

## Coronavirus hits council operations - Virtual meetings become the 'new normal'

The Covid-19 crisis has had an enormous effect on families, our communities and our economy. Our local Councils have also had to cut back on day to day activities, including routine maintenance, as well as meetings, which meet as videoconferences. Councillors have had to become accustomed to taking part in meetings from home and working remotely on their casework, to address issues raised by residents. The District Council has established an 8 member "Emergency Committee with representation by all parties and independents. This has met as a videoconference viewable by the public through YouTube. Liberal Democrat Councillors have been lobbying to ensure democratic accountability for other important decisions, in particular planning applications. In response, Officers have assured Councillors that major planning decisions will be decided as usual by the Planning Committee.

As new **Lib Dem MP Daisy Cooper** said "Liberal Democrats have an important role to play in protecting our open, internationalist and egalitarian values and to fight against the rise of 'illiberal democracy' both at home and abroad"

## Liberal Democrats - leading the fight to protect jobs

Millions of people across the country are facing uncertainty over the future of their jobs, as well as being hit by a loss of income and the crisis will have a devastating impact on the economy for decades to come.

Liberal Democrats in Parliament have played a leading role in successfully pressing the Government to extend the furlough scheme to protect workers in the Covid-19 crisis. They have also pushed to extend support for those who are self-employed, to help more people through this crisis for longer.

With millions still not getting the support they need,

## Support for new play equipment on Tansley village green



Ward councillors **Paul Cruise, Steve Flitter and the recently re-elected Mayor of Matlock David Hughes** arranged a donation of £686 from Derbyshire

Dales District Council's Local Projects Fund and **Cllr Sue Burfoot** contributed £500 from her County Council fund towards new play equipment on Tansley Village Green adding to funding from the Lottery Community Fund.

This enabled **Tansley Parish Council** to purchase and install the equipment. Congratulations to the Parish Council and the local community for raising the necessary funds.



Cllr David Hughes re-elected as Matlock's Mayor

Lib Dem MPs are continuing to press for further increases in support.

**Find out more at: [LibDems.org.uk/protect-jobs](https://libdems.org.uk/protect-jobs)**

The Liberal Democrats are also calling on the Government to provide proper mental health support for frontline NHS and social care staff during the Coronavirus crisis. The 'clap for carers' wasn't just a gesture - people want to see frontline workers supported through the crisis and beyond and Liberal Democrats want to see 24/7 access to mental health support for these workers. They must no longer be penalised for time off work due to mental or physical ill health.

## A frustrating wait for yellow lines



Many months ago, Cllr Sue Burfoot agreed a number of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) with Highways officers, which should have been out to consultation by now. These included double yellow lines on the Jackson Road / Wellington Street junction, the bottom of Smith Road and the Lime Tree Road / St Giles Walk junction among others.

Sue has now been informed that these waiting restrictions cannot be delivered at present, because the Government has instructed Highways authorities to prioritise plans for improving pedestrian circulation in our town centres, given the increase in cycling and walking during the lockdown.

The proposals for Matlock will be interesting! Sue has highlighted the needs of disabled and visually impaired people and been assured that they will be taken into account when the plans are being devised.

## Town council help to protect Lumsdale Valley

One impact of the Government's decision to relax the lockdown by allowing everyone to travel anywhere in the country has been the influx of hundreds more visitors, some from far afield, to our beautiful Lumsdale Valley, with its iconic ponds and waterfalls. On the first weekend after the lockdown was relaxed the valley was saturated with sightseers. The **Arkwright Society** and local residents were concerned to reduce numbers, so contacted Town and District Councillors **Paul Cruise** and **Mayor David Hughes**.



Lib Dem Councillors and members of the Arkwright Society

**Paul and David**, assisted by **Sue Burfoot** as County Councillor, arranged a package of measures from the Town Council, County Council and private companies. The Arkwright Society closed all the land in their control, other than public footpaths and bridleways, which could not be closed. The package of measures included part funding by Matlock Town Council of a set of banners and signs. Electronic signs from **MVIS Ltd** and CCTV, from **Riber Security**, were provided for the Bank Holiday, both at no charge. Help was also provided in removing mention of Lumsdale on social media and digital maps.

The County Council urgently agreed the signage and provided road closure barriers and standard signage as well as agreeing to Highfields School closing their car park, to deter visitors in cars.

Despite some further problems on Bank Holiday Monday, the local partnership which was set up, together with signage and barriers provided, has led to a reduction in visitors.

However, it is felt that the main culprit from May onwards was the Government's decision to allow unlimited travel for exercise and sightseeing, despite closed visitor attractions, toilets, cafes and shops.

## New Councillor Trustee of the Hurst Farm Community Association

**Cllr Paul Cruise** (seen in the photo at the top helping to protect Lumsdale) has become a trustee of the Hurst Farm Community Association. As a highly qualified and experienced manager in the aerospace industry, he will be able to support the Association by offering his expertise in finance and business administration.

## Calls For traffic calming on Smedley Street, Matlock Green & Tansley



Residents of the **Smedley Street** area, congregation members from All Saints Church and parents of children attending All Saints Infant School have signed a petition to the County Council calling for a lower speed limit ie 20mph, on Smedley Street, which has become a race track in recent times. They have provided direct and also anecdotal evidence of speeding and its effects, especially on children. County **Cllr Sue Burfoot** supported the petition and says "One idea suggested is the formation of a Community Speed Watch residents group, as soon as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted. It is a fact that physical measures are not sufficient. I am asking the County Council to come up with a simple but practical scheme to address the problem of speeding,

such as electronic signage and rumble strips".

Sue has campaigned previously to reduce speeding on the **A615 between Matlock and Tansley**, as well as road safety issues in **Starkholmes**, but Council officers have so far not backed residents' demands. Regrettably, action tends to be a response to accident fatalities and injuries, rather than being pre-emptive.

**Liberal Democrats - caring for our environment**