

## Chairman's Report to Antrobus Parish Council May 2025

After a period of little variation in the personnel of the parish council, the year began with a number of changes;

Following her completion of two years in office, former Chair Carol Bailey stood down & subsequently resigned her position as a councillor. Also for business and personal reasons, Councillors Steve Rigby and Helen Vanek left the council.

Thanks were formally recorded to all of them for their contributions on behalf of residents of the village.

I was appointed to a second term as Chairman, Helen Metcalfe became Vice Chair and as a result of the above resignations, Jon Bloor, Mark Walsh and Lorna Pateralos were co-opted on to the council.

As a consequence of numerous flooding events which have had serious implications for some residents in the village, Antrobus Parish Council (APC) had previously instigated the formation of a "rapid reaction flood team" whose role is self explanatory. The concept of this was first introduced by CWAC following severe flooding events in the Northwich area. Not for the first time, Antrobus has been rather ahead of the game in setting up their group which was called into action during heavy wet spells at the beginning of 2024. Thanks to all responders was recorded at the time and those thanks are repeated here.

Proactive investigation by members of the team resulted in CWAC Highways initially investigating and subsequently clearing tangled roots which were obstructing a road drain near the village centre.

Ironically, despite Antrobus having been designated by CWAC as a specific "at risk from flooding" location, we continue to await the report from the 2021 survey carried out by CWACs own appointed consultant!

The Community Right To Build Order (supporting the application from Antrobus CIO / Village Hall to build a replacement shop & tearoom) being driven by APC stalled and ultimately was suspended because of administrative issues raised by CWAC.

The Village Hall has continued with a conventional planning application and other than being a statutory consultee, the Parish Council anticipates no further role in the process.

The "regular" Parish Council business of issues of highways & planning continues.

CWAC acknowledge that with highways related costs estimated £19.5 million but a budget limited to approximately 20% of that figure, action will be principally reactive rather than proactive.

Repeated reporting of defects, either on line or through CWACs "Report It" app does have some rewards & all residents are encouraged to take the opportunity to flag problems in their area.

Specific issues raised by APC with CWAC have included:

need to repaint road markings outside Antrobus St Marks Primary School

condition of pavements in The Old Orchard and Knutsford Rd

repeated contacts in connection with road surface & ongoing flooding of Gibb Hill

APC receives notice of all planning applications in the parish and comments accordingly. Responses are made with the attempt to be consistent and within guidelines as currently understood.

After a post pandemic backlog in CWAC's planning department, there does appear to have been recent improvement in response times although targets are often not met. Occasionally and when appropriate, local issues brought to the attention of APC have been addressed with a "quiet word or request" prior to consideration of more formal action. In the event of non compliance or obvious failure to follow correct procedure, involvement of CWACs planning enforcement officer follows.

Engagement with bus companies serving Antrobus has resulted in a more regular service through the centre of the village which will hopefully benefit the majority of users.

Other activities or projects undertaken by APC during this year have included:

Providing funding for Antrobus Village News, St Marks Primary School, provision of replacement playground slide, continuation of the Warm Space initiative.

Monitoring allocation of dwellings in Manley Close in line with agreed eligibility criteria

Regular maintenance checks on playground and defibrillator

Coordination of a village spring clean event

Updates to the Community Emergency Response contacts document

APC continues to be well represented by our Ward Councillors who have kept us informed of developments including the devolution of our local councils (CWAC, Cheshire East & Warrington) which is timetabled for 2026, and boundary changes of the Tatton Ward, which now additionally includes Lymm, Sutton Weaver, Dutton & Ashley.

After serving as Clerk to APC since 2012, in November Mr Simon Palmer announced his intention to retire. His final attendance at a meeting was in February, when formal thanks were recorded and a token of appreciation was presented.

Simon has kindly supported the initial induction of his successor, Lucy Merry, who was appointed following a selection process carried out by appointed councillors.

Lucy's employment commenced in January 2025

Finally and in a similar vein, in April, Councillor Paul Harrison announced his intention to stand down from the parish council. As a long standing member, including in the position of Chairman between 2013 and 2014, Paul's extensive contribution was noted and thanks recorded.

Simon Batey  
Chairman APC  
May 2025