

Chairman's Annual Report Upto 31st March 2019

First of all thank you to all the Parish Councillors who have supported me in the last 12 months. Attendance by all our Parish Councillors at our quarterly meetings has been excellent and we are sharing activities between us a little more now which is great to see. Local participation in our meetings remain very poor and we are grateful for those that do attend. However, I have some comfort that we are hearing many views of local people by our growing awareness in the local community and I have personally had numerous discussions with local people while out and about in Rivington.

Once again may I thank Kim Snape our local Councillor for her continued support and United Utilities for its quarterly updates.

Over the last 12 months we have seen some significant events within the Parish with some making the national news. The "Winter Hill fires" of 2018 were devastating for the natural moorland and were on an unprecedented scale. During these fires contact was made with our local MP Sir Lindsay Hoyle, who provided some updates with how the wild fire was being managed. Following the fire it is pleasing to see that a multi agency group was established to help agree how the moorlands would be recovered although this could take upto 10years due the peat damage.

The Rivington Heritage Trust have continued to make substantial progress on renovating the Terraced Gardens with an overwhelming positive response from the general public and unprecedented volunteering. Various events are happening throughout the year with some major events such as the "festival of light", the "big thankyou" and "a taste of Rivington". These events provide excellent opportunities for leisure activities both locally and beyond. The overwhelming success of the project is clearly leading to an increased volume of people and traffic in and around the Parish which is causing some concern which needs some careful thought and as a Parish Council we will look to engage with key stakeholders such as Chorley Council, Lancashire County Council, United Utilities and Rivington Heritage Trust on how this growing demand can be managed sympathetically in the future. Rivington has always been popular as a tourist destination but is becoming a "honey pot" location these days which puts increased pressure on the village and its residents.

Increasing the visibility of what we do and how we serve the local community is a critical element of the Parish Council and it is really positive to see that we are very close to having an excellent website finally launched. While this has taken much longer than anticipated it will be a critical addition to the Parish Council and how it makes available information to both local residents and interested parties.

Our links with our neighbours, local community and other stakeholders remains positive. Increased dialogue has occurred with both Rivington Unitarian Chapel where we have been discussing Village Green works and Rivington Parish Church who have offered to help with the planned information board on the Village Green.

The greatest personal disappointment through the year has been the lack of progress to the works on the Village Green. This has been the result of two separate contractors both quoting for works at different times and then subsequently declining to undertake the works once

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requested. We are therefore for a third time looking to engage an alternative contractor to undertake these works for which we have available funds set aside and committed to improving the village green. As part of our Village Green plans we have developed and agreed a three year plan that will be made available on the Parish Council website in due course.

To conclude this annual report I would like to take the opportunity to finish on a high. The Rivington Village Green Fete held in May 2018 was a great success with over half a dozen stall holders participating including both individuals and local groups such as Chorley Lions and Rivington Heritage Trust. Once again may I personally thank our fellow Councillor, Vince McCully for taking the lead on this and making it such a success and we all look forward to the May 2019 festival which is set to grow again. We hope this May fete becomes a key event in Rivington for many years to come.

I would like to finish with formally thanking my fellow Parish Councillors and clerk over these last 12 months, Mr Barry Keenan, Mr David Jones, Mr Trevor James-Ellett, Mrs Lynne Berry, Mrs Olive Fisher and Mr Rob Wilson our Deputy Chair for their commitment and participation throughout the year.

As we move into 2019 I am looking forward with increased optimism to the future and I would be delighted to continue as Chairman of the Parish Council with your support.

Steven Jones

Rivington Parish Council Chairman