

Henbury Parish Council Chair Report 2026

The Parish Council consists of Five councillors which is below the number Cheshire East recommends of Seven.

The Council met throughout the year at Henbury Church Hall on a regular bimonthly basis with all meetings open to the Public. Ward Councillor Lesley Smetham attends our meetings and provides regular updates to the council of information considered pertinent to the good running of the council.

In my first year as Chair of the Parish Council I would like to put on record my thanks to David Nuttall for his sterling work as the previous Chair. David continues to assist with the running of the parish Council and his support is most welcome.

This year we were saddened by the passing of Councillor Janet Bayley who had served on the Parish Council for many years. Janet brought a wealth of knowledge to the council with her experience of living in the more rural aspect of the Parish. Janet will be a great loss to the council, but I am delighted that her daughter Melanie Bayley has joined the Parish Council and will continue the family legacy of active involvement with the Council.

Cheshire East financial issues continue to impact local services with further reductions in the services they provide. The council has increasingly taken on services such as road gritting, in winter, remedial tree works and general improvements to the infrastructure. The footpath to Whirley is a good example of where Cil resources have been used to improve this vital footpath linking local schools to the village.

The precept remains in line with other communities and despite the loss of some 48 properties the council was able to limit the precept increase whilst maintaining strong reserves that will be added to Cil monies to fund improvements that would otherwise not be forthcoming. It is important to note that unlike council tax the local precept is spent on our community and wherever possible uses the services of locally based contractors.

Councillor Simon Browne continues his excellent environmental projects in most cases funded by support from local landowners and community backed funding. This work would not be possible without the support of the many volunteers who come forwards in all weathers to increase the hedgerows and more throughout the Parish.

We continue to endeavour to resolve the ongoing flooding issue on Church Lane. I would like to thank David Nuttall for his continued attention to this matter and thank our ward councillor, Lesley Smetham for endeavouring to find a long-term solution to the issue.

Planning remains a contentious issue. The Parish Council recognise the need to build more houses but remain of the view that future large-scale developments that favour the mass house builder is not in the interests of Henbury residents. The old Flora site will soon offer 16 new houses of mixed use which when added to other recent developments on Andertons Lane and Rough Hays shows that Henbury has accommodate more than its fair share of new properties.

The Peak cluster pipeline route is a concern to the Parish Council as it is to neighbouring councils and Cheshire East. We continue to follow the application process with interest but recognise that this ultimately will be a Central Government decision with little recognition of the impact on the community.

In closing I would like to thank Sue Loxham for her service as clerk to the council. Recently revised audit requirement and an ongoing review to the Henbury online website are just some of the ongoing projects to be managed effectively.

Michael Wood

Chair
Henbury Parish Council.