

Newton St Cyres Parish Council



Annual Report and Summer Newsletter 2022

Your Local Representatives

Devon County Councillor

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

Mid Devon District Councillor

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

Parish Councillors

Cllr Jim Enright, Woodlea, Langford, Newton St Cyres, EX5 5AG Tel: 01392 851859 – jimenright@newtonscyres-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@newtonscyres-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@newtonscyres-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 – lizouldridge@newtonscyres-pc.gov.uk; Press Officer, Allotment Officer, Neighbourhood Litter Officer.

Cllr Stephen Parker, Lilly Farm, Newton St Cyres EX5 5BY 01392 851505 – stephenparker@newtonscyres-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 near Belluno.

Cllr Gina Quicke, 36 West Town Road, Newton St Cyres, EX5 5BS 01392 851627 – ginaquicke@newtonscyres-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- grahamscopes@newtonscyres-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 – chrissouthcott@newtonscyres-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.

Jane Hole, The Cellar, Pump Street, Newton St Cyres, Exeter, EX5 5BY 01392

851148 - parishclerk@newtonstcyres-pc.gov.uk; Parish Clerk, Website & Facebook Officer.

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 6th April at 7pm

Present:

Parish Councillors (Cllr Jim Enright as Chair) and Parish Clerk, and 9 members of the public.

Cllr Jim Enright welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies

Cllr D Hodge, Cllr G Scopes, Cllr E Ouldridge, Cllr G Barnell, Marcus Iles

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 11 March 2021

Agreed and signed as a true record.

3. Chairman's Report

Hello Fellow Residents, it has once again been an unusual year for us all. COVID has taken its toll on our lives, and on community life too. Let us hope that the world now looks back at what happened, what we did right, what we could have done better, and we arrive at a better place moving forward.

A highlight for Newton St Cyres over the past year has been the installation of the **Pedestrian Crossing in the Village Centre**. It was a long time coming and took a lot of effort by a lot of people. But it does go to show that perseverance often wins in the end.

We still have further ambitions. A footpath from the lay-by to the bus stop in Half Moon, a crossing at Tytheing/Sand Down Lane, traffic calming at Smallbrook and a 40 mph buffer-zone before the 30mph limit comes in by Quickes, coming from Crediton, to name but a few.

We were disappointed not to be able to secure the Old School site for an Affordable Housing development. However, our search for a suitable site continues.

There is some progress too on the **Boniface Trail**. Devon County Council has allocated £20,000 to an initial route study, concentrating on the Crediton to Newton St Cyres stretch. We are trying to extend this to Langford so that the complete village can benefit. Eventually it will, of course, go all the way to Exeter. DCC are consulting with our own Boniface Trail Association and updates will be included both in the Newton Wonder and in the Parish Council Minutes.

The **A377 Group**, which consists of Chairs of the Parish Councils situated between Crediton and Cowley, together with District and County Councillors for the Area, and DCC Officers, is now meeting bi-monthly to discuss making the A377 safer for all. It is already showing signs that it will be a useful platform for creating change.

Our next big project will be creating a **Neighbourhood Plan** for our designated area. MDDC are obliged to take account of such Plans when granting Planning Permissions so it will give us a say in the future development of our village. We have already carried out a **Housing Needs Survey** in conjunction with MDDC and Devon Communities Together, and the results can be found on the Parish Council website.

We are also working on a **Queen`s Platinum Jubilee Party** to be held at the Recreation Ground on Sunday 5th June from 12 noon till 4pm. It will be a “street party” in flavour with those attending bringing along their own tables, chairs, food etc. The Rec. bar will be open, and we will have hot food available too. More details will be published in the Newton Wonder as our plans come together.

And we are now able to announce that **Jock Campbell has won the much-coveted Community Person of the Year Award**. Jock was instrumental in the preparation of the NSC Community Resilience Plan, a copy of which can be found on the Parish Council website.

Finally, I must thank my fellow Parish Councillors, District Councillor, County Councillor, volunteers, and our very efficient Clerk, for all the hard work they put in to make Newton St Cyres a better place for us all.

4. Parish Council Financial Statement (unaudited) for year ending 31 March 2022

These were presented with copies available if required

5. Neighbourhood planning – what it is and why Newton St Cyres should have a plan.

Cllr Jim Enright gave a presentation on Neighbourhood Planning and after discussions with questions and answers, attendees were invited to sign up to the Steering Committee. It was noted that a meeting of the Steering Committee would be arranged as soon as possible.

6. Presentation of Community Volunteer of the year award

The winner was Jock Campbell for his work on Community Resilience including production of a Community Resilience Plan.

7. Public Participation/Questions

There were no further questions

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Newton St Cyres Parish Council Receipts and Payments 2021-2022

	This Year Y/E 2022	Last year Y/E 2021
Receipts		
Precept	£13,431.00	£13,431.00
Grants		
DCC Community Enhancement	£1,000.00	£0.00
DCC Covid grant	£0.00	£500.00
DCC Locality	£0.00	£500.00
DCC Rain Gauge maintenance	£300.00	£67.75
Allotment Rent	£430.00	£463.00
VAT Refund	£799.76	£471.64
Raddon Hill/Feniton/Thorverton admin payment	£400.00	£310.00
Parish Hall contribution to resurfacing fund	£750.00	£750.00
Other	£3.48	£112.50
Total receipts current account	£17,114.24	£16,605.89

	This Year Y/E 2022	Last year Y/E 2021
Payments		
Grants		
Parish Hall	£1,000.00	£500.00
NSC Recreation Ground	£1,000.00	£500.00
Boniface Trail	£0.00	£500.00
Citizens Advice	£100.00	£100.00
FANS	£0.00	£500.00
NSC Football Club	£200.00	£0.00
Admin/running costs		
Bank Charges	£36.00	£0.00
Annual subscription for email addresses	£230.00	£220.00
Clerks wages incl PAYE/Raddon Hills	£4,795.60	£4,296.94
Expenses - Clerks	£86.32	£77.04
Expenses - Other	£13.41	£18.75
Fees and subscriptions	£484.00	£627.59
Hall expenses & electricity for outside light	£201.39	£66.00
Insurance	£373.52	£379.21
Printing	£160.95	£0.00
Training (Clerk and Councillors)	£119.00	£105.00
Village Organisation		
Churchyard grass cutting (new & old)	£975.00	£975.00
Parish hall Wifi	£200.00	£200.00
Recreation ground rent	£500.00	£500.00
Repairs & Maintenance		
Allotment Costs	£675.00	£0.00
Bus shelter cleaning	£64.00	£64.00
Community Resilience	£8.95	£71.39
Defibrillator related	£284.58	£0.00
Gardening/Maintenance	£0.00	£134.52
Grass cutting - parish	£1,320.00	£1,120.00
Noticeboards	£120.00	£0.00
Rain Gauge Telemetry service	£565.00	£469.00
Signs	£88.73	£0.00
Miscellaneous		
Asbestos removal at allotment site	£1,410.00	£0.00

Aquasacs (grant funded)	£0.00	£986.64
Covid grant (balance returned to DCC)	£279.85	£183.45
Electric cost for Vodafone surestart	£30.00	£30.00
High viz jackets for litter pickers	£0.00	£29.52
Laminator	£25.99	£0.00
Misc. funds (litter picker sticks)	£17.35	£0.00
New bench for Village Green (grant)	£455.00	£0.00
PPE for Road Wardens	£160.25	£0.00
Resurfacing Fund for Parish Hall car park	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
Road Warden Scheme, purchase of trailer	£2,035.00	£0.00
Road Warden, tools (grant funded)	£730.22	£0.00
VAT	£1,194.48	£461.92
Total payments current account	£21,429.59	£14,615.97
Financial Summary Current Account		
Balance b/f as at 1 April 2021	£15,852.36	£13,862.54
Add Receipts for Y/E 31 March 2022	£17,114.24	£16,605.89
Less Payments for Y/E 31 March 2022	£21,429.59	£14,615.97
Balance c/f as at 31 March 2022	£11,537.01	£15,852.36
Financial Summary Footpath Account		
Balance b/f as at 1 April 2021	£268.02	£268.02
Add Transfers for Y/E 31 March 2022	£0.00	£0.00
Less Payments for Y/E 31 March 2022	£0.00	£0.00
Balance c/f as at 31 March 2022	£268.02	£268.02
Financial Summary Resurfacing Account		
Balance b/f as at 1 April 2021	£6,014.23	£4,512.18
Add Receipts for Y/E 31 March 2022	£1,500.73	£1,502.05
Less Payments for Y/E 31 March 2022	£0.00	£0.00
Balance c/f as at 31 March 2022	£7,514.96	£6,014.23
Financial Summary All Accounts		
Current Account (of which £5,300.00 is a required reserve)	£11,537.01	£15,852.36
Footpath Account	£268.02	£268.02
Car park resurfacing account	£7,514.96	£6,014.23
Total of all Accounts as at 1 April 2022	£19,319.99	£22,134.61

Devon County Councillor's Report – Cllr Margaret Squires

Over the last year I have endeavoured to attend Newton St Cyres parish council meetings when possible. I need to say thank you to the Chairman for bringing DCC issues forward on the agenda, as I have Sandford PC on the same evening. I do like to hear the concerns of the parishioners at the beginning of the meeting and also the reports of various groups. There is a lot going on within the parish and it is appreciated - especially the efforts towards dealing with climate change.

I am really pleased that the traffic lights in the centre of the village have been installed and thank all those that have had the disruption for understanding. Hopefully they will improve safety for all. I will continue to work with the A377 Action group looking at wider traffic issues as a whole within the parish.

Thank you to all who have reported highway defects over the year and those that have contacted me. As always potholes etc. can be reported via the website www.devon.gov.uk and scrolling down to "Report a Pothole" and following instruction or by calling 0345 155 1004.

Within DCC I serve on Children's Scrutiny and over the last year we have had a shortage of social workers. As always foster carers are needed. It is good to be able to attend meetings in person again and it is encouraging to see Covid rates decreasing we hope that this will continue.

Please contact me with anything I can help with on margaret.squires@devon.gov.uk or calling 01363 84337 and leaving a message.

Margaret Squires – Devon County Councillor

Mid Devon District Councillor's Report – Cllr Graeme Barnell

This is a regular annual update on my work as District Councillor and Chair of the Newton St Cyres Flood and Resilience Network.

Traffic and Road Safety

- **Road Crossings**

We now have our much-needed road crossing in NSC village centre. I am seeking another near the junction of Tytheing Close and Sandown Lane.

- **Paths and pavements**

We still need paths and pavements that connect homes with bus stops, car parking and also with neighbours. Paths are needed at Half Moon, Smallbrook and along Station Road in NSC.

- **Speeding and safety**

The County Council have now agreed to review speed limits, road signage and marking along the A377 from NSC to Downs Farm. Improvements are urgently needed if we are to prevent more accidents and another tragic death.

Planning and Development

- **Crediton to Exeter Cycleway**

We await the report of County Council employed consultants on the feasibility different routes for the Cycleway. Report expected in July.

- **Neighbourhood Plan**

I am now chairing a group of our neighbours in producing a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish. We hope that the Plan will set out the priorities for the kind of place we want NSC to become and express a collective view about the development of our communities including affordable housing, encouraging business and the enhancement of our environment. There will be much consultation!

- **Local Plan**

We will also need to focus on the new MDDC Local Plan. This is being prepared right now for the whole of Mid Devon. We will shortly be receiving the new Local Housing Needs Assessment from MDDC. This is a crucial piece of work because it sets out the calculations that are being made about the number of new houses that we will be told must be built in coming years. In a few months we will be delivered of the proposed site options for future major developments. I'll keep you posted.

- **Joint Planning with Crediton and other local Parishes**

I have helped to set up a Crediton and District Joint Planning Group. This will work with Mid Devon planners to ensure we get some joined up planning about the impact of new developments in the area.

For example, in 2021 Mid Devon Council Planning Committee approved a proposal by Bellway Homes to build 257 new homes in a scheme near to Shobrooke Park. It's been clear for some time that this development

will have a significant impact on surrounding communities. It's not just the additional traffic but also its impact on education and health services that are already badly overstretched. Many local people (me included) are also very concerned about the impact of this development on the environment and countryside. Unhappily it's too late to make a stand against this scheme in principle. The Parish Councils in Newton St Cyres and Shobrooke have submitted questions about education, traffic & health services that are not yet being answered. There are also serious questions about the environmental impacts of the designs. We will be following up on these concerns up later this week at these joint meetings between local Councillors and MDDC.

The Environment

Given limitations on space I've not been able to report here on my work on environmental issues in the Parish. This work includes:

- Flood defence
- Biodiversity
- Farming and Land Use

I'll be reporting in more detail on this work in future editions of the Newton Wonder **Graeme Barnell, MDDC District Councillor, Newbrooke Ward**

Report from Newton St Cyres Recreation Ground - John Quicke Hon Treasurer

Things are slowly getting back to normal at the Recreation Ground after the last few difficult years.

Dave Phare (the groundsman) has retired after doing a brilliant job in maintaining and improving the playing surfaces at the ground and other maintenance works. Thanks Dave. Tony Lewis (Chairman) and Ian Harris (Bar Manager and Caretaker) have taken on this role.

Thank you to all the volunteers on the management committee, but particularly to Tony and Ian who keep the whole thing running. We are of course very grateful to the Parish Council for their continued support both financial and otherwise.

Churchwarden's Report

Here we are again at the end of another church year. We have gradually been returning to our worship and hospitality. It is wonderful to meet up with our church family once again and to be able to welcome others from across the Mission Community.

We are now able to provide refreshments for everyone, and we are once more able to sing safely. We are aware that the COVID virus is still around in high proportions, and that we need to protect one another, and so we continue to wear face masks in church.

It has been a real joy to hear more of Andrew Daldorph's music at our services, and to be able once more to sing the Gloria and the Sanctus. We are greatly blessed with Andrew and his gift of music, and the plan is to open this up to the public in the coming months.

We have re-established our fund-raising committee "ULOT" and so far, have returned to the bi-monthly coffee mornings for the village, and these are quite well attended. In the coming months we hope to arrange other events as well as our usual summer cream tea. We will also be inviting the village to our patronal festival lunch in June and to the harvest festival lunch in October.

We have started a new venture on the first Sunday of alternate months at 10.30: **Coffee Time!** This is just what it says, "coffee and chat" where everyone will be welcome. It is hoped that those not attending church can meet up with those who do, just for a chat so we can all get to know one another. Please invite people to come and meet up.

The PCC has continued to meet this past year, and to struggle with the finances, and heavy burden of our splendid and much-loved Grade 1 listed church. There are many repairs and works for us to confront that has been shown up in our Quinquennial report from our Architect. We will be dealing with these over the next few years. We do now however have a lovely warm church which is much appreciated.

We were sorry to see Katie move away to another area, and we have missed her guidance; but we are very thankful for all the support and wisdom we have received from Julia Hocking and Laura Ford and the retired clergy during the vacancy. We now look forward to a new era as we welcome the Reverend Tim

Collins and his wife Mary into our community.

We look forward to new beginnings and many new things happening in the next few years. We hope to move forward now with energy and new ideas, and hope that more people will come forward to support the church and encourage new blood to flourish. We are always looking for new ideas to spread God's word.

Sue Browne, Churchwarden

Report from The Friends of Newton St Cyres Arboretum

It has been great that the Arboretum has been able to remain open throughout the COVID crisis. It provides a wonderful area for both relaxation and exercise. Our volunteers have continued to do a fantastic job in maintaining and improving the Arboretum, including mowing the paths, strimming other areas, and planting and tending a number of new trees, including both natives and exotics.

We were able to hold more events than in 2021. In conjunction with the AGM in June, we had tours led by Peter Hopkin and Vaughan Gallavan which featured birds and trees respectively. In July the Crediton Arts Centre performed *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in the Arboretum to a sell-out audience of 90 people. Both these events were blessed with good weather, but a second entertainment of *Rustle* by the Paddleboat Theatre in August had to be relocated to the Parish Hall because of a forecast of bad weather. A regular weekly event has been the session held by Karen Dudley's group 'Moving Outside from the Inside', involving both exercise and meditation. Fundraising activity was able to be resumed and two very successful Coffee Mornings were held in the Parish Hall.

With our many fine old trees we have had some casualties again. Major limbs were lost from holm oaks and we decided to fell others on safety grounds. We also plan to take steps to control the Japanese laurel that has become seriously invasive in parts of the Arboretum.

Some 120 Friends pay an annual subscription of £10, and this makes a crucial contribution to the costs of maintaining and improving the Arboretum. Many of the Friends make key contributions as Volunteer Wardens and helping with maintenance and improvement work. This Spring we have held working parties to get on top of some of these tasks and these have been very well supported.

We must thank all our volunteers for their tremendous work 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 encouragement and the provision of insurance cover and much appreciate the Church for letting us access the Arboretum through Churchyard.

Roger Wilkins. Secretary, Friends of Newton Arboretum, April 2022

Report from the Parish Hall

Organisation and operational aspects

The Committee of Management was much saddened by the death of our Caretaker, Chris Barlow, on 1 May 2021. We were pleased to appoint Kamil Ceglak as our new caretaker, taking up his appointment on 2 July.

At the 2022 AGM the following officers were elected: Roger Furniss (Chairman); Rosemary Chambers (Secretary); Peter Watts (Treasurer); and Mary Long (Booking Secretary). Nicola Baker, Christine Burrows, Julie Furniss, Lorraine Mitchell, John Salter and Sheila Jackson were elected as committee members. Gina Quicke attends Committee Meetings as a representative of the Parish Council and Nicola Baker acted as representative of the Church, as well as being a Committee Member and Trustee in her own right. Roger Wilkins retired from the Committee having been Chairman since 2014 and Treasurer from 2003 until then. He has been the mainstay of both the day-to-day operation of the hall and its strategic direction.

The COVID pandemic continued to have a major effect on the operation and use of the Hall with bookings in the year down to 166 compared with 625 in a normal year. The outreach Post Office Service provided from Stoke Canon remained open throughout.

Activities organised by the Committee: Despite COVID restrictions three very successful live performances were held in the Hall. The Committee also organises the schedule for coffee mornings which are held monthly and hosted by different village organisations.

Hall improvement: Estimates have been obtained for joint sealing and white lines repainting of the Car Park for consideration - the work will be funded

from the special fund for car park maintenance administered by the Parish Council. Until the financial situation returns to normal no other major works will be considered.

Financial Matters

Income in 2021/22 exceeded expenses by £1646.35 There would, however, have been a substantial deficit had we not received grants through MDDC of £5963 and a donation of £1000. The Committee agreed that our policy should be modified to maintain reserves of at least £10,000 compared with the previous figure of £8,000. It is fortunate that we entered the COVID crisis with some £16,000 and that reserve is still exceeded enabling us to be confident to continue as a going concern. A fifth annual payment of £750 was made into the fund held by the Parish Council to cover the costs of car park maintenance.

Summary

In summary the Parish Hall continues to provide an invaluable resource for the community in line with its charitable objects -The provision and maintenance of a village hall for the inhabitants of the Parish of Newton St Cyres without distinction of political, religious or other opinions, including use for meetings, lectures and classes, and for other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupations with the object of improving the conditions of life of the said inhabitants.

Roger Furniss – Chairman

Report from Newton St Cyres Primary School

COVID Provision

Despite coming out of lockdown and a sense of normality returning to school, we have had to juggle some serious outbreaks of COVID in school affecting staff and children. We have had two major outbreaks in children in November 2021 and February 2022 which had significant impact on pupil numbers in school. This meant that staff had to revert to remote teaching as well as classroom-based learning. This had a huge impact on workload and wellbeing which is carefully being monitored throughout the remainder of this year.

From the end of November to the end of February, as mentioned above, many children missed between a week and 10 days of school due to COVID infection. As not all the children were absent at the same time, the incremental disruption to teaching sequences was significant over this time and meant that most children have missed parts of the curriculum but at slightly different

times. This has been compounded by high levels of staff absence, which has also meant that teaching programmes have been compromised and children have not been supported by the adults who usually work with them. Heads of School, teachers and support staff have worked incredibly hard to manage this situation and provide continuity of education in extremely challenging circumstances and staff teams have pulled together to achieve this in a remarkable way. However, the impact of COVID infection levels on the progress of children's learning is now presenting a real challenge to leaders and teachers as they seek to rebuild children's confidence and identify and fill gaps in their learning.

Newton St. Cyres School – Significant Developments

There have been some significant changes to staffing at the start of the 2021/2022 academic year. We are delighted that Lisa Hobson joins us from her supply teaching role and is teaching in our foundation stage unit. She brings a wealth of experience and will work alongside Mrs. Tempest and the other FSU staff. We are also pleased to welcome Aishling Halford who is working alongside Sue Wilkinson in class 3. Aishling has been maths lead at Brampford Speke and will continue this role, working alongside the English leadership team. Janine Holmes remains in years 1 and 2 and Jack Hookway remains in year 5 and 6 as they continue their excellent career development.

As part of the outreach work of the Exe Valley Federation (EVF) with Chulmleigh Academy Trust (CAT), the leadership team was asked to provide a programme of intensive support for Chulmleigh Primary School, with some further work with the other two primary schools. This was in addition to the work the EHT was commissioned to do for CAT during the school year. James Akhurst, who is the Deputy EHT, agreed to undertake this work for 18 school days from the 28th February. Whilst he worked at Chulmleigh, Charlotte Tofts acted as Head of School at Newton St Cyres [Mondays to Wednesdays].

Federation Review

Every year the federation commissions an independent review, which has been led by Neil Swait (Ofsted registered HMI) for the last couple of years. The review took place on 2nd and 3rd March, with the following aims:

- To give the Federation Leadership Team and governors the opportunity to review school improvement since the last Review with an impartial external adviser. This will enable leaders and governors to triangulate their self-evaluation with that of the adviser and provide appropriate support and challenge to leaders in improving outcomes for every child in the EVF.

- To prepare for forthcoming Ofsted inspections by focusing on the federation's vision for the curriculum and progress towards meeting the Ofsted criteria for the Quality of Education
- To demonstrate the federation's focus on system leadership and equipping future leaders to work in the federation and beyond.
- Feedback to governors and the leadership team recognised that the federation has risen to the challenge of the pandemic, which has been a huge distraction from the core business of education. The enthusiasm of leaders for achieving the best possible outcomes for children was identified as a strength, along with the clarity of self-evaluation by Heads of School; this included a commitment to ensuring that every child learned to read as quickly as possible. The strong sense of community amongst leaders was also singled out for recognition and the positive impact that this has on the sharing of subject knowledge. As a result of the federation review and its associated action plan, governors and school leaders have an objective view of the work of the schools and an external validation of its efficacy. The governors who attended the focus interviews with Heads of School found this a particularly useful insight into their link school's strengths and opportunities for development.

The Curriculum and its Development

The federation schools have the same ambitious curriculum intention for all children, including those with SEND. However, we recognise that some children may need to have the curriculum adapted to enable them to access it but the same content is taught to all children. This adaptation may be achieved through pre-teaching, intervention groups on a 1:1 basis or as part of a small group, or with a higher level of adult support.

Reading is given the highest priority from the first day that children start school and continues throughout the primary phase. This can be shown through the amount of time that is dedicated to reading as a whole class, individually and in small groups in the class timetables. Teachers read to their classes nearly every day and ensure that a wide range of genres are covered. During the federation review, children reported that they enjoyed reading because it 'took them on an adventure' and their teacher often read books to them that were just above the children's reading ability to stretch and challenge their comprehension and vocabulary.

The current emphasis on creating an ambitious curriculum is founded on the belief that if children are knowing more and remembering more, they will be making progress. This is why the sequential development of skills in a knowledge-rich environment is so important. Teachers measure progress through ongoing formative assessment and marking children's work as well as through quizzes, rapid recall sessions at the start or end of a lesson and building knowledge organisers. During the federation review, Neil Swait saw excellent examples of this practice relating to the study of Islam, where children added information to their knowledge organisers as they acquired it. By using different colours to record the facts they had learned, it was possible to see how their knowledge had grown over the course of the unit of study. Teachers are now starting to record which children have not yet met the expectations of a unit of study, rather than completing time-consuming assessment spreadsheets, which helps to keep their workload manageable. This information is also shared with school leaders at Pupil Progress Meetings. We look forward to ending this year as positively as possible and looking ahead to a brighter 2022/2023 academic year!

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

Report from the Newton Environment and Wellbeing Group

The group was formed in 2019 and since then has become involved in a number of initiatives with the aim of improving the parish for wildlife and residents and seeking ways to tackle the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency. We meet regularly, approximately monthly, either in the Parish Hall, Recreation ground or Beer Engine and have a Page on the Newton Wonder website together with a Facebook Page for members of the group. Over the past three years (with a hiatus during COVID) we have been involved in:

- Planting over 600 trees in Langford and Station Road;
- Undertaking Water quality sampling on the River Creedy and Shuttern Brook as part of the Citizen science project for the Westcountry Rivers Trust;
- The establishment and offering active support to the 'Friends of the Churchyard' group who are helping improve management of the churchyard for the benefit of people, the ancient meadow and the flora and fauna that still exists in the oldest areas;

- Taking part in Ancient Woodlands surveys;
- Engaging in conversations with local landowners and organisations managing land in the Parish to explore ways in which the community and landowners can work together towards complimentary aims;
- Organising a Community Forum to explore community actions to tackle Energy, Food Security and Health concerns, and beginning to help bring forwards some initiatives inspired by the Forum;
- Planting up wildflower areas on the Village green and outside the primary school;
- Supporting the new community Kitchen that started recently in the Parish Hall;
- Organising Work Parties to undertake groundworks around the Parish to support biodiversity, including the removal of Himalayan Balsam from the banks of the River Creedy, together with other possible Work Parties including removal of Skunk Cabbage adversely impacting Shuttern Brook.

There are a number of outcomes from the community forum to take forward and we welcome support from all the community. Our chair is Andrew Broadhead and our email if you would like more information is: newnewgroup@protonmail.com

Andrew Broadhead and Sue Rowell

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 has 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. They are all on the 1st Thursday in the month at 7.00 pm in the Parish Hall Clubroom, COVID regulations permitting, on the following dates:

7 July 2022	1 September 2022
6 October 2022	3 November 2022
1 December 2022	

The next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will be held in May of 2023 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/newtonscyres>, 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.