

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT –YEAR 2004/2005

I felt extremely proud when my colleagues on the Parish Council elected me as Chairman in 2004. My family have served the community of Winwick since the mid 1930's with my grandfather, grandmother, father and uncle all being past chairman. I will continue to work hard, as they did to improve the services and facilities provided by the Parish Council for local residents.

In November 2004, Councillor Maureen Banner, the Borough Council's portfolio holder for Lifelong Learning and I, officially launched our new Learning Centre at Winwick Leisure Centre. Maureen told me she was delighted to see that a Borough Council grant of £2000 had been used to purchase 2 laptop computers and a printer, and commented that the superb facilities are among the best examples of partnership working in providing learning opportunities within the community. 3 taster sessions held in December 2004 have led to over 50 local people signing up for courses run by Warrington College the TUC, and supported by the Government's LearnDirect programme. The facility boasts 16 broadband internet connections and local businesses are now showing interest in using it for their training programmes.

The Countryside Suite has become a huge success for many organisations such as the Dallam Day Care Centre, who now use the facilities to provide leaning experiences for people with mental and physical disabilities. Indeed the Leisure Centre bookings have increased significantly in the past 6 months since the opening of the new facilities. I'm sure local ratepayers will be happy as the Centre increasingly pays its own way.

In 2005 the Parish Council is working in partnership with Groundwork Mersey Valley, and the Woodland Trust who with a generous grant from WREN (landfill tax) and the Borough Council amounting to £60,000 will improve security and improve public access to Radley Common. A key aim of the project is to set up a "friends group" who will work to encourage conservation and enjoyment of the site.

Radley Common is owned by the Parish Council and therefore by you as the community. If you have never been there please let me know. I will take you there and show you what you have been missing!

I hope those people living in Winwick Park will have noticed the Parish Council has provided flowerbeds and a bench in the centre island. These may seem like small steps forward, but the Parish Council will continue to do its best, within its limited resources, to improve the local environment.

The Parish Council continues its work to encourage community activity and will again in 2005 sponsor a Best Kept Garden Competition. This year thanks to a generous donation from two local residents, we will extend the judging criteria to include a children's section. It is open to any children who have grown plants or helped to cultivate or nurture them.

The Youth Good Neighbour Award 2005 will be open to 2 age groups i.e. young persons between the age of 7-11 and 12-17 living within the Parish and who have made a difference to someone or a group of people in the areas of personal care, care for the environment, care for the community.

I would like to record my thanks to my colleagues on the Parish Council for their support and hard work over the year and would take this opportunity to thank the members of staff of the Parish Council for their dedication and commitment.

John Gordon-Chairman Winwick Parish Council.

May 2004