

Chair's Report, May 2025

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. We are particularly grateful to all those volunteers who helped us deliver magazines and Xmas parcels this year.

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 the annual election of officers, Cllr John Young was re-elected as Chair and Cllr Rowan Clarke as Vice Chair. Other members of the Council are Cllr Suzanne Barnicoat, Cllr Malc Crane, Cllr Joel Fletcher-Swindlehurst, Cllr Guy Freeland, Cllr Justin Rigg and Cllr Carol Wood. During the past twelve months the following actions were carried out:

Communication

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

A new **Parish noticeboard** is about to be installed at the junction of Mansfield Road and Langwith Road in Hillstown.

The 4th six-monthly **newsletter** has just been delivered to all homes in the parish.

Palterton Village Hall

Councillors also act as Trustees for Palterton Welfare, the charity which administers Palterton Village Hall and playing field. The Hall grows ever more popular, with a rise in the number of children's parties and people attending regular clubs. Among other activities, we host a very popular award-winning parent and toddler club, a craft club and recently welcomed a second football team. The Hillstown Jubilee Social Club is at full-capacity membership. A **card reader system** has been introduced to improve payment options at the bar. Bolsover Post Office operates in our small room on Thursday mornings.

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

A dedicated **website and a Facebook page** help keep parishioners informed of events and activities.

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

Environment

New trees are now establishing themselves along Steels Lane and hundreds of **new bulbs** recently placed in Hillstown, Palterton and Scarcliffe brightened up the early spring across the parish.

Extra hanging baskets have been ordered for Hillstown to fill in existing gaps and should be in place shortly.

The council has supported **Hillstown and Palterton Allotment Associations**. We were successful with a National Lottery grant application for £9,750 to improve surfaces and fences at Hillstown and install a composting toilet. We greatly appreciate the hard work of all our allotment holders.

Governance

The council is constantly revising all its **existing policies** to ensure they are up to date. Recent policies cover Dignity at Work, Member Officer Protocol, Equality and Diversity, Freedom of Information, Privacy, Safeguarding, Complaints and Vexatious Complaints.

The **Human Resources Committee** meets 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, Mavis Riley and Sharon Hall.

Grants

The following grants have been awarded:

Xmas Activities:

Palterton Residents Association £1000

Scarcliffe Village Activities £1000

£2,000 was allocated for Xmas boxes which volunteers delivered to pensioners in **Hillstown**.

VE Day:

Scarcliffe Residents £450

Palterton Residents £300

Other

Northeast Derbyshire District Co Responders £1000

St Lukes Mission £500

St Leonards Church £500

This represents a significant increase in 137 Grants over past years.

Projects

We are determined to provide better play facilities for our younger parishioners living in Hillstown.

Throughout the year the Council has continued its 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.

Maintenance and inspection have been carried out in respect of our **playgrounds** at Palterton and Scarcliffe and repairs made to surfaces where required. We have also carried out inspections of our bus shelters.

An **inclusive swing** has been installed at Palterton playground to enable children who are unable to use regular swings to have an enjoyable, safe experience.

Speed Information Devices. The Council is in the process of installing six warning devices to reinforce the local speed limits. These should be installed in the early summer in areas which have been identified by the Police and County Council.

The Council has taken over the triangle of land on the **south side of Mansfield Road by Hillstown Water Tower**. Orders are being placed for a new Hillstown sign, bench, litter bin and additional flower beds. We will also be erecting our new **Parish Council noticeboard**.

Events

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

We have given grants to residents Scarcliffe Village Action and Palterton Residents groups to help celebrate VE Day and donated to Old Bolsover Town Council's VE activities.

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 5th successive year.

Cllr John Young

Chair

May 2025