

Chairman's Report, May 2024

Scarcliffe Parish Council works to promote the well-being of the people of Hillstown, Palterton and Scarcliffe. Parish Councils are the level of government closest to the community and councillors are grateful for the support for our activities from members of the public.

Scarcliffe Parish elects eight Councillors, four representing the Hillstown area in the North and four representing Palterton and Scarcliffe in the South. All our Councillors are volunteers; they receive no payment for the work they undertake for the community.

In May 2023, a new council was elected to serve for a four-year term. Cllrs Crane, Young, Freeland and Clarke returned to be joined on the new council by Cllrs Rigg, Wood, Barnicoat and Fletcher-Swindlehurst.

Cllr John Young was elected as Chair and Cllr Rowan Clarke as Vice Chair. During the past twelve months the following actions were carried out:

Communication

The Council **Website** has been completely updated and expanded to provide more extensive information and news for parishioners.

We have a new **Parish noticeboard** for joint use with the Hillstown Miners Welfare Trustees.

For the first time since COVID the council has delivered a **newsletter** to all homes in the parish. This will be a twice-yearly event from now on.

Palterton Village Hall

The Hall's renovation is almost completed. This year it has benefitted from **additional comfortable seating**. A **card reader system** has been introduced to improve payment options at the bar.

Outside, **new planters** and seating are now installed to be filled with plants in the summer.

A dedicated **website and a Facebook page** have been established to help keep parishioners informed.

At Xmas Palterton Village Hall hosted several well-attended parties and concerts, including the Pantomime.

Environment

New trees have been planted along Steels Lane and hundreds of **new bulbs** placed in Hillstown, Palterton and Scarcliffe brightened up the early spring across the parish.

Hanging baskets have been ordered for each of the three villages and should be in place shortly.

The council has supported Hillstown and Palterton **allotment associations**. We greatly appreciate the hard work of all our allotment holders.

Maintenance and inspection have been carried out in respect of our **playgrounds** at Palterton and Scarcliffe and all our **bus shelters**.

Governance

The council revised all its **existing policies** to ensure they are up to date. In addition, **new policies** have been developed and adopted to cover Dignity at Work, Member Officer Protocol, Equality and Diversity, Freedom of Information, Privacy, Safeguarding, Complaints and Vexatious Complaints.

The **Human Resources Committee** has been re-established to support the council's staff. New policies have been adopted and systems improved. We are most grateful for the hard work and dedication of our Council Clerk, Brian Smyth, and his team: Liz Smyth, Daryl Stokes, Mavis Riley and Sharon Hall.

Grants

£2,500 was donated to **Hillstown Miners Welfare Trustees** to pay towards a disabled ramp.

Palterton Residents Association and **Scarcliffe Activities Committee** were each given grants of £500 to support Xmas activities for pensioners. £1,000 was allocated for Xmas presents for pensioners in **Hillstown**.

Projects

We are determined to provide better play facilities for our younger parishioners. Throughout the year the Council has been in dialogue with the Hillstown Miners Welfare Trustees on our proposal to fully fund a play area for 4 -12-year-olds on the recreation ground. Discussions are continuing and we will re-double our efforts to reach an agreement soon.

Events

In November Councillors laid wreaths at **Remembrance Day** ceremonies in Palterton and Scarcliffe. Silhouette statues were put on display and for the first time in many years the Council joined the ceremony at Bolsover to commemorate the fallen of Hillstown.

Planning

During the year Councillors have regularly reviewed **planning applications** and lodged responses with Bolsover District Council, objecting where we believe a proposal will not be beneficial for the area. We have regularly reported concerns about road safety to Derbyshire County Council.

Finance

The required financial audit was carried out and no concerns were raised. The Council has strong reserves, allowing us to keep **Council Tax** at the same level for the 4th successive year.

Cllr John Young
Chairman
May 2024