



Dear Residents & Stakeholders,

It is with pleasure that I present the annual Chairs report for Sandymoor Parish council covering the period of May 2024 to April 2025. This year the Parish Council once again have been working tirelessly to improve Sandymoor for its residents.

I have listed below an overview of how this year has been spent serving the public.

#### **Maintenance of Defibrillators**

The Parish Council continues to maintain three defibrillators in the community. These defibrillators are integrated into the Ambulance Services Circuit network and are checked monthly by the Clerk. Recently, the pads on the defibrillator at Hazlehurst were replaced to ensure its optimal functionality.

#### **Engagement with Keepmoat Developers regarding Sandymoor South**

We have established contact with the designers at Keepmoat regarding the future development of Sandymoor South. Discussions have focused on the management of Public Open Space (POS) and the potential for facilities catering to different age groups in the area.

#### **Support for Successful Summer Fair**

The Parish Council provided financial support and strong leadership lead by our Vice Chair Tom Willet to ensure the successful operation of the Summer Fair. The Parish Councillors were supported by community volunteers and one of our Borough Councillors, Mike Ryan. This strong collaborative group made the day a complete success despite the day starting out very inclement, overall, the feedback we received was that it turned out to be a great event.

#### **Maintenance of the Planters**

Our enthusiastic Planters Group continues to flourish. Volunteers meet periodically to socialise and purchase plants for the community planters, each one crafted with a unique theme. The Parish Council funds the replacement of plants and other necessary materials, ensuring the planters remain vibrant and diverse. I would like to extend my thanks to the volunteers as this is the third year that the community has come together to make the entrance/exits of Sandymoor look welcoming.

#### **Installation of a New Bin at Swan's Reach**

A new bin was placed at Swan's Reach, with funding for its regular emptying. This initiative has been well-received and has significantly contributed to keeping the area clean and tidy. Eventually upon adoption of the Bloor estate it is expected that it will be emptied by HBC.

#### **Stopping Illegal Travel at Swan's Reach**

The Parish Council worked closely with Bloor Homes to install bollards at Swan's Reach, preventing unauthorised vehicles from crossing the outdoor space and accessing Stalbridge Drive from the new Bloor estate.

#### **Successful Use of SID to Monitor Traffic Speeds**

The Council continues to collaborate with Halton Borough Council (HBC) and local police using data from the Speed Indicator Device (SID). The information gathered has been used to identify speeding hotspots and determine future action. The SID has been moved to its third location since being acquired and the Health and Safety group run by Councillor Schon are building a clear picture of those roads which need close attention.



### **Second Year of Christmas Tree Installation**

The second annual Christmas tree installation at the Coop was a success, with improvements over the previous year. Proper electrical connections and upgraded lighting were funded by the Parish Council, and we have allocated additional funds in the 2025 budget to continue this festive tradition.

### **Continued Development of Public Open Space with HBC**

We have continued our efforts with Halton BC in the revitalisation of Public Open Spaces (POS). This ongoing collaboration is designed to improve the local environment and enhance community spaces. In particular the Parish Council is working on Art based initiatives to enhance the areas paths and open space experience particularly as the new Sandymoor South development comes on stream.

### **Local Projects Funded**

The Parish Council provided a grant to a newly established organization supporting basketball coaching for underrepresented groups in the area, with 18 participants attending the first session. Additionally, we have helped fund an exciting scouting project, sending 50 young people to Kanderstag, Switzerland, in August 2025 for an international event. Both opportunities are expected to benefit the Sandymoor community youth.

### **Guest Speakers**

The Parish Council were delighted to welcome two guest speakers this year:

**Dan Price**, Police and Crime Commissioner, in November 2024. Dan gave a very thorough overview of his new role, as well as the challenges and opportunities that directly interface with Sandymoor. We continue via our Clerk to gain regular updates so we can help deliver his messages into the community.

In addition, we have seen several changes to the local Police force presence this year and have been delighted at the key updates that we have heard at the parish meetings. The Police are keen to help us get a neighbourhood watch scheme off the ground and we look forward later this year to gain local support. We continue to urge residents to report incidents to the police and gain a reference number rather than using social media. This helps highlight potential or growing problems in the area so the Police can act in a more efficient manner.

**Stephen Young, HBC Chief Executive**, in February 2025 and again in March 2025

These sessions provided valuable insights to the community and encouraged further engagement. Stephen was able to give the meetings a much greater overview of initiatives in the wider Halton area and mentioned in particular the budgetary issues HBC is under, as over 70% of all funds in the borough now support Adult & social care. At time of writing though Stephen Young is leaving to go to Salford City Council and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for all the time and help he has given us over the last 3 years.

### **Youth Engagement**

Our ongoing collaboration with the local academy continues to foster stronger relationships between young people and the Parish Council. We are actively working to identify ways the Council can improve facilities and opportunities for youth in the area.

### **Diversifying Investments & Audit controls**

The Finance working group lead by Councillor Graves continues to help the Parish Council to have a well thought strategy to keep the various funds we have safe yet producing the best returns. The outcome has been that the Council approved the diversification of funds between more accounts, so we are aligned with FSCS bank protection limits.



The Council were delighted to pass both internal and external audits again this year and my thanks goes to Louise Irvine for ensuring the Council is operating correctly.

### **Public Open Space Onboarding**

The Council is working on the acquisition of open space from developers. These are Swans Reach, Lea View, Bloor site 1&2 and the Morris Homes development. To ensure that no troublesome legacy work is inherited, the Council has conducted snagging walks on these developments that are due to be transferred to the Parish Council. These efforts have been successful, and we expect the legal work to be completed this year.

### **Residents' Concerns**

The Parish Council has continued to address and resolve numerous concerns raised by residents. Our close cooperation with Halton BC officers and the support of our three Borough Councillors has been vital in ensuring quick resolutions.

This report highlights the Parish Council's continuous commitment to enhancing the quality of life for residents and fostering a vibrant, engaged community. We look forward to building on these achievements in the year ahead. I would like to finish by paying tribute to the Clerk & Proper Officer Arthur Neil and Responsible Financial and Digital Officer Louise Irvine for their dedication and hard work this year, they are the glue that holds the Council together. Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Councillors who continue to work by giving up their own time for no other reward than wanting to help make Sandymoor a better place.

Steve Mahon

Chair Sandymoor Parish Council. May 2025