

**Minutes of Newton Annual Parish Assembly
held on Wednesday 22nd April 2015 at the Village Hall**

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Those Present

Paul Presland	-	Parish Council Chairman
James Finch	-	Suffolk County Councillor
PC Gary Austin	-	Suffolk Police
Dave Crimmin	-	Parish Clerk

27 residents, registered as local government electors in Newton.

The Chairman welcomed both guests and residents to Newton's 122nd Annual Parish Assembly.

Apologies

James Cartledge (Babergh District Councillor), Dawn Bridge, Deborah Williams, Mr & Mrs Wilkins, Tony Langley and Sue Presland.

2015/01 Minutes of Meeting held on 23rd April 2014

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

2015/02 Police Report

PC Gary Austin gave the Police Report. "This report covers the period from 01/04/2014 to 01/4/2015. During this time there are 23 crimes recorded relevant to the parish of Newton, this compares to 12 crimes for the same period last year."

2015/03 Suffolk County Council Report

James Finch gave an overview of the year at Suffolk County Council which covered the 12 months of Achievements at Suffolk County Council:

- Council Tax
- Educational Standards
- New Waste facility
- Mental Health
- Apprenticeships
- Broadband.

2015/04 Babergh District Council Report

No report received.

2015/05 Chairman's Report

Paul Presland delivered the Annual Report on behalf of the Parish Council. "It seems like only yesterday that I gave my first Chairman's report to the Annual Meeting of the Parish of Newton but time flies by very quickly and this is the last report I will present to you before my term and fellow councillors' 'terms of office' come to a close. In the circumstances, I think it is appropriate to spend a moment to remind ourselves of what our aims and objectives have been over the last 4 years.

Like all Newton Parish Councils before us, we have been committed to developing and maintaining high standards of engagement with our community and working for the good of the parish of Newton. Although Newton Parish Council is part of a tier of local government, central to Councillors' thinking is always the fact that they are directly accountable to villagers and to our local community. Throughout their time in office, it is my belief that all Parish Councillors 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 commitment. Of course our roles and responsibilities have been made considerably easier because of the support provided by our very experienced Clerk, Dave Crimmin. Dave provides the team with excellent advice, guidance and, when appropriate, clarification on

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procedural matters. In addition to the help provided by our Clerk, we are indebted to both James Finch, our Suffolk County Council representative and James Cartlidge our Babergh District Council representative, for the commitment they show to our village. We are fortunate that crime in Newton remains a rarity but, nevertheless, we appreciate the regular reports from our community police officers because they inform us about local issues and alert us to anything that we need to look out for eg ensuring that sheds are secure to avoid opportunist theft.

The following items are a summary of the main areas of work that Councillors have been focusing on throughout the last twelve months. A full list of activities is available from the minutes of our meetings which are always in the public domain.

1. Affordable local housing needs. Hastoe Housing Association has been selected as the preferred partner for the Local Housing scheme. They have reviewed potential sites and are currently in discussion with local land owners. However, one of the possible sites, land directly opposite the Saracens Head, has recently been sold to a Colchester based developer. No further information is available at this stage.
2. Highways issues/ Road Safety Parish Survey. 92 responses. Main findings were Gateways at entry points to village, Pedestrian Crossing, Interactive speed signage, Improvement to Valley Rd/ A134 junction, Extension of 30mph, introduce 40mph immediately after 30mph and road sign to say Community Speed Watch Village. A meeting took place in 23 January with SCC Highways and we are still awaiting feedback from that meeting.
3. NPC Byelaws. It became necessary to update and amend the Newton Byelaws. Many thanks to Dave Crimmin for his painstaking hard work with this matter; the new Byelaws came into force on the 15/10/14 and there are new signs in the village clearly stating the rules and regulations. Unfortunately, we do have a trader still operating from the layby on the A134 and Dave is currently liaising with the DVLA over this matter.
4. Newton Youth Council. Council has met on several occasions. Chair is Stephanie Poole, ably assisted by her brother William. Two NPC Councillors also attend the meeting on a temporary basis until new members can be found. The NYC has organised the purchase of a new Sports shed and is looking for donations of equipment.
5. Village amenities. Very shortly there will be a covered bus shelter erected directly opposite the Saracen's Head. There is a new bench to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on the playing field.
6. Finance. An Expenditure budget of £11.185.91 was set in November 2014 and new Financial Regulations were also adopted in November 2014. The Parish Precept was agreed to be £9067.02
7. Planning applications. The number of planning applications has remained fairly consistent with previous years; some have been relatively straight forward, others have been more complex but in all cases, Councillors have reviewed the applicants using the correct legislative criteria to make their judgements.
8. Fireworks. A very successful event, 8th November; we were extremely fortunate with the weather, windy but dry!
9. Improving Broadband speed. We held an extremely constructive public meeting which was well attended by many villagers. NPC gave us an informative appraisal of the current situation and whilst for many of us our BB speed is painfully slow, we are, nevertheless, looking forward to the ' progress meeting' which will should take place in the autumn of this year.

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10. Fit -Village Scheme. New venture, initially sponsored by Suffolk Sport, starting Pilates and Nordic Walking in village, May 2015

11. Supporting local organisations. This year we have made financial donations to the Kernos Centre to help to pay for the work they do for people with mental health problems, our local church to help pay for the upkeep of the churchyard and the British Legion Poppy appeal

12. 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.

13. 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. On this occasion I do not want 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.”

2015/06 Newton Green Trust

Alan Vince gave the report on behalf of the NGT. “Just a reminder that the Trust was set up to administer Newton Green for the benefit of the villagers of Newton, after the Lord of the Manor had given up his rights to the green. A few years later the Trust was able to buy the plain, which has also made a major asset of the village available for sporting and community activities. The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2015 have been drawn up but not yet audited. As is to be expected, the greater part of the income of the Trust was the rent of £4500 derived from the Golf Club. In the previous year, we spent quite a lot of money on re-surfacing the car park at the Saracens Head which is one of the main assets of our village. This area is now much more attractive and practical.

Over the past year, the trust has been active in trying to find a solution to the track which serves the houses at Little Green. Temporary repairs were carried out during the year, using material from the Village Hall car park – this involved Roy, myself and Mike Oliver shoveling material to repair the pot holes. We are still trying to find a more permanent solution and have met with the residents of those houses for this purpose. The roof of the garage on the sports field was replaced during the year thanks to the efforts of John and Philip Taylor. Ditches on the green were cleaned out as a joint effort between the Trust and the Golf Club. The pond at Plough Cottage was also cleaned out during the year. During the year the Golf Club representative on the Trust, Dora George, resigned and has been replaced by Fred French, who has been a Golf Club member for many years and is quite familiar with the various problems that arise. Our thanks to Dora for all her work over the years.

Unfortunately our secretary to the Trust, Chrisi Donders, has felt it necessary because of work commitments, to resign from her position, and we must thank her for all of her efforts over the past few years – it is not a particularly easy position to fulfil and we do appreciate all that she has done. Roy Gardiner (our present chairman) has volunteered to take on this position. The constitution of the Trust has come under review during the past year. At present only one Trustee is elected from the village, the others being two nominated by the Parish Council, the Lord of the Manor, and a representative nominated by him, together with one representative from the Golf Club. The appropriateness of this arrangement has been discussed, and it has been suggested that some of those nominated posts might be replaced by Trustees elected by the village at the Parish Assembly – so that they can be seen to represent the village people. If this was adopted, it might still result in the same people acting as Trustees. Comments and thoughts from anyone present will be welcomed. In any event the Trustees will change in the coming year when two new trustees will be nominated from the Parish Council in place of

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Roy and myself, who will no longer be councillors. Again, this year we made the usual donations to village organisations. If there are any other suggestions about how the Trust funds might be used, these could be considered at future meetings.”

2015/07 Parish Assembly’s Newton Green Trust Representative

Paul Devlin was unanimously re-elected as the Parish Assembly’s Newton Green Trust representative

2015/08 Village Hall

Alan Vince gave the Village Hall report. “I think we can report another successful year. A quick look at the accounts will show that we spent some £11,000 of which £9,000 came from income earned during the year. Our income from lettings was £7500, which must be comparable to many of the larger village halls in the area. But we have the advantage of having the best village hall; it is cosy, pleasant and attractive, and we have the best gardens, grounds and play areas for miles around. Having said that, a large part of our income arises from outside the village; we are very popular for children’s and family parties and have several clubs which regularly use the hall. I wish that more of the people from the village would make use of it and enjoy the facilities. We reviewed our charges during the year and decided we did not need to increase them.

During the year, our main expense was on the car park. The decision to tarmac the entrance has been successful and is a great improvement on what we had before. We have obtained road planings and spread these over the remaining area (although we still need a few more) which should mean that we have a good parking area for years to come. During the year we changed the electricity supplier and this has already saved money. On the income side, various events have been held. The coffee morning and gift aid appeal raised £523, we had a very successful mid-summer munch which brought in £724, and in conjunction with the church, a very enjoyable quiz night which raised £168 for each organisation. We hope to repeat these events this year.

Some minor changes have been made to the constitution of the management committee during the year. We no longer have a representative from the Methodist chapel, but we do now have recognised members from the Trust, and fireside club. We currently have a vacancy for a member elected from the village following the resignation of Sue Presland for personal family reasons. Do we have any volunteers to join the village hall committee, or do you know of anyone who might like to help? Finally, my thanks to the committee for their hard work during the year, and in particular to Janet our secretary who is always busy on village hall affairs, and who ensures that the garden always looks lovely!”

2015/09 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 rent charges over land so that the income could be used for the relief of poverty. The capital has been added to over the years to produce a small annual income, and currently stands at about £6,500. Although there is probably little actual poverty in the village in these modern times, the Trustees (myself, Harry Buckledee, John Taylor, and Rev’d Judith Sweetman) have continued the tradition of making small cash gifts and 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. Our income is supported by donations and we are always grateful for the £200 given by Newton Green Trust each year. We usually take a collection at this assembly, and last year you contributed £36.15. Perhaps we can do a little better this year, for this very worthwhile institution.”

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2015/10 Parochial Church Council

Paul Presland reported that the annual cost for the PCC was £11,500 with an ever increasing charge of £7,500 being levies for the costs of Rev. Sweetman. Although it is difficult financially because of the funds raised annually, bequests have helped works on the outside of the Church and for a new cross.

2015/11 The Fireside Club

Wendy Turner gave the following report. " Our membership k's' gone up to 24 during the last 12 months so we must be doing something right. We have had a very busy year, meeting twice a month, we have enjoyed two beetle drives, two ten pin bowling afternoons at Strike in Sudbury and only three afternoons of bingo! Meetings involving food have been many....with a strawberry tea, a buffet lunch, Ivan's lunch, Alan's pancakes, two fish and chip lunches in the village hall inviting other elderly people in our village to join us, and a Christmas lunch in Newton green Golf Club.

Other activities have been a mini fete, photos of members when young, photos of relatives involved with the Second World War, armchair exercises, making model snowmen for Christmas cake decorations and a short panto written and performed by members. We have decorated the Christmas trees in the village hall and have puzzled over a number of quizzes. Last year we enjoyed seven outings. The first was on the doorstep, Melford Hall. We had a memorable boat trip on the river Stour from Sudbury to Henny Swan for lunch enjoying beautiful weather. We went to the Transport Museum in Ipswich both male and female members enjoyed this outing which ended with a meal at the Beagle.

We travelled to the Tidemill at Woodbridge, I could not fit the visit in with the tide but we were given a good guided tour of the mill, followed by a disappointing lunch at Notcuts Garden Centre as the cafe was being revamped. Our trip to Colchester Castle was very interesting but such poor arrangements for a drop off point for buses, with main roads to cross and quite a walk. We went to the theatre in Ipswich to see The Mousetrap and in October we had lunch at the Lion at Leavenheath. In February I had to cancel a visit to Marks Hall to see their snowdrops as the bus I enquired about for the trip was far too expensive. We looked at the snowdrops in the village hall car park and went to Weldon's instead! We use Go Start Community Transport for our outings and are very lucky to have Julian driving for us. He took two groups of 15 to visits I had arranged at BBC Radio Suffolk in their new building, a most enlightening tour of modern technology.

At our coffee morning we had an unexpected profit of just over three hundred pounds and this together with the generous gift of two hundred pounds from the Newton Green Trust has put our finances on a good footing for our next year of outings and activities ending this month with an outing to Stonham Barns to see Meercats and a cream tea at Corncraft. So ending on a theme of yet more food I present the Newton Green Fireside Annual report for 2014-15."

2015/12 Art Club

Carol Langley reported that the club has 11 members that meet every Friday between 1.30pm and 4.30pm and has now become the Arts & Craft Club. Anybody wishing to join should just turn up.

2015/13 The Village Fete

Paul Presland gave the Fete Report. This year's Fete will be on Saturday 20th June, with a coffee morning towards the end of May. A Fete Quiz Night is scheduled for Saturday 27th June.

2015/14 Village Newsletter

In the absence of Dawn Bridge the Chairman read the report. "I'm very pleased to report that the Newsletter continues to be well supported by the village and continues to thrive. However, due to our imminent house move I have recently been searching for someone who would be willing to assume editorship in my stead. Several offers of help have been forthcoming, but sadly no editors, and so, having given the matter a great deal of thought, until such time as a new editor emerges, I shall continue to produce the magazine for Newton as I have for the past 16 years. I will also continue to organise

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Newton's annual fundraising events for Macmillan and for the Hospice from Newton Village Hall, and to support Newton in every way. May I take this opportunity to thank everyone very much indeed for their unfailing support of our little magazine. Long may it prosper."

2015/15 Neighbourhood Watch

Paul Presland gave the following report. "Newton continues to be a safe and pleasant place to live so the role of Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator is not an arduous responsibility. I have only been contacted on a couple of occasions regarding minor concerns. The fact that the village is part of a NHW scheme can be beneficial for insurance purposes so I am happy to continue with the role."

2015/16 Autumn Show

Paul Presland gave the following report. "The 2014 Autumn Show was again well supported and successful. As there was no fete, it was augmented with a BBQ and bar. This proved very popular so we hope to include these next time. This year's show is on Saturday 5th September.

There will also be an opportunity to exhibit produce, flowers, cookery and craft at the fete as there will be a 'Taster Table' of 16 classes:

1. Collection of Vegetables, three kinds, one of each.
2. Collection of Salad Vegetables, four kinds.
3. 3 Courgettes

4. Collection of 6 berries of one or mixed variety.
5. One specimen bloom of a large flowered Rose
6. Bowl or Vase of Annuals, mixed

7. An arrangement of Summer Flowers and Foliage in your favourite container. Size to suit container.

8. Photograph of a single bloom or stem of flowers.
9. Small craft item.
10. A family size fruit pie.
11. A cake including a vegetable.
12. 6 cheese scones.
13. A jar of jam or chutney.

Children's classes

14. A cake
15. An arrangement of garden flowers in a jam jar.
16. A painting or collage

It is hoped that this may encourage other villagers to contribute to the main show."

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2015/17 Newton Community Award

Wendy Turner won the 2015 Newton Community Award for all the work and support she undertakes on behalf of the village. Alan Vince gave the following testimony "Where do you start? In the last few years these well-deserved awards have been presented to those people who, quite voluntarily, put so much effort into making this village such a wonderful community. The village has seen a lot of changes in recent years. Many new people have come to live here, and unfortunately quite a few of them just keep themselves to themselves and do not get involved in village affairs and that is their loss.

However, some 30 years ago someone moved into Newton and from day one has involved herself in just about every activity and organisation that exists in this village. She seems to have been a part of almost everything apart, she admits, from playing golf. She has held just about every position within the W.I, being president several times, and assuming all sorts of parts and characters in the annual pantomime with which she has been closely involved. For the church she has hired floor scrubbers, bought new bell ropes, and rung the bells among other things. She has been a stalwart of the village hall committee for many years and her help has been invaluable.

A few years ago she took over the organisation of the fireside club which has greatly increased in membership under her leadership. She tries out and arranges all the outings – I think there were 14 last year, and all the activities at the fortnightly meetings. If all that were not enough she also organises walks for Babergh DC. She probably does other things as well which I haven't mentioned – oh yes she also has an allotment.

It's about time all her efforts, which I know are very much appreciated in the village, were formally recognised. On behalf of Newton Parish Council, I would like to present Wendy Turner with this community award and express all our thanks to her for all her efforts on our behalf."

2015/18 Questions to the Chair

An issue was raised on additional signage re dog litter.

The meeting closed at 9.22pm when refreshments were served.

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