

# Hilldale Parish Council Newsletter – January 2024



## Chairmans Column

As we move forward into 2024, it has been such a pleasure to see the trials and tribulations of the of the previous year, now seem to be behind us; or at least most of them.

As you are probably aware, Hilldale, being such a small community, gets very little public funding and is reliant to a great extent, on money generated by the precept and hire of the Village Hall. While we scratched our heads, wondering how we were going to cope with the unsurpassed rise in utility bills and general running costs of the Village Hall, we suddenly found ourselves with the additional headache of having to replace the floor in the Hall. To make matters worse, the annual ROSPA report for the playing field, deemed the large climbing frame to be unsafe with a recommendation, that it be dismantled and removed as soon as possible. Remarkably, due to the tenacity of my fellow councillors and in particular, that of our Clerk to The Parish, Trish Grimshaw, we managed to secure funding to replace both the floor and the climbing frame. Full details are given below, but I'm sure everyone will join me in offering sincerest thanks to all involved.

Gary Ward; Chairman

**Grant Success** – As promised we would like to update you on the successful grant applications our Parish Clerk, Trish submitted resulting in £37,785 of funding towards four important projects.

**Junior Play Area** - Prior to the Christmas break the Parish Council were delighted to both extend the footprint of the junior play area and renew the wooden multi activity equipment with a large slide, basket swing and monkey bars.

Residents and local primary schools were consulted to find out what children and families wanted from a revamped play area. One of the key elements flagged up by the consultation was that a play area should be suitable for children of primary school age so larger more challenging equipment should be sought.

The £19,000 cost of the project was jointly funded by a grant of £10,000 from the National Lottery and the Parish Council's funds which included utilising ear marked reserves; a local trader was utilised to undertake the work.

This was a huge leap forward as we initially thought it would be some time before we were able to replace the multi activity equipment which had deteriorated to a point where its removal was necessary.

The grant demonstrated the Lottery's confidence in the professionalism and quality of our proposal and our ability to deliver. The award represented a significant percentage of the total funding required.

An official opening of the play area will be held in February when we invite the local primary schools to come and enjoy the facility and say thank you for their wonderful ideas which transformed into the play equipment on site.



## Speed Indicator Device

The funding application submitted to West Lancashire Borough Council (which has been match funded by the Parish Council) is for the purchase of a speed indicator device (SpID). Speeding traffic and road safety is a regular concern raised by residents in the village. The SpID will remind drivers of the speed limit by standing out from normal signs which could help to break the habit of drivers who consistently use excessive speed. The improvement of road safety for the village will educate and inform drivers about their speed thereby reducing the number of road traffic collisions. Data collected from the SpID will be available to the highways authority to be used to better target any relevant enforcement activities.

We are currently liaising with Lancashire County Council as to best location(s) for the SpID in order to target hot spot areas.

## Village Hall Floor

During the autumn we were pleased to announce that the Village Hall Floor Project was awarded a grant of £24,750 via the grant programme for West Lancashire called the "Whitemoss Community Fund". The independent, national grant-making charity, GrantScape administer the fund enabling both community and environmental projects that are situated within a five-mile radius of Veolia's Whitemoss landfill site in Skelmersdale. We also received £1,000 from an application to Lancashire County Council champion's fund.

This was a significant achievement and our thanks go to Trish for carrying out the detailed work required on this application to enable the village hall floor to be completely replaced. We were also fortunate to be able to incorporate additional works such as a wider emergency exit, door, ramp and rail. We recruited an Architect who provided the specification for the floor, given the hall is used for a wide range of activities; the contract to undertake the work was awarded to a local business.

The work was completed on time with minimum disruption to hirers. Over the Christmas close down we have also decorated the hall which is now looking refreshed.

## Bulb and Tree Planting

A grant of £1,000 has been awarded to Hilldale Parish Council from the Lancashire Environment Fund to fund a bulb and tree planting scheme. We are aiming to hold a community planting morning on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February 10.30 to noon and would be delighted to hear from anyone wishing to help us on the day. Free tea/coffee and cake will be offered to all volunteers. Please e mail the Clerk for further details.



## New Website

You may have noticed the Parish Council has a new website and e mail address.

Our website is [www.hilldaleparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.hilldaleparishcouncil.gov.uk) and the clerks e mail address is [clerk@hilldaleparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@hilldaleparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## Halls Bookings

If you would like to book the hall, please contact the Clerk (details below) who will be happy to provide you with availability and further details. The hall is an excellent venue for all types of functions and offers an excellent kitchen facility ideal for preparing buffets and hot drinks.

## Hilldale Parish Council Correspondence

All Council correspondence should be sent to Trish Grimshaw, Parish Clerk/RFO via the letter box at the Village Hall or e mailed to [clerk@hilldaleparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@hilldaleparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Council Meetings** - meetings are usually held on Thursday evenings; please see noticeboards or website for details. Members of the public are very welcome to attend the meetings.