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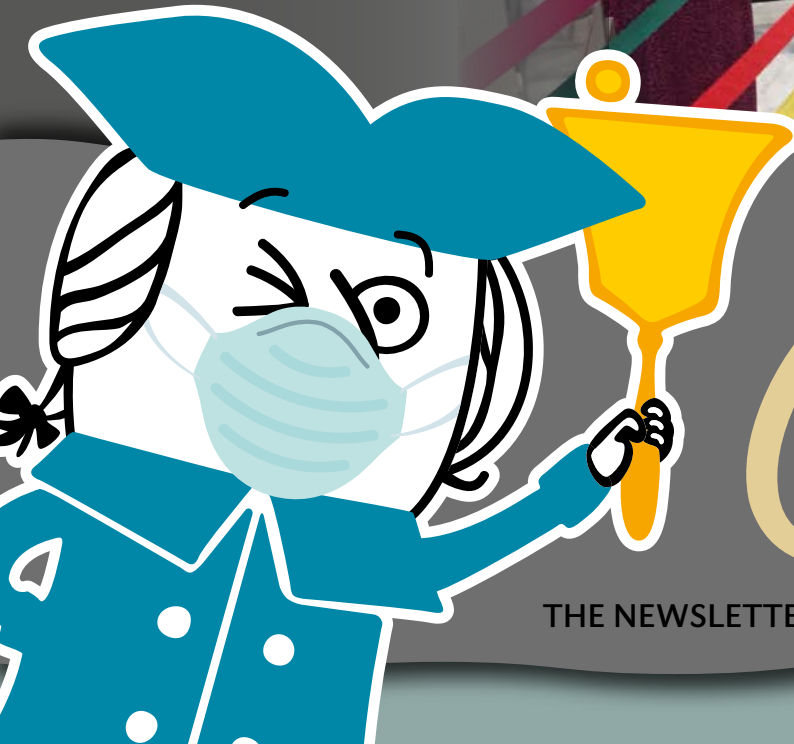
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THE NEWTON

Crier

NOVEMBER 2020

THE NEWSLETTER OF NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL





(DEPUTY) EDITOR'S NOTES

Back to the Future!

Hi, everybody, I'm stepping in to cover for Sam on this issue, so I've borrowed the red pen and settled into the hot-seat for this winter edition of the newsletter.

It's been a real hive of activity at the council over the last couple of months, having now made the momentous move from Devon Square to our all-new offices at Newton's Place.

The logistics of relocating whilst maintaining a consistent level of service to the public have been challenging – especially in these corona-centric times – but we firmly believe that the end result is absolutely worth the effort for the long-term benefit of the town.

By far the most complex operation has been the painstaking process of cataloguing, packing, transporting and storing of the thousands of artefacts that together form Newton Abbot Museum's amazing collection of historical treasures. Seeing these items now displayed in a setting worthy of their cultural importance should provide all Newtonians with a justifiable sense of pride in our town. Hopefully, it won't be too long before we can fully open the doors to the general public and celebrate the completion of this major new asset properly.

State-of-the-art is the new normal!

Natalie

Natalie Hicks
Events Co-ordinator

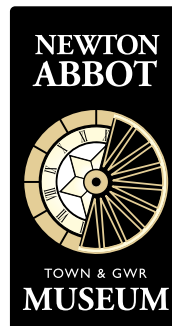


Keep in touch

call us: 01626 201120 | email us: info@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

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Edited by: **Natalie Hicks** (Natalie.Hicks@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk)



We're back!

Our fantastic new museum has wowed its first visitors, opening its doors to the public at 10am on Saturday October 3rd.

The history hunters' heaven is located within the £2.2 million Newton's Place project, which has been led by Newton Abbot Town Council, at the former St Leonard's Church in Wolborough Street.

The reimagining from unloved and crumbling Victorian eyesore to 21st century community facility made a more than favourable impression on those lucky enough to be there for the opening.

'It's absolutely amazing, for me the biggest observation is I can't believe the level of transformation,' said resident Andy Waites who was one of those invited to cut the ribbon rainbow with Mayor Cllr Richard Jenks.

'It's quite spectacular and showing the history of Newton Abbot, it's also really interactive and family-friendly. And what with wi-fi and usb sockets in the community rooms upstairs, which will all be accessible to local groups when they open, it's great for the town.'

Shane Morris, another ribbon-cutter, said after taking part in the ceremony: *'It's great, I'm very proud actually. It's the first time I've chopped a ribbon!'*

Other first-day visitors were Oggwell residents Lindsay Cooper and her fiancé Darren Bevin who has volunteered at the museum since summer 2019.

'It's superb, excellent, so good for the town,' said Lindsay who teaches at Newton Abbot College and is looking forward to the day when student trips can be arranged.

Darren added: *'The old museum was basically two rooms in a house, a ten-minute walk away from the town centre where I don't think many people knew about it. Now it's close to the library, close to the Tower and hopefully will get a lot of interest.'*

All the visitors were impressed with the fact that despite a £2.2 million price tag, not one penny has been added to council tax bills. Instead, the cost has been covered by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £950,000, donations from individuals and businesses, the sale of the old town hall and cash from house builders via the Community Infrastructure Levy.

It was a proud day for Cllr Mike Ryan, Chairman of the Newton's Place Project Board.

'It feels fantastic, it's been a long time coming but they've made a fantastic job of it,' he said. 'Hopefully next year we can formally open the whole building, which isn't possible yet because of the Covid-19 situation. I believe the big room can seat up to 200 people and it's there to use free of charge if you're a charity or for a small fee if not. I'll say it again: it's a fantastic building!'

'I'm very proud of all the people involved, particularly the town clerk, Phil Rowe, who had the initiative in the first place to come to us as a council and say, look, the building's for sale.'

Curator Felicity Cole, whose involvement with the museum dates back more than 30 years, said: *'It's a dream come true. Once everything becomes normalised again I'm excited about the opportunities the building affords us. To be able to have a school party downstairs and at the same time perhaps an event in one of the community rooms upstairs is wonderful. One of our local arts teachers came in and said, "Wow, we'll be able to do so much here", and we've got no end of groups clamouring to use the new facilities – it's just fantastic.'*

Due to current pandemic restrictions, visits are suspended until early December. Please see our website www.museum-newtonabbot.org.uk or call us on 01626 201121 for details.



NEWTON'S PLACE *Update*

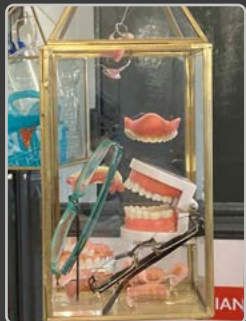
COMMUNITY | HERITAGE | TOWN

With the restoration work now complete, we take a closer look at some of the items on display within the all-new museum section of the building

Catching moments in time

A time capsule is an historic cache of objects that mark a moment in time, intended for people in the future to understand our way of life. Usually, they're hidden underground in sealed containers, often buried to coincide with the opening of a new civic building.

But the museum has taken a different approach, creating a set of glass 'time pods' that hang from the ceiling at Newton's Place. The contents – all of which were suggested by the public – represent 2020 and also objects that might not exist 100 years from now.



There are everyday household objects, current technology, food packaging and even money. Poignantly, some capsules highlight the issues of single use plastics, global warming and the current Covid-19 pandemic.

In answer to the question, 'what might not be here in 100 years time?' one participant chose human beings, with another selecting false teeth and spectacles!

More room to breathe

Although we loved the old museum and did our very best with the space on offer, certain types of objects were just too delicate or large to be squeezed into our displays. The Newton's Place Project has allowed us to build bespoke conservation standard cases which mean we can, at last, reveal some of our most interesting items, moving them from storage to public view.

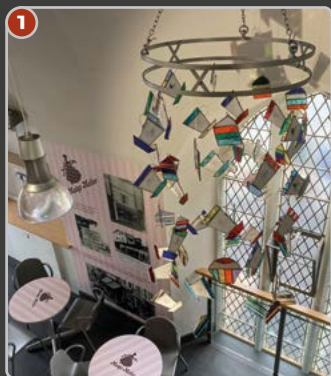
An item we are most excited about is this hand-made, golden taffeta wedding dress lovingly stitched together in Newton Abbot in 1871, which can finally emerge from its careful tissue paper cocoon.

Felicity and Charlotte (curator and assistant curator) were excited to dress the bespoke mannequin in this Victorian nuptial gown which consists of three separate sections - a skirt, a blouse and a bustle.

They were both amazed at the tiny waist of the bride who wore the dress, in fact the waist was so small even a dedicated period costume mannequin supplier didn't provide an off-the-peg option with her measurements!

The museum has some beautiful period costumes in its collection and they are finally on show. As well as the dedicated costume area, you can see clothing safely displayed in other themed areas as well. The wonderful textile pieces in the collection can finally be seen in all of their glory and we can't wait for you to see them.





Community engagement

It's all about you! Since the beginning of the Newton's Place project we have put people at the centre of everything that we have done.

We ensured that we chatted to as many people as possible to find out what you wanted in your new community space - not only how it would look, and what stories we would tell, but how you wanted to use the building and what you wanted to do when you visited.

We are very proud that we have involved hundreds of local people in the creation of beautiful artworks for the building:

- ◆ Many people reminisced about Madge Mellor's café before creating the glass teacups and slices of cake included in our glorious chandelier ❶.
- ◆ Students from Learn Devon celebrated the town and created a clock tower from glass sections.
- ◆ With the help of fabulous glass artist Amy McCarthy, many groups including Newton Abbot art clubs, secondary school students and museum volunteers, learnt glass etching techniques for sections in the two giant glass panels ❷.
- ◆ Students from Newton College explored our photo archive and created images for a large light box ❸.
- ◆ Two primary schools imagined what the banners on the front of the building might look like and decided bright, bold, and colourful was the way to go!
- ◆ Primary school pupils cast stunning glass blocks after being inspired by the Sandford Orleigh screen ❹.

Have we whetted your appetite yet? There's so much more to see and do that we can't wait to welcome you!

Visiting the museum

In line with current Covid-19 government guidelines, announced on Saturday 31st October, visitor bookings have been suspended for the duration of the lockdown period. The situation will be reviewed as soon as

restrictions are eased – hopefully in early December – so please check our online booking page by clicking on Newton (left), or keep an eye on our social media to stay up to date with all the latest developments.

During the four weeks prior to November's revised lockdown rules being rolled out across the country, interest in Newton's Place has been consistently strong, with fantastic reactions from virtually everyone that spent their Covid-safe 60-minute allocation amongst the contemporary styled, interactive exhibits and displays. In fact, since officially opening to the public, almost 700 bookings were placed by visitors from far and wide, confirming our belief that the new museum will prove to be a hit with townfolk, day-trippers and holidaymakers alike – and provide a welcome boost to the local economy, once we've consigned Covid-19 to the history books!





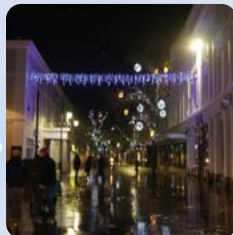
Out & About*

with **Sally Henley**, TOWN DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Despite some of the best attempts within the media to dampen any sign of Christmas spirit, we in Newton Abbot are determined that our residents and visitors will have every good reason to be cheerful this December! It's certainly been a year to remember and lots of our memories will not be the fondest, but one thing we can be sure of is that Christmas will certainly be happening in Newton Abbot!

Whilst we may not be able to put on our usual array of Christmas events, we will still be illuminating the whole town with our beautiful festive lights. There has never been a more important time to lift the spirits of the community and I'm proud to say that Newton Abbot Town Council recognises this.

As the evenings draw in, we will still be able to come over all Christmassy as we walk through the town. The same sadly, cannot be said for some of our neighbouring towns and cities where, as I understand it, there is some doubt as to whether Christmas lights will be going up at all! We won't be having a light switch on event, but the lights will be switched on without fanfare in the last week of November and so it will be a lovely surprise when it does happen.



FOR MORE INFO:
check our website:
newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

or follow us:
@newtontownwoman

Newton Abbot Now



Father Christmas of course is extra busy with all the challenges brought by the global pandemic and so he will be focusing all of his energy upon sourcing the gifts and making sure that he has a robust plan to ensure they are all delivered in time for Christmas Day.

This year Father Christmas will not be able to make his usual personal pre-Christmas visit to his Newton Abbot Clock Tower grotto and he hopes that children will understand why, but he assures me that he will be back next year! In the meantime, he hopes that whenever we look at our now iconic illuminated 'Tree on the Tower', we will think of him and smile.

People have realised just how important their town centres are as this year has progressed. Many of us were grateful to the independent and national retailers trading in our high street, which continued to deliver a brilliant local service in the face of lockdown and continue to do so as I write.

*Within current Covid-19 social distancing guidelines, of course!



If our high streets are to survive, we all need to make regular use of our town centres and take a break from the screens, which seem to have taken over our lives. We have the power to secure the continuing commercial vitality of Newton Abbot and so, if you possibly can, please give that internet giant a wide berth.

There is plenty to choose from in Newton Abbot town centre, whether it's gifts, Christmas food and drink or a new 'hair do' you are looking for. Our town still has the lowest shop vacancy rate in the region, and we want to keep it that way!

You may have noticed that some new shops have opened after the lockdown and several established businesses, upon retirement of their owners, have also changed hands. These are really positive




The South Devon College community holds an important place in Newton Abbot and the college has always been an enthusiastic supporter of Christmas in our town. The 'Tree on the Tower' is the spectacular centrepiece of our Christmas illuminations and Newton Abbot Town Council is proud to that this much loved installation will once again be sponsored by South Devon College.

South Devon College

signs and it's a clear indication that Newton Abbot is looked upon as a promising place to do business.

Working in the retail and hospitality sectors has always been hard but rewarding work. However I think we should remind ourselves how much more difficult things are right now for staff. Many shops and businesses are operating with reduced numbers of employees, meaning staff have a much heavier work load. On top of this they are obliged to wear face coverings for very long shifts. It's not easy and it's not comfortable, so please do spare a thought for them and be patient and good natured. It makes such a difference!

Going back to the Christmas theme, we will, pending further lockdown announcements, be having our usual Wednesday late-night shopping evenings on 2nd, 9th and 16th of December. This year, it is all about shopping locally and supporting your own town centre businesses. We won't be doing big 'events' at these evenings for obvious reasons, but we will still have music, lights and action – hopefully lots of shopping action!

There will be free parking from 4pm in the non-barriered TDC car parks and I do hope that residents will come out and support the business community. Look out too, for our 'Winter Woodland Trail', in partnership with the MDA, Austins and 'Woodland Wildlife'. There is a chance to win a £200 and £100 Austins gift card – with the draw taking place just before Christmas, this could be a welcome Christmas bonus for two lucky people!

I look forward to seeing you in town (as soon as Covid-19 legislation allows) and wish you and yours a cosy and safe Christmas.

Sally

Sally Henley
Town Development Manager

Winter

EVENTS



It's certainly going to be different this year but in Newton Abbot, Christmas is definitely not cancelled!

Our usual array of fantastic festive lighting will be bringing a big boost of yuletide cheer to the town centre streets – and with three Wednesday evening extensions planned for Christmas shoppers, there'll be plenty of opportunities for everyone to soak up a little seasonal atmosphere.

LATE-NIGHT SHOPPING

Wednesdays 2nd, 9th & 16th December

- ◆ Late night shopping until 8.30pm
- ◆ Free parking from 4pm in selected car parks
- ◆ Live music and Christmas stilt walkers



CHRISTMAS COVID SAFETY GIVEAWAYS

Throughout December

- ◆ Watch out for town councillors and staff popping up in the town centre with safety giveaways
- ◆ Not available to on-line shoppers – you have to be in it to win it!





THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION

Remembrance Sunday at the War Memorial

To maintain social distancing rules, this year's service, on Sunday November 8th, will be attended by a limited number of people.

Wreath-layers are asked to visit the War Memorial between 9am and 10.30am on the day. Residents wishing to follow the service can view it LIVE from the town council's Facebook page from 10.45 am.

Please
CLICK HERE
for further
details

Please
CLICK HERE
to view Order
of Service

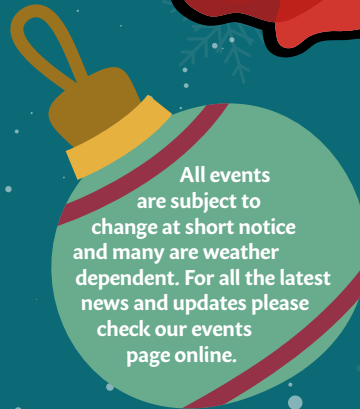
THE CHRISTMAS WOODLAND TRAIL

From Thursday 3rd December

- ◆ Search for the Fairy House and eleven Christmas woodland themed roundels
- ◆ Prize for winning entries – £200 (1st) and £100 (2nd) Austins gift cards
- ◆ Presentation of winners' gift cards will take place at Austins toy store on 29th December at 11am
- ◆ Full details, including entry forms, to be published in the Mid-Devon Advertiser (3rd, 10th and 17th December issues)

f Roundels & Fairy House gifted by Steve from Woodland Wildlife

f Gift cards provided by Austins Department Store



All events are subject to change at short notice and many are weather dependent. For all the latest news and updates please check our events page online.

MID-DEVON
Advertiser
SERIES

AUSTINS
Department Store

WOODLAND
WILDLIFE

Practical Fire Safety Advice

HOW TO DEAL WITH DOMESTIC FIRES, IN CONJUNCTION WITH **DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

With many of us already working from home to help control the spread of Covid-19, the approaching winter months will further extend the hours we spend in our own properties. Combine this with the corresponding greater demand for heating and lighting, plus festivities such as Bonfire Night and Christmas, and the potential for fire-related domestic incidents is significantly increased.



To minimise risks for residents throughout the region, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service have introduced their **Safer Together** programme, which explores ways of working with the community to prevent avoidable emergencies and to make our homes safer places in which to live, work and relax.

As part of that initiative, we've used guidelines from the Service to put together the following essential information about preparing for, and calmly dealing with, fires in the home. Just a small amount of forethought could prevent a relatively minor situation from becoming a disaster.

Plan your escape

- * Plan an escape route and make sure everyone who lives in, or visits, your home knows how to escape.
 - * Make sure the escape routes and exits are kept clear.
 - * The best route is the normal way in and out of your home; think of any difficulties you or the other people in your household may have and prepare for these.
 - * Think of a second route in case the first one is blocked.
 - * If the layout of your home changes or circumstances change, review your plan.
 - * Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them.
 - * Choose a safe room. If you can't escape you will need to find a room where you can wait for the fire and rescue service. A safe room should have a window that opens and a telephone.
 - * Get everyone in, close the door and put bedding or towels along the bottom to seal the gap. Open the window for fresh air.
- * If there is a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor where the air will be clearer.
 - * If a fire starts the priority is to get everyone out and call 999.
 - * Don't try to fight a fire yourself.

TOP TIP

Practise your escape plan and put a reminder of what to do somewhere where it can be easily seen – like the fridge.



Escaping from a window

- * You should only try to escape through a window if on the ground or first floor, and your escape route is blocked.
- * If you have to break the window, cover jagged glass with towels or thick bedding.
- * Throw bedding or other soft materials onto the floor below the window to break your fall.
- * Don't jump out of the window – lower yourself down to arms length and drop to the ground.

TOP TIP

If you have any children, elderly or disabled people in the home, plan the order you will escape in so that you can help them out.

Escaping from fires in flats

- * If there is a fire in your flat, leave the building, closing the door to your flat behind you.
- * Never use the lift in the event of a fire, always take the stairs.
- * If your escape routes are blocked get everyone into one room, close the door and put bedding or towels along the bottom to seal the gap. Open the window for fresh air.
- * Phone the fire and rescue service or shout for help and get someone else to make the call.



For total peace of mind, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service can carry out a free inspection of your home to pinpoint possible dangers and provide expert advice on fire safety. A visit from one of their specially trained Home Safety Technicians usually takes around 45 minutes and covers:

- * Checking that fitted smoke alarms are set up correctly
- * Making a fire escape plan
- * Using electricity safety
- * Cooking safely
- * Keeping children safe
- * Identifying and discussing any further support where needed, including fitting specialist fire safety equipment where required.

Because of Covid-19 restrictions, Home Safety Check requests will be prioritised for households most at risk, but basic fire safety advice is still available to all residents over the telephone.

To book an appointment or find out more about Home Fire Safety Checks, please contact the Fire & Rescue Service:

by 'phone: **0800 05 02 999**

via e-mail: **firekills@dsfire.gov.uk**

online: **www.dsfire.gov.uk**

or on their text info line: **078 00 00 2476**



DEVON & SOMERSET
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Sharing Treasures at the People's Museum

What object do you own that is precious to you? That is the question we asked people who took part in the creation of the People's Museum exhibition for the Your Space community cabinet, in the new museum.

We wanted to find out what special things people kept in the back of a drawer or in pride of place on a shelf at home and about the stories behind their objects. We connected with Newton Abbot groups – the art group, home education group, refugee families, museum volunteers, the library's Knit and Natter group and the creative

writers Bright Lights, as well as many local residents too.



F

After stories about objects were shared, beautiful, mini display cases were created to honour all of their treasured items. Starting with blank, plain boxes, people delved into our giant container of art materials and were inspired by multi-coloured tissue, sequins, jewels, ribbons, printed craft papers, buttons, old maps, feathers and Scrabble letters to design the perfect space for their object.

Pat, a museum volunteer, wanted to represent the life of her beloved father – an aircraft fitter – by highlighting his hobbies that made him the person he was **A**.

Members of Newton Abbot Art Group used their talents to draw and paint their boxes too. Tom's object was a treasured Maori necklace that was gifted to him from the indigenous New Zealand people when he couldn't travel to his son's wedding there **B**. John shared a piece of the Berlin wall that he had kept since the wall was destroyed in 1989, along with photographs of him



L

proudly helping the wall to come down during a chance business trip to the city **C**.

Two boxes decorated by members of Newton Abbot home education group – who meet weekly in town – contain very different items. One holds a beautiful seed pod, placed on a pedestal, that was gathered in 1927 by a distant relative from South Africa during their emigration to Australia **D**, whilst another box is home to a first attempt by a four-year old at making a clay sculpture **E**.

The Knit and Natter group members contributed pieces of knitting **F** and also their knitting tools to form a shared box about the group **G**. Individual boxes include Pat's collection of items given to her by her son from his adventures around the world **H**, whilst Jackie remembers her parent's vegetable stall in Newton Abbot market **I**.



A



B



C



D



E



G



I

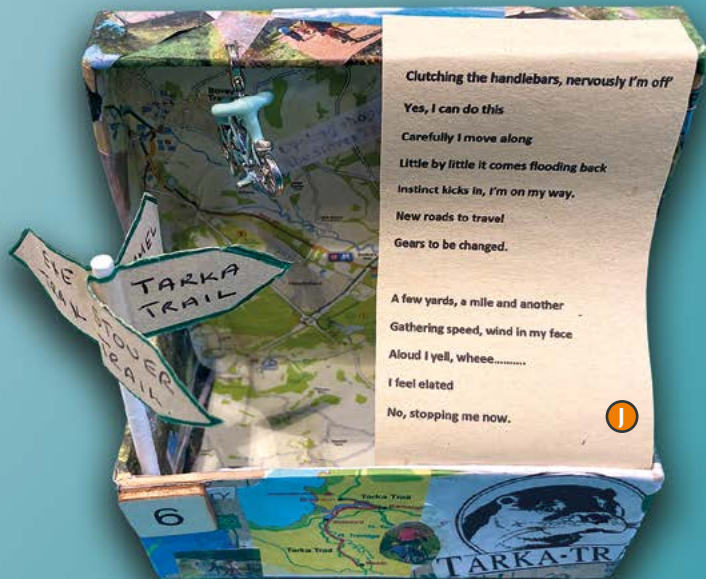


K

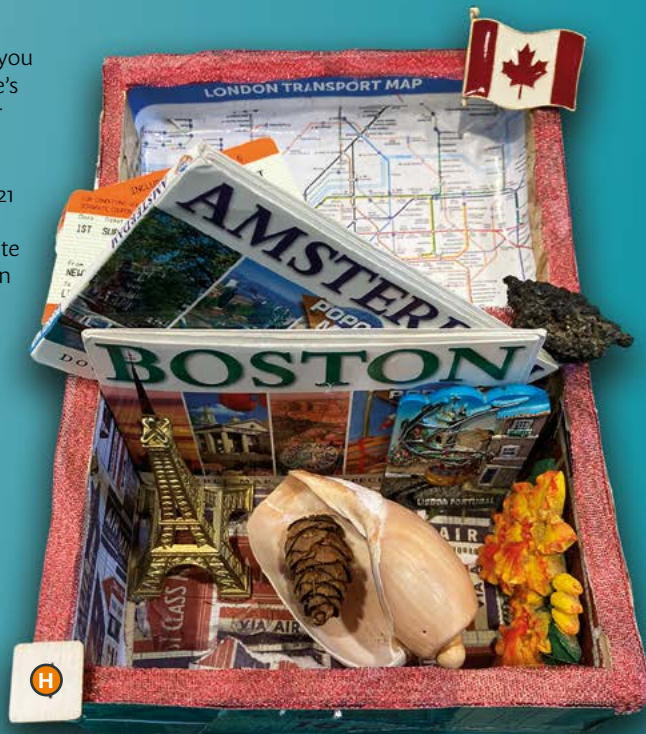
The Bright Lights writing group, which is based in the library, created boxes that celebrate the renewed discovery of the joy of bike riding **I**, share memories of being a Girl Guide in the 1950s **K**, and take a rejuvenating and gothic look at life **L**.

Because we have a few more boxes that we couldn't fit into the community cabinet, we have plans to change things around in a couple of months.

If you have a treasured item that you would like to exhibit in the People's Museum, you can email Kate, our community outreach worker, by clicking the link on this page or phone the museum on 01626 201121 to discuss ideas and reserve your own small art kit to help you create your own display box for inclusion in the People's Museum.



J



H



Kate is always keen to hear from anyone with a story to share – [click here](#) to get in touch!

Never too many cooks!



...a few words from the mayor

This will be a year etched in our minds for a lifetime. Everyone in our town will have been touched by events, whether a personal tragedy or illness, being furloughed, losing a job or seeing how a community can come together to support each other and those who are vulnerable.

We all see the world and experience it from our own perspectives; this is what makes us all individuals, but very often we share similar values when supporting others.

During the early months of the pandemic, my role as mayor changed greatly. As a team, your council staff and members had to rapidly appraise what was needed to provide the appropriate support to our community without duplicating the excellent help already being delivered by others.



Richard and son, Chris, preparing some welcome nourishment for those in need.

For us it was about providing a hub and directing people to where they could find support. This included providing financial support to charities that were best able to deliver help where most needed. It was important that we were able to identify those groups that could deliver appropriate support and we worked with the Lord Lieutenant's office and his representative locally, the Deputy Lord Lieutenant Peter Barlow, to ensure appropriate information was fed upwards and to pass on any concerns we had.

On a personal level, I signed up to the NHS responders scheme along with 500,000 fellow UK citizens. Locally, we were cooking more than 100 meals every Sunday for people using the facilities at the Avenue Church. These were delivered by a team of volunteers, coordinated by Cllr Jackie Hook. The kitchen team was headed by my son Chris Jenks, a Michelin trained chef, who has cooked for members of the Royal Family and many 'A' list celebrities. He is also a town councillor. Other key people in the kitchen included Cllrs Phil Bullivant and Brian Hayes. The HITS food bank, through Cllr David Cox, provided the funding with donations from individuals and local supermarkets.

Our challenge now is the economic regeneration of our town. There is absolutely no doubt that we have been hit hard by the pandemic and the full effects will not be felt until 2021.

We have been pressing Devon County Council for investment into key infrastructure projects and will continue to do so. This has included lobbying ministers and we are actively working on plans for investment into the town's cultural quarter, based around the newly-created Newton's Place. This includes provision of leisure facilities, supported by restaurants, pubs, cafes and the arts.

October saw the opening of our new museum at Newton's Place, this is a celebration of our rich heritage and a project by the community for the community. Our town clerk, Phil Rowe, with his team and volunteers (including councillors) has delivered a terrific facility for our town.

The pandemic is not over yet; we all need to be vigilant and take seriously the need to respect and support others and be safe.

I am very fortunate to be part of a great team of fellow councillors, staff and other professionals. I thank them and all those who have given time, energy and resources supporting their fellow residents during this difficult year.

Kind regards

**Councillor Richard Jenks
MAYOR OF NEWTON ABBOT**