

## Chair's Annual Report 2017

# Silverdale Parish Council

### Councillor Eileen Braithwaite

The year began with the shock that Eileen Braithwaite had passed away after a very short illness. She had been the longest serving parish councillor and a notable force in the local community for many years. The parish council offered their condolences and presented her family with flowers and a plaque was dedicated to her memory in the Parade.

### Changes in Membership

Dr Terry O'Neill and Mrs Amanda Hughes were both unable to continue and three new members were co-opted during the year. We would like to thank those Councillors for the hard work, dedication and enthusiasm for the work done by the Parish Council.

Our new members were Jan Siery, Casey Scarlett and Matt Melvin who have together widened the representation of the council and have already made their mark putting forward initiatives and representing their neighbours to improve the parish.

I congratulated Gareth Snell for his bi-election result believing him to be the first resident of Silverdale to be sworn into Parliament at Westminster.

### Silverdale Parish Budget

SCC ended the Lengthsman scheme and NULBC withdrew their financial support phasing the reduction over four years. The Parish Council has **increased** the Parish portion of the local Council Tax this year by about £7 for a band D property in order to protect its income stream and so ensure that services are maintained, including reducing the risk of localised flooding in Silverdale.

It is a considerable relief to know that our future funding is secure in view of the need to help complete the local large projects and provide the range of local services to our community.

### Parish Council Community Grants

To support the work that is done by Silverdale by local community groups, the Parish Council has a £2000 fund to make small grants. In the last year, some of the small grants have been given to:

St Luke's Church PTFA – 3 picnic benches £749.00

Park Road Allotments – traffic mirror      £165.50

Total Larger Awards/Grants £914.50

## **Facebook Pages & Village Magazine**

In addition to our website, the Parish Council has now a Facebook page to enable residents to say in touch with all the work we are doing. As not all residents have access to the internet, so we have continued with the village newsletter.

In addition Sophia Snell and Jan Siery published Silverdale Parish's social media policy

## **Newsletter**

The newsletter currently is funded by advertisement and is a colour magazine but limited to outlets such as the post office library and stores such as Gardner's Garden Centre with a limited reach.

Parish councillors were able to leaflet the whole of Silverdale to explain the budget predicament and ask residents to support their decision to meet the costs of providing parish services from the precept. We felt that it would be possible using councillors' local knowledge to distribute the newsletter free to every householder.

## **LARGE PROJECTS**

### **Relocation of Silverdale Miner's Wheel**

Project planning is continuing to re-erect the 3.3 metre steel pit wheel, previously marking the entrance to Silverdale Colliery.

In June planning permission was achieved for the design by our architects and a grant decision is now awaited from Tesco to finance the project, so the wheel will stand proud adjacent to Silverdale Athletic club near Scott Hay Road to mark our industrial heritage.

### **Miner's Tribute Monument**

At the other entrance to Silverdale is the miner's tribute at Stonewall, designed by local sculptors, Michael Talbert and Steven Whyte and built with a large number of local contributions and large organisations; Foundation for Sport and the Arts, British Coal PLC, National Power Australian Ministry, BP, Barclays Bank and others.

After standing nearly 20 years, there are maintenance issues that need to be addressed to ensure it will continue to capture our spirit.

The Parish Council is continuing to work with the Borough Council on a project which will see a full restoration of the Miners' Monument at the entrance to the village. The scheme also incorporates plans to enhance and develop their local heritage. There is a separate report for a Silverdale Festival in 2018 to bring music and drama to the village

We have lopped branches of trees to ensure the sculpture is easily visible and worked with NULC to keep the area tidy. It was recognised as a Locally Important Building by NULC and added to the list in October 2017.

## **Heritage Park Play Areas**

David Wilson Homes (the original developers) submitted a planning application to NULC to regularise the level of play space at the time of completing the development in 2014.

Silverdale Parish Council opposed the plans which would reduce the amount of play space below the original application in 2007 and the issue is ongoing with the Planning Department.

## **Ilkley Place Play Area**

NULC Play Area extension scheme has been approved and work is expected to start April 2017.

## **SERVICES**

### **Acre and Park Road Allotments**

Our allotment associations have continued to extend coverage and won many horticultural awards. The parish have supported Acre Allotments to reduce anti-social behaviour, meeting on site to discuss security and liaising with Police and Crime Commissioner staff.

### **Silverdale Library**

Staffordshire County Council took a decision to cease funding the library services including Silverdale and the Parish Council were concerned about the impact that this will have on the village as well as the capacity that the village has to provide sufficient volunteers.

However from January 2017 Business Enterprise Services were given a five year lease and are providing the same level of service as provided previously.

### **Joseph Cook's Blue Plaque**

A terraced house in Newcastle Street was adorned with a bright blue plaque marking the place where a miner began his life. Cook emerged later on the other side of the world as a statesman. NULC, Newcastle Civic Society and SPC worked together bringing local author Graham Bebbington who wrote *Pit Boy to Prime Minister* the biography of Joseph Cook and all those interested in his story of highest ministerial achievement against the odds.

## **CAMPAIGNS**

One of the many roles we carry out are to make representations to agencies when services are threatened or where dangerous situations arise for residents.

### **Brighton House, Sneyd Terrace**

This care home specialised in re-ablement, once had 19 residents, with around 50 full and part-time members of staff as an essential part of the fabric of specialist nursing and social care provided for people in Silverdale, particularly following illness. Councillors mounted a vigorous local campaign and initiated an on line petition opposing the closure of Brighton

House and other changes in Health Services which together were seen as detrimental to local people and brought about because of lack of adequate funding.

We were advised that the decision was not overturned and the home is closed and we note with great sympathy to the family one resident rehoused under the closure had died.

### **Near misses Mini Roundabout Pepper Street Scott Hay Road**

There's a legitimate concern that traffic measures undertaken at Heritage Park housing development need strengthening. The mini roundabout is the only entrance and exit to the estate of 300 houses.

We allocated time to re-view video evidence collected by one of the residents living in Sutton Avenue. Suggested improvements included re-designing the mini roundabout to reduce the potential for accidents.

### **St Luke's Pepper Street School Patrol**

The Parish was concerned at traffic speeds outside St Luke's school. After an on-line petition, several requests were made to the SCC Highways Department to introduce traffic calming measures. Finally we heard that 2 crossing patrol staff would be advertised to ensure greater safety of school children and their parents and carers.

### **Underground Fire Hollywood Lane Keele Parish**

There has been concern for residents in Parkside about the potential danger of the underground fire for many years and evidence that children are accessing the area through gaps in fencing and poor signage.

In November Keele Homes had bought the site located within the neighbouring Keele Parish and containing industrial spoil and so inherited the site of the underground fire which has been burning for at least ten years.

NULC have promised to ensure the new owners properly fence the potentially dangerous area to keep the area clear and we publicise the matter and worked with Keele Parish.

### **Walley's Quarry**

In December The Environment Agency with SCC gave Red Industries a 10 year licence to dispose of non-hazardous waste and stable hazardous waste so we highlighted on our Facebook the reporting of offensive smells and other environmental problems.

SPC and residents from Thistleberry Ward (which includes the Walley's landfill land) are represented on a panel that meets regularly and reviews the licence conditions

Adam

Henryk Adamczuk (Chair)