

**Minutes of Newton Annual Parish Assembly  
held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024 held at Newton Village Hall**

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**Those Present**

Rita Schwenk	-	Chairman
Lee Parker	-	Babergh District Councillor
Dave Crimmin	-	Parish Clerk

15 residents, registered as local government electors in Newton.

**2024/01** With Newton Parish Council Chairman David Everett in the USA, those present elected Rita Schwenk as Chairman of the meeting. The Chairman welcomed both guests and residents to Newton's 130<sup>th</sup> Annual Parish Assembly.

**2024/02 Apologies**

Ian Cole, Janys Sherwood, Fiona Garman, Shona Shipp, David Everett, Laura Smith and James Finch (Suffolk County Councillor) sent their apologies.

**2024/03 Minutes**

The minutes of the Assembly held on the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023 were agreed by those present and the Chairman signed the minutes.

**2024/04 Police Report**

No Police report was submitted.

**2024/05 Suffolk County Council Report**

The Chairman read the Suffolk County Council report.

**Library Services**

The Council has underlined its commitment to library services in Suffolk, as it approved plans in May to increase its funding to Suffolk Libraries, now an independent charity. This will enable the service to continue operating at its current level, until the end of the contract in July 2024 when a new contract will be drawn up.

**Suffolk Fire Service to bring control room back to the County.**

SCC Announced plans in June to create a new fire control centre here in Suffolk independently of Cambridgeshire. The company behind a project to deliver a new IT system as a joint venture, initiated in 2019, has run into technical and financial problems, causing a significant delay. This will protect and upgrade the call centre specifically for Suffolk residents.

**£100m broadband investment in Suffolk under government's Project Gigabit**

Better broadband is on its way for around 80,000 properties across rural Suffolk in a £100 million investment under a £5 billion government infrastructure programme. This will build on our Better Broadband for Suffolk programme which has helped to deliver wider access to superfast broadband to be installed by City Fibre.

**Highways Repairs**

Following the ever-increasing demand for road repairs, the SCC Cabinet approved an extra £10 million in November to repair and resurface local roads in villages and residential areas across Suffolk over 3 years. This was followed by the Government announcement to invest £609m into highway maintenance in the East of England of which £107.5m has been ringfenced for Suffolk over the next decade, including £3.4 million in this last financial year 23/24 and circa £10m per annum going forward.

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**Almost £1 million extra committed to investigating the flooding following Babet**

Since the storm, targeted recovery work has been carried out across the county to ensure damaged highway infrastructure is repaired, those whose properties were flooded get help and that investigations can start which will identify how to reduce flood risk. As lead local flood authority, the county council has a duty to investigate significant flooding and establish the source of flooding, factors which may have caused the flooding, the impacts on people, services and infrastructure and any actions which could be taken to increase resilience to future storm events. In any usual year, Suffolk County Council carries out around 3 or 4 of these investigations. Following Babet, up to 100 are likely to be needed.

**Suffolk County Council's Adult Social Care service rated Good overall by Care Quality Commission**

Following a period of intense inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Suffolk County Council has become one of the first councils nationwide to achieve this standard. CQC's final report rated the overall quality of Suffolk County Council's Adult Social Care services as "Good" and highlighted areas of strength including, the quality of its leadership, the culture of learning and support for staff, the range of digital care options available under CASSIUS, the good relationship between social care and health colleagues and locality team knowledge and understanding of community needs. This rating is also a testament to the high levels of financial investment the council has consistently put into Adult Social Care over the years, especially during the dark days of the pandemic, and shows how through imagination and service transformation, they are delivering on the priority of us all to put people's health and wellbeing at the top of your local authority our agenda for adult social.

**Budget 23/24 Overspend**

Over this last 12 months, budgetary control and forecasting has been a major challenge for the County Council. Special Educational Needs, SEND school transport and care costs are the main factors for SCC forecasting to spend £22.3m over its original £688.1m budget for the 23/24 financial year.

**24/25 SCC budget Approved with a focus on protecting the most vulnerable adults and young people.**

Suffolk County Council has confirmed its financial budget for 2024-25. The £752.8m package was approved at the Full Council meeting on Thursday 15 February 2024, with the priority to protect vulnerable adults and children across the county. This represents an increase of £64.7m over the 23/24 financial year.

Despite the recently announced uplift in government funding and asking for an increase in Council Tax of 4.99%, it is still not sufficient to cover the rising costs imposed by inflation, or more importantly the increasing levels of demand for services - in particular children's care, special educational needs, and disabilities (SEND) and home-to-school transport.

Focusing on those children who have extremely demanding needs and no-one else to turn to, is the right thing to do. SCC have therefore confirmed that 60 new members of staff will be recruited to drive forward important reform to the way special educational needs and disability (SEND) services are delivered in Suffolk. This includes an increase in permanent SEND staff of nearly 15%. These new posts will support the improvement of the quality and timeliness of assessments, plans, reviews, and communications with families.

To provide care and services for vulnerable children and adults, the next two years will see an additional £42.7 million allocated to children's services, and an additional £29.9 million for adult services. However, this means £64.7 million of savings needs to be found at the same time over 2 years which include:-

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- £11 million of staffing costs through changing the way services are delivered and restructuring across the council.
- £30.6 million of additional savings from an extension of the council's hugely successful Adult Social Care Transformation programme.

The council's budget will therefore increase by 8.6% (from £693.0 million to £752.8 million), some of which is generated by a 4.99% increase in the council's share of Council Tax, and additional Government funding. The increase of 4.99% to Council Tax is made up of a 2.99% increase in general Council Tax and a 2.00% increase dedicated to funding adult care. This will see the council's share of a Band B property's bill rise by £1.12 per week, compared to last year.

**2024/06 Babergh District Council Report**

Lee Parker gave the Babergh District Council report.

May

- Local elections: 10 Greens, 9 Independents, 7 Conservatives, 5 Liberal Democrats & 1 Labour Cllr made up the new Council.
- Coalition agreed between the Greens, Independents and Liberal Democrats with the sharing of leadership across the 4-year term.
- The long running Bellevue House issue appeared settled as contracts were exchanged.

June

- Council reiterates its objection to pylon proposals.

July

- Cabinet sets its strategy for the next four years citing climate housing and community at the heart of its priorities.

August

- Cost of living support for residents reviewed. - £100,000 made available to council tenants, a reduction in council tax for low-income households and £150,000 to households struggling with rent.
- A 30% increase in funding to Citizens Advice Bureaus to accommodate increased cost due to increased demand.

September

- Inspectors declare the long-awaited joint local plan part one to be sound and can progress to adoption. The plan has been seven years in the making.

October

- Babergh's new website was launched.
- Storm Babet. Suffolk resilience forum declares a major incident and provides cross agency support to those affected by flooding in the district.

November

- A consultation begins into measures that might streamline energy efficiency upgrades to listed properties.
- A consultation was launched to help shape the future of Babergh following the strategy announcement in July.
- The joint local plan was adopted at full council.
- There was a call for land to support nature, to increase tree coverage and to improve biodiversity.

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December

- Parking charges are back on the agenda. Babergh Cabinet declares that it needs to consider all options faced with a potential shortfall of £1.8M of funding.

January

- Babergh urges the government to fix the broken funding for councils after cost of running the council was expected to rise by 12.8% year on year.

February

- A balanced budget was delivered albeit by use of £1.2 million of reserves.
- The parking charges petition was heard.

March

- Babergh District Council was named the best council in the UK.
- Parking proposals were considered by the scrutiny committee and will now be forwarded to cabinet for consideration next month.

Lee thanked the Parish Councillors for all their work over the past year.

**2024/07 Chairman's Report**

The Chairman delivered the Annual Report on behalf of the Parish Council.

The year started with the May 2023 Newton Parish Council election. Paul Presland and Russel Bower stood down after giving sterling support to the council as Chairman and member.

Ian Cole, David Everett, Laura Smith, Rita Schwenk, and Phil Taylor all stood again for election, and they were joined by Louise Evers and Jany's Sherwood. David replaced Paul as Chairman.

The council has been busy over the past 12 months with a regular cycle of monthly meetings which reviewed 17 planning applications and the appeal for Rotten Row Barn. The Newton Neighbourhood Development Plan has helped Babergh to review each application, and with the exception of the extra dwelling at Fairways, developments for dwellings which were considered by the council as not being in accord with the NNDP have been refused. With the appeal being lost at Rotten Row Barn, it now remains to be seen how quickly the operations there can be stopped.

Based on the feedback from the Parish Survey held in February 2023, the council has developed its Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan and has implemented the following projects over the past 12 months:

- New benching, picnic tables and litter bin in the Recreation Ground
- New bench and litter bin in Plamplin Close
- New bus shelter on The Green and new litter bins for both shelters on the Green
- Contracted a local stonemason to clean and re-paint the War Memorial
- We have finally completed the transfer of 9 allotments from Michael Oliver to the council after 20 months. Pleased to say that all nine allotments are now allocated with only one resident still on the waiting list.

The issue of A134 safety scored highly once again in the February 2024 Parish Survey and the council is working hard with Suffolk County Council to look at ways to improve the current situation. The village is now part of the ANPR Pilot scheme being conducted by SCC Highways and there have been two weeks over the past 6 months when both the ANPR and the SID devices have been used simultaneously.

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Thanks to our County Councillor James Finch, we are now embarking on a feasibility study with SCC Highways to see what options there may be to introduce a safe crossing point along the A134.

The council is still considering ways to increase the number of footpaths in the village, and councillors are talking to local landowners to see if this can be achieved.

The council is now offering an email subscription so that residents can receive a regular newsletter on council news and events.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who contributed to the Village Litter Pick earlier this month. Your efforts are greatly appreciated and make a difference to the cleanliness of our village. We also want to acknowledge those who continue to help keep the village clear of rubbish throughout the year. Your dedication to our community is commendable.

Finally, thanks to County and District Councillors James Finch and Lee Parker for all their help and support during the past 12 months.

**2022/07          Newton Green Trust**

Phil Taylor gave the NGT update. "Thank you and good evening to you all, I will begin my report by paying tribute to Michael Oliver. As many of you know the Oliver family, through their generosity helped set up the Newton Green Trust so that the Green would no longer be owned by the Olivers but gifted to the Village. It has always been that the Lord of the Manor was a permanent member of the Trust but last year when Michael sold Newton Hall and moved out of the village he decided to step down. I would therefore like to put on record the Trusts appreciation and gratitude for all that Michael and the Oliver family has done for Newton. I'm sure you all agree that the Green makes Newton a special village. With Michael stepping down Paul Devlin agreed to take his seat as a Trustee, so welcome Paul and I would also like to thank my fellow Trustees for their help over the last year.

The Trust has been busy this year, mainly on administrative tasks. As mentioned with the retirement of Mike it has meant a restructuring of the Trust was needed which is on-going involving the Charity Commission, solicitors and Trustees. The Trust has new bank accounts with Unity Trust Bank which has taken an extraordinary long time to complete all due to Barclays. The Trust was trying to update the bank mandate with Barclays, which it thought was going through albeit very slowly, when they received a cheque from Barclays with a letter stating that the account had been dosed. With Barclays offering no explanation or help it did cause problems .. The Trust current account stands at £22,750.07 and the deposit account at £22,493.24.

The Trust has also employed the services of a Land Agent to handle easement issues, which are mainly concerned with 3 properties. Signage has been put up to remind people that the road from Rectory Road to Rotten Row is Private Land and that it is a No Through Road. It is hoped that as the enforcement to stop the activities at Rotten Row Farm happens the amount of traffic will be reduced significantly.

Little Green Track has always been a contentious subject and although the Trust's only obligation is to grant access across the Green via the track and not to maintain it, it is hoped that there could be a resolution forthcoming. It is being proposed that the Trust, working with the Parish Council, could use the CIL money (Community Infrastructure Levy) generated from the development at Juglands to sort the track. The CIL money is given to

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the community to offset any harm caused by a development and this would seem like the ideal use of this.

As some of you would have seen the Trust has agreed to allow an area of the Playing Field to be "rewilded" or not cut so that it can be seen what plants and insects will appear. This is not run specifically by the Trust but with help from Babergh's bio-diversity officer and a village resident who has a wealth of experience it is hoped that this will be an exciting project in the village. However as with all these things it will only be a success if at certain times of year residents will come and volunteer to help with clearing the old grass to reduce the fertility of the soil, allowing flowers and less competitive grasses to grow. We will let you know when! The Golf Club are also undertaking an area on the Green as well which will be near to Mill House. These areas will be signed and it is hoped that there will be a platform where pictures of plants and insects can be posted by people on their walks.

The Trust works very closely with the Golf Club and they have asked me to remind residents that the course which is not on the Green is Private Property and so have asked that people should only walk on the designated Footpaths. They have also invited Villagers to the Grand Opening of the Clubhouse on 11th May, where there will be an evening of Soul Music and food with a free drink in the mix as well!! Tickets are available from the Clubhouse.

And finally, the Trustees would like to know if there is anyone in the Village who would like to become the Clerk to the Trustees, which would include being the Treasurer. Please speak to any of the Trustees if you are interested.." He was asked questions on when the Trust's accounts will be published as well as the right of villagers to attend the Trust meetings.

**2024/08 Parish Assembly's Newton Green Trust Representative**

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

**2024/09 Village Hall**

Alan Vince gave the Village Hall report. The main project this year has been the damp proofing of the building. Damp has long been a problem in the hall but we hope that the work carried out will rectify this. The wooden panelling has all been removed, the walls injected and a waterproof membrane installed before the boards were replaced. The walls were also damp proofed externally and some repairs carried out to the roof to prevent water ingress. All this cost £16600 but we were able to get a grant of £10000 from Babergh District Council so the net cost was £6600. There is still a bit more work to be done on the porch roof.

Lettings for the year remained at a good level, and there was a profit after normal expenses of approx. £6200. After spending £1300 on the new chairs there was approx. £4900 left to set against the damp proofing costs so we ended the year about £1700 worse off. We are reviewing the level of letting fees for the coming year.

In other respects it has been a difficult year. There have been disputes with two electricity supply companies which are still ongoing. Towards the end of the previous year a smart meter was installed but it didn't work so no accurate meter readings were available. That meter was then replaced, but the new one did not send readings to the supplier or record separate day/evening and weekend readings so we

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Maureen Williams”

**2024/11 Parochial Church Council**

Paul Presland read the Newton PCC report. “Church services continue to be held on the third Sunday of each month.

We are holding coffee mornings every third Wednesday and this has attracted more residents from the village and people from surrounding areas. The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held on Sunday, 28 April 2024. Our end of year finances have been independently assessed.

We are continuing to fulfil our parish share commitment despite the imbalance between income and expenditure.

PCC members: Christine Cornell, Vera Cutts, Churchwardens: Miranda Doyle Ferguson and Paul Presland, Treasurer: Graham Ferguson, Secretary: Fiona Garman. Approval has been received to go ahead with plans to install a toilet and servery at the church and proceeds from fundraising are going towards this project. Having these facilities will help with the church holding a variety of events.

Following the success of the Harvest Cream Tea held last year, the same event is planned this year for Sunday, 6 October. The quiz in February held jointly with the Village Hall was a huge success and another is set for October. We have volunteers helping with various aspects of keeping the church in good order and the yearly spring clean took place on Saturday, 13 April.

Thank you to all those who continue to give their support in one way or another.”

**2024/12 The Fireside Club**

Teresa Parry gave the Fireside Club report.” The Newton Green Fireside Club continues to be well supported within the village with a total membership of 31 with a core group of approximately 24 attending each fortnightly meeting. All of the members are of retirement age and above and we warmly welcome any villagers who would like to join us.

We have had a busy year with a variety of activities that members appreciate and enjoy. Our year began with a boat trip on the River Stour with lunch at the Henny Swan on a beautiful sunny September day. Unfortunately we tend to struggle with trips, as members tend to sign up for these outings and then for various reasons are unable to keep to their booking. This does incur costs to the club so this year we have trialed using Felix coaches who operate on a non-refundable basis. The trip to Norwich unfortunately was not a happy outing due to the roadwork’s on the A14 and various other incidents which meant a very long day - hopefully the trip to Ely and the Mississippi Boat cruise will be less traumatic. We will then evaluate if this is a feasible means of outings for the club.

There is always a good turn out for any food and drink related meetings and Alan our resident Pie man holds the record of having 30 people attending for our Pie and Mash lunch where he made pies for everyone – no mean feat taking into account individual preferences so thank you Alan.

We have enjoyed film shows and talks using the proxima and screen provided by the Parish Council, which we thank them for and also thank Dave for his willingness to set this up as required.

We have had a variety of guest speakers this year including talks by Citizens Advice Sudbury, Citizens Advice Singers, Sudbury Archives also a talk on the history of Perrywoods and one from Peter Heskith a retired policeman who circumnavigated the world on container ships.

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Our major fundraisers are the Midsummer Munch and Coffee Morning, along with raffles when members and occasionally speakers, generously provide prizes and buy tickets. The Water or Wine Raffle at the Midsummer Munch is very popular and has raised £100 for the last two years. We continue to charge £25 for a 'term's activities, payable at the beginning of each term, with which most members are happy with. If payment is not made for a term then activities are charged at between £5 and £10 for individual meetings, however, this may increase in September 2024. If anyone is unable to afford the fees these can be subsidized by the club. We have a healthy bank balance of over £3000 which we aim to reduce over the summer by giving members a lunch at a local restaurant and subsidizing other activities. I would like to think that we are a happy, welcoming and thriving community within Newton and we look forward to the challenges of the year ahead.

**2024/13            Questions to the Chair**

There were no issues raised.


**The meeting closed at 8.38 pm.**

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

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**Newton Parish Council**

	<b>2022 / 2023</b>		<b>2023 / 2024</b>	
	<b>NEWTON PARISH COUNCIL</b>			
<b>Receipts &amp; Payments Account for the year ending 31st March 2024</b>				
<b>Receipts</b>				
Precept	£13,625.97		£18,242.81	
Grants	£2,975.23		£212.64	
Recycling	£251.23		£749.00	
Bank Interest	£150.37		£1,067.94	
CIL	£17,579.58		£4,836.56	
Other	£37.00		£1,800.00	
VAT Repayment	£2,529.97		£3,599.17	
		<b>£37,149.35</b>		<b>£30,508.12</b>
<b>Payments</b>				
Clerks Salary	£11,571.48		£12,527.46	
Admin	£1,718.33		£1,805.97	
Donations	£400.00		£700.00	
Annual Subscriptions	£441.51		£452.01	
Footpath Maintenance	£300.00		£360.00	
Insurance	£1,497.60		£1,658.56	
Inspection	£635.00		£430.00	
Maintenance	£0.00		£55.75	
Village Hall Hire	£425.00		£420.00	
Projects	£2,718.62		£0.00	
CIL	£18,083.66		£23,007.30	
Clerk's Pension	£0.00		£0.00	
Other	£0.00		£1,750.00	
VAT Paid	£3,599.17		£5,250.31	
		<b>£41,390.37</b>		<b>£48,417.36</b>
<b>Excess of Payments over Receipts</b>		<b>-£4,241.02</b>		<b>-£17,909.24</b>
Add Balance Brought Forward		£49,357.31		£45,116.29
<b>Balance Carried Forward</b>		<b>£45,116.29</b>		<b>£27,207.05</b>
<b>Represented by</b>				
Barclays Community	£0.00		£0.00	
Barclays Premium	£0.00		£0.00	
Barclays Tracker	£0.00		£0.00	
Unity Trust Current Account	£19,996.62		£1,019.44	
Unity Trust Savings Account	£25,119.67		£26,187.61	
		<b>£45,116.29</b>		<b>£27,207.05</b>
I have prepared these accounts from the books and records of the Newton Parish Council and certify that they are a true record of the Parish Council's transactions				
Signed: _____ Date: _____				
Dave Crimmin RFO Newton Parish Council				

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

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**Charities Accounts**

**NEWTON CHARITIES  
ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2023**

An Account of the William Alston Charity in the Parish of Newton for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023, to be presented at the Annual Parish Assembly to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

<b>RECEIPTS</b>			<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Balance b/f:			Flowers etc	82.68
Cash	240.18			
Natwest Bank	521.99`	762.17	Christmas Parcels	50.00
Donation Newton Parish Council	100.00		Monies Distributed	380.00
4 x Quarterly dividend COIF	302.96			
Coffee Morning	154.19		Cash in hand	30.44
			Natwest Bank Balance	776.20
		-----		-----
		1319.32		1319.32
		-----		-----

The current capital of the Charity is represented by 556.18 units in C.O.I.F is £11,037.39

Approved by the trustees on 23rd April 2024

Countersigned

Date:

Chair of Newton Parish Council

Signed.....

Dated.....

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**Newton PCC**

<b>Newton Parochial Church Council</b>			
<b>Receipts &amp; Payments Accounts as at 31st December 2023</b>			
<b>Income</b>			
3	Cash Collections	£815.00	
1	Gift Envelopes	£240.00	
9	Events	£1,749.82	
8	Grants	£0.00	
7	Legacies	£0.00	
6	Gift Aid	£0.00	
11	Headstones	£254.00	
4	Wall Safe	£40.00	
11	Funerals	£52.80	
11	Weddings	£750.00	
10	Bank Interest	£604.34	
12	Trading Activities	£0.00	
13	Other	£0.00	
		<u>£4,505.96</u>	
<b>Expenditure</b>			
23	Churchyard	£780.00	
17	Events	£202.00	
24	Electricity	£930.00	
21	Incumbent Expenses	£1,144.43	
23	Church Expenses	£1,425.71	
20	Salaries	£1,386.00	
18	Commitments	£65.00	
19	Quota	£8,235.00	
23	Organist / Verger Fees	£420.00	
23	Organ Repairs	£0.00	
23	Insurance	£814.25	
23	Audit Fee	£35.00	
22	Mission & Evangelism	£0.00	
25	Cost of Trading	£0.00	
29	New Building Work	£1,159.80	
27	Major Repairs	£0.00	
99	Other	£0.00	
		<u>£16,597.19</u>	
	Surplus / <b>Loss</b> for year		<b>£12,091.23</b>
	Surplus Brought Forward		£88,745.69
	Surplus Carried Forward		<b><u>£76,654.46</u></b>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
	Bank Account 00164975 - General Account	£24,796.57	
	Plus unbanked cash	£0.00	
	Less unrepresented cheques	<u>£1,060.47</u>	£23,736.10
	Bank Account 00978573 - Churchyard Maintenance		£881.78
	Bank Account 07158830 - Fabric Fund		£52,036.58
			<b><u>£76,654.46</u></b>

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

