

ANTROBUS PARISH COUNCIL 2000 - 2014

Each March the Chairman of the Parish Council presents an Annual Report outlining the work of the Council. The reports have been used to compile a summary of the work of the Council between 2000 and 2014.

Chairmen 2000 - 2015.

1998 - 2000 Coni Sutton. 2006 - 2008 Ray Lawton. 2014 - Phil Pugh.

2000 - 2002 Ernie Wright. 2008 - 2010 Deborah Hodd.

2002 - 2004 Mike Barker. 2010 - 2012 Nigel Pemberton.

2004 - 2006 Ann Barlow. 2012 - 2014 Paul Harrison.

Clerks during this period: Carol Kinsey, Inge Cosgrove, Sue Richards,
Simon Palmer.

Between 2000 and 2015 four councillors who had each served for over 25 years resigned or did not seek re-election, Ann Barlow, Ray Lawton, Roy Read and Coni Sutton. Coni was the first woman to become an Antrobus Councillor and Chairman and served for 47 years.

Other councillors who resigned or did not seek re-election during this period were Christine Ashall, Mike Barker, Karen Bolshaw, John Corlett, Deborah Hodd, Ernie Hodgkinson, Ron Mounfield, Kate O'Donnell, Nigel Pemberton, Chris Tratalos and Ernie Wright.

Millennium. To mark the Millennium in 2000 a wall clock was purchased and hung in the Village Hall. The millennium oak tree was planted on Knutsford Road. Improvements were made to the junction of School Lane and Knutsford Road by planting flowers, shrubs and a beech hedge. A new flagpole was installed in the centre of the village. A time capsule, filled with items that depicted life in Antrobus in the year 2000, was prepared with the intention of building it into the new extension of the Village Hall.

Road safety was raised at a meeting in February 2000. About seventy parishioners attended the meeting. It was again raised as an issue in the Parish Plan. Eventually speed reduction markings were improved at four principal entrances to the village centre. For a short period of time SID (speed indicator device) was used on Knutsford Road. The Parish Council supported the local authority in its efforts to

make the A559 a safer road, especially at its junction with Knutsford Road. One problem raised in a number of reports is the thoughtless and sometimes dangerous parking of cars.

The report for the year ending March 2001

Foot and Mouth. The Chairman's Dance had to be cancelled due to restrictions to prevent the spread of Foot and Mouth disease.

Playground. The Parish Council put forward the provision of a playground as a project to be taken forward by the organisation Groundwork. It was finally opened on 12th December 2002 and the final payment made in March 2004. It has been well used over the years. A questionnaire was circulated in the Village News in the summer of 2015 to assess how the playground might be further developed.

Bridle paths. Notification was received that Flash Lane had been officially recognised as an ancient highway and Vale Royal Borough Council instructed to reinstate it as a bridle path.

The report for the year ending March 2002

Footpaths and lighting. A request to Cheshire Highways Department was made for a footpath from the Village Hall on Knutsford Road to School Lane. Safety of pedestrians to and from the playground was given as the reason for the need. It took much longer to complete than expected due to the necessary replacement of overhead cables and the supporting poles. As a result of this Cheshire County Council decided that it was necessary to replace the existing street light units and put together a design to improve the lighting in the centre of the village at no cost to the Parish Council. Although there were some comments that this made the centre of the village less rural in appearance the scheme met with general approval because of the increased safety obtained.

Drain clearance and flooding. Following much communication with Highways regarding flooding and blocked drains, it's hoped the problem is resolved. However, the autumn of 2002 saw School Lane being excavated on several occasions in an attempt to eliminate the flooding of the Village Hall field. Pieces of pipe were replaced but only time would tell if the action taken would solve the problem. But...

Flooding, caused by the heavy rains of 2013 created damage and danger across the whole of Antrobus. The village centre and other areas were flooded for lengthy periods. Local people worked with emergency services to protect both health and property. The report for 2014 states that despite the advice of local farm drain experts that flooding was caused by a short length of drainage pipe in the centre of the village, the Local Authority refused to enlarge it. After 18 months of continuous pressure by the Parish Council the Authority agreed to full surveys, which supported the advice given. The work was finally completed. Because of this and other supportive work on field drains, it is hoped that flooding in the village centre is now a thing of the past.

Queen's Jubilee. A donation of £500 was given by the Parish Council to the Village Hall Committee for the Jubilee celebrations.

Mike Barker, Chairman, represented the Parish Council and the village at the Mayor of Vale Royal's Golden Jubilee church service, the Queen's Golden Jubilee visit to Cheshire held at King's School, Macclesfield and the Cheshire County Council Civic Service at Chester Cathedral.

The report for the year ending March 2003

Land transfer. June and July 2002 meetings included two motions transferring parcels of land from the Parish Council to the Village Hall Committee. The reasons for this came about when drawing up the lease for the Playground. The transfer of one of the parcels of land was straightforward. The second transfer took place in March 2004. This means the Parish Council no longer owns any land.

Post Office and shop. A public meeting was held in January 2003 about the future of the Post Office and the shop. About 60 people attended. In discussions following the meeting it was thought by some that a community shop would probably attract reasonable support. A month later a further meeting was held and a steering committee of eight people was elected to take forward a community shop project. The Parish Council donated £300 towards start up costs. In 2015 the shop and Post Office are still open for business.

The report for the year ending March 2004

Parish Plan. In November 2003 a committee was appointed to write a grant application for the writing of a Parish Plan. This was successful. A questionnaire

was compiled and distributed to every household in the village, then the Parish Plan written and published. It was adopted by the Parish Council in September 2005.

Boundary Changes. changes coming from central government. Councillors attended several meetings in relation to possible boundary changes should the proposed Referendum decide in favour of a Regional Assembly. The Parish Council was in favour of a no vote. Should there be a yes vote the Council indicated that they would prefer to be in a newly constituted Mid Cheshire Authority and be attached to Northwich in any localised structure.

The report for the year ending March 2005

Community Pride. Each year the Parish Council enters various categories in the Community Pride Competition with varying success. The Community Shop won the Community Project Award for Vale Royal District.

The report for the year ending March 2006

Cheshire Village of the Year. We were runners up in the Cheshire Vibrant Village Competition 2005. For this achievement, we received a framed certificate and a cheque for £75 from the Deputy Prime Minister's Office. In 2006, as a result of much hard work, Antrobus entered and won the Cheshire Village of the Year Award which meant that we became the Cheshire entry for the national Calor Village of the Year Competition. There are a number of certificates in the Village Hall and shop and plaques on a street light standard in the centre of the village showing our successes in the Community Pride Competition over the years.

Quality Parish Council. To achieve Quality Parish Council status a financial sub committee was formed, Standing Orders were reviewed and new policies were adopted - on Complaints Procedure and on grants to village organisations. The first quarter of an hour of Parish Council meetings became available for parishioners to talk to individual Councillors, or the whole Council, or examine plans. Quality Parish Status was granted in October 2006 and was re-accredited in 2011.

The report for the year ending March 2007.

Poultry waste processing plant. Special meetings called do not arise very often but the last year had been an exception. The planning applications for the Senna Green and Thellow Heath farms caused a great deal of concern and in the Parish

Council's view were best dealt with by way of open meetings which would allow the views of villagers to be clearly expressed. Efforts to reject the plans were strongly made by both the Parish Council and the Peace Group. The plans for a poultry waste processing plant at Thellow Heath and an enabling application for residential development at Senna Green were refused in February 2009.

Vandalism. Unusually for Antrobus, issues of vandalism arose concerning the Playground which was closed on safety grounds for a number of weeks. There was serious damage to the equipment. The replacement parts cost £1500.

The report for the year ending March 2009

Tributes were paid to three former Parish Councillors who had died, Stan Owen, John Corlett and Jean Greenhough. They had all served the Parish Council in many capacities, each with their different skills and interests.

Formation of Cheshire West and Cheshire. The Parish Council and the Clerk spent much of the year wrestling with the implications of and the new arrangements arising from the re-organisation of the Cheshire Authorities. Vale Royal Borough Council and Cheshire County Council were replaced by the new borough council on April 1st 2009.

Electronic processing. The Parish Council now have a live web site and a dedicated email address for correspondence. They assisted in the development of a more efficient electronic system for circulating urgent Homewatch information to local residents. Where possible the Council has moved to electric communication and with the agreement of the auditor has moved to electronic accounting.

Applejacks. Planning matters often created controversy and challenges including Fairbank Farm and Hatton Farm, now normally referred to as Applejacks. The Stretton Autodrome project was rejected in 2010.

The report for the year ending March 2011

Potholes. The reporting and monitoring of potholes is a regular feature. The usual response is to loosely fill in the worst holes, with limited success. The Parish Council was therefore delighted to be given short notice in February 2011 that large areas of our more main roads were to be re-laid. However, they did miss an area of

Knutsford Road. The work in general proved unsatisfactory prompting more repairs and a new surface on a long stretch of Knutsford Road the following year.

Crime waves do not normally occur in Antrobus but there had been a plethora of offences mostly to do with metal and livestock thefts although barns and outbuildings had also been targeted.

Communications. The Communications Group produced and distributed the "Antrobus Quick Reference Guide". They instigated a Cheshire FM broadcast on Antrobus by contacting village groups and helped choose and organise the six broadcasters to ensure that as many aspects of village life as possible were aired in the two-hour Sunday morning broadcast.

The report for the year ending March 2012

Nursery planning application. Planning again dominated Council time, specifically an application to set up a Wholesale Plant Nursery submitted just before Christmas 2011. This united the whole village and the Keep Antrobus Special Campaign was formed. Following a Parish Council open afternoon and a Public Meeting attended by 127 people, all of whom voted against the application, the Parish Council objected to the application. Subsequently the application was rejected.

The report for the year ending March 2012

Community Garden. In summer 2011 the Greener Antrobus Group was formed as part of the Council. It followed ideas to start a "Community Allotment". Land to make this possible is kindly licensed to the Council by Mrs Evelyn Bolshaw. It is now called Antrobus Community Kitchen Garden.

The report for the year ending March 2013

Broadband. The Council had formed a partnership with Local Authority to obtain a grant from the Rural Community Broadband Fund. The 2014 report noted that the Antrobus-Arley area had been left out of the general roll out of super-fast fibre-optic broadband, on the grounds of cost of installation in a rural area.

The Council, supported by villagers and other rural areas submitted an application for additional government funding. A grant of £643,000 was approved for rural areas across Cheshire. The Council will be involved in how the money is used.

Heartstart. Two Councillors have been trained to use and teach Heart-start techniques. Two training events have taken place and a defibrillator machine is now sited at the front of the Village Hall.

Over the years the Parish Council has supported many charities from the proceeds of the Chairman's Dance. Grants have also been made to village organisations. Councillors take part in Village events such as the Fete, the Remembrance Day Service, and village celebrations of national events.

Compiled by Ann Barlow and Paul Harrison (edited)