

# NEWNHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held in the Village Hall

on Monday 22 May 2023 at 7:00pm

**Parish Councillors Present:** Cllrs Sally Armstrong, Debbie Bastin, Trevor Collins, Debbie Crossan, Gary Hammersley (Chair), Val Reynolds, Jim Simpson

**WNC:** Cllr Rupert Frost

**Clerk to the Parish Council:** Elaine Gibbon

18 villagers attended

Reports presented by (or on behalf of by) :-

- **Parish Council**  
by Gary Hammersley (Overview) & Trevor Collins (Financial)
- **Unitary Council** (*Ward presentation*)  
by Cllr Rupert Frost
- **Newnham Primary School**  
by Cllr Debbie Bastin on behalf of Sol Johnson, Headmaster
- **FONS (Friends of Newnham School)**  
by Cllr Sally Armstrong on behalf of Suzanne Boniface, Fons
- **Girl Guiding** (*no longer called the Guides!*)  
by Judy Summers, Guide helper on behalf of Janet Ashwell, Guide leader
- **St Michael & All Angels Church**  
by Mary Wood, Churchwarden
- **WI**  
by Christine Pett
- **Book Club**  
by Fiona Walton
- **Newnham Bell Ringers**  
by Claire Millsop
- **History Society**  
by Judith Dorkins
- **Village Hall Committee**  
by Debbie Crossan (Chair of VHC)

All reports will be posted on the website

## Comments/Observations :

1. Improved presentation with use of photos and projector
2. Key financial reports from the Parish Council should be presented visually.
3. Praise was given for being such an active village especially regarding the Coronation celebrations.
4. Cllr Frost, WNC one councillor = 2,400 residents and will reduce when boundary changes come in – and reduce to 2 from 3 WNC Councillors in 2 year's time (at 2024 elections)
5. There has been very little information made available to the public about WNDC – referred to the Towns & Parish magazine on the website
6. Penny Alexander – suggested 'silent' (animal friendly) fireworks in response to the proposed FONS party.
7. Progressive supper unlikely to be organised by FONS going forward
8. Vote of thanks to Janet Ashwell for all she does and has done for the Girl Guiding – but who might take it on when Janet retires?
9. Dire funding position for Girl Guiding
10. The church needs to become a community space & will then benefit from grants (what makes it a community space?) as it receives no funds from the diocese – it can only raise funds locally
11. There is no water supply to the Church
12. The WI is desperately seeking new members otherwise it may seriously have to stop
13. Potential for another book group to be set up. The current book group has 12 members (and is full) with a waiting list of 3. Fiona offered to help someone set it up.
14. More Bell Ringers are required – no experience necessary.
15. There are some Newnham Hand Bells somewhere (Jim Wood is the resident Hand Bells expert)
16. Any other organisations not present? Allotment Society

## OPEN FORUM

**PARKING IN THE VILLAGE** – bad parking on corners, grass verges and pavements. There is legislation that decrees no parking on pavements. Is there flexibility with this? It has been suggested before that school staff could be offered alternative off road parking within the village. It was agreed that it is difficult to know the correct way to approach the driver of a badly/dangerously parked car. Possibly involve LPCSO (Local Police Community Support Officer) in conjunction with the school.

Could the PC commission a report re parking in the area around the school? What the problem is? What the solution is? The main problem (unsurprisingly) is on School Hill.

**Manor Lane & Mounts Lane** are also black spots for parking as many vehicles are double parked on the pavements in both these streets.

It was agreed that village parking should be kept on the PC agenda.

**NO MOW MAY** - Anne Rushall/Debbie Crossan supported *No Mow May* and it was suggested that the verges along Mounts Lane could be left unmown (it was said that they had not been mown for 2 years) and that biodiversity within in the village should be actively encouraged. Opposition to this was voiced on the grounds that it could be 'dangerous' as it could obscure the view of motorists.

Snowdrops – should not be mown until at least midway through May.

A counter suggestion was that a plan could be drawn up as to exactly which areas within the village the grass could potentially be left as wildlife areas and a consultation with villagers undertaken. **This would have to be done before October 2023 which is when the annual mowing schedule is prepared.**

**VOLUNTEERING** - Promote an annual village volunteering day – gauge the appetite for this – following on from the volunteer day after the Coronation weekend.

**PLAYGROUND / PLAYING FIELD** – Claire Millsop put forward a suggestion that the PC could help to create a more user-friendly area for the older children (12 years plus), e.g., basketball posts.

It was acknowledged that it is the school who holds the (long) lease on the playing field and the PC only have a short lease of the immediate area where the play equipment is. Possible negotiations between the PC and the School to extend the play area could be opened?

**SYCAMORE TREES ON THE GREEN** – The sap is purportedly edible. Can we preserve it (& sell it)?

## **AD HOC**

Use of a microphone to project the speakers

FONS – list of events to go onto the “Whats on” calendar on the website (and all organisations' dates to go on to (with contact details))