

## Rowton Parish Council – Chair’s Annual Report 2022/23

The year began with the shadow of the Covid Pandemic still in the background. I am glad to say that we are now back to the normal format for our meetings.

Despite the Pandemic, which still rumbles on in the background, it has been a busy year for the Parish Council. Some of the key issues are highlighted below.

### Planning

The Land at Woodbank which has access to the A41, is still causing concern but as the land is in Christleton the Parish Council is keeping a watching brief as any development will affect residence of Rowton.

The other planning application that continues to cause some concern to residents and the Parish Council is the land adjacent to the Drift. The request is to erect a two-storey block of four affordable one-bedroom apartments. – Objection has been submitted on the basis of concerns about the exit to the property being too close to the A41 and flooding/drainage issues (see next section). A decision is still awaited.

### Flooding in and around Moor Lane.

#### **Highways**

This was by far the most serious issue dealt with by the Parish Council in 2021/2022, involving raw sewage in front and back gardens as well as on the pavement in Moor Lane. The problem was exacerbated by the kerb being too low which results in water flooding the pavement and residents flushing wet wipes down the drain causing blockages.

The level of the kerb has been raised and the pavement tarmaced. It has since rained substantially and there was no flooding. No more action as issue resolved. This improvement will affect the Planning Application for erection of a 2-storey block of 4x1 bedroom apartments and overload to the drainage system. To date we are still waiting for a response from Wastewater Developer Services from United Utilities.

On a positive note, it has been confirmed that the Average Speed Cameras are to be installed on the A41. Our understanding at the moment is that these cameras will be in operation between the Sainsburys Roundabout and the Black Dog pub. The timetable for installation is not yet clear.

### Japanese Knotweed – Clay Pitts Lane

The presence of Knotweed was referred to in the last Chairman’s report. As at the time of writing it would appear that it is under controlled but is still being monitored.

### Litter Picking

A litter picking event took place on 29<sup>th</sup> April and several bags of litter were used to clean up the village in time for the Coronation Celebration on the Green.

## Community Events

Heritage Walk—Sunday 16 October Local Historian David Cummings led the walk which started on the Village Green. He talked about those with links to Rowton who served in the 1914/18 War. Many of their names are commemorated locally. He emphasised that there was fun as well as dark times, describing one of the soldiers arranging a bar and entertainments near the Front Line. The tour included walking the canal tow-path from Rowton Bridge to Waverton, including the Boundary Stone. The boundary has been 'Beaten' every 10 years since the Civil War in 1652. Altogether, a very enjoyable 2 hours was spent hearing about some of the history of Rowton and the surrounding villages. The walk finished at the Methodist Church, Moor Lane for a well-deserved cup of tea, sandwich, and slice of cake!

Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee --To commemorate this momentous occasion the Parish Council installed an inscribed brass plaque on the Memorial stone on the Village Green. We along with the whole nation were deeply saddened at her passing and reflect on the fact that she only ever practiced the most noble values - duty, service, grace, honour - which she came to personify.

The Parish Council is also organising a Coronation Party on 8<sup>th</sup> May, on the village green, to celebrate the crowning of King Charles 111

## Parish Precept for 2023/24

Last year the Parish Precept was reduced by 15.8% but due to the change in economic circumstances it has been necessary to increase the Precept for this year by 11% to maintain the necessary level of reserves.

## Carols on the Green

The annual Carols on the Green was once again a great success with increased numbers of attendees. I would like to thank Michael Smythe for leading the singing with such expertise.

Finally, I would like to give my thanks to our Clerk, Christine, without whose hard work and expertise the Parish Council would not be able to function.

Cllr Howard Hopwood  
Chair - 2022/23