

Lane Head South Residents' Group

Chair's Annual report for the year 2025/2026

Here we are again , completing another year of activities aimed at caring for and enhancing our area of Lowton. The year has certainly consisted of much effort and a certain amount of success and we have experienced a wonderful degree of support which is so encouraging. We have so many members who give us the benefit of their time and their very special skills and talents

We have the benefit of good relations and cooperative working with the other Lowton Resident Groups and this adds to our strength. Once again we have maintained regular communication with council officers and enjoyed the support of our ward councillors. The officers of the council have joined us for numerous meetings and helped explain some situations or technicalities.

The long standing air quality problem in Winwick Lane seems to be improving as a result of the ANPR camera now located there and the next test is to see if the extra traffic lights on Winwick Lane will also help , bearing in mind that there will still be standing traffic at the head of Winwick Lane.

Serious concern continues to be expressed by the residents of Newton Road from the A580 to the Newton Boundary, which suffers from being an A road and at the same time a residential road with all that entails regarding speed and HGV use, and which they feel could be relieved by speed and weight limitation.

Concern was raised regarding Severn Trent Water's plans for a biogas site at Winwick ,very close to the Lowton borders. Lowton residents agree with those of Winwick in anticipating the generation of more traffic on country lanes.

In a more positive vein we have acquired a splendid new website. We have Heather with her brilliant IT skills to thank for building this and enabling us to have such a state of the art facility.

Heather also introduced a new Christmas feature - a Window / Garden advent calendar with each window representing one day of Advent. Each of the 25 days was given a window or garden and helped make Lane Head really colourful – we thank Heather very much for her work and creativity and thanks to all the residents who took part and went to so much trouble to make our area attractive and really Christmassy.

Having arranged a bowling afternoon in September, we sold tickets and arranged a raffle but sadly rain prevented play so we hope for better luck this year!

Once again we gathered around our Winton road Christmas Tree to sing carols and the people of Lane Head proved themselves to be stalwarts when they defied the rain again .

Thinking of more serious matters, the threat posed by the wish of an asset management company known as Tritax ,to build an intermodal strategic rail freight terminal on hundreds of acres of productive farmland to the west of Winwick Lane, has placed a sword of Damocles over us all. The new and unexpected element in the plan for phase three being the possible purchase and inclusion of Wigan land , thus creating a very much bigger SRFI. | On November 17th we held an extraordinary meeting, with our MP Jo Platt and the Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham as special guests and this clearly indicated, by its numbers and the strength of feelings expressed that all were of one mind.

We have attended "consultations," four of which were held , written letters, started a poster campaign and will continue to work along these lines, supporting each other because the residents are of the same mind regarding food production being replaced by more and more vehicular traffic , more congestion, noise, toxicity, light pollution and warehouses of up to 90 feet high. ---plus loss of valuable productive farmland. We need to continue to make representations during the extended consultation period and to consider what further steps we should take.

Work on the pedestrian crossings at Winwick Lane and Newton Road started and was due to finish by Feb 9th but seems to have drifted into March. We are hoping to see the completion of the Winwick Lane pedestrian crossing during March. It remains to be seen whether it will be helpful for the safe crossing of Newton Road/Kenyon Lane as mentioned in last year's annual report.

As you can tell there is much work to be done , for example - administratively, succession planning for key roles is important and making use of our new web site to communicate effectively is now easier.

As a member of the PNFS I am conscious of the very fine network of Public Rights of Way we have here and how threatened they are with every flurry of new development. We must ensure they are not forgotten or "lost" among the plans and that they continue to perform a useful purpose.

Some historic situations crop up repeatedly or just do not go away but there is always something to be addressed.