

# Brailsford and Ednaston Parish Council

## Chairman's Report 2023-4

### A New Council

A new Parish Council was formed in May 2023 including a new representative for Ednaston, Dale Heath.

The elected Council comprised Pat Laughlin, Gillian Woodhouse, Katie Kerr and Dale Heath. Unfortunately, as a result of an administrative error, nominations for longstanding members Simon & Lucy Thompson were not included in the election. As there remained vacancies, it was resolved at the first meeting to co-opt the Thompsons.

Dale Heath resigned from the Council during the first year of office as he moved away from Ednaston. After formal advertisement of the vacancy John White from Brailsford, who had been working with the Parish Council on planning matters relating to the Avant Estate, was co-opted to fill the vacant position.

### Council Priorities

Our first priorities for the new term were set as follows:

- The renewal of the approved Neighbourhood Plan to align with the development of a revised Local Plan by Derbyshire Dales District Council. This work to include a new all Parish residents' survey to form the basis of the new Neighbourhood Plan.
- The continued monitoring and oversight of all planning applications, representation of residents' concerns and input to the Planning Committee determination meetings
- Investment in traffic management, including speed reduction devices, and road/pedestrian safety measures. This work to be enhanced by the finding of a new road/traffic survey
- Actions to create a greater village identity for Brailsford
- Support for the redevelopment/refurbishment of the Institute
- Research and information gathering in relation to the mitigation of increasing problems of flooding and sewage contamination around the Parish
- Ongoing support for village events such as the Xmas Lights, Village Fete and Remembrance Day events
- Although the primary function of the Practice Patients Group, to maintain oversight of the changing arrangements for the GP surgery and feedback concerns if appropriate.

### Planning and Development

In 2023 our work has once again been dominated by issues relating to planning with applications in Ednaston and two new major sites at the western and northern ends of Brailsford village. The original plans for these sites would have delivered c140 further new homes in Brailsford without investment in significant new infrastructure. One application (to the west of the village, south of the A52 and adjoining the conservation area) was refused by the District Council's Planning Committee and has now gone to Appeal with a hearing set for 9 July 2024. The Parish Council has made representations to the Inspector.

Issues raised by residents to the Council during the year illustrated that over development remains a major concern and this was the subject of a well-attended public meeting which also provided an opportunity to meet and hear the views of our MP Sarah Dines. Since this meeting took place Ms Dines has expressed very clear concerns about the overdevelopment of the Parish.

### **Speed Reduction**

An allowance was made in the 2023/4 budget for the installation of the promised 2<sup>nd</sup> Speed Indicator Device (SID) to be installed on the A52 at the western end of Brailsford. Although the location chosen was that used previously by Derbyshire County Council (DCC) the new installation was subject to approval and licensing from the DCC Highways team and this has taken many months to complete.

The Council is also considering the installation of village entry verge 'gates' which are also considered to be a speed reducing asset.

Although we no longer have regular attendance from Derbyshire Police at Parish Council meetings the Council has continued to call for regular speed checks through our villages. Some interest has also been shown in setting up a Community Speed Watch team and we will continue to support this activity.

### **Hedge and Grass Maintenance**

The Parish Council funds a maintenance contract for those areas owned by the Council and identified as Public Open Space. In 2023 we also took responsibility for hedgecutting on the western side of Luke Lake as research identified that this hedge is in 'no man's' official ownership.

Rightly we are not able to take action in relation to overgrown hedges in private ownership which restrict the width of pavements alongside the A52. An appeal has been made to the relevant households/landowners for support but in the event that no action is taken, and in the interests of pedestrian safety, cutting will become subject to a legal requirement and formal notice from the Highways Authority.

### **Community Investment**

#### ***Parish Paper***

In 2023 the new Parish Paper newsletter providing all Parish community information was launched and good feedback has been received. The Paper is funded by the Parish Council but supported by advertisement, and a number of local businesses have taken advantage of this opportunity. Thanks to Cllr Kerr for leading work on the development of the Paper and taking on the role of its Publisher/Co-ordinator.

#### ***The Park – Children's Play Area***

An allowance was also made in the 2023/4 budget for improvements to the children's play area on Brailsford Park. Advice has been sought from residents and the local school on the type of equipment to be installed. This work has been delayed by the need for essential repairs to the Park gates and fencing and thoughts on the most appropriate equipment would be welcomed.

### ***Xmas Lighting***

In 2023 the Council decided to move away from the installation of traditional Xmas trees and provide the solar powered street lighting adopted by a number of other Councils. However there were concerns about the standard of this year's installation and feedback from residents would be welcomed.

### **Conclusion**

The activity required from Parish Councils has increased significantly over recent years and as with many other small organisations, we are always seeking volunteers to support our work and/or to join the Council. Please contact our Clerk – [clerk@brailsfordandednastonpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@brailsfordandednastonpc.org.uk) if you would like to know more.

As always, I should like to thank my fellow Councillors for their input and commitment during the last year.

Pat Laughlin