

NEWTON IN THE ISLE

PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Dave Gibbs, 358 High Road, Newton-in-the-Isle, PE13 5HS
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Minutes of a Meeting of Newton-in-the-Isle Parish Council held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 8th July 2025

Present - Cllr R Bradley (Chairman), Cllr A Clark, Cllr S Clark, Cllr K Humphris, Cllr B Simpson, Cllr K Simpson, Cllr A Osborn (CCC), Cllr B Barber (FDC), D Gibbs (Clerk),
7 parishioners

022/25 Apologies for Absence

Cllr R Moore, Cllr C Seaton (FDC)

023/25 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He observed that the recent incidents involving children killed by fallen trees and gravestones serve as a reminder of the Council's responsibilities regarding public safety.

024/25 Public Forum

A resident asked why the issue of vacant properties is included on the agenda when the Council has no remit for housing. The Clerk explained that this applies solely to social housing and the Council lobbies Clarion Housing Group to bring vacant properties back into use at the earliest opportunity.

A number of issues with the updating of the village website were highlighted and greater use of social media to showcase the work of the Council was suggested. The Chairman acknowledged these issues, but explained that it is sometimes difficult to find the time to undertake this work.

An update on the plan to extend the High Road 40mph speed limit to the east of the village was requested. The Clerk reported that the application has been submitted by the developer.

Speeding was discussed at length. The Clerk explained that the MVAS data is shared with the Police and also analysed through the Council's own data analysis to identify patterns and help to target repeat offenders. Enforcement activity is targeted at those parishes that have an active Speed Watch group and the Council is now working on establishing a group to work with the Police on this.

025/25 Minutes of Previous Meetings

- a) **RESOLVED** - that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 13th May be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

- b) RESOLVED - that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 10th June be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

026/25 County and District Councillors Reports

County - Cllr Osborn explained that he has been in discussion with the Diocese of Ely regarding the future of St James' Church. He is hoping to obtain more information to clarify the nature and scale of the works required to bring the building back into use. He has also noted that the roadside drains in the village need to be cleared of debris before the winter and will be speaking to Highways about this.

District - Cllr Barber reminded Members that the deadline for applications for grants for businesses is approaching.

Cllr S Clark reported that there were a large number of nominations for the Pride in Fenland awards, making the task of selecting the winners more difficult than ever. The awards evening was an enjoyable celebration of voluntary activity and two residents of Tydd St Giles received awards.

027/25 Police Matters

The Clerk reported that he has not had an opportunity to meet Sgt Lee Lombardo yet. Cambridgeshire Police has re-established a policy of designated officers with a local remit. The neighbourhood officer for Newton-in-the-Isle will be PC David Lovitt.

028/25 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on meetings attended and correspondence received, including two meetings with the Probation Service.

Correspondence included traffic orders for closures of Roman Bank on 28th July, Mill Lane and Cross Drove on 8th August, and Fen Road and High Road on 27th and 28th August, a County Council appeal for food waste recycling volunteers, a District Council announcement of the community centres supported by Net Zero Villages grants, the election of the new Chair and Vice Chair of the District Council, the publication of a new edition of Local Councils Explained by the National Association of Local Councils, Cambridgeshire ACRE's Affordable Homes; Thriving Villages event, Anglian Water's water main replacement programme and notification of the movement of abnormal loads from Conrad Energy.

029/25 Outstanding Matters

- a) Accumulation of scrap in Colvile Road - Members noted that the situation is getting worse, with several vans now present. The Council continues to lobby Clarion Housing Group to intervene.
- b) Dangerous path surface at St James Close - Awaiting a visit from Clarion Housing.
- c) Vacant properties - Members continue to monitor several vacant properties around the village. It was noted that some properties are being sold rather than refurbished.
- d) Allocation of vacant allotments - The Community Payback team have gathered up the concrete, metal and other rubbish on the site. Cllr Bradley will remove it.

- e) Village bus service - no further progress.
- f) Former Colvile School site - The planning application has not been submitted yet.
- g) Bird deflectors on overhead power lines - The Clerk has spoken to UK Power Networks and they are investigating.
- h) Replacement doors for Village Hall - The new door has been fitted.
- i) Litter bin outside former Woadman's Arms - The District Council will relocate the bin shortly.
- j) Planning Committee terms of reference - Members resolved to adopt the updated terms of reference with the amendments agreed at the Council's May meeting.
- k) Village Hall valuation - The Clerk has received the valuation undertaken by the Village Hall charity's insurers, showing a total rebuild cost of £410,664+VAT, which is now reflected in the charity's insurance policy.

030/25 Members' and Residents' Issues

- a) Wildflower meadow - Members discussed the meadow, its appearance and contribution to the biodiversity of the site. A question on the future of the meadow is included in the forthcoming survey. Members resolved to retain the meadow pending feedback from the wider community.
- b) High Road vegetation - Cllr Bradley reported that he had attempted to contact the landowner but had not been successful. The landowners on both sides of the road need to be reminded of their responsibilities.

031/25 Highways

- a) The large pothole at the southern end of Fen Road has been marked but not repaired. The surface dressing of the High Road into Tydd St Giles is almost complete. The lining has been renewed except where parked cars prevented this. Surface dressing of Colvile Road is planned for next year. Work was scheduled for Little Ramper, but appears not to have taken place.
- b) The timescales for applications to the 2025/26 Local Highway Improvements and 20mph speed limit schemes have been confirmed. Proposals will be considered by the County Council's Highways and Transport Committee at a meeting on 14th October, with design feasibility work taking place from then until June 2026, followed by delivery hopefully by the end of December 2026.
- c) Members discussed the data report from the MVAS speed monitoring device located at the east end of the High Road. The Clerk noted that the 85th percentile speed was only 42mph, showing that the majority of drivers obey limits, but a small minority continue to drive well in excess of the limit. The MVAS will be relocated elsewhere in the village shortly.
- d) The Clerk reported that he has spoken to the Speed Watch Coordination Officer about starting the process to set up a Community Speed Watch in Newton-in-the-Isle. Several residents have volunteered to join the group, enabling the process to commence.

032/25 Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field

The Clerk provided an update regarding issues relating to the management and maintenance of the Playing Field. They noted the following and resolved accordingly.

- i) Probation Service Community Payback - The Payback team has carried out some tidying of the Playing Field and spread the piles of woodchip on the path through the copse.
- ii) The dyke behind the properties in Goodens Lane - It was not possible for the Community Payback team to clear the rubbish from the dyke, due to access and safety concerns.
- iii) Bricks, concrete and metal around the perimeter of the field - This has been gathered together by the Community Payback team and needs to be removed from the site.
- iv) New field drain - Quotes for the work are needed. One contractor visited the site, but has not provided a quote.
- v) Carousel bearing - No progress
- vi) Soft play surfacing - Awaiting completion of the carousel bearing repair.
- vii) Teen shelter - The Handyman will paint the shelter shortly.
- viii) Moles - The contractor is working to remove the moles.
- ix) Signage - To be purchased shortly. The Handyman will install the signs.
- x) Grass cutting - The new contractor is gradually improving the site.
- xi) Arboretum - One dead tree still to be replaced when a suitable replacement can be located.

033/25 Annual Parish Meeting

Members reviewed this year's Annual Parish Meeting. They felt that the choice of speaker was good, but the attendance was disappointing. Cllr B Simpson reported that she had received 17 entries for the dog fouling poster competition and a winner would be selected for printing.

034/25 Residents' Survey

- a) Cllr Humphris briefed Members on the recent work of the working group. Members considered the latest draft of the survey and provided feedback.
- b) Members resolved to delegate a budget of £500 to the working group to approve the final design to be printed before the next meeting.

035/25 Consultations

Members considered the following consultations and resolved accordingly:

- a) Local Government Reorganisation - Members agreed that East Cambridgeshire was more akin to Fenland than Huntingdonshire in terms of landscape, farming, soils, road conditions etc.
- b) Public Rights of Way Hierarchy - Members asked the Clerk to arrange a tour of the public rights of way in the Parish.
- c) Grimsby to Walpole Stage 2 consultation - Consultation event at Tydd St Giles Community Centre on 19th July.

- d) Great Collaboration climate and environmental survey - The Clerk will respond.

036/25 Finance

- a) The Clerk presented an updated financial statement as at the end of June, showing income of £15,316.13 and expenditure of £2,630.31, resulting in a surplus of £12,685.82 and total funds held of £44,400.86.

- b) Members reviewed the quarterly financial reconciliation.

- c) Members noted the following sums received:

<i>Barclays Bank (interest)</i>	£ 105.21
<i>Fenland District Council (concurrent functions grant)</i>	£ 1,968.00
<i>Fenland District Council (recycling credits)</i>	<u>£ 142.92</u>
	£ 2,216.13

- d) Members noted the following payment issued by direct debit:

<i>Information Commissioner (registration fee)</i>	£ 47.00
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- e) Members approved the following payments:

100824	<i>D A Gibbs (salary June and July)</i>	£ 893.96
100825	<i>D Freeman (handyman)</i>	£ 352.05
100826	<i>Idverde Ltd (grass cutting)</i>	£ 717.60
100827	<i>Newton Village Hall (hall hire)</i>	£ 90.00
100828	<i>Fenland District Council (street lighting)</i>	£ 7,619.66
100829	<i>CAPALC Ltd (affiliation fee)</i>	£ 416.61
100830	<i>CAPALC Ltd (training)</i>	£ 50.00
100831	<i>Newton Village Hall (transfer of recycling credits)</i>	<u>£ 142.92</u> *
		£10,282.80

* Members resolved to transfer the recycling credits to the Village Hall charity.

037/25 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will take place on Tuesday 9th September at 7.30pm.