

A View from the Bath

A Newsletter from

Matlock Bath Parish Council

Summer 2026



Parking Issues and Vehicle Noise



The village has long suffered from parking issues and vehicle noise. However, one weekend towards the end of March was particularly bad with orchestrated vehicle noise and the riverside pavement being blocked with parked vehicles. The Parish Council received a series of complaints from residents, businesses and visitors and at our meeting at the end of March it was decided that action needed to be taken. We have over the years contacted the various agencies involved in 'policing' these issues – the Police, Derbyshire County Council and Derbyshire

Dales District Council resulting in little or no positive action on 'passing the responsibility' to someone else. We decided that a co-ordinated face-to-face approach might prove a little more productive so decided to try and do this through the services of our MP John Whitby. It has taken over two months of e-mails, telephone calls and discussions but after a lot of hard work, persistence and lobbying, this is to take place on Saturday 11th July. Attendees will be: John Whitby MP for Derbyshire Dales, Simon Ripton – Constituency Caseworker, Cllr Peter Baranek – Matlock Bath Parish Council Chairman, Cllr Adrian Hunter – Derbyshire County Councillor for the ward, Cllr Charlotte Hill – Derbyshire County Council Cabinet Member for Highways, Inspector John Troupe – Derbyshire Constabulary, PCSO Kirsty Hunt – SNT Officer, Derbyshire Constabulary and Cllr Nick Whitehead – Derbyshire Dales District Councillor for the ward.

The following issues have been raised by various parties in the initial discussion:

- Improvements to street furniture to prevent access to pavements.
- Better signage, explaining parking restrictions whilst directing to alternative parking.
- More visible/frequent/effective use of parking enforcement with Officers working in pairs and in co-ordination with Police when appropriate.
- Policy Confusions: Blue Badges and motorcycles obscuring their number plates.
- Expanded provision of temporary parking.
- Illegal parking enforcement and vehicles removed – as is now happening in Castleton, for example.
- Reintroduction of the Police stop and check of bikes on the entrances to the village, with a focus on noise.
- Reintroduction of Police motorcycle patrol officers on the A6 from Matlock to Cromford.
- Entry speed on approach to the village, and the use as village centre as drag strip.

You might have further ideas that can be thrown into the mix. It would be great to think that actions come straight from the meeting but feel it will be more of a sharing of thoughts and then the various agencies going away to consult amongst themselves and come back to John Whitby at a further date. We would be delighted to see some things in place this year but it could well be 2027 before any real progress can be made.

The Parish Council strongly feels that any measures which are implemented, are not there to prevent or stop any visitor coming to the village. We are extremely concerned that over the years, the situation of parking issues has not improved. For the safety of residents and visitors, it is imperative that something is done so we can all enjoy our lovely village.

If you have any concerns or witness any issues regarding parking, parking enforcement, blue badges etc, it is imperative that you report these to the relevant authorities. Parking on the Highway, ie the Parades, contact: parking@derbyshire.gov.uk Any issues relating to any of Derbyshire Dales Car Parks, contact: parking@derbyshiredales.gov.uk It is always helpful if the Parish Council is copied in as well so we have a record.

If the issue is regarding an obstruction, then contact the Safer Neighbourhood Team or ring 101.

Matlock Bath Illuminations 2026

The Illuminations season will open with a Preview Night on Saturday 12th September and then every weekend from the 19th September until Sunday 1st November with a Friday night on 30th October. There will be firework displays every Saturday in October, plus the final night, Sunday 1st November. The fireworks will start at 8.30 pm.

Residents will be once again issued with a parking permit which will allow to access to properties on New Bath Road, Clifton Road, Temple Road, Waterloo Road, Holme Road and St Johns Road. There will be no road closures on the New Bath Road or St Johns Road, but signage will be supplied for residents to put on the road to prevent visitor parking. Parking permits will be put inside the September issue of "A View from the Bath".

Art and Photography Competitions 2026

Just a reminder that you can still enter our 2026 Art and Photography Competitions. Log on to our website – www.matlockbathparishcouncil.gov.uk and follow the link from Competitions. All the details are there.



Stephen Allen
2nd Prize 2025

Art Competition – This competition has been running since 1980 and over the years we have seen some fantastic work from entrants of nearly every view in the village. Media over the years has also changed; we now see collage work, 3D models, mixed media, textiles along with the more traditional drawing and painting.

Prizes will be awarded for those aged 14 and over.

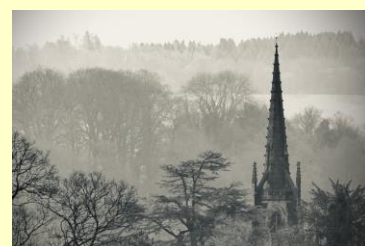
The picture to the left was submitted by Stephen Allen and he used collage to create this wonderful piece of Masson Mills.

Photography Competition – Now in its 17th year, the Photography Competition proves extremely popular.

We award prizes of 1st, 2nd, 3rd in three categories – Adults, Junior and Young. In addition, thanks to kind sponsorship, we offer prizes in "Best Picture of ..." for the Illuminations, Holy Trinity Church, the Grand Pavilion, Heights of Abraham, Riverside Kiosk. We also award a prize for "Hidden Gem", Parish Council prize and Heritage.

New for this year is a separate category for photographs which have been manipulated/post produced. Please note, however, that we will not accept photographs which have been produced through AI.

Remember that when entering either of our competitions, the main rule is that the entry has to be of an artefact or view of Matlock Bath. Entry is through our website – www.matlockbathparishcouncil.gov.uk where you will find the rules, entry form and further details. The closing date for both competitions is 10th October 2026 and work from both Art and Photography will be displayed in the Pump Room of the Pavilion on Saturday 24th and Sunday 25th October 2026.



Melanie McDonald
1st Prize, 2025

We are extremely grateful to all of our sponsors, including the Heights of Abraham who are generously sponsoring the main prizes.

Christmas Lunch



We are gathering quotations for this year's Christmas Lunch which will be held on **14th December 2026**.

As in previous years, and in order to accommodate as many residents as possible, the Parish Council will request that those wishing to have three courses, will be required to pay £5 towards their meal. Anyone having just two courses, will pay nothing. The lunch is open to everyone over 60. Anyone under 60, or anyone not living in the village, will be asked to pay the full cost of the meal – this will be advised as soon as possible.

If you would like to attend the meal, please contact the Clerk – clerk@matlockbathparishcouncil.gov.uk or telephone 07914 420545. A reminder will be in our September issue of "A View from the Bath".

Matlock Bath Activity Area

In the Spring edition of "A View from the Bath", it was reported that a storage box and a bin would be installed in the area. We are pleased to say this has now been completed. The storage box contains tennis posts and a net. Please ensure that if you do take the net and posts out of the box, you return them to the box before you leave the area. Please do not leave the posts and net up when you leave. Please ensure that all rubbish is put in the bin.

A reminder that residents can use the area free of charge. If you are using the area for the first time, please complete the booking form on the website, so we have a record of the users. We will then release the code to you in order for you to access the area. We will be changing the code regularly; we do ask that you do not interfere with the lock on the gates otherwise it stops others from using it. Please do not pass the code onto anyone else, even if they do live in the village, and secure the gate as you are leaving.

Any queries, please contact the Clerk – clerk@matlockbathparishcouncil.gov.uk

Footpaths and Bridleways

An integral part of Matlock Bath's infrastructure is our network of footpaths and bridleways – some Victoria and others dating even further back. They now come under the management of Derbyshire County Council who have given them numbers to identify them, but many have proper names. We have Green Lane, Valley Steps, Fishpond Hill, West Bank, Jacob's Ladder, Birdcage Walk and The Wapping. You may be able to name a few more. They are important historic links for the village and need to be properly maintained.

The Parish Council receives a small grant of £315 each year from Derbyshire County Council for minor maintenance. This is soon eaten up by keeping a small number of these paths clear of vegetation. Other maintenance work and major repairs need to be carried out by Derbyshire County Council. Tree fall is a regular problem, but this needs reporting to DCC otherwise no action will be taken. Any work that needs carrying out is reported on the footpaths section of the DCC website, preferably with a photo or two of the issue.



This is what happened when a large tree fell in a storm last Autumn. It did not block the path but was growing out of the retaining wall of the Wapping and the root ball took the wall and a section of the path with it. It may have taken nine months, but the path has now been repaired and is now open for safe passage again. The reconstruction may not be what the Victorians would have approved of, but we must be grateful that the work is completed.

Fortunately, all repairs and clearance do not take this long but it is important that through usage and monitoring we ensure that our footpath and byway network is kept safe and clear so it can be used and enjoyed for years to come.

A map of the footpath network is available on the internet and via google but if you have trouble getting a copy, contact the Clerk.

As far as we know, the names of the paths are not recorded anywhere! Perhaps they should be?

Derbyshire Residents Survey 2026 - DCC

You still have time to have your chance to tell Derbyshire County Council what you think. We want to know what it is like to live in Derbyshire and how you feel about Council services. We run this survey every year so we can see what is changing and where things need to improve.

Your answers matter. What you tell us will help Councillors and Council staff make decisions. This includes how we plan services, what we focus on, and how we spend money in the future.

We know that many households are facing financial pressure, and the Council is too. With limited resources, it is more important than ever that decisions are guided by what residents tell us.

The survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. The closing date for completing the survey is **midnight on Sunday 19th July 2026**.

If you require the survey in a different format, please contact haveyoursay@derbyshire.gov.uk Telephone 01629 533190

View from the Bath Chair



As is usual in the summer edition, we are pleased to enclose a copy of the Annual Report which was presented to the AGM held in May. At the AGM, I was pleased to accept the unopposed nomination as Chair for another year. This, I think, will be my 19th year in the role – although records from this time are a little sketchy and my memory is even sketchier.

As I fast approach becoming an octogenarian later this year, I did think that perhaps I should be doing a little less! I do realise that I cannot do what I did when I first took on the role in 2008. In accepting the role, I did explain to Councillors that we need more help in the work of the Parish Council.

With the talk of regionalism and devolution that is in the air of politics currently, I have always said that nobody knows what the village wants and needs more than the residents and businesses whose daily lives revolve around the village. We are fortunate that the decisions that the Parish Council makes are not coloured by political dogma. They are taken using the knowledge of Councillors who live and work in the village and meet with residents on a daily basis, encountering the issues that they encounter so understand what the village needs. There will always be decisions that need to look at the bigger picture but given the very unusual character of our village, the general 'one size fits all' nature of decision making by the higher tiers of Government does not always work favourably for our village.

Many villages of our size do not even have a Parish Council and can function perfectly well on this top-down approach. Matlock Bath could not. It needs a body like the Parish Council to fight for what we need. The voice of Matlock Bath must be heard. In the last two decades, the Parish Council has taken on a much higher profile and as such needs a little more involvement from its inhabitants either as a Councillor or in a supporting role through one of the Committees or helping in whatever way you can. Please consider giving a very small amount of your time to help the village in whatever way you can.

Important Reminders

Hedges and Gardens – It is the time of year when everything grows at a rapid rate especially 'the weeds'. Property owners/tenants are responsible for any vegetation/shrubs/trees which spread onto adjacent land/property and must take all steps to manage it. This is especially important to adjacent paths and pavement areas. Cut back all encroaching vegetation. If you encounter any such problems on the public highway, report it immediately to Derbyshire County Council via their website. Search 'obstructed pavements' for all types of obstruction on the pavement/footpath.

Wheelie Bins and Bags – You should only put your wheelie bins and bags onto the highway the night before collection. They should then be returned to your property as soon as practicable after emptying. At any other time, it will be classed as an obstruction.

Updates in Brief

Historic Tufa Shelter, Lovers Walk – We reported in the Spring edition that the Chairman of ICOSMOS-UK was to meet with DDDC about the rebuilding of the shelter. The outcome of this meeting was that DDDC were reminded of their responsibility as the custodians of this listed building. They informed ICOSMOS that they would be applying to formalise the demolition of the building by applying for retrospective planning permission. DDDC were advised that such an application would be challenged nationally. As yet, no application has been submitted.

Illuminations Surplus 2025 – We are still waiting to hear what the surplus money will be spent on.

Nature Reserve – We have taken delivery of a scythe mower so hopefully this year we can start to manage the willow herb before it goes to seed.

Duke of Edinburgh - Thanks

For the past 6 months, a local resident has undertaken his Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. This has included volunteering and has been done through litter picking in the village. We are extremely appreciative of all the hard work that this young man has done in helping to keep our village tidy. Well done Reuben and thank you.

Annual Report 2026

We are pleased that the Parish Council continues to take a high-profile role in the village. Though our statutory responsibilities are few, we work with many non-statutory roles and have added to these during the year. With the higher profile comes increased workload. Many from outside the village and some residents and businesses see the Parish Council as all powerful and responsible for everything which, of course, is certainly not the case. We are happy to pass the many issues raised with us to the responsible authorities or individuals though. However, sometimes it is proving more difficult to get responses to issues raised especially with the County Council highways.

As you will see from the list below, we have been involved in a variety of activities that hopefully will have brought an improvement to both the environment of the village and quality of life for all in Matlock Bath.

Awarding Grants	Website Management	Photography Competition
Activity Area	Social media	Art Competition
Village Christmas Lunch	Singing Round the Tree	Remembrance
Quarterly newsletters	Winter Lighting	Tower Florals
Smedley Close	Bus shelter maintenance	Flower Barrels
Nature Reserve Management	Signage maintenance	Rose Garden
Footpath maintenance	Benches & Maintenance	Cattle trough florals
Planning issues	Implementing Grants	Liaising & Lobbying
Winter service scheme	Joyce Pawley Arbour	Station adoption
Advice / support for residents	War Memorial	

In 2025/2026, one Councillor resigned so we have one vacancy on the Parish Council. We encourage volunteers to help with the work of the Parish Council on a casual basis as well as serving on our Committees. Copies of all Committee Notes and Parish Council Minutes can be found on our website. The Parish Council's thanks go to all our volunteers for the hard work they put into the work of the Parish Council for the benefit of the village.

Parish Council Budget – A budget for 2025/2026 of £42,505 (and ringfenced funding of £23,779) was set by Full Council in January 2025 based on recommendations on spending needs from each of the Committees. The precept requested was £34,500, a small increase on 2024/2025. The difference between the precept and budget was met from the carry forward from 2024/2025. The budget set for 2026/2027 is £42,985 with a ringfence of £26,518. Councillors felt it was necessary to raise the precept for 2026/2027 to £35,500 in view of rising costs. Although this is an increase 5.49%, it amounts for the band D taxpayer as a cost of 11.6 pence per week or £6.07 per year. This increase will cover a rise in costs and the extra financial liabilities that we have taken on over the last 12 months. We still think that is excellent value for money for the work that the Parish Council does to help, support and promote the village.

Finance and General Purposes Committee - This Committee oversees the **finances** of the Parish Council and deals also with **employee and personnel issues**. As well as managing its own budget, the Finance Committee oversees the budgets of all the other Committees and the financial planning of the Council. The Finance Committee this year has recommended to Full Council to grant an award to DASAC (for the Raft Event), Matlock Bath Bowling Club, Matlock Bath Pre-School Playgroup and the Childrens Christmas Party.

Details of the Income and Expenditure for each financial year can be found on our website.

Communications Committee - The **website** continues to be a popular way of communicating. The website contains a vast amount of information enabling us to keep residents up to date with village life. The website is updated on a regular basis and is an extremely reactive tool.

Our main vehicle of regular communication with residents continues to be the quarterly **Newsletter**, a hard copy of which has been delivered by hand by again some willing volunteers to **every residence** and business in the village as well as being published on the website. It continues to be well received.

The uptake of advertisements in the Newsletter offsets some of the printing costs.

Facilities Committee - This Committee oversees the **Activity area, bus shelters, benches, winter lighting** and the **war memorial**.

The Parish Council once again arranged for the bus shelters, village signs and noticeboards to be cleaned regularly.

The **activity area** is now regularly used by residents and some groups and individuals from outside the village. All hire charges will be used to maintain the area. The area is regularly swept and maintained so it is safe for users.

Annual Report Cont

The flower bed outside the court, which was cleared and planted up, paid for from the Welcome Back Fund following the pandemic, continues to be regularly maintained.

Whilst the maintenance of the retaining wall on the A6 was completed, the activity area was not available for hire. The contractors very kindly agreed to pay for the loss of income for the Parish Council.

The ***Joyce Pawley Arbour*** – in memory of Cllr Joyce Pawley, is still maintained using donations made by residents.

Environment & Conservation Committee – This Committee deals with anything to do with the ***environment and conservation*** in the village including the ***Nature Reserve, florals*** around the village, ***footpaths*** and any other issues. There has been a local resident volunteering in the Nature Reserve who has cleared large areas of brambles which had become intrusive in the meadow. This has allowed the spring and summer flowers to bloom and flourish.

The Parish Council has continued to provide ***four three tier planters*** along the Parades. After purchasing the planters in 2020, we rely on volunteers to plant up. Two of the planters are sponsored by businesses. In addition, two ***flowering barrels*** at the bottom of Clifton Road as well as the cattle trough are planted up and maintained by a local resident. The Rose Garden in Memorial Gardens is maintained when possible.

As part of the DCC Rights of Way Minor Maintenance Scheme, the Parish Council has arranged for a number of ***footpaths*** to be cleared by a local resident. This work was paid for through the Maintenance Scheme at no cost to the Parish Council.

In 2025, once again, the Parish Council again joined the ***Winter Service Scheme*** operated by Derbyshire County Council. This scheme provides free 'salt' to the Parish Council to distribute to residents/businesses who sign up to be a volunteer to clear snow and ice from pavements during the winter months.

Much of the work the committee does relies on volunteers and we are always looking for more to help in any way they can.

Activities Committee - The Parish Council has for many years promoted 'village' activities, some of which have been open to the wider community. We have continued this promotion both as a community service and to promote Matlock Bath to the wider world. The ***Pro Loco Art Competition*** has attracted many entries over the years and in 2025, its 45th year, the standard was very high.

The 16th ***Photography Competition*** again proved very successful. With over 250 entries made, we had to shortlist to 90, a task which proved near impossible for the Shortlisting Committee. With the high standard of photographs received, we are able to use many of the entries in our publicity material, website etc. Sponsorship for both competitions was again received from Heights of Abraham with other prizes sponsored by DDDC (Illuminations), Holy Trinity Church, The Grand Pavilion (2 prizes) and Riverside Kiosk in the "Best Picture of" Categories. We are extremely grateful to all of our sponsors who support our competitions each year.

The Parish Council is very proud to work with representatives of the British Legion to facilitate the ***Remembrance*** at the War Memorial. Once again, the service in 2025 was held in the morning with the two-minute silence at 11.00 am. Richard Maltby attended on behalf of Holy Trinity Church. Two wreaths were laid on behalf of the children of the village and the residents.

Our Christmas event – ***Singing Round the Tree*** – has seen numbers dwindling and Councillors felt a change was needed. As a result, the Fishpond Choir agreed to come and join our event. As the weather was inclement, the new venue was Rose Cottage. Dave from Rose Cottage put on soup and a roll. The singing was led by Leisha Martin and John Phillips together with the Fishpond Choir.

December saw the 13th ***Christmas Lunch*** which was held again at The Fishpond and was attended by 64 residents. The food was outstanding and it was good to see so many residents attending. With an increase in attendance meant that those attending were asked to donate £5 if they chose to have 3 courses.

Annual Report Cont

Planning Committee – In the past year the Parish Council has considered many planning and tree work applications. The Planning Committee consider each application in detail and the merits or detriments of each one assessed. Although the Parish Council has only an *advisory role* on planning issues, we feel that this area is important for the village. We have local knowledge pertinent to the needs of the village all of which is in a conservation area and covered by other planning regulations some specific to Matlock Bath. The Committee aims to meet regularly and sometimes has on site meetings to look at planning applications. Over the past year we have lobbied against some applications but unfortunately our objections have not always been successful.

Smedley's Close/Cumberland Mine – We were due to clear a path in the area but due to a breakdown of equipment and inclement weather, we were not able to. We have now missed the window when English Nature allow us to work on the area which is a SSSI so must wait until the autumn to start the work. We are currently waiting for the family to provide the history of the land and its previous owner for an information board.

In Autumn 2025, we saw one of the trees in Smedley Close lose a limb. Unfortunately, it damaged a resident's wall. The Parish Council arranged for the wall to be repaired. We are currently awaiting a tree inspection to ensure the rest of the tree is safe.

Matlock Bath Development Association – Though a body independent from the Parish Council, this was borne out of the Parish Council initiative with Derby University – the Into the Future project. In addition, what MBDA does is closely aligned with the work of the Parish Council, so we have always worked collaboratively and supportively.

MBDA was approached by an Energy Group to ascertain whether MBDA could be used as a vehicle for the group to apply for grants. Directors agreed to this. One original Director is still on board in order to be the link to the Parish Council.

A further meeting has been held, and a grant application will be submitted shortly.

Noise and Illegal Parking – The Parish Council has raised the issue of noise and illegal parking in the village to DCC and DDDC on many occasions. Environmental Health has commented that noise from motor vehicles comes under the jurisdiction of the Police Authority. We continue to lobby DCC for action on illegal parking and better use of our allocated enforcement hours.

And we alsoAs well as the work of the Committees, we have representatives on various bodies including The Derwent Valley Rail Partnership, Pavilion and the DDDC Illuminations Liaison Committee. We lobby the higher tiers of local government (County and District Councils) on a regular basis on behalf of residents and on general issues of concern in Matlock Bath from water leaking onto the highway to dangerous trees, from the provision of grit bins to litter and refuse.

Once again, **our adopters of Matlock Bath station** planted and maintained planters and barrels with bedding plants and bulbs.

We continue to have regular **Closer Working** meetings with DDDC which are held every three months. These meetings allow us to raise issues/concerns formally with Officers and receive feedback.

The Future

Though the topography of the village does not lend itself easily to help us bond into one community, the activities and social media links that have formed have enabled us to act together. We encourage residents and businesses to work and share their activities with the whole village through the newsletter and the website. Thanks must go to all those who have worked so hard in everything we do for the village and, of course, to those who selflessly give their time to act as Councillors or volunteers with the only reward being that we do it to make Matlock Bath a better place to live, to work and to visit.

Summer Solstice Event Brings Community Together – New Bath Hotel & Spa

More than 200 people came together on Saturday 21st June to celebrate the Summer Solstice at the historic lido at the New Bath Hotel & Spa in a day filled with swimming, wellbeing activities, live music and fundraising.

Beginning before dawn at 4am and continuing through to the event, the event welcomed local residents, hotel guests and visitors from across the surrounding area, creating a vibrant atmosphere of community spirit and wellbeing.



The first swimmers arrived at 4am to greet the sunrise, enjoying the unique experience of taking an early morning dip in the historic outdoor pool. Throughout the morning, two yoga sessions were held on the lawn beside the lido, allowing participants to embrace the peaceful surroundings and stunning views whilst starting the day with mindfulness and relaxation.

As the day progressed, guests enjoyed a variety of activities organised by the New Bath team and local supporters. Fundraising attractions included spin-the-wheel games, lucky dips and a popular cake sale featuring homemade treats generously baked by lido members. Face painting and glitter art were a particular hit with younger visitors, helping to create a fun and festive atmosphere throughout the grounds.

Live entertainment added to the celebrations with performances from the Danny Maddocks Trio, MSax Saxophonist and the Cromford Community Band providing a wonderful soundtrack to the day's festivities.

The Summer Solstice event marked the first large-scale community event hosted by the hotel for several years and reflects a renewed commitment to community engagement under the leadership of General Manager, Shaun White.

The event also raised valuable funds for the hotel's chosen charity for 2025, the MND Association. With £2 from every ticket sold donated to the charity alongside proceeds from fundraising activities throughout the day, an impressive £891.80 was raised.

Visitors praised the welcoming atmosphere, beautiful setting and strong sense of community that was evident throughout the event. From the first sunrise swimmers to those enjoying the evening entertainment, the day highlighted the positive impact of bringing people together to celebrate, connect and support a worthy cause.

The New Bath Hotel and Spa team would like to thank everyone who attended, volunteered, performed, baked cakes or contributed to the fundraising efforts. Following the success of the Summer Solstice event, the hotel looks forward to hosting more community-focused activities in the future and continuing to strengthen its relationship with local residents and organisations.



***'A View from the Bath' is published by Matlock Bath Parish Council,
Coppice End, Woodland Terrace, Derby Road, Matlock Bath***

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**Website: www.matlockbathparishcouncil.gov.uk E-mail: clerk@matlockbathparishcouncil.gov.uk
Telephone: 07914 420545**