

Matlock's community tree planting day a great success

Before the late March lockdown 24 councillors and local residents planted over 450 native trees and shrubs on two sites in Matlock.

The first one was above the Arc Leisure Centre and at the top end of the nearby Dimple playing fields where well over 300 trees and shrubs were planted. The other site is one where previous initiatives were reinforced to provide a shelter belt and wildlife resource around the edge of the ever popular Cavendish playing fields, where **Cllr Steve Wain** is the groundsman. It is hoped that these trees and shrubs will help to absorb most of the excess moisture and ground water, while helping to screen parked cars, enhance biodiversity and reduce carbon emissions. It is ironic that we have experienced a long period of drought since the trees were planted, while the lack of grass mowing has left the area looking more attractive.

Organiser **Cllr Martin Burfoot** says "The District Council was reluctant to allow our full proposals to be carried out, but we hope our efforts will be the start of similar schemes throughout the Derbyshire Dales, in order to enable the Council to fulfil its Climate Change and Corporate Plan objectives".

Although Matlock in Bloom provided the bulk of the funding for this excellent project, the District Council's Local Projects Fund from All Saints ward members contributed about 30% of the total cost. The persistent drought since March has had an unfortunate effect on the trees, but the Town Council stepped in to provide some much needed water in late May.



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Focus

on Matlock & Tansley



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Liberal Democrats - keeping you in touch with local issues

The Coronavirus crisis

Leadership is everybody's business

Over the past few months we have all faced many challenges given unprecedented restrictions to our freedom. We have learnt to do things in different ways as we protect and look after each other.

The message to 'Stay Safe' is unifying, seen in the windows of shops, offices and homes. Some people have gone to extraordinary lengths to ensure their message is seen, so it is clear that we all feel the need to share our collective responsibility.

During this time your Liberal Democrat Councillors have continued to work hard for our local communities. We have supported the Arkwright Society to help protect Lumsdale against the huge influx of visitors and supported efforts to ensure that residents self-isolating or shielding loved ones have received the food and medicines they needed.

Cllr Steve Wain has praised the magnificent community effort which recently protected the Cavendish sports fields from illegal access by a number of people from the traveller community. Residents acted jointly and appropriately, highlighting the skills and resourcefulness we have amongst us. Nevertheless, the District Council has a legal obligation to provide traveller sites for those who habitually reside in the District. Liberal Democrat Councillors are currently investigating the reasons for the delay in meeting this obligation and hope to contribute to a resolution of the problem.

These are difficult times which look as if they may be with us for some time, but we have seen how effectively and generously our community can work together. We must continue to support local businesses in the coming months and be vigilant as we protect our beautiful town and district. As an American president once said "I take as my guide the hope of a saint: in crucial things, unity; in important things, diversity; in all things generosity".



Cllr Steve Wain with Walter

Comment The Government's response to the Coronavirus crisis will be judged by historians in years to come. They will rightly focus on the human cost of the pandemic. Confused messaging, delays to the lockdown and the distribution of PPE will all be in the spotlight, as will the abysmal response to the ongoing crisis in our care homes.

With hindsight, as Lib Dem MP Layla Moran said: "While other countries were locking down, the Conservatives were telling us just to wash our hands. While people had to stay away from family funerals, the Tories defended Dominic Cummings' breach of the rules. While NHS workers put their lives on the line, the Conservatives opted out of EU deals for ventilators and PPE, and then they did a 'U' turn by dropping their plan for all primary pupils to be back in school before the summer holidays". The Conservative government's response to this crisis has meant that we have the highest number of excess deaths in Europe.

Apologies to St Giles and Tansley ward readers, who will find our Spring edition of Focus enclosed with this one. We were unable to deliver it prior to the lockdown in late March.

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