



Newhaven Town Council - Annual Report 2020-21



The Mayor - Councillor Graham Amy



Sadly my second and final year as Mayor of Newhaven has been a disaster with virtually all events cancelled because of lockdown caused by Covid 19.

Like many of you Marlene and I have lost loved ones but let us hope that with the enormous efforts of the NHS, vaccinators, volunteers and essential workers that life will return to normal later this year.

Although special occasions like the Dieppe Raid commemorations and Remembrance Sunday were held, only limited numbers were able to attend. I am sure these events will be well supported when it is safe to do so.



It will be good to be able to support all our local charities and attend events like the Fish Festival, the Lifeboat Fete and events at recreation grounds and halls throughout the town.



I was particularly sad that with St Michaels Church celebrating its 900th anniversary in 2020, the marvellous programme of events had to be curtailed. Fortunately, Mike Flood had composed the history of the church in music and song and

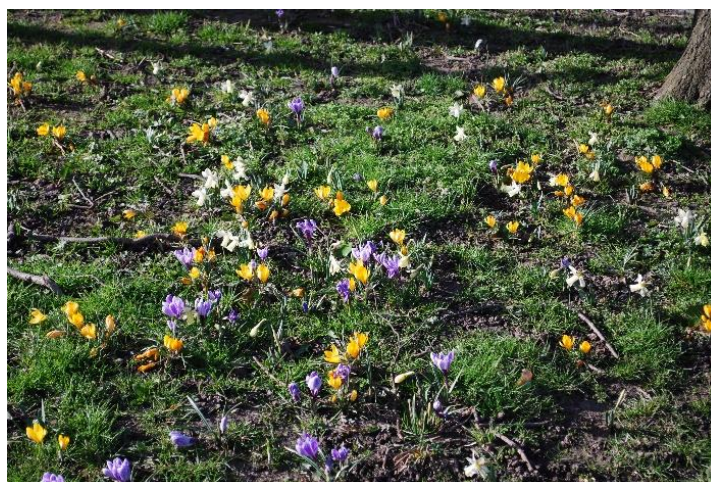
Carole Buchan and Hilary Musk produced a beautifully illustrated book, "The story of a church, a town and its people." The profits from the book helped a number of Newhaven families by way of the church foodbank. Some of the events will fortunately be held this year albeit a little later than we had hoped.

I would personally like to thank the Rev. Martin Miller for the love and kindness he has given to the residents of the town during this period. He has helped both Marlene and myself during what has been a very difficult time for us. I would also like to once again thank the staff at Newhaven Town Council for all their efforts during this time and our Young Mayor Ted Packham who is a credit to his family and his school.

I had the pleasure of opening the block of council flats on the site of the old District Council offices in Fort Road, and Newhaven like many towns, will grow in population during the next few years due to the housing crisis.



At the time of writing this we were waiting to hear if we have got grants from the Government to improve green spaces, employment prospects and our ambition of clean, green and marine industries. Finally a big thank you to all those volunteers who have planted bulbs, shrubs and trees during the last few years to make our Newhaven a nicer place to visit, work and live.



Councillor Graham Amy, Mayor of Newhaven 2020-2021

Ted Rackham - Young Mayor



Ted was elected as Newhaven's Young Mayor at the end of October 2019. He had great plans for his year in office; in particular wanting to raise money in support of your people's mental health. Unfortunately, as in so many cases, Coronavirus put a stop to his plans, and therefore the Town Council decided to extend his term in office so that he could achieve what he set out to do.



A low-key approach was adopted this year for Remembrance Sunday, with a short socially distance service. Ted held his own personal commemorations outside his home, by reading a poem and laying a poppy wreath with his brother.

Ted has been busy during the recent lockdown. Fitted in around his online studies, he has visited nursery workers, Bickerstaffs, the refuse workers, firemen, garages and the food bank in Newhaven giving them all a little treat to say thank you for all their hard work over the past 10 months.



Regeneration & Strategic Development Committee

Chair - Councillor Paul Boswell



What a strange and unpleasant year this has been! All the plans we made last year, all the things we thought would happen, hardly any of them have come to fruition. It just goes to show what power the fickle finger of fate really has.

On a positive note though (no pun intended) electricity is now connected to bandstand, meaning that when we are able to go back to 'normal', bands and events can make use of it to a much greater extent.



So far, we've had the very successful 'Gin and Fizz' event, plus a small, social distanced Christmas celebration complete with Town and Rev. Martin Miller blessing the Christmas tree which has been planted near the bandstand.

The compilation of the local Business Directory is ongoing, despite Covid holding us back, as are (virtual) discussions about our creative quarter and how best to encourage growth and a collective voice for all our local artists/makers.

Discussions about how best to modernise and revamp Meeching Hall are ongoing, it is the only venue we have at present for a reasonable sized crowd and as an interesting Victorian building, we owe it to future generations to preserve and sympathetically improve this local landmark building.

The district heating study is still ongoing, like everything else, progress has been hampered by the pandemic.

Looking forward to 2021/22, I sincerely hope that with the roll-out of the vaccine we can start to use our local resources more and carry on with improvements around and within Newhaven.

Councillor Paul Boswell, Chair of Regeneration & Strategic Development Committee

Planning & Development Committee

Chair - Councillor Steve Saunders



It has been a strange year for all the Town Council Committees and as the one that meets more often than all the rest, we have had to become accustomed to the virtual world of on-line meetings very quickly. The Council had to ensure that everything was in place for members to fully engage with the new process, including equipment and training for those who needed assistance. We are grateful to our officers for the way this was quickly implemented and allowed business to continue, albeit in a 'new-normal' way.

We are proud to have managed to continue to be able to allow our residents to take part in meetings, as the new technology allows. It is something that other councils have not managed to do, but in Newhaven we are determined to remain transparent and allow as much public engagement as possible.

It's been another busy year, despite the COVID-19 pandemic and developers and homeowners alike, have been providing us with many applications to consider as a Planning Committee.

Our comments and suggestions have been fed back to decision making authority for our area, Lewes District Council and we are pleased to say that they are more often than not, included in their officers' reports to the District Committee. It ensures that our local knowledge and experience forms part of the documentation and considerations that help form the District Planning Committee members, make the correct decision. Whilst we cannot always ensure a good outcome, we can certainly make sure that our strong voice is heard and with both myself and my Deputy Chair Cllr. Graham Amy sitting on the District Committee, it adds to that strength. I must thank Graham for his assistance throughout the year and for stepping in to chair the meetings on one or two occasions, when I have been unable to do so through work and personal commitments.

The other Committee Members deserve much praise too, if not only for adapting to the new way of working and bringing their local knowledge to the table. We are a committed team and I've been lucky and honoured to lead them through this unusual year.

There have been some larger applications to consider, and we have seen some of the schemes that we looked at over the past couple of years, finally commence on site.

The Augustfields development has finally begun and is well on the way to completion, as is the former Parker Pen site. Both are scheduled for affordable housing, being provided by Housing Associations. Guinness Trust for the former and Stonewater, for the latter. The controversial scheme to provide houses on the site of the former Council Offices in Fort Road, was finally completed late last year and is provided by Lewes District Council.



One of the latest schemes to receive approval, is in Clifton Road on Eastside and is another affordable housing development, in conjunction with a Housing Association. This time it is Optivo. We are still awaiting final plans to come forward for much larger schemes at the Marina, Transit Road, Beach Close and land at Court Farm Road, but be assured that our committee will be looking closely at all new applications and ensuring we try to get the most for the town.

We are well aware that the priorities for Newhaven continue to include traffic congestion, parking, air quality and the increasing need for affordable homes for our younger generation in particular. We are always looking at ways to improve and support our High Street and the businesses of our town. We are the commercial hub of the district, and this gives us a whole new set of constraints and problems, when looking at development. Our Neighbourhood Plan helps us in this regard and is a great tool for us in trying to ensure our plans for Newhaven are not ignored.

There are suggestions that Planning Regulations are going to be eased, with Government consulting on new rules that will allow more permitted developments to proceed. We are kept abreast of changes as they occur and remain vigilant that our Neighbourhood Plan is not compromised, nor overlooked.

As I write this report, our Clerk Ken Dry and the officer team, are looking to put physical meetings back on the agenda. We have introduced new equipment at our Hall to allow hybrid meetings, where some face-to-face participation of members and the public, are able to take place. There will of course be some restrictions with regard to the social distancing regulations, as they remain in place. However, with the added facility of live broadcast of meetings, it will significantly improve on our 'new normal', until we can hopefully return to something like the way we were.

Finally, I must thank our Officer Team of Ken, Susie, Ruth, Nicky, Jill and Kevin, for their hard work in keeping things together and allowing us to keep serving our fabulous community.

Councillor Steve Saunders Chair of the Planning & Development Committee

Environment & Amenities Committee

Chair - Councillor Graham Amy



Covid has made life difficult for many and it has hampered some of the environmental improvements intended to be carried out during the last 12 months. However, plans for wildflower verges, additional tree planting and greening will be carried out over the next 12 months. There will be improvements to the built environment and we will continue to enhance the biodiversity of the town.

The lockdown has heightened our awareness of our environment and the need to reverse the decline in our wildlife. This is vital because a recent study has shown that farmed poultry makes up 70% of all birds with only 30% being wild. The picture is even more stark for mammals, 60% of all mammals on Earth are livestock, mostly cattle and pigs, 36% are human and just 4% are wild animals!

With the various green spaces being gradually devolved to us we have a great chance to reverse previous trends.

VALLEY PONDS - Work will continue to reduce the reeds and further tree work will be carried out by our contractors Bonny's Wood. They have been working on the outskirts of the town removing diseased Ash and Elm trees. We will be carrying out another toad survey this year and monitoring the new ponds we built on Riverside Park. Other tree works will be carried out at Rose Walk Amenity Park, and Newhaven Cemetery.



MAINTENANCE OF HIGHWAY VERGES ACROSS THE TOWN - Potential verges across the town have been identified for possible wildflower planting thanks to the work of local botanist Dave Harris and James Newmarch from ESCC. Next year will see your council work up plans to re-wild certain verges and green areas in conjunction with our Highways contractor. It is an item that is rather contentious as some people like wild verges whereas others like close cropped areas. We will try to reach a balance as we have at areas like Valley Ponds.

TRAFFIC BOLLARDS - Despite some delay in obtaining the licences traffic bollards were installed outside the Co-Op Supermarket in Fort Rd. This followed a number of near misses as cars mounted the pavement.



TOWN CENTRE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS - Despite Covid and a number of shops closed the Christmas lights seemed to cheer those that ventured into the Town Centre. Further improvements were made to the lights in the Town and on the Memorial Green. A Christmas tree was planted near the bandstand on Denton Island and will become a major feature in the years to come and looked beautiful when lit up and viewed from the Ring Road.

FORMAL AND INFORMAL GREEN SPACES- We have been working with both the county and District Councils to take over the Ouse Valley Nature Reserve, East Side Recreation Ground and Drove Park. As a Council we feel that Newhaven people should manage the assets on their own doorstep and have a say on how they are run. Looking forward, your Environment Committee will look to enhance our green spaces and make Newhaven a better place to live, work and visit, not only for this generation but for generations to come!

Councillor Graham Amy Chair of Environment & Amenities Committee

Promotion, Partnership & Finance Committee

Chair - Councillor Angela Simmons



The Promotion, Partnership and Finance Committee oversees the Council Finances and specific details are given later in this Annual Report.

The Committee promotes the town, supports local partnerships, groups and voluntary organisations with grants of varying amounts.

Obviously, this last year has been exceedingly difficult; however, most of the Alcohol Anonymous meetings continued and provided great support for their members.

The Photo competition took place and continued to provide some excellent results.



During the Pandemic the council continued to provide financial support for both the CAB and CTLA. The former continued to provide excellent essential support for local people. The latter adapted to circumstances and provided a lifeline for the isolated people of Newhaven.

Additional financial support was required to supply I.T. equipment to enable councillors to continue working with remote meetings. Newhaven Matters supplied so much information to local residents, although it was not possible to deliver to individual households.

The foodbank which again was essential to so many households, especially during the early part of the year, was of course supported by Newhaven Town Council.

So many events that have become land marks in the towns calender could not take place. The money given to the organisations concerned was given and the money either retained for future events, or in some cases returned.

The council lost a considerable income from the hire of its halls and facilities, but when unused the opportunity was made to decorate, clean and refurbish.

Some savings were made with reduced printing costs and reduced costs for essential services which helped to adjust the additional cost of the online services.

The Annual Commemoration of the Dieppe Raid in August did take place with a simplified ceremony, with wreath laying and the traditional respectful Silence.



The community of Newhaven responded well to the challenges of the Pandemic with groups and neighbourhoods helping to ensure that residents were assisted in so many ways. Thank You.

Councillor Angela Simmons Chair of Promotion, Partnership and Finance 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.

The Town Council has four main committees -

Promotion, Partnership and Finance, Regeneration and Strategic Development, Environment and Amenities and Planning and Development. 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. During the pandemic all meetings have been held on line.

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 meets 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 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 can now be viewed online during normal office opening hours. The building also has a 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, Valley Road Parkour and play area and the Lewes Road Recreation Ground and Children's Play Area also Eastside football pitch and recreation ground. 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 together with some play equipment for small children. 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 Harbour Primary and Nursery 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 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 funded and managed 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 together with the floral displays in the High Street. The Town Council has also planted bulbs in grass verges in various locations in recent years.
- ◆ 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). The dial-a-ride service now operates across the coastal towns from Telscombe to Seaford.
- ◆ 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
 Citizens Advice Bureau
 Community Rail Partnership
 Community Transport for the Lewes Area (CTLA)
 East Sussex Association of Local Councils (2 representatives)
 Egrets Way Committee
 Friends of Riverside Park
 Heat Network Board
 Lewes District Association of Local Councils
 Lewes District Foyer
 Meridian Mature Citizens Forum
 Newhaven Chamber of Commerce
 Parishes of the Lower Ouse (POLO)
 Uckfield Railway Parishes committee

Newhaven Town Council Structure 2020-21

Town Council Members

Denton Ward

Bill Giles	15 Marine View, Newhaven (Chair of Audit Committee)
Charlie Carr	c/o Town Council Offices, Newhaven
Diane Hall	7 Fairholme Road, Newhaven
George Taylor	c/o Town Council Offices, Newhaven
Angela Simmons	Cedars House, 1 Heighton Road, Newhaven

Newhaven South Ward

Graham Amy	71 Court Farm Road, Newhaven (Chair of Environment & Amenities Committee)
Marlene Amy	71 Court Farm Road, Newhaven (Chair of Personnel Committee)
Kim Bishop	Bay Tree House, 128 Court Farm Road
June Dyer	103 Newhaven Heights, Court Farm Road, Newhaven
Philip Boorman	18 Mariners Wharf, Newhaven
Joe Emery	126 Court Farm Road, Newhaven
Heather McLean	71 Gibbon Road, Newhaven
James MacCleary	56 Fort Road, Newhaven

Newhaven North Ward

Steve Saunders	86 Hurdis Road, Bishopstone (Chair of Planning & Development Committee)
Lesley Boniface	33 Metcalfe Avenue, Newhaven
Paula Woolven	87 Ambleside Avenue, Telscombe Cliffs

Newhaven Central Ward

Paul Boswell	Meeching Estate Agents, 43 High Street, Newhaven (Mayor & Chair of Regeneration & Strategic Development Committee)
Christoph von Kurthy	15 Newfield Road, Newhaven

Staff

Clerk to the Council	Ken Dry
Responsible Finance Officer	Ruth Durrant
Head of Strategic Development	Susie Mullins
Administration & Finance Officer	Jill Marshall
Assistant to the Clerk	Nicky Still
Amenities Officer	Kevin Lewry

Financial Summary 2020-21

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The Town Council's full accounts for the year 2020/21 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.

2020/21

Precept (Council Tax)	£539,506.00
LDC Grant	£ -
Income (budgeted)	£ 82,250.00
	<u>£621,756.00</u>

Expenditure

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

For the year 2020/21 the budgeted figures were

Administration/Office	£103,105.00
Staff and Training	£196,169.00
Building and Grounds Maintenance	£169,177.00
Community Services/Engagement & Promotion/Partnership/Support	£153,305.00
and Services (CCTV Cameras, Christmas lights, grants, play areas, Citizens Advice Bureau, School Holiday Activities)	<u>£621,756.00</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 2020/21, the following expenditure has been made from the Earmarked Reserves:

Grant funding towards SCDA Youth Centre, Denton Island	£ 10,000.00
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During the year 2020/21, the following grants were awarded by the Town Council:

Affinity Rowing Club	£ 3,000.00
Denton & District Cricket Club	£ 594.00
Just Friends	£ 500.00
Newhaven Baptist Church	£ 500.00
Newhaven Day Club	£ 297.00
NIPPERS	£ 328.00
Our Newhaven	£ 240.00
Rotary Club of Newhaven	£ 500.00
Sailhaven CIC	£ 3,000.00

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 2019/20 have been duly audited and certified by the external auditor.

