

WRIGHTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH REPORT 2026

1. PARISH COUNCIL Chairman and Vice-Chairman

At the Meeting of the Council held on 19th May 2025 Councillor Ms K Jukes was elected as Chairman of the Parish Council for the year 2025/2026, and Councillor Mrs J Burton was elected Vice-Chairman.

2. PARISH COUNCILLORS and CLERK/RFO

At May 2025, Wrightington Parish Councillors were:-

APPLEY BRIDGE

Mrs K Jukes	68 Appley Lane North, Appley Bridge.
Mr H Carey	1, Appley Close, Appley Bridge, Wigan
Ms S.Roberts	70 Appley Lane North Appley Bridge
Mrs H Kelsall	72 Appley Lane North Appley Bridge

MOSSY LEA

Mrs Judith Burton	2 Courage Low Lane, Wrightington.
Mr F Johnson	351 Mossy Lea Road, Wrightington.
Ms A. Fletcher	102, Appley Lane North, Appley Bridge
Mr I. Burton	2 Courage Low Lane , Wrightington

The Parish Council began the year with 8 members. During the year there were 2 resignations, Councillor Johnson from the Mossy Lea Ward and Councillor Carey from the Appley Bridge Ward. Following the appropriate advertisement of the vacancies the Parish Council welcomed Councillor Carey back on the Council and Councillor H Ainscough onto the Parish Council as a newly co-opted Mossy Lea Ward Councillor. The Council now has its full complement of 8 Councillors The Parish Council and Councillors continued to work throughout the year with Borough Councillor Mrs Jukes, Borough Councillor Bailey, Borough Councillor Whittington

3. FINANCE & PROCEDURE

All advisory, informative and procedural documentation used by the Parish Council were reviewed, amended and approved as required during 2025/6 ready for acceptance or approval at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council later tonight. The Parish Council reviewed its own Standing Orders for the direction of Parish Council business going forward on 17th November 2025

Following the Budget Meeting in January 2026 it was determined that the Parish Precept requirement for 2026/27 would be held at £22,300.00, same as the previous year. No mean achievement in these troubled times which will no doubt be greatly appreciated by Parishioners

The Parish Council accounts for the year ending 31 March 2025 were approved at the June 2025 Parish Council Meeting and were audited by the internal auditor, followed by the external auditors PKF Littlejohn, with no matter arising requiring action. The Council has taken all the action necessary throughout the course of the year to satisfy audit requirements prior to the submission of the end of year financial report to the external auditors.

The Councils Financial Statement for the year ending 31 March 2026 will be approved at the May Parish Council Meeting to follow.

The Council has finally managed to move from the Nat West to online Banking with Unity Trust Bank so bank reconciliations can now be done monthly and payments made by BACS transfer. This development combined with Councils new accounting package SCRIBE has greatly improved the production of reports and Government returns almost at the push of a button and will greatly

facilitate budget monitoring. Council however does need to review the Bank mandate arrangements which are not functioning satisfactorily

The Website continues to function well, is confirmed as compliant and fully operational at wrightington-pc.gov.uk and can be used to contact the Clerk on clerk@wrightington-pc.gov.uk. All Council enquiries to the Clerk in the first instance please.

Over the course of the Parish Council year, it has again become apparent that the needs, problems and issues in the 2 wards which join together to form the Parish of Wrightington, are very different and continue to be a source of disagreement amongst Councillors. It is evident that a disproportionate amount of time in Meetings is still often given over to the discussion of Quarry related issues in Appley Bridge, mitigating against the progress of other matters requiring attention. Council needs to conduct its business in a more constructive and businesslike manner with debate being limited and compliance with rules as laid down by legislation which are identification of a specific issue , debate , propose and second a motion and then vote on it and move on to the next item requiring a decision.

Voting Procedures. It should be understood that no one Councillor can make a decision which is binding on the Council as a whole. Voting , following a motion being proposed and seconded, shall be made by a show of hands unless otherwise called and in the event of a split decision the majority shall prevail in which case the decision is binding .ALL Councillors are responsible for the decision jointly and severally unless a recorded vote is called for in which case the way in which each Councillor voted and their name must be recorded in the Minutes and displayed appropriately. There can be no exceptions to this rule which is enshrined in the Local Government Act 1972 and must be adhered to ensure a vote is legal and part of the democratic process and openness and transparency

4. PLANNING

The Parish Council is notified of all planning applications within the Parish and can submit comments, observations and objections when necessary. The Parish Council, however, has no power of direction or decision making in these matters.

Numerous Planning Applications have been received by the Parish Council during the year and have been dealt with in accordance with the Council's powers and it continues to do so.

The Borough Council does not have to notify neighbours when a planning application is submitted to them, therefore in cases where adjoining occupiers, or others affected by applications, become aware of proposed developments it is always advisable for them to submit observations and objections directly.

Parish Councillors and members of the public can access all planning applications by logging onto the West Lancashire Borough Council website, inputting the planning application number or address of the property. Maps, plans and associated documents can be viewed and comments, objections and observations submitted online.

5. PARISH COUNCIL ACTIVITY

The Parish Council is the first tier in the democratic structure of Local Government. The following are some of the areas in which Wrightington Parish Council have been involved during the past year. This may change depending on the outcome of the pending Local Government Reorganisation, but it is 99% certain that Parish Councils will continue to exist and be the first tier of local government within their communities and it is likely that they will play an even greater role in servicing their communities as other Authorities become more remote

POLICING

PCSO Neil Smith remains responsible for Policing Wrightington, Parbold, Hilldale, Bispham, Dalton, Newburgh, and sometimes beyond when the need requires. Due to the extensive geographical area to be covered, Policing is difficult and Police visibility minimal.

VILLAGE HALLS

Fire detection and security at the village halls is monitored and checked annually. Electrical safety certificates have been renewed, and gas safety certificates issued, at both village halls in 2025/6.

SMART gas meters have been installed at both village halls.

APPLEY BRIDGE – The high standards of grounds maintenance and planting at the village hall has continued again this year and has resulted in the hall being booked for children's parties and family gatherings as well as the normal weekly activities which occur such as Motown Aerobics, Pilates, children's and adult's martial arts classes, WI, Brass Band rehearsals and Yoga and Wellbeing classes are now established. Residents and participants in the Remembrance Day Service at the War Memorial on Appley Lane North again returned to the Village Hall for refreshments afterwards. The potholes in the car park have been repaired, Repairs to the roof have been carried out and the gutters cleaned out

A video entry system appears to work well adding to the security of all users. A new kitchen has been installed to everyone's satisfaction and the toilets have been renovated and an outdoor Book Exchanged Library installed. All from reserves and at no additional cost to Parishioners

The cellar has been cleared though its future use is still to be decided

MOSSY LEA – Similar high standards of planting at the village hall has continued again this year. Coffee Mornings, supported by the Parish Council and providing an amenity in the Parish continue to take place once a month in the village hall. The Church of God continue their weekly meetings in the hall on most Saturdays in the year. There are now several sewing type classes delivered in the hall most months, with the Crafty Ladies meeting in the hall 2 Fridays each month and a regular Wednesday evening Yoga class is now well established.

Council approval for the installation of Patio Doors to the rear of Hall was originally given and subsequently withdrawn on a split vote on the basis of lack of need despite the Hall running at almost capacity as regards use

Both the Ladies and Gents toilets have been refurbished and further refurbishment is planned

Both village halls were used for the Borough Council elections in 2026.

Planting of the baskets on the railings has been undertaken at both village halls and a Christmas Tree was again erected outside Appley Bridge Village Hall in December.

HIGHWAYS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Additional reports of potholes, blocked gullies, flooding, poor road sweeping and inadequate grass cutting, and over hanging trees have been reported throughout the year as they have arisen.

Speeding vehicles on Moss Lane, Courage Low Lane, Toogood Lane, Church Lane, Mossy Lea Road, Moss Lane and Appley Lane North and South, have again been reported repeatedly throughout the year to the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership and the Police, sadly to little avail.

Illegal Parking on the main road outside Fairy Glen is proving problematic and damaging the grass verges particularly at weekends . Blocked drains cause flooding and hazardous conditions both to pedestrians and motorists when it rains. The Parish Council continues to report these issues

The Parish Council continue to support and monitor the 6 public defibrillators in the Parish, all of which are functional and, on The Circuit, which is the database where all publicly accessible defibrillators are recorded, kept by North West Ambulance. The 6 locations are as follows: Mossy Lea Village Hall, Mossy Lea Road. The Pensioners Hall, Chisnall Avenue, Mossy Lea. Sharrocks, Mossy Lea Road. Appley Bridge Village Hall, Appley Lane North. Maria Costello, Hall Lane, Appley Bridge and The Boathouse, Mill Lane, Appley Bridge.

West Lancs Planning is due to contact all residents including the Council regarding issues with both East and West Quarry relating to possible breaches of planning, permitted development, enforcement action and stop notices,

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Council has dealt with a considerable volume and variety of business during the past year including complaints from members of the public about various matters.

Any resident who requires help or advice on any problem affecting the area is welcome to bring it to the attention of the Parish Council either through a Parish Councillor, the Clerk to the Council or at Open Forum which is held at the beginning of each Parish Council Meeting.

The Council continues to be as active as possible in accordance with its statutory responsibilities and with your help will continue to be the focal point for our Communities and I commend this report to the Meeting

Mr J Ashurst
The Clerk/RFO to the Wrightington Parish Council
18th May 2026