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### **ART OF THE MATTER**

Unleash your creativity at one of our free craft workshops

### **MODERN COMMUNITY POLICING**

Banish the dark side and learn to use the force for good



THE NEWTON

Cryer

WINTER 2021

THE NEWSLETTER OF NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL





## EDITOR'S NOTES

# So here it is...

...Merry Christmas! And this year everybody IS having fun, with the long awaited return of social gatherings allowing us to *look to the future* with a properly positive frame of mind.

As the world takes another step towards the normality that we previously took for granted, our appetite for activity and social interaction has also returned – and with renewed vigour. One of the many beneficiaries of this (further boosted by the popularity of the 'staycation' this year) has been our amazing new museum. Based right here alongside the town council at Newton's Place, the museum has seen an incredible upturn to visitor numbers over the last few months – with feedback showing a 98% approval rating!

And with the festive season just around the corner, we've a full programme of events – starting with the Christmas lights switch-on at the end of November – to look forward to in the run-up to the winter holidays, including an all-new augmented reality trail with the chance to win a Nintendo Switch games console.

Also in this issue, the mayor of Newton Abbot, Cllr Mike Joyce, offers an insight into his work in partnership with the local constabulary as a police advocate, and town development manager Sally Henley has all the latest news from the highstreet and beyond.

In fact, by the time you've caught up with all that's happening around the town, Santa may have already fired up the reindeer...

*Sam*

Samantha Scott, Deputy Town Clerk.

# Keep in touch

call us: 01626 201120 | email us: [info@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk)

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## Building fences (and bridges)

The council has recently commissioned the construction of a new 'eco' fence in Newton Abbot, signalling the move towards a sustainable relationship with a fledgling environmental group.

The structure has been built at Vicary's Field allotments using chestnut and larch, neither of which have been chemically treated. Both timbers have naturally long lives and their local origin helps to safeguard jobs in the south Devon economy.

Installation was carried out by volunteers with Green Futures Newton Abbot, a community group launched a year ago by residents Andrew Rothery and Simon Heath. The pair intend to marry green issues with wellbeing and social cohesion by encouraging individuals to care for their neighbourhood.

*'This project is part of a longer-term environmental management programme; we want to engage local people in looking after their surroundings and help Newton Abbot become more environmentally friendly,'* said Andrew.

Ward member Cllr Mike Hocking said: *'Andrew and his mates wanted to do something and we've supported them from the word go, with a proportion of the council's district community fund helping them to set up. It's an important issue; we really do need to be looking after the environment. The allotment needed a new fence and using this local chemical-free timber is one way of demonstrating our commitment to environmental issues.'*

Pictured left to right: Cllr Mike Hocking and town clerk Phil Rowe with Steve Tipping, Simon Heath and Andrew Rothery of Green Futures.



# Record numbers flock to Newton Abbot Museum

Thrilled staff at Newton Abbot Museum have revealed that visitor numbers are breaking all records. Since the facility in Newton's Place, Wolborough Street, opened on May 17th almost 3,000 people have been through the doors.

That's 50 per cent more than the old site in Devon Square would expect in a year, and despite the fact that until late July only six people at a time were allowed in.

Curator Dr Charlotte Dixon said: *'By September 7th we had received 2,988 visitors, it's incredible. In August alone we had 1,494 people coming through the door, we've even had people coming back for repeat visits to see things like object of the month because they knew it had changed. It's exactly what we were hoping for.'*

Museum Assistant Katie Petley-Jones joined from prestigious Bath Abbey in late June. *'The museum job market is very competitive, and this is a great opportunity - this place is amazing,'* she said.



*Dr Charlotte Dixon and Katie Petley-Jones in the museum's reception*



*The new exhibits are a real hit with the youngsters!*

*'We're getting very positive feedback with average visitor ratings of 4.9 out of five. One said we should be voted small museum of the year and we're also getting excellent reviews on Trip Advisor.'*

*'A lot of people turn up with their wallets too, expecting to pay, and when they learn it's free the looks on their faces are amazing! It's not unusual to see £20 notes in the donation box.'*

Quiet sessions for people with sensory needs, activity workshops and group bookings for special interest clubs are among the initiatives helping to boost the museum's popularity.

The facility is providing volunteering opportunities, including a popular 'digital takeover day' which attracted teenagers, plus a six-month paid job opportunity for an unemployed 16 to 24-year-old as part of the Government's Kickstart scheme.

The £2.2 million Newton's Place was delivered by Newton Abbot Town Council without increasing its share of the council tax bill. Mayor Cllr Mike Joyce said: *'I pay tribute to my fellow councillors for their foresight in bringing Newton's Place to our town; these first museum visitor numbers are thrilling. My congratulations to the team, including the many volunteers who make it all possible, and my thanks to those who've taken the time to visit.'*

**HAVE  
YOUR  
SAY...  
...WE'RE  
LISTENING!**



Newton Abbot Town Council is keen to seek your views regarding a future vision for the town of Newton Abbot.

Is there a particular project you would like to see delivered? Is there something in your neighbourhood that you'd like help to sort out? What is your hope for the future of where you live?



*Town councillors having their say at a recent workshop*

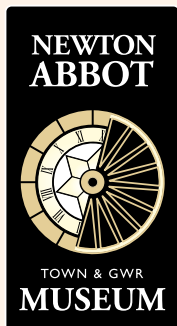
Working together with Newton Abbot Community Interest Company (NACIC), we're updating the current community plan to more accurately reflect our new vision for the town.

Kate Green, our community engagement officer, and Emily Farrell, business development manager for NACIC, will be attending various events in your area and around the town over the next couple of months, so do come and speak to us. We really want to hear your thoughts.

You can contact us by e-mail:

[yourcommunity@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk](mailto:yourcommunity@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk)

or add your comments to the NACIC Facebook page [@NewtonAbbotCIC](https://www.facebook.com/NewtonAbbotCIC).



# Museum News

WITH DR CHARLOTTE DIXON (CURATOR) AND KATIE PETLEY-JONES (MUSEUM ASSISTANT)

It has been a busy few months at the museum since we extended our opening hours and welcomed more visitors than ever before! It is great to see the place buzzing and to have activities and events up and running.

We are continuing to clean regularly, and encourage visitors to wear masks and use the provided hand sanitiser to keep everyone covid safe, but are delighted to now be open from 9.30am to 4.30pm, Tuesday – Friday, and from 9.30am to 1.30pm on Saturdays, thanks to our wonderful team of volunteers. You can drop in to visit – there’s no need to book – and it’s free!

Our last day open to the public before Christmas will be Saturday 11th December, when there will be a free **Make & Create** Christmas themed craft activity for everyone to enjoy. Our community engagement officer, Kate Green, has already organised several of these creative sessions, and some of the results from the recent photography workshop can be seen on page six of this newsletter. Further info and booking details can be found on our website.

The museum will reopen on Tuesday 18 January 2022, so be sure to come along and look out for previously unseen objects on display in the new year – there will always be something new to see!

## Mini Marvels!

Found during excavations of a hillfort at Milber Down in 1937-8, these exquisitely crafted, tiny figures date from the first century BC. Newton Abbot Museum has been privileged to host this stag, bird and duck – each cast from bronze – on display for the very first time in our town.

Having been kindly loaned to us by Torquay Museum, the three figures will be on display until we close for the Christmas period on the 11th December.

The detail on each of the castings is incredible; you can see the antlers on the stag and a lasso around its neck, you can even see the feathers on the birds wings!

*The duck even comes complete with a tasty little snack!*



*Each figure measures around 75mm in length and are pictured here at actual size!*

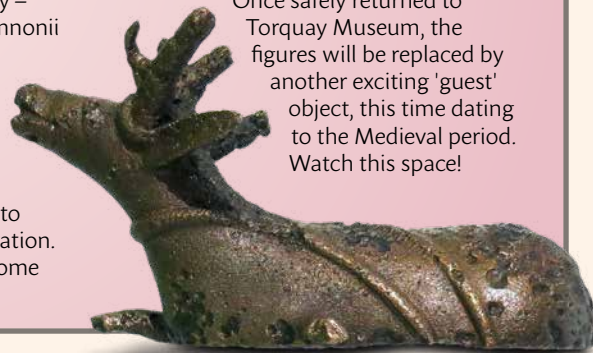
They must have been made by an incredibly skilled artisan and would have been highly prized amongst Iron Age settlers and tribesmen. Why they were buried remains a mystery – perhaps a local chief from the Dumnonii tribe hid them underground for safekeeping?

The bird may have been discovered with detached wings, which were possible hinged originally before being soldered onto the body at some point after excavation. This repair unfortunately caused some damage to the tiny bird figure and,

because of its unstable condition, it hadn't been on display to the public since the 1990s.

One of the aims of the Newton's Place project was to conserve the bird to enable it to be displayed alongside the stag and duck for the very first time, right here in Newton Abbot, so do come along and see these amazing objects while they are still on show!

Once safely returned to Torquay Museum, the figures will be replaced by another exciting 'guest' object, this time dating to the Medieval period. Watch this space!



# Relax & Enjoy the Show

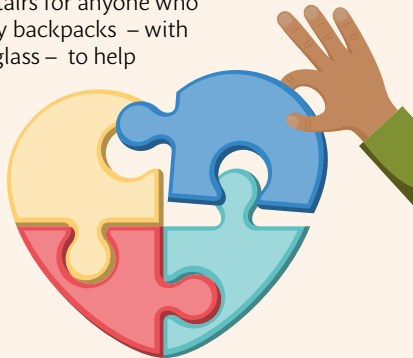
In August, the museum hosted its first 'Relaxed Visit' for visitors with sensory needs, and we are now running these sessions regularly. Keep an eye on the website and social media to find out when the next of these events will be taking place.






During 'relaxed' hours we reduce the sounds in the museum and create a chill-out room upstairs for anyone who needs a break. There are sensory backpacks – with squishy toys and a magnifying glass – to help you enjoy your visit and ear defenders, which you are welcome to borrow, available at the front desk.

You can also find a visual story on our website to help you plan your trip to the museum and what to expect when you arrive.

These resources and visits are ideal for anyone with autistic spectrum disorder or with sensory needs, as well as their families / carers, but everyone is welcome.



 @Newton.Abbot.Museum  
 @NewtonsPlace  
 [museum-newtonabbot.org.uk](http://museum-newtonabbot.org.uk)



## NEW DONATIONS

Following the wishes of Di Nicholls, former Mayor of Newton Abbot (1985-1986), a presentation miner's lamp has been donated to the museum. Di was presented with the lamp in 1985 by the wives of the South Wales miners who worked the Treharris Deep Navigation Mine. It was gifted to thank the Teignbridge Support Group and the people of Teignbridge for their support during the 1984 miners' strike.



As part of the government strategy to minimise the effect of the strike, smaller non-unionised ports such as Teignmouth were used to import coal. Pickets were organised by the National Union of Mine Workers to dissuade dockers from handling the coal. Miners from Treharris Deep Navigation Pit were assigned to Teignmouth Docks, and they were accommodated in the Labour Party Rooms in Highweek. Local people from the Teignmouth area invited the miners into their homes and organised collections of food and clothes for the men and their families.



The miners' strike lasted longer than had been originally anticipated, but was formally called off in March 1985, as miners slowly began to return to work (with the promise that some mines would remain open, although they were then closed soon afterwards). The Treharris miners returned home following the end of the strike, but the links forged with the people of Teignbridge remained long after their departure.

Intrigued? Why not go to our website and search 'Miner's Lamp' to find out more about this object's story. If you have any memories of Newton Abbot during the miners' strike of 1984, we would love to hear them! Email [museum@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk](mailto:museum@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk)

# Make & Create

WITH KATE GREEN, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER FOR NEWTON'S PLACE

From collage to animation, clay to photography, our monthly **Make & Create** sessions at the museum offer opportunities for families to spend time getting creative together.

Inspired by the museum and its collection of objects that tell the story of the town, each two-hour workshop will encourage participants to use a different artistic method to make something special. By taking part you will not only create your own work of art, but you will learn something about the history of Newton Abbot too. It's a win-win situation!

The workshops are free, but you will need to book your place (for one adult and one child) as numbers will be limited.

About once or twice a year we will have a special guest artist running the sessions and we may need to make a small charge, but overwhelmingly getting involved will not cost you anything. To find out what is coming up visit the 'What's On' page on the museum website. You can book a place for the workshops in the weeks prior to each date.

During November we will be running a special climate change themed workshop to coincide with COP26, where we will make models of endangered animals, whilst in December the workshop will have a Christmas theme, making heritage inspired Christmas crackers.

Don't forget to book your space!



We began our **Make & Create** sessions in August with a 'drop-in' activity so that we could meet local families and chat to them about what sort of activities they would like to have a go at.

We even asked people to vote for what they would like to do next. Below is a list of ideas for what we can offer, so please do get in touch to register your vote!

- ◆ ANIMATION
- ◆ BOOK MAKING
- ◆ CRAFTS
- ◆ VIDEO & DRAMA
- ◆ PHOTOGRAPHY
- ◆ CLAY MODELLING
- ◆ STORY MAKING
- ◆ SOUND RECORDING
- ◆ MODEL MAKING
- ◆ CREATIVE WRITING

So, what do you fancy? If you have an idea for an activity or story to share please email me [kate.green@newtonspplace.org](mailto:kate.green@newtonspplace.org)

*Shown here are some of the amazing images captured by participants at our last photography workshop*



## Remembering Henry, a local hero

**NEWTON** Abbot's first ever Honorary Freeman, Henry Cole, passed away earlier this year at the age of 90.

A true civic champion, the former mayor was a familiar face around town, often seen greeting coach visitors from the seat of his flag-bedecked mobility scooter. He rarely missed any of Newton Abbot's community events and was responsible for initiating the Courtenay Park band concerts during his mayoral term of office in 2000 - 2001.

Mr Cole, a former serviceman and supporter of the Poppy Appeal, served as town councillor for the Buckland Ward from 1993 until poor health forced him to quit in 2011.

He was appointed deputy mayor in 1999 and mayor a year later. During his 18 years on the council, he sat on several committees, chairing the Environment Committee from 1995 - 1997.

He represented the town on the Council for the Protection of Rural England and the Devon Association of Parish Councils.

In 2011 Mr Cole was made the town's first ever Honorary Freeman in recognition of his contributions. Although no longer entitled to vote at town council meetings, Mr Cole attended frequently and was given his own seat of honour.

In March 2013 he was invited to voice concerns he had been harbouring about party politics. Urging cooperation in the town's interests he told members: *'I've been wondering what's up. I read in the paper about councillors moaning about others, dragging their names through it. We work together whatever happens. Let's go in, have a drink together. Let's just agree in here and not put it in the paper. It gives a bad name to all you councillors. People think, what's wrong? We want to fight for the town, not our parties.'*

Mr Cole died in hospital on August 11 having suffered a stroke. Newton Abbot Mayor Cllr Mike Joyce paid tribute saying:

*'There are very few people who have given as much to our town as Henry. His was a life well-lived and we are so thankful for all he did.'*



## Remembrance Sunday at the War Memorial

Sunday 14th November



We will be welcoming back the parade again for 2021. This year we are celebrating the centenary year of Newton Abbot's war memorial and the branch of the Royal British Legion, which makes it extra-special! Starting from Courtenay Street and proceeding along Queen Street to the War Memorial, the parade will begin at 10.30am, led by the Corps of Drums, Royal Marine Volunteers Cadet Band. The service will commence at the War Memorial at 10.45am.

We will, once again, be live streaming the service through our Facebook page so if anyone is unable to attend, they will still be able to view the event.

# Christmas events



AFTER LAST YEAR'S MUTED CELEBRATIONS, EVERYONE'S LOOKING FORWARD TO ENJOYING THE WINTER BREAK TO THE FULL IN 2021 – AND WITH A GREAT PROGRAMME OF FESTIVE EVENTS LINED UP, THERE'LL CERTAINLY BE NO SHORTAGE OF CHRISTMAS SPIRIT IN NEWTON ABBOT THIS YEAR!



## CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON Wednesday 24th November 5.30pm

Catch a glimpse of Santa when he travels through the town, magically switching on the lights!

## MAYOR'S CAROL SERVICE Wednesday 15th December

Carol service with the Mayor, Cllr Mike Joyce, at 7pm in in front of St Leonard's Clock Tower, accompanied by the Rock Choir.

## VICTORIAN EVENING Wednesday 1st December

- ◆ Late night shopping
- ◆ Live music and Christmas walkabouts
- ◆ Children's entertainment (2 shows) from Elfic
- ◆ Market Square filled with charity stalls from 6pm with a Victorian theme
- ◆ Stilt walker and balloon modeller
- ◆ Have a brief chat with Santa and see his sleigh in front of the Clock Tower



- ◆ Late night shopping
- ◆ Live music and Christmas walkabouts
- ◆ Have a brief chat with Santa and see his sleigh!

## CHRISTMAS SATURDAYS 4th, 11th & 18th December

- ◆ Music from the Salvation Army Band

## LATE NIGHT SHOPPING Wednesday 8th December

- ◆ Late night shopping
- ◆ Live music and Christmas walkabouts
- ◆ Have a brief chat with Santa and see his sleigh in front of the Clock Tower



## Jingle bells!

Look out for town mascot, **Newton**, at our Christmas events around the town. The two metre tall town cryer is hard to miss but super friendly – and may even have some tasty treats to share!







## NEW this year! HIGH STREET SAFARI

Available from 24th November until 31st December, **SantaNeedsYou** is an augmented reality trail, accessed via a series of QR codes on display in various business windows around the town. Simply find the ten animals aiming to take the final spot on Santa's sleigh team, then vote for your favourite for the chance to win a Nintendo Switch!



Check the website (or scan the QR) for more info!

**SANTANEEDSYOUTRAIL.COM**



## SANTA'S CHRISTMAS POST BOX

Children are welcome to post their letters to Santa in his post box, either on his sleigh on the late-night shopping Wednesdays in town, or during the week at Newton's Place.



## Don't forget...

Parking is **FREE** from 4pm in all Newton Abbot Pay & Display car parks on late night shopping evenings. (1st, 8th and 15th December).

## CHECK ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR THE LATEST NEWS:



@newtontownwoman or @NewtonAbbotCoun



Newtonabbotnow or NewtonAbbottowncouncilcommunity

Please note that entertainment and event times are subject to change at short notice and many events are weather dependent – check on the council's website or Facebook page for the latest information.





# Out & About

with **Sally Henley**, TOWN DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

FOR MORE INFO:  
check our website:  
[newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk](http://newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk)



or follow us:  
[@newtontownwoman](https://twitter.com/newtontownwoman)



Newton Abbot Now

Well, what a summer 2021 gave us! Gradually this year we saw our lives returning to something like normal, edging hesitantly out of lockdown like excited but nervous teenagers on a much anticipated first date.

And the good news is we fell in love! Fell in love, that is, with our fabulous Newton Abbot businesses, most of which I'm thrilled to say have successfully weathered the mother of all storms. And it's in no small part down to you, the people of Newton Abbot, who have done more than most to keep our high street going.

Consider this fact: the British Retail Consortium, the go-to trade association for all shopkeepers, has confirmed this autumn that across the country the average town now has more than 14 per cent of its shops lying empty. That's a huge number of gaps in the street scene. In Newton Abbot however, just five per cent of town centre commercial property is available to let, so don't be backwards in coming forward with that statistic the next time you hear someone moan that Newton Abbot isn't what it used to be!

A colleague who travelled widely across the UK this year even called me on his return to Newton Abbot to say just how good we were looking compared with almost everywhere he'd visited! That one call did me the power of good, because sitting mostly in a local bubble it's all too easy to lose sight of the big picture.

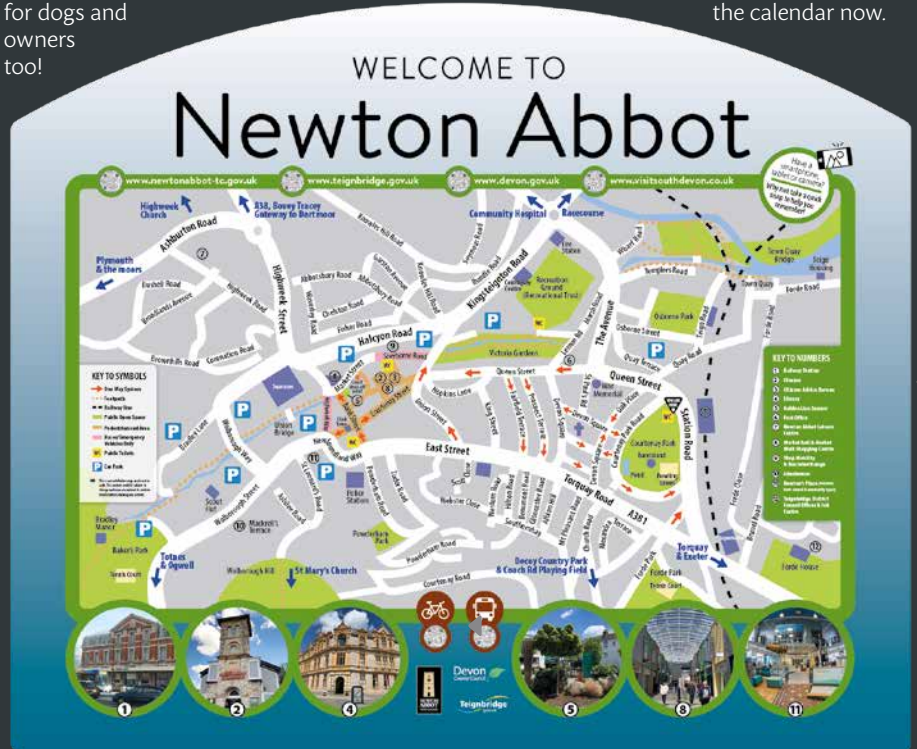
But another truth is that the gift of life remains in our hands so as we approach the festive tide, I urge everyone to keep the 'shop locally' thought in the forefront of your minds. Talking of which, how about

this for something a bit different this year: Canine Christmas Carols in Wolborough Street on Saturday December 11th!

One of the things I personally love about a trip through town is the chance to see so many well-behaved pooches and their owners. We thought that they might enjoy this family-friendly get together. Led by Revd. Gareth Regan at the top end of the town (near Carpetright) the event will be held in partnership with wonderful local charity Animals in Distress. Christmas jumpers are of course welcome for dogs and owners too!

Throughout December there will be festive music in the town centre, with the traditional Saturday performances from the Salvation Army Brass Band and Spectrum Music Band to get us all into the Christmas spirit! (Do check the town council website for regular updates on town centre events).

We're planning our traditional three late-night shopping events on the first three Wednesdays in December; that's the 1st, 8th, and 15th, so put the dates on the calendar now.



I'm delighted to say that Father Christmas will be visiting and has a permit to park his sleigh in front of the clock tower on all three evenings! Teignbridge District Council has just confirmed that there will be free parking from 4pm in all the pay and display car parks, so come on down a bit earlier and make the most of this bonus. Why not have a spot of supper in town?

Are you hosting visitors later this year?

Well, the great news is that we've updated the information boards in the town's car parks and the new map is also available in tear-off pads from Newton's Place (where's there's also a free online information point) and the library.

Don't forget that details of everything happening in Newton Abbot will be on the town council's website.

You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter, and we pop up regularly in the local press. The Mid Devon Advertiser is part of the local business scene as well and isn't it great that our local paper is coming back into the heart of the town? They are moving into the wonderful Invertere buildings next to Lloyds Bank!

That's about it from me for now; I'll leave you if I can, with just one more thought. Given some of the awful stories we've all heard about the abuse of retail staff this year, please, remember that our shop workers aren't responsible for empty shelves or the rules about keeping everyone safe.

They too, have been pandemic heroes and deserve to be treated with respect and shown courtesy and kindness. That's not too much to ask, is it?

I look forward to seeing you in town!



**Sally Henley**  
Town Development Manager

## Refreshing the parts that other councils cannot reach!

With Devon County Council opting to carry out less street maintenance in recent years, staff at Newton Abbot Town Council have stepped in to help bridge the gap.



Facilities maintenance officers Harry Rodgers and Tony Little regularly set aside part of their working week for tackling scruffy paths and graffiti. Equipped for the job with all the correct safety gear, they also have at their disposal a powerful steam cleaner that 'cooks' unwanted weeds into oblivion.

The eco-friendly chemicals used to generate cleansing foam are plant-based and safe for use even next to watercourses such as the River Teign at the historic Town Quay, which is one of the spots where Tony and Harry have been hard at work.

*'To be honest there aren't many town councils with kit like this – we're lucky to have it,'* said Tony. *'I moved from Bristol five years ago and absolutely love it here, Newton Abbot's such a nice town and everyone's so friendly, which is why it's great that we're able to help keep it clean and tidy.'*

Harry, a Newtonian born and bred, added: *'The public like it when they see us clearing the weeds and graffiti, no one wants to live somewhere that looks a bit scruffy. The Town Quay is such a popular place now and it's looking a lot better than it did a few years ago. I'm proud of my town and want to keep it that way.'*



Kelly Wagstaff is well known to Quay regulars as she works in the busy Love Food refreshment kiosk. *'It's such a lovely spot down here and when the town council comes and cleans up it looks absolutely beautiful; it makes such a difference to people spending time here,'* she said.

*'And since the town council made some improvements a few years ago people love it so much that we've even got volunteers now who pick up litter and generally look after the place. When I first started there'd be smashed glass and everything every morning, not now. We've a fantastic bunch of regulars and Town Quay is just a lovely place.'*



# Communication is the Key

SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES ARE LARGELY SELF-POLICING, SO LET'S TALK ABOUT BECOMING ACTIVELY INVOLVED

Mayor Cllr Mike Joyce serves as a Police Advocate with Devon and Cornwall Police. The voluntary role makes him a link between residents, the town council and constabulary. One of the aims is to get the public working in partnership with officers, thereby tackling crime and antisocial behaviour.

Mike has regular columns in the local press and here he talks through some of the initiatives that benefit from Newtonians – lifelong or more recently arrived – getting involved.



Mayor Cllr Mike Joyce in action with his new little friend, SID

## Speed Watch

I was made aware that there were some speed indicating devices, affectionately known as SIDs, languishing in Newton Abbot Police Station. I took it upon myself to bring these useful pieces of equipment back into service for the benefit of the town.

Operatives can stand with them at the roadside where speeding is thought to be an issue and record the details of passing vehicles if necessary.

Alternatively, SIDs can simply be used to show a driver their speed. Experience has shown that they generally keep more people within the limits.

The data acquired is very useful, not only if the next stage of tackling the matter is required, which is Speed Watch, but also for Devon and Cornwall Police when considering if enforcement is necessary.

Speed Watch is a new initiative within Newton Abbot, and we now have eight trained volunteers – we could always do with more of course.

Operatives are invited to register their interest and take an online training course and simple examination to show they have reached the standard necessary for on-site training with the

local group coordinator, namely me. This is carried out at approved sites in the town and with the support of existing operatives who have hands-on Speed Watch experience.

Once new members feel confident, I can sign them off as being fully trained, which means they can work alongside other operatives without me being present. All equipment, including hi-vis jackets and ID badges, is included.

Speed Watch sessions only take place during daylight hours and at designated sites inspected by the police. These are drawn up using information received by councillors and residents as potential areas of concern.

If you'd like to know more then please do get in touch and I'll go through all the details.

# Police Advocate

The role of Police Advocate has become an important part of the communications channel between your town councillors and the police.

I meet with local officers every two weeks (virtually, during the pandemic) to receive data about current criminal activity. This provides a comparison with previous statistics and reveals developing trends.

It should be noted that the data is acquired through reports logged with the 101 phone service and the online

and chat facilities available on the Devon and Cornwall Police website [www.devon-cornwall.police.uk](http://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk).

It is therefore, absolutely imperative that all concerns about suspected criminal activity or antisocial behaviour are reported as not only does the information enable officers to detect trends but it also provides the data which determines the amount of resources made available to them.



**Advocates have the opportunity to place before officers any concerns raised by residents and businesses. Matters discussed recently include:**

- 1 Graffiti**  
An ongoing frustration for many in the town but by building a picture of dates, times and tags the police can act accordingly.
- 2 Antisocial behaviour**  
By highlighting areas of concern resources can be directed where needed.
- 3 Speeding**  
Officers are made aware and if *Speed Watch* has already been tried then enforcement can follow.
- 4 Vandalism**  
This may in some instances be minor but can cause tremendous stress and frustration.
- 5 Litter, dog fouling & public order offences**  
These are matters brought to councillors' attention but not necessarily reported through the 101 system.
- 6 Begging**  
Officers can be made aware if the behaviour of those involved is thought to constitute a nuisance.
- 7 Intelligence**  
Some information is acquired by advocates on an informal basis and may be of interest to the local force.
- 8 Communication**  
This is a topic that enables police advocates and officers to ensure that lines of communication are operating correctly.
- 9 Personnel**  
Officers can advise advocates about changes in personnel to ensure communication is kept alive.

## Stronger Together

This is just a snapshot of what has gone on since I joined the council in 2016 but I hope it gives a flavour of what goes on behind the scenes.

Developing the relationship between community and the police is an aspect of the town council's work I am very keen to foster, thereby helping to ensure that residents, businesses and visitors can continue to enjoy a safe place in which to work, rest and play.

If you love our town as much as I do, then please feel free to get in touch about any issues of concern. We're so much stronger when we work together.

Call Mike on 01626 337770 or e-mail [mike.joyce@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk](mailto:mike.joyce@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk)



# Action on Climate in Teignbridge

ACTION ON CLIMATE (ACT) MEMBER **FRAN HAMILTON** EXPLAINS WHY TREES ARE NOT JUST FOR CHRISTMAS...

**New neighbours move in and immediately cut down a magnificent silver birch and create a drive with non-porous material. I am mad! I love trees.**

What's all the fuss about? Let's start at the bottom, below the surface of the soil. Maybe you have noticed white threads on old rotting wood. These are called mycorrhizal fungi and absorb nutrients and minerals in the soil and transport them from one plant or tree to another, often over huge areas. In this way, they extend the roots of any plant. Nearly all plants (including vegetables) are dependent on mycorrhizal fungi for their thriving and survival. You can read about the astonishing abilities of underground fungal networks in Merlin Sheldrake's book *Entangled Life*.

Still at ground level, trees absorb water and hold it, thus regulating the flow that any heavy rain brings. Once a tree has been removed, soil erosion can result from the removal of the many roots that anchored it in the soil. Above the ground, the water the trees have absorbed is drawn up and eventually expelled via the branches and leaves. This cools the air, which brings increasing benefits as extreme weather becomes the norm due to climate change. One large oak tree is capable of transpiring 40,000 gallons of water into the atmosphere each year. Strategically planted deciduous trees can cool a building in the hotter months, and then allow the warming sun into our homes during the winter months. Trees can also protect buildings from the wind.

Another key benefit of trees is the reduction in pollutants as a result of the leaves absorbing particles. Researchers from the US Forest Service have calculated that trees in the US remove over 17 million tonnes of air pollution each year, saving at least 850 lives that would otherwise be lost through acute respiratory illness. No doubt the UK will also have a high figure.

Trees are also a vital habitat for wildlife. Tree cavities provide nest and roost sites for birds and bats. We quietly acknowledge the lack of tree cavities in our landscape every time we put up a nest or bat box. The research, however, is starting to suggest that these boxes are not adequate replacements for natural hollows and cavities. Trees have more stable microclimates than boxes, buffering against temperature fluctuations. Even a dead tree is valuable for wildlife. Springtails, mites, beetles, flies and parasitoid wasps are particularly likely to use dead trees, but it's not unusual to find the humble earthworm living metres-high in a tree cavity.

So besides not cutting down a perfectly healthy tree what can we do? Tree cover in Devon is only 11.8% - slightly less than the national average. Surprisingly, Camden and Croydon feature among the top 20 places in England and Wales with the most tree cover, while largely rural areas like the Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales have the least.

But before rushing out to plant a tree it is worth doing some research on which tree to plant. You need the right tree in the right place. Getting it wrong can do more harm than good. The Woodland Trust has lots of information on its website, including an A-Z of British trees and a tree ID app, plus tips on how to choose a tree and where to plant it.

Planting trees is often promoted as a way of offsetting our carbon emissions, but such schemes can be little more than greenwash. In many cases the trees would have been planted anyway. Reducing emissions in the first place is always the better option. So be alert to the sound of the chainsaw; trees are really precious and need all the help we can give them – for all our sakes.



# Let's Keep Everyone Moving!

**Nigel Canham**, Chair of Newton Abbot Community Transport Association, reports on the importance of being mobile

It's fantastic to see our town getting back on its feet after the battering we've all faced this year and last. The great news is that Newton Abbot Community Transport Association (NACTA) is still here and happily helping the district's most vulnerable and isolated to get out and about.

If you think a few months in lockdown was tough, try living permanently without any means of leaving the home and no hope of getting around town on your own two feet, even if you do somehow make it in.

As a charity now entering its fourth decade, we supply affordable mobility scooters, wheelchairs, and walkers for use in town; we have a fleet of wheelchair-friendly minibuses that travel across south Devon offering social trips, plus a ring and ride service, and we have voluntary drivers who use their own cars for journeys such as hospital appointments.

We even now operate some bus services that the commercial companies said weren't financially viable, thereby maintaining links between several rural communities and Newton Abbot.

The benefits we provide aren't just social, we play a significant role in maintaining the health of the local economy. When we bring people into town they spend cash in the high street, not online.

We're available at the end of a phone – call 01626 335775 – or you can email [manager@newtonabbotcta.org](mailto:manager@newtonabbotcta.org)

Our base is tucked away under the multi-storey car park, right in the town centre, and we're open from 9am until 4.30pm Monday to Friday and 9.30am until 1.30pm Saturday.

Planning to attend the late-night shopping or other events in Newton Abbot this Christmas? We'd be delighted to help - all we ask is that you book in advance.

As chair of the organisation, I must take this opportunity to thank each and every person who has helped us through this very challenging period. The hard work and dedication of staff, volunteers and any other number of supporters has been truly incredible.

It's my belief that without NACTA life in Newton Abbot and the surrounding communities would be much the poorer. Equally, without the support those communities give us, we'd simply not be able to carry on.

Thank you.

*Nigel*

[www.newtonabbotcta.org](http://www.newtonabbotcta.org)

Newton Abbot  
Community Transport



NEWTONCRAYER | Autumn/Winter 2021



## It's Snow Time!

As the colder months draw nearer, Newton Abbot Snow Warden Cllr David Howe reminds us of how we can keep our roads and pavements safe for everyone:

Watching the likes of *White Christmas* on the telly from the comfort of your armchair is a lovely experience but, in reality, we do not wish for the winter weather to upset our normal daily routine.

A few years ago, the freezing temperatures that Devon experienced prompted succession planning for future years of potential adverse weather conditions. So, despite the mild winter last year, we should all be prepared for adverse winter weather conditions and be aware of the location of your local highway grit/salt bins, the purpose of which is to maintain emergency access for the roads. These bins have been strategically placed to discourage people from stealing a stash to keep in their garages for personal use. Please check the contents of the bins and inform the town council if they require replenishment.

Most importantly, please do not waste it – ONE level tablespoon of grit/salt is more than enough to melt snow covering one square metre of road surface. Just a cup full will tackle a three to four metre length of carriageway. Remember that a thaw will take all that melted ice AND grit/salt 'down the drain' and means you may have to re-treat the road surface afterwards. So, ensure your stock of grit is in place before the cold weather arrives. It would also be prudent to keep a small supply for use within your immediate vicinity.

Interested  
in becoming a  
Snow Warden?  
Contact the town council  
via 01626 201120 or  
[info@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk)



# A warm hello from Teign u3a!

Following the end of the Lockdown rules, Teign u3a want to encourage our members living in and around Newton Abbot to enjoy the return of the activities. We are also looking for new members who will come and join us. Anyone over the age of 55, who is not in full-time employment, and who would be interested in pursuing an active and positive retirement, is very welcome.



The u3a offers an informal self-help style of learning and socialising, to people on their own, as well as to couples. Anyone, from all walks of life, whatever their background, can benefit from participating in the activities offered by our members. As we re-connect, we have confirmation that at least 25 of our interest groups have started up, (from September). In fact, our walking groups have already been out and about in the Devon countryside with a spot of lunch, too. Our regular coffee mornings are happening again at various locations with around twenty members present. Believe me, there's so much shared and discovered over a cup of coffee and an informal natter!

Almost all of our activities take place during the day and on weekdays. We meet regularly at the Courtenay Centre in Newton Abbot, for interest groups, committee meetings, and monthly get-togethers where we listen to a guest speaker. We try to arrange venues that are situated near a bus stop to enable members who do not have a car to attend. We also share information, ideas, and suggestions via our monthly email newsletter, or by post, for members without online access.

During Lockdown, when meeting face to face was impossible, we used the medium of Zoom to visit the Arctic, look at beauty spots of the Southwest, hear about the plight of the wolves in Yellowstone Park, Medical Detection Dogs, a history of Gilbert and Sullivan, and how we can help keep Newton Abbot plastic-free.

Going forward, and with your safety in mind, you can enjoy meeting up face to face. We offer card games, a book club, music appreciation, practice at speaking European languages, painting, photography, craft skills, table tennis and for those with an interest in History, we have three groups, who like our Questers group, visit places of interest in the area.

Members pay a yearly amount of £25, which includes free access to any interest group or groups, and free tea or coffee and biscuits at our monthly meetings. Also, a free copy of the magazine: Third Age Matters, delivered five times per year. The relatively low cost of membership makes Teign u3a accessible to people of all income levels.

If you would like to find out more about joining, please phone 07342 794 793 or email [membership@teignu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@teignu3a.org.uk) or visit [www.teignu3a.org.uk](http://www.teignu3a.org.uk)

# u3a

