SMISBY PARISH NEWSLETTER

Spring 2025



Victory in Europe Day – 80th Anniversary Celebration

Chris Taft

The joyous moment, in our nation's history, started at 3 pm on the 8th May 1945 when Winston Churchill officially announced the end of war in Europe. Smisby's joyous celebration of this occasion started at 3 pm on the 4th May 2025, when parish residents turned-out in force to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day:-





A huge thank you to EVERYONE who gave their time, energy, and creativity to make this event such a success. YOU created an atmosphere that made the occasion so special. Sincere thanks also to the Parochial Charity for their generous support.

'Changing of the Guard' at Smisby Parish Council

Chris Taft

After proudly serving this wonderful community since mid-2018, I have decided to step down from Smisby Parish Council. It has been a privilege to be part of this Council, and I've thoroughly enjoyed my time as a councillor, but growing commitments (particularly at work), have made it increasingly challenging to attend meetings and contribute as much as I'd like — and as much as you deserve!

I'm incredibly proud of what we have achieved as a council. Our successes are a testament to the collaboration and positive energy of a small group of individuals who have brought diverse ideas and a shared commitment to our meetings.

During the 13th May Parish Council meeting, we elected Councillor Mike Cuming as Chair, and Councillor Gemma Dickins as Vice Chair. I offer my warmest congratulations to them both. We can all be confident that the parish remains in capable and caring hands.

To ensure continuity, I will continue to serve as a Parish Councillor until the end of this year, or until new volunteers step forward to join the Council. If you care about the future of our community, I warmly invite and encourage you to attend one of our bimonthly meetings. Come along, see what we do, and consider getting involved — it's a rewarding way to help shape the place we all call home. Thank you to everyone who have supported me on the council for the last 7 years.

Ultrafast Full Fibre Broadband (FTTP)

As part of the UK's Digital Switchover, fibre optic cables were recently installed in Smisby. To confirm the availability of "Ultrafast Full Fibre Broadband' to your property, there's a Postcode Checker on: https://www.openreach.com.

Roadworks (B5008) - https://one.network/?GB142173352

Derbyshire County Council has confirmed that it will be carrying out Surface Dressing on the B5008 Willington Road, between Willington and Repton. Work will result in occasional road closure and delays, until 1st Aug (see link above).

Other Parish Council News...

Mike Cuming

I think I can best thank Chris for his tenure as chair simply by listing his achievements, which don't just stop at chairing meetings in a friendly and effective manner.

Reinstating 'The Poplars' boundary wall and adjacent pavement was initiated when Steve Hewitt was Chair, continued under Sarah Rushman and was finally completed under Chris's leadership. More recently a tidy-up of the Pinfold has started, having been precipitated by the Copper Beech tree being condemned and felled in 2024. A working party has been formed to evaluate possible improvements to the Jubilee Field (see separate article about that) and Chris has meanwhile deftly handled several tricky liaison issues. Chris also took on the book exchange project and led the installation and furnishing of our village telephone box. He also arranged the community defibrillator CPR training events which will continue periodically. Chris has always been particularly active working with Derbyshire County Highways, persuading them to install 'Dragons Teeth' on the B5006, improve the drainage facilities in Forties Lane, and deliver a more reliable gully cleansing schedule: there hasn't been a flooding event since that work was completed. Chris has also been exceptionally diligent in pursuing potholes and obscured/damaged/missing road signs on our behalf.

The Parish Council is very grateful to him, and for the anticipated efforts he will no doubt continue to make as a serving Parish Councillor.

Ongoing tasks for the PC currently include, among other - Highways liaison (potholes, signs, footpaths - which will, presumably, never end); upkeep assets such as jubilee field, pinfold, war memorial; liaison with East Midlands Airport - principally about noise and other local impact; planning - commenting as required on local applications; speed watch; liaison with Police - security and neighbourhood events; County Council liaison - representing Smisby to the elected officials who run the County; and production of this Newsletter jointly with the Parochial Charity. We will always welcome volunteers who may wish to get involved in any of these projects or indeed to become a Parish Councillor. Meetings take place in the Village Hall on the 2nd Tuesday evening of alternate months, the next being July 8th at 7.30 pm.

Community Speed Watch (CSW)

We are delighted to welcome Elizabeth Sturgess to the CSW team. She completed her one-hour online training with the Police in April, after which she became qualified to participate and has already carried out her first session (on Mon 12th May,) a busy day, with one speeding driver every 3 mins, over a one-and-a-half-hour period! Thank you, Elizabeth!

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Readers may recall that speeders get a letter from the Police to remind them of the speed limit and are placed on a county-wide database for a year. If during that year they are observed speeding again - anywhere in the county - they get a second (rather firmer) letter. A third 'bust' results in a letter being hand-delivered by a uniformed officer with blue flashing lights. We are happy to report that less than 10% of letters are 'second' letters and personal deliveries are rare indeed. So, it seems that the process of educating drivers is working, albeit slowly. We do know that the vast majority of speeders are genuinely unaware of the limit of 40 mph on the B5006 past the village and our primary goal is to enlighten people rather than punish them. There still hasn't been an accident at that junction since we started Speed Watch, but the number of audible near-misses suggests that we still have some way to go!

Apparently, the Police regard us as one of the more successful of the 100 Derbyshire Speed Watch groups - which is nice of them - and as a consequence of our data collection we qualify as a 'red' speeding location which means we can expect more enforcement activity shortly.

We are still (always) looking out for more volunteers - if you are interested then you are welcome to come along and observe a session, where you'll find it can actually be quite good fun, as well as being worthwhile.

Jubilee Field

The information below was given to everyone who attended the Parish VE Day Party in Smisby Village Hall and it is now updated and published in the search for more ideas. The field is owned by Smisby Parochial Charity (who pay for most of the football pitch and hedge maintenance) which leases it to Smisby Parish Council – who, in turn, spend about £2,000 per year having the grass cut, and about £1,000 per year on play equipment inspections, rent, insurance and maintenance – approximately one third of the Parish Council's total annual income!

The children's play equipment will soon need to be replaced, owing to its age, the small experimental wildflower patch near the entrance gate is overgrown, the Pétanque court is seldom used and currently shabby. The football field on the north side has recently been re-seeded and is currently seeing some use but requires new nets. There is no shelter at all but there are some picnic benches. There is adult exercise equipment which appears to be unused and there are eleven small trees within the field.

The Parish Council has been inviting suggestions for some time and has now formed a working group (led by Janet Sullivan) to explore options to maximise the benefit from this field. Initial suggestions from Parishioners include replacing (and possibly relocating) the play equipment, 'better' or 'other' use of the gravel Pétanque area, erecting a shelter, planting community woodland, setting aside a proportion of the area for hay meadow, creating parking spaces, a smallholding such as pig-farming (or chickens or sheep), creating a formal garden, erecting an exercise wall and the building of some affordable or low-cost housing for those with connections to the Parish. There are also suggestions for more trees (either around the boundary or within it) – possibly specimen trees or a community orchard. We could mow only the play areas (and pathways between them) to reduce cost, or simply make no changes at all, and continuing as is.

Factors will be the limited funds available for upkeep, as well as the possible benefits and drawbacks of any given proposal. There are currently 133 homes within the Parish with a total population of around 330. At present there are comparatively few children. The village already suffers from parking problems from time to time and both access and parking must be taken into account.

It is expected that capital expenditure (for example on new play equipment, or other infrastructure) is likely to come from Grant Aid, or fund-raising, or possibly from the Parochial Charity, however the ongoing maintenance costs are likely to continue to fall to the Parish Council - which is funded through your rates.

The process of consultation to seek and refine ideas is likely to take some time but there are definitely opportunities to enhance the area, or perhaps to reduce the costs. Opinions and ideas are sought, ideally considering practical aspects such as likely cost, benefits, drawbacks and timescales. Please feel free to get ideas from children, the elderly, former residents and indeed anyone with an interest. These may be passed to any Parish Councillor or emailed to Smisbyparishclerk@gmail.com

To help facilitate conversations on this topic, the Parish Council propose that residents of the parish gather on the Jubilee Field for a "communal picnic." This is for the entire parish community to come together, become familiar with the field layout and openly share ideas for its future ...and of course, have a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon together!

= See Next Page for Picnic Details =

Picnic in The Park!

Saturday 2nd Aug 2025 – 3:00 pm

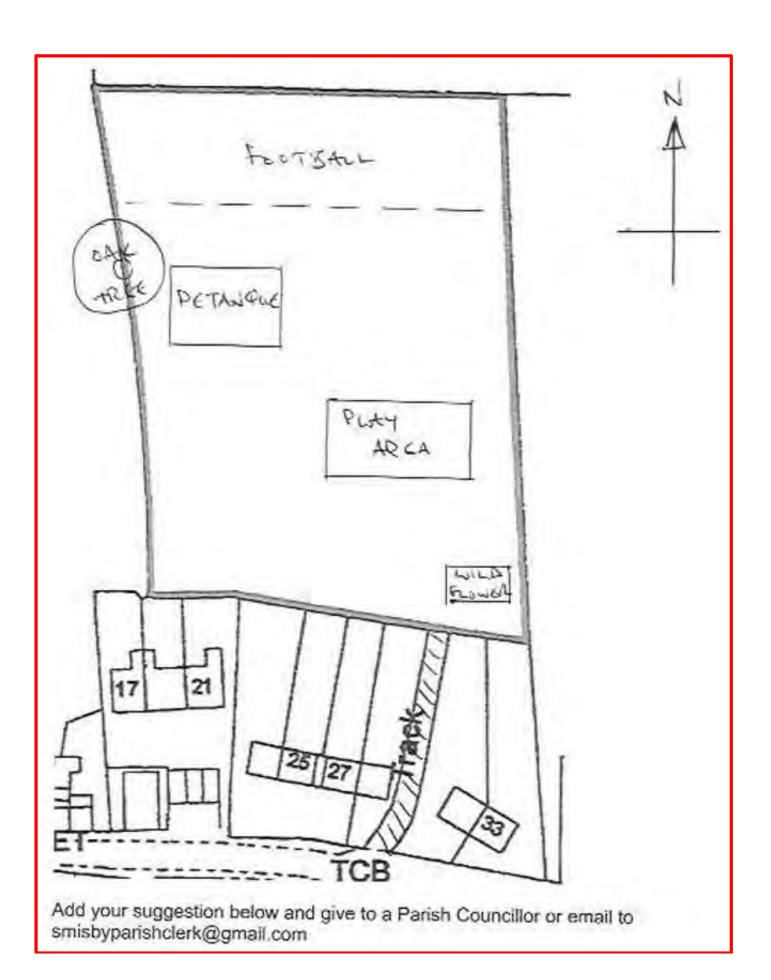
Smisby Jubilee Ground

- ➤ An informal gathering and opportunity to share your thoughts on how to best utilise our Jubilee Ground
- ➤ Please bring your own Food, Refreshments and Chairs, as there are insufficient park benches to cater for everyone
- > We would particularly appreciate ideas from our younger parish residents, as they're the ones who are likely to use the grounds most in future

Hope to see you there!

The Jubilee Grounds Team





Smisby Allotment Association

Sarah Rushman



We continue to have a stable allotment group with few tenant changes over the last 12 months. We have good input from the tenants and the field and woodland is overall in excellent condition, though we have had to do some remedial work on the water supply. We have some maintenance jobs to do over the next 6 months including fence post changes and tree care in the woodland planting at the far end of the field.

Mowing and general maintenance are being managed regularly by the tenancy group. The ground is in good condition and we are all enjoying producing excellent fruit, vegetables and flowers.

We have a waiting list at the moment and have been asked about adding additional plots to increase the availability.

If you would like to come and see what we are doing at the site, or might be interested in taking over the management, then do please get in touch - we would welcome interest from the wider community.

Smisby Allotment Association Contact: smisbyallotments@yahoo.co.uk

Ashby Camera Club Larry South

We're now into our 'summer' season of visits to local places of interest and will be publishing our next 'winter' season programme later.

Check out https://www.ashbycameraclub.co.uk to find out what's on and pop along to meet us at one of the events, or maybe meet us at Ashby Show on 13th July.

Ashby Art Club Victoria Chadwick

The past year has seen Ashby Art Club grow once more and welcome new members to Smisby Village Hall.

We meet on Monday evenings, 7-9pm, and every second and fourth Wednesday of the month, painting, drawing and creating side by side, whilst enjoying happy hours of conversation and sharing of advice and guidance.

Our Easter exhibition took place at Ticknall Village Hall on 19th - 21st April and drew many art lovers to enjoy our members' high quality and varied artworks.

We continue to enjoy our art evenings and mornings at Smisby Village Hall.

We are a friendly and relaxed group and always looking to welcome new members.

South Derbyshire District Council

Councillors Kerry Hains and James Lowe

Bin Lorry Fire: A discarded laptop caught on fire inside one of our SDDC bin lorries during refuse collections last month. Fortunately, the team were not hurt but please try and avoid disposing of anything containing a lithium battery in your black bin – many supermarkets will accept waste batteries.

Inner Caddies: There has been a delay to the supply of the inner caddies for the green bin. If you are still waiting for yours to be delivered, please place your paper/cardboard in an open plastic or cardboard box next to your bin on collection day.

Planning Committee Renamed: Members of the public often attend our planning meetings so, this is just to make you aware that these committees are now called Development Management committees!

Please contact us! We are here to help so please contact us if you need advice or have any concerns on issues including bin collections, street cleaning, anti-social behaviour, dog fouling and planning applications. If it's not an area that we cover, we can usually point residents in the right direction.

Kerry.Haines@southderbyshire.gov.uk [07967 676404] and James.Lowe@southderbyshire.gov.uk [07890 543597]

Derbyshire County Council (Melbourne & Woodville) - Newly Elected Representative

Chris Taft

UK local elections were held on the 1st May 2025 and the results for our area are shown below. Within Derbyshire, Charlotte Hill is one of the 42 Reform UK Councillors, who now control the County Council:-

Election Candidate	Party	Votes	%	Outcome
Charlotte Hill	Reform UK	1508	44%	Elected
Andy Dawson	Labour	899	26%	Not elected
David Muller	Conservative	671	20%	Not elected
John James	Liberal Democrat	338	10%	Not elected

Smisby Parish Council would like to thank David Muller for his support and congratulate Councillor Hill on becoming our newly elected representative. We look forward to working with her and receiving her support on parish issues, such as:-

- Potholed roads, poor quality repairs and lacklustre performance and engagement from DCC Highways
- Future Airspace Plan and the potential for significant increases in air traffic movements & aircraft noise
- Speeding on Parish Roads (esp. B5006) and noisy motorcycles being 'exercised' up & down the A511 bypass



News From St James' Church

Canon David Edwards

We held our Annual Parish Church Meeting on the 11th May and the church officers (Treasurer, PCC Secretary, Electoral Roll Officer, and Church Warden) were re-elected. In the absence of a Vicar the PCC meetings are chaired by the Lay Vicechair, Gary Margerrison.

The four parishes of this Benefice, Melbourne, Smisby, Stanton by Bridge and Ticknall, were disappointed to receive no applications for the post of Vicar, when it was advertised in February/March. However, the post has been readvertised and representatives of the four parishes will hopefully meet soon with the Archdeacon to short list and prepare to interview one or more candidates. I hope to have better news when I write the next one of these articles.

The church is grateful to the members of the ministry staff, all volunteers, for keeping the normal patterns of worship going in all four parishes.

I know that a lot of people in the village appreciate the way in which the churchyard is maintained, and we have renewed BETEL's contract for another year. They are a Christian organisation that helps the homeless and jobless back into work, and we are glad to support them.

I want to thank everyone who helps look after this beautiful church and grounds. We are lucky that so many care for this place that has been at the centre of village life for more than 900 years.

Canon David K Edwards: Email: dedwards804@gmail.com Tel: 01530 412604 Mob: 07530 114169

Aircraft Noise Mike Cuming

The UK's Future Airspace Plan is focused on using technology to modernise & optimise our air traffic systems to make air travel more efficient, whilst addressing environmental and safety issues associated with inevitable increases in air traffic.

From a parish perspective, residents should be sensitive to any proposals that (1) increase the number of aircraft movements, (2) permit old / noisy aircraft to fly in and out of EMA, (3) change the air corridors (routes) in and out of EMA.

Smisby Parish Council aim to decipher the aviation jargon and provide easy-to-understand briefings on the above and explain to residents how proposals in the UK's Future Airspace Plan could affect the parish environment, in which we live.

It's important that when the briefings are scheduled you make every effort to attend them, because once the authorities have made their final decisions, changing them will be very difficult ...and we'll all be left living with the consequences.

PLEASE SUPPORT SMISBY PARISH COUNCIL AND HELP GIVE OUR COMMUNITY A SAY IN DECISIONS THAT AFFECT US

Parochial Charity Chris Taft

Earlier this year, Simon Barnett stepped down as a Parochial Charity Trustee. On behalf of all Parish Residents, Smisby Parish Council would like to express their sincere gratitude to Simon for his dedication and commitment, whilst he served on the charity as a co-opted trustee.

Parochial Charity News Gemma Dickens

Big news! We're becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) which offers better protection for trustees and simpler administration. The application is with the Charity Commission, and we're awaiting their decision. We're keeping our financial and legal partners updated as this change will mean an update to ownership of all our assets.

In terms of assets - our Hemington land rent is under review, and we're addressing a Highways Notice. The agricultural land in Smisby has been re-let to a local farmer, and the break clause has been invoked on the Ashby car park and are exploring future options for this site.

From an admin perspective, the 2024 accounts are with the Charity Commission. Insurance is renewed, and investment policies are under review. We've been notified of interest rate reductions and are monitoring cash deposits.

The fun stuff - The VE Day Tea Party was a great success! We're now deciding on the best format for our Christmas hampers: vouchers, traditional, or a mix? Funding has been approved for several village projects, including War Memorial poppies, flower troughs, Jubilee Field maintenance, a Village Hall gazebo, and a new notice board. We've also granted funding for student support, books, and plants for the Village Hall.

In trustee news, Simon Barnett has stepped down as trustee. A huge thank you to Simon for his 12 years' service! We'd also like to extend our gratitude to all past trustees for their dedication and contributions to the charity.

Recruit of new trustees:

Calling new Trustees! Join Our Team & Shape Our Village's Future!

Do you have a passion for our village and want to make a real difference? Our Parochial Charity is seeking an enthusiastic new trustee to join our team! We're transitioning to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), offering enhanced protection and streamlined administration.

As a trustee, you'll play a vital role in overseeing the charity's activities, supporting local projects, and ensuring responsible financial management. We're looking for individuals with:-

- A commitment to our community: A genuine interest in improving village life.
- Constructive communication and collaboration skills: The ability to work effectively with fellow trustees and the wider community, embracing respectful dialogue and challenge.
- Sound judgement and decision-making skills: The ability to consider different perspectives and make informed choices.
- Time and enthusiasm: A willingness to dedicate a few hours each month to trustee duties.

If you're ready to contribute your skills and passion to a worthwhile cause, we'd love to hear from you! Contact the Clerk at sheila.heap@icloud.com for more information and an application pack. Join us in shaping the future of our village!

Smisby Village Hall Ron Walker

Your committee has worked extremely hard to ensure that our hall is kept to the highest standards both safety wise and aesthetically. Our village hall was the setting for a wonderful VE Day celebration. Over 80 parishioners attended this moving event and most having very favourable comments, I trust that everyone was impressed by our new marquee, kindly funded by the Parochial Charity and with the kind help of Mark Parnham. The AGM was marked by the welcome return of former committee members Simon Barnett and David Waters plus a new member Karen Walker. They all bring so much to the table in the shape of expertise and knowledge.

To further advance the appearance of the hall new oak doors are planned to the toilet areas quite shortly. A recent safety review came up with some minor work required to make sure that our hall has all the boxes ticked and this will take place in the next few weeks. We have recently acquired a new booking in the shape of a kick boxing club, if this is your thing then pop along to the hall at 12:30 pm on Saturdays and test it out. Finally, a big thank you to Suzanne Jones and Hazel Salt for tending to the flower troughs again, they have been superb as always.

Smisby Women's Institute

Suzanne Jones

Where has this year gone? We seem to have been so busy with our monthly meetings, craft mornings and walking groups. We even have a crochet group, which meets every Thursday afternoon in Smisby Village Hall with members having made flowers that are hanging from the tree or as wreaths decorating the outside of the hall.

We visited Sinai Park House, just a stone's throw from Burton town centre. A fascinating (and supposedly haunted!) medieval house, that the monks of Burton Abbey used as a retreat, for rest & recuperation ...after bloodletting (ugh!).

Who has heard of Saltaire near Bradford, West Yorkshire? Not many of our members had but they loved it! It's a wonderful place to visit, a World Heritage Village, Salt Mills has the largest collection of Bradford-born David Hockney works of art.

Simon Michael, an author who gave a talk to us last year about his time as a Barrister, invited the WI to a tour of the Middle Temple one of four Inns of Court in London. Everyone had a wonderful time, especially eating lunch in the 16th century hall with carved oak beam ceiling and stained-glass windows.

In January, we celebrated our 90th Birthday as a WI at The Beeches in Ashby, we had a lovely lunch and a superb talk given by two lovely ladies Julia & Elaine 'The Potty Plotters' from Radio Derby, they were superb after dinner speakers and they certainly got us all laughing at their antics!

We have had some excellent speakers throughout the last twelve months. We learnt about Thomas Cook and how the travel and holiday company started. Did you know how and where Foxes Glacier Mints came from? Currys, Halfords, and many more, all household names and still going strong, all started in Leicester.

We have a membership of sixty-five and an average monthly attendance of thirty-seven. Over the past twelve months, we have been continually active as a WI and with the projects planned for the coming twelve months ...it will be just as busy but enjoyable for our members.

All information can be viewed on our website: https://www.smisby.org.uk/womens-institute

On Behalf of Smisby Village Community

Chris Taft

Smisby Parish Council would also like to extend its thanks to everyone who has contributed to decorating the village. Your efforts — from the handmade VE Day decorations on the outside of the Village Hall, to the planting of flowers throughout the village (not to mention keeping them watered!) — have made a real difference. Your dedication and your care for our community is respected and greatly appreciated. You've helped create a welcoming and vibrant community environment, that we can all be proud of. Well done and, again, sincere thanks to each and every one of you!

Rock Night!

Our very own 'Dr Nic' Rushman

and his band

Thin on Top

Performing at Smisby Village Hall – one night only!

Saturday 14th June 2025 – 5:30 pm

Tickets £5 each

In aid of Pancreatic Cancer & in memory of Dawn Barnett

Includes Classics From

ZZ Top / Thin Lizzy / Queen

And

Dire Straits / The Dandy Worhols ...even Oasis!

<u>Ticket Reservations</u>: WhatsApp Nic, Michelle or John or call / text 074 1578 3066

Limited Tickets Available – You Snooze You Lose!!!

Landscaping and Horticultural machinery for Sale or Hire



Kilworth Machinery Ltd Anwell Lane, Smisby Tel:01530 412690 www.kilworthmachinery.co.uk

- Tractors
- Mowers
- Rotavators
 Log Splitters
 - Saw Benches
 - Sweepers





BLUEBELL ARBORETUM AND NURSERY

Visit our tranquil nine-acre woodland garden full of unusual trees and shrubs, many of which have been planted for their superb summer flowers/ foliage! Many of the rarities on display are available for sale from our adjoining specialist plant nursery. RHS Partner Garden.

Smisby, South Derbyshire LE65 2TA | 01530 413700 | bluebellnursery.com

Smisby Web Pages https://www.smisby.org.uk

The village website is a treasure trove of useful links and information from many of the groups and associations within the village including St James' Church, Women's Institute, Parochial Charity, Village Hall and Parish Council.

The Parish Council agenda, minutes and contact details are all published on the site, together with their accounts and audit information.

There are links to council sites such as highways reporting, speeding reporting and contact details for planning and accessing the council. In addition, a link to easily access the police neighbourhood alert line.

And for those who enjoyed reading this newsletter, previous issues are also available on the website!

Parish Councillors

Chair Mike Cuming 07747 841 348 Vice Chair Gemma Dickens Councillor Richard Brooke

Councillor Chris Taft Councillor Janet Sullivan Parish Clerk Caroline Crowder

smisbyparishclerk@gmail.com

Parish Council Meetings at 7:30 pm (2nd Tuesday of alternate months)

08th Jul '25 [subject to quorum] 09th Sep '25 [subject to quorum] 11th Nov '25 [subject to quorum] 13th Jan '26 [subject to quorum] 10th Mar '26 [subject to quorum]

12th May '26 Annual Parish Meeting - 7:00 pm

12th May '26 [subject to quorum]

Smisby Web Pages

https://www.smisbv.org.uk

Smisby WhatsApp Group aka "Smisby Crew"

Access Requests: 07415 783 066

Smisby News



Defibrillator Code

Outside Village Hall – device not locked but will trigger an alarm,

silenced using Code **2131**

Parochial Charity

Trustee Paul Cooper Trustee Gemma Dickens Trustee Elizabeth Sturgess

Clerk Sheila Heap 01530 414179

Village Hall Committee

Ron Walker Chairman Secretary Suzanne Jones Treasurer Claire Hynam

Bookings Clerk Janet Sullivan 07557 961 105 Trustees: Pat Barnes, Hazel Salt, Chris Taft,

Sarah Rushman, Karen Walker, Barbara Ball, Simon Barnett & David Waters

Local Derbyshire County Councillor (Elected)

Charlotte Hill: Charlotte.Hill@derbyshire.gov.uk

South Derbyshire District Councillors

Kerry Haines: Kerry. Haines@southderbyshire.gov.uk James Lowe: James.Lowe@southderbyshire.gov.uk