

**Minutes of Newton Annual Parish Assembly
held on Wednesday 28th April 2021 held via Zoom**

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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

6 residents, registered as local government electors in Newton.

The Chairman welcomed both guests and residents to Newton's 127th Annual Parish Assembly.

2121/01 Apologies

Alan Vince, Sue Presland, Fiona Garman, Wendy Turner, Kate Waterworth and Steve Harris.

2021/02 Police Report

No Police report submitted.

2021/03 Suffolk County Council Report

James Finch updated those present on the SCC's year.

The Year of COVID 19

The year has been dominated for all of us at National and local level by pulling together to overcome the unprecedented incident of Coronavirus throughout the year. The County Council with the Suffolk fire Service reacted from the very beginning back in March 2020 in many ways to the National guidance given by the Ministry of Health and the NHS. These are just some examples of actions taken by the Council: -

- Immediate response supplying the elderly and vulnerable with food packs so that they were well fed and nobody suffered because of the 1st lock down and were unable to visit the shops.
- The collection and dissemination of local data and advice to guide the local policy for best practice control.
- The organisation of Home Schooling with the local authority in maintained schools
- The introduction of "Home but not Alone" free phone line for the lonely.
- Support Lines for those with Financial Worries.
- The follow up to Test and Trace and now recently totally co-ordinated at the local level since March 2021.
- Local co-ordination of the Vaccination programme with Clinical Commissioning Groups via the Director of Public Health – Stuart Keeble.

There will be lots of lessons learnt for this last year and no doubt our future modus operandi both in work and leisure will be different in the future. We should all thank each other for the collaboration that has been achieved. My belief is that there is "always good that comes out of bad".

Resurfacing of 25% of the Suffolk Highway

On 5th August it was announced that Suffolk Highways completed its 1000th resurfaced mile following the Council's commitment to relay new road surfaces on a quarter of Suffolk's road network. In 2017 Suffolk County Council's Cabinet committed to resurfacing 1,000 miles of road across Suffolk over a four year period in a bid to improve the quality of roads and reduce the number of potholes. There is still more to do.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

In September it was announced that 100 fast charging points for electric vehicles were to be built in rural parts of the county. The council have reached out to interested parish and town councils and non-profit

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organisations to put in fast chargers where there are currently none. The funding will cover the installation and set-up costs, meaning very little expense for the hosts and possibly creating a source of income for them. The up take has been good.

Fostering and Adopting in Suffolk

In October the Council launched Adopt East, a regional adoption agency which has been established to recruit adopters across the East of England. Adopt East will work across local authorities to find families for children who are waiting to find their forever home. The target has also been doubled for increasing number of new foster parents from 30 to 60 for 2021/22 as a result of the predicted extra numbers required following the Pandemic.

Choice of Schools for September 2021

On National Offer Day 98.57% of Suffolk children were offered a place at one of the schools preferred by their parents. Suffolk County Council received 7,602 applications from parents indicating which primary school they would prefer their child to join in September 2020. Some 7,116 children received offers for their first preference school and 7,493 children received an offer for one of their three preferred schools.

Suffolk' Response to the Climate Emergency

In response to its declaration of a climate emergency, SCC aims to lead the way with an unparalleled range of activities and policy changes to support its ambition of being a 'net zero' authority by 2030. The council's cabinet reviewed and agreed an extensive programme of recommendations to achieve this ambition including dozens of changes and new ways of working. Being 'net zero' means the council will remove its carbon emissions where it can; if it is unable to do so, it will compensate for those emissions.

Investment in Suffolk's Natural Environment

The County Council will be investing in tree-planting, restoring hedgerows, and improving roadside verges for wildlife. £228,000 from the Suffolk 2020 Fund will enable Suffolk County Council to enhance its work to protect and encourage biodiversity in the county. The authority will do this through a number of new schemes, as well as building on existing work.

Suffolk Archives New Home "The Hold" Welcomes First visitors in 2020

Monday 28 September saw the public able to access The Hold, Suffolk's flagship new heritage facility on Ipswich Waterfront. This versatile new building will be the permanent home of the Suffolk Archives Ipswich branch and is shared with the University of Suffolk, who have dedicated teaching spaces within the building. The creation of The Hold, and its associated countywide programme of events and activities, has been made possible thanks to a grant of £10.3m from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, and further funding support from other national organisations and local Suffolk heritage groups.

Better Broadband for Suffolk reaches 100,000th customer as the 3rd phase contract is agreed with the UK Government.

By June 3, more than 100,000 households across Suffolk were using faster broadband, thanks to the council-led Better Broadband for Suffolk programme. The partnership - between Suffolk County Council, Openreach, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) and local councils – has made faster broadband available to around 150,000 premises so far, since being launched in 2010. It means the current total superfast broadband coverage in Suffolk now stands at more than 98 per cent coverage.

The team has plans to go even further, after today announcing an additional phase of work, to provide connectivity to approximately 5,000 more premises, including over 550 businesses, in some of the most rural parts of Suffolk under Phase 3.

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Suffolk County Council secures £3.1M for building decarbonisation initiative.

Suffolk County Council (SCC), working in conjunction with property specialists Concertus, has secured £3+M of funding from The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to promote capital energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation projects within buildings used to provide frontline public services. Working with Concertus, the council has been preparing a range of packages to support the decarbonising of various buildings in the Council's estate including applications for the council's headquarters at Endeavour House in Ipswich, four rural fire stations, Beacon House, Waterloo Centre and Leiston Children's Centre. All this is to help reduce the County Council's running costs for the future."

2021/04 Babergh District Council Report

Lee Parker gave the Babergh District Council report.

"Summary of activity for Babergh District Council 2020/21

- £21M paid to businesses in Babergh / MidSuffolk via Covid grants during the pandemic
- All staff have been working remotely throughout the pandemic. Babergh was an early adopter of technology to facilitate virtual meetings
- Staff have been diverted to assist with the processing of business grants and community support via the 'Home but not alone' scheme
- We introduced the Sudbury 'virtual high street' which has helped support Sudbury business throughout the pandemic by providing an online market place for local independent business to trade. This has been recognised nationally for the innovative approach to business support and over 100 businesses and organisations have joined.
- We have agreed to bring our Public Realm services in house after many years of outsourcing, a move that will allow a more flexible approach at improving the bio-diversity of the District
- Babergh added to its existing stock housing stock of 3400 houses with the acquisition of 45 new build houses in Sudbury. This is in addition to 158 homes in the pipeline over the next 3 years.
- We approved our first bio-diversity action plan in support of the Council's carbon neutral ambitions
- We have agreed to convert our waste collection fleet to hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) by summer of this year
- We have committed to the future of face to face customer service in Sudbury by launching a new Customer Access Point at Sudbury Library following the expiry of the existing contract with the Town Hall, a move that is set to save £30Kpa to taxpayers.
- Kingfisher leisure pool benefitted from a £2.4M refurbishment courtesy of grant funding
- Communities in Babergh/Mid-Suffolk have benefitted from nearly £4.4M of funding from CIL in the last 12 months.
- CIFCO is now fully funded having delivered income to the tune of £1.6M in 2020/21. The last tranche of investment is expected to increase income to £1.9M for this financial year.
- Despite delivering a balanced budget for 2021/22 the medium term outlook remains pressured and Cabinet agreed to introduce parking charges from October 2021 (at the earliest) to ease some of the burden. Cabinet were resolute that discretionary services should become self-financing in the future but acknowledge the decision to be contentious.
- Our Joint Local Plan has been submitted for examination by the Secretary of State following approval by Council in November."

The Chairman thanked Lee for all his work in helping Newton being granted CIL funds for the Recreation Ground.

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

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2021/05 Chairman's Report

Paul Presland delivered the Annual Report on behalf of the Parish Council. "It has been a remarkably busy year for NPC and despite the COVID restrictions, we achieved most of the objectives on our Development Plan. Learning how to use Zoom certainly helped as did the commitment and professionalism of our Council team. We were able to run our monthly meetings and even added additional sessions to discuss any very urgent matters. As in previous years, we have been very well supported by Lee Parker, our District Councillor, and James Finch our County Councillor. Their contributions at our Council meetings have been both insightful and informative.

In May 2020 we welcomed back David Crimmin as our Clerk and David's experience and knowledge of local government issues has proved invaluable. He was able to hit the ground running and immediately implemented structures that enabled the Council to move forward with its priorities. We have been able to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our targets which has meant we have been able to implement developments within agreed time frames.

We also welcomed a new member to the Parish Council, Mr David Everitt, which means we now have a full complement of Councillors. David lives in Whisper Wood, runs his own business and we look forward to his contributions over the next three years.

The key objectives of our Development Plan were: The regeneration of our village recreation ground and the progression of our Newton Neighbourhood Plan to the Referendum stage.

Recreation Ground Regeneration

The regeneration of the recreation ground has taken up a substantial amount of time for Councillors and our Clerk. Detailed financial grant applications had to be submitted to Babergh DC along with plans for the Multi Use Game Area, two new playgrounds and the Forever Fitness Zone. A very comprehensive tendering process was organised and after evaluating each submission, Councillors agreed to offer the work to two companies.

Works began on the MUGA and the Forever Fitness in the late Autumn and were completed within agreed timescales. Both facilities are of an extremely high specification and the Council hopes they will become very popular with villagers for many years to come. Obviously Covid restricted usage but it is already encouraging to see those new facilities being used as Covid restrictions are relaxed.

Unfortunately, Covid did have a massive negative impact on the building of the two new playgrounds. The company offered the contract was unable to honour its commitment and so had to withdraw. Fortunately, another contractor has been found and work will start in mid- June, with a completion date to coincide with the school summer holidays.

In preparation for future village events, the Council has worked with the Village Hall Committee to install an electricity supply to the recreation ground. This will be completed in June.

Newton Neighbourhood Plan

The second significant piece of work to be undertaken has been completing the remaining sections of the NNP. This extremely complex document, first started 3years ago, has finally reached the Section 16 stage which allows it to be submitted to Babergh/ Mid Suffolk District Council. It is currently nearing the final weeks of consultation before it is reviewed by an Independent Assessor.

Once any necessary modifications have been made, a village Referendum will take place to vote on whether to adopt the Newton Neighbourhood Plan. This will not take place until the Autumn 2021 and further details will be sent to villagers to explain the process well in advance of that vote. At this stage I would like to thank every villager who has been involved in this exceptionally long, sometimes tortuous process. You have all played your part in many ways and without your input this much needed NNP

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would not have been completed. To those of you who have provided the ongoing professional, technical, and artistic advice I simply salute you!

Other Issues that Councillors have worked on over the past 12 months.

To ensure due diligence with NPC financial matters, Councillors receive a detailed report from our Clerk at every meeting. The report is always carefully reviewed, and questions asked if further clarity is required.

The speed of traffic remains a thorn in the side of most villagers. The Council has been working very closely with James Finch, our County Councillor, to install new speed cameras in the village. A new set have been jointly funded and after months of negotiations, Suffolk Highways have agreed to install new posts.

The increased number of cars crossing our Green is also becoming a major concern and I am thankful to villagers who have provided us with hard data for us to use in our discussions with Babergh/ Mid Suffolk, Newton Golf Club, and other associated organisations.

Planning applications always keep Councillors busy, and it is important that villagers make their feeling known to us when these planning applications are received.

The Council has also been reviewing its policies and procedures to ensure we remain compliant and now have a calendar of when documentation should be reviewed. These are all on our website.

Finally, on behalf of the Newton Parish Council, I would like to thank villagers for all you do to keep our village such a beautiful place to live. When Covid restrictions allow I look forward to seeing you at one of our events or even at one of our face-to-face meetings.”

2021/06 Newton Neighbourhood Plan

Barry Coleman gave the update on Newton’s Neighbourhood Plan. “After a challenging 30 months, the Steering Group and Parish Council have now submitted the residents’ NP. There are a number of people who went the extra mile in producing the plan and we are very lucky to have them involved. I hope that our communication throughout the process helped people keep up with developments. We will need to keep the communication going when the referendum is being held.

A sound plan will be handed across to Babergh and the parish council and both have a duty to use its outcomes to give the parishioners what they have requested.”

The Chairman thanked Barry for all his effort and support in the process and agreed that NPC should be kept to account regarding the NP.

2021/07 Newton Green Trust

Phil Taylor gave the NGT update. “Over the last year, the Trust has built a new bridge from the Village Hall car park to the Recreation Ground and has planted trees on the Green. Work is currently being undertaken to put new signage in the Recreation Ground laying down the rules for golf practice. The increase of vehicles crossing the Green to Rotten Row is also under review. He thanked the Golf Club for the ongoing maintenance to the Green.”

2021/08 Parish Assembly’s Newton Green Trust Representative

Steve Harris has decided to step down as the NGT representative. Those present wished to record their appreciation for the work he had undertaken while on the Trust.

Shona Shipp was unanimously elected as the Parish Assembly’s Newton Green Trust representative.

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2021/09 Village Hall

Alan Vince gave the Village Hall report. "There is very little to report regarding the past year. The accounts show a receipt of £55 from lettings, but that was just a late payment from the previous year. Apart from that we received a grant from Babergh District Council of £10,000. The interest received from our deposit account was negligible. Much of the usual annual expenditure continued, but we took advantage of the lack of use of the Hall to replace the front door and one of the side doors. Hopefully this will save having to put up with sticking or rattling and draughty doors in the future. The usual cleaning took place and the opportunity was taken to concentrate on clearing much old stuff and detritus that had accumulated in the storeroom. Janet has worked very hard on this, and new items of furniture etc. have been ordered.

Looking ahead to the coming year, hopefully there will be some return to normality. Enquiries are already being made for bookings at the Hall once this is allowed. Many of the groups that have regular activities at the Hall cannot wait to get back.

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.

Unfortunately, age is rapidly creeping up on the members of the committee and we must attempt to try to recruit some new members who might be able to take on some of the responsibilities in the next few years. If anyone would like to volunteer to join the committee please get in touch."

2021/10 Newton Charities (Plampin and Alston)

Sue Presland reported that "The Alston and Plampin charities were created in 1564 and have continued to offer support to villagers in need, who are sick or bereaved ever since.

The benefactors gave rent charges over land so that 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 £10,017.58an increase of £602.18. A copy of the accounts have been provided for inspection.

Although there is probably little actual poverty in the village these days, the Trustees have continued the tradition of making small cash gifts at Christmas to a few of the more needy in the village. Occasionally we are able to offer help to those who have sever health and financial difficulties. In addition a contribution of £50 has again been made towards the Christmas parcel fund set up by the Parish Council and the Trust. Gifts of flowers or pot plants and cards are made to those who are sick or needy or experiencing stressful circumstances. These gifts are much appreciated by the recipients and take comfort in the knowledge that the village is there for them and thinking of them. If you aware of anyone in such circumstances please let one of the Trustees know.

Our income is supported by donations and we are always grateful to receive these. Several years ago Newton Green Trust resolved to support the Charities on an annual basis and in 2020, kindly donated £200. Other streams of donations such as coffee mornings have been cut due to the Covid 19 restrictions, but hopefully they can recommence later this year.

At the end of 2020, our long standing Treasurer and Chairman decided it was time for him to step down. We cannot thank Alan enough for all he has done to ensure the maintenance of the Charites and the good works it undertakes. It was my privilege to try to fill Alan's shoes and I was appointed as a Trustee by the Parish Council. In addition the Reverend Robert has now assumed the role of an ex-officio Trustee of the committee.

The current Trustees are now:

Robert Parker McGee

Sue Presland

Janet Taylor

Maureen Williams."

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2021/11 Parochial Church Council

The PCC report was submitted by Fiona Garman. "The pandemic meant that for the very first time the doors of All Saints' Church had to be locked. For most of the past year this has been the case and restrictions have caused the cancellation and postponement of weddings and other services and events. During the closure of churches in the benefice services have been streamed on-line.

The churchyard has continued to be maintained including the conservation area and twelve recently planted tree saplings. A thorough spring cleaning inside has taken place with the help of volunteers from the village. It has been a sad year for us all and we were particularly affected by the passing of Margaret Lowe, a great friend and longstanding member of the PCC. We hope to hold a memorial service in her memory once restrictions are lifted and normal service is resumed.

The theft of the lectern last year was reported to the police but unfortunately it has not been recovered. We continue to work towards the installation of toilet facilities at the church enabling the offer of a venue to hold concerts and various events for villagers and local people.

We are happy to have the church open again and visitors can once more come and enjoy the building and tranquil surroundings."

2021/12 The Fireside Club

Wendy Turner said that due to the pandemic the Fireside Club has not operated for the past year. She is now in the process of handing over the reins to 3 parishioners and she was thanked for all her efforts in running the club over many years.

2021/13 Community Allotments

Kate Waterworth provided this report. "The main core of allotmenters have worked hard over the past year to maintain the vegetable allotment during very difficult times. Due to various Covid restrictions it has been necessary to limit the number of people on site, but with careful planning and liaison a reasonable harvest was achieved. This was shared amongst all the allotmenters from the seed growers to those that physically laboured on site.

It has not been so easy over the past year to recruit new members to the group, but a recent flyer(please see enclosed) was sent out to the Box River News, Newton Newsletter and also posted online on the Newton Village Newsletter and Newton Green Community Voice & Noticeboard Suffolk FB pages. We have had several enquiries and offers of donations of seeds and pots and a lady who recently moved into the village has now recently joined our group. The allotment group had planned another open day, similar to the one in July 2019, but due to Covid we were not able to proceed with one in 2020, or take part in the Village Show and Harvest Festival due to them both being cancelled.

This Spring we started to clear the 2nd Allotment with a plan to turn it into a wildlife area, but unfortunately on clearing the site we found lots of rubble, bricks and tiles embedded in the ground left by a previous tenant. Work has now halted on this site as the group feel it is not our responsibility to clear away all this rubbish. The area will need to be dug over by a machine before it is usable. (Please see letter enclosed addressed to Paul Presland on this matter) As Covid restrictions are lifted and the village events begin to start up again we will be able to support these as we did before by selling seedlings, plants and produce at these events which will raise money for the other groups as well as sustain the running of the allotment.

Future Plans/Events

Seed Swaps, Plants and seedlings for sale with an honesty box, Sunflower growing competition for the children, to make a young area for them to grow plants and build bug hotels, to make raised beds for adults with disabilities. "

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2021/14 Village Newsletter

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

2021/15 Questions to the Chair

No issues were raised.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Village Hall Accounts

NEWTON VILLAGE HALL							
RECEIPTS & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021							
<u>BALANCE OF FUNDS AT 1/4/2020</u>	£	£		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	£	£	
Cash at Bank Current A/C	£5,579.46			Insurance	£589.81		
Cash at Bank Deposit A/C	£30,276.40			Rates & Water	£84.23		
Cash in Hand	£79.47	£35,935.33		Electricity	£550.90		
				Cleaning	£301.50		
				Repairs & Maintenance	£384.78		
				Sundries	£516.42		
				New Doors	£3,790.00	£6,217.64	
RECEIPTS							
Lettings			£55.00				
DONATIONS			£40.00				
COUNCIL GRANT			£10,000.00				
FUND RAISING							
Coffee Morning	£0.00						
Quiz Nights	£0.00	£0.00					
				BALANCE OF FUNDS AT 31/3/2021			
				Cash at Bank Current A/C	£9,455.24		
				Cash at Bank Deposit A/C	£30,312.37		
Deposit Account Interest		£35.97		Cash in Hand	£83.05	£39,848.56	
TOTAL			£46,066.30	TOTAL		£46,066.30	
I have prepared this account from the books and records of the Newton Village Hall Fund, and certify that it is a true record of the fund's transactions							
				A A J VINCE : Treasurer			2021
Audited and found correct							
							2021

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

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**NEWTON CHARITIES
ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2020**

An Account of the Alston and Plampin Charities in the Parish of Newton for the year ended 31st December 2020, to be presented at the Annual Parish Assembly to be held on 28th April 2020

RECEIPTS			EXPENDITURE	
Balance b/f:			Flowers etc for sick	37.25
Cash	37.09		Christmas Parcels	50.00
Nationwide BS	193.64	230.73	Monies Distributed	250.00
Donation NG Trust		200.00	Cash in hand	40.07
Quarterly dividend C.O.I.F		288.56	Nationwide BS	
Interest: Nationwide BS		0.55	Balance B/F	342.52
		-----		-----
		719.84		719.84
		-----		-----

The capital of the Charity is represented by 556.18 units in C.O.I.F valued at 1801.14p per unit as of 31st December 2020 equalling £10,017.58

Signed by the Trustees on 27th April 2021

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