

## The Preston Trust Chairman's Report

### AGM 8<sup>th</sup> May 2016

I would firstly like to thank all The Trust committee members without whom none of what it has delivered this year would have been possible. The committee members remain the same this year as last, although the Treasurer position was handed to Robert following election at last year's meeting, so a special thank you to Robert for taking this on and dealing with the bank to change signatories and other such matters which don't seem to have put him off yet! We are also currently seeking some more committee members to increase the capacity of activities which The Trust is able to engage in.

Over the past year The Trust has sought to continue its regular activities, and introduce new ones in line with its main objectives of enhancing the village, preserving village history, promoting high standards of planning, and providing financial support for any purposes which fulfil these objectives.

The Trust has continued to maintain the village website, not a trivial task, and organised the Christmas tree lighting event at the Red Lion. This year at Christmas not only did The Trust provide the tree, new lights, and the food and drink, but also arranged for the event to include the ladies' choir, an art competition from the Primary School, and the SG4 band to continue the merriment well into the evening.

The Trust also continues to respond to local planning issues and wrote a strong objection to the proposed Vicars Grove expansion last year. As you may know, the application was turned down. We will also be writing in support of the recently announced Neighbourhood Plan.

The Trust has initiated a number of one-off activities this year:

- We planted a new "sweet gum" tree near the pond as a replacement for the one originally installed for the Queen's jubilee. This was a request raised at last year's AGM, and we hope that this tree lasts somewhat longer!
- In looking for a way to commemorate the centenary of the start of World War 1, again a suggestion received from last year's AGM, we contributed to a replacement memorial plaque in St Martins which was recently unveiled.
- We organised the Clean for the Queen litter pickup around the village in March.
- We made a substantial donation to the Primary school for the new windows which are currently being installed.

We have also been in discussion with the Parish Council on a number of items in addition to local planning issues including:

- Alternative uses for the phone box, but it seems BT are keen to keep hold of it, and this is being managed via the Parish Council.
- Speeding in the village which may result in a DriveSafe initiative.
- Planting along the new green fence at Castlefield.

A significant amount of The Trust's time was spent organising and running the village day last July, following on from its successful debut in 2014. The scarecrows were numerous and imaginative, the school entertained with their dancing, the dog show was a lot of fun, the band played the night out. The introduction last year of the car display also made the event one to remember for all who were there. One of the main aims is not only that everyone in the village will have a great day, but that The Trust would be able to facilitate the coming together of our many village societies and clubs to enrich community spirit. We believe that was achieved, and so The Trust will be running the event again this year on 9<sup>th</sup> July which we hope you will all be able to attend and enjoy.

Before the village day though The Trust are taking part in the garden party at PHC on 11<sup>th</sup> June in honour of the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup>. This will be a good opportunity to foster links with the school. We will provide games and facts about the Queen during our allotted 1946-1956 decade, and adorn our stall with information on the Trust and the village. The Womens' Institute, Scouts, and Girl Guides as well

as possibly Preston Primary will be there, so do order your tickets in advance (details in Newsletter and website).

Another initiative we are hoping to launch this year is an email news service to complement the OWL and Parish Council emails. This will enable us to be as inclusive of everyone in the village as possible via electronic means as well as the paper newsletter. We intend it to be a hub for all village societies, schools, church etc to disseminate information village-wide, especially short notice or reminder items which should complement the monthly newsletter.

Finally as far as events are concerned, we are hoping for a late flurry of entries for the village photographic competition. This is intended as something fun for all ages, and also something which will preserve a pictorial history of the village. So please get clicking!

So in conclusion The Trust has had an active twelve months and thanks the village for its support. We are always looking for new projects and ideas to consider, so there will be an opportunity for you to voice these at the end of this meeting. We rely on financial contributions from the village, so The Trust would like to take this opportunity to encourage you all to renew your subscriptions when you receive a form next month.

We would like to see as many people being members as possible, so please do also take any opportunity to encourage your friends and neighbours in the village to join up as well. As a special thank you to members, there will also be a free burger on offer at the village day BBQ for members!