

**NOTES OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GROUP HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2018 AT 7.00 P.M. AT THE TOWN HALL, GREAT WESTERN HOUSE, 9 DEVON SQUARE, NEWTON ABBOT**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs L Sheffield (Chairman)  
M Joyce (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillors  
Mrs C Bunday R J Jenks (Dep Mayor)  
C Coyle-Moore K L Purchase (Mayor)  
M Hocking Ms L Roberts  
D Howe T Ward

In attendance Mrs Meryl Basham, Environmental Officer,  
Newton Abbot and District Co-operative Allotment Association

Officers In attendance: Felicity Cole – Museum Curator  
Alexandra Robinson – Committee Administrator

**CE11. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors David Corney-Walker, Colin Parker and Mrs Ann Jones and Mrs Sally Henley, Town Development Manager.

**CE12. INTERESTS**

None declared.

**CE13. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Community Engagement Group meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018 were received and signed as a correct record.

**CE14. PRESENTATION – ALLOTMENTS CENTENARY CELEBRATION**

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Meryl Basham, Environmental Officer, Newton Abbot and District Co-operative Allotment Association (NADCAA) to the meeting and invited her to update Members on the work of the Allotments in their Centenary year. Mrs Basham raised the following key points:

- History of food shortages encouraged potato growing at the time of the Great War (early 1917);
- Land was allocated for food production, the development of the first allotments;
- Early allotments concentrated on potato growing;
- A formal arrangement was passed by the Newton Urban District Council to ensure that land was properly cultivated;
- By 1918 there were 477 allotment holders and the formation of an association;
- This helped families throughout the period of rationing ensuring people got a better share of limited food;
- The Allotment Act of 1925 protected the sale of land intended for allotments;

- Today the majority of the plots are owned by Newton Abbot Town Council and managed by the Association and there are almost 389 half-plots across the town;
- The association has a number of annual activities including photographic competitions; fruit and vegetable show; bat monitoring and social events;
- Allotments take account and support the local wildlife and environment; with Wildlife Watch and bat surveys;
- The future of allotments are supported in the Newton Abbot Neighbourhood Development Plan 2016-2033.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Basham for an informative and thorough presentation and invited question and comments from Members, who raised the following key points:

- Members welcomed the opportunity to have a presentation and update on the work of the Allotment Association;
- There is a waiting list for a number of the allotment sites and priority is given to residents of Newton Abbot;
- The Association would like to see the Hele Park site, known locally as 'Lemon Grove' to be finished and available for use; and
- Noted the improved site security.

Mrs Basham concluded her presentation, thanking Members for the invitation to speak and invited Councillors to visit the allotment sites or participate in a Bat Watch event.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Basham for taking questions and noted that the value and importance of allotments remains as relevant today as it was when they commenced 100 years ago. Following which Mrs Basham was invited to leave the meeting.

## **CE15. MUSEUM REPORT**

The Chairman reminded Members that they receive regular updates on the Newton's Place project at each committee meeting therefore she invited the Museum Curator, Mrs Cole to update Members on the recent activities in the Museum in preparation for the move and re-opening in the new premises.

Mrs Cole referred to the Museum Report, previously circulated, and raised the following key points:

- ❖ The main focus for the Curator has been the development of the themes for the new setting;
- ❖ The selection of items from the collection, the stories associated with the themes and the development of the designs with Leach Studio;
- ❖ Work with the Broad-gauge society to design and create a model of the first train that arrived into Newton Abbot Station, the 'Antelope';
- ❖ Kate Green has continued an extensive programme of community engagement both with existing groups to update them on the project and with new parties to extend the reach across the community and across all age groups;

- ❖ A variety of activities held in the community during the Museum closure have been valuable pilot studies and once evaluated fully would provide the basis for activities in the Museum once it re-opens;
- ❖ Mrs Cole and Mrs Green will give a radio interview for BBC Radio Devon on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October to promote the 'Memories of St Leonard's Church' event, inviting the public to share their experiences and photographs of events held at the church over the years prior to its closure;
- ❖ The Newton Abbot Photographic Club have carried out several sessions of gaining photographic images as evidence of a formal historical record to retain in the archive and meet the conditions of the Planning Consent together with artistic photographs which will form part of a temporary exhibition at the launch;
- ❖ Schools project to prepare art for the hoardings around the former Seymour Horwell site showing an historical time line for Newton Abbot;
- ❖ The Museum Volunteers were invited to an 'Antiques Roadshow' as a refreshing treat to acknowledge their commitment to the Museum, particularly while it remains closed;
- ❖ The Curator attended a course on the recruitment and retention of volunteers to assist in management of volunteers upon re-opening;
- ❖ Tess Walker, Museum Volunteer had offered 'ten-minute' talks in the town throughout the summer; and together with Val Harrison had organised 11 events for the Heritage Open Days in September; and
- ❖ Acknowledged the support and commitment of the Clock Tower volunteers who following a busy summer had collected £600 in donations and sale of leaflets.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Cole and the Museum staff and volunteers for their continued efforts on the Newton's Place project and within the Museum in preparation for the move and re-opening.

## CE16. ACCOUNTS/INCOME & EXPENDITURE

### A. MUSEUM

The Community and Engagement Group received and noted the Income and Expenditure statements from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017- 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 and a further statement as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018 for the Museum, previously circulated.

Following consideration, it was;

**RECOMMENDED** that

- a) The Income and Expenditure Statements for the Museum be hereby noted and accepted; and
- b) To note and recommend the proposed 'stand-still' budget, of £32,800 for the Museum to the meeting of the Community & Heritage Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

### B. NEWTON IN BLOOM

The Community and Engagement Group received and noted the Income and Expenditure statements from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017- 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 and a further statement as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018 for Newton In Bloom, previously circulated.

Following considerable discussion, it was;

**RECOMMENDED** that

- a) The Income and Expenditure Statements for Newton In Bloom be hereby, noted and accepted; and
- b) To note and recommend the proposed 'stand-still' budget, of £18,000 for 2019/20 for Newton In Bloom to the meeting of the Community & Heritage Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

**CE17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Community and Engagement Group would be 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 at 7.00 pm in the Town Hall.

CHAIRMAN