

DUFFIELD PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMANS REPORT - APRIL 2020

It was with deepest regret that Duffield Parish Council announced the death of its Chairman, Councillor Colin Thompson, from the effects of Covid-19, at the age of 69, on the 5th April.

The Chairman's Report was published before this date for the Annual Parish Meeting, and still stands as testament to all that Colin achieved in his tenure as Chairman of the Parish Council.

Vice-Chairman Councillor Roger Harrison's tribute to Colin can be found elsewhere in the Scene.

The Parish Council has seen some changes and challenges in the previous 12 months. Following the local election in May 19, the Council was formed with eight new Councillors on board and a change of leadership. Both new and serving Councillors have worked well together to bring about improvements and events in the village. A by-election was also held in November, bringing the first ever Green party representative to the Council.

Weston Centre

The Parish Council has provided funding for staffing and operational costs for the RJ Weston Charity whilst it changes its trustee status, and this will continue in 2020/21.

We continue to help fund the Good Neighbour project in 2020, allocating £1000 for the group which works to improve the lives of the over-50s in Duffield.

Grants

The Parish Council awarded £500 to support the Arts Festival, and £1000 to DCA for bulb planting, which has led to the impressive display of daffodils you will have noticed around the village this spring.

New Duffield Action Plan 2020 – Consultation event and survey

The Duffield Action Plan, which sets the priorities for improvements in the village, was launched in 2015. The Parish Council is now refreshing that Plan and this involves consulting with residents to find out their views. This began with a consultation event held in February and more consultation, using traditional and online surveys as well as face to face meetings, will be taking place to bring the plan up-to-date.

The revised plan will be issued later this year. To take part in the consultation and read the previous plan visit <https://www.duffieldparishcouncil.gov.uk/duffield-action-plan.html>

Events

The Parish Council has run its own events in 2019 as well as supporting village events run by others including the Duffield Community Association's Carnival, Duffield Arts Festival (organised by Jonathan Leach) and The Eyes Have It music festival (organised by Simon Clark).

Movies in the Meadow – The Council saw a good turnout thanks to fine weather in mid-September with over 1000 people visiting on two evenings to watch Bohemian Rhapsody and Grease.

Eyes Meadow Fireworks Display – This was well-attended as always, with a spectacular display put on at Eyes Meadow for Bonfire night.

Despite the recent Coronavirus outbreak leading to a number of events and activities having to be cancelled, the Parish Council very much hopes to see further events taking place later in the year including the Movies in the Meadow event in September and the Fireworks night in November.

Gray Recreation Ground

A basketball hoop was installed to complement the play facilities at Gray's Rec and has been well-used by local children.



Floral Hanging Baskets

Floral displays were installed along Town Street in the summer, thanks to generous sponsorship by local businesses The White Hart; Katie Weeds Hair Design; Chevin Homes; Chevin Golf Club, Meadowvale Carpets; and Lecaw Electrical Services. Our sincere thanks to these businesses for their contribution.



Eyes Meadow Improvements

The area in front of the changing rooms was given a facelift with a patio area created for seating for summer events.

In addition, the installation of lighting in the meadow has made the area safer and more pleasant for all, especially during night time events such as the fireworks display.

The approach road to Eyes Meadow, Donald Hawley Way, has been completely resurfaced and the speed humps repainted.



Anti-Social Behaviour

In common with many neighbourhoods, the village continues to experience intermittent issues with anti-social behaviour, and the Council continues to work with the Police and others to present a united front in tackling these issues. Community Walks were set up by the Council and Neighbourhood Watch have now taken over these which are well attended. In addition the Council employed a private security firm to make patrols and give feedback on problem areas where necessary.



Climate Change

The Parish Council has declared a "Climate Emergency" and has pledged to decrease our own CO² emissions and encourage others to do the same. The council pledges to take climate impact into consideration in relation to all its decisions and actions. The Parish Council is fully supporting the community group "Plastic Free Duffield" which is raising awareness on reducing the amount of single use, throwaway plastics that cause environmental damage and create litter in the village.

Coronavirus

The Council has found different ways of working to ensure it continues to support the village. Please keep safe and well and we look forward to welcoming you back to Council Meetings in person soon, in the meantime however please join our remotely held meetings if you can.

THANKS.....

- To everyone in Duffield who continues to support the objectives of the Council, and particularly the village volunteers: the many individuals who carry out litter picking, keep an eye out for elderly neighbours, run village clubs and organisations, help coach sports activities, or volunteer for the Carnival Committee; to members of the DCA, Women's Institute, uniformed organisations and others, our sincere thanks.
- My fellow Councillors for their tireless work on behalf of the community.
- To the Council staff:
 - Kath Gruber, Parish Clerk, for her service to the village, giving her commitment and dedication to the ever-varied and demanding role of Parish Clerk.
 - Jackie Clements, who keeps the communication channels open and informative. Congratulations to Jackie who has recently stepped into the role of Assistant Clerk.
 - Michael Forkin, Village Warden, who continues to work very hard ensuring that our village, grounds and Cemetery look their best.
 - Sarah Brooksby, the previous Assistant Clerk who took on the role of the Weston Centre Strategic Development Manager at the end of 2019.

I'd also like to give a warm welcome to our two new members of staff:

- Michael Antonio Hutchinson who joined the Council in February 2020 as Village Grounds Worker. He is ably assisting the Village Warden with his work,
- Claire Gillman, our Apprentice shared with Belper Town Council, who also joined us in November 2019.