



Newhaven Town Council Annual Report 2011-12



Introduction by Town Mayor

Councillor Steve Saunders



Being chosen to serve as the 28th Mayor of Newhaven was an enormous honour for me. Being Newhaven born and bred and tracing back at least 5 generations of my family for well over 100 years, I truly have the Town in my soul and looked forward from the start, to promoting what we do and the wealth of opportunity that exists here.



Even I however, did not realise just how many community groups we have in Newhaven that provide support for local people. They do their selfless best to ensure that people of all ages and abilities, enjoy life and have access to as many facilities and opportunities as possible.

I was fortunate to have been invited to many events throughout the year. I have met some fantastic people that inspire others to achieve, without asking for as much as a thank you for their efforts. I have been humbled by the commitment of these volunteers. The time and effort they give, means that others can have some moments of joy, know that someone cares and that they are not forgotten.

At the beginning of my year, I asked for groups to come forward that I could support. I was looking specifically for those that didn't get any support from other sources, who gave their time so that their members did not miss out on opportunities and access to events. Also, that the work of such groups would be able to reach more areas of the local community with the help that I could give.



I finally chose three groups that I felt fulfilled the criteria:

Coastwatch are a group of volunteers that man many of the old coastguard stations along our coast and restore the visual watch over the inshore waters. With our town's long history as a working port and an important fishing fleet, Coastwatch is a welcome charity

for the fishermen and boat users of Newhaven that compliment the work done by the lifeboat volunteers of the RNLI.

VISTA is one of those groups that I had no idea existed. I was fascinated by the work they do to support the blind and partially sighted members of our local community. They put on events, outings and help them with their day-to day problems. My late grandfather suffered from sight problems after retirement, which meant his enjoyment of his later years suffered as a result. I only wish that such support had been available for him.

Newhaven Football Club (Youth Section) offers boys and girls the opportunity to play football beyond the environment of school sports. Giving young people the chance to engage in physical activities outside school, as well as the camaraderie of team sports and making new friends, which is vital for so many. Without such local volunteer organisations, like the Tennis, Sailing, Boxing, Martial Arts, Hockey and Cricket Clubs, to name but a few, so many children and young people would not be able to take part and the talent that many of them possess would not become realised and recognised.

Through the immense hard work and support of my partner and Mayoress Sharon, I have been able to put on some great fundraising events throughout the year. I will be presenting cheques to all three of my chosen charities for £1000, which I very much hope will enable them to continue their outstanding work in this wonderful community of ours.

The year has seen many changes and momentous events for Newhaven. I had the pleasure of presenting our retiring Town Clerk Ian Everest, with the Freedom of the Town in recognition of his years of unerring service to Newhaven and then welcoming his replacement Stephen Meah-Sims to the Council.

We have had the ups and downs of the West Beach saga, which looks set to continue, together with the new Library Development, the Rampion Offshore Wind Farm and of course, the Eastside Development Planning Applications. It has been an exciting time to be involved in local politics and the opportunities to shape the future of the Town have never been so promising. The fortunes of our community look to have finally turned a corner and I am pleased to have been a small part of making this happen. You can be assured that I will continue to be involved along with my fellow councillors, to ensure that we get the best result possible for our long-overdue regeneration and prosperity.



Some equally momentous community events took place in Newhaven this year and I was pleased to have been involved in them too.

Not frightened of standing up and looking silly in front of the crowds (as is often a pre-requisite to becoming Mayor), I was encouraged by my predecessor to dress up and lead the annual Children's Parade to the Fish Festival and duly obliged as Sponge Bob Square Pants. This costume has become rather synonymous with me, having worn it to all the schools in the Town recently, to thank them for supporting my charities in their 'Non-School Uniform Day'. This was an idea put forward by our fabulous new and enthusiastic Young Mayor, Charlotte Crookston.



She took over from Adam Wiggins last year and is continuing the great work the office provides, as a voice for young people in the Town. It shows that we have a wealth of vibrant and talented youngsters that will secure the future of our town for years to come.

The 'Newhaven Cormorant', supported by Zap Arts and the Arts Council, saw over 3000 people come to Newhaven to witness a spectacle of colour, music and light, the like of which had never been seen before. It brought together community groups from all corners of the Town, from fishermen and drama groups to bands, choirs and schools. It gave us an insight into the possibilities there are for the myriad of organisations and groups within the Town to work together in a cohesive way to promote Newhaven on a wider stage.



The remembrance events in November and earlier in the year for the Dieppe Raid are always well supported by a grateful and respectful community. I am always deeply moved by these occasions and attending as Mayor with the honour of laying wreaths on behalf of Newhaven, will always stay with me.



Newhaven Town Council and The British Legion always welcome the support of the military cadets and they remain a credit to their units and to the Town as a whole. I must extend my personal thanks to them for the support that they and the Sea Cadets in particular have given me throughout my year in office. This was shown much in evidence, whilst waiting at tables at my Charity Bash in February, where friends, family and civic guests were invited to help me



celebrate my 50th Birthday in style and raise money for my charities. The High Sheriff Kathy Gore, Chairs of ESCC and LDC, Mayor of Seaford and deputy Mayor of Peacehaven, along with representatives of my charities and the Town's 'Maestro Players', made the evening a great success.

During the year I have had the amazing honour of visiting La Chapelle Saint Mesmin in the Loire Valley in July and January. In November I welcomed their Mayor Nicholas Bonneau and a delegation from La Chapelle to Newhaven. The signing of a charter to twin our two towns was an historic event. It opens up many opportunities for the residents of our two communities to enjoy a cultural exchange, along with chances for our community groups to share experiences and schools to profit from an exchange of ideas, language and information. I hope that everyone involved continues to support and encourage this union between La Chapelle and Newhaven and the seeds sown by our joint Charter, flourish and grow for the benefit of us all.



I've been lucky enough to be asked to: open fêtes, fairs, fishing stages and businesses; present awards, certificates and medals; attend dinners, drama performances, exhibitions and civic receptions; and meet with investors and developers. None of this would have been possible without the community spirit of the people of Newhaven, which has supported me throughout my year. I would like to thank them for making it so memorable for me, together with the

support of the officers at the Council and my fellow Councillors that gave me the opportunity to serve as Mayor for Newhaven.



I'd like to give special thanks to my Deputy Mayor, Councillor Graham Amy and his wife Marlene and to Ruth, Jacky, Ian and latterly Stephen in the office, for supporting Sharon and I throughout the year.

My final thanks go to Sharon and my family for their patience and support, without which, I could never have even considered the office of Mayor, let alone having enjoyed it so much.



Cllr Steve Saunders
Mayor of Newhaven 2011-2012

Report from the Leader of the Council

Councillor Judith Ost

The past year has been one of change for Newhaven Town Council, starting with the town council elections in May 2011 which saw 9 new councillors elected. The political make-up of the council remained Liberal Democrat – all 18 town councillors are now Lib Dem. In September a further big change took place when Ian Everest, who had been our town clerk since 2001, retired. Ian was presented with the Freedom of the Town in recognition of his service to the town and to the town council at a lovely reception at the Newhaven Enterprise Centre. At the same time the town council welcomed new Town Clerk, Stephen Meah-Sims.



The BIG Planning Event

Big changes are potentially afoot in the town and indeed the country too. Three major planning applications based around new supermarkets (now reduced to two following the withdrawal of Cross Stone) have been received over the past year which it is hoped will kick start the regeneration of the east side of the town. At the same time the Government has introduced wide ranging changes to the planning system as part of its localism agenda which is intended to give local communities a greater say in how their area is developed. Newhaven Town Council is keen to engage with these opportunities on behalf of local

residents and as a first step held a major public consultation event on 14th March “The BIG Planning Event” at the Hillcrest Community Centre. This was an opportunity for local people to see the plans being put forward and to give their opinions on what they thought was really needed in Newhaven. As well as the event itself, we produced a questionnaire asking people for their views and had it delivered to every household in Newhaven. We had a huge response – 1,300 people attended the event and approximately 1,000 people responded to the survey either on the day or by returning their questionnaire to the town council offices. These responses have now been analysed, collated and put together to produce “The People’s Report”, which will be used by the Town Council to shape neighbourhood planning for the town and also the future priorities of the Town Council in a more general way. A copy of the report has also been sent to Lewes District Council so that they can take on board local people’s views when making their decision about the supermarket planning applications in May.

In addition to this, the Town Council has worked hard this year to ensure that it responds to various consultations on behalf of the people of the town. These consultations have included the Lewes District Local Development Framework Core Strategy, the Brighton and East Sussex Waste and Minerals Plan, the Boundary Commission consultation on new

parliamentary boundaries and the Defra consultation on village green legislation. We have also taken up issues which are of concern to local people such as the proposed fisheries reforms and the closure of the NatWest Bank in the town centre.

The fight to re-open the sandy West Beach reached the High Court this year following the decision by Newhaven Port and Properties to challenge the decision made by East Sussex County Council to register the beach as a village green. This resulted in a Judicial Review of the decision being held over four days at the Royal Courts of Justice in The Strand, London during November. The arguments centred around a number of complicated legal arguments which were very thoroughly debated by QCs representing Newhaven Port and Properties and East Sussex County Council and barristers representing Newhaven Town Council and Defra.



The judge, Mr Justice Ouseley went away to consider the arguments and finally announced his decision on 21st March. Unfortunately, his decision was extremely disappointing and frustrating for the town council and for the people of Newhaven. Despite accepting that

- Newhaven Town Council provided significant evidence that the beach had been used by local people for more than 20 years as of right for lawful sports and pastimes.
- The Inspector at the Public Inquiry dealt with an unusual situation carefully, made the necessary factual findings, grappled with the issues, and produced a clear and reasoned recommendation which dealt with the issues raised.
- A village green does not have to be grassy, or in the middle of a village and that it does not matter that the land is covered by the tide for part of the day.

Mr Ouseley concluded that the beach could not be registered as a village green because registration is not compatible with the statutory purpose (ie running a port) for which the land is held by the Port Authority because there is a conflict of statutory regimes. This was a last minute legal argument raised by the legal team working for the Port Authority in writing after the Judicial Review closed. At the time of writing this report, the Town Council is taking legal advice and considering its options.



fire dogs. Meanwhile, boats in the harbour, including the ferry, joined in the fun and the event climaxed with performers descending the cliffs from Newhaven Fort on zip wires. It was wild and wacky and sometimes a little bizarre, but undeniably fun. Newhaven Cormorant was brought to Newhaven by Zap Arts with funding from a number of partners, including Newhaven Town Council.

A number of exciting events have taken place in the town over the last year. In July the town was invaded by Generik Vapeur, a group of blue men from France, for a unique community spectacle called "Newhaven Cormorant". The blue men worked their way through the west side of the town from the swing bridge to the West Beach car park in their own zany way, stopping frequently to give the crowd of about 3,000 onlookers short presentations of street performance with music, flares and

Other events in which the Town Council has been involved this year include the annual Mayor's Christmas Carol Concert at St Michael's Church in December and the

commemorations of the Dieppe Raid of 1942 which take place in August each year. 2012 sees the 70th anniversary of the Dieppe Raid and this year's event will perhaps be the last "big number" anniversary at which there are likely to be veterans of the Raid itself present. The commemoration ceremony will take place on Sunday 12th August at 3pm at the Royal Canadian Engineers Memorial, South Way, Newhaven.



At the 2011 Remembrance Day commemorations in November a wreath was laid at the town's war memorial by the Mayor of La Chapelle Saint Mesmin, Newhaven's new twin town in the Loire Valley in France. The Mayor, Monsieur Nicolas Bonneau, was in Newhaven together with a group of people from La Chapelle, to sign the twinning charter with Newhaven. M Bonneau said he was extremely honoured to lay a wreath in Newhaven and spoke of his town's gratitude to the British servicemen and women who liberated

France in 1944. The signing of the charter took place at a special ceremony held at the Newhaven Enterprise Centre after the wreath laying which was attended by many local people as well as VIPs including representatives from the French Consulate in London. Newhaven Town Council is keen to support the twinning, which it is hoped will provide wonderful opportunities for the people of both towns, including our school children and local organisations. New ties of friendship are already being formed, led by the Newhaven Twinning Association and that of La Chapelle Saint Mesmin.



Newhaven's second Young Mayor, 16 year old Adam Wiggins, organised a couple of events for young people during the half term holiday in October. Two special swimming sessions for young people were held at the Seahaven Pool, which were attended by about 30 or 40 young people each time, and an art workshop was held at the Lewes Road hut at which a graffiti banner was produced by a small group of young people. At the Young Mayor elections in November, 14 year old Charlotte Crookston became the third Young Mayor of Newhaven. Charlotte is a year 10 student at Tideway School and has already been very busy raising money for her charities which are Haydn's Wish, Dyslexia Action and Diabetes UK.

The Town Council has continued to make improvements to its play areas during the year, with new equipment for younger children installed at Valley Road in November and a new "bouncy truck" about to be installed at Denton Recreation Ground. Denton Rec exploded with colour last summer as a result of a sowing of wildflower seeds along the side of the Rec nearest the road and this is to be repeated again this summer.

Working in partnership with organisations that provide activities for youth such as Wave Leisure, NCD A and NIPPERS, the Town Council funded an extensive programme of activities for children and young people during the summer holidays last year and this is also to be repeated for the summer of 2012.

The Town Council looks forward to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead and to working closely with other organisations and developers for the benefit of local people and the regeneration of the town.

The role of Newhaven Town Council

There are three tiers of local government with areas of responsibility in Newhaven - East Sussex County Council, Lewes District Council and Newhaven Town Council.

East Sussex County Council's responsibilities include:

- ♦ Adult Social Care, working in partnership with East Sussex Downs & Weald PCT and others, to assess the needs of and commission services for older people and those with disabilities, either in their own homes or in residential placements;
- ♦ Waste Disposal, such as by landfill or incineration
- ♦ Children's Services, leading the Children's Trust arrangements, supporting school improvement, commissioning services for children and families through Children's Centres and otherwise, and managing fostering and adoption;
- ♦ Transport and Environment, including road safety; the maintenance of footways, roads and bridges, and street lighting; support for public transport; rights of way and access to the countryside; and protection of the Downs and Heritage Coast;
- ♦ A range of other services, including Libraries, Archives and Records Management, Trading Standards, Adult Community Learning, and the Registration Service.

Lewes District Council's responsibilities include:

- ♦ Housing
- ♦ Deciding planning applications
- ♦ Rubbish collection from premises in the town; provision of recycling facilities
- ♦ Street cleansing
- ♦ Environmental health
- ♦ Provision of leisure and sports facilities, such as the Seahaven Pool, recreation grounds
- ♦ Collection of Council Tax on behalf of all three tiers of local government
- ♦ Licensing of taxis

Newhaven Town Council is the equivalent of a village parish council. It receives annually a small percentage of the money raised by Council Tax, known as "the Precept." This money can be spent on the provision of various things that are of particular benefit to the local community and which the Town Council feel are not adequately provided by the other two tiers.

Eighteen local people serve as Councillors on the Town Council. They are all volunteers and receive no pay for the work they do on behalf of the town. Elections are held every four years.

There are full meetings of the Town Council about every six weeks throughout the year, which take place at Meeching Hall, in Fort Road. All meetings of the Council are open to the public and there is a short period at the beginning of each meeting put aside for questions from the public and for the receipt of petitions.

An important part of the role of the Town Council is to represent the views of the town in response to various public consultations.

On a regular basis our Planning Applications Committee meet to look at planning applications received by the Planning Authority and to pass on to them our comments. The Town Council always try to represent the views put forward by local people in this regard, although sometimes this can prove difficult when an application is controversial and has both vocal support and opposition amongst local residents. Nevertheless, members of the Planning Applications Committee take a vigilant approach in representing the local viewpoint, and encourage objectors/supporters of planning applications to attend meetings and put forward their views. When an application is of particular public interest a special public meeting may be held.

At the present time, Newhaven Town Council provides the following for the local community:

- ◆ The Town Council **offices** in Fort Road act as an information point for local residents. The offices were the subject of a major refurbishment in 2003-4 and are now much more people friendly, with easy public access from street level. Internally there is a lift for the less agile or parents with buggies and the interior is light, modern and convenient. Current planning applications may be viewed there during normal office opening hours. The building also has large reception area for viewing materials and a large private meeting room. Leaflets and posters are displayed concerning local events, places of interest and other items of general interest. The meeting room is modern and well equipped and is in regular use in hosting meetings and is available for hire. The offices are owned by the Town Council.
- ◆ Four **social centres** are owned, maintained and run by the Town Council. They are available for hire by local organisations and individuals. They are Denton Social Centre, East Side Social Centre, Lewes Road Hut and Meeching Hall.
- ◆ Some of the town's **recreation grounds** are maintained by the Town Council. These are the Denton Recreation Ground and Children's Play Area, the Valley Road Play Area, and the Lewes Road Recreation Ground and Children's Play Area. Other local recreation grounds and play areas are the responsibility of Lewes District Council.
- ◆ Three **amenity areas** in the town are maintained by the Town Council. The Bay Vue Amenity Area in Bay Vue Road is owned by the Town Council and maintained as a grassed area with public seating. The Valley Ponds area are owned and looked after by the Town Council as a wildlife conservation area and amenity area for local residents. The strip of land known as the Rose Walk Amenity area (behind Southdown School, linking Church Hill and Rose Walk) is leased from East Sussex County Council and maintained as a grassed area by the Town Council.
- ◆ The town's **war memorials** are looked after by the Town Council. All three memorials – the Canadian Memorial, the Mercantile Marine Memorial (also known as the Transport Memorial) and the town's War Memorial – now stand together in the Memorial Gardens in South Way. Each year in August, the Town Council host a commemoration service at the Canadian Memorial on the anniversary of the Dieppe Raid in 1942. The Town Council also work in

partnership with the Royal British Legion to organise the annual service of remembrance during November

- ◆ **Newhaven Cemetery** is owned by the Town Council, which acts as the local burial authority. The Cemetery includes burial plots, a garden of remembrance for ashes interments, and a chapel which is used for some funerals.
- ◆ There are a small number of **allotments** at Newhaven Cemetery, which are let to local residents for a nominal annual fee. The allotments at East Side are owned and controlled by Lewes District Council.
- ◆ The Town Council own and fund the **CCTV cameras** in the town centre, which are operated and maintained by Sussex Police.
- ◆ The **Christmas Lights** in the town centre are owned and put up each year by the Town Council. A number of local businesses allow the Town Council use of their electricity supply for this purpose. The bulbs are LED energy saving bulbs.
- ◆ The **floral boat** at the junction of Bridge Street and South Way is owned and maintained by the Town Council. The Town Council have also planted bulbs in grass verges in various locations in recent years. Additionally, support is given by the Town Council to Newhaven in Bloom, who provide many of the floral displays in the Town in the summer.
- ◆ A **community bus service** operating on a door to door dial-a-ride basis started on 1st April 2009, funded by the Town Council and operated by Community Transport for the Lewes Area (CTLA).
- ◆ Some of the **public seats** in the town are owned and maintained by the Town Council.
- ◆ There are 9 Town Council **noticeboards** around the town which are used for the display of Town Council minutes and agendas and a list of Town Councillors.

The Town Council is also consulted on wider matters, such as the Lewes District Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework plan.

The Town Council is represented on the following outside bodies:

Access in Seaford and Newhaven Committee
Age Concern Day Club
Community Transport for the Lewes Area (CTLA)

INPACT
Lewes District Association of Local Councils
Lewes District Foyer
Local Partnership for Children
Meridian Mature Citizens Forum
Newhaven in Bloom
Newhaven Strategic Network
Open Spaces Group
Parishes of the Lower Ouse (POLO)

Newhaven Town Council Structure 2011-12

Town Council Members

Denton Ward

Peter Clark	24 Norton Terrace, Newhaven
Diane Hall	7 Fairholme Road, Newhaven
Ann Giles	41 Arundel Road, Newhaven (Lead Member for Children & Young People)
Roderick Main	5 Avis Parade Flats, Avis Road, Newhaven (Lead Member for Planning)
Angela Simmons	Cedars House, 1 Heighton Road, Newhaven (Lead Member for Community Services)

Meeching Ward

Graham Amy	71 Court Farm Road, Newhaven (Deputy Mayor)
Carla Butler	6 Southdown Close, Newhaven
Maurice Langham	34 Mariners Wharf, Fort Road, Newhaven
Chris Bradshaw	132 Court Farm Road, Newhaven (Lead Member for Localism & Neighbourhood Planning)
Sebastian Hale-Smith	26 Meeching Rise, Newhaven
Jane Scott	c/o Town Council Offices
Heidi Watkins	30 Southdown Road, Newhaven

Valley Ward

Julie Carr	73 Iveagh Crescent, South Heighton (Lead Member for Partnership & Promotion)
Judith Ost	Mary Ann's Cottage, Lewes Road, Newhaven (Leader of the Council)
Pat Ost	Mary Ann's Cottage, Lewes Road, Newhaven
Steve Saunders	25 Southdown Road, Newhaven (Town Mayor)
Janice Butler	6 Southdown Close, Newhaven
Jim Still	30 Southdown Road, Newhaven

Staff

Town Clerk	Ian Everest (Stephen Meah-Sims from 5 th September 2011)
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Deputy Town Clerk	Jacky Cole
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Administration & Finance Officer	Ruth Durrant
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Financial Summary

The Town Council's full accounts for the year 2011/12 will be available later in the year for public inspection.

Income

The Town Council's budget is comprised of the amount paid by residents of the town (via the Council Tax) and the amount raised by income from rentals, lettings, bank interest and other fees and charges.

2011/12

Precept (Council Tax)	£354,145.00
Income (budgeted)	<u>£64,900.00</u>
	<u>£419,045.00</u>

Expenditure

The Town Council's expenditure is controlled by a budgeting and monitoring process which categorises expenditure into separate headings.

For the year 2011/12 the budgeted figures were

Halls, Play Areas and Cemetery	£113,235.00
Administration and Staff	£164,000.00
Regeneration and Partnership	£207,900.00
Contribution to Reserves	<u>£ 50,000.00</u>
Sub Total	<u>£535,135.00</u>
Less: Income and use of balances	<u>£180,990.00</u>
 (CCTV cameras, Christmas lights, grants, play areas Citizens Advice Bureau, School Holiday activities)	 <u>£354,145.00</u>

The Town Council also has an Earmarked Reserves Budget. This is used for projects for which it may be necessary to accumulate funding over a number of years or for special one-off funding demands.

During the year 2011/12 the following expenditure has been made from the Earmarked Reserves:

ZAP Arts Event	£ 2,500.00
Childrens/Play Areas	£16,517.00
Asset Management	£ 4,898.00
West Beach Village Green Application	£31,705.00
Newhaven Uncovered	£ 100.00

Continued...

During the year 2011/12 the following grants were awarded by the Town Council:

2 nd Denton & South Heighton Beavers	£141.00
Hanson Road Residents Association	£250.00
Munchkins Parent & Toddler Group	£200.00
Neill's Den Social Club	£150.00
NIPPERS	£100.00
Rathan Court Sheltered Housing	£150.00
Rock Solid Youth Club	£200.00
Rotary Club of Newhaven	£200.00
Vista Group for the Blind & Partially Sighted People	£200.00
South Heighton Village Hall Management Committee	£100.00
National Coastwatch Newhaven	£200.00
NFRPA	£100.00
Vitalise	£150.00
Newhaven Youth Marching Band	£300.00
Newhaven Cricket Club – Youth Section	£100.00
Meeching Amateur Dramatics	£200.00
Meeching Valley Primary School	£200.00
Newhaven Twinning Association	£250.00
Our Newhaven	£200.00
U3A	£150.00

Special one-off grants were also made as follows:

Newhaven Fish Festival	£ 2,000.00
Lewes Road Hut/Denton Youth Clubs	£14,796.00
Summer Community Event at Newhaven Fort	£ 310.00
Community Bus Service	£ 4,400.00
Newhaven in Bloom	£ 1,500.00
NIPPERS Half Term Playscheme	£ 2,500.00
School Holiday Activities	£ 9,886.00
Armed Forces Day	£ 200.00
Diamond Jubilee Street Party	£ 350.00
Denton Community Challenge	£ 350.00

Note:

The accounts of Newhaven Town Council are audited each year in compliance with the Audit Commission Act 1993 – Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/553)

The accounts for the year 2010/11 have been duly audited and certified by the external auditor.