

# NEWCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

## ANNUAL MEETING

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen and welcome to Newchurch Parish Councils Annual Meeting.

At last years Annual Meeting I announced that Kevin Shaw had that day resigned from the Council. Councillor Deborah Ward was co-opted onto the Council. Unfortunately in December Brian Sneyd also resigned from the Council. After advertising the position, Councillor Alison Youd was co-opted onto the Council.

We were all up for re-election on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, but as no one else was willing to stand and we all were, we were all re-elected due to an uncontested election.

With help from various grants we have managed to purchase some more play equipment on Jubilee Field. We are endeavouring to get the play equipment area fenced in to keep dogs out of there for obvious reasons, but the cost is at present in the region of £7,000. We are some way towards reaching this goal, but are still a little short.

I am once again going to thank Brooker Farms for their continued help in the mowing and maintenance of this wonderful village facility and in particular to Mr Kevin Head for all the shorter mowing around the equipment etc. You will have noticed, no doubt, that there are areas of clover that are left un-mowed in the main area of the field. This is for the bumble bees, as it is a rich source of food for them, so we are doing what we can. A tree was planted along the southern edge of the field without any ceremony in memory of Mrs Cordelia Courtney one of our former Councillors and Tree Warden. At this point I shall just mention the sad passing of Mrs Janice Day, our former clerk who died earlier this year.

I am going to also thank a small band of volunteers who maintain the Wildlife pond area. After it's dredging out a year or so ago, it is again becoming a nice spot to sit and relax and watch the world go by. A lot of people stop and picnic here which is very gratifying.

Unfortunately late last year the flagpole in the spinney broke. Mr Brian Sneyd has in the past week replaced it. It has not gone through the top of the slab as the previous one did, but to the rear of the Memorial. The Council is very grateful to Brian for doing the work for us, as we know he is such a busy man and has fitted it in when time allowed. We have also noticed that Mr Basil Head has done mowing and strimming in the Spinney. Thank you.

The apple trees have been full of blossom, so hopefully there should be a bumper crop of fruit this Autumn. The scent from these trees has been wonderful. The wild flowers and the trees are all developing nicely. We have planted some more bluebells to augment the few that are blooming. It is all a matter of time and patience, but this area is a fabulous asset for the Village. People stroll about there and also walk their dogs. Thankfully at present we don't have a major problem with the perennial dog fouling. There is still some, so please don't let us be complacent about it. We also have a lot of people stop and picnic here as well as the wildlife area. A lot of people also come and view the splendid memorial. We also noticed that there were a few Poppy Day Crosses placed at its base.

On 11<sup>th</sup> November last year we proudly lit the beacon along with other Town and Parish Councils across the land. In total there were going to be about 1,000 throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK overseas territories to mark a century after the guns fell silent after the end of the First World War. The beacons were to symbolise the “Light of Hope” that emerged from the darkness of war. We were blessed with a lovely evening involving mulled wine and hot dogs, rounded off with a few fireworks ensuring that the evening ended with a bang. I would like to thank the volunteers who made the evening so successful. The Council were so pleased that so many people turned up to mark the occasion. There were some wonderful photographs taken of the evening by Mr Oliver Reeves which are on the village website [newchurchvillage.org](http://newchurchvillage.org).

Which brings me nicely onto the village website. It is continually being improved and updated, but can only be relevant if people notify our webmaster Mrs Starling of events that are happening or due to happen in the village. Please use this wonderful facility.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for all their hard work, help and wise words during the past year. I would also like to thank our clerk Mr Michael Sharpe for the work that he puts in for and on behalf of the Council. It is so nice that although he doesn't actually live in the village, he joins in with all our activities. I would also like to thank our treasurer Mrs Denby for keeping our finances in such good order.

There is one other person that I am going to publically thank and that is Mr Phil Weatherup for his massive contribution in keeping this village largely litter free, it hasn't gone unnoticed, but it is a never ending mission.

Thank you.