



Newhaven Town Council Annual Report 2013-14



Welcome to the 2013-14 Annual Report from Newhaven Town Council. The Town Council has had a busy year:

Town Council Activities

NEWHAVEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Town Councils are able to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, which set out how a local community would like to see their local area grow and change. It can set out what type of development is needed such as housing, employment and recreation space, where new development will be located, and what it should look like.

A Neighbourhood Plan has to go through certain stages, including a referendum with the local community (where more than 50% need to vote in its favour) before it becomes a legal document and used by the District Council. The future really can be in the hands of local people!



The first stage of producing a Neighbourhood Plan is to apply to the District Council for the formal designation of the Neighbourhood Plan area and the Town Council received a formal designation notice last summer.

Work is now underway to understand what makes Newhaven 'tick' and what its strengths and weaknesses are, as well as looking at what the community said at the 'Big Planning Event' in 2012. There will be a series of consultation events in early summer, so you can tell the Town Council how you would like the area to grow and what you think will make a positive change to our unique town.

The events will take place in all parts of the town, so look out for an event near you. They will be advertised by posters and on the Town Council's website at <http://www.newhaventowncouncil.gov.uk/> in late spring.

WEST BEACH



There has been a frustrating wait for most of the past year following the decision by the Appeal Court in March 2013 to allow the appeal and permit the beach to be registered as a Village Green. The Port Authority immediately announced its intention to appeal to the Supreme Court. Following a long wait, the Supreme Court decided that it would hear the appeal. Following a further long wait, it has now decided that the appeal will be heard in November 2014 – the provisional dates are 3rd and 4th November.

The town council will continue to try and talk to the Port Authority about getting the beach open temporarily during the summer of 2014 whilst waiting for the Supreme Court case. We will also continue to try and get them to talk to us about a permanent agreement to re-open the beach instead of continuing on to the Supreme Court. Whatever happens, the Supreme Court is the end of the legal road so far as the Village Green case is concerned – there will be no possibility of appeal to the European Court.

NO COLD CALLING ZONE

The Town Council is currently carrying out a consultation on whether the local community would like to see Newhaven become a No Cold Calling Zone. This proposal would enable residents, particularly the more elderly, to turn away unwanted and intrusive doorstep callers and traders. This in turn would help to reduce the number of distraction burglaries in the area and enable the Police to identify who the cold callers are and the locations they target in town. Religious and political groups are exempt from the scheme.

At the time of writing this report, 140 responses to the consultation have been received, of which 137 are in favour of the No Cold Calling Zone and 3 are against. Local residents can still vote via our online survey at www.newhaventowncouncil.gov.uk/survey or in person/by post at the town council offices at Fort Road.



Newhaven Town Council adopted a new committee system for 2013-14. This means that most of the Council's work has been carried out by its committees.

Policy & Resources Committee Chair – Councillor Rod Main



The Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for the strategic and corporate development of the Council, including the management of its finances and resources and the management of its buildings. Historically, this committee would have been called "Finance and General Purposes" or simply F&GP and indeed, many councils still have an F&GP committee. However, a fresh start with a committee system means a chance to have a name that sounds more 21st century than 19th, hence P&R.

The committee system also allows councillors to be more focussed on specific issues. In particular, those things which have been "on the back burner" for a while. So over the last year P&R has been able to take a long look at the state of the council's social centres.

LEWES ROAD HUT.

The internal refurbishment a year ago revealed that there were potential external issues which needed to be addressed. These could potentially be serious for this almost 100 year old hut. Structural and condition surveys have been carried out with the result that extensive exterior refurbishment has been commissioned. This will start in May.



DENTON SOCIAL CENTRE

A further set of structural and condition surveys were carried out at Denton Social Centre. These show that this building is essentially sound however, some windows and doors needed to be replaced. This has been carried out. On the agenda for the coming year, the committee will consider the provision of disabled access to the toilets and the possibility of a new kitchen.

EAST SIDE SOCIAL CENTRE

This was reported to be having problems with damp and again, similar surveys have been carried out on this centre. Solutions have been identified and the refurbishment of the exterior will be carried out during the summer.

MEECHING HALL



It was brought to our attention that some of the electrical fittings were sub-standard or needing repair. In addition, the doors under the stage needed replacing and there was some work required to the stage area itself. These have been completed. It is intended that, in the coming year, structural and condition surveys will be carried out on the hall. We will then give consideration to any remedial work which needs doing and any further work such as disabled access via the front door and new kitchen here too/

In addition to the above, the committee also reviewed the budget proposals and made a recommendation to full council. Although we made it in good faith, it turned out that some information was missing, some incorrect and some could not be relied upon largely because of prevarications by central government. These things are sent to try us. After several additional meetings between councillors and staff, the budget was eventually agreed and ratified by full council.

Councillor Rod Main, Chair of Policy & Resources Committee



Planning & Development Committee

Chair – Councillor Steve Saunders



The Planning Committee meets every 3 weeks and acts as the local consultee to the District Planning Committee that in turn, is the decision-making body for the majority of decisions. We encourage local residents to attend our meetings and put forward their views which, along with those of the committee members, are passed on to the lead authority. We also encourage developers to liaise with members prior to presenting applications, in order to feed local knowledge into proposals.

As elected representatives of Newhaven, members often speak at the District Council Committee Meeting, in support or objection of applications, along with giving advice and support local residents in making representations themselves.

A selection of applications considered in the last year:

- Detailed planning application for housing layout at Eastside
- Outline planning application for housing at the former Parker Pen Site
- Outline planning for the proposed new Fire Station at the former Saxonholme site
- Planning application for new Transport Interchange at Newhaven ferry terminal and train station
- Applications for 2no. housing sites at Denton Corner

Councillor Steve Saunders, Chair of Planning & Development Committee



Community Engagement & Promotion Committee

Chair – Councillor Julie Carr



The Community Engagement and Promotion Committee oversees Council communications and promotions such as its website, newsletter and social media and is also responsible for supporting tourism and promotional activities, community events, civic and commemorative awards and the awarding of grants.

In this, its first year, I am delighted that the committee has been able to give financial support to a number of community events which have helped to enrich people's lives in Newhaven.

These include the Denton Community Challenge, which seems set to become a well-loved annual community event, the Fish Festival, the Summer by the Sea linked events which took place in the town during the summer of 2013, the storytelling events held at the RNLI boathouse and the Seahaven Armed Forces Day.

2013 was the 60th anniversary of the Coronation of HM The Queen and the town council was also able to help fund two community parties held in June to commemorate this. We have also helped to fund the youth clubs at Lewes Road hut and Denton Social Centre, youth activities in the school summer holidays, the Citizens Advice Bureau, Newhaven Street Market, the Seahaven Foodbank and the Community Bus Service run by CTLA. A sub-committee called the Grant Aid Committee decides on smaller grants and this year awarded funding to 18 different local organisations.



In addition to helping to fund events organised by other people, the committee is responsible for overseeing the organisation of events which are organised by the town council itself and this year these have included the annual commemoration of the Dieppe Raid in 1942, the Remembrance Day Parade in November and the Community Carol Concert in December.

At the beginning of this month, the town council's new newsletter "Newhaven Matters" was published and delivered to all households in Newhaven. This will be published on a quarterly basis and will include news about what the town council is doing and what other people are doing – news about developments, plans, events and local organisations. Improvements to the town council's website are also under way, which include the facility to upload videos – we hope to regularly post videos of events in the town – and the facility to run surveys to find out what local people think about local issues.

Councillor Julie Carr, Chair of Community Engagement & Promotion Committee

Environment & Open Spaces Committee

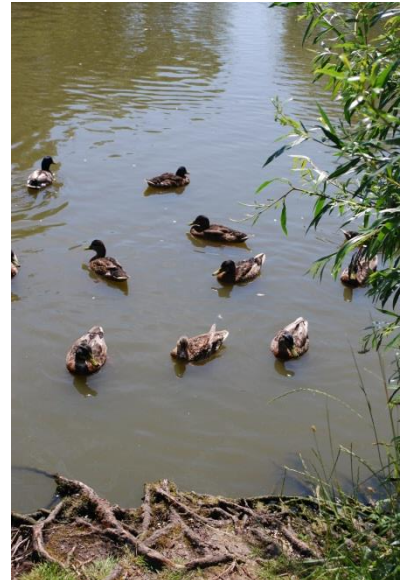
Chair – Councillor Steve Saunders



The Environment and Open Spaces (EOS) Committee is responsible for looking after the open spaces provided or managed by the town council and for improvements to the town's public environment which can be undertaken by the town council, such as the provision of grit bins, bus shelters, benches and CCTV cameras.

The introduction of the new committee system has given the Environment and Open Spaces Committee the opportunity to pursue several projects which it has been difficult for the town council to find time to carry out before.

The Valley Ponds have been suffering from a lack of TLC for several years and I am very pleased that this year the EOS Committee has been able to adopt and start to implement a proper management plan for this area which is so well loved by both residents of the Valley and residents of the wider town. This should make the Ponds a much better place for both people and wildlife. The last few months have seen the cutting back of brambles and nettles, the clearing of the culverts and the removal of dead and decaying tree branches. New trees have been planted and wildflower seeds have been sown. A "Friends of Valley Ponds" group has been set up to help look after and take community ownership of the area.



Following the discovery that the air raid shelters underneath the Bay View Amenity Area were in a dangerous state which resulted in the amenity area having to be closed, work will be carried out to fill in the shelters to make them safe and it is expected that the amenity area will re-open to the public for summer 2014.



The committee arranged for two new bus shelters to be installed in Brighton Road, on either side of the road by the junction with The Fairway.

A unique bench has been created by local sculptor Christian Funnell on Castle Hill which will offer local people an opportunity to commemorate loved ones who have died in a stunning setting. Commemorations will be etched directly into the wood of the seasoned oak slats which form the seat and arms of the bench. The bench is not only striking and unusual – it is also wildlife friendly.

I'm looking forward to leading the committee in the forthcoming year as it looks at issues such as Riverside Park, devolution of community assets from LDC, the provision of CCTV cameras in the town centre and supporting community groups working in the town's open spaces.

Councillor Steve Saunders, Chair of Environment & Open Spaces Committee

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.

During 2013-14 the Town Council adopted a new committee system with three main standing committees – Policy & Resources, Environment & Open Spaces and Community Engagement & Promotion. 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 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. 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 is 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 owned by 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 hosts a commemoration service at the Canadian Memorial on the anniversary of the Dieppe Raid in 1942. The Town Council also works 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 owns and funds 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 has 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 as well as for information on local events.

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 2013-14

Town Council Members

Denton Ward

Peter Clark	24 Norton Terrace, Newhaven
Diane Hall	7 Fairholme Road, Newhaven
Ann Giles	41 Arundel Road, Newhaven
Roderick Main	c/o Town Council Offices (<i>Chair of Policy & Resources Committee</i>)
Angela Simmons	Cedars House, 1 Heighton Road, Newhaven

Meeching Ward

Graham Amy	71 Court Farm Road, Newhaven
Paul Boswell	Meeching Estate Agents, 43 High Street, Newhaven
Carla Butler	6 Southdown Close, Newhaven
Maurice Langham	34 Mariners Wharf, Fort Road, Newhaven
Chris Bradshaw	132 Court Farm Road, Newhaven
Sebastian Hale-Smith	26 Meeching Rise, Newhaven
Jane Scott	c/o Town Council Offices

Valley Ward

Julie Carr	73 Iveagh Crescent, South Heighton (<i>Mayor and Chair of Community Engagement & Promotion Committee</i>)
Judith Ost	Mary Ann's Cottage, Lewes Road, Newhaven (<i>Deputy Mayor</i>)
Pat Ost	Mary Ann's Cottage, Lewes Road, Newhaven
Steve Saunders	25 Southdown Road, Newhaven (<i>Chair of Environment & Open Spaces and Planning & Development Committees</i>)
Janice Butler	6 Southdown Close, Newhaven
Darren Grover	c/o Town Council Offices

Staff

Town Clerk	Linda Butcher (1 st April 2013 – 31 st October 2013) Jacky Cole (from 1 st November 2013 – previously Deputy Town Clerk)
Responsible Finance Officer	Ruth Durrant (from 1 st November 2013 – previously Administration & Finance Officer)
Head of Strategic Development	Susie Mullins (from December 2013)

Administration & Finance Officers

Jill Marshall

Maureen Pope (until November 2013)

Assistant to the Clerk

Nicky Still (from February 2014)

Facilities Manager

Nick Harker (until January 2014)

Caretaker

Kevin Lewry (from April 2014)

Financial Summary 2013-14

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The Town Council's full accounts for the year 2013/14 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.

2013/14

Precept (Council Tax)	£ 326,564.00
LDC Grant	£ 68,936.00
Income (budgeted)	<u>£ 86,071.00</u>
	<u>£ 481,571.00</u>

Expenditure

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

For the year 2013/14 the budgeted figures were

Administration/Office	£ 63,710.00
Staff and Training	£122,613.00
Building and Grounds Maintenance	£102,122.00
Community Services/Engagement & Promotion	<u>£ 78,928.00</u>
Partnership/Support and Services (CCTV Cameras, Christmas lights, grants, play areas, Citizens Advice Bureau, School Holiday Activities)	<u>£367,373.00</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 2013/14, the following expenditure has been made from the Earmarked Reserves:

West Beach Court Cases	£ 12,270.00
Newhaven Uncovered Project	£ 461.00

During the year 2013/14, the following grants were awarded by the Town Council:

1218 SQN (Newhaven) ATC	£ 250.00
2nd Denton & South Highton Beaver Scouts	£ 200.00
3rd Newhaven Scout Group	£ 450.00
Age UK East Sussex	£ 200.00
Breakout Community Trust	£ 200.00
Denton & South Highton Junior FC	£ 300.00
Harbour Primary PTFA	£ 200.00
Meridian Mature Citizens Forum	£ 250.00
Newhaven Cricket Club Youth Section	£ 100.00
Newhaven Junior FC	£ 200.00
Newhaven Tennis Club	£ 200.00
NIPPERS	£ 200.00
Rock Solid Youth Club	£ 250.00
Vitalise	£ 340.00
Newhaven Conservation Trust	£ 50.00
National Coastwatch	£ 500.00
Our Newhaven	£ 200.00
Seahaven Veterans Day	£ 250.00
Friends of Riverside Park	£ 250.00

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 2012/13 have been duly audited and certified by the external auditor.