

Chair's Report – Hadnall Parish Council

Good evening, and thank you for coming.

I'm going to be straightforward.

I should probably start by saying I haven't actually been on the Parish Council very long—and somehow I've ended up as Chair. I'm still not entirely sure how that happened, but here we are.

For those who don't know me, I'm a 35-year-old construction worker with roots in the North East, I've got a family of four, and a dog who seems to think it runs the house. Like a lot of people here, I'm just trying to get on with life—and I'm genuinely grateful that we can raise our family in a place that's as safe and decent as Hadnall.

This year has not been without challenges. We saw the resignation of Laura Tarburton as Chair, after a huge amount of hard work and commitment to the role over several years. Laura put an enormous amount of effort into the council and particularly into the ongoing flooding and drainage issues affecting the village, and I think that deserves recognition and thanks.

Despite being a relatively small group of volunteers, the Parish Council has continued to deliver important work over the last year.

Flooding and drainage issues have remained a major focus. The council has continued pushing Severn Trent for answers, updates, and long-term solutions, while also trying to keep residents informed and represented throughout the process.

The council has also continued representing residents on major planning matters, including the Wedgefields development and wider infrastructure concerns linked to it.

Alongside that, there have been practical improvements around the village too — including fencing repairs and replacement work at The Ease, resurfacing work around the Moat footpaths, maintenance to trees and play equipment, new signage, and continued upkeep of parish-managed areas.

We've also welcomed new councillors onto the council during the year, which is encouraging and badly needed.

But we also need to be honest: recruitment remains a real issue.

At times, the council has been operating with very small numbers, and there is a genuine risk that without enough councillors, meetings cannot legally go ahead and decisions affecting the village cannot be made.

And I'll be honest—if turning up was as popular as having an opinion online, we'd have a full council and a waiting list.

The reality is that parish councils are run by ordinary people volunteering their time alongside jobs, families, and everything else life throws at them. None of us are experts in everything. We're simply people trying to do our best for the village.

We also need to be realistic about what a parish council can and cannot do. We can represent residents, push for action, maintain local assets, and try to influence decisions—but we do not control everything that happens.

That said, I do think this council has shown resilience over the last year. We've kept things moving, we've kept representing the village, and we've brought some stability during what could easily have become a much more difficult period.

Looking ahead, I think our priorities are clear:

- Continue pushing for progress on flooding and drainage
- Keep representing residents on planning and infrastructure matters
- Continue maintaining and improving village spaces
- Support the Community Led Plan and encourage residents to engage with it
- And, most importantly, encourage more people to get involved in the council and wider community efforts

If you care about what happens in Hadnall, this is your opportunity. You do not need special qualifications or experience. You just need to care enough to step forward.

Finally, thank you to everyone who contributes to village life — councillors, volunteers, residents, and our Clerk. A strong community does not happen by accident. It only works because people are willing to give their time and effort to it.

Tom Dickson

18 May 2026