

This is the **Dalbury Lees Parish Council annual report for 2017 / 2018**. It has been agreed with Parish Councillors who have been consulted in its preparation.

Sadly this year Des Jackson, one of the founder members of the Parish Council and previously chair of the Parish Meeting, died as did Stuart Holmes who was Clerk to the Council. Both made significant positive contributions to our community.

Like last year, this report of the activities of the council has been split by new projects, maintenance, planning and administration.

An additional grant was applied for and obtained by Phil Coultas to cover the second year costs of the Parish Council website (a Government Transparency requirement). Unfortunately from now on the costs will need to be covered from Parish Council resources. Legal guidance to formalise the ownership of the Allotment Field has continued. As advised steps are being taken to establish a Charitable Trust to manage the Allotment Field as a whole and formalise its ownership within the Trust with a deed about to be completed. A year ago a defibrillator was procured for the Parish by Ruth Slack. The current plan is to install it in the telephone box on the village Green. Unfortunately the device procured requires a power supply to keep it warm and ready for use. To date investigations have not been able to confirm continuity of electricity supply to the telephone box and the annual power supply cost is not clear but it is likely to be a lot less than £100. The Snow Patrol did not have enough community volunteers step forward to register it under the County Council Winter Service Scheme. The salt and related materials acquired last year to help keep the pavement in Lees ice free was used several times this winter by the only two remaining volunteers. (Steve Trowbridge, in particular, and Phil Coultas; sadly the third volunteer Bill Allen, died last year.) A grant was obtained through the Community Fund managed by Derbyshire County Councillor, Julie Patten, to cover the cost of a composting facility to be installed at the top of the allotments. Colin Timmins has now completed this project. In September last year Ruth Slack presented information obtained from Chesterfield Police regarding Neighbourhood Watch schemes. The Parish Council is soon to ask the Parish whether there is enough interest in re-launching a scheme - we are awaiting a template to adapt for this.

Gerry Williams has been managing the maintenance which has been carried out regarding grass cutting at both the village green and the allotments. Weed killer was also applied to the Village Green in 2017. Discussions with the district council have drawn a blank despite the initial promising discussions Phil Coultas had with the Chief Exec of the district council at a public meeting. The Chief Exec suggested that a new contractor might be able to provide an enhanced service but this came to nought. The gutters on the main road in Lees were sprayed with weed killer by Colin Timmins and this has served to suppress weed growth. Vegetation at the entrance to several rights of way in the Parish has been pruned back. The hedge around the allotments has also been cut thanks to Jim Archer. Fortunately a reported leak to the water supply at the allotments was not a lasting problem. A gate post to the allotments was replaced. The Parish Council re-appointed two local members of the German Pole Trust (the third member is appointed by the senior Dalbury Church representative). The Silver and Golden Jubilee benches were renovated by Phil Coultas. The Village Green notice board is continuing to deteriorate and further stop gap repairs are planned in addition to the backing being coated in thick black paint by Gerry Williams. Issues have just arisen with respect to the telephone box:- the door is now catching and a pane of glass has been broken. As well as addressing these issues the intent is to re-paint it this year.

The Planning Application and subsequent Premises Licence application for the approved wedding venue at Grange Field's Farm were submitted for review. Unfortunately despite much comment from Parishioners, our neighbours in Osleston and the Parish Council these applications were largely approved by SDDC. Phil Coultas spoke at the Planning Meeting with Andrew Tomkins and Phil Coultas both speaking at the SDDC

Premise Licence meeting in SDDC Swadlincote but their points of view were largely dismissed. There have been a number of planning applications within the parish including Talland (rear balcony), Mullion House and Mulbury House (retention of front boundary walls), Moston (house extension). The Village Green has been (re-) confirmed as a Local Green Space which helps protect it from future development. In early 2018 outline planning applications were made for two houses above the School House and one below Grange View. There were two SDDC Planning Meetings held to consider these applications. Colin Timmins spoke against each application at each meeting on behalf of the Parish Council. Phil Coultas also attended the second planning meeting. Both applications were approved. Concerns have been raised regarding parking around The Cow and the Green - advice was sought from the police and they have advised that people with particular concerns should telephone the police on 101 at the time.

On the administration front there has been 6 parish council meetings since the last annual parish meeting. The council has reviewed and updated its financial risk assessment, standing orders, asset register. As the year has progressed a list of activities the council does on a regular basis is being accumulated to remind the council regarding what needs to be done when of its repeating actions. As required by the Transparency Code the council maintained its website, latterly and largely through the efforts of Margaret Fox (our Parish Council clerk) taking over the reins from Phil Coultas, enabling interested parties to keep abreast on parish council affairs and access information on the services provided by the Parish, South Derbyshire District Council and Derbyshire County Council.

A big thanks is due to our clerk, Margaret Fox, for helping the Parish Council manage its business in the right way and to our two South Derbyshire District Councillors, Lisa Brown and David Muller, together with our Derbyshire County Councillor, Julie Patten, for advising and supporting the Parish Council in local Government matters.

Dalbury Lees Parish Council ideally needs 5 councillors to operate and currently has a vacancy - would interested parties please contact any of the current parish councillors or the clerk if they would like to know more about what is entailed. A positive interest can be lodged with the clerk by means of a CV and a covering letter. It is an ideal time to volunteer as the Parish Council has only one year of its term in office left i.e. the commitment is one year only.

Phil Coultas
Chair Dalbury Lees Parish Council 2017-18