



## Newhaven Town Council Annual Report 2007-2008



## **Introduction by the Town Mayor Councillor Julie Carr**

I was very honoured to take on the role as Mayor of Newhaven in May 2007. It has been a very interesting and enjoyable year, but most of all it has been a privilege to represent Newhaven over the last year. It is difficult to pick out individual events but I would just like to highlight a few things.

The last year has seen a number of exciting and positive developments within Newhaven. We have seen the opening of the new 'Newhaven Enterprise Centre' on Denton Island, this will really help new fledgling businesses to get established.

I am very pleased to see that the ferry service under Louis Dreyfus Armateurs have reported an increase in business over the last year and that the new service to Le Harve will run again this summer.

The plans for West Quay Phase III were recently approved by Newhaven Town Council Planning Committee and will be considered by the Lewes District Council Planning Committee in the near future. I was pleased to see that the developer had listened to concerns that people had raised at a recent public meeting and had made a number of changes to the plans in light of the comments they had received.

I was privileged to represent Newhaven at the Dieppe Raid 65<sup>th</sup> commemoration events which were held in Newhaven and in Dieppe last August. A large number of people attended the services in both Newhaven and Dieppe, it is important that we never forget the people who lost their lives in that ill fated raid 65 years ago.

It was good to see so many people attend the [very wet!] Remembrance Day service in November, I was particularly pleased to welcome students and staff from the University of Sussex Royal Naval Unit, as well as a large number of organisations that were represented. Children laid wreaths on behalf of their School which was very moving and I hope this is something that will continue.

The Sea Cadets have been very active again throughout the year and I was very pleased to appoint Daniel Vaughan as the Mayor's Cadet. Daniel has supported me at various events and I am grateful to him for this.

I was very sad and angry to see the closure of the Mount Pleasant Post Office in March this year. Despite an excellent campaign to keep the Post Office open, including a petition signed by 2000 number of people, numerous letters strongly objecting to the closure, including one by myself on behalf of the Town Council, and a deputation that went to Downing Street, the Post Office went ahead with the closure. Sami and John who ran the Post Office at Mount Pleasant really made it the 'heart of the community' and I hope people will still support them by using the shop even though the Post Office has closed.

It has been a pleasure to meet so many people over the last year, I would like to personally thank all the volunteers who give their time so generously and freely to enable the many groups and organisations in Newhaven to be so successful and who provide much needed activities and support for the community. I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who has made my year as Mayor such an enjoyable one, I would particularly like to thank my daughter Charlie, who has been my consort for the last year and who managed to get me everywhere on time!

## **Report from the Leader of the Council Councillor Judith Ost**

The Town Council elections held in May 2007 resulted in eight new faces on the Council and a fresh, younger looking Council, with five of the eighteen members being in their twenties. The top priorities chosen by the new Council were to work in partnership towards improved play, sport and recreational facilities and services for the children and young people of Newhaven; and to work in partnership to enhance amenity areas, open spaces and public areas in the town.

In line with these priorities, the Council have provided funding for a number of projects during 2007-08. During the summer holidays funding was provided to enable activities for young people to take place at the Lewes Road hut and recreation ground, organised by the Newhaven Community Development Association (NCDA). As well as the obvious benefit to the young people themselves who participated in these activities, it was intended that there would be a positive impact on the levels of anti social behaviour by bored youngsters over the holiday period in the town. This venture was a success and it has been decided to give further funding to similar activities to be organised by NCDA and additionally to fund free play provision for needy children by NIPPERS at Shakespeare Hall during all the 2008 school holidays.

Crossover have taken over the old Friday Ad shop in Newhaven Square, part of which has been turned into a youth lounge, offering much needed facilities for the young people of Newhaven. The Town Council gave financial support of £800 towards the purchase of equipment for the youth lounge. The Denton and South Heighton Junior Football Club were given £3,000 towards their project to improve their pitch and changing rooms at The Hollow, South Heighton. The Town Council are very appreciative of the time and work put in by the club to provide sporting opportunities for our young people and were delighted to be able to help improve these facilities. The Town Council also contributed £1,000 towards the replacement of the boiler at Shakespeare Hall, to enable them to continue to offer facilities for children and young people and £400 to a recent event for young people held at the Fort called "Urban Dayz".

A major partnership project has been taking place this year looking at Newhaven's Open Spaces and aiming to encourage community involvement in their development. This is a partnership between NCDA, the Town Council, East Sussex County Council, Lewes District Council and the Castle Hill Group. The first part of the project has involved the formation of conservation management plans, audience development plans and research and educational plans for the open spaces which have been overseen by an Open Spaces Development Worker employed for this purpose. It is hoped that his work will result in a significant grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to continue and extend this work with and for local people.

During the forthcoming year the Town Council will continue working towards the provision of improved play facilities for children and young people by embarking on a project to provide a new and greatly improved play area at Denton Recreation Ground. Initial consultation has already taken place with local children and their parents and the Council has allocated £30,000 to this project. Additional funding will

be sought from other sources and it is hoped that at least part of the project may be completed in time for the 2008 school summer holidays.

Another major project which the Town Council will continue to work on over the next year involves the Lewes Road Recreation Ground, where it is hoped to carry out some drainage work to make the ground more usable throughout the winter months and to provide a BMX track. There are a number of difficult issues to overcome to sort out Lewes Road, apart from the poor drainage we have to work with the County Council because of landfill gas issues and with the Environment Agency on flood risk assessment as it would be better to let this area flood in an emergency than to let the water through to the Valley Estate.

These latter two projects have been made possible by the sale this year of the Lodge building at the Cemetery in Lewes Road. This house, once the home of the Cemetery superintendent, has been unoccupied for several years. Before the sale could take place work was needed to separate the Lodge from the Cemetery grounds, including the provision of a separate exit on to the C7. Following this, the Lodge was sold at auction in Brighton on 20<sup>th</sup> September. The new owner of the Lodge has carried out extensive refurbishment of the building and has let it to tenants. After the costs of the project were deducted this resulted in a very useful £164,976 contribution to our finances. There are strict rules about what the Town Council can spend money from the sale of property on - but both the Denton Play area project and the Lewes Road Recreation Ground project will receive funds from this source.

Further improvements to public areas in the town have been made by the provision of new Town Council noticeboards in six locations around the town, which give more space for the display of small posters advertising events as well as for the display of Town Council material. A town centre noticeboard is still needed and we will continue to work towards this in partnership with the District Council and the Highways Authority. New signs have also been provided at Newhaven Cemetery and work is under way to provide an information lectern at the War Memorial Gardens in South Way. It is hoped that the lectern may be in place this spring.

Many local people may feel that these improvements are overshadowed by the continuing threat of the proposed incinerator to be built on North Quay. The Town Council has continued to fight hard against this proposal, as it has right from the beginning. The fight has culminated this year in the Town Council joining with DOVE as co-claimants in legal action seeking a judicial review of the granting of planning permission for the incinerator. At the time of writing this report, the outcome of this action remains uncertain. Whatever it may be, the Town Council will continue to oppose the incinerator by all means open to it.

Two further issues of overwhelming public concern have dominated local news this year. In the autumn, the Post Office announced that it proposed to close the Denton and Mount Pleasant Post Office at Denton Corner. Two thousand local people signed a petition objecting to the proposed closure and this, together with the Town Council's own strong letter of objection, was forwarded to the Post Office – who unfortunately, took no notice whatsoever. The post office has now closed, but the owners continue to operate the shop as a service to the local community and I would

urge all local residents to support them in this endeavour. The Town Council are very grateful to the owners for all their hard work over the past few years at the post office.

The other issue of huge concern is, of course, the closure of the West Beach. As most local residents will know by now, the French owners of the port have recently announced that the beach will now be permanently closed on health and safety grounds and have erected a formidable fence to prevent people from accessing the sands. The port owners are quoting harbour byelaws which date back to the 1930s allowing them to close the beach off from public access. The Town Council fully shares the outrage felt by local people at this action and has formed a working group of councillors to look at ways of getting the beach re-opened. Initially, they will be looking at the legal position - to see whether the public have legal rights to access the beach either through some sort of ancient legislation or through rights that may have accrued because of the decades that people have been using the beach. Another aspect that our councillors are looking into is whether it is at all feasible for the Town Council to pay for public liability insurance for the beach. The port owners are claiming that they cannot keep the beach open because of health and safety issues which they cannot afford to address, so it may well be that such insurance is either impossible to obtain, or prohibitively expensive, but nonetheless we feel that this is something that should be checked out.

The town of Newhaven will face many challenges, both old and new, in the coming years. Please be assured that the Town Council will continue to work hard on behalf of the people of Newhaven to represent your views and to make the town a home we can all be proud of.

**Councillor Judith Ost**  
**Leader of the Council**

## **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 the proposed incinerator
- ◆ 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. This was done recently for the Newhaven Marina and Augustfields applications, when the Town Council called a public meeting at the Hillcrest Centre on 15<sup>th</sup> January which was attended by the architects for both these applications, Morgan Carn. The meeting was lively and very well attended. Following the meeting the architects withdrew the Augustfields application and have been talking in more detail with residents of the Augustfields estate. Additionally, a number of improvements and amendments have been made to the plans for the Marina which have taken into account a number of the comments made at the public meeting.

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 now a lift for the less agile or parents with buggies and the interior is light, modern and convenient. The building also has a private interview room and a small meeting room. Current planning applications may be viewed there during normal office opening hours. Leaflets and posters are displayed concerning local events, places of interest and other items of general interest. A Planning Officer from the District Council visits the offices to hold a Planning Surgery twice a month. The Registrar visits the offices once a week to allow local residents to register births and deaths. The meeting room is in regular use in hosting meetings connected with the Meridian Mature Citizens Forum, Anti-Social Behaviour, Tourism Group and the Local Area Transport Strategy. 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 Social Centre 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 View Amenity Area in Bay View Road is owned by the Town Council and maintained as a grassed area with public seating. The Valley Ponds area is leased from Lewes District Council 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. This year the bulbs were replaced with 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 twice weekly free **mini bus service** to the Town Centre shops is provided by the Town Council for senior citizens living in outlying areas of the town, in partnership with the local Lions Club.
- ◆ The Town Council funds the provision of vouchers for local senior citizens giving a reduction in the purchase price of **senior citizen railcards**.
- ◆ Some of the **public seats** in the town are owned and maintained by the Town Council.
- ◆ There are 6 Town Council **noticeboards** around the town which are used for the display of Town Council minutes and agendas and a list of Town Councillors. These have been replaced with larger, more modern ones this year, allowing some space for the advertising of local events. The Valley Ponds board has also been moved to a more convenient position.

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

The Town Council are represented on the following outside bodies:

- Access in Seaford and Newhaven Committee
- Acquisitive Crime Action Group
- Age Concern Day Club
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Community Transport for the Lewes Area (CTLA)
- INPACT
- Lewes District Foyer
- Meridian Mature Citizens Forum
- Newhaven Children & Young People's Initiative
- Newhaven in Bloom
- Newhaven Local Area Transport Strategy
- Newhaven, Peacehaven & Lewes Volunteer Bureau
- Newhaven Strategic Network
- Open Spaces Group
- Parishes of the Lower Ouse (POLO)
- Prevent and Deter Group
- Shakespeare Hall
- Tourism and Culture Action Group

## NEWHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL STRUCTURE 2007-2008

### **Town Council Members**

#### **Denton Ward**

Charlie Carr 73 Iveagh Crescent, South Heighton  
Ann Giles 41 Arundel Road, Denton  
Roderick Main 5 Avis Parade Flats, Avis Road, Denton  
Hannah Routledge 28 Cantercrow Hill, Denton  
Angela Simmons Cedars House, 1 Heighton Road, Denton (*Lead Member for Community Services*)

#### **Meeching Ward**

John Adams 110 Newhaven Heights, Court Farm Road, Newhaven  
Graham Amy 71 Court Farm Road, Newhaven (*Lead Member for Partnership & Promotion*)  
Carla Butler 6 Southdown Close, Newhaven (*Lead Member for Planning*)  
Darren Grover 2 Firlie Terrace, South Heighton  
Robert Robertson 28 Western Road, Newhaven  
David Rogers 74 Fort Road, Newhaven  
Vacancy

#### **Valley Ward**

Julie Carr 73 Iveagh Crescent, South Heighton (*Mayor*)  
Emma Clothier c/o Town Council offices  
Cynthia Kennedy 70 Elphick Road, Newhaven (*Lead Member for Children and Young People*)  
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

### **Staff**

**Town Clerk** Ian Everest  
**Assistant Town Clerk** Jacky Cole  
(Part-time)  
**Administration/Receptionist** Ruth Durrant  
**Works Manager** Simon Innis  
**Grounds Staff** Robin Deakin, Peter Shew, Tony Skinner  
**Caretaker** John Seymour  
(Part-time)

## **FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

The Town Council's full accounts for the year 2007/08 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.

#### **2007/08**

Precept (Council Tax)	£ 292,180.00
Income	£ 84,570.00
Capital Receipt from Sale of Lodge	£ 196,900.00
	<u>£ 573,650.00</u>

### **Expenditure**

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

For the year 2007/08 the budgeted figures were

Administration/Office	£ 41,602.00
Staff and Training	£ 184,987.00
Building and Grounds Maintenance	£ 30,023.00
Community Services	£ 70,269.00
(CCTV Cameras, Christmas lights, grants, play areas, Citizens Advice Bureau, Newhaven in Bloom)	<u>£ 326,881.00</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 2007/08, the following expenditure has been made from the Earmarked Reserves:

Elections	£ 9,253.00
War Memorials	£ 113.00
The Lodge	£ 10,000.00
Hall Refurbishment	£ 6,257.00
Notice Boards/Street Scene	£ 3,985.00
Youth Initiatives	£ 4,400.00
Play Areas	£ 2,016.00

During the year 2007/08, the following grants were awarded by the Town Council:

ABC Fund	£	250.00
Age Concern Newhaven Day Club	£	250.00
Denton Women's Fellowship	£	150.00
Friends of West Quay	£	150.00
Happy Valley Pre-School	£	400.00
Meeching Amateur Dramatics	£	425.00
Munchkins Parent and Toddler Group	£	200.00
N.I.P.P.E.R.S.	£	150.00
Newhaven Branch of ESDA (Bluebird Club)	£	150.00
Newhaven Cricket Club (Youth Section)	£	100.00
Newhaven District Guides	£	200.00
Newhaven Historical Society Local & Maritime Museum	£	345.00
Newhaven & Peacehaven U3A (University of Third Age)	£	100.00
Newhaven Youth Marching Band	£	300.00
Our Newhaven Project	£	350.00
Rotary Club of Newhaven	£	150.00
Shakespeare Hall	£	150.00
South Heighton Guinness Trust Residents Association	£	100.00
Start Art and Smart Art	£	150.00
Vista for the Blind & Partially Sighted of Newhaven	£	200.00
Vitalise	£	150.00
Viva Art	£	250.00
Volunteer Centre Sussex Downs	£	200.00
West Beach Improvement Group	£	130.00

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 2006/07 have been duly audited and certified by the external auditor.