



# DISLEY PARISH COUNCIL

**Richard Holland** *Disley Parish Clerk*

Tel: 01663 762726

Email: [admin@disleyparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:admin@disleyparishcouncil.org.uk)

Web: [www.disleyparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.disleyparishcouncil.org.uk)

Twitter: [@disleypc](https://twitter.com/disleypc)



## **Disley Parish Council Annual Report**

Chair's Review of Disley Parish Council's (DPC) activities for 2019-20 prepared by Cllr. Jackie Pattison.

### **Introduction**

The Annual Parish Meeting scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020 was cancelled due to government recommendations regarding Covid-19 and social distancing.

For the same reasons, it was necessary for the Community Centre & Library to be closed from week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> March and at the time of writing, government recommendations remain in place. DPC has been unable to operate from the Community Centre but staff and councillors have continued to carry out Council services and work remotely whilst considering social distancing requirements and Cllr. Pattison wishes to thank them all for their support and cooperation during this difficult time.

#### **1. Election of Officers for the year 2019/20**

At the Annual Parish Council Meeting held in May 2019, Cllr. Jackie Pattison was elected Chair, Cllr. Sue Adams was elected Vice-chair, Cllr. Cath Birchall was elected Chair of the Finance Committee and Cllr. Sue Adams was elected Chair of the Planning Committee for the year 2019/20.

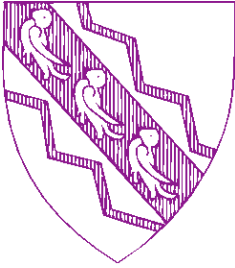
The newly formed council set up project groups for major activities which report back to full council at regular intervals.

DPC held a Strategic Planning Day at Lyme Hall for all councillors and staff to discuss the contents of a Disley & Newtown Corporate Strategy to outline the purpose, vision and goals of the Council over the next 3/4 years. The completion of this strategy has been delayed but DPC hopes to complete and publish the document in summer 2020.

#### **2. Disley Parish Council Services and activities**

**Community Centre:** DPC has carried out 2 important improvement projects - to repair the roof and replace the heating system.

In the past year, 55 groups booked the community hall including several new Saturday coffee morning hirers and 2 new regular hirers. This represented a reduction of 2 hirers from the previous year. One of the hirers booked the community hall for 52 weeks of the year providing an opportunity for a regular income flow.



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There were also bookings from Cheshire East Council for health and well-being events relating to falls prevention and dementia drop-in sessions. We were also delighted to have taken 15 private bookings for children's birthday parties and family celebrations. We continue to receive new hirer enquiries and the community hall bookings are almost at full capacity on weekdays and Saturday mornings. However, there is still some availability on Saturday afternoons and Sundays.

DPC has maintained a good working relationship with the Cheshire East Council library service and staff and regularly utilised the Library space and the small meeting room. This room was also available for hire and for the PCSO to hold surgeries and carry out desk work.

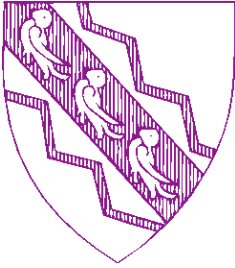
**Village Handyman Service:** The Handyman Service continued to maintain and improve the village's appearance and look after the Council's assets. Projects and response work have included:

- installing a WW1 silhouette at the Memorial Park.
- creating a new base for a bench on Buxton Old Road.
- emergency removal of a fallen tree on Jackson's Edge Road.
- installing a new manhole cover at Newtown playing fields.
- relocating a cast iron planter at Hollinwood Road/A6 junction.
- Building, installing and lighting a beacon for the WW1 commemorations event held in Lyme Park.
- installing a new storage unit at the Community Centre.
- maintaining play equipment in the parks.
- carrying out tree management safety work.

The Council purchased a van in 2018 to provide the Handyman Service with more flexibility to undertake community tasks and to raise awareness of Parish Council services.

**Community Bus Scheme:** DPC's Community Bus Scheme has been suspended until government recommendations are relaxed and risk assessments regarding social distancing have been carried out.

The Scheme started in 2012 to improve accessibility using a second-hand vehicle donated by Cheshire East Council. A new Fiat Ducato minibus was purchased in 2018/19 and takes up to 14 passengers and has a rear tail lift and wheelchair anchors to allow better accessibility.



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There are currently 14 volunteer drivers and three further volunteers on the waiting list who will hopefully, be trained later in the year. DPC Admin Assistant, Helen Richards has carried out splendid work in administering the scheme with efficiency, patience and kindness.

43 new individual members signed up during 2019/20 giving a total membership of 258 members of which approximately 105 are regular users. There are 34 group members with 13 new members during 2019/20 including two youth groups and three sports groups. Weekly trips continue to be very popular and have included new destinations such as Llangollen, Saltaire, Port Sunlight, Wedgewood and the Shire Horse Centre in addition to the old favourites like Bury, Skipton, Bents Garden Centre and Chatsworth Christmas Market. Monthly pub lunch outings are also popular and included new venues such as Platform One, Romiley, The Barrel Inn, Eyam and the Devonshire Arms, Mellor. A number of half-day trips have also been well attended, including Handforth Dean, John Lewis and Parkers' and Wilmslow garden centres.

The weekly Shoppers Group remained an important door-to-door service and has now operated for over 18 months, taking a regular group of less-mobile shoppers to a supermarket on a weekly basis. Each passenger has an agreed pick-up time and the driver has a set route. The service is operated differently from the variety of trips which are organised monthly and are open to all Community Bus Scheme members. We continue to receive positive feedback from all passengers.

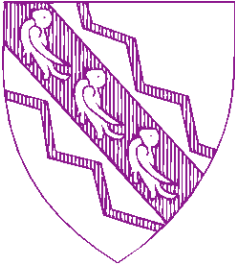
**Allotments:** There are 33 allotment plots across the three locations at Hagg Bank, Springfield and Greystones. There were some changes of tenants at renewal in 2020 when three allotment holders left, enabling new tenants from the waiting list to be accommodated. There is currently one vacant plot at Greystones and there are eight people on the waiting list, four of whom are waiting for a plot on Hagg Bank.

Two site inspections were carried out in Spring and Autumn to ensure allotments were being fully cultivated.

Work carried out during the year by the Council included new fencing at Hagg Bank to secure the site from sheep invasions, and hedge and tree pruning.

## **Parks:**

**Arnold Rhodes** – improvement works scheduled for completion in May will be continued as soon as possible. Feedback on works to date has been positive and an array of golden daffodils adorned the park in April. All works have been managed by ANSA and funding has come from S106 monies from the Duddy Road/Storey Road housing development.



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**Newtown** - plans for new sports changing rooms at Newtown were welcomed. Works were scheduled for completion in May and will be continued as soon as possible. All works have been managed by ANSA and, again, the funding has come from S106 monies from the Duddy Road/Storey Road development.

**Tree Management:** The Parish Council undertook a Trees Condition Assessment for all the trees within Council land in 2018. The report outlined the condition of all trees and highlighted any safety concerns. All Priority 2 (Moderate risk) have been made safe in 2019/20. This work was undertaken by a combination of specialist tree surgeons and the Village Handyman Service.

**Communications:** The Council's bi-monthly eBulletin now has 600 subscribers, receiving regular news updates and details of local events and meetings etc. A more regular Coronavirus eBulletin was distributed by the Council and has been well-received.

The Parish Council Twitter feed has nearly 340 followers and the Council now has a Facebook page at @disleyparishcouncil.

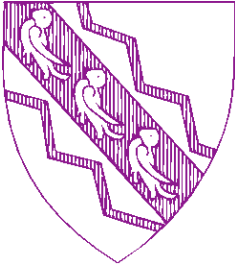
The Council continues to produce the hardcopy Disley News newsletter three times per year, and this is distributed to all homes and businesses in Disley and Newtown.

The Parish Council's website contains a wealth of local information such as business listings and is currently being updated for greater accessibility.

**Village Events:** A number of events organised by DPC were held during the year, including:

- the revamped and renamed Disley Parish Council Christmas Extravaganza
- a community litter pick
- community defibrillator training
- local business group meetings

**Planning:** during the year 2019/20, Cheshire East Council consulted the Parish Council on 55 planning applications. They also issued a wider consultation on a Draft Site Allocations Development Policy as part of the Cheshire East Local Plan to meet housing needs to 2030. The document which was approved by Cheshire East Council identified proposals for future housing in 12 Local Service Centres including Disley with a proposal to designate Safeguarded Land for housing on the edge of the green belt. The Parish Council ensured that this consultation was well publicised. The Parish Council, as a landowner, declared the Greystones allotment site as a site



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with a proviso that the allotments be relocated and improved in line with the Neighbourhood Plan. The document is now being considered by the Planning Inspectorate whose comments were due to be received in summer 2020.

**Civic Awards:** Each year the Parish Council presents awards to residents for outstanding volunteer work or for wider individual achievements. This year's awards were presented at the Civic Service which was held at St Mary's Church to:

**Les Matthews** - long-standing Chairman of Disley & Lyme Horticultural Society, who has been fundamental in keeping the society alive.

**Tom Farris** – a younger resident who has been a leader at First Disley Beavers since he became a scout.

**Margaret Burchett** – for her work on behalf of the weekly Cuppa an' a Chat group.

**David Kidd** – who served as a Parish Councillor for 8 years and as Chair of the Council for 5 years. As a member of Disley & Newtown Neighbourhood Plan and as member of village groups including St Mary's PCC and the Well Dressing Committee.

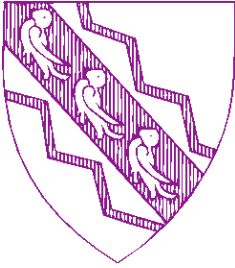
**Peter Fagan** – who has been working for Cuppa an' a Chat for over 10 years.

**Village enquiry service:** During the year, DPC dealt c150 enquiries – main issues included overgrown hedges and footpaths (12%), streetlighting (11%), drains and flooding (11%), potholes and pavement trip hazards (10%), fly tipping, dog waste, missed bin collections and graffiti. Signposting to Cheshire East Council and other agencies such as BT, United Utilities, The Environment Agency and Peaks & Plains Housing Trust. Regular contact with Highways secured the repair of many potholes. The Parish Council dealt with fallen tree branches across the A6 near Lyme Park bend and at the entrance to Peveril Gardens. We made safe a drystone wall which had been knocked over by a lorry onto the highway.

The Parish Council has dealt with many incidents of graffiti within the village, removing it as soon as possible. Cheshire Police confirmed that it has been a problem along the A6 corridor, and they were looking into the issue.

**Community Grants:** Parish Council grants were awarded to:

- Cheshire Police - Participation of Disley youths in football tournament (£25)
- Disley Methodist Church - External defibrillator unit at Methodist Church (£500)
- Disley Footpaths Society - Membrane for footpath improvements (£186)



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- Disley Runners - Running Leader course and banner flag (£270)
- Community Together - Room hire, materials, publicity for event (£250)
- Disley Community Choir - Purchase of sheet music (£150)

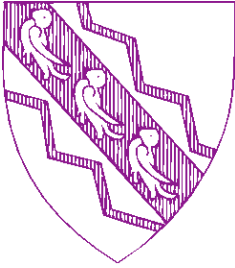
**Work placement student:** The Parish Council was delighted to host a student from Poynton High School for a week-long work experience in July 2019. The student was able to get an overview of all the Council's activities.

**Air Quality, A555 Mitigation & Traffic:** This remains a significant concern for Newtown and Disley which has a designated Air Quality Management Area on the A6. The opening of the A555 in 2018 has given rise to more concerns relating to increases in traffic, particularly HGVs, congestion and potential increases in pollution levels. Cheshire East Council is the principal authority with responsibility for monitoring and action planning to reduce vehicle pollution levels. The Parish Council, being the local contact point, continued to receive many enquires and complaints from residents. In response, the Council set up an Air Quality & Highways Improvements Project Group, which included local volunteers to help to identify local concerns and lobby for change.

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC), as the lead council on the construction of the A555, has carried out a 1 year on traffic count, as required under the terms of the planning consent. SMBC is currently assessing the results and a full report is due early in the summer. There is a perceived belief that there has been a substantial increase in traffic on A6 and all feeder roads.

Disley Parish Council has continued to lobby the Cheshire East Highways Team for details of the Stage 2 mitigation work in the village centre which had been rescheduled for 2019. This was not carried out despite reassurance from Cheshire East Council that £400,000 was still available for the works and DPC supported initial plans brought forward in January 2020.

**Speed Indicator Device (SID) Monitoring Programme:** Working in partnership with the Cheshire Police PCSO, the Parish Council's SID unit has been used to carry out regular traffic speed and volume monitoring at locations including on the A6, Buxton Old Road, Jackson's Edge Road, Hollinwood Road and Redhouse Lane. Where appropriate this information has been fed back to residents and Cheshire East Highways. DPC has also resolved to purchase a further SID unit and the PCSO has helped to set up a speed watch group to monitor traffic speeds on Buxton Old Road. Concerns have been raised about speeding vehicles on Jacksons Edge Road, particularly at peak times, and the PCSO has encouraged the residents to also set up a speed watch group in this area.



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## **Covid-19**

In mid-March 2020, Disley Parish Council started to recruit volunteers to support our community in response to the worsening Covid-19 situation. When lockdown was announced on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, recruitment of our Street Coordinators was almost complete. The next stage was to organise coordinators and other volunteers into six teams on a geographic basis. Each team set up its own WhatsApp group to facilitate communication between team members. The team structure has worked well when coordinators have needed to self-isolate or if there is lots of help needed on a particular street and there has always been someone available to step in and help when needed. Our volunteers have responded to many requests for help with shopping, collection of prescriptions, telephone support and other requests for help from residents. As we slowly come out of lockdown, the Street Coordinator Scheme continues to provide support as and when needed. Disley Parish Council would like to thank all our Street Coordinators and the numerous other volunteers who are supporting our community through these difficult times. The community response to the Covid-19 pandemic has been truly amazing in Disley and Newtown.

**Footpaths, Towpath Action Group & Friends of Disley Station:** All these community-led groups continue to do fantastic work around Disley and Newtown. Access to our wonderful countryside via the footpaths and the canal has been particularly important over the period of lockdown and I know that residents would wish to join me in sending special thanks to the hardworking members of these groups

And to end with some good news....

**Winners of Cheshire Best Kept Village Competition:** Disley & Newtown was awarded the prestigious Championship Award in the Cheshire Best Kept Village Competition 2019. This was a huge scoop for the village and a fantastic recognition for all the hard work that had been put into the village's appearance over the past 12 months.

As well as the main prize, the village also received a Little Gem Award for the Memorial Park on the A6 and won the individual prize in the Best Kept Village (Population 2,501 -5,000) category.

Disley Parish Council's thanks go to PRIDE, the Friends of Disley Station, Disley Parish Council officers, Disley WI, St. Mary's Church and the many individual residents who have contributed and helped to improve the environment around the village.