

## STANDISH VOICE VICE CHAIR'S REPORT – 2021 AGM

It has been a busy year for Standish Voice despite us not being able to do some of the things we had planned due to the pandemic.

As well as the initiatives Gill has outlined we also saw the success of one of our long-running campaigns to save the Crown pub with its reopening.

The new landlord has renovated the pub, and, despite COVID-19, it now has a bright future. I'd like to thank the Save The Crown campaign which we have helped over the past five years to retain this important building for Standish.

It has been a difficult time for all businesses and during the first lockdown we tried to help by launching the Support Standish website and Facebook page to give our businesses free publicity and encouragement. I would like to thank Nettle marketing agency, of Wigan, for helping to establish this free of charge to us and the village's businesses.

Those businesses, unfortunately, could not benefit from the Christmas Market this year. We were ready to go for the Market on December 5<sup>th</sup> until the beginning of September, but regrettably then had to take the correct decision to cancel the event.

No money was lost, and we still have a healthy contingency fund to use for future Christmas markets. As the months unfold we will be deciding what we can stage – but we do hope a normal Market can go ahead.

Instead, in December we staged a digital Christmas Market with videoed entertainment from schools, singers, bands and comedians, virtual traders and competitions. I'd like to thank everyone who took part and joined in, especially our Market Committee and Kathy and Ian who spent many hours organising the festivities.

In the year ahead I hope we can restart our monthly public meetings, which have been suspended since last March; we will continue to monitor the much-delayed Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, which is important for the future of Standish's Green Belt; and we shall encourage people to engage with the consultation on Wigan Council's plans for infrastructure improvements across the village.

We will be using our newsletters to members and social media for this. We now have 10,000 followers on Facebook with only eight people being banned from using it due to breaches of our rules.

This very low number is reflective of the terrific community spirit across our village, which has been exemplified during this very difficult year.

Finally, I'd like to thank Gill for her continued leadership and wise counsel, our committee for sticking with things despite so many difficulties, Nic MacMillan who is standing down from the committee for her high quality work on the Neighbourhood Plan and commitment to our vision for Standish.

Thanks too to our councillors and all the volunteers who have been part of Standish Coronavirus Help, which has been a beacon of hope for many in our village during 2020.