

NEWTON & NOSS PARISH COUNCIL

THE CHAIRMANS ANNUAL REPORT 2011

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen it is nice to see so many of you here, I am not sure if it is support for your Parish Council or if it is a wish to throw rotten vegetables at us.

First of all may I give you some good news, in May many of you will be aware there is an election for a new Parish Council. So if you do not think we are doing a good job I urge you to stand for election [The election is good fun.]

I have been lucky to lead a very strong and multi talented Council, thank you all.

However I have been aware that the current Council is not as representative as it could be, with most of the Councillors coming from Newton Ferrers. Noss is under represented after the resignation of Jeremy Brown. although Cllr. Peter Stitson has been keeping the flag flying for Noss. But Collaton and Membland are not represented at all. So please urge your friends and neighbours from underrepresented areas to stand in the forthcoming election.

The Localism bill will give more powers to the Parish Council. This has started, we are at present in negotiations with SHDC over the transfer of three parcels of land to N&NPC.

I am sure that the importance of the PC's will increase at the demise of more centralized administrative bodies.

The village housing initiative presses on slowly as yet we have not had a proper planning application, but just proposals of which we are not happy. Your District Councillor Suzie Cooper has been working tirelessly on this project.

David Cameron's major policy at the 2010 General election was the BIG SOCIETY. I quote "Civil Servants are working away furiously on David Cameron's big idea even if some still do not know what it means"

I think it means more power to communities, to encourage people to take an active role in their communities, with transfer of power from central to local government. To support charities and social enterprises and to have a more open transparent government

To this end we have been talking to SHDC [as I mentioned earlier], about the transfer of assets from SDDC to your Council, these talks include, the playing field and play park at Butts Park. The Green at Newton. Gypsy meadow, the car park, the tennis court the grass area next to the tennis court and the play park at Noss. If we do nothing these areas will be let go without maintenance and maybe later sold off for development. However nothing comes without a price, this year we have set a budget that keeps your council Tax the same as last year, but next year there will need to be an increase to pay for these services I did hint at this in my report last year. How do you all feel about this? Do we have a mandate to take on these assets? Please let me know at question time. Item 8 Sec.ii.

Your Council has been ashamed at the way Noss play park has been neglected by SHDC. Over the past year we have been very grateful to Cllr. Geo Buckland who has been planning and supervising a drainage scheme for the play park and Cllr. Sue Hinchcliffe has been raising grants and with the help of a play space architect have been designing a new and exciting play park. A very big thank you to you both.

The Cottaton-Butts Park link path is almost complete except for the section outside No1 Butts Park. Cllr Alan Cooper and Cllr Tom Taylor have been working hard on this project and have been driven Mad by the inability of the lawyers from DCC and Torr Homes to transfer the land to our ownership. This has been held up now since May 2010.

The Parish Council has a duty to provide allotments to those residents wishing to have them, we have started to look for sites. This project is being led by Cllr Suzie Cooper and our new Councillor since November Cllr. Peter Gough. [Welcome Peter remember to duck quickly when the vegetables start being thrown].

As usual Cllr Tom Taylor has been very active with the foot path inspection, and is now engaged in THE DEFINITIVE NATIONAL FOOTPATH REVIEW. Thank you Tom.

These are a few of the items that we have worked on over the past year. But I could have spoken about Planning [which takes up a lot of our time at each meeting]. The Budget, The Bus Stop at Butts Park. Parking and lack of enforcement. The lack of progress over the rebuild of The Co-op. Xmas Decor. The School. Noss Hard. The Village Design Statement. Listed Buildings. Conservation Areas. The list is endless.

As Chairman for the past three years I personally have done very little but tried to keep everything moving along like the conductor of an orchestra, waving my arms about and trying to keep the peace.

I shall be standing down from the Parish Council at the May election after 20 years as a Parish Councilor, 12 years at Ermington and 8 years at Newton and Noss two very different parishes.

So the very good news is that you will not have to sit through another of my reports.

JOHN YOUNG