



A very special View from The Bathchair – Peter Baranek



I take the unprecedented action of writing to you between newsletters in these unprecedented times. During lockdown, we were able to go around the village for our exercise with impunity but once lockdown started to unwind, this became far more difficult for many residents and in the last 10 days you have been contacting the Clerk with your very serious concerns. Please keep doing so as you are the eyes and ears of the village. We take every email very seriously and try to answer whenever possible.

What have the Parish Council been doing? We were aware of issues starting to emerge whilst still in lockdown with the return of some visitors. Since then we have had an article printed in the Derby Telegraph, done radio interviews on Radio Derby, Peak FM, had a question accepted for Any Questions, on Radio 4, organised East Midlands Today news to come to the village and film and also a Radio 2 interview on the Jeremy Vine Show. We also understand that other residents have done local radio interviews as well. All of these had the same message **PLEASE STAY AWAY** – our village does not lend itself to social distancing. The Parish Council wrote to the District and County Councils and our MP expressing our concerns about social distancing in the village and suggesting a series of measures that would help alleviate the situation. DCC responded saying they were considering what we had put and our MP sent a press release she had prepared with the Chief Executive of the Peak District National Park, but not answering any of the points we raised. We still await a formal response from DDDC.

At its meeting on Wednesday this week, the Parish Council agreed that we all need to become more proactive in reporting the problems in the village and any lack of enforcement of the rules to the necessary authorities. This includes the Police not dispersing groups of people who are not obeying the current rules as well as the parking enforcers not issuing fines to those breaking parking restrictions such as parking on the pavements. All of which make social distancing even more difficult. The parking enforcement is overseen by DCC. We would urge residents to take photographs of any incident provided it is safe to do so as well as noting the numbers of the officers concerned if possible. Any issues in the Derwent Gardens and Lovers Walk should be reported to Derbyshire Dales District Council. You could also write to your MP on all issues.

The Parish Council has been assured that there will be 2 dedicated Civil Enforcement Officers (parking) and the Police will have an operational team in the village over this weekend. The multi-agency group including the local authorities have issued a press release asking people not to come. The Parish Council have been doing this for nearly 2 weeks through many media channels. None of the suggestions that we made have to the local authorities, as yet have been acted upon, but we will be keeping up the pressure with your help. So please contact the necessary agency to report incidents but also keep the Clerk informed. The situation could well get worse through the summer without remedial action being taken by the authorities or the Government.

Finally, two Parish Councillors have written to all agencies following the issues experienced last week pointing out that it is a public health emergency and should be treated as such with actions taken to alleviate the situation. As of writing this, we have not received a reply and no action has been taken. We, as a village, now need to be reporting issues as they occur to the agencies at all levels to take whatever action is necessary to remedy the current situation for the residents of Matlock Bath.

Many of the documents referred to can be found on the Parish Council website. Please stay safe!!

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Other contacts: Police – telephone 101 or email <https://www.derbyshire.police.uk/ro/report/>
Derbyshire County Council: Telephone 01629 533190 or email contactcentre@derbyshire.gov.uk
Derbyshire Dales District Council: telephone 01629 761100 or email via their website
Sarah Dines MP: sarah.dines.mp@parliament.uk

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*****STOP PRESS – There will be an interview with ITN News today *****