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WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

Rotary Newton Abbot continue to invest in local communities



THE NEWTON

Cryer

SUMMER 2026





EDITOR'S NOTES

Get set for summer!

With the mini heat-wave pushing the temperature skywards at the end of May, have we been given a sneak-preview of balmy days ahead as we roll into the summer season?

Most of our events organisers are certainly hoping so; a little bit of sunshine always helps with outdoor gatherings like *Party in the Park*, *The Barham Cup* or the *Town Criers' Competition*, all of which are featured – along with many other amazing days out – in our summer events listings in this issue.

And if you're looking for the ultimate combination of relaxation, the great outdoors and financial benefits, why not consider applying for an allotment at Decoy Field? Be quick, though, they're likely to be in high demand!

Talking of swift responses, for those of you that like their news delivered promptly, our short format digital news service, *Cryer Express*, provides snippets of all the latest happenings direct to your smartphone. Scan the QR code to sign-up today and never miss that essential piece of local news again!

Sam
Samantha Scott, Deputy Town Clerk.

Keep in touch

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SUNDAY BAND CONCERTS 2026

All performances commence at 2.30pm at the Courtenay Park Bandstand. Attendance is free and bringing along your own picnic is very much encouraged!



◆ 12th July – TIVERTON TOWN BAND

◆ 9th August – OKEHAMPTON EXCELSIOR SILVER BAND

sponsored by the Braden family (in honour of the late Major G.W. Braden)



◆ 13th September – BAY BRASS

sponsored by Mead Storage

Mead Storage
CONTAINER & CARAVAN STORAGE



Plotting a healthy future!

More and more people are becoming aware of the far-reaching benefits of working an allotment including chemical free fruit, vegetables and flowers.

Did you know that between 2011 and 2021 the amount of PFAS pesticide residues in food (synthetic 'forever chemicals') in the EU tripled? Rising by 220% in EU fruit and 247% in EU vegetables with the highest residues being in strawberries up 534%. (source: Pesticide Action Network UK). The term 'grow your own' has never been more important to our continued good health!



A daily visit to the allotment is beneficial to both your physical and mental well-being; it has been scientifically proven that working an allotment is good for you and can help you reconnect with nature. It is a place to find friendship and join in with the community spirit, or, alternatively, it can be a place to relax and find solitude on your own plot. It also saves you money – even a well-managed quarter plot can save you up to £500 per year if worked properly.

It is important to note that an allotment is not an occasional hobby, it is a lifestyle that requires a continual commitment every week, but there is no downside to having an allotment, so why not apply today? Simply visit nadcaa.org.uk, click the **Apply For A Plot** button and fill in the form, or email info@nadcaa.org.uk

For the first time in 25 years the Newton Abbot & District Co-operative Allotment Association (NADCAA) has almost cleared the waiting list for its biggest site, Decoy Field, so why not get your name on the list now and make a real change to your life and well-being?



Newton Abbot bereavement group launched

Newton Abbot Town Council is supporting the launch of a new bereavement support group. The first meeting is due to take place at The Courtenay Centre 10.30am – 12pm on Thursday June 18 and is the initiative of 77-year-old former social worker Dorothy Martin whose husband John died in 2024.

Having found her own grief overwhelming, Dorothy sought help from a support group in Teignmouth. The decision transformed her life and generated the desire to ensure others could benefit from something similar.



Dorothy Martin with husband John

"It did me such good, it was wonderful; it saved me really," she said, "I thought that I've just got to share this. I know the loneliness bereavement creates; I know the feeling that no one can help. I was talking recently with a funeral director who said that support like this is so needed. Whatever time I have left I just want to ensure that I use it wisely and for the benefit of others."

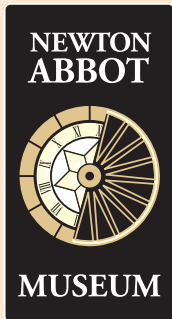
The Newton Abbot Bereavement Support Group will meet on the first and third Thursday of each month at The Courtenay Centre, with room hire charges covered by the town council for the first three months.

Dorothy, now a Bereavement Listener for Rowcroft Hospice, added: *"The role of the group is to help people understand they are not alone, to talk through, in a very gentle way, ways we can move forward in our grief, with time for a hot drink and biscuit and a little socialisation."*

"We look forward to hearing from you, meeting with you and helping you as we share information on the grief journey to enable us to move forward in a way our loved one would have us go."

Anyone thinking the group might be of help to them is asked to call 07793 726025 and leave a message. A leader will call back and provide further information, answer questions and offer an invitation to the next meeting. Dorothy is also hoping to attract support from retired professionals who could take the number of group leaders to four.

For more information email martin_dorothy@hotmail.co.uk or call **0747 685 8963**



Museum News



FROM **JOANNA ECCLES** (CURATOR) AND **LUCY COKES & VERONIKA VALIGURSKA** (CURATORIAL ASSISTANTS)

This summer, we're excited to be working on a new project to digitise our growing photographic archive of over 7,000 images and make it accessible online for everyone to explore.

By carefully digitising each image, we can preserve them for future generations while also providing new ways for the community to connect with their heritage.

These photographs capture the rich history of our town: its streets, people, events and everyday moments.



Once online, the collection will be freely available, allowing the local community, researchers, and anyone with an interest in Newton Abbot to browse and discover stories from the past – all from the comfort of their own home!

And talking of photos...

A new, free exhibition, open to the public throughout August, offers the chance to explore the fascinating collections of Newtonian Andrew Cooper, an award-winning wildlife filmmaker, broadcaster and writer.

Working with the BBC Natural History Unit, Andrew travelled to more than 70 countries, filming extraordinary animal behaviour from the Arctic to Africa and from the Himalayas to the Galápagos.

This exhibition brings together paintings, photographs, filming equipment, and documents (including from David Attenborough) to explore Andrew's career and the wider golden age of wildlife film-making.



Think small

Artist Fliss Shillingford has been exploring history with local community groups, and creating 3D models of iconic buildings around Newton Abbot.



Now forming a new trail around the museum, visitors can test their powers of observation to spot models of well-known local buildings including Madge Mellor's, the Library, Forde House and more! The miniatures will be discoverable at Newton's Place for a year.

August Creative Thursdays

In conjunction with our summer exhibition, we will host drop-in creative activities each Thursday morning between 10.30 and 12.30. No need to book, but places will be limited to the space we have.

WATERCOLOUR WILDLIFE.

6th August

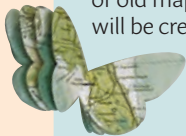
With watercolours and special paper, create mini artworks of wildlife. Tips and inspiration from Andrew Cooper's beautiful artworks.

PAPER BUTTERFLY ART

13th August

Using a selection of old maps, you will be creating

an unusual 'Victorian' butterfly collection for your wall.



SOUND RECORDING

20th August (2 x 1-hour)

Skylark FM is the most unusual radio station that you have ever encountered! A continuous broadcast across Dartmoor of the sounds of nature, wildlife, ambient noise, people speaking and original music – all recorded by the public. In this workshop you will record sounds around Newton Abbot that will contribute to the station's output.



ANIMAL MASKS

27th August

We are hoping for a carnival of animals at the end of this magnificent mask making workshop. Using cardboard, fake fur, feathers and lots of lovely art materials you can create all sorts of birds and animal masks.



STAY UP-TO-DATE!

Don't forget to check our social media streams or the museum website for all the latest news, exhibition dates, opening times and contact details:

MUSEUM EVENTS LISTINGS

TODDLER TUESDAY

Every Tuesday, 9:30am–10:30am during term-time.

Pre-book your FREE place online via our What's On web page and find out about upcoming sessions.



RELAXED VISITS

These are drop-in sessions – no need to book.

We set aside special visiting hours for anyone who might benefit from visiting the museum at a quieter time. Reduced sound levels and a chill-out room upstairs make this a great time to visit if you have additional needs, but everyone is welcome.



HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

11th – 20th September

Newton Abbot Museum is again taking part in the nation-wide Heritage Open Day events. This year's theme is Everyday Histories, celebrating the ordinary lives, places, and moments that shape our shared past. We will be looking at 'Entertaining Newton Abbot through the ages'.

See website and social media for updates.



HALLOWE'EN TRAIL

26th – 30th October

There will be a Halloween Trail to complete this October half-term, with a unique Pastport sticker to collect!

Keep your eyes peeled for a series of spooky Halloween events in the museum.

WHAT'S IN STORE – PROJECT NEWS

Funding secured

Newton Abbot Museum has secured approval for a new heritage store. With support from National Lottery Heritage Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation and Swire Foundation, the project will create a climate-controlled facility to house more than 18,000 collection items.

The new store will have improved physical access through step-free entry and expand public engagement through tours, workshops, and enhanced research and volunteer facilities. It will also support digitisation, helping uncover new stories within the collection.

The museum team has already begun the major task of moving the store collection to keep it safe during construction, which is expected to begin in summer 2026. Throughout the building phase the museum will remain open to visitors.



Barry, our collections assistant, wrapping pictures in preparation for offsite storage

Made possible with



Heritage Fund

Seasonal Snippets

Summer Volunteers

Are you looking for a short-term volunteering opportunity over the summer holidays? We are looking for volunteers to help with our summer exhibition this year throughout August.

Summer holidays

Alongside our two nature-themed exhibitions, we'll be buzzing with family-friendly activities throughout the summer holidays!

- ◆ Our popular Thursday drop-in sessions will be back, with hands-on crafts and activities inspired by the fascinating world of recording nature on film and as artwork.
- ◆ Come and explore a new trail this summer!
- ◆ We're also delighted to welcome back our Young Curators Club for ages 8–16.

For more information and booking details, keep an eye on our website or subscribe to our monthly newsletter.

Tower Opening – FREE Admission

Open: 10am to 1pm every Wednesday from 20th May until 16th September. The Tower is open on selected Saturdays and on Saturdays throughout the school holidays. See website for dates.

Please note: due to the nature of this ancient building, there is no wheelchair access to the upper floors, and children aged under five are not permitted upstairs. The steps are steep and access to the upper floor is at the visitor's own risk. A video showing the upper floors is available to view on the ground floor.



Artist's impression of the museum's new storage facility at Newton's Place

Wildlife-Friendly Verges Take Root

A PROGRESS REPORT FROM **THOMAS COLLARD**, GREEN SPACES OFFICER FOR NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

Since early 2025, Newton Abbot Town Council has been exploring new ways to manage grass verges that are both environmentally responsible and shaped by community feedback. As of April 2026, this work has moved from planning into action, with a town-wide wildlife-friendly verge trial now underway.

This initiative forms part of the council's response to the biodiversity emergency declared in 2024 and reflects a wider commitment to enhancing green spaces for both people and wildlife. A dedicated working group of councillors, officers, and local organisations continues to guide this work through the council's annually reviewed biodiversity policy.

Shaped by Community Feedback

A key part of developing the trial has been listening to residents. Two rounds of public consultation were carried out across 2025 and early 2026, ensuring that local views have directly influenced both the locations selected and how the verges are being managed.

This feedback highlighted important considerations such as safety, visibility, and maintenance standards, all of which have been carefully built into the trial design.

From Grass to Wildflowers

Seven verges across Newton Abbot have now been selected for the trial. Most have been prepared and sown with a carefully chosen mix of locally sourced wildflower seeds, primarily made up of native species. These are supported by a small number of fast-growing 'nurse crop' annuals, which help establish the longer-term planting while also providing early colour and visual appeal.

Each wildlife-friendly area has been clearly marked out with stakes to prevent accidental mowing, and new signage has been installed to highlight the project and direct residents to further information online. In some locations, additional signage has also been introduced to address issues (e.g. off-road parking) raised during consultation.

Testing What Works

The trial is not a one-size-fits-all approach. At several sites, two separate areas have been created: one sown with wildflowers and another left to regenerate naturally. This will allow the council and local ecologists to compare outcomes and better understand which methods deliver the greatest biodiversity benefits.

At one location with historic heathland characteristics, the decision has been taken to rely entirely on natural regeneration, offering a further opportunity to learn from different management approaches.

Looking Ahead

The trial is expected to run until early 2028. During this time, ecologists will monitor plant and other wildlife diversity, while the council will continue to gather feedback from residents.

The findings will help shape how grass verges are managed across Newton Abbot in the future, balancing biodiversity gains with the needs and expectations of the community.



Facilities Maintenance Officer, Stephen Payne working the verge at Queensway, Buckland



Summer Events



Another summer schedule that just packed with great days out for all the family! Whether you're a fan of music, markets or meeting new friends, there's an event to match your mojo – and most are free to attend.



PARTY IN THE PARK

Saturday 4th & Sunday 5th July,
11am – 4pm, Courtenay Park

A fun-filled two day event organised by the town council in partnership with Rotary Newton Abbot. There'll be plenty of free activities, and no need to book places or buy tickets, just turn up and enjoy the party!

- Music from Rock Choir, Taiko Drummers, Four Play Band, The Knights Templar and Full Disclosure
- Circus skills & face painting
- Refreshments available
- Trade & charity stalls
- Balloon modelling
- Bouncy castle
- Dog show



MUSIC IN THE MUSEUM presents HARBOTTLE & JONAS

Monday 29th June,
7pm, Newton's Place

Exquisite folk from one of the country's most exciting duos. Their songs explore historical tales and personal narratives, weaving stories into their live shows that are as engaging as they are moving.

• Tickets £15 (or £20 with interval drink)



NEWTON ABBOT SUNDAY MARKETS

5th / 19th July, 2nd / 16th August, 6th / 20th September, 4th / 18th October, and 1st / 15th November (10am – 3pm) Courtenay Street

PLUS – Additional Special Event: NEWTON ABBOT FOOD & DRINK FEST

30th August, 10am – 3pm, Courtenay Street

Due to their popularity, the fantastic outdoor Sunday markets are held on the first and third Sundays of each month:

- Amazing choice of street food
- Local produce and crafts

in Newton Abbot

SUNDAY BAND CONCERTS

12th July – Tiverton Town Band
9th August – Okehampton Excelsior Band
13th September – Bay Brass

All performances will commence at 2.30pm at Courtenay Park bandstand. Bring along a picnic!

BARHAM CUP DINGHY RELAY RACE

Friday 31st July, 6.30pm, Fish Quay

This annual rowing race from Fish Quay in Teignmouth to Newton Abbot Town Quay – with a change of crew at Coombe Cellars to keep things interesting – has been going strong for over 100 years and remains as popular as ever!



TEIGNMOUTH REGATTA

With 14 race classes to choose from, entrants of all ages and abilities are catered for.

In partnership with Teignmouth Regatta.

TOWN CRIERS' COMPETITION

Saturday 5th September
10.15am – 2pm, town centre

The colourful criers always bring a great sense of occasion to this event – so come and support them once again for this traditional event.

- ✦ Prizes for top criers in eight categories
- ✦ FREE children's activities in Courtenay St
- ✦ St Leonard's Clock Tower open for tours



DEVON GENERAL REMEMBERED

Sunday 6th September, 10am – 4pm

Celebrating the Devon General Omnibus & Touring Company – and its fabulous cherry red & ivory buses – formed in 1919.

- ✦ FREE open-top bus trips and heritage bus rides with rail station link
- ✦ Memorabilia stall



CLASSIC CAR SHOW

Saturday 12th September,
9am – 4pm, town centre



Classic cars on show throughout the pedestrianised part of the town centre.

- ✦ Live music from Hot House Combo
- ✦ Entertainment on Golden Lion Square

In partnership with Teignbridge Classics. For general and exhibitor enquiries, please visit: www.teignclassics.co.uk

MEET YOUR COUNCIL

Saturday 3rd October,
10am – 1.30pm, Courtenay Street

Come and meet your town councillors, council officers and museum team.

The local community of Newton Abbot will be asked to share their views about their priorities, concerns and aspirations for the town, and much more!



Also watch out for live music and entertainment in the town centre on selected Saturdays.

Visit www.newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk for more details. Further updates are also available on Facebook and Instagram:



NewtonAbbottowncouncilcommunity



@newtonabbottc

All events are subject to change at short notice, and many are weather dependent. For latest news check the website and NATC Facebook page.

FOCUS ON



by **Pierre Doutreligne**
PROJECTS & STRATEGY OFFICER

Tucked just off the hustle and bustle of Courtenay Street, Union Street is a short(-ish) yet characterful stretch that perfectly captures the town's independent spirit. While larger chains and retail parks dominate many town centres across the country, Union Street has quietly carved out its own identity: quirky, creative, community-focused and proudly local.

Whilst, at first glance, it may look like a nondescript side street, when you do wander along Union Street you quickly discover a place filled with an unmistakably independent personality. For the street's standout feature is undoubtedly its mix of truly local businesses. From musical instrument suppliers to specialist watchmakers and repair shops, Union Street offers experiences – and an expertise – that simply cannot be replicated online or in a retail chain.

The variety of businesses on display gives visiting Union Street an almost treasure-hunt vibe. You might pop in for a gourmet sandwich and come out having fallen for vintage décor, a handmade gift, or an electric guitar. Unlike uniform high streets elsewhere, Union Street feels organic and authentic, shaped by the personalities of the people who work there, from long-standing Union Street stalwart Lewis at Gunter Watchmakers to recent arrivals Vicki and Henri, the mother-and-son team behind homemade gift emporium Keepsy Box.

Union Street also embodies the quirky side of Newton Abbot, as demonstrated by the colourful bollards, the brainchild of the community-driven Cwtch Hub, a café and social space in the top end of the street. That individuality is increasingly important in modern town centres. Independent streets like Union Street create a sense of place – something distinctive that cannot be copied. In Newton Abbot, where the historic market town atmosphere remains strong, Union Street complements the wider town centre perfectly. It connects naturally with the market culture, local cafés and family-run businesses that continue to define the town.

But perhaps Union Street's greatest charm lies in its sense of discovery. Granted, it is not polished. Nor is it overly commercialised. Instead, it feels lived-in, original, and genuine.

There is a warmth to the street that encourages people to slow down, browse, chat and support local enterprise.

In an age of homogenised high streets (which luckily doesn't apply to either Courtenay Street or Queen Street), Union Street stands as a reminder that character still matters – a quirky little pocket of independence that continues to give the town colour, creativity and community spirit.

The final word goes to the Mayor of Newton Abbot, Councillor Louise Cooke: *"Next time you are in town, make sure you take the time to turn into Union Street – Newton Abbot's hidden gem. Have a coffee, buy a gift or look at beautiful art for sale. You can even get your hair or nails done – or your watch repaired. It's all there and well worth a visit!"*



Mayor of Newton Abbot, Councillor Louise Cooke, pictured alongside one of the distinctively colourful bollards that line Union Street. PHOTO: Nigel Canham



Community Project Updates

Interested in joining the Rotarians? Please contact Martin Smith at martrcna@outlook.com or Jane Camp at jane.rotaryna@gmail.com

GET READY TO CELEBRATE!

Party in the Park is back, and it's shaping up to be bigger, brighter, and more exciting than ever!

Rotary Newton Abbot is delighted to once again join forces with Newton Abbot Town Council to bring another unforgettable weekend of community spirit, entertainment, and family fun to the heart of the town.

Rotary Newton Abbot will be bringing the energy on Saturday, while Newton Abbot Town Council has a fabulous programme planned for Sunday, making this a full weekend of fantastic entertainment for everyone to enjoy.

Saturday promises a fun-filled day packed with live music, dazzling performances, interactive activities, and plenty of surprises for all ages, including our extended Youth Zone. From the amazing, energetic and crowd-pleasing Rock Choir opening the event, to our first-ever Fun Dog Show, there'll be excitement around every corner. Children can enjoy creative workshops, inflatables, games, and colourful face painting, ensuring there's something for the whole family to enjoy.

Visitors can also explore a fantastic variety of local stalls, delicious food and drink, and opportunities to support amazing community groups and local businesses. Whether you're coming for the music, the atmosphere, the family fun, or simply to enjoy a summer day in the park, Party in the Park truly has something for everyone, and best of all, it's completely FREE to enter!

Alongside returning favourites that everyone knows and loves, this year's event will feature exciting new attractions guaranteed to entertain the crowds. Expect laughter, music, community spirit, and plenty of unforgettable moments as the park comes alive for an incredible weekend.

Bring your friends, bring the family, and join us for a summer event not to be missed! Party in the Park 2026 is set to be our best one yet!

YOUNG APPRENTICE CHALLENGE

Working with our District Team, Rotary Newton Abbot launched the Young Apprentice Challenge for local schools and youth groups, and it proved a fantastic success.

With an initial £50 seed fund generously donated by Rotary Newton Abbot Corporate Members, teams used creativity and teamwork to raise money for charity and their own projects. Activities included Christmas fair stalls, car washes, and a popular hot dog and fireworks evening.

The competition inspired enthusiasm across the South West Peninsula, with three outstanding finalists emerging: Coombe Pafford Special School, 1st Newton Abbot Kingsteignton Explorer Scouts, and Rydon Primary School. These were the three teams who raised the most money overall.

The finalists competed at the Rotary District Youth Festival in February, where presentations were made to the judges.



L-R: John Cleverly (Shelterbox), Tony Williams (Rotary District), Miss Barker & Miss Thomas (Rydon Primary School) together with pupils of Rydon Primary School

With a delightful, memorable performance, Rydon Primary School took the top prize and will use part of the funds raised to improve their outdoor environment.

Following this successful year, we hope the 2026/27 Young Apprentice Challenge will be even bigger and better, with more teams ready to develop new skills, support their communities, and take on the challenge!

A NEW LANDMARK TAKES ROOT!

Rotary Newton Abbot has proudly planted one of Devon's special landmark trees donated by Devon Wildlife Trust as part of the Saving Devon's Treescapes project.

This beautiful tree will help replace those lost to ash dieback, boost local biodiversity, and grow into a lasting symbol for the community for generations to come.

Next time you pass Penn Inn, look out for the newest addition to Newton Abbot's landscape – a small tree today, a local landmark tomorrow!

Nick & Jane Taylor, leaders of our Gardening Club, joined Rotarian Jeremy Newcombe to inspect the newly planted tree at Penn Inn Roundabout – and just ten weeks later it was thriving beautifully!

L-R: Nick Taylor, Jane Taylor and Jeremy Newcombe (Newton Abbot Rotary)



COMMUNITY GRANTS

Rotary Newton Abbot is proving that small changes can spark big transformations.

Following a heavily oversubscribed first round, the club has just concluded its second round of Community Grants delivering fifteen 'seed donations' of £300 each to the grassroots organisations that are working locally.

This latest injection of £4,500 brings the club's recent direct support to nearly 30 local charities, sports clubs, and community groups. For these volunteer-led organisations, a £300 boost isn't just a donation, it's a new kit for a youth team, a new exercise class, a much-needed piece of equipment etc.

Locally we have an incredible network of 'quiet heroes', small groups making a difference for our community. Our seed donations are designed to encourage these local efforts!

Congratulations to all recipients!



Scan the QR code to access Rotary Newton Abbot's Facebook page

Activity Hotting Up for Summer

WITH **KATE GREEN**, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER FOR NEWTON'S PLACE



Although its early days yet for the exciting project at the museum to build a new heritage store for our 18,000-strong collection, we have connected with hundreds of people already, testing out ideas for what sort of activities we will run behind the scenes when the new store is built and kitted out.

One of our main aims for the project is to expand the experience for museum visitors by sharing what happens behind the scenes in the museum, enabling people to get up close to items in the stores with tours of the space and explorations of rarely seen objects.

Since November last year, we've worked with over 900 people, consulting, planning and delivering all sorts of activities and workshops to connect people with some of the treasures in the current stores.

For this summer, a second phase of workshops will be on offer to all ages, so look out for details on our website of how you can get involved. Planned activities include:

CONSERVATION IN ACTION

See conservation experts work behind the scenes to conserve some of our more fragile items in the collection.

YOUNG CURATORS CLUB

Working in schools with young people who are interested in history, and finding out about what is involved with working as a museum curator. We will also be running a Young Curators Club each Tuesday morning in the summer holidays

PICTURE THIS

A wide range of art activities including sketching, collage, pottery and photography

where participants create art inspired by the collection.

DEEP DIVE

If you've visited the museum and have enjoyed reading our information panels to learn about items on display then you should know that this will be the tip of an iceberg in terms of what we know about a subject!

Our Deep Dive sessions are an opportunity to find out much more and to dive into oodles of facts and photos. Subjects will include The Great War, The Workhouse, Tudor Costume, and a look at local newspapers from the last 100 years.

GETTING SOCIAL

Something for the savvy and techy young people in Newton Abbot. We are looking for people between the ages of 18 and 25 who are interested in creating content for our social media platforms – great experience to add to your C.V., plus we have vouchers on offer as a 'thank you'.

OUTREACH

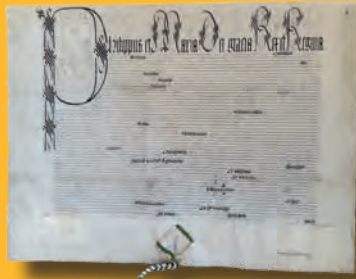
Our extensive outreach programme is back, bringing fascinating objects and activities to your group, community centre or community event. Get in touch with museum staff to arrange an outreach visit to your setting.



YOUR SPACE



An illuminating collection of objects on show from our Ukrainian community that share traditional items from their homeland. Also, in June there will be a celebratory event and performance from the local Ukrainian women's choir.



Celebrating 40 years of connection with Newton Abbot, the current Lord of the Manorial Borough, Keith Stokes-Smith will be sharing precious, historic documents including the original letters patent and grant by Queen Mary I (daughter of Henry VIII) and her husband, Philip II of Spain.



An amazing collection of toy fire engines will completely fill the



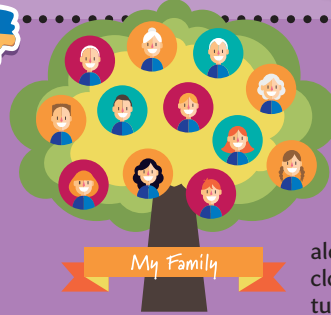
Your Space case across August – you will have never seen so many fire engines in one space before!



A local collector who used to work as a truancy officer will be showing his fascinating collection of objects relating to school attendance – very appropriate for September, being 'back-to-school' month...



Make & Create



Following our Family History Day in June we will be helping you make a creative family tree. Bring along information about those close to you and we will help you turn it into a work of art!



With an abundance of flowers everywhere this month, we will help you make your very own flower press! We will also 'dig out' objects from our collection that feature flowers for you to see.



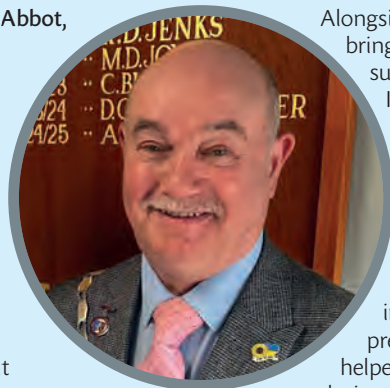
Learn about the history of Newton Abbot's Alexandra Theatre and create your own mini-box theatre with curtains, stage sets, characters, props and everything you would find in a theatre. What would your drama production be?



Looking Ahead to a Brighter Future

FORMER MAYOR OF NEWTON ABBOT, COUNCILLOR COLIN PARKER SHARES HIS OPTIMISM FOR THE DAYS AHEAD

As we look ahead to the future of Newton Abbot, there is every reason to feel optimistic and encouraged by the progress taking place across our town centre. Over recent years we have all recognised the challenges facing high streets throughout the country, yet Newton Abbot continues to show a resilience and determination that compares very favourably with many similar towns.



There has been in recent years a few differing opinions as to the direction of travel in respect of certain projects aimed at enhancing our town centre. I feel currently we are slowly but surely emerging from that transition stage.

Let's face it, town centres as we have known them are changing, and perhaps never will be the same again with their evolution into more diverse and experience-led destinations, focused not only on retail but also on leisure, hospitality, well-being and community life!

We must develop with these changes and not look back. At the same time, I am not detracting from the fundamental prime motivator for us which is the purchase of our necessary living requirements in our shopping establishments!

One of the most significant developments is, of course, the impending completion of the Market Hall and surrounding area improvements. This project represents far more than a physical transformation; it is a statement of confidence in Newton Abbot's future. The enhanced facilities and attractive public spaces will provide a modern and welcoming environment for residents, visitors and businesses alike, while still respecting the proud heritage and character of our traditional market town.

Equally encouraging is the continued commitment shown by our established businesses, such as The Country Table. The ongoing expansion and investment by Austins, our flagship department store, sends a very strong message about belief in Newton Abbot. Austins has been at the heart of our community for generations, and its continued growth is a tremendous vote of confidence in the future of our town centre.

Alongside this, it has been wonderful to welcome new businesses bringing fresh energy and variety to our high street. Businesses such as The Italian Store, Yellow Umbrella Gifts, Holly Keeling Interiors and Cotton Traders all add greatly to the attractiveness and diversity of the town centre. Their investment demonstrates that Newton Abbot remains a place where businesses see opportunity and potential.

We should also recognise the commitment shown by many long-established institutions and businesses that have chosen to remain firmly rooted within our town centre, including those who have successfully relocated from the previous market area. Their loyalty and determination have helped maintain the vitality and continuity of Newton Abbot during periods of significant change.

Having just completed my second term as mayor I can say that this has been a year of energy, challenge and transition for our town, set against the backdrop of impending local government reorganisation and the likelihood of increased responsibilities for town and parish councils.

Importantly, Newton Abbot's progress is not happening by accident. It is the result of hard work, partnership and belief from businesses, local organisations, community groups, councils and residents alike. While there is always more to do, the positive signs are increasingly visible. Occupancy levels remain encouraging; investment continues to be out there and there is a growing sense that our town is moving confidently in the right direction.

The future of Newton Abbot will depend on all of us continuing to work together. Supporting local businesses, welcoming visitors, encouraging new investment and taking pride in our town are all essential if we are to build upon the progress already achieved. By pulling together as a community, we can ensure that Newton Abbot not only adapts to modern challenges, but thrives as a vibrant, attractive and historically successful market town for many years to come.

Newton Abbot must remain confident in its identity, bold in its aspirations, responsible in its governance and united in its community spirit.