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Plenty of Christmas fun for all at this year's festive events!

PLUS:

TWO'S COMPANY, TREE'S A CROWD

Deadwood to boost social life!

COMMUNITY ART GOES UNDERGROUND

Bringing colour and light to the darker corners of the town

BUILDING A FUTURE FOR OUR HISTORY

Museum storeroom set for shiny new extension



THE NEWTON Cryer

WINTER 2023





EDITOR'S NOTES

Winter is
coming...

With the last of the Bonfire Night toffee, pumpkin pie and Hallowe'en treats disappearing from our cupboards and fridges, it can only mean one thing: Christmas is just around the corner!

And for Newtonians, that also means another top selection of seasonal appetizers to lift everybody's spirits before the big day arrives. The fun starts on Friday 25th November with the Christmas lights switch-on and continues with some established family favourites like the lantern parade and mayor's carol singing event, right up until the last late-night shopping evening on 20th December – ideal for those last-minute gifts. See the centre pages for this year's full line-up of seasonal celebrations.

Look out also for a special Christmas concert at the museum, to be held on 13th December, just after the public display section of the museum closes its doors to visitors in order to carry out vital conservation and cataloguing work. Visitor numbers have been higher than ever this year, so the team, despite having been rushed off their feet, are extra motivated to ensure everything's spick and span for the re-opening on 23rd January, 2024.

It's also been super-busy summer and a highly creative autumn for our community engagement officer, Kate Green, who has been organising craft workshops, art club commemorations and next-generation curator courses, as well as the amazing 'Tunnels of Love' project, which has brought some much-needed colour to the town's pedestrian subways – when does she find time to sleep?!!

Samantha Scott, Deputy Town Clerk.

Keep in touch

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

Published by: **Newton Abbot Town Council**

Edited by: **Samantha Scott** (sam.scott@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk)



Remembrance at the War Memorial

Sunday 12th November

This year's parade will start from Courtenay Street and proceed along Queen Street to the War Memorial. The parade will start at 10.35am, led by the Devonport Royal Naval Volunteer Band. The service will commence at the War Memorial at 10.45am.

We will, once again, be live streaming the service through our Facebook page so if anyone is unable to attend, they will still be able to view the event online.



Never 'stumped' for great ideas!

The loss of a diseased tree in the heart of Newton Abbot has delivered an opportunity to create a 'stylish and practical' spot where shoppers can meet to enjoy coffee or check their phones.

The mature, but ailing alder in Courtenay Street has been shedding branches for some time, and now safety specialists at County Hall have confirmed that it is dead and have demanded that it be felled. But concerned by the prospect of creating a trip hazard, the officials insisted that a tall stump had to remain until a replacement can be planted next year.

Town development manager, Sally Henley, was horrified by the proposal, so popped on her thinking cap to come up with a solution.

'It was going to stick out like a sore thumb, right in the heart of our primary shopping area and really just not acceptable to my mind,' said Sally.

'Then it struck me, why not incorporate the stump into a bistro table where people can rest their coffee cups or check phones?'

'Members of the Newton Abbot Community Shed have really embraced the idea and come up with a design that's stylish and practical.'

'I have run the idea past the county council, and they have no concerns, now our facility maintenance officers at the town council will work with the Community Shed once the tree has come down.'

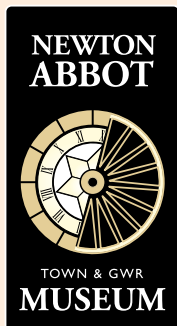
'I really want to reassure people that this isn't a Plymouth-style removal of unwanted trees just for the sake of it, this is a safety matter that needs addressing and a new sapling will be planted next year.'

'So, what we have now is a temporary opportunity to add something new and actually quite attractive.'

'Members of the Community Shed are full of bright ideas and I am now in talks with them about other opportunities for some more town centre enhancements. Watch this Space!'



The alder tree in Courtenay Street scheduled for removal due to public safety concerns.



Museum News

YOUR REGULAR ROUND-UP FROM **INDIA JOLLY** (CURATOR) AND **LUCY COKES** (CURATORIAL ASSISTANT)

Summer 2023 was the first year the museum had a special exhibition running in the community rooms at Newton's Place.

Called *The Science of Collections*, the exhibition attracted those interested in natural history and how science overlaps with heritage practices.

The museum drew in 300 more visitors over the summer holidays, compared to 2022, with just under 2000 people coming to see us in August alone. The activities organised by our community engagement officer, Kate Green, were a big hit – over 200 family members were involved with the Thursday crafts we had on offer.

Special talks relating to the exhibition were also a hit, with fossil expert Robert Randell talking about the geology of Newton Abbot,

and our very own Lucy Cokes telling a keen audience about the entomology project currently underway at the museum.

As always, we would not be able to run special events like this without the support of our wonderful volunteers, and a big thank you goes out to them and all the extra shifts they covered to help us open the exhibition.

We plan to make these summer exhibitions a regular occurrence, so keep an eye out for information on what we will be bringing to the museum next summer!



Family groups creating curiosity cases during *The Science of Collections* exhibition at the museum.



DON'T FORGET!
The museum is **FREE** to visit and there is no booking required!

Keeping our house in order...

Our last day of opening in 2023 will be Saturday 9th December; we will then reopen on Tuesday 23rd January.

This closure period is absolutely vital for the museum as it is our chance to ensure that all the objects on display are in tip-top condition, and to change the items in our large costume case so that visitors have something new to see in 2024!

We also use the closure period to really get stuck-in to the behind-the-scenes work that keeps a museum running, including object conservation (cleaning and repairs) repacking and cataloguing items.

Be sure to check back in with us in January to see what exciting new objects can be found in the museum. We can't wait to welcome you in the new year.



Stay up to date with the latest family-friendly events by signing up to our monthly family newsletter.

Contact the museum to be added to our mailing list.

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:

UPCOMING EVENTS

VICTORIAN EVENING

Wednesday 6th December, from 5pm

Head down to the Victorian Evening in the Market Square, where the museum will have its usual festive stall. Handle some of the collection and join in with a small activity.



CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Wednesday 13th December, 7:30pm – 8:30pm

Join us for a FREE Christmas concert in the museum! The Haldon Quartet will be playing a selection of classical and Christmas songs in front of the Sandford Orleigh screen in the main museum.

The concert is free and not ticketed, so come on by, listen to some music and have a look around the museum before we close for our Christmas break.

RELAXED VISITS

These are drop-in sessions so no need to book. Next sessions:

Monday 5th February, 2024

Monday 8th April, 2024

Every other month 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.

Sew much fun!

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

Our community cabinet, Your Space, has been jam-packed with fantastic displays all year and we will round the year off with a lovely, home-made display created by families at our latest Make and Create workshop.

Our November workshop had everyone that attended turning their hand to sewing, knitting and making things out of fabric. As a result, we should have an eclectic mix of hand-made sewn and knitted items for you to see, on show from Tuesday 14th November.



LET'S ROLL THE DICE!

Do you enjoy playing board games? Have you ever thought that you could do better at some of the game designs and gameplay? Then this upcoming project is for you!



The Cabinet of Curiosity is a project that we are running for the Winter months when you are most likely tucked up at home in front of the fire playing games with friends and family.

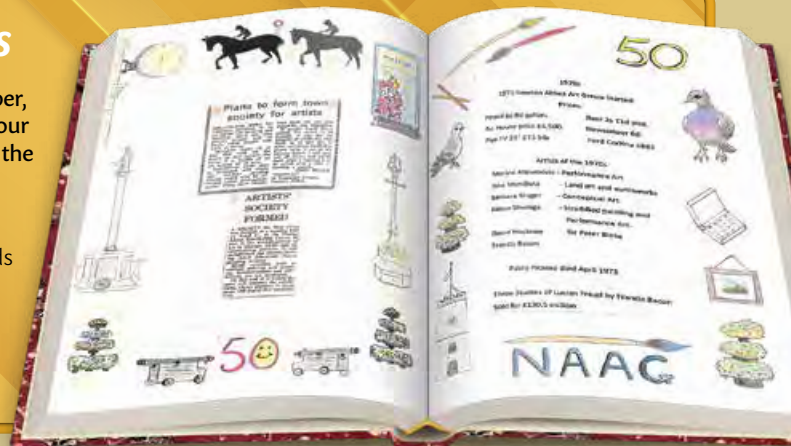
In January we will be running board game sessions in the museum which will be the springboard for designing a brand-new game inspired by museums and their collections.

The sessions will run for 6 weeks beginning on Tuesday 9th January from 5.30pm – 7.30pm and are free to join. Each week we will play board games and be inspired to invent a board design and playing pieces and work out how the game will begin and end and what happens in the middle!

Golden milestone for local artists

If you're reading this issue of the *Newton Cryer* before 14th November, then nip down to the museum because the October exhibition in Your Space features beautiful handmade scrapbook pages summarising the high points of Newton Abbot Art Group's 50 year history.

Founded in October 1973 the group has been part of the cultural scene of Newton Abbot for five decades, and, excluding the periods lost to Covid lockdowns, it has celebrated each of its 50 years with annual art exhibitions, regular weekly painting sessions, and workshops. Members have designed a series of pages with decorative borders to set off newspaper cuttings and writings to share in our community cabinet.





Young Curators

Young history enthusiasts spent five weeks in the museum during the summer holidays experiencing the work of a museum curator.

Participants undertook activities such as learning how best to handle and look after museum items, finding bug traps in the museum and identifying insects, learning about the many challenges to look after objects in museum stores, cataloguing and photographing the museum's Handling Collection and finally looking through some of the museum's 16,000-strong collection to choose objects that they would like to see in an exhibition.

The month-long club culminated in an official launch of their exhibition in Your Space accompanied by speeches, refreshments and certificates. The YC club was so popular that the museum is running weekly Young Curator sessions starting on Tuesday 7th November for four weeks. We will have a rolling start time of 3.30/4.00pm to allow for different school closing times, and sessions will finish at 5.30pm. See the museum website to book a place.





NEWTON ABBOT Christmas EVENTS DIARY

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON Saturday 25th November

- * Daytime entertainment
- * Father Christmas switches on the lights at St Leonard's Clock Tower at 5.30pm

VICTORIAN EVENING Wednesday 6th December

- * Victorian themed charity market
- * Late night shopping till 8pm
- * Markets and street food

LANTERN PARADE PUBLIC WORKSHOP Saturday 9th December

At the Avenue Church
(for more info contact the
council office on 01626 201120).



DOG FRIENDLY CAROL SERVICE Saturday 9th December

- * In partnership with Animals in Distress

LANTERN PARADE Wednesday 13th December

- * Theme this year: *The wild creatures came to town*
- * Parade from Bearnes School at 6.30pm
- * Late night shopping till 8pm
- * Markets and street food

MAYOR'S CHRISTMAS CAROLS Wednesday 20th December



- * Carol service at 6.30pm in front of St Leonard's Clock Tower featuring the Rock Choir
- * Late night shopping till 8pm
- * Markets and street food

FIRESIDE SELFIES IN ST LEONARD'S CLOCK TOWER December Wednesdays 6th, 13th & 20th (6pm – 8pm) and Saturdays 2nd, 9th, 16th (11am – 1pm)

SANTA ON HIS SLEIGH Saturday 25th November (5.30pm – 6.30pm) and Wednesdays 6th, 13th & 20th December (6pm – 8pm)

Don't forget...

Parking in TDC town centre car parks is **FREE** from 4pm, for all three Christmas late-night shopping events.

Sunday parking £1 all day in TDC car parks.


Please be aware that the multi-storey car park closes at 6pm.




Special thanks to
Torbay Hospital
Radio for their help with
the audio equipment set-
up at this year's events.

Thanks also to councillor
Mike Ryan and his wife, Lin,
for all their amazing work on
creating Santa's float.

Please note: all events are
subject to change at short
notice, and many are weather
dependent. All information is
correct at the time of printing.

 @newtontownwoman or
@NewtonAbbotCoun

 Newtonabbotnow or
NewtonAbbottowncouncilcommunity

www.newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

The most magical time...
With another packed schedule of Christmas events planned for the town centre for 2023, this year's on course to be as colourful, warm and friendly as ever!

SCAN HERE
for latest events info!



Look out for...

Our town mascot 'Newton', who'll be ringing in some festive cheer around the town on the following dates:
25th Nov + 2nd/9th/16th December, 11am – 1pm
20th Dec, 6pm – 8pm





Out & About

with **Sally Henley**, TOWN DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

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

or follow us:
@newtontownwoman
Newton Abbot
Now

Hopefully you are not one of those 'negative Nellies', who prefer to focus upon our frankly, very few empty shops; but one who celebrates, values and uses our many occupied ones!

I was particularly delighted to see the opening of iTown in the former Argos building in Queen Street. This fantastic children's role play and café facility, not surprisingly, has been incredibly popular with families with small children and is a real draw to this part of town. Newton Abbot is home to many entrepreneurs and this sort of investment by a local man, shows how attractive town centre trading still is. He could have chosen any number of regional towns to set up his business, but I am so pleased that he chose Newton Abbot!

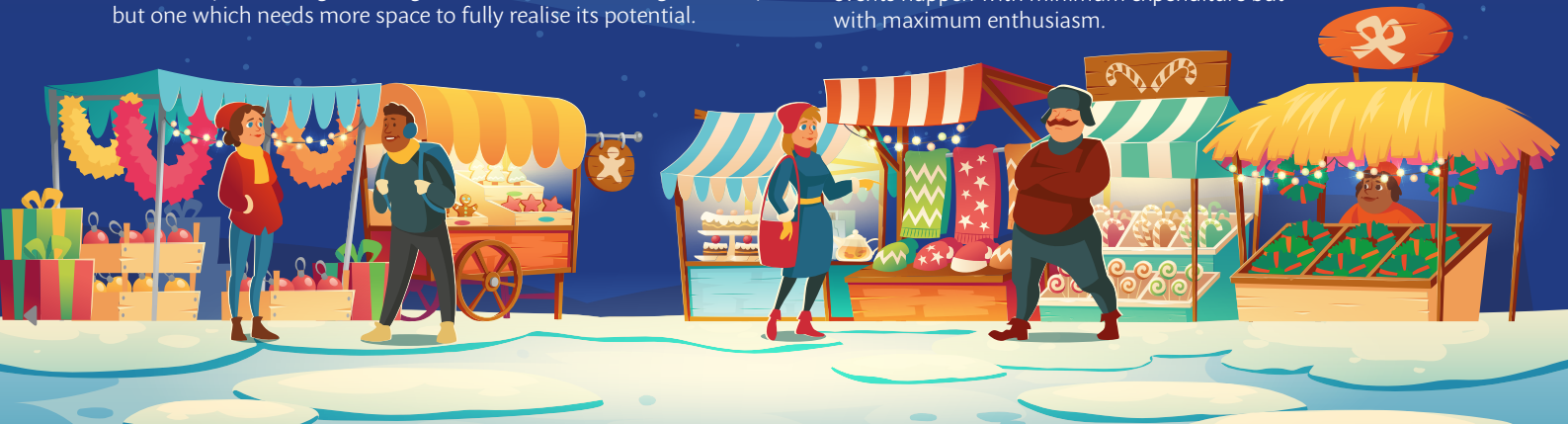
High Streets have for decades been about the survival of the fittest and it was therefore with much sadness that the nation watched as Wilko went into administration, with the ensuing shuttering of stores. I understand how the store staff must have felt, having experienced administration and redundancy in my former retail life, but I am sure that the excellent team will have secured new roles. In no way a reflection on the brilliant hard working store staff, but simply, there were other 'value retailers' who were doing it better. As we saw with Woolworths decades ago, Wilko had rested on its laurels, not stepped up its operation and let its rivals steal a march. It is tough out there.

It's the opposite story with Shoe Zone, however! This is a thriving business, which does what it does well, and has now expanded its offer. Here, the closing down signs do not denote a failing business, but one which needs more space to fully realise its potential.

Let's hope that by the time you are reading this, they have secured suitable, larger premises in the town centre. Market Walk does now have a huge gap, to add to other smaller vacant units around the square and we all hope that Teignbridge District Council, which owns the centre, can pull something out of the hat to bring it back to its former, almost 100% occupied, glory. At the time of writing, we haven't had an update on the cinema and Market Hall projects, but I hope more information will be shared with the community soon – and that the empty units will be incorporated into any proposals.

The business community and residents and visitors too, continue to tell me how upset they are about the impending traffic management proposals for Queen Street and surrounding streets. I spend a great deal of time in the town centre and people are always coming up to speak to me about this. Whilst there are a few who support the proposals, most are quite simply dismayed at the dismissal of the findings of the last consultation, (TROs) which were clear in showing majority opposition. For me it has been such a frustrating time, as despite the results of the last consultation, the objections from the town council and my regular and detailed feedback to DCC and TDC over the last three years, the scheme will proceed.

Despite the erratic weather over the summer, we managed some of our planned events and we hope that we have better luck on the run up to Christmas. Such a lot of hard work goes into events, and I am grateful to town councillors, to museum volunteers, to charities and to members of the community who help to make these outdoor events happen with minimum expenditure but with maximum enthusiasm.





Animals in Distress

presents

THE DOG FRIENDLY CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

Led by Reverend Gareth Regan. In association with the Anglican churches
of Newton Abbot

*Carol singing led by close
harmony choir forte*

In partnership with



Cookies for
well behaved
dogs & owners!

Be sure to wear
your favourite
Christmas jumper
– pooches too!

Please take
responsibility for
your dog at all times
during the event.

Saturday 9th December 2023, at 12pm
Wolborough Street (near Carpetright), Newton Abbot Town Centre

Please do make a note of the Christmas late night shopping events on the first three Wednesdays in December, and of the Switch-On day, when the festive illuminations light up the town, including our beautiful 'Tree on the Tower' centrepiece. Live music and markets will of course feature alongside Father Christmas for the little ones and Fireside Selfies in the Clock Tower, which was very popular last year.

With the cost-of-living crisis and everyone feeling the pressure, it is equally stressful if you are running a business. I do hope that you

will continue to shop locally and support your town centre business community as we approach this busy time of the year.

See you in town!

Sally Henley
Town Development Manager

Socialising that's all round

SUE FURNESS FROM TEIGN U3A REVEALS THE MANY BENEFITS OF SPENDING SOME QUALITY TIME WITH LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE

ARE YOU NEW TO THE AREA, BEREAVED, OR FEELING ISOLATED?

The days have shortened, and you'll probably be spending less time out and about meeting people around town, at least until the spring. Not a problem if your diary is full and you can spend your evenings musing about the interesting morning or afternoon you've just enjoyed. But what if you are new to the area, or recently bereaved, or you don't find meeting people and making new friends particularly easy?

For many of us, creating opportunities to socialise requires us to step outside of our comfort zone. But when you do, you'll make new friends, discover new interests, and enjoy hours of fun, believe me!

If you've never heard of us, you're in good company. At our recent u3a awareness day in the town square, 80% of people we met hadn't heard of us either. Kudos to you if you have, or if you are already one of our 300+ members.



Teign (Newton Abbot) u3a is just one of the 1000+ u3a groups in the UK, uniquely set-up for older people – usually those who are retired or semi-retired. There's no strict age limit, but mostly we are over 50.

All our members live in or around Newton Abbot. We take pride in being friendly and sociable, welcoming new members and supporting them as they get to know their way around. We enjoy regular coffee mornings, summer and winter events, and guest speakers at our monthly meetings.

ARE YOU LOOKING TO LEARN NEW SKILLS IN RETIREMENT?

Each week there are a staggering 30,000+ u3a interest groups taking place in the UK. Walking is one of the most popular, with almost all u3as having at least one walking group; but there's something for everyone. Activities that prompted the most interest at our awareness event, included: Digital Inclusion, Singing for Pleasure, Dancing, Walking, Bowls, Painting, Coffee Mornings, Litter Picking, Armchair Travel, and Real Ale Appreciation.

Our shared learning and leisure groups are all run by-members, for-members. There are no exams or qualifications, learning is purely for enjoyment. Currently we have 40 interest groups, each with a volunteer leader who has a particular skill. If there's enough demand for a certain subject, you can start a group yourself. Importantly, we will assist you in setting it up.

At Teign u3a we aim to give members value for money at the same time as covering our costs. Membership fees cover entry to all interest groups; however, for special hire such as a sports hall, a small charge may be added.

A sunny day for one of our Friday Walking Group (above), and a slightly less perfect day (but only weather-wise!) for our Dartmoor Adventure group resting at Bellever Tor



good for you!



Our Questers group, visiting Exmouth Lifeboat

A new members coffee morning



SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

Concern about the health effects of social isolation in older people is part of the motivation behind the government strategy on loneliness. Loneliness is a risk factor for poor health and dementia; some argue that it is worse than smoking.

One proposal in the policy is the expansion of social prescribing services – social prescribing connects people to community groups and services so that, for example, GPs can prescribe such things as dancing, gardening etc., according to an individual's social, emotional, or practical needs. It is predicted that social prescribing will soon be a part of every GP practice.

Check us out!

ONLINE: teignu3a.org.uk

EMAIL: membership@teignu3a.org

or CALL: 07342 794 793

u3a

learn, laugh, live

Tunnels of Love

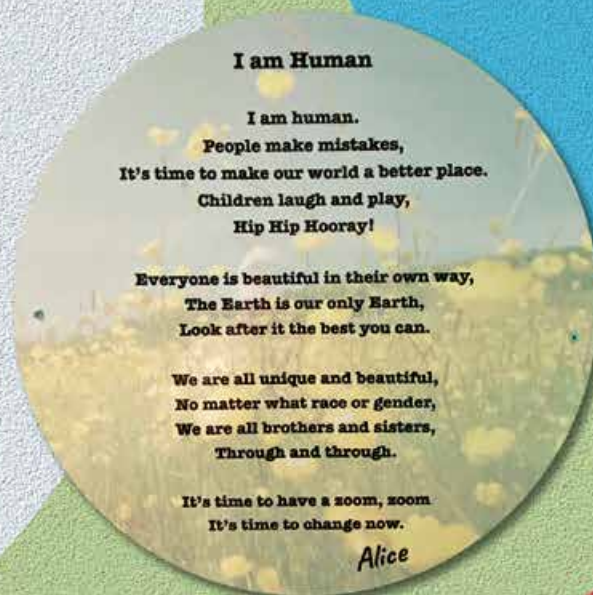
ART BY THE COMMUNITY FOR THE COMMUNITY

Residents and schoolchildren in Newton Abbot have been praised for the key role they played in transforming the town's unwelcoming subways.

Four vandalised underpasses at Penn Inn have been given an artistic makeover with much of the creativity coming from those who use the site every day, an important pedestrian and cycle link which avoids the busy A380 road above.

Colourful ceramics, professional graffiti, fairground mirrors and photos are complemented by uplifting poems and prose, centred on the themes of air, water, fire and earth.

The Tunnels of Love project has been more than three years in the making, led by Newton Abbot Community Interest Company (CIC) and supported by Arts Council England, Teignbridge District Council and Newton Abbot Town Council.



The completed project was officially opened in July



Project artist Kate Green told a gathering of invited guests at the unveiling on July 25th that the impressive results, already winning huge support on social media, had come about because of the community's involvement.

'It was more than three years ago, before Covid, that I was asked by the CIC and Cllr Jackie Hook if I could do something to brighten up the subways and I said, yes I will, but on one condition: it needs to be artwork made by local people and which is uplifting and means something. Everything here has been made by children from local schools and people from local groups. The subways also feature photographs of pedestrians, dog walkers and cyclists passing through Penn Inn'.

Two other locations in the town are set to benefit from similar makeovers later this year.



Air - Playfulness, Games and Questions

Playing, laughing and using our brains is what makes our days fun. We hope that every time you walk through this tunnel you find something different to do - enjoy this space!

'Tunnels of Love' is a project to transform the subways of Newton Abbot into positive, inspiring and engaging spaces. Working throughout a year, local artists connected with communities across the town ranging from 5 year-olds to 95 year-olds to find out what made them feel safe, uplifted and to involve them in the creation of artworks for each tunnel. Every tunnel has a different theme, linked to the elements and what is important in our lives.

Who helped? Children from Haytor View Primary School, visitors to Buckland Xmas Fair who made beautiful bobbles with artist Zofia and all of the wonderful cyclists who stopped to have their photo taken.



A lot more in store for museum...

Exciting new plans lie ahead for the storeroom of Newton Abbot Museum. As you will know, the museum relocated to the former St Leonard's church in 2020. The vestry and organ loft at the rear of the church were transformed into a museum store room, but the space is very small and cramped and anyone in a wheelchair or with impaired mobility cannot access the area.

Also, with the museum holding such a large collection of over 16,000 objects we just cannot fit all of the museum's items in to the current space and so we currently have to rent storage space off site, which is not ideal for the care of some of the objects.

And so, we are very excited to be planning to build an extension onto the current stores. Having received advice from Teignbridge planning and conservation department, a state-of-the-art facility has been designed and the museum is applying to the Heritage Fund for money to build the impressive store room.

With the extra space, we will be able to show people around the stores and share the museum's impressive collection, run workshops and exhibitions in the new store area itself (such as the young curator club) and people will be able to see conservation work in progress, undertake research and come face to face with the many artefacts that we can't put on show in the museum itself. We will keep you updated with progress as things start to develop.

