

RUSHTON PARISH COUNCIL
Annual Parish Meeting – 2024/2025
Held Tuesday 20th May 2025

Chairman's Annual Report

Please note that the official Annual Report will be posted on the Parish Website

Cllr. Emma Leslie - Chairman, presented the annual report.

It is with great pleasure that I present this year's Chairman's Annual Report on behalf of the Parish Council. This past year has been rewarding, as we have continued to serve our community with commitment and care. The report outlines the key activities, achievements, and issues the council has addressed over the past twelve months, as well as our ongoing projects and future plans.

Throughout the year, we have worked closely with residents, local organisations, and other tiers of government to ensure that the needs and priorities of our parish are represented and supported. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow councillors, our parish clerk, and all those who have contributed their time and energy to making our community a better place.

This report reflects not only our work as a council but also the strength and resilience of our community and in particular working groups. I hope you find it informative and a helpful overview of the council's progress and aspirations for the year ahead.

Communications

- The website has continued to be developed by Parish Clerk, Lindsey Worrall.
- The Parish Newsletter continues to go out quarterly to the Parish. This year it continued via email, and a smaller number of printed copies. Mike Wilson continues to take on this role brilliantly with the aid of one of our newly appointed councillors, Paul Chrisp. We are still looking for a volunteer to take this on. The Parish Council has bought a printer alongside the Jessie Hughes to aid in printing this communication.
- Parish Publicity Officer Mike Wilson continued to produce communication content for the Jessie Hughes Village Hall and Parish Council along with producing content for the Parish Newsletter.
- Facebook – our Facebook page continues to be used and is picking up more followers weekly. Parish councillors Oliga Vertija and Emma Leslie continue to maintain the page.

Environment and Development

- The initiative of co-ordinating hedge cutting for residents on busy roads was offered again, co-ordinated by Mike Wilson and Eddie Shaw.
- Oulton Mill Picnic Area continues to be well maintained, well used, and well visited by local residents and those further afield. Local resident Nick Raynor has continued to support with grass cutting and Councillor Eddie Shaw with hedge cutting along with members of the community who also supported with the maintenance and upkeep of the site. We'd like to

thank the mystery bird feeder and also working groups who rotate up keep of the site. This following year we will be planting more fruit trees and pruning back where necessary to ensure the area stays maintainable.

- Our Ward Councillor, Charles Hardy has spent another year helping to keep the Parish on the agenda of CWAC departments. Our thanks to Charles for his continuing support of items concerning our Parish and representing our interests at a CWAC level.
- The leaf collection on the village green was repeated this year, supported by a large number of volunteers, 25 in total who turned out for this yearly event which really helps with the surrounding area – our thanks to all those that participated, it really does make a huge difference to the village at that time of year.
- Mary Wilson continued for another year as “litter picker co-ordinator” and the Council would like to again thank all volunteers who continue to work to keep the Parish tidy and free from litter.
- Road sign cleaning, a great team has been put together to keep our entrance signs looking clean along with maintaining the newly planted flowers around them, huge thanks to everyone involved.

Road Safety

The following activities have continued this year:

- Speeding – the efforts of previous years continue to pay dividends though we continue to monitor the situation through resident reports and VAS data. The newly repositioned VAS on lower lane is now taking readings again and is being monitored by Parish Councillor Graham Sime to ensure it runs smoothly.
- 20mph speed limits – The 20 mph signs have now been correctly positioned within the village and we continue to work with highways to ensure that all signage is facing the right way within the parish.
- Entrances to the Village – The Parish Council, lead by Emma Leslie has been working hard to get the village sign funding secured by United Utilities now a design and installer has been decided on. We are still waiting on confirmation on the level of funding and hope to have this soon. We continue to push hard to get this achieved knowing the positive impact it will have on our parish.
- Resurfacing – numerous areas around the village have now been resurfaced and pot holes have been identified and worked on by highways. The state of our highways remains high up on the agenda this following year.
- Highways volunteer scheme – The Parish Council have been working with CWAC as they launch their ‘highways volunteer scheme’, which takes specific pre agreed jobs within the parish that they believe can be carried out safely by residents. The list of jobs include, sign cleaning, weed clearance, hedge cutting etc .The scheme is in its infancy at present and we plan to work closely with them over the coming year.
- Road markings – Emma Leslie has been working closely with representatives from UU who are keen to give back to the village following the extensive work that has been going on in the area over the past years. United Utilities have agreed to refresh road markings around the village, in particular concentrating on the villages entrance points. This work is set to take place once all their works are finished. A great result for the village and our road safety.

Community, Youth and Social Activities

- Remembrance Day – A strong number of local residents gathered at the Cross to remember those who have lost their lives in conflict. This year, Reverend Jim again led a short service at The Cross where wreaths were laid and children from the village read out the names of villagers who lost their lives in the two world wars. Thanks to everyone who took part.
- The Annual Village Golf Day was again held this year.
- The Play Zone and MUGA has continued to be a popular and attractive part of our Village that is also enjoyed by the pupils of Eaton Primary School. The amazing team of 52 helpers continue to support the facility along with Mike and Mary Wilson and Councillor Olga Vertija. Crucial work has been carried out in 2025 to ensure the safety of all who use it. Many thanks to all involved in keeping this fantastic village area usable.
- Collaboration with the Village Hall – continued this year – thanks to the Village Hall and its committee members.
- Women's Institute Celebrate Milestone – Following the 100th Birthday of the Eaton Women's Institute last year, it's great to see the group going stronger than ever.

Finances

With increasing financial needs due to increases in costs of maintenance of key facilities like the Playzone, MUGA, Picnic Area, and Village Green, along with a macro backdrop of high inflation, it was again decided to raise the precept in this financial year. The accounts are shown at the AGM which follows this meeting.

United Utilities work on Supply Pipes

The United Utilities project to reline the old (1890) water pipes supplying many Northwest towns from the Vyrnwy reservoir continued the work in the Parish this year and is expected to now be completed this coming year. Please keep an eye out on their portal for any updates.

Projects for next year

Our priorities this year will be to ensure the agreed highways works with United Utilities are carried out along with the new improved village entrance signage. We will continue to work with highways on maintaining our highways with their appearance, pot holes and the correct signage.

Our village green is at the top of our priority list to get the flooding looked into. Investigations have taken place over the last few months and the correct contractor will now be appointed.

Community Spirit - Help & Volunteers

Finally, and most importantly, without the help and support of all the volunteers who contribute so much of their time (including Parish Councillors in they are volunteers themselves) we would not have the sense of community we do, so once again a huge thank you to everyone who gives up their time to help others in this community. We would not be able to achieve anything without this support and the Parish would not be such a lovely place to live.