

## NEWCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

### CHAIRMANS REPORT 2017

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

Welcome to Newchurch Parish Councils Annual Meeting.

At last year's Annual Meeting our Treasurer Mr Gordon Wimble retired and Mrs Valerie Denby very kindly took over this role. The change over seemed to go very smoothly and it all appears to be working well. Unfortunately Mrs Denby is not able to be with us this evening but has prepared the accounts for us to peruse. Councillor Cragg will this evening give the Treasurers Report and answer any relevant questions.

Due to pressure of her work, our Clerk, Mrs Alison Prentice has reluctantly tendered her resignation and so tonight would have been her last meeting; unfortunately she has been called away so Mrs Starling has stepped into the breach at the last moment to help us out. Mrs Prentice took over the position of Clerk for the second time after Mrs Day, our previous Clerk, had to retire in 2014 through ill health. I would like to publically thank Mrs Prentice for all the work that she has done for the Council. I know for a fact that this last year has been rather trying for us both, with legal statements having to be prepared etc. These have been very time consuming to say the least. I think and hope that we have seen the last of these now though. These statements refer to the accident on Jubilee Field involving a small boy and the roundabout. The roundabout was repaired and back in operation fairly quickly but the paperwork seemed to be endless. We have not heard anything from our insurers for some time now, so one presumes that it must be at the point of being finalised. Councillor Shaw and I had several meetings with Playdale who sold us the equipment. It was so useful to have his expertise on this matter especially with his engineering knowledge.

Today Councillor Cragg and I have been holding interviews for the position of Clerk, we had 3 applicants for this post one of which withdrew his application at the last minute.

Once again I would like to thank Mr Kevin Head and Brooker Farms for maintaining the Jubilee Field to such a high standard. Mr Head has also managed to cut the grass in the Spinney a couple of times. We are not trying to make it like a lawn, but to keep the grass manageable and the thistles under control. The Spinney is a really popular place to go especially with dogs. Unfortunately not everyone is diligent about cleaning up after their pets, both on Jubilee Field and the Spinney. The Dog Warden has been informed and is supposed to patrol occasionally. Surely it is not a major effort to take a bag or two when you go for a walk with your pet!

We have noticed that a lot of people go and look at the information panels in the Spinney and soon the new panels will be going onto the Memorial. With the aid of some very generous donations these have now been completed. Councillor Sneyd will soon be finishing off the rock work and things will then be ready for the grand opening ceremony on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2017. Councillor Cragg has worked so very hard on organising and co-ordinating it all so I am not going to say any more about it as he will no doubt be telling you about it later.

We are very grateful to Newchurch Village Productions for a very generous gift from part of the Pantomime funds to go towards some new play equipment on Jubilee Field.

The Council would like to extend our thanks to the small band of volunteers who maintain the wildlife pond. During the summer month especially, a lot of cyclists seem to pop in there for a picnic and to rest their legs no doubt.

Of course in today society the big thing is communication and the present way is by social media. The village website [www.newchurchvillage.org](http://www.newchurchvillage.org) is the window to our village. Everything that is going on in and around our community is displayed there. Councillor Cragg and Mrs Starling spend endless hours on this project, with all the current activities and on the history pages. We recently had an email from a couple who now live in France but used to live in the village. They commented how good it was and how many memories it had brought back to them so we must congratulate them both.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for their continued help and support during the past year. I would also like to thank Mrs Cragg our Tree Warden and to Mrs Denby for her expertise on all things financial. Once again I would like to thank Mrs Prentice for her work with the council and to wish her well for the future.