

## **Over Haddon Parish Meeting**

### **Chair's Report April 2020**

Councillors this year have been myself as Chair, Penny Aitken (Vice-Chair), Zena Hawley, Sally Mosley and Steve Pope. Mathew Lovell has continued as Clerk to the Council this year, and we thank him for all his hard work.

It has been a busy and eventful year for the Parish Council, until everything came to a grinding halt following the widespread cessation of activities from mid-March 2020 as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.

The dispute which the parish council has had with Derbyshire Dales District Council over the public toilets on the car park in Over Haddon has continued throughout the year without resolution. The parish council continue to pay for cleaning the toilets in order to keep them open, despite this being a facility for tourists and visitors who, through their associated income generation, benefit the wider District and the National Park, rather than our own small community. Nevertheless, we see it as the right thing to do, although at some stage it will have to be put before the local electorate due to the high proportion of the parish precept taken by the cost of maintaining the toilets.

A more positive initiative this year has been the proposal, in conjunction with Derby College, to develop the “wooded copse” at the junction of Main Street and Wellgate Lane, as a community garden. The college has agreed to carry out the work, seen as providing a multi-disciplinary learning experience, whilst the parish council will pay for the cost of materials used for the work. A broad scheme was agreed with the team from the college, which was presented at a public meeting held in the village hall in November, attended by about 30 people, and which received enthusiastic support. A follow-up questionnaire confirmed the general support, whilst providing a wide range of further suggestions about the site, to be taken on board by the college team. It was also decided that the site should be given its historic name of “the Plantation.” Whilst some initial dry-stone walling work has been carried out, implementation of the main scheme awaits planning permission and, of course, the relaxation of the pandemic restrictions.

An additional small amenity has been achieved in the form of a new bench, in memory of a former walker, placed adjacent to the historic village pump and well, and the site of the main well dressing display.

The parish council contributed to the Peak District National Park's “Parish Statements” document by adding a set of Community Aspirations relating to the village and parish of Over Haddon, which will form part of the policy framework adopted by the National Park.

We were involved with a scheme to encourage members of the local community to express interest in housing need in conjunction with the Derbyshire Dales District Council housing enabler and the Peak Rural Housing Association. The council also co-operated with a volunteer scheme for litter collection organised by our local District councillor Mark Wakeman. In addition, as part of the statutory planning process the council commented upon seven planning applications over the course of the year.

Finally, the parish council, in conjunction with the Over Haddon Village Hall Committee, held a public meeting in the village hall in early March to discuss the implications of the climate and ecology crises, which was well attended and threw up a number of interesting possible local initiatives on these issues. Fortunately, the meeting was held one day after a meeting for small parish councils from throughout the county of Derbyshire to discuss the same issues.

Hopefully the positive projects which we, as a parish council, are supporting, can resume when the present national emergency has been brought under control.

Roger Truscott  
Chairman