

Newton's Place - the doors are opening!

THE phased opening of Newton's Place, the £2.2 million museum and community hub project in Newton Abbot, is set to begin on Saturday October 3 - subject to any additional Covid-19 restrictions.

Initially only the museum will welcome visitors and advanced booking will be essential.

Ongoing uncertainties about the pandemic and the need to restrict numbers of people in the building mean the community space won't be available to hire until further notice.

Additionally, residents wanting contact with Town Council staff, whose offices are also located in the former Wolborough Street church, will have to email or phone.

Although the opening has come later and in a different format to that hoped for, Project Board Chairman Cllr Mike Ryan is delighted to be on the verge of welcoming visitors.

'We have waited for so long to announce the opening of Newton's Place and it's fantastic that we are now able to do that,' he said.

'As everyone knows, there were disappointing construction delays and then of course we were all hit by the corona virus situation.

'This is definitely not the way we had things planned but we'll take what we've got and be grateful.

'Our Town Clerk Phil Rowe, and Museum Curator Felicity Cole, will monitor the situation very closely and update us regularly.

'As soon as they're able to take bookings for the community space and open the Town Council front desk we'll let everyone know.

'Likewise, we hope to be able to do away with booked museum visits as soon as possible but for now we must make every visit safe and enjoyable.

'To deliver Newton Abbot's number one priority project has been a heck of a challenge these past three years and we've not been helped by recent events.

'But nothing can take away from what has been achieved, and that is to conserve a landmark building, deliver fantastic community resources and all without adding a single penny to council tax payers' bills.

'That's a pretty decent legacy I reckon'.

Museum opening hours and booking details will be published later this summer at www.newtonspace.org.