

## Annual Report Presented to the Annual Parish Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020

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: maintenance	Climate Emergency
Website management		

With currently have seven 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 2019/2020 of £38,860 and ringfenced funding of £45,323 was set by Full Council in January 2019 based on recommendations on spending needs from each of the Committees. The precept requested was £28,000, the difference was met from the carry forward from 2018/2019. The budget set for 2020/2021 is £37,300 with a ringfence of £51,388. The majority of the ringfence being allocated for the renovation of the sports area. 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 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 2019, 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.

We once again rented out the **sports area** in 2019 to bring in more funding to go towards the renovation project. This rent was ringfenced to be used for the renovation. Quotations for work have been received and a decision on the contractor will be decided shortly with a view to the work starting as soon as possible. We were fortunate to receive a grant of £3,490 from Better Derbyshire which will also go towards the renovation.

**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 offset some of 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 tenth **Photography Competition** again proved very successful. With over 150 entries made, 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), The Grand Pavilion and Holy Trinity Church.

In November a joint **presentation ceremony** for both of the competitions was held at The New Bath. 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. Once again the service in 2019 was held in the morning with the two minute silence at 11.00 am. Rev Nick Grayshon attended on behalf of Holy Trinity Church. Two wreaths were laid by on behalf of the children of the village and the village.

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 with audio by MDS. Mulled wine was provided by Mad Hatters followed by a buffet provided by Forget Me Not and funded by the Parish Council.

December saw the ninth **Seniors Lunch** held at The New Bath Hotel. It was enjoyed by 29 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.

Directors have agreed that the provision of toilets should be a longer term project. This will give the Development Association time to raise the necessary funding prior to applying for further grants. During this time, planning permissions and plans will be drawn up and submitted followed by a big launch for the project itself.

### **Peak Leader Grant Application**

June saw the final installation of the winter lighting. Unfortunately during the storms in November, part of the festoon lighting was brought down by a tree falling from Lovers Walks. Thanks to a local electrician and a cherry picker, the broken festoon was removed and replaced.

The two new fingerposts and four information lecterns in the village will be installed as soon as possible. They were ready to be despatched in March but unfortunately just missed the lockdown. Once these have been installed, this will complete the Peak Leader Application.

### **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.

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**

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.