

# The Parish Council Of Lower Peover

Comprising

Nether Peover  
(Cheshire West and Chester)

Peover Inferior  
(Cheshire East)

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## NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT -

The Annual Assembly of the Parish for LOWER PEOVER will be held at Lower Peover primary school on Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 7pm.

Local government electors for the parish will be entitled to vote at the meeting which will be open to the public.



**Geoffrey Parker**

Clerk to the Council, on behalf of the Chairperson, Councillor Ben Jackson  
8th May 2025

## Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024
3. Matters arising from the minutes, not already covered in an agenda item
4. Chairperson's Annual Report
5. Parochial Charities
  - Richard Comberbach Trust Report
6. Women's Institute Report
7. Questions from the public to the Parish Council
8. Open Forum

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF THE LOWER PEOVER PARISH  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024 AT 7.00PM**

**Present:** Councillor B Jackson (Chair), P Binyon, G Dutton, C Warnes and S Wilson.

Clerk Mr G Parker

**1. Apologies**

Alison Painter and Lousie Corlett.

**2. Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes not already covered in an agenda item.**

None.

**4. Parish Council Chair's Annual Report**

Received and noted.

**5. Parochial Charities.**

The report of the Richard Comberbach Trust was received and noted.

**6. Women's Institute Report**

Received and noted.

**7. Questions from the public for the Parish Council**

None.

**8. Open Forum**

None.

Signed:

Date:

# **Chairperson's Annual Report**

## **Lower Peover Parish Council**

**May 2025**

### **1. Introduction**

I am pleased to present my annual report for my second year as Chairperson of Lower Peover Parish Council. I would like to thank Vice-Chairperson, Councillor Painter for her support for her continued guidance throughout the year on helping me settle into the role of Chair, as we have navigated a number of interesting projects this year.

Once again it has been another busy year in Lower Peover with the Parish Council working on several exciting projects in the parish, that we hope will be of benefit to both current and future residents of the village.

### **2. Parish Councillors**

In March 2025 Mr Charles Warnes retired from the Parish Council and I wish to thank him for his contributions to our work over the last 18 months and we enjoyed having him as part of the team.

As of the time of writing we have advertised the open position for a new Councillor and look forward to receiving applications in due course. At the time of writing, Cheshire East Council have confirmed that they have not received any requests for an election (from at least ten electors). Therefore, the Parish Council will now move forward to co-opt into the vacancy using our usual co-option procedures and we are currently looking for residents who wish to apply.

Unfortunately, during the year Councillor Corlett had to take an extended period of medical leave, but thankfully has made a good recovery and we are very pleased she has now been able to return to Parish Council duties.

### **3. Parish Plan**

In 2024-25 the team advanced the new parish plan workstreams which can be found here:

<https://lower-peover.co.uk/parish-plan>

A brief summary of each workstream along with example work undertaken during the year is set out below:

#### **Work stream 1: Road Safety & Highways**

The Parish Council will continue to monitor road safety in and around the village, and how safety might be improved along the main road arteries in the village. As a Parish Council we are frequently in touch with the highways authority to discuss concerns about the roads in our village. After lengthy discussions, in October of 2024 the long awaited 'Draggon's Teath' road markings were added on Middlewich Road, thereby more clearly designating the entry to the 30mph zone through the centre of the village.

The Parish Council has also been leasing with both local authorities to push for the repair or replacement of many damaged road name signs round the Parish. In our current budget we have planned to provide for 3 'gateway' sign configurations – one for each of the main roads into the village and we hope that once installed these will further add to the traffic calming measures.

During the year 3 speed watch sessions were held leading to many speeding motorists receiving notification letters and as ever we are grateful to the volunteers who staff such sessions.

## **Work stream 2: Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability**

The main focus of the biodiversity workstream in the year has been the continued restoration of the pond at the junction of Barrows Brow and Free Green Lane. As recorded in the 2024 annual report after receiving inputs from residents, a comprehensive plan for the restoration of the pond was put together. This included applying for grant monies to fund planting, and draining and dredging the pond.

A carefully-considered grant application was put together by resident volunteer Debbie Swift and Councillor Painter to the United Utilities, Better Rivers Better North West Community Fund. The application was successful and therefore United Utilities will fund plants and equipment for the pond restoration.

During the summer a contractor was also found to dredge the pond as well as support from local farmers who would provide tractor and trailer services and access to land to tip the spoil on. Throughout the summer the pond was drained and a date agreed in early autumn to undertake the dredging work.

Unfortunately, 48 hours before the planned works, we experienced some of the heaviest rainfall of the year. This had two detrimental effects – the pond started to fill with water and the land where the tractors were going to take the spoil became heavily waterlogged. It was therefore decided to postpone the dredging works until the summer of 2025. At the time of writing, we are liaising with all parties to rearrange the dredging works.

## **Work Stream 3: Public Realm and Paish Built Environment**

This workstream takes care of all matters relating to the built fabric of the parish and all parish assets (e.g. benches, phone box, village signs (non-highway signage), defibrillator, Parish Council owned land). As set out in last years report, several strategic priorities were identified and work undertaken on them this year including several projects outlined below:

- The acquiring of a new bench for the land at Smithy Green after the existing bench was destroyed in a car crash in the autumn of 2024. The new bench has been paid for by an insurance claim and will be installed in early summer 2025.
- Repair to village sign at Birchwood Drive: In early December 2024, Mr Kellet with support from Councillors Paul Binyon and George Dutton took down the village sign on the corner of Birchwood Drive and replaced the timber upright post that had become rotten. Despite the rather challenging stormy weather the work was successfully completed. The Parish Council wishes to thank the Kellet family for their time in leading this project and for their generosity of donating the new timber post.
- Repair to the finger posts at the junction of Middlewich and Plumley Moor Road: This project was initiated and lead by residents Paul Frith and Sally Aspin and funded by the Parish Council. New fingers were cast at Whitehead (Ironfounders) in Broad Heath; both Paul and Sally visited the foundry and witnessed the very dramatic casting process. A few days later the cooled fingers were returned to Lower Peover and carefully painted by Councillor George Dutton. On the 25th of January Paul Frith, Sally Aspin, Alan Painter and Councillors Binyon, Dutton, Jackson, Painter and Wilson met to put the fingers back on the sign, including the new fourth finger which had been absent for many years. The Parish Council wishes to thank all the volunteers and especially Paul Frith and Sally Aspin who initiated and led this community project.

With limited funds and rising costs, in last year's report we appealed to residents and volunteers to help support the projects and were heartened by the response and the progress on both the projects above is testament to the good outcomes that can be achieved when that Parish Council and volunteers work in collaboration.

We are now in the process of assembling a volunteer team to undertake restoration work on the village sign at Smithy Green sign as well as the phone box.

## **Work Stream 4: Regional Project Liaison**

This workstream acts as a primary point of liaison regarding matters involving local, regional or national infrastructure, commercial, planning or transport projects where the residents of Parish may or may not be directly impacted.

The goals of this workstream are to act as the initial point of contact to assess the scope of external projects, ensuring that the Parish Council is consulted about such projects and possible impacts on Lower Peover. On a case-by-case basis, as projects arise, the workstream will establish working groups to evaluate proposals, collate community responses or feedback on public consultations and provide recommendations as to the further steps that the Parish Council can take.

In the last year the Parish Council has actively participated in consultations relating to the Future Airspace project at Manchester Airport.

## **4. Other Council Business**

### **a) Community Emergency Plan**

During the year, the Community Emergency Plan was adopted by the Parish Council. This plan was put together in collaboration with the Cheshire Community Resilience Network. It is intended to act as a guide for responding to emergencies that may happen in or adjacent to the Parish, detailing possible risks and actions that the Parish Council could undertake to prepare for possible emergencies. The document can be found here:

<https://lower-peover.co.uk/policies>

## **b) Fibre Broadband**

This was a key project in the 2022 Parish Plan, which in the second half of 2023 finally received government approval and government grant funding was allocated. Work started right away on the installation and in the autumn of 2023 the VISPA network went live. Throughout 2024 the rollout of the network continued, while there have been teething issues, the response from residents has generally been positive. However much of the intended progress during 2024 was stalled due to a blocked duct on Crown Lane that Openreach had to clear before VISPA could continue the installation. This caused the rollout to grind to a halt in the autumn, with the blockage cleared in the New Year. It is now hoped that the rollout can continue to the north of the village to provide fibre service to the area around Smithy Green and Free Green Lane.

## **c) Planning**

As a 'statutory consultee' the Parish Council reviews all planning applications that we receive from Cheshire West and Chester Council, and Cheshire East Council. The Parish Council reviews the applications in line with the Parish Council Planning Protocol which can be found on the Lower Peover Parish Council's website.

In February 2025, an Extraordinary Meeting was held to discuss the planned development of 4 dwellings at Heesom Green Stock Farm, Middlewich Road. The Parish Council was not a statutory consultee (as the development was just outside the Parish boundary), however after strong feedback by Lower Peover residents to The Chair it was decided to call a meeting to discuss. The meeting was very well attended by residents and the Parish Council agreed to submit extensive comments on the application.



#### **d) Environment**

The Parish Council has continued its work to ensure that the natural environment of the village is maintained to a high standard with activities including:

- Two litter picks held, one in May 2024 and a second in April 2025
- Giving a donation to St Oswald's Church for the cutting of the grass in the graveyard.
- Arranging for several grass verges around the village to be cut on a regular basis. In response to anticipated greatly increasing costs the Parish Council went out to tender in spring 2024 for the grass cutting arrangements and a new contractor was appointed.

#### **e) Communication**

The Parish Council has continued to produce and deliver 3 newsletters to all the homes in the village regularly throughout the year. We are also trying move more households over to electronic delivery via e mail.

#### **f) Christmas Tree**

For the fifth year running the Parish Council arranged a Christmas tree with lights on in the village, along with a switch on of the lights on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December. This year were very grateful have a super tree generously donated to us by the Halman family. The event was accompanied by music from Weaver WI Group Choir while villagers enjoyed refreshments including beer kindly donated by Mobberly Brewery. Each year we try to enhance the event and were therefore very grateful to Mr Dutton for the electric supply he provided along with all the Councillors and volunteers who made the evening possible. A super evening was enjoyed by residents as the village came together to celebrate the start of the Christmas period.

#### **g) Lower Peover Welcome Pack**

As recorded in the 2024 annual report a Lower Peover Welcome Pack has been created for new residents who move into the village. The welcome pack continues to be kept up to date and distributed to new residents.

#### **h) Crime**

Throughout the year the Parish Council meeting was attended on several occasions by the PCSO and the Parish Council receives regular updates on incidents of crime in the village and neighbouring parishes. The police also hold regular PCSO surgeries to discuss any worries or concerns.

#### **i) Health and Safety**

A defibrillator is available at 'The Country Store' on Hulme Lane, for the public to access. During the year we were approached by several residents who highlighted the need for an additional defibrillator located in the north of the village in the area around The Cobbles. To explore the feasibility of this, we consulted with the Knutsford Community First Responder Trust who were able to advise us of options for provision of a defibrillator in this area. At the time of writing, we are exploring a range of options including purchasing a new defibrillator or trying to find consensus of relocating an existing defibrillator to a public location. We hope to assemble a consortium of establishments in the village to fund an agreed solution.

#### **j) Governance**

Throughout the year our Parish Clerk has worked hard to ensure that all matters relating to governance are properly taken care of. This has included undertaking scoping work for a Neighbourhood Plan, maintaining

the risk register, preparing out annual audit, liaising with insurers and the local authorities and managing the budget.

## **5. Support for Community Initiatives**

The Parish Council have supported several community initiatives throughout the year:

### **D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

In June 2024 the Village Events Committee, with support from the Parish Council, arranged a series of events to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day.

An incredibly realistic landing craft tableaux on Smithy Green was put up while an extensive exhibition was organised in St Oswald's Church to tell the stories of life in Lower Peover during WW2 along with many first-hand accounts of villagers who participated in the Normandy Landings. The exhibition was the result of painstaking research undertaken over many months and the results drew visitors to the village from far and wide with both regional and national press publicising the commemorations in our village. The church was decorated with hundreds of woollen poppies that were knitted by a team of volunteers from across the parish.

The whole 9 days of the exhibition was supported by a pop-up tea tent outside the lynch gate serving homemade cakes through wind and rain to raise funds for the series of commemorations.

The formal day of commemorations was held on the 6th June with an organised walk from St Oswald's Church to St Lawrence's Church followed by the unveiling of a blue plaque at The Bells of Peover to commemorate the role that pub played in the planning of D-Day; Year 6 Pupils from Lower Peover Primary School performed a song that they had written specially for the occasion. In the evening a fish and chips supper was held at the Bells of Peover garden with music performed by Mereside Brass. Shortly after which a peal of bells from St Oswald's

Church signalled the start of more formal commemorations inside the church. 'Lower Peover Remembers' was an evening of readings and music with the direct descendants of Lower Peover residents who fought and supported the war effort reading out the accounts of their ancestors.

Finally, village residents gathered in St Oswald's churchyard to reflect and remember the sacrifices of our forebears with a lighting of a beacon just after sundown.

All the commemorations were very well supported, with over 1500 people attending the exhibition over the 9 days. Donations at the commemorative events and funds from the tea tent enabled all the costs of the exhibition to be covered and a donation totalling £3000 was made by the Village Events Committee to the Royal British Legion.

The Parish Council thanks the Village Events Committee who organized the commemorations as well as the villagers who attended, supported as well as the descendants of our forbearers who kindly allowed the stories of their relatives to be shared with the Lower Peover community, making for such a moving and meaningful occasion.

### **VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

At the time of writing, preparations are underway for a party to be held on the 10<sup>th</sup> May to commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day. The event, organized by the Village Events Committee with support from the Parish Council, will see around 350 people attend the evening of celebrations with a marquee, band, bar and hog roast.

## **6. Conclusion**

Once again, the last 12 months has been a busy one for the Parish Council. The work on existing projects has continued while new activities have been advanced.

The Parish Plan has greatly benefited from collaborations between volunteers and the Parish Council, and we hope to build on this model in the coming year.

I would like to thank our Parish Clerk, Mr Geoff Parker, for all his hard work during the year and working so diligently to ensure that the decisions and goals agreed by the Parish Council are executed properly.

I also want to thank all the Parish Councillors who give up their free time and use their skills for the benefit of the Parish Council, its projects and the other residents of the parish. The achievements and plans outlined in this report are a direct the result of their service to the village throughout the year. I feel very fortunate to work alongside with such a super team of Councillors.

Ben Jackson

Chairperson

Lower Peover Parish Council

The Bucklow School Charity of Richard Comberbach and his Wife.

Trustees' Annual report to Lower Peover Parish Council 2025

Since my report of last year, the trustees have met routinely twice and had two extraordinary meetings.

The Trust owns School House and part of Lower Peover Primary school and part of the adjacent land.

The principal objectives of the Trust are to support the school in diverse ways. This may include some financial support.

The charity is constituted by deed of Trust and is a registered charity, Charity number: 525858

The Trustees are:

Chair: Sybil Crossman: co-optive trustee

Treasurer: Norman Withenshaw: co-optive trustee

Trustee representative for Plumley, Toft & Bexton PC: Andrew Shaw

Trustee representative for Allostock PC: Julia Wison

Trustee representative for Nether Peover (LP): **Vacancy**

Trustee representative for Peover Inferior (LP) and Trustee/Governor: Alun McIntyre

Ex officio: Fr Murray Aldridge Collins

The correspondent is not a trustee.

Mrs Stephanie Taylor Wattam had represented Nether Peover since 2020 but resigned last month. She had served the Trust well during her five-year term and the Trustees have thanked her for her commitment. There is from this month a vacancy for this role. Please see additional information separately from this report.

October 1st 2024 Ordinary meeting:

Chair and Trustee/Governor were re-elected.

The school had received an excellent Ofsted report and was congratulated.

The Annual Report to the Charity Commission had been completed. For details contact the treasurer.

It was agreed to again fund books for school pupils. This was bibles for each Reception class pupil to have in school and for Year 3 pupils to take home. The bibles being age appropriate and chosen by school and the vicar.

The trustees were informed that the DfE had approved the formation of a new Academy Trust known as the Chester Diocesan Learning Trust and that discussions would be taking place about the inclusion of Lower Peover Primary school. The trustees would be taking part in the forthcoming meetings and discussions.

#### March 11th 2025 Ordinary meeting

The new tenants of School House had entered their second year of tenancy, and both parties are satisfied with the agreements.

Correspondence concerning Old School Yard continued regarding its maintenance. The Land Registry had been consulted.

Lower Peover School academisation is expected to go ahead. Governors, Trustees and Head Teacher to be consulted. Meetings to be arranged with a representative from the Director of Education for the Chester Diocese.

The school is to have internal building work and this is to take place in the summer holidays.

The trustees will once again fund books as leavers' gifts for year six pupils.

To mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WWII, and to commemorate VE day, the trustees agreed to fund the gift for each pupil of a booklet of the Gospel of John especially published for the occasion and including personal stories of some involved in the war effort. These will be distributed in school by Cllr Anthony Harrison, an Armed Forces Member Champion and Councillor for Chelford Ward of East Cheshire Council.

Date set for next ordinary meeting is September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2025.

#### April 29<sup>th</sup> 2025 Extra-ordinary meeting

The trustees met to discuss the implication of the school academisation.

#### April 30<sup>th</sup> 2025 Extraordinary meeting

The trustees met with Ms Sue Noakes, deputy director of Education for the Chester Diocese for further information and guidance.

Sally Geake, correspondent to the Richard Comberbach Trust. April 2025

Cc Plumley with Toft & Bexton PC

Allostock PC.

## Lower Peover Women's Institute Report 2025

Lower Peover WI is a thriving WI of around 45 members, many are from the village and some from the surrounding areas close by. There is a wide age range in our WI, and you *don't* have to be a good cook or crafty in any way to join! New members are always welcome to attend 3 meetings free without having to join the membership. The meetings take place on the first Wednesday of each month, except the December meeting, at Lower Peover C of E Primary school at the top of the cobbles near the church. Most meetings consist of a speaker as well as ample opportunity for socialising. All new members have the opportunity to be collected, by arrangement, by an existing member and brought to the meeting and hostessed for the evening, or if they prefer just please turn up. Please bring £1 for refreshments of tea or coffee, and a mug. Occasionally, we have something a little stronger and then we provide the glasses.

Please contact the President, Sally Aspin 01565 722272 for further details, or Secretary, Sally Geake 01565 722489