

Standish Voice 2026 AGM – Vice Chair's 2025 report

Thanks Gill.

I just want to speak about a few other things Standish Voice has been involved with this year.

The main one is obviously Standish Christmas Market, which is now firmly part of the village's calendar and one of the biggest annual one-day events in Wigan borough.

2025 saw another successful Market and despite the wet weather, thousands of people enjoyed the day. It was the year, I think, when businesses across the village truly embraced the Market, putting on their own celebrations and making memories as well as money.

Our Market committee is stronger than ever, led brilliantly by Kathy, as are the Market's finances, which are now in a state to withstand substantial shocks, and ensure the event continues well into the future. Indeed, this year's Market will be a 10th anniversary event and we'll try to make it even more special.

So, thanks to the committee: Kathy, Ian, Claire, Jacquie, Chris, Bernie, Steve, Debbie, Heidi, Sarah, Judith, Jean and Diane. And also Karen for processing all the payments. Thanks to everyone who volunteered and our generous sponsors.

Standish Voice also supported Save Standish Spire and we were pleased to see the work completed on time and on budget with just days to go before the Christmas Market. The church now has another huge architectural challenge, with death watch beetle in its roof, and Standish Voice will be supporting them in overcoming that.

We helped to establish a new Friends of Ashfield group, who will have responsibility to improve the park and adjoining Victoria Pit reclamation area – and who we will work alongside on this.

This year, we also supported Standish St Wilfrid's Football Club with sponsorship and publicity for their campaign to improve their facilities at their ground at The Convent. Hopefully, the improvements being undertaken at their pitch will propel them into a higher division next season.

So, I too would like to thank the Standish Voice committee for their hard work for the village this year, especially Gill who leads us ably and who represented us at important hearings and with the council with tenacity and expertise.

Thanks very much to you all, too, for supporting us by attending today.