

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Newick Parish held  
at 7.30 p.m. Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2015  
at Newick Village Hall, Western Road, Newick.**

An audio recording was made of the meeting.

**1. Chairman's Welcome**

The Chairman of Newick Parish Council, Cllr. John Lucas, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Parish Councillors Mr Cris Allen, Mr Chris Jago, and Mrs Jean Sheppard, District & County Councillor Mr Jim Sheppard, Mr Steve Saunders, Ms Carol Hart, and members of Newick Badminton Club.

Seventy-one parishioners attended the meeting including Newick Parish Councillors:

Mr. C. Armitage, Mr. N. Berryman, Mr. R. Houghton, Mr. J. Lucas, Mr. G. Parker, Mrs J.Smerdon, Mrs. M. Thew, and Mrs C. Wickens.

The Clerk, Mrs. Sue Berry, was in attendance to take the minutes.

**2. Approval of the Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

It was proposed, seconded and agreed that the Draft Minutes for the Annual Parish Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2014 should be approved as a true record of that meeting. Copies were available at the meeting and on the Newick website, with a copy on file at Newick Post Office.

**3. Reports from PCSO, Newick Village Hall Management Committee, Clubs and Societies**

Report from Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) – PCSO Sally-Ann Reed introduced herself to those present and made them aware that they could find details of local crime figures on the police.uk website. She issued a warning that break-ins to outbuildings tended to increase during the summer and advised that shed alarms were available for those who would like one. She referred to the 'Little Book of Big Scams' publication, copies of which were available at the meeting, and advised that incidents of cold calling appeared to have reduced. PCSO Reed highlighted that Newick's Neighbourhood Watch Team was continuing to work effectively and she mentioned the potential impact of the forthcoming cuts to the Sussex Police budget.

Report from Newick Village Hall Management Committee (NVHMC) – Mr Mike Berry, Treasurer of NVHMC, reported on the work that had been carried out at the village hall over the past year to improve and maintain the fabric of the building. He outlined the plans for improvements over the coming year, including the installation of a disabled egress at the front of the building. Mr Berry reported on the finances of the hall and gave some details of the revised charging structure. He stated that, although the management committee had sufficient trustees, not all of them were active and that the committee would welcome new members who would be prepared to help run the hall. Finally, Mr Berry thanked Newick Area Community Care Association for its donation of £5,000 towards the new disabled egress, the hirers of the hall and those who attended the activities and events that took place at Newick Village Hall for their support.

Report from Newick Branch of the Royal British Legion (RBL) – Mr Paul Antrobus thanked the Parish Council for its agreement to the proposal to erect a commemoration stone on the village green in memory of the fallen of Newick. He outlined the aims of the local branch in supporting ex-servicemen within the community, reporting that, sadly, membership numbers were in decline. Mr Antrobus reported that the branch was planning trips and events for both members and non-members to enjoy in the hope that this would attract new members to help support the aims of the RBL.

Report from Newick and District NADFAS – Mrs Sarah Tasker, Chairman of NADFAS reported that the society had recently celebrated its thirtieth anniversary and gave details of the activities of the society over the past year, which had included lectures and special interest days on a wide range of art related subjects. She advised that the society would shortly be hosting an event to value antique jewellery and encouraged people to attend with items for valuation. She encouraged people to become members of the society, stating that there was something for everyone in the society's varied programme.

Report from Newick Twinning Association (NTA) – Mr Andy Wilson, Chairman of NTA, gave details of the association's activities over the past year, including participation in Newick Festival, and its regular events such as a summer lunch, progressive dinner and quiz. He spoke about the special links with Itteville in France and the exchange visits that had taken place each year for the last twenty three years, as well as the more recently formed links between the primary schools in Newick and Itteville. He invited those present to consider joining the association and to take part in the forthcoming visit to Itteville.

Report from Newick Rootz – Mr John Samson gave a report on behalf of Newick Rootz, a copy of which can be found on the Newick website. He outlined the practical work undertaken by members of Rootz in helping to maintain and improve access to the 8.5 miles of footpaths within the Parish of Newick. He also gave details of other projects in which Rootz was involved, including the ESCC Path Warden scheme, conservation work on Newick Common, wildlife and plant studies, hedge laying, and organising a story walk for local school children as part of Newick Festival. Mr Samson highlighted the responsibility of footpath users to keep to the rights of way and to clear up after their dogs. Finally, he spoke of the fun side of belonging to Rootz and encouraged people to get out and use their local footpaths.

Report from Newick Area Community Care Association (NACCA) – Mrs Jenny Smerdon, Chairman of NACCA reported that the Community Care Day Centre run by NACCA had closed down at the end of 2014. She advised that a new committee had been formed and four new trustees appointed to run the Community Centre. Mrs Smerdon reported that the committee was in the process of updating the décor and trying to resolve the heating problems.

Report from Newick Lawn Tennis Club – Mrs Jenny Smerdon, Chairman of Newick Lawn Tennis Club, gave details of the club's facilities and advised that one of the courts had been newly resurfaced. She stated that the club would be participating in the Great British Tennis Weekend in May 2015 and invited parishioners to join in the free activities that would be on offer that weekend.

Report from St Mary's Church Pastoral Team – Mrs Patsy Bailey spoke on behalf of St Mary's Church, reporting that, although the Rector had retired and had not yet been replaced, the Church was doing well with support from the Rector and Curate of Barcombe Church. She spoke about the outreach work with Newick School and the Pastoral work within the community. This included monthly TLC tea parties, Christmas and summer parties, dancing for fun and fitness, knit and natter groups, meals for those living alone and support for residents at Nightingales. She asked those present to consider joining the team of volunteers who visit elderly and lonely people in Newick.

Report from Newick Cinema – Mr Mike Berry spoke about the community based cinema that had been running at the Village Hall since May 2014. This was held on the fourth Sunday of each month when a major film would be shown. He reported that although there were a number of regular attendees, the numbers were not yet sufficient for the initiative to be self-financing and that if numbers did not improve the cinema would not be able to continue.

Report from Newick Horticultural Society (NHS) – Mr John Samson, Vice Chairman of NHS, told the meeting that it was the second oldest Horticultural Society in the UK, having been founded in 1831. The Society had over two hundred members and was extremely active with a wide range of outings and events. The Society's Spring and Annual Shows were well supported, but as they cost around £4,500 each year to stage, it was necessary to hold fundraising events to cover these costs. In order to help raise the profile of Newick, the Society had planted up and was maintaining raised beds beneath the village signs on the A272 at either end of the village. Mr Samson invited those who were interested in any of the Society's activities to get in touch with one of the committee members for further information.

Report from The Friends of Newick Health Centre - Mr Peter Todd, Chairman of the Friends of Newick Health Centre, gave a brief demonstration of one of the defibrillators that had recently been purchased and were being installed at various places around the village. He reported that defibrillators were available at the Village Hall, the Health Centre and The Crown Inn in Newick, and that one would shortly be installed outside the Sports Pavilion and another at Newick School. Mr Todd asked to be informed if any of the devices appeared to have been tampered with and he advised that courses to train people how to use the defibrillators would soon be available.

#### **4. Newick Parish Council - The Chairman's Report**

Copies of the Parish Council Chairman's report were circulated at the meeting and can be found on the Newick Website. The Chairman, Cllr. John Lucas, highlighted that the membership of the council and committees remained largely unchanged with nine of the eleven councillors elected in 2011 still in post. He thanked the Clerk for the good work that she had done during the year and referred to the additional workload created by an unusually large number of Freedom of Information requests that had been received. Cllr. Lucas described the work that was ongoing to improve the appearance of the village including the cutting of grass verges, litter picking and tree maintenance. He thanked Cllr. Cris Allen for renovating all of the wooden seats and benches around the village in his free time during the summer of 2014, and referred to some potential projects that might be progressed by the next Council. The voluntary work carried out by Newick Rootz, the Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators and the Community Speed Watch team were also mentioned. Cllr. Lucas reported on the Parish Council's participation at the Lewes District Council Core Strategy Independent Examination hearings, and clarified the definition of the term 'at least 100' when applied to the new homes target in the LDC Core Strategy. He reported that the Neighbourhood Plan had been approved at referendum and that it would be formally adopted by Lewes District Council in the summer of 2015. In the meantime, it was reported that the Neighbourhood Plan already carried weight in the determination of planning applications within the parish. It was noted that thirty-nine of the one hundred new homes that were being planned for Newick would be affordable homes, either for rent or shared ownership, and that priority for these properties would be given to those with a local connection.

Cllr. Lucas reported that the council had so far been unsuccessful in obtaining additional land for allotments. He reported on the success of the Newick Festival weekend held in summer 2014 and thanked the organisers and sponsors of this event for their contributions. It was noted that the children's play area would shortly be upgraded and that a new play area would be made available as part of the proposed new development off Newick Hill. The problem of antisocial behaviour around the skate ramps was, unfortunately, still an issue but steps were being taken to try to address this. It was reported that the contribution the Parish Council received from the Council Tax had not changed for the past four years, although the Parish Council element of Council Tax bills had increased a little as a result of the reduction in the central government grant. Details of the Parish Council's financial accounts would be made publicly available in due course.

#### **5. Question and Answer Session:**

The following matters were raised during the Question and Answer Session:-

- Mr Peter Burnie proposed a formal vote of thanks to the Parish Council for their hard work over the past year.
- Mr Alf Thomas reported that he had been attending Parish Council meetings as an observer and had been making recordings of the meetings as permitted following a recent change in the law. He stated that one councillor had not been attending meetings as a result and that the Parish Council had approved the councillor's absences. Mr Thomas stated that he considered that the recording of meetings by residents should not be accepted as a valid reason for not attending meetings. The Chairman responded to this statement by Mr Thomas and clarified the legal position regarding councillors not attending meetings.
- Mr Malcolm Smith asked the purpose of recording meetings when a member of the public already had the right to attend meetings if they were interested to hear what was being discussed. Mr Thomas responded by stating that a recording was the only means of preserving a verbatim record of the meeting.
- Mr Peter Burnie reported that Newick Rugby Football Club was celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and invited them to take some refreshments.

***The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45 p.m.***