

**Minutes of Newton Annual Parish Assembly  
held on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at the Village Hall**

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**Those Present**

Paul Presland	-	Parish Council Chairman
James Finch	-	Suffolk County Councillor
Lee Parker	-	Babergh District Councillor
Dave Crimmin	-	Parish Clerk
Martin Render	-	Community Heartbeat Trust.

15 residents, registered as local government electors in Newton.

The Chairman welcomed both guests and residents to Newton's 124<sup>th</sup> Annual Parish Assembly.

**Apologies**

Fiona Garman, Sue Presland, Harry Buckledee, Paul Devlin and Sue Crawte.

**Martin Render, Chairman of Community Heartbeat Trust, gave those present an awareness session on the process in which the recently installed defibrillator at the Golf Club would be used.**

**2017/01 Minutes of Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

The meeting agreed the minutes of last year's meeting and the Chairman signed them as a true copy.

**2017/02 Police Report**

No Police report submitted.

**2017/03 Suffolk County Council Report**

James Finch updated those present on the SCC's year. "As this is nearly the end of a 4 year term of administration of your county council, this report summarises the achievements over that period with some key messages for the future.

**Council Tax Frozen from 2011** - the county council has lived up to their pledge of freezing Council tax since the last election, meaning that the residents of Suffolk are not paying a penny more than they did in 2011. That's a 6 year freeze! For the future we are committed to running a low-tax county council and maintaining services by being more and more efficient and investing in better technology.

**Roads** - In 2016 we renewed more than 300 miles of roads across the county after an investment of an additional £10 million. We implemented an online reporting system for potholes which has seen over 70% of customers now using this service. We plan to invest over £250m over the next four years.

**Caring for Suffolk's elderly and vulnerable** - this has remained one of our highest priorities. With an aging population, we have supported residents to live active and fulfilling lives. We have taken all opportunities to invest in adult care services. For the last two years we introduced the adult social care precept at 2% and 3% respectively. This money is ring-fenced and goes directly to these front line services.

**School standards up** - Since the last election in May 2013 Suffolk Schools have gone from 60% 'Good' or 'Outstanding' rating by OFSTED to 90%. This means that 9/10 children in Suffolk now have access to the highest standards of education. We are now ranked in the top half of all authorities in the country for GCSE results.

**Transport** - Over the past four years we have managed to work with partners to secure millions of pounds of improvement to the Rail network, with brand new rolling stock and reduced journey times under the new rail franchise with Greater Anglia. Our continued investment in community transport

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through our Connecting Communities scheme has extended services in rural areas, allowing everyone to access public transport no matter how remote their location and no matter their age.

**Infrastructure** – we have worked closely with our MP's to secure money for two large bridge projects in Ipswich and Lowestoft. These nationally significant projects will help to ease congestion and attract economic investment. The Upper Orwell crossing will be a bridge of international architectural significance after the announcement of Lord Norman Foster of Foster and Partners designing it. This is a real coup and will truly be a legacy bridge for all the residents of Suffolk to be proud of. In addition plans are being developed for a Sudbury Relief road.

**Waste Disposal** - The county's energy from waste plant has enabled us to save money on landfill tax, generate electricity and earn income. The plant was built to budget and on time. It takes all Suffolk's domestic waste for incineration and powers 30,000 homes. As a result, waste going into landfill in Suffolk has been cut from 44% to just 1% !

**Summary** - Over the past four years, services have been not only maintained but in many cases improved. We have greatly improved Suffolk's Schools and protected those most vulnerable in our society. We have invested heavily in our road and transport network, ensuring that they are fit for purpose for growth in the future. We have protected all of our libraries, secured nationally significant infrastructure projects and taken huge steps in preventing damage to our environment. We have achieved all of this without raising our base Council tax by a single percent."

**2017/04 Babergh District Council Report**

Lee Parker gave the Babergh District Council report.

"Move to Endeavour House

Councillors have resolved, along with Mid Suffolk District Council, to move out of our Districts and in to Ipswich to share space with Suffolk County Council. Ours is the first authority in the UK to undertake such a move and it is perfectly reasonable for constituents to want to know what it means for them. I will be happy to answer any questions directly and you are welcome to contact me for specific detail. However I will summarise some of the key points here. The move is scheduled to take place in August/September of this year. Walk in access points will be set up in Sudbury Town Hall and in Stowmarket for those that require a face to face service. In addition, we will expect Officers to make themselves available to constituents by appointment at any other places in the District as required. There will be a single telephone number to call Babergh from where you will be diverted to which ever department you require and a new website is being launched this month which will be a big improvement on what we have now. I cannot stress enough that this is not a merger of Councils via the back door. We and Mid Suffolk will remain as two sovereign Councils, but sharing a common set of working practices within one building. There have been no decisions taken as yet with regards to what will become of Corks Lane. A number of ideas are under consideration and I will provide feedback as I receive it.

Governance Change

Council has resolved to change the Governance model at Babergh from the Committee system to Leader & Cabinet. It is considered that the change will result in decisions being taken and policy being implemented more efficiently and effectively. All decisions of cabinet (including decisions made by cabinet members individually) are subject to the usual local government requirements of being published five clear days before the decision is made. Notification of forthcoming cabinet key decisions is required to be published (on a 3 month rolling basis) at least twenty-eight days before a decision can be made, in a 'forward plan'. When any cabinet decision has been made, other councillors can, within a certain period, call that decision in for further discussion by an overview and scrutiny committee before the decision can be implemented. In some councils many key decisions will also be considered by the overview and scrutiny committee first, before coming to cabinet for decision. Collectively these systems are intended to provide a check and balance to the cabinet decision-making process.

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Boundary Review

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is undertaking a further electoral review ('review') of both Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. The Mid Suffolk review is an 'intervention' review which has been triggered by significant electoral inequality between different wards within the district. The timetable for the review was agreed at the Council meeting on 28 July 2016. Babergh District Council agreed, at the Council meeting on 26 July 2016, to request that an electoral review of Babergh be run concurrently with Mid Suffolk. 1.2 The collective review of both districts is being undertaken by LGBCE in two stages. Stage one is to determine the Council size i.e. the total number of Councillors, and stage two is to redraw the ward boundary lines to achieve electoral equality using the revised Councillor numbers. The outcomes of the review will be effective from the next scheduled district Council elections in May 2019."

**2017/05 Chairman's Report**

Paul Presland delivered the Annual Report on behalf of the Parish Council. "At last year's Annual Parish Assembly I reported that the workload of Councillors had increased significantly. This year has been no different and it was definitely a sensible decision to move to 11 meetings per year. We have been getting through our agendas more efficiently and normally can conclude our meetings at a respectable hour. Councillors remain totally committed to developing and maintaining high standards of engagement with our community and working for the good of the parish of Newton. They have selflessly discharged their duties with integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness and honesty. On your behalf, I would like to thank them all for their hard work and for the support they have offered to me.

Once again NPC has been supported by its very experienced Clerk, Mr.Dave Crimmin. He provides the team with excellent advice, guidance and, when appropriate, clarification on procedural matters. Most of you will know that after twelve years of outstanding service, he will step down from his role with NPC at the end of June 17. We know he will very smoothly and expertly hand over the reins to his successor Jane Hatton. We are also looking forward to Dave's contribution at future NPC meetings. In addition to Dave, we are extremely fortunate to receive advice and guidance from both James Finch, our Suffolk County Council representative and our District Councillor, Lee Parker; we are indebted to them for the commitment they show to our village.

We are fortunate that crime in Newton remains a rarity but, nevertheless, we cannot become complacent and we really appreciate the reports and advice given to us from our community police officers. Villagers will be aware that minutes of every meeting are published on the NPC website and a hard copy appears in the monthly Newton Village Newsletter. Therefore, for the sake of time and brevity, the following is a synopsis of the main things that have affected our village over the past months.

The number of planning applications has remained similar to the previous year but there are signs that the nature of the applications is beginning to change. We know that Babergh's Core strategy means new housing is on the way for Newton but we hope that any development will reflect the feelings of villagers. The building of 8 new dwellings opposite the Saracens Head has started and we are sure that similar applications are in the pipeline.

Highways - Our County Councillor has been campaigning for lowering the speed limits from Sudbury to Stoke by Nayland on the A134. Clearly this is a complicated issue and there are many differing perspectives that need to be considered. However, we know that our CC will have the interests of all the villages affected by excess traffic speeds at heart.

At the annual Parish Assembly in 2015 I reported that Hastoe Housing Association was working on behalf of NPC to identify and secure land to be used for 4 new affordable dwellings. After lengthy negotiations, I am pleased to announce that a site has been identified with a local landowner. Final details are now being drawn up between Hastoe and the landowner and once completed, NPC will confirm the position of the site. A public meeting to review the outline development will then take place.

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These rented properties will be available to villagers who have significant links to Newton; none of the afore mentioned properties will be available for purchase.

Our updated Newton Byelaws seem to be dissuading people from selling vehicles from the layby on the A134. However, vigilance is the watch word and villagers are encouraged to report any suspected illegal selling to our Clerk as soon as possible. Please try to take a picture of the vehicle and the registration number.

Village amenities - It is wonderful to see our village pub doing so well. It seems to be bucking national trends and appears to be going from strength to strength. As it featured so positively in our most recent Parish Survey, we wish Beverley and her team, all the very best for the future. More homes now receive faster broadband speeds but for those villagers who still lag behind, we will be asking our County Councillor to campaign for that situation to be rectified as soon as possible. In partnership with the Golf club, there is now a Defibrillator unit situated on the outside of the clubhouse. After many years lovingly tending to our village War Memorial, the work became too much for Harry Buckledee and he had to retire. We thank him for all his efforts. Tony Langley has kindly taken on that responsibility and the PC is investigating grants to professionally restore the memorial to its former glory.

Finance - The expenditure budget for 2016/17 was set at £11,207.85 and the Parish Precept was set at £9380.00. Our accounts continue to be audited by Heelis and Lodge.

Newton PC Trust representatives - Cllrs Bower and Poole are the NPC representatives on the Newton Trust and Cllr Schwenk sits on the Village hall committee; they provide monthly feedback to the PC on matters relating to those organisations.

Christmas Festivities - Despite the teething troubles with tree lights we hope villagers enjoyed the Christmas tree decorations erected on the approach road to the Golf club. We are grateful to the Newton Trust for allowing the site to be used and for Beverley Faulkner, Landlady of the Saracens Head, for providing the electricity.

Fireworks 5/11/16 - Another extremely successful event; despite the normal cold, windy conditions, good numbers of villagers and friends enjoyed the 20 minute display. This village tradition is now here to stay! Many thanks to all the villagers who joined the Councillors to help make this such a great evening.

We have made financial donations to our local church, All Saints to help pay for the upkeep of the churchyard and to the British Legion Poppy appeal. Newton footpaths and grass areas around the village hall. We remain very pleased with the way our footpaths have been maintained this year and also the grassed areas around the Village Hall and we thank both contractors for their efforts. G. Flowers and D. Gotts have been given their contracts for another year. Autumn and Spring Clear ups. These have taken place and I would like to thank those residents who turned out to pick up litter. They worked very hard and thoroughly deserved their bacon rolls. I would also like to thank all those residents who are picking up litter throughout the year, your efforts are noticed and they do make a difference!

**Finally**, I would like to thank all the villagers who do so much for our village. It would be inappropriate to name individuals; you know who you are. Instead, I would prefer to simply say that without your commitment and enthusiasm Newton would be in danger of losing not only its sense of community but also its heart."

**2017/06 Newton Green Trust**

Russel Bower and Colin Poole gave the report on behalf of the NGT.

"Easements - This has been an extensive piece of work carried out primarily by Paul Devlin, the delay has been due to working through issues raised by homeowners solicitors, we now have a suitable document that will be used for every Property. Completing the easements will start in earnest in May.

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Agreement with the Golf Club - We are very close to signing a 25 year agreement between the Trust and The Golf Club. We expect the agreement to be signed in the next few weeks.

Little Green Track - we have had various issues including contractors unwilling to carry out the work due to potential damage caused by their equipment, or missing appointments. A trustee is meeting a contractor this week.

Paul Devlin has decided to step down from the Village Trust, we would like to publicly thank him for all his hard work and efforts in particular with the Easements and the Golf Club agreement."

**2017/07 Parish Assembly's Newton Green Trust Representative**

After many years' service Paul Devlin has decided to step down as the NGT representative. Those present wished to record their appreciated for all the work had undertaken while on the Trust.

Graham Parry was unanimously elected as the Parish Assembly's Newton Green Trust representative.

**2017/08 Village Hall**

Alan Vince gave the Village Hall report. "I am pleased to report that the Village Hall has had another successful year. You have in front of you a copy of the accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 from which you will see that our funds have increased by some £4000 over the year. The income from lettings was up from £7700 to almost £8300, and we were very pleased to receive a donation of £400 from the Fete committee, for which we thank them very much. Unfortunately, we were again unable to hold a Midsummer Munch in 2016 basically because of the lack of volunteer helpers. This had previously been a popular and very enjoyable afternoon but it appears to have run its course.

One of the main reasons for the increase in funds was that the cost of maintenance and repairs was again considerably less than in recent years, although not included is the cost of approx. £1900 for the new front door which was installed right at the end of the year. The Village Hall Committee is proud that we have such a lovely venue in a good state of repair, and surrounded by beautiful grounds. We hope that you all appreciate it too and will make good use of it. We have had two very successful joint quiz nights with the PCC, but there seems little interest in trying to put on other fundraising events – unless of course anybody has any good ideas for any such events.

Most of our income is derived from organisations from outside the village; we have two dance clubs, the Sudbury Wargames Club, and yoga classes who use the hall regularly. The Hall is a very popular venue for children's parties, but again many of these are from people in surrounding villages – they get to know how nice our village hall is. From the village we accommodate such regular events as the Fireside Club, the Art and Craft Club, various council and committee meetings and the coffee mornings which continue to be popular. Apart from these events the people of Newton Green do not make good use of their Village Hall, and it would be good to see it used for more village activities.

Looking ahead to the coming year, we need to replace the side door, and some of the wood panelling, and are considering replacing some of the upholstered chairs which have not proved to be very satisfactory. There is one sample black chair which we will probably order. We will also need to consider whether some external redecoration is needed.

Finally I would like to thank the Management Committee for all the efforts they put in, and particularly to Janet Weavers for all her organisational abilities and hard work especially in keeping the garden in good shape."

**2017/09 Newton Charities (Plampin and Alston)**

Alan Vince reported that "The Alston and Plampin charities were created in 1564 – some 450 years ago – so the fact that they are still going is quite remarkable. The benefactors gave rentcharges over land so that the income could be used for the relief of poverty. The capital has been added to over the years to

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produce a small annual income, and currently stands at over £7500. A copy of the accounts is provided for your inspection.

Although there is probably little actual poverty in the village in these modern times, the Trustees have continued the tradition of making small cash gifts at Christmas time to a few of the more needy people of the village. Occasionally we are able to help those who have severe health and financial problems. In addition, a donation of £50 has been made to the village Christmas parcel fund set up by the Parish Council and the Trust. These gifts are much appreciated by the recipients; knowing that the village is caring for and thinking of them is very comforting to them. If you are aware of anyone in such circumstances please let one of us know so that we can help.

Our income is supported by donations and we are always grateful to receive these. We usually take a collection at this assembly, and last year you contributed £50.70. Perhaps we can match or even improve on that this year, for this very worthwhile cause.

The Trustees for the past several years have been myself, Harry Buckledee, John Taylor and the Rev'd Judith Sweetman. As you will know Harry has had to go into residential care and cannot continue as a Trustee. I and my fellow Trustees would like to record our sincere thanks for all his help and good advice over the 20 years since he was appointed in 1997, and to wish him all the best. We hope a new Trustee will be appointed shortly."

**2017/10 Parochial Church Council**

Paul Presland read the report submitted by Fiona Garman. "We continue to hold regular services throughout the year and Revd Judith Sweetman also holds an informal prayer meeting every Thursday morning at 9.00am. As of January 2017 a trial period began holding one service a month on the fourth Sunday of each month.

A new sound system has been installed which is beneficial for occasions when the whole church is used. Discussions regarding toilet facilities are ongoing. Fundraising events have included Gift Day, Fete, Historic Churches Cycle Ride, Concert with Trinity Singers, Mill wheel Singers, Quiz, Harvest Lunch and Coffee Morning. We are very grateful to all who have contributed financially or in volunteering their time and skills to the running of the Church."

**2017/11 The Fireside Club**

Wendy Turner gave the following report. "April 2017 we have 23 members. During the last 12 months we have lost Ruby Biggs in August, Iris in November, Rosemary Otto in December. Judith and David Smalley moved away and sadly and unexpectedly we lost Sally Western earlier this month. Six members in twelve months. On a brighter side we have three new members, Jenny and Ken Mazdon who left the village to live in Laveneham and we are pleased to welcome them into the club. Also Gwen Smith joins us when she is fit. We have one new member who recently moved to the village, Eileen Sherwood who has integrated very well.

Our outings during the year were many and varied. Poetry reading, armchair exercises, an animal quiz and a well known faces quiz, we played bingo twice and scrabble twice. We brought photos of our grandparents, told members what we were reading, had a demonstration of first aid, tried origami and played indoor skittles and kurling. Our outings took us to the Blackwater on a boat trip, All Saints Church Newton to hear about its history, Kelvedon Hatch war bunkers, Harwich Redout Fort where we were met by the Harwich Town Cryer. Our mystery tours took us to Kersey Mill where we painted on glass, to a Cheese Farm where we had a tour of the farm and watched the process of cheese making.

Last year ended with a trip to Marks Hall to see the autumn colour but we were too early and to Perriwoods for Christmas shopping. We enjoyed the Fête, we celebrated the Queens 90th birthday with

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friends and other villagers and had a successful coffee morning. Our finances are healthy but will be put under stress as we have no fête this year which usually boosts our bank balance by £400.

We are having an outing to Audley End on Friday which will be the first of our monthly outings. We all look forward to these and hope they will be able to be continued. With outings and many meals to look forward to I present the Newton Green Fireside Clubs annual report for 2016/17."

**2017/12 Art & Craft Club**

Carol Langley reported that the club has now been running for 10 years, has 11 members that meet every Friday between 1.30pm and 4.30pm. We try to hold an exhibition every couple of years in aid of St Nicholas Hospice. We would welcome anyone to join us, there is a nice family atmosphere and it will cost you £3 per week.

**2017/13 The Village Fete**

Paul Presland gave the Fete report. "The event was promoted as a Party in the Park designed to coincide with the Queen's celebrations. There were two key parts to the day; a traditional village Fete took place until late afternoon and that was followed by a concert in the evening. A huge amount of work went into organising both events and I would like to thank all the volunteers who made this event possible.

As seems to be the case now, the afternoon was damp and cold but, as always, villagers and friends braved the conditions and had a thoroughly good time. In addition to the very popular traditional stalls and games, we were able to create a very large piece of art work painted by villagers to commemorate the Queen's reign.

As we drew the Fete to a close still under leaden skies, a villager was heard to say "do I see the sun trying to break through?" Remarkably by 6 pm the field was bathed in sunlight and the concert Roadies set to work producing a fabulous stage for the evening. Villagers took the chance to pop home for some warm clothing, returning with chairs and blankets and their dancing shoes. The concert was such a success that people were still dancing until midnight.

After expenses, the organising committee was able to make a £400.00 donation to the Fireside club, our Church, the village newsletter and the village hall. A small contingency has been retained for future events. Regrettably there will be no Fete in 2017; perhaps it is becoming a biannual event."

**2017/14 Village Newsletter**

The residents thanked Sue for all the work she has undertaken in ensuring that the Newsletter continues to flourish.

**2017/15 Neighbourhood Watch**

The Neighbourhood Watch scheme continues in the village with Sue Presland as the coordinator.

**2017/16 Autumn Show**

Paul Presland read the report from Sue Presland.

**2017/17 Nordic Walking**

Dave Crimmin updated residents that a Nordic Walking group still operates from the Village Hall on Tuesday evenings and anyone interested in joining should contact Janet Crimmin for more details.

**2017/18 Newton Community Award**

Tony Langley was awarded a community achievement award for his services to the village. John Taylor was awarded a lifetime community achievement award for his contributions to the village for the past 50 years.

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**2017/19          Questions to the Chair**

No issues were raised.

**Paul Presland presented a farewell gift to the Clerk, Dave Crimmin, who will be retiring from Newton Parish Council at the end of June after 12 years' service.**

**The meeting closed at 9.45pm when refreshments were served.**

Signed..... Dated.....