

Newton St Cyres Parish Council



Annual Report and Summer Newsletter 2021

Your Local Representatives

Devon County Councillor

Cllr Margaret Squires, Frostlands Farm, Copplestone, Crediton EX17 5NY 01363 84337 margaret.squires@devon.gov.uk

Mid Devon District Councillor

Cllr Graeme Barnell, Hales, West Town Road, Newton St Cyres, Exeter, EX5 5BS 01392 851308 – gbarnell@middevon.gov.uk

Parish Councillors

Cllr Jim Enright, Woodlea, Langford, Newton St Cyres, EX5 5AG (Chairman) 01392 851859 – jimenright@newtonstcyres-pc.gov.uk Chairman, Community engagement officer, Development group, Raddon Hills Parish Councils group, Parish Hall Car park group member and member of the Staff and Personnel Committee, Quality council

Cllr Roger Cashmore, 27 The Glebe, Thorverton, Exeter, EX5 5LS 01392 860053 – rogercashmore@newtonstcyres-pc.gov.uk Vice Chairman, Churchyard Liaison, Flood/Emergency Plan Integration Officer, Raddon Hills Parish Councils group member, Coordinator for action regarding the A377 safety issues

Cllr Damien Hodge, 2 Tytheing Close, Newton St Cyres, Exeter, EX5 5DB 01392 851111 – damienhodge@newtonstcyres-pc.gov.uk Arboretum Management Group Liaison, Neighbourhood Watch Officer, Risk Assessment of Assets.

Cllr Liz Ouldrige, Kuredu, New Estate, Newton St Cyres, Exeter, EX5 5AR 01392 851621 – lizoultridge@newtonstcyres-pc.gov.uk Press Officer, Allotment Officer, Neighbourhood Litter Officer.

Cllr Stephen Parker, Lilly Farm, Newton St Cyres EX5 5BY 01392 851505 – stephenparker@newtonstcyres-pc.gov.uk Boniface Trail Representative, Parish Footpath Officer, Raddon Hills Parish Councils group member, Responsible for the village flowers, the village green, the village benches and the telephone box containing the defibrillator by Belluno.

Cllr Gina Quicke, 36 West Town Road, Newton St Cyres, EX5 5BS 01392 851627 – ginaquicke@newtonstcyres-pc.gov.uk Development Group member, Primary School Link, Parish Hall Representative, Staff and Personnel Committee member, Risk Assessment of Assets, Nextdoor Parish Representative

Cllr Graham Scopes, Fairview, Half Moon Village, Newton St Cyres, EX5 5AB 01392 851375- grahamscope@newtonstcyres-pc.gov.uk Community Speed Watch Officer, Snow Warden and Co-ordinator

Cllr Chris Southcott, Barn Owl Cottage, Newton St Cyres, EX5 5AX 01392 851569 – chrisouthcott@newtonstcyres-pc.gov.uk Highways and Railways Liaison Officer, Recreation Ground Representative, Friends of Newton ST Cyres

Station liaison, Responsible for the book exchange telephone box near The Beer Engine and the defibrillator at the Rec.

Cllr Paul Taylor, 6 Woodlands, Newton St Cyres, EX5 5BP 01392 851604 – paultaylor@newtonstcyres-pc.gov.uk Development Group Member, Staff and Personnel Committee Member, Training Officer, Boniface Trail Representative Parish Clerk, Jane Hole, The Cellar, Pump Street, Newton St Cyres, Exeter, EX5 5BY 01392 851148 - parishclerk@newtonstcyres-pc.gov.uk Website/Facebook Officer

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 11 March 2021 at 7pm via zoom

Present: Parish Councillors (Cllr Jim Enright as Chair) and Parish Clerk, Cllr Graeme Barnell, MDDC, Cllr Margaret Squires, DCC and 22 members of public

Cllr Jim Enright welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. **Apologies:** There were no apologies.
2. **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 4 April 2019.**
These were agreed and signed as a true record.

3. Chairman's Report

Hello, well it has been a very strange year for us all. The Parish Council was planning our 2020 Annual Parish Meeting which was to be held in the Parish Hall on April 2nd. But to our surprise the country was put into lockdown and our meeting was necessarily postponed. Since then, the Parish Council has been meeting via Zoom and we have become quite adept. Although it does highlight the problem the village has with broadband. Well, here we are in March 2021 and our combined 2020 and 2021 Annual Parish Meeting is being held via Zoom. So, what are the highlights of the past two years?

The most prominent was the re-surfacing of the A377. It was badly pot-holed and well overdue the attention it received. Regrettably, problems of increasing traffic usage and speeding still blight the A377. We have been in talks with Devon County Council and with D & C Constabulary, but little helpful progress

has been made. We will continue to press our case together with strong support from local residents who live by the main road.

We also still have problems with large trucks, tractors and trailers using Langford Road, a narrow lane totally unsuitable to such use. We do, of course, accept that we live in a farming community and there will always be tractors and trailers at certain times of the year. These are part of the fabric of our community. However, we are now suffering from the increasing industrialisation of farmland for use as warehousing, distribution and Anaerobic Digestion, without suitable access routes. Here again we are being supported by local residents in our attempt to get DCC Highways to accept their responsibility to their electorate and protect our rural lanes. Many homes adjoin the road, and they suffer constant noise and vibration from hundreds of unsuitable transport movements daily.

Cllr. Damien Hodge, in his role as Neighbourhood Watch Officer, took on the additional work of co-ordinating the Parish Council efforts to support residents affected by the lockdown. He is still performing this role and receives well deserved thanks on behalf of our community.

We held a successful Community Fair which brought together local groups and potential volunteers and this will be repeated in future years.

The Parish Council has received a grant for the purchase of PPE to be stored at the Parish Hall and at the Recreation Ground for emergency use as both are classed as Evacuation Centres. Realising that both of these great community facilities have suffered from enforced closure during the past year, the Parish Council has budgeted additional grants to offer some extra support over the coming year.

Cllr Paul Taylor and his committee have made progress with the Boniface Trail which is now firmly in the sights of Devon County Council. The first stage will be a Feasibility Study, to be carried out within a 5-year period, which hopefully will then be approved and added to the County budget.

The Greater Exeter Plan proposed building 1200 dwellings in the Sweetham and Tytheing areas of Newton St Cyres. Fortunately, GESP has now been

withdrawn, but the danger still lurks. A new Mid Devon Plan is being formulated with requests for suitable development land to be put forward by landowners.

The village Post Office closed, and it took some months to make arrangements for the service we now receive in the Village Hall twice weekly. But it does work well.

The long-expected village centre Pedestrian Crossing is expected to be built in the summer of this year. Thanks go to Cllr. Roger Cashmore whose design is being used. But we still pursue “school” signs on Station Road, a pathway from the bus stop to the lay-by in Half Moon, and a crossing point for Tytheing and Sand Down Lane.

Our plans to progress a Community Land Trust were put on hold until meetings could take place. A CLT would enable the Parish Council to join together with a Developer and build Social Housing to rent to villagers. We hope to start progressing this when the restrictions on meeting face to face come to an end. A separate project centred around a Village Community Shop and Post Office. This too was put on hold but will hopefully be dusted off and further investigated.

I must thank my fellow Parish Councillors, all of whom take on individual responsibilities in addition to their collective responsibilities. Our hard-working Clerk, Jane, and our District Councillor, Graeme Barnell, and County Councillor, Margaret Squires, for all the hard work put in over the past two years. And there is Cllr Liz Ouldrige, our Press Officer, who keeps the village informed through the very successful Newton Wonder, produced by that local stalwart, Peter Hawksley, and his team.

What would we do without the Parish Hall, the Recreation Ground and the Arboretum, run so successfully by their Chairmen and Committees? And of course, the very many Volunteers, mostly working behind the scenes, but who make a very significant contribution to village life. Well done and thanks to you all.

And now we come to the Community Volunteer of the Year Award. We had decided to whom this honour was to be bestowed but the cancellation of the Annual Parish Meeting delayed the announcement, until now.

And finally, the Parish Council does now meet the criteria for application for the Local Council Award Scheme – Quality Level - and this will be pursued in the coming year.

With the vaccination program well under way, it does look as though the mid and latter part of this year will see a return to near normal. How great that will be for us all.

4. Presentation by James Anstee (Devon County Council Road Safety Manager) on road safety in the parish, followed by questions from the public

Cllr Jim Enright explained that James Anstee would be unable to join the meeting due to internet access issues. Cllr Jim Enright reported that speed monitoring cameras had been put up at the entrance to the village by Quickes, by the Village Green and by Tytheing Close on two occasions last year. At least 20,000 vehicle movements were recorded, the vast majority of which were within the legal speed limit (30mph plus 10% plus 1/2mph). Speeds of 35 to 36 mph were therefore breaking the speed limit, those travelling over 36mph would be offered a speed awareness course if stopped and over 40mph would get a fine. 60 vehicles were recorded travelling at speeds which would warrant further action. However, some of these 60 may be emergency vehicles, there is no way of knowing. The Parish Council would like to see Average Speed Cameras installed; however these are expensive with ongoing costs. Money from speeding fines goes to central government and is not kept locally. DCC data shows that between 2015-2019 there were 35 recorded accidents between Cowley and Crediton. To the end of 2018 the same section of road was ranked 39th in terms of its overall performance compared to all roads in the county.

A footpath at Half Moon from the layby up to the bus stop is needed and the Parish Council had been informed that Hanlons were making enquiries with regard to installing a footpath as required by their planning permission.

Another problem area was crossing between Sand Down Lane and Tytheing Close and when the old school site is developed, the Parish Council will request that a crossing be included as part of the planning consent.

Cllr Jim Enright opened the meeting up for comments

Half Moon resident - speeding is prolific, for example whilst reversing into my drive a car overtook on the wrong side of the road. Lorries (e.g. CMC/Gregory) are some of the offenders. Could the tachograph be checked as these would show speeds?

Cllr Jim Enright noted that a puffin crossing had been agreed for installation in the centre of the village and this would mean gaps in the traffic should develop in the Crediton to Exeter direction which may assist with crossing the road. The crossing will have pressure sensors so would remain on red until pedestrians had crossed over to the other side. DCC have said they will see if the crossing helps with reducing speeding, if not then other solutions could be looked at.

Cllr Margaret Squires noted that the crossing had been agreed and should be installed in the summer holidays. The existing central island would be taken out and the road narrowed. Letters had been sent to nearby residents together with a copy of the map. Once there is a crossing, then average speed cameras would not be an option

Cllr Graeme Barnell commented on the different stories regarding average speed cameras and whether or not they could be used. He was concerned about the social impact the A377 was having on the village. There were no safe crossing points between Tytheing Close and Sand Down lane and a footpath was required at Half Moon. He didn't feel that we were being listened to.

Half Moon resident - lots of vehicles go too fast. Could traffic calming measures to be looked at?

Tytheing Close resident - over the last year the road is more dangerous and walking up and down School Hill feels unsafe due to the narrow path and the speed of vehicles. The flashing lights by Belluno are in the wrong place as by the time they flash, cars are already going too fast down the hill. Incidents of

road rage have also increased lately. If we can't have speed cameras, what can we do? Feels like we are not being listened to.

Cllr Jim Enright said he would like to see a 30mph speed limit all the way from Cowley to Crediton. The speed limit is determined by the number of houses. Perhaps speed bumps could be considered?

NSC resident – speed cameras would do a better job at reducing speed than a crossing and if £120,000 was being spent on a crossing, wouldn't this be better spent on average speed cameras?

Cllr Jim Enright explained that the Parish Council had decided to go with a crossing which there was some likelihood of getting rather than starting the process again to ask for average speed cameras and risk not getting anything.

Cllr Roger Cashmore – we could consider crowd funding our own speed camera? People have died on the A377 and the crossing will not address the underlying problem of speeding traffic. What's the point of laws if they are not enforced?

Cllr Jim Enright said the Parish Council had looked at funding its own speed camera, but this would not be sanctioned by the Police.

Newton St Cyres resident – could signage be looked at to reinforce the slow down message?

Tytheing Close resident – an elderly man with a Zimmer frame struggles to cross the road at Tytheing Close and refused to come to this meeting as he feels that nothing will be done. A child was hit by a car by Court Barton; a boy had an accident near Bernaville. The resident is going to write an article and asked people to contact her with their road issues.

Newton St Cyres resident - 5 people had died due to accidents on the A377 between Cowley and Crediton. Surely the money required is a small price to pay?

Cowley resident – it's very difficult to cross the road at Cowley to get to the bus stops. Could more signs be painted on the road to remind people it's still 30mph?

Newton St Cyres resident – more warning signs would be welcomed, and paint is cheap

Newton St Cyres resident – had agreed to join the Community Speed Watch some time ago but had heard nothing.

Cllr Jim Enright explained that the sites that CSW were using were taken out of use by the Police. However, this had been reviewed and we were waiting for the sites to be re-authorised and hope that CSW could start again.

Cllr Margaret Squires noted that any signs on the road required a Traffic Order which cost about £3,000.00 and required agreement between DCC and the police so it was not as quick and easy solution as it might seem. If 20 is plenty signs were used by residents, they should be green as red signs would be taken down. Speeding is a police issue and perhaps the Police Commissioner should be contacted?

Cllr Jim Enright noted that the police have been part of the discussions.
Half Moon resident - could the DVLA be involved as they can extract speeding data from digital tachograph when the vehicle is stopped. Could the companies of speeding lorries be contacted?

Cllr Jim Enright noted that the Parish Council had contacted several companies following reports of speeding by parishioners and a mixed response had been received.

Cllr Graeme Barnell noted that the Parish Council have been trying their best to get Highways to deal with a list of issues. The proposed planning application for a lagoon at Rixenford Lane would lead to even more traffic and a press campaign was underway. Parishioners needed to support the Parish Council and as a parish we needed to make a nuisance of ourselves.

Cllr Jim Enright noted that residents could write to DCC and James Anstee and copy to the Clerk

Tytheing Close resident – the police had told her that dash camera footage could be used.

Half Moon resident – average speed cameras may be a deterrent but will not solve the problem for which we need a change of culture. The geography of the road will affect any average speeds.

5. Plans for Pedestrian Crossing

Cllr Jim Enright showed the plan for the Puffin crossing and Cllr Roger Cashmore gave a brief overview of the plans.

6. Parish Council Financial Statement for year ending 31 March 2021

Cllr Jim Enright showed the Financial Statement, and this was noted.

7. Presentation of Community Award

The award for Voluntary Services was presented to Daphne and Tom Clague

8. Public Participation/Questions

There were no further questions

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.45pm

Newton St Cyres Parish Council, Receipts and Payments 2020-2021

			This year Y/E 2021	Last year Y/E 2020
Receipts				
	Precept		£13,431.00	£12,768.00
	Grants	DCC Locality (bench)	£500.00	£265.00
		DCC Community Enhancement	£67.65	£885.00
		DCC Covid-19 grant	£500.00	£0.00
		MDDC S106	£0.00	£2,705.00
	Allotment Rent		£463.00	£380.00
	VAT Refund		£471.64	£650.45
	Raddon Hill/Feniton/Thorverton admin payment		£310.00	£310.00
	Parish Hall contribution to resurfacing fund		£750.00	£750.00
	Other		£112.50	£275.30
Total receipts current account			£16,605.79	£18,988.75
Payments				
	Grants	Parish Hall	£500.00	£500.00
		NSC Recreation Ground	£500.00	£500.00
		Boniface Trail	£500.00	£500.00
		FANS	£500.00	£0.00
		Citizens Advice	£100.00	£100.00
		Mid Devon Mobility	£0.00	£100.00
	Admin/running costs	Election	£0.00	£147.35
		Clerks wages incl PAYE/Raddon Hills	£4,296.94	£4,186.53
		Expenses - Clerks	£77.04	£143.15
		Expenses - Other	£18.75	£14.63
		Fees and subscriptions	£627.59	£402.46
		Hall expenses & electricity	£66.00	£308.00
		Insurance	£379.21	£376.47
		Printing	£0.00	£211.15
		Training (Clerk and Councillors)	£105.00	£222.30
	Village Organisation	Churchyard grass cutting (new & old)	£975.00	£1,160.00
		Parish hall Wifi	£200.00	£200.00
		Recreation ground rent	£500.00	£500.00
		Allotment Costs	£0.00	£44.00
	Repairs and	Arboretum licence	£0.00	£20.00

Maintenance	Bus shelter cleaning	£64.00	£64.00
	Community Resilience	£71.39	£0.00
	Gardening/Maintenance	£134.52	£33.00
	Grass cutting - parish	£1,120.00	£1,660.00
	Rain Gauge Telemetry service	£469.00	£117.00
Miscellaneous	Annual subscription for email addresses	£220.00	£224.50
	Electric cost for Vodafone surestart	£30.00	£30.00
	High viz jackets for litter pickers	£29.52	£0.00
	New defibrillator/parts	£0.00	£1,881.90
	Parish Hall car park resurfacing fund	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
	Purchase of projector	£0.00	£764.15
	Spending covered by grant (Aquasacs, PPE)	£1,170.09	£0.00
	S106	£0.00	£3,705.00
	VAT	£461.92	£673.85
Total payments current account		£14,615.97	£20,289.44
Financial Summary Current Account			
	Balance b/f as at 1 April 2020	£13,862.54	£15,163.23
	Add Receipts for Y/E 31 March 2021	£16,605.79	£18,988.75
	Less Payments for Y/E 31 March 2021	£14,615.97	£20,289.44
	Balance C/F as at 31 March 2021	£15,852.36	£13,862.54
Financial Summary Footpath Account			
	Balance b/f as at 1 April 2020	£268.02	£388.02
	Add Transfers for Y/E 31 March 2021	£0.00	£0.00
	Less Payments for Y/E 31 March 2021	£0.00	£120.00
	Balance C/F as at 31 March 2021	£268.02	£268.02
Financial Summary Resurfacing Account			
	Balance b/f as at 1 April 2020	£4,512.18	£3,004.00
	Add Receipts for Y/E 31 March 2021	£1,502.05	£1,508.18
	Less Payments for Y/E 31 March 2021	£0.00	£0.00
	Balance C/F as at 31 March 2021	£6,014.23	£4,512.18
Financial Summary All Accounts			

Current Account (of which £5,300.00 is a required reserve)	£15,852.36	£13,862.54
Footpath Account	£268.02	£268.02
Car park resurfacing account	£6,014.23	£4,512.18
Total of all Accounts as at 1 April 2021	£22,134.61	£18,642.74

Devon County Councillor's Report

The last year or so will be for ever in our memory as none of us will have experienced such a difficult time previously. With everyone told to work from home and only travel for essential journeys. It has meant that County Hall has been empty and yet the work has gone on. Devon County Council working with partners including the District Councils, NHS and the University have formed Team Devon who have managed the Pandemic. We can look back and see the numbers who have had the virus in our County are thankfully lower than across the rest of the country. As a Councillor we have experienced virtual meetings so for me visiting parishes in my rural division has not been allowed. Committee meetings within the County Council have continued via teams and as some of you will know I sit on the Children's Scrutiny committee. We have experienced more children coming into care and appreciate the foster carers. It has been difficult for all especially with children being home and learning at home – hopefully this is over for good. DCC has stepped in to help with meals for those on free school meals – providing finances in the school holidays. As I have joined the parish council meetings via Zoom, I have realised the difficulties this Lockdown periods have had on our communities. Newton St Cyres residents have experienced more speeding along the A377 – less traffic has caused more problems. Unfortunately, there have been a couple of fatalities involving motor cyclist and my heart goes out to the families of those involved.

I am looking forward to the Puffin crossing being installed in the centre of the village – there will be disruption whilst the work takes place, but it will make such a difference to the safety of the school children crossing and also the bus passengers. It will be paid for as part of the capital funding from DCC, and we are one of a very few parishes that were awarded funding from this pot. Original it was to have been installed in the last financial year but like so many other schemes it fell behind because of Covid. It is due for installation in the

summer. Hopefully once installed it will have the effect of slowing the traffic over a wider area.

An area of concern has been a planning application with East Devon District Council that will have an effect on traffic on the edge of Mid Devon District. Large Agricultural traffic serving a digestate lagoon in Rixenford Lane. I have been in discussion with highway officers on this application and will continue to do so. Like so many things within DCC any response is governed by policy. Within Devon County there are 8,000 miles of road. Some are A-roads but most our very rural roads serving remote areas. To manage such a large network there are national policy and local Devon County Council policy. This is needed so that all are treated uniformly. The most important section of road to us as individuals is that adjoining our home but the whole of the County needs the policy so that we are treated to the same standard.

It was a real pleasure to be able to give locality budget to fund the new bench on the green and I hope it will be enjoyed by the residents – so that they can sit for a while and watch the world go by.

I would like to thank those that supported me in the recent election, and I look forward to the next four years working with the parish, I will work to help all the residents in whatever way I can.

Cllr Margaret Squires

Climate Change

In 2019, Devon County Council declared a 'climate emergency'. This was to help Devon achieve the target of becoming carbon neutral by 2050. The County Council is taking a series actions to reduce its own carbon footprint and is working with other partners and the wider community to reduce carbon emissions. Newton St Cyres Parish Council has its own role to play in this and to this end, we have been fortunate to co-opt Sue Rowell to help us move forward on the issue. Please contact the Parish Clerk if you are interested in working with us on this important project.

Mid Devon District Councillor's Report

Last Year

2020 was a busy year for me partly because of Covid. The work of the Council has not stopped and cannot stop because of the virus. Until last August I was a member of the Mid Devon Council's Cabinet with responsibility for Planning and Regeneration. I was able to play my part in ensuring we got our Local Plan (2013 to 2033) across the line after years of delay. This Plan protects us from speculative Housing Development.

I was also able to help in ensuring Government Covid grants to businesses were distributed efficiently and that businesses could reopen safely during the periods of respite we've had from Covid.

I had to spend a great deal of time opposing and helping to defeat GESP (the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan). I formed an alliance with friends in Mid and East Devon District Councils and with the Parish Councils that was finally successful in stopping GESP. GESP was advertised as the bringer of new growth and investment to Devon. I was well placed to understand that this was just window dressing. GESP actually meant thousands of new houses locally and in other parts of rural Mid Devon that were not justified by any measure of local housing need. These schemes would have destroyed much beautiful countryside and degraded our environment.

My opposition to GESP cost me my job on the Mid Devon Council Cabinet, but that has given me much more time to work on local issues. Here are some of the issues I'm dealing with now.

Big development

I will continue to oppose any schemes for big housing development between Exeter and Crediton. GESP is now dead. However, there are sizeable areas of the Creedy Valley that remain attractive to town planners who are always seeking ways to meet Government housing targets and to developers who look at the valley and see another lucrative suburb of Exeter. Mid Devon District Council is just starting a new Local Plan for the period 2025 to 2045. We are being told by Planning Officers that hundreds of new homes are needed in Mid Devon every year within the new plan. This is nonsense. All of the additional

houses required by the Government are already accounted for in the existing Mid Devon Local Plan.

I will continue to be vigilant and work with the Parish Councils and with colleagues from other Councils to oppose any new proposals for big development schemes locally.

Affordable housing

Like most rural areas of Devon, we lack affordable housing for local people. Most of all we lack affordable rented housing (Government subsidy to enable rent at 80% of market) and social rented housing (50% of market rent) More affordable housing would enable and encourage families on ordinary incomes to live in villages like ours without spending disproportionate amounts of their income on housing. It would also mean that families on ordinary incomes who live in the village can remain rather than move into Towns. I will continue to support Parish Councils and my neighbours in developing a local Community Housing Scheme. First of all we need a site. Let us know if there's a way! I will also be working to get Mid Devon Council to invest in affordable and social rented houses rather than lend many millions of taxpayers' money, with little or no return, on speculative private housing development with its Company 3 Rivers Development. It is vital that any local affordable housing schemes are sustainable in their impact on the environment and fit in with and enhance the communities in which they sit.

Transport and Traffic Plan for the Creedy Valley

After much pressure, the County Council have now promised us a controlled road crossing in the centre of Newton village. We are told this will happen later this year. We will need to work hard to make sure that it does!

I will continue my work with fellow Councillors including the Parish Councils to deliver a Transport Plan for the Creedy Valley that responds to the impact of increasing road traffic on our communities, including that arising from new housing developments in and around Crediton. These plan needs to include:-

- Footpaths and safe road crossing points in all the communities that sit on the A377.
- Speed calming along rural lanes that are increasingly being used as "rat runs" including through Shobrooke and Sweetham, .
- Average speed cameras along the A377

- Cycle Ways especially the Exeter to Crediton Cycle way (aka the “Boniface Trail”)

Industrialisation of the Countryside and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs)

I will continue to work with the County Council, Parish Councils and with local communities to deal with the impact of HGV traffic that disrupts normal life in some of our communities. This is not about ordinary farm traffic. It’s about very large lorries, tractors and trailers that supply a growing number of storage and distribution businesses located in the countryside. These businesses receive and distribute stuff over a wide area of Devon and the HGVs and the huge Tractor and Trailer combos routinely plough up and down narrow lanes, through our hamlets and often by our local school. We have to find solutions.

The Birds, the Bees and Biodiversity

We are blessed to be able to live in such a beautiful place surrounded by lovely countryside. Even here I think we must work together to improve our environment. I will work with the Parish Councils, Landowners, Community Environmental Groups like NEW, the Church Councils etc to identify, protect and extend places where ponds, wildflowers and grasses can provide a more diverse habitat. I will be proposing policies that actively support populations of birds, mammals, amphibians and pollinating insects. These places include road verges, churchyards, the edges of fields. I will be working to:

- Replace mowing and cutting practices that degrade wildflower and wildlife habitats especially those practices funded by the taxpayer
- Identify and support projects that develop and extend local habitats for birds, mammals, amphibians and pollinating insects especially projects involving schools and younger people.

Zero Carbon

Last on my work list (but definitely not least) is our part in combatting global warming. Mid Devon Council is signed up to the Devon Climate Declaration and is committed to achieving a Zero Carbon footprint within its assets and services by 2030. This is a huge task, but it is not one we can continue to duck.

I believe that the Parish Councils should also have a Zero Carbon plan that encourages and supports local people to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.

There are various ways we can contribute individually and collectively. These include:-

- Encouraging and prompting green energy generation and home insulation schemes.
- Sharing cars and journeys (post COVID of course).
- Further reductions in landfill waste.

Postscript

There is various other work that I'm engaged in, including local flood prevention and improving rural broadband but perhaps more of that another time.

If you are interested in supporting me with this work please contact me at g.barnell@middevon.gov.uk or on my landline 01392 851308. Let me know too if you think my priorities are wrong or that there is something more important that I should be doing as Councillor.

Cllr Graeme Barnell

Report from Newton St Cyres Recreation Ground

Like everyone the Recreation Ground has had a difficult 2020, with most sports and activities cancelled. We have been fortunate that MDDC and the Parish Council have provided us with grants which have enabled us to keep going, as we still had rent, utilities and ground maintenance to pay for. These are much appreciated. The Play area at the Recreation Ground has continued to provide a very well used facility for local children, and informal activities have given people a place to get some fresh air and exercise during this difficult time.

With things started to open up we have football, cricket, tennis all starting up again as and when the Covid rules allow.

Let's all hope for a better 2021.

John Quicke

Hon Treasurer, Newton St Cyres Recreation Ground Club

Churchwarden's Report

This has been a very difficult year for everyone, not least for the church. We have tried to remain in contact with as many people as possible, especially during lockdown; both by telephone and zoom services which were instigated by Katie, and now continue in her absence.

We have prayed at home separately, and in small groups for the troubles of our village and the world. We have prayed for the sick and the dying, and for the families in their grief as the figures rose alarmingly. We have prayed for the government, and the Scientists, and for the success of the vaccine. We have prayed for our teachers, the children and their parents in our school; and we have prayed for our families, friends and neighbours in our fear for them. We continue our prayers, and we have remained an active church!

At Newton we have tried to keep the church open when allowed. We have held some Holy Communion services so long as we felt it was safe to do so; and we have remained open for private prayer. PCC meetings have been held, some bible study, and other working groups have met, all on Zoom! Tony Lane has produced many pastoral letters, which I know people have found very helpful, and we have all looked forward to them.

At Christmas we were able to hold a Covid safe carol service which was different from usual, but much enjoyed. With thanks to Tony, we also held a short reflective service with a small congregation, and were able to hold our usual Christmas Day service, which was well attended.

Thank you to all those people who have continued to care for others, and also continued the work of the church in our village during this last difficult year. I am not going to name them, but they know who they are.

Work for the fabric of the church has continued thanks to Tony Lane and Brian Please.

We have been unable to fund raise this year, and have been reliant upon good will for the continuance of donations for the church. Thank you to all those who have continued to donate.

We now come to a time of change. Katie has left us for fresh pastures, and we will be looking for an Incumbent for our mission community. I hope we will all

embrace what comes our way. Change is always difficult, but hopefully we will prove that none of us is too old, staid or out of touch to welcome it. We need to move forward for the sake of the future of the church, please pray for God's will to be done.

Let us hope for a better year ahead where we are all able to meet in church together, and we can embrace the future with confidence.

Sue Browne

Report from The Friends of Newton St Cyres Arboretum

It has been great that the Arboretum has been able to remain open during the Covid crisis and provided a good exercise area in wonderful surroundings for both humans and dogs! There has been a big increase in the number of visitors. Our volunteers have done a fantastic job in continuing to mow the paths, trim many other areas and empty the dog bin. With help from a grant from Awards for All, we were able to get stump grinding done and have planted some more trees.

Inevitably, with many fine old trees, we have some casualties and during the winter major limbs from a couple of holm oaks came down and more recently and 'English' oak was uprooted. We carry out annual inspections of our trees and have identified two more that we think are at risk and we will get these felled.

Although the Arboretum has been able to keep open, the Friends have not been able to hold their normal activities. The Arboretum tours and AGM were not held in 2020 but are now scheduled for Tuesday 29 June this year. We hope to be able to hold a fund-raising Coffee Morning later in the year.

The Arboretum is a great area for outdoor entertainment and two theatre events are planned. On the afternoon of Saturday 10th July the Crediton Arts Centre will be performing 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' and on the afternoon of Saturday 21st August, The Paddleboat Theatre will perform 'Rustle', a family-oriented entertainment, in a joint venture with the Parish Hall.

Over 120 Friends pay an annual subscription of £10, and this makes a crucial contribution to the costs of maintaining and improving the Arboretum. We must thank our volunteers for their tremendous effort in maintaining and

improving the Arboretum and our Committee for managing the Arboretum. None of this would have been possible without the agreement and support of John Quicke, owner of the Arboretum. Thank you, John. We thank the Parish Council for your encouragement and the provision of insurance cover. We also much appreciate the Church for letting us access the Arboretum through Churchyard.

Roger Wilkins. Secretary, Friends of Newton Arboretum, April 2021

Report from the Parish Hall

This has been a year like no other for the Hall, as for practically all other activities. This report covers our financial year from March 2020 to the end of February 2021, with updates to the present time.

The Hall closed on 18th March 2020 and since then has only re-opened for a few days from 19th October and then again for a few days from 7th December. Fortunately the Post Office outreach service (which uses a room separate from the Main Hall) has been able to continue to operate for two sessions of two hours each week throughout (except for April 2020, when it was open only once weekly). The service was extended to include sale of some household requisites and this has made a valuable contribution to our village community. Apart from the Post Office, the Hall was hired out during our Financial Year on only 28 occasions, compared with some 600 in a normal year.

The Hall entered the crisis period with a reserve of some £16,000. We are much indebted to MDDC who have supported the Hall through the award of a Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant and a Local Restrictions Support Grant and to the Parish Council for grant support towards our general expenditure. Despite the collapse in income from hiring and fund-raising events, the Hall has not had to dig into its reserves, and we were able to make improvements through installation of an additional radiator in the Club Room and the replacement of some of the windows in the Main Hall and the rooms to the side of the stage. Planned upgrading of the stage lighting and sound systems has, however, been deferred.

It has been a busy and difficult year for our Committee and for Chris Barlow, our Caretaker, dealing with frequent changes in regulations and restrictions, whilst striving to provide, as far as possible, a 'Covid safe' environment and a

service to our community. We have procedures 'ready to go' and hope to be able to reopen, with restrictions in numbers and requirements for sanitisation and social distancing, at the beginning of Step 3 of the Government's Roadmap, currently planned for 17th May.

I wish to thank all members of the Hall Committee and our Caretaker for all their help during the last year. Daphne Clague has now retired from the post as Treasurer, and we were delighted that her services to the Parish were recognised by an award from the Parish Council at the Annual Parish Meeting. Thanks to Daphne and to Peter Watts, who has taken over as Treasurer.

The AGM for the Hall is planned for Wed 30th June. We would welcome ideas on the best way forward and one or two volunteers to join our Committee would be very much appreciated.

Roger Wilkins
Chairman, Parish Hall Committee, April 2021

Report from Newton St Cyres Primary School

Lockdown Provision

It has been a very turbulent time for education and the Exe Valley Federation has acted swiftly to deliver a substantial education during the most recent lockdown. Newton St. Cyres was once again open as a hub school and offered a full curriculum for all key worker children from Newton St. Cyres, Thorverton and Brampford Speke. Staff from across the federation worked at the school and worked alongside 50-60 which is considerably more children than the previous lockdown.

Once lockdown eased, the school reopened from 8th March and had strict measures in place to ensure the safety of pupils and staff. Due to the size of the school, bubbles remained throughout the school and this extended to playtimes. Visitors on site were cancelled and parents were asked to wear masks during drop-off and pickup. Staggered start and end times were also employed to limit congestion on site. This continues to be the case even with measures easing further on 17th May. As we head towards full easing on 21st June, we are mindful to keep some of the measures in place to ensure the safety of all the staff and pupils so that we can finish this academic year as positively as possible.

Newton St. Cyres School – Significant Developments

There have been some significant changes to staffing at the start of the 2020/2021 academic year. We are delighted that Janine Holmes joins us from Thorverton and is teaching in our year 1 and 2 class. She brings a wealth of experience from Thorverton and will work alongside Mrs. Gee and Ms. Keast in class 2. We are also pleased to welcome Carrie Horrell who is working alongside Sue Wilkinson in class 3. They have a large class (37) and will be splitting the year groups to operate over two classroom bases. Carrie has been English lead at Silverton and will continue this role, working alongside the English leadership team. Jack Hookway has been moved into year 5 and 6 which will provide him with some excellent career development and he will be supported by Sue Wilkinson and Carrie Horrell who both have extensive year 5/6 knowledge.

At the end of last year, Mrs. Claire Theedom was appointed as head of school for Cheriton Fitzpaine and Mr. Josh Hamidullah moved to year 5/6 at Silverton. These are both fantastic opportunities for them and we want to thank them for their contributions to Newton St. Cyres and wish them all the best for their future endeavours.

In October, Fiona Jeffery, Acting Headteacher of Sandford School left her position with immediate effect. It was agreed that James Akhurst would step in and work as Acting Headteacher in an interim capacity. Time will be split across the week and Sue Wilkinson and Helen Tempest have kindly agreed to take on leadership responsibility in his absence.

The gradual expansion of the federation over the last five years has changed the remit of the Executive Headteacher and part of the rationale for including Sandford School in the EVF was to give capacity to create a Deputy Executive Headteacher role. The post was advertised internally and interviews took place remotely on the 26th January with a panel of governors and the EHT listening to a presentation and asking a series of challenging questions. The panel agreed unanimously that James Akhurst should be appointed to this role from the 1st February 2021, the date of re-federation at Sandford. As James is already Acting Head of School at Sandford and will remain Head of School at Newton St Cyres, this role can only fully develop once a new Head of School at Sandford is in post. James will continue to support the new Head of School as a school improvement partner.

Pupil numbers at Newton St. Cyres continue to grow and our reception intake this year of 19 is our biggest ever. Our anticipated reception numbers for next year currently sit at 17, which is another large intake. Provision for these children will be suitable for next academic year, but in 2022/23 we will need to look at class structures as the KS1 class would have 36 children. The addition of the parent and baby group being hosted at school on a Wednesday has allowed us to reach our youngest members of the school community. This is currently operating alongside government guidelines with a limit of 15 people but is incredibly popular and a direct influence on people choosing NSC as their child's first choice school.

The Curriculum

A lot of work has been undertaken on understanding the purpose of the curriculum and the theory which underpins it. Through literature reviews as part of the SLT and wider curriculum team we have discussed the importance of delivering a curriculum which is innovative and shares knowledge as well as skills. We understand that children need to reach their full potential in all areas of their learning and need to be ready to build a skill set ready for the 21st century. Staff at Newton St. Cyres are keen to ensure that the wider curriculum is developed so that children are getting the most out of every subject. Staff are acutely aware of which subjects are taught confidently and which need a greater emphasis placed upon them.

After lockdown staff are acutely aware that there are children who need to catch-up and the funding for this has been allocated to a strong staff team to provide support for phonics, English and maths. Not only do children need to gain extra support for English and maths, but also pastorally. As we returned to school on 8th March, we had a whole school focus on recover, refocus and readiness as we prepared children to return to the classrooms. We used the Jigsaw recovery package and also The Book of Hopes which inspired the children in English with a mixture of short stories and poems.

We look forward to ending this year as positively as possible and looking ahead to a brighter 2021/2022 academic year!

James Durward-Akhurst
Deputy Executive Headteacher – Exe Valley Federation
Head of School = Newton St Cyres

Allotments

Parish Council allotments are available to rent for £20.00 per plot per year. They are located on the A377 just past the old school. If you are interested contact the Parish Clerk.

Communicating With Your Local Councils

Devon County Council

Devon County Council look after many aspects of our lives and have an excellent website (<https://www.devon.gov.uk/>) which is full of helpful information. However these four contact points may be of particular interest:

If you wish to report problems with our roads from potholes to broken signs and lights please use: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

If you have concerns about the safety of a child or young person please contact the County Council Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk and give as much information as you can. If a child is at immediate risk contact the police on 999.

To find out about County-wide planning issues from mineral extraction to long-term planning for development you can use this website:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/navigation/planning-and-development/>

Devon runs an excellent library service with superb facilities in both Exeter and Crediton. We are also very lucky to have a mobile library service that visits the village on the second Wednesday of the month. More details of this and all their other services can be found on this website:

<https://www.devonlibraries.org.uk/web/arena>, where you can also find out how to borrow ebooks.

Mid Devon District Council

Mid Devon also have an excellent website. These three contact points may be of particular interest:

This website: <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/do-it-online/> allows you to communicate with MDDC. You can do everything need to do with MDCC from

paying council tax, applying for housing benefit to reporting an incident of fly tipping or a dangerous dog.

This website, <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/recycling-rubbish/> covers all issues to do with recycling and rubbish, including schedules for bin collection.

The planning website, <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/planning/> has all the information you need to know about building works and planning permission. You can also submit, view or comment on applications from this website.

Newton St Cyres Parish Council

The Parish Council welcomes members of the public to all their meetings. The schedule for the rest of this year is shown below. They are all on the 1st Thursday in the month at 7.00 pm in the Parish Hall Clubroom, COVID regulations permitting.

1 July 2021

No meeting in August

2 September 2021

7 October 2021

4 November 2021

2 December 2021

The next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will be held in May of 2022 and the date will be published on our website, nearer the time.

The Parish council has both a website and a Facebook page. The website, <https://parish.middevon.gov.uk/newtonstcyres>, contains copies of Minutes, Policies and other important Council documents. Every month the agenda for the forthcoming meeting is posted on the website. There is also a link to the Footpaths Map here. The Parish Council Facebook page is interactive. It contains up-to-date information on Planning Applications received and any Road Closure notices etc.

There are Parish Notice Boards at the locations below. These display important Parish Council documents and are also available for local organisations to use. They are not available for commercial advertising.

Langford - Half Moon

Central Newton St Cyres: - Sand Down Lane, Tytheing Close and the Village Green

Sweetham - Station Cross

Smallbrook

Community Magazine

The Newton Wonder community magazine is produced monthly (with the exception of January) and can be delivered to your house. The magazine is independent from the Parish Council, although you will find a summary of our monthly meetings there. If you would like to receive a copy please contact Gerry on 851504. The magazine is always looking for articles, coming events etc. Copy date is 15th of the month. All articles should be sent to the Editor, editor@newtonwonder.net . The magazine also supports a village website, www.newtonwonder.net this is updated regularly by the editor of the Newton Wonder.

