The handrail leading from the Canal Bridge to the towpath at Stoak was again found to be loose. The Parish Council commissioned its repair and were reimbursed by CWaC.

The A5117 from the A540 to Elton has now been named Dunkirk Way, Strawberry Way West, Strawberry Way East, Old Farm Way and Hill View Way which should make it easier for emergency vehicles and SatNav users. The road from the Strawberry roundabout through to the A41 at Backford now has its former name of Whitby Lane fully restored.

It was agreed with CWaC that double yellow lines would be painted around the drop-off area outside the Old School House on the A5117 to stop people from using it as a lay-by. Vehicles parked in the drop-off area restrict visibility for vehicles pulling out of Little Stanney Lane, which is already a difficult junction. Unfortunately the lines were painted at the front of the drop-off rather than the back and even the police didn't realise that double yellow lines restrict parking both in front of and behind them, so they used the drop-off for their observation vehicles. An apology was received and a lesson was learned about

We are waiting for the public consultation to start in relation to the proposed speed limits for Rake Lane and Wervin Road, which will be undertaken by CWaC.

**Public Rights of Way:** Following a site visit last year with Pete Atkinson a bollard has been inserted into the entrance to the bridleway at Stoak to try to prevent fly-tipping. Other requests are being considered but as Public Rights of Way do not have a budget, Pete is constantly trying to find money from somewhere to get any work done.

**Communications:** The Parish Council's website, [www.littlestanney-pc.gov.uk](http://www.littlestanney-pc.gov.uk), has been live for a year now. Any suggestions are always welcome from residents about improving its content. All of the parishes except Stoak should now be superfast broadband enabled. There is no news about when Stoak will be enabled.

**Police and Fire:** Our Beat Officer, Kevin Ross, has now left Mickle Trafford for another area and we are awaiting our new Beat Officer. Our PCSO Lyam Beddows also moved on during the year and we have a new PCSO, Jake Connolly, who we have not yet met. We receive regular written updates and the Police hold a regular surgery in Little Stanney Village Hall which is advertised on our website. Anyone can call in for a chat. We were consulted on Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service's draft 5-year Strategy.

**Cheshire West and Chester:** During the year CWaC consulted the Parish Council on a number of issues including the draft Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two), Changes to Podiatry Services, the Domestic Abuse Strategy and Homeless Strategy. The Parish Council responded to some consultations and noted others. The Community Governance Review of the parished areas was concluded early this year in time for the elections in May. We have no further information about the review of the non-parished areas, which are of interest to the Parish Council in that we are hoping to gain a small amount of land from Ellesmere Port.

**Membership of Associations:** The Parish Council continues to be a member of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils, Cheshire Community Action and the Cheshire Playing Fields Association.

Roy Greenwood  
Chairman, Little Stanney & District Parish Council  
April 2015