



Newbald Parish Council

Annual Report – June 2020

Chairman's Overview of Council Achievements

Councillor Changes

NPC welcomed new Member Diana Stewart and welcomed back Cllr. Edward Openshaw.

It is with sadness that NPC said goodbye to Cllr. Becky Clarke who had to leave for personal reasons. We would like to thank her for her valuable contribution to the Parish Council.

Finance

In line with ERNLLCA and other financial recommendations, over the past year NPC has continued to maintain a healthy financial asset base, which, with the input of the Sober Hill Wind Farm donations puts us in a strong financial position for the future.

The Newsletter, Website and Social Media.

With her usual efficiency our Parish Clerk, Suzanne Smith has regularly produced the wonderfully informative newsletter which I believe is the main way we can access our Parishioners on a personal basis. NPC also continued to support and promote village events via its website, social media and email, providing information about anything we feel will be of interest to residents.

The Parish Council has committed to commissioning a new website. This follows new regulations coming in which require all public sector bodies to meet strict 'web accessibility' standards by September 2020. This will mean that our website is totally accessible to people with disabilities. The changeover to the new website should take place later in the summer.

Community Renewable Energy Scheme

After a year of research and discussions, NPC submitted an application for a grant to commence a community renewable energy scheme in the village. The aim of the scheme is to not only make the village more environmentally friendly and self-sufficient, but also to reduce energy costs for residents and even provide the village with an income. At this stage NPC has not firmly committed to the project; the grant application is for a feasibility study, which would involve public consultation, should NPC think it is a worthwhile project to pursue.

High Speed Broadband

Following endless setbacks, NPC has campaigned hard for the rollout of superfast broadband to include the roads currently excluded by both KCOM and BT. As a result of NPC's campaign, KCOM has committed to including some of the previously excluded roads in its rollout. These are scheduled to be supplied by the end of 2020. Unfortunately, there are some postcodes which continue to be excluded due to the high cost of connecting them. There are about 13 properties in these postcodes. NPC is researching whether it would be possible to set up a Community Fibre Partnership with BT

Openreach, where the costs of connection are met by the supplier, the community and various grant sources. The Parish Council is already in discussions with Openreach after submitting an application.

The Cemetery

As well as the regular grass cutting, NPC arranged for the cemetery gates to be restored. The gates date back to the Victorian era and now once again make for an impressive entrance.

NPC has started looking at the possibility of extending the cemetery to ensure that it will continue to serve the village for years to come. Whether this goes ahead does depend partly on the Community Renewable Energy Scheme which may use part of the same field.

More recently a tree had to be removed as an emergency measure when it partially collapsed.

NPC decided that it would provide opportunity for residents to display memorial plaques in the historic building at the back of the cemetery. They also have the option to scatter ashes in the cemetery, providing they inform the Parish Council beforehand. No one has taken this offer up yet.

The Church

Apart from the regular grass cutting and general maintenance of paths and fencing throughout the Churchyard, we have closely monitored the trees & shrubs.

NPC arranged for the repair and upgrading of the paved area directly outside the Church following health & safety concerns.

In addition, it organised a survey of all the trees by a professional arboriculturist, which resulted in extensive tree work being carried out.

More recently a tree had to be removed as an emergency measure when it split.

Unfortunately a very large old beech tree will also need to be removed to protect the fabric of the church, which has been deteriorating due to a lack of sunlight reaching it. NPC has sought and obtained the necessary permissions from ERYC and the York Diocese, but is now waiting for the birds to finish nesting and coronavirus restrictions to be eased.

NPC campaigned hard for a brown sign to signpost our Norman Church from the A1034. Unfortunately ERYC refused our request.

Health & Safety, Risk Assessments and Emergency Planning

Health & Safety together with Risk Assessments form a major part of our duties in respect of all NPC owned or controlled areas, and I would confirm that these have been undertaken thoroughly and efficiently on all occasions where they have been a legal requirement by Councillor Ed Openshaw.

NPC has been instrumental in liaising with ERYC and Yorkshire Water about various sewage leaks around the village which have been a cause for concern. Action has been taken to address the worst of these. However, NPC continues to be concerned that the sewage system in Newbald is overloaded and will campaign for work to be undertaken to sort this out, while encouraging the planning authorities not to allow too many new developments in the village.

Flooding has also been a concern that has been discussed at length with representatives from Yorkshire Water and ERYC.

Cllr. O'Sullivan worked hard to update the village's Community Emergency Plan and this has been re-published.

Sober Hill Wind Farm

Donations from the Sober Hill Wind Farm have made a big impact on the village as a whole, and on NPC in particular, whose duty it is to administrate and distribute the funds within the legal parameters. These funds which total £24,600.00/year (index linked) have been fairly and justly allocated, awarding the following amounts totalling £17,858.02 this past financial year:

1	Newbald Football Club	New team kit	£898.42
2	Newbald Village Hall	Additional chairs for Community Room	£864.00
3	Newbald Young People's Project	Roof repairs	£8,235.60
4	Newbald Playing Field Association	Drainage/Industrial mower	£3,750.00
5	Newbald Parish Council	Tree work in Newbald Churchyard (agreed under the 10% of unused funds rule)	£4,110.00

The fund was re-opened for applications in early 2020 and, although applications were received, considering these had to be suspended due to the Coronavirus emergency.

Grants

NPC also paid out the following grants:

1	Village Hall	Grant for Phase 2	£5,779.00
2	Newbald Playing Field Association	Grass cutting - playground	£450.00

Sancton Hill Wind Farm

NPC is represented on the Board of the Sancton Hill Wind Farm, and though the applications were often not well received, we are pleased to report that all of our village charities received either their full or a major percentage of their funding requests.

Traffic and Parking

NPC has continued to liaise with ERYC to try and persuade them to take action to help with the many parking and traffic issues in the village. Unfortunately, in these cash strapped times, there will be no help forthcoming unless there is a serious accident. Newbald continues to be considered low risk by ERYC.

NPC looked at the cost of paying for traffic calming measures itself. However, at £40,000 for just one chicane, plus more for the necessary signage, this has thus far not been a feasible option.

When necessary, NPC continues to write to the companies, whose lorry drivers regularly take shortcuts through our village in the hope of persuading them to use a different route. It is also trying to persuade ERYC to put "Not Suitable for HGVs" signs at the top of High Hunsley Road. ERYC said that it may do this out of its 2020-21 budget.

Thanks to Councillor John Howard, NPC is now registered with the Community Speedwatch programme. This should get underway once Coronavirus restrictions have been eased.

The Mires & The Becksies

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT) have been employed to maintain the Eco-environment and general maintenance of both The Mires & the Becksies, both of which I believe have been undertaken to a high standard.

YWT is currently undertaking some great developmental work to improve the Becksies environment and increase the number of species available. This has been part funded by the Sober Hill Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund. YWT has done really well at engaging with the School and members of the public by holding educational and practical events.

Defibrillators and Emergency First Responders

Both the village's defibrillators continue to be in good working order, ready to serve and save lives when required. One is in the phone box on the Green; the other is in Monckton Court, South Newbald. Last year NPC arranged for some training in how to use a defibrillator, which was well attended.

Following an appeal in the newsletter, NPC was pleased when village resident Michelle Clark volunteered to become an Emergency First Responder and passed the required training and test. She now volunteers for the Yorkshire Ambulance Service serving the village and the surrounding area.

Parish Transport

With the help of the not-for-profit organisation Beverley Community Lift and our Parish Transport Champion, Cllr. John Howard, NPC established a weekly community bus service which ran between Hotham, Newbald, Sancton and Market Weighton. This service was aimed at helping the elderly and vulnerable access transport, with the aim of ensuring that they feel less socially isolated. Unfortunately, despite our best efforts to publicise the service, the uptake was very poor and the service had to be withdrawn.

Christmas Tree and Lights

Once again NPC provided a magnificent Christmas tree with wonderful bright lights, which, with the guidance of Terry Bowater and his big red button, served as a fund raising event for NPFA via a raffle to switch the lights on.

Planning Permissions

We have naturally been involved in the approval or otherwise of planning applications, and whilst I believe we have always made our decision in the best interest of the Village, there is always the odd one which gets overruled by the Planners at ERYC who totally disregarded some of our opinions without any in depth discussion

The Village Hall

During the year NPC has been in close contact with the Newbald Village Hall MC primarily via our representatives, Cllr. Sarah Milner, Cllr. Ed Openshaw and Cllr. Geoff Lewis, who have worked closely as part of the vibrant and conscientious Village Hall Committee to upgrade and extend the existing facilities for the benefit of the community as a whole.

Phase 2 was completed late last summer and makes for an incredibly impressive space, with a fantastic new community room. Phase 3 will be to re-clad the main hall exterior (walls and roof) and create space for a dedicated bar. The Village Hall Management Committee is currently in the process working with architects to achieve this.

Newbald Playing Field Association (NPFA)

NPFA continues to be a strong charity, working hard to preserve and enhance the playing field and playground, which are both important village resources. We look forward to the gala in June and intend to have a stand there so that we can engage with the community.

Environmental Projects

Last summer, NPC applied for a grant to install 2 large environmentally friendly planters at Co-op Corner (Galegate/Eastgate corner). We also applied for the cost of bee friendly plants to go in them. NPC then teamed up with Newbald School to create a 'Bee Paradise'. Eight pupils from the school worked with Cllr. Beccy O'Sullivan to plant out the planters and it was agreed that the children would monitor how many bees they could observe there at intervals going forward. As the Parish Council also provided an environmentally friendly bench at the corner, this area is now a nice new place for residents to sit. In the future, the Parish Council intends to apply for more grants to expand the number of planters/plants there.

NPC also successfully applied for a grant to plant four new native common Alders on The Mires. These have been well received.

Neighbourhood Watch and No Cold Calling Zone

NPC continues to run a village wide Neighbourhood Watch scheme, using all its usual community engagement channels to keep residents informed of any important matters relating to crime in the area.

NPC would like to expand its Cold Calling Zone further across village once ERYC re-open the scheme. Currently it only covers Galegate.

The Beck and Water Voles (Protected Species)

Happily, the water voles continue to thrive in the Becksies and in the beck on Eastgate and The Mires.

Some maintenance issues have been raised in relation to the beck but there is an ongoing dispute as to whose responsibility it is, be it the residents that live next to it or ERYC. Doubtless we will continue to be a go-between for both parties and will do our best to reach a conclusion.

General Maintenance

This is an ongoing part of the Council's remit and therefore throughout the year we have regularly overseen and maintained The Beck and The Mires, the many benches, the notice board, and the Centenary Bench.

Unfortunately there are always some items which fail to get resolved to the satisfaction of all, even though we as a council have tried our best.

Dog Fouling

Like many other Parish Councils the problem of Dog Fouling is constantly being raised on our agenda, and we as a council are dedicated to try and resolve this matter as a priority, but we can only be successful if those offending get a conscience. We would confirm that NPC has adopted an ongoing fund for the provision of poo bags and maintenance of the dispensers, in the hope that it will go some way to resolving the problem.

Two years ago, the Parish Council held a poster competition for children at Newbald Primary School. We offered a cash prize for the best anti-dog fouling poster and smaller prizes for all entries. The best posters from each class were displayed in prominent positions around the village. The children were very engaged in the process and we had some great entries. The Pocklington Post was impressed with the idea and covered the story in their publication. The Parish Council had just initiated the same competition again this year when the Coronavirus shut the school down. This is something we will come back to.

Coronavirus Emergency


At the time of publishing, the last Parish Council meeting was held on Monday March 23rd, which was an emergency meeting held in the car park of the Village Hall to introduce measures to allow work to continue without any physical meetings. We hope to be able to resume meetings as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, the Parish Council has played a very active role in getting the village's Coronavirus volunteer programme up and running.

VE Day 75th Anniversary

It is very sad that the anticipated community celebrations could not take place to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of VE Day. However NPC is delighted that Newbald did not let the lockdown curb its enthusiasm and held a 'Stay at Home Street party', something which NPC, together with some amazing volunteers, was instrumental in organising.

In conclusion I believe that we as a Parish Council have acted responsibly and pro-actively to resolve all manner of issues effectively within the legal and financial constraints under which we are bound for the good and wellbeing of our village.



Gavin Steward
Chairman
Newbald Parish Council

WWW.NEWBALD.COM



Parish Council Meeting Dates

ALL MEETINGS CANCELLED AT TIME OF PUBLISHING DUE TO CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS.

Meetings are preceded by an Open Forum at 7.30pm at which parishioners are welcome to come along and talk about any local issue. Agendas are published on www.newbald.com.

<u>OFFICE CONTACT</u>		NPC COUNCILLORS	
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Newbald Parish Council Current Year

Summary Receipts and Payments for Year Ended 31st March 2020

Last Year Ended 31st March 2019		Current Year Ended 31st March 2020
	Operating Income	
42,814.71	Income	54,042.91
21,373.22	Sober Hill Wind Farm	25,041.83
2,187.42	VAT Data	1,995.85
<u>66,375.35</u>	Total Receipts	<u>81,080.59</u>
	Running Costs	
31,348.19	Sober Hill Wind Farm	19,680.02
29,635.91	Administration	32,595.53
3,923.04	Council Activity	4,161.39
3,112.23	Cemetery	4,737.28
2,173.19	Churchyard	5,209.28
1,995.85	VAT Data	3,008.39
<u>72,188.41</u>	Total Payments	<u>69,391.89</u>
	Receipts and Payments Summary	
46,894.63	Opening Balance	41,081.57
66,375.35	Add Total Receipts(As Above)	81,080.59
113,269.98		122,162.16
72,188.41	Less Total Payments(As Above)	69,391.89
<u>41,081.57</u>	Closing Balance	<u>52,770.27</u>
	These cumulative funds are represented by:	
25,736.23	NPC Unity Current Bank A/c	36,472.90
0.00	NPC HSBC Current A/c	0.00
0.00	NPC HSBC Deposit A/c	0.00
12,771.58	Wind Farm Current A/c	481.34
2,442.35	Wind Farm Deposit A/c	15,682.53
131.41	Pockit Card	133.50
<u>41,081.57</u>		<u>52,770.27</u>
	Reserve Balances are represented by:	
-5,813.06	Current Year Fund	11,688.70
36,092.57	General Reserves	24,917.71
10,802.06	EM Reserve - Wind Farm	16,163.86