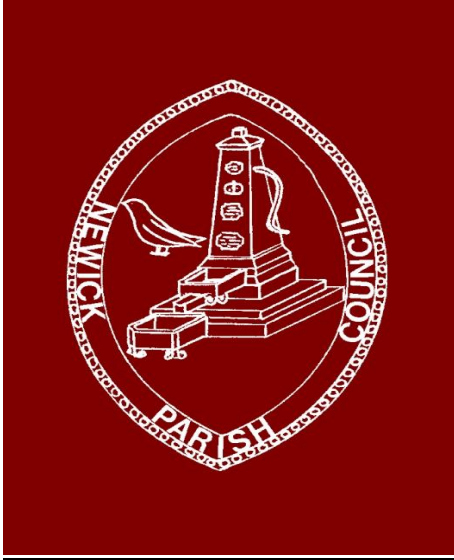


# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: YEAR TO APRIL 2018



## The Parish Council

At the beginning of the council year in May we were a body of four elected councillors and 7 co-opted councillors. In the summer Jed Jones resigned and Melanie Thew, an experienced councillor, was co-opted in September to fill the vacancy. We thank Jed for all his hard work whilst on the council.

## Your Parish Councillors

Chris Armitage  
Guy Clothier  
Mario Halsey  
Ben Horsfall  
Iain Nesbitt  
Jean Sheppard (Vice Chairman)  
Jenny Smerdon (Chairman)  
Melanie Thew  
Joe White  
Cathy Wickens  
Ken Wrench

## Parish Council Precept

The work of the Parish Council is funded largely by a contribution from the Council Tax paid by parishioners to Lewes District Council. This is

known as the precept. In 2017/18 the precept received amounted to £53,906.

## Neighbourhood Planning

Our boundaries are under threat from developers who seem to think it is ok to propose developments on sites outside those included in our Neighbourhood Plan!

Newick's Neighbourhood Plan (NP), adopted in July 2015, made full provision for the number of new dwellings that the village had been asked to accept for the period up to 2030. Lewes District Council (LDC) has demonstrated that it has a five year land supply, so there is no justification for additional dwellings to be imposed on Newick and its residents.

The Neighbourhood Planning committee is currently meeting monthly and will continue to carefully monitor national and local issues, legislation and emerging legislation together with relevant court proceedings and local developments as they affect Newick.

## Planning Updates

In November 2017, Fairfax Properties submitted a planning application for outline planning permission for 20 homes, some public open space and community parking for KGVPF on land to the rear of 45 Allington Road. The Council unanimously agreed to object because the proposed development is outside the development boundary and is therefore contrary to LDC saved Local Plan policy CT1. It is not in the NP and it failed to address satisfactorily issues around increased traffic flow, parking and pedestrians using the footpaths to access the local Primary School along an already congested road.

The application is now with Lewes District Council to be considered by the planning committee.

Baroness and Paddy Cumberlege's appeal for the quashing of an application for 50 homes at Michelswood Farm was successful in October 2017, but the DLA Delivery then appealed against the judge's decision. The Appeal Court hearing took place on 28th February and 1st March 2018 and the verdict is still awaited.

The action taken by the Cumberleges on behalf of the village is intended to defend our NP. It is crucial that we adhere to the plan or we risk the possibility of further development of other sites around the village.

The latest challenge to the plan is from Thakeham Homes who have the option to build on the Woods Fruit Farm site, Goldbridge Road (HO4). The Council has written to Thakeham Homes to express considerable concern regarding plans they are proposing for the site. These clearly do not comply with policy HO4 of the Neighbourhood Plan. The proposal for an additional thirty homes on a larger site is not in the plan.

Outline planning consent has recently been granted for a pair of semi-detached houses on the Parish Council owned site between Vernons Road and the Rough. The Council acknowledges the concerns of residents living nearby; however, the site is in the NP (Policy H05).

### **Reedens Meadows**

This site is a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) which is the name given to greenspace that is of a quality and type suitable to be used as mitigation to offset the impact of new housing development on the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA). The purpose

of SANGs is to provide alternative greenspace to attract visitors away from the Ashdown Forest SPA.

Much of Newick lies within this area so before any new housing is permitted a SANG was required. Natural England (NE) is the body which oversees the setting up of a SANG and they dismissed early suggestions of, for example, joining up existing rights of way. The design of the site must include a NE compliant walking route, on-site car parking provision, potential connections to other walks in the area and numerous other features.

Thakeham homes (developers of the Newick Hill Site) are the freehold owners of the land at the moment, but once approved by NE, Lewes District Council (LDC) will become the new owners and the land will be protected from development for at least 80 years.

This beautiful site of just over 29 acres is now open for residents to enjoy and will be maintained by Lewes District Council with help from Newick Rootz volunteers.

### **Anti-social behaviour at Recreation Ground**

Sadly, the Parish Council has during the year received a number of reports of anti-social behaviour at the recreation grounds (King George V Playing Field and Manwaring Robertson Rugby field). There have also been complaints of drugs being used, loud music being played and verbal abuse directed at those who have tried to reason with the perpetrators.

The Council has checked the CCTV footage following receipt of these reports and is in touch with Sussex Police about these incidents.

If you are the victim of, or witness an incident of anti-social behaviour in Newick, please report it to Sussex

Police by telephoning 101 (999 if it is an emergency) or sending an email to [district.lewes@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:district.lewes@sussex.pnn.police.uk).

You can also report incidents on the Sussex Police website <https://www.sussex.police.uk/contact-us>.

### **Neighbourhood Watch**

Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators are continuing to pass on information to residents when it is received from the police.

There have been a few burglaries in the village. Thieves seem to be looking mainly for jewellery or money and entry is often gained by breaking glass doors or windows or forcing locks at the rear of properties. Police advise that residents should be careful what they put on social media and never advertise the fact that they are away. Be aware of 'cold callers' and do not let them into your house.

Always make sure you lock vehicles, even if you're only leaving them for a while. Opportunist thieves have stolen wallets, phones and photographic equipment from vehicles, some parked in driveways.

### **Fingerposts**

Match funding from ESCC has been received for two of the three fingerposts the council has identified as needing to be replaced and this work has been done. The cyclical programme for maintaining fingerposts and benches will ensure that all benches and fingerposts are reviewed on a regular basis.

### **Allotments**

The Cornwells Bank site has completed its first year and several allotment holders won prizes at the Horticultural Society Annual Show. Congratulations must go to everyone for their perseverance in achieving rabbit and weed free plots!

### **Newick Food Fair**

The second Newick Food Fair proved to be a wonderful occasion, celebrating local produce from Sussex. Stall holders were thrilled to be asked to come back and it was great to see the Village Green being used in this way. Thanks to Alex Harrison, Emily Rae and Steve Jones who, with help from the Council, organised the event so brilliantly.

### **Newick Food fair, Festival and Scarecrow Trail**

Plans for the next Food Fair and Village Festival are well under way. The dates for your diary are **23rd and 24th June 2018**.

### **Newick Post Office**

We were all saddened by the death of our long serving Postmaster, Terry Coombes who passed away suddenly in May. The Post Office in Allington Road remains closed. The Parish Council has been liaising with The Post Office Ltd. and trying to work with local people and businesses to find a way of ensuring that Newick keeps a Post Office in some shape or form'.

A letter received from The Post Office Ltd. stated: - 'The provision of a Post Office service to our customers in the local community is important to us, and we will continue to work hard to restore services in the area as soon as possible.

### **School Crossing Patrol**

The 'lollipop' gang has almost completed 2 years. We thank them all for their dedication. They are continuing to make a real difference to the safety of pupils at Newick School.

## **Christmas Tree on The Green**

The Parish Council would like to thank Tom Stovold and his team at **Southern Events**, a local company based in Jackies Lane, for donating, transporting and decorating the Christmas tree on The Green once again this year. Thank you also to Baroness and Mr. Cumberlege for providing the power source for the tree lights. The tree looked great and provided suitable festive cheer to the village centre.

## **Newick Directory**

The Parish Clerk has updated the Council's Newick Directory and it has been distributed to all households within the Parish.

The Directory is an A5 size booklet containing useful information about local services, clubs & societies and contact details for local businesses. It is updated every two years and the printing costs are covered by donations from local businesses.

## **Village Appearance**

Sandra, our handy person continues to keep our village looking good. Unfortunately our grass verges come under threat during the winter months and during spells of wet weather, but by parking sensibly we can help protect them.

We continue to work with East Sussex County Council, through our Strengthening Local Relationships meetings, with regard to road safety and highways work.

## **Parish Office**

The office is working well at the Community Centre and it is open to visitors on Monday and Thursday mornings from 10:00 to 12:00. If you have any queries regarding village matters then do pop in during those times to speak to the Clerk.

## **Parish Website (Newick.net)**

The Newick village website, up graded last year is continuing to evolve. It is managed by the council and contains village information, news and events, details of Parish Council meetings and documents, and booking information for Newick Village Hall and Newick Community Centre. You can now sign up to receive email alerts about new items placed on the news and events page. Just visit [www.newick.net](http://www.newick.net), click on the 'News and Events' tab at the top of the page and follow the link on the top right hand side to sign up to receive these alerts. Enter your name and email address to register.

## **Community Speed Watch**

Many of you will have seen the Community Speed Watch volunteers in their high-vis vests and speed camera, normally on the village Green where the highest number of speeding motorists are caught. The team tries to operate at least once each week, weather permitting. The prime objective is to persuade traffic to drive at or below the speed limit through our village and their mere presence is normally enough to slow most drivers down. Having said that, every time they operate they always catch vehicles driving at more than 45mph! Every vehicle caught driving in excess of 35mph is reported via DVLA to Sussex police and everyone caught receives at least a warning letter and reprimand from the police.

*Jenny Smerdon,  
Chairman, Newick Parish Council  
18th April 2018*

