

Annual Report Presented to the Annual Parish Meeting 15th May 2019

The Parish Council continues to take a high-profile role in the village. Though statutory responsibilities are few, we continue with many non-statutory roles and have extended these during the year. With the higher profile comes increase workload. Many from outside the village and some residents and businesses see the Parish Council as all powerful and responsible for everything which of course is certainly not the case. We are happy to pass the issues raised with us to the responsible authorities or individual though. As you will see from the list below, we have been involved in a variety of activities that hopefully will have brought an improvement to both the environment of the village and quality of life in Matlock Bath.

Summer tower florals	Facebook page	hedge planting
Flower barrels	Twitter account	clearing
Cattle trough florals	Quarterly newsletters	Surveys
Rose garden	Press releases	Awarding Grants
Residents litter picking	Pro Loco Art competition	Planning issues
Dog 'poo' picking	Photography competition	Advice / support for residents
Footpath maintenance	Presentation ceremony	Liaising & Lobbying
Winter service scheme	Remembrance	Peak Leader grant
Bus shelter maintenance	Singing round the Tree	Winter lighting
Signage maintenance	Seniors' lunch	Christmas tree
Bench plaques	Station adoption	Summer activity area
Bench maintenance	Nature Reserve:	
Website management	maintenance	

With two resignations and one new co-opted member this year, there are now eight Councillors serving. We encourage volunteers to help with the work of the Parish Council on a casual basis as well as serving on our Committees. Copies of all Committee notes and Parish Council Minutes can be found on our website. The Parish Council's thanks go to all our volunteers for the hard work they put into the work of the Parish Council for the benefit of the village.

Parish Council Budget – A budget for 2018/2019 of £64,376 was set by Full Council in January 2018 based on recommendations on spending needs from each of the Committees. This included £24,836 ringfenced funding. The precept requested was £28,000, the difference was met from the carry forward from 2017/2018. The budget set for 2019/2020 is £36,510 with a ringfence of £45,523. The precept request was £28,000.

Finance and General Purposes Committee - This Committee oversees the *finances* of the Parish Council and also deals with *employee and personnel issues*. As well as managing its own budget, the Finance Committee oversees the budgets of all the other Committees and the financial planning of the Council. The Finance Committee this year has recommended to Full Council grant awards to Matlock Bath Bowls Club, Matlock Bath Development Association, Derbyshire Sub Aqua for the Boxing Day Raft Event and the Children's Christmas Party.

Details of the Income and Expenditure for each financial year can be found on our website.

Planning Committee – In the past year the Parish Council has considered many planning and tree work applications. The Planning Committee consider each application in detail and the merits or detriments of each one assessed. Although the Parish Council has only an *advisory role* on planning issues, we feel that this area is important for the village. We have local knowledge pertinent to the needs of the village all of which is in a conservation area and covered by other planning regulations. The Committee has met regularly and sometimes had on site meetings to look at planning applications. It also met with DDDC planning officers to both lobby and seek advice and clarification.

Environment & Conservation Committee – This Committee deals with anything to do with the **environment and conservation** in the village including the **Nature Reserve, florals** around the village, **footpaths** and any other issues. There has not been any volunteer work in the Nature Reserve this year and as a result we had to secure the services of Derbyshire Wildlife Trust volunteers for one day who cleared large areas of brambles which had become intrusive. They also removed small unwanted self-set trees. A further day's work was paid for by the Parish Council to keep the meadow area clear.

The 'year-round colour' hedge planted on the border with the New Bath Hotel is growing; our volunteers will monitor the failing specimens and replace as necessary.

The Parish Council has continued to provide **four three tier planters** along the Parades. In addition, three **flowering barrels** opposite Masson Mills and at the bottom of Clifton Road together with the Rose Garden in Memorial Gardens which have been planted and maintained by a local resident. There is also the cattle trough and area around it on the A6 which again was planted and maintained by a local resident. An increasing number of residents have asked to be involved in **litter picking** around the village including a young resident undertaking his Duke of Edinburgh bronze award. Litter picks have been provided by the Parish Council as well as DDDC as part of the annual national litter picking initiative. Residents continue to be involved in **dog 'poo' picking** in order to keep the village clean and tidy.

As part of the Rights of Way Minor Maintenance Scheme, the Parish Council arranged for a number of **footpaths** to be cleared. Although the Parish Council receives a small grant for this work, it is supplemented by a budget each year to enable us to clear more paths than would normally be possible.

In 2018, the Parish Council again joined the **Winter Service Scheme** operated by Derbyshire County Council. This scheme provides free 'grit' to the Parish Council to distribute to residents/businesses who sign up to be a volunteer to clear snow and ice from footpaths during the winter months. Although the scheme is very successful with businesses, only a few residents have signed up.

Facilities Committee - This Committee oversees the **sports area, bus shelters, benches, signage** and the **war memorial**.

The Parish Council once again arranged for the bus shelters, village signs and noticeboards to be cleaned regularly.

As residents are aware the sports area has been closed for around 3 years now due to the fact it is unusable as an activity area. In order to boost the sports area budget in preparation for the renovation, in 2018 we invited applicants to submit proposals to put on a children's exercise area/fair. This brought in a good rent which has been ringfenced and will be used to renovate the sports area. The area will be also rented out in 2019 with a view to the renovation project starting at the end of 2019/beginning of 2020.

Communications Committee - The **website** continues to be a popular way of communicating. The website contains a vast amount of information enabling us to keep residents up to date with village life and some of this information is mirrored on our **Facebook** page. Both are updated on a regular basis and are extremely reactive tools. News items also are 'tweeted'

Our main vehicle of regular communication with residents continues to be the quarterly **Newsletter**, a hard copy of which is delivered by hand by again some willing volunteers to every resident and business in the village as well as being published on the website. It continues to be well received. The uptake of advertisements in the Newsletter has once again been constant – the income from which offsets the printing costs.

Activities Committee - The Parish Council has for many years promoted 'village' activities, some of which have been open to the wider community. We have continued this promotion both as a community service and to promote Matlock Bath to the wider world. The **Pro Loco Art Competition** has attracted many entries over the years.

The ninth **Photography Competition** again proved very successful. With 150 entries made which we had to shortlist to 87, a task which proved near impossible for the Shortlisting Committee. With the high standard of pictures, we are able to use many of the entries in our publicity material, website etc. Both competitions have attracted sponsorship from various sources including Sir Richard Arkwright Masson Mills and Heights of Abraham. In addition, sponsorship money was received for 'specialist' photographs from Derbyshire Dales District Council (Illuminations) and Holy Trinity Church.

In November a joint **presentation ceremony** for both of the competitions was held at The New Bath, sponsored once again by Heights of Abraham and The New Bath Hotel. It was a chance to bring together all the winners in both competitions and was very well received by those attending. We also invited our volunteers in order to acknowledge the work they do on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council is very proud to work with representatives of the British Legion to facilitate the **Remembrance** at the War Memorial. With 2018 being a special year in that Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day fell on the same day, it was agreed that the service would be held in the morning with the two minute silence at 11.00 am. Rev Pauline Key attended on behalf of Holy Trinity Church. Wreaths were laid by two schoolchildren and a former resident, who is still serving, on behalf of the village.

2018 saw a new initiative from the British Legion – poppies on lampposts. The Parish Council took up the chance to purchase some poppies. The Parish Council is grateful to The Hall Family who sponsored some of the poppies and also put up them up

Our Christmas event – **Singing Round the Tree** – again proved very popular and it was good to see so many residents coming together at this time of year. Music was provided by John Phillips on guitar and Gerry Kreibech on keyboards and audio by MDS. The event was then followed by a buffet hosted by The Midland and funded by the Parish Council.

December saw the eighth **Seniors Lunch** held at The New Bath Hotel. It was enjoyed by 34 residents. The food was outstanding and it was good to see so many 'senior' residents attending.

Matlock Bath Development Association

Though a body independent from the Parish Council, this was born out of the Parish Council initiative with Derby University – the Into the Future project. In addition, what MBDA do is closely aligned with the work of the Parish Council so we work collaboratively and supportively.

Peak Leader Grant Application

Following the installation of our Phase 1 lighting – festoons from Memorial Gardens to Jubilee Bridge, arrangements for our Phase 2 were put in place. In readiness for Christmas 2018, three cross river decorations and three further trees with lights in them were installed. The remainder of the lighting – one further cross river and festoons on the Riverside from Jubilee Bridge to the play area will also be installed.

We continue to work on installing two new fingerposts and four information lecterns in the village. We are currently waiting the necessary permissions.

Toilets

In 2018 following the closure of the Pavilion Toilets, a consortium of interested parties namely – Grand Pavilion, Matlock Bath Development Association, Accessible Derbyshire, Matlock Bath Town Team, Mining Museum and the Parish Council – was set up. An expression of interest form was submitted to RDPE for a grant to re-build these toilets with a Changing Places facility. The application was approved and shortly a full application will be submitted. This project is being led by The Grand Pavilion but with support from the other parties.

Travellers – In January of this year we saw the arrival of one of the regular traveller families in the village. Unfortunately, this attracted the arrival of further families. The Parish Council has written formally to the District Council to enforce the need of an authorised traveller site in the area. DDDC has agreed to look into putting a barrier system on the car parks. It is hoped that this will come to fruition to prohibit illegal use by travellers.

And we also

As well as the work of the Committees, we have representatives on various bodies including The Derwent Valley Rail Partnership, footpaths and the DDDC Illuminations Liaison Committee. We meet with DDDC officers every three months to raise issues formally and receive feedback. We lobby the higher tiers of local government (County and District Councils) on a regular basis on behalf of residents and on general issues of concern in Matlock Bath from water leaking onto the highway to dangerous trees, from the provision of grit bins to litter and refuse.

Once again, our adopters of Matlock Bath station planted and maintained planters and barrels with summer bedding and winter flowering and cleared and developed the bed in front of the platform. DCC provided and planted the hayracks making the station a wonderful sight for all.

The Parish Council would like to thank our District Councillors, Cllr Garry Purdy and Cllr Joyce Pawley along with our County Councillor, Cllr Irene Ratcliffe for their work in keeping us up-to-date with what is happening at District and County Council levels and for all the lobbying they have done on our behalf.

The Future

The future for the village is exciting. We have the Matlock Bath Development Association working hard to bring new money and life into the village. This is crucial as the help and support we receive from both the District and County Councils is diminishing due to lack of finance. Thanks go to all those who have worked so hard in everything we do for the village and, of course, to those who selflessly give their time to act as Councillors or volunteers with the only reward being that we do it to make Matlock Bath a better place to live, to work and to visit.