

Brindle Parish Council

Annual Review 2024/2025

I have pleasure in preparing this annual review of Brindle Parish Council for 2024/2025, particularly as I approach 25 years since I was first elected to the parish council.

The parish council was elected last May and we also co-opted and welcomed Jane Greenway onto the parish council who has been a great addition to the team. I would like to pay tribute to my colleagues on the parish council for volunteering to give their valuable time, knowledge and expertise in serving the parish council and local residents.

Our Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer continues to do an amazing job in making sure parish affairs are administered efficiently and effectively, that we meet and surpass our legal and financial requirements and she makes a real difference to the Brindle community. Katherine continues to provide an exceptional and professional service to the parish council and we thank her for all of her brilliant work.

One of the highlights for me this year was Brindle winning the Lancashire Best Kept Village Competition. This is a very prestigious award and reflects the hard work of residents in taking pride and looking after our local area. Teams of judges visited the parish and assessed us against rigorous criteria with the judge in the finals being Edwin Booth, Chairman of Booths Supermarkets. This is just one of the lovely quotes from the judges:

“There was a strong sense of village pride and the impression of efforts put in by everyone to care for both private and publicly shared areas. Brindle is a small village nestled amongst working farmland with sheep, cattle and horses grazing in rolling hills. The homes and the streets all appeared to be carefully looked after with absolutely no signs of graffiti or litter.”

Well done to everyone in Brindle for their hard work in keeping the village so neat, tidy and beautiful. We will continue to support the community to continuously improve and make sure Brindle remains a very special parish that we can all be proud.

We have continued our key focus of improving road safety in the parish and following the completion of the detailed action plan last year, we have worked with local residents to encourage Lancashire Police to undertake more enforcement action, lobbied the county council hard to put physical improvements in place, including reducing the speed limit, and promoted road safety messages in the community. I'm pleased that the parish council purchased a SPID (speed indicator device), which we feel has had a positive impact on driver behaviour.

I'm looking forward to the second SPID being installed which I hope will have similar effect on road safety. I would like to pay tribute to all residents who are doing a great job in raising the profile and helping to promote the message of reducing speed and driving safely. Further information on the parish council's extensive work on this really important issue is available on our website.

The parish council will continue to do all it can with local residents to improve road safety not just in the centre of the village but all the roads and lanes in the parish.

The parish council replaced its notice boards on the St James' Church wall and at Top 'Oth Lane for safety reasons and also to improve communications in the parish, not just for our notices and information, but for the wider community to use. The noticeboards are an attractive addition to the parish and we've received lots of positive feedback. We are grateful to the Singleton family for installing the new noticeboards for us.

In addition to the traditional way of communicating, we have also continued to develop our website – www.brindle-pc.gov.uk – so that all our information is in one place and includes our agendas, minutes, news, financial and other valuable information so that we are as open and transparent as possible. There is also a handy section on contacts to help residents with any local issues. We have also needed to invest in the website and email system to meet cybersecurity standards and data protection requirements.

The Parish Pound continues to be a great focal point for Brindle and a lovely place for residents to enjoy. We are very grateful to the Webster family for looking after the Pound and ensuring it looks fantastic, together with all their great support of the parish generally. As the collection point for the food bank we are full of admiration for all those who donate and make sure donations go to those in need on a weekly basis. The Christmas tree in the Pound last year was the biggest yet, which the parish council received funding for from Lancashire County Council's parish champion and was supplied locally by Will Singleton.

Our Clerk was successful in securing funding from Chorley Council to develop the Brindle and Withnell Fold Nature Reserve walk route in the parish, improving accessibility and promoting it so that everyone can enjoy the wonderful Brindle countryside and keep fit and healthy at the same time. Great progress has been made and the project will continue into next year.

The parish council supported the 400th anniversary of Brindle St James' Primary School with Councillors Louise Croasdale and Pauline McGovern representing us on the organising committee who did a wonderful job in marking this milestone with a great fun day. I was pleased to welcome our local MP and Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir Lindsay Hoyle and the Mayor and Mayoress of Chorley to the parish for the occasion.

We worked with our three local primary schools – Brindle St James', Brindle St Joseph's and Brindle Gregson Lane on biodiversity projects with funding from Lancashire County Council which generates some great inspiring work by our local

school children. Chorley Council again donated daffodil bulbs, which we appreciate volunteers planting so that we have some nice spring colour to cheer the parish.

We have supported local community organisations, including the Community Hall, Village Show, Brindle WI, Brindle Parish Council and Brindle Over Fifty Fives in their wonderful work supporting the local community.

Our concern about community safety and crime continues, particularly around Denham Quarry and we will continue to push for more police visibility at this site.

To ensure appropriate development the parish council carefully considers all planning applications affecting the parish and provides comments to Chorley Council. The parish council mounted a major objection to the proposed Finnington development at Riley Green, which we hope will stop this inappropriate development that would negatively impact our parish. Protecting the green belt and parish for future generations will be an important challenge for us moving forward and we propose to fully engage in the review of the local plan, which is currently out for consultation.

As the eyes and ears of local residents we continue to report issues to Chorley Council and Lancashire County Council whether it be blocked drains, potholes, public footpaths and fly tipping etc.

We have been well represented at the Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC) to make sure our voice was heard local and nationally and also at Chorley Council's Liaison Committee.

We continue to meet regularly at Brindle Community Hall and also at Trinity Methodist Church on Gregson Lane to make sure accessible to all residents whether that be on Bournes Row or Birchin Lane and everywhere in between.

We are developing a number of community projects to pursue next year in response to suggestions from residents, including the second SPID mentioned above, which together with increased running costs, have unfortunately forced us to increase our parish precept. Next year the parish precept will be £40.70 for a band D property, or around £3.39 per month. A full breakdown of the parish council budget and work it does to ensure we achieve value for money is available on our website. Our accounts continue to receive a clean bill of health with two different independent qualified auditors certifying them as compliant and correct.

Our Clerk worked tirelessly in developing new governance policies and procedures which we adopted in the year to make sure we follow best practice and are on a firm legal and organisational footing.

We are grateful to our district councillors – Councillors Irene Amahwe, Michelle Beach, and Pauline McGovern – for all that they do on our behalf at Chorley Council. County Councillor Alan Cullens also does a great job as our Lancashire County Council representative.

During the year we expressed our appreciation to former Councillor and Vice-chair, David Metcalfe who had stepped down after many years of service. Very appropriately we presented David with a framed picture of Brindle and the classic St James' Church and the Cavendish Arms image.

I really appreciate the support of my vice-chair, Louise Croasdale and all Members of the Parish Council and our excellent Clerk for all that they do for Brindle.

I commend this report to the parish council.

Councillor Darren Cranshaw
Chair - Brindle Parish Council

February 2025