



ANNUAL REPORT

2022 / 2023



Councillor Carol Bunday
Mayor - 2022/ 2023



Phil Rowe
Town Clerk



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Presented by the Mayor of Newton Abbot,
Councillor Carol Bunday

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It is difficult to know where to start this report, we were emerging from two years of lockdowns and restrictions, Russia had invaded Ukraine and no-one could have foreseen the events at home and how they were to unfold when I took over as Mayor in May 2022. A year celebrating our Queen's 70yrs on the throne, her Platinum Jubilee, and for me, my year in office started with a bang, the jubilee weekend in early June went off without a hitch, the weather was great, and all the events that the Town Council put on were well attended and enjoyed by all, the Jubilee had brought the communities together.

As we moved through one of the hottest summers on record we enjoyed Band Concerts in the Park, we showed the town's support for Ukraine by holding a short service on their Independence Day and throughout this time we were organising the Town Criers competition, and the town's Growfest which we had to cancel due to lack of support.

Then on the 8th of September we all heard the sad news that Queen Elizabeth II had passed away, which meant that as a Town Council, like all councils, we had to implement "Operation London Bridge", all events were cancelled in respect to our Queen, and a period of national mourning started. The Town Council officers worked hard to get everything in place within the very short time scale; although we had things in place and had gone through the procedures having to do it for real is a different story.

Within a few days of the Queen's death, I had the honour but sad task of reading out the proclamation announcing this but also proclaiming Prince Charles as our new King, taking the title of King Charles III.

Once the period of mourning was over things settled back down to normality, with the Town Council finalising its plans for the Christmas events, starting with the switch on of the town's Christmas Lights, which I have to say were the best they have ever been, and I believe much better than a lot of towns in Devon, again this year Father Christmas did the honours, on a very wet night, he switched the lights on for us, and he also came for each of the four late night shopping Wednesdays until Christmas.

We had the return of our Lantern Parade, the Victorian Evening, the Mayor's Carol Service and for the second time our Doggie Carol Service, although the weather was not always kind to us, all the events were very well attended and enjoyed by all, I have to thank all the officers of the Town Council and all the volunteers that helped make Christmas 2022 the big success that it was.

Newton Abbot is not only blessed with the events that the Town Council puts on, but most weeks throughout the year something is going on in our busy town centre, from buskers to brass bands, from other forms of street entertainment to the Classic Car Show, all organised by Sally Henley the Town Council's Town Centre Development Manager, she is always on hand to help our businesses and liaise between them and the local authorities, she also notes our empty shops and does her best to get them back into use, making Newton Abbot among the lowest in the country for its empty shop units.

On April 1st 2023 we will (by the time you read this report) had the official opening of our wonderful new Museum, Community Hub and Council offices, the Town Council bought and converted the Old St Leonard's Church into the multi-functional building we now call Newton's Place, we would have also given the Freedom of the Town to our adopted ship HMS Triumph, a

Trafalgar Class Hunter Killer Submarine with all the pomp and ceremony that these occasions demand.

Looking a little bit more into the future we have the local elections on the 4th May, which will give Newton Abbot a new council and a new Mayor who will take over from me on May 17th and my 20yrs as a Newton Abbot Town Councillor will be at an end as I will not be standing this time due to having made the decision to retire, but just before this I will have one last very special event, I will be leading our town in its celebrations marking the coronation of our new King Charles III, what a year it has been, the ups, the downs, the joys and the sadness, has made this a very special and unique year and I am so privileged to have been your Mayor.

In looking back we must acknowledge the other things that have happened, some we can control, like producing our new Community Plan, or should I say your Community Plan, for its the people of Newton Abbot that have shaped this plan, we have listened and produced it, from the conversations we have had and the views you have shared with us on how you see Newton Abbot going forward.

We have taken on a third FMO (Facilities Maintenance Officer), all three are very visible and hard at work cleaning our town centre and residential areas doing the jobs TDC and DCC should be doing but for one reason or another they are not, so we, your council are continuing to look at ways we can invest in our town by taking on the jobs these bigger councils find they cannot do, and so, as we move forward and their finances struggle to make ends meet, it will be even more important that your Town Council is in a financially strong position in order to step in and safeguard the services that we know are so important to you.

Unfortunately some of the things that happen or are planned for our town are out of our control, like the regeneration of the Market Hall, Alexandra Theatre and Queen Street, Newton Abbot Town Council has no control over these and other issues that affect us, these are controlled by TDC (The Planning Authority) and DCC (The Highways Authority) and although we are asked for our opinion and give it, TDC and DCC have no obligation to listen to our and/or your views they are only obliged to ask.

In finishing this report I just want to thank all the officers at the Town Council for all their hard work and support not just for this my Mayoral year but for the last 20yrs I have served as a Town Councillor, and I wish them all the very best for the coming years, I would also like to thank all those councillors that have supported me throughout this time, it has been an experience and a pleasure.

Cllr Carol Bunday
Mayor of Newton Abbot

MAYORAL YEAR 2022 – 2023

ENGAGEMENTS CARRIED OUT BY THE MAYOR – COUNCILLOR CAROL BUNDAY

2022

Sunday 8th May	Band Concert
Saturday 14th May	Newton Abbot Flower Club Flower Festival
Thursday 19th May	Papa Johns Opening Ceremony
Thursday 19th May	Totnes Mayor Choosing Ceremony
Friday 20th May	Media Launch of Policy Enquiry office
Friday 27th May	Wolborough C of E Primary School May Day & Jubilee Party
Monday 30th May	Celebration of Syrian Refugee Exhibition
Thursday 2nd June	Southlands Care Home Jubilee Garden Party
Thursday 2nd June	Lighting of Jubilee Beacons
Saturday 4th June	Queen's Platinum Jubilee Thanksgiving Service at Exeter Cathedral
Sunday 5th June	Band Concert
Saturday 11th June	Launch of new Estate Agents
Sunday 12th June	Royal British Legion Decoration Day
Monday 13th June	Meet with Brian Smith of the Dyrans Journal Talking Newspaper
Tuesday 14th June	Falklands Liberation Day
Monday 20th June	TDC Chairman Armed Forces Flag raising
Friday 24th June	Opening of new Muga Youth Centre
Monday 27th June	Newton Abbot Flower Club
Friday 1st July	Stover School Prize Giving Day
Friday 1st July	Civic Reception of Newton Abbot Rotary Club
Sunday 3rd July	Band Concert

Monday 4th July	Carnival Quiz
Tuesday 5th July	Carnival Pooh Sticks
Wednesday 6th July	Carnival Duck Race
Thursday 7th July	Exeter Lammas Fair
Friday 8th July	Bradley Barton School Summer Fayre
Friday 8th July	Carnival Fun Run
Saturday 9th July	Carnival Procession
Sunday 10th July	NADSA Concert
Thursday 21st July	Teignbridge Propellers opening of new office
Saturday 30th July	Opening of Hair & Beauty Salon
Monday 1st August	Opening of Joint Arts Project Exhibition
Wednesday 10th August	Art Group Summer Exhibition Award Presentation
Sunday 14th August	Band Concert
Monday 22nd August	Southlands Care Home Cyclethon start
Wednesday 24th August	Raising of the Ukrainian Flag on St. Leonards Tower
Wednesday 31st August	Southland Care Home Cyclethon finish
Saturday 17th September	International Staff Songsters of the Salvation Army Concert at Exeter Cathedral
Sunday 18th September	Commemoration Service
Sunday 25th September	Dawlish Civic Service
Saturday 1st October	Opening of new branch of A Plan Insurance
Thursday 6th October	NADMCS Civic Performance
Friday 14th October	Totnes Civic Dinner
Saturday 15th October	Totnes Civic Service
Sunday 16th October	Newton Abbot Civic Service
Friday 21st October	NADSA Concert
Saturday 22nd October	Town Ball

Thursday 3rd November	Community Transport AGM
Saturday 5th November	Re-opening of Linda's Little Library
Wednesday 9th November	Launch of Salvation Army Toy Appeal
Friday 11th November	Poppy Train Wreath laying
Friday 11 th November	Armistice Day service
Sunday 13 th November	Remembrance Service and Parade
Sunday 20 th November	NADSA Concert
Saturday 26 th November	Christmas Lights Switch on
Monday 28 th November	Rendells Christmas Show
Friday 2 nd December	Parkers Christmas Remembrance Service and opening of building
Saturday 3 rd December	The Station Youth Centre Christmas Fun Day
Saturday 3 rd December	Newton Abbot Christmas Dinner
Sunday 4 th December	Teignmouth Civic Carol Service
Monday 5 th December	Salvation Army Toy Appeal Making Up of Bags
Wednesday 7 th December	Victorian Evening
Friday 9 th December	Highweek Primary School Christmas Fete
Friday 9 th December	Kingsteignton Civic Carol Service
Saturday 10 th December	Choir 86 Concert
Sunday 11 th December	Friends of Rowcroft Hospice Celebration of Christmas
Wednesday 14 th December	Lantern Parade
Thursday 15 th December	Stover School Carol Service
Monday 19 th December	Tree Planting at Tindall House
Wednesday 21 st December	Newton Abbot Carol Service
Thursday 22 nd December	Visit St. Benets Residential Home

2023

Thursday 12 th January	NADMCS Civic Performance
Sunday 15 th January	NADSA Concert
Sunday 19 th February	NADSA Concert
Friday 10 th March	NADSA Concert
Saturday 11 th March	Portreeve Dinner
Sunday 12 th March	NADSA Concert
Saturday 18 th March	Dawlish Town Council Spring Ball
Monday 20 th March	ATC Cadets Awareness Evening
Tuesday 21 st March	Tuckers Maltings cheque presentation photo shoot
Thursday 30 th March	Choir 86 Easter Concert
Saturday 1 st April	Triumph Freedom Parade
Saturday 1 st April	Official opening of Newton's Place
Saturday 8 th April	Easter Fun Day
Sunday 16 th April	Lord Mayor of Exeter Civic Service
Friday 21 st April	Open Tuckers Maltings MaltFest
Friday 21 st April	NADSA Concert
Saturday 22 nd April	Open Bee Hives
Friday 28 th April	Opening of Ocean Healthcare's Training Centre
Friday 28 th April	Museum Volunteer Party
Saturday 29 th April	Heath Rial Link photo shoot
Sunday 30 th April	Devon County Council Civic Service
Sunday 7 th May	Coronation Party in the Park

**ENGAGEMENTS CARRIED OUT BY
THE DEPUTY MAYOR – COUNCILLOR LESLEY SHEFFIELD**

Sunday 14 th August	Dawlish Celebrates Carnival
Friday 11 th November	Coombeshead Academy Remembrance Assembly
Monday 28 th November	Newton Abbot Flower Club
Sunday 7 th May	Coronation Party in the Park

NAMES OF COUNCILLORS FOR THE TERM 2019 – 2023

Councillor Philip Bullivant	Councillor Carol Bunday
Councillor David Corney-Walker	Councillor Karen Crout
Councillor Colin Davieson	Councillor Alex Hall
Councillor Ryan Hall	Councillor Rob Hayes
Councillor Mike Hocking	Councillor David Howe
Councillor Chris Jenks	Councillor Richard Jenks
Councillor Ann Jones	Councillor Mike Joyce Parker
Councillor Colin Parker	Councillor Mike Pilkington
Councillor Mike Ryan	Councillor Lesley Sheffield

OFFICERS

Town Clerk

Mr Phil Rowe
Newton's Place
43 Wolborough Street
Newton Abbot
TQ12 1JQ
Telephone: 01626 201120
Mobile: 07850 795071

Website: www.newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

E.Mail: phil.rowe@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

Deputy Town Clerk

Monday – Thursday

Ms Sam Scott

Email: sam.scott@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

Mayor's Secretary

Tuesday – Friday

Mrs Carla Winsborrow

Email: carla.winsborrow@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

Events Co-ordinator Job Share

Mrs Natalie Hicks
Part Time 3 days a week

Email: natalie.hicks@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

Miss Kelly Burridge

Email: kelly.burridge@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

Office Administrator

Miss Kelly Burridge

Principal Administrator

Linda McGuirk
(Monday - Thursday)

Email: Linda.McGuirk@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

Facilities Maintenance Officers - Mr Tony Little, Mr David Samson and Mr Steve Ryan

Housekeeper

Mrs Michele Webber

Newton Abbot and Great Western Museum.

Curator: Dr. Charlotte Dixon

Telephone: (01626) 201121

Email: museum@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

Website: www.museum-newtonabbot.org.uk and www.devonmuseums.net

Newton Abbot Museum Assistant

Curatorial Assistant: Katie Petley-Jones– Full Time

Email: KatiePetley-Jones@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

Charlotte Edwards – Part Time 3 days a week

Email: charlotte.edwards@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

Town Development Manager

Sally Henley Telephone: 07595 893151 or 01626 201120 Email sally.henley@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

Newton Abbot Community Interest Company

Business & Community Development Officer - Emily Farrell
Telephone: 01626 206690

Email: manager@newtonabbotcic.org.uk

Town Crier

Mr Nigel Kenneison

Email: nigelk57@gmail.com

NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** The Council and its Committees and Sub-Committee would normally receive presentations and reports on a variety of subjects, however due to the Government Restrictions imposed because of the COVID-19 Pandemic this was severely limited for the past two years. However, work has continued with many local organisations to ensure that local issues are reviewed and moved forward despite the difficulties faced during these difficult times. Some normality has now returned however working and social patterns have yet to return to pre-Covid levels, and they possibly never will.

The Council has received presentations from a few organisations, relating to the following:

The Mayor welcomed Inspector David Hammond to the June Council meeting who provided an update for members on local policing in the town. Inspector Hammond concluded his presentation by reassuring members that Newton Abbot remained a safe place to live and work and provided statistics as a comparison with other towns of a similar size and demographic including St Austell, Bodmin, Paignton and Torquay. The Mayor in expressing her thanks to Inspector Hammond for his attendance asked questions of him including matters referring to young offenders, Street Pastors, the reopening of the Police enquiry office and how the cost-of-living increase might impact upon crime in the future?

At the June meeting of the Community & Heritage Committee representatives of Griffiths Civil Engineering updated members on the A382/383 Link road, phase 1 project. It was noted the project was due for completion mid-July and had been constructed to relieve traffic entering Newton Abbot once the proposed housing development at Houghton Barton had been constructed.

In July the Council received a presentation by representatives of Heath Rail Link with an update on the plans to facilitate re-opening of the existing railway line and to return it to operational use for commuters and heritage passengers. The group's aim was to raise funding to secure the line and run a regular commuter service between Heathfield, Teigngrace and the mainline hub of Newton Abbot, where the disused platforms 9 and 10 will be restored. A business plan has been created and discussions were taking place between Great Western Railway (GWR), Network Rail and Devon County Council (DCC). DCC had produced a feasibility study. The group were investigating funding opportunities to enable the project to progress and are considering ways to increase membership.

Also in July, the Council welcomed Mr Fergus Pate, representing Teignbridge District Council (TDC) who gave a presentation to members on the proposed Bradley Lane Bus Link, which was at that time being circulated for public consultation. Councillors had expressed concern regarding the potential loss of existing bus services; removal of mature trees; the installation of parking restrictions, which will cause parking issues and the proposed figure of eight route and whether the scheme was commercially viable? In response it was confirmed that the 77a and 88a services would continue to operate. Parking numbers had been considered, but more work was required. The scheme might need to be subsidised in the short term, but it should be commercially viable. [Arising from the public consultation the scheme did not go ahead]

In September the Council welcomed Emily Allen, a representative of Devon Connect and the Teignbridge Together Co-ordinator who introduced the project by Teignbridge Together which was a new online community hub from Devon Connect. It is a place to share local community listings, events and volunteering opportunities. It enabled people to make connections from home or reach across Teignbridge and Devon and offers a range of free

promotional support. Members were supportive of the project and suggested including a link to the hub from the Town Council's website as well as sharing information on Town Council events with the hub.

In October the Community & Heritage Committee welcomed a representative of Newton Abbot CIC, Emily Farrell, who informed members that the draft Community Plan had been available for public comment since its publication in early summer. Several comments had been received, most of which had resulted in small edits to the text, and some changes to the list of projects. Devon County Council and Teignbridge District Council had also engaged with the consultation. It was noted that a further project has been added, called Help! which focused on the signposting that the Town Council was providing to the public in respect of the cost-of-living crises. Members in discussion on the draft plan were supportive in principle.

In March 2023 the Mayor welcomed Assistant Chief Constable Glen Mayhew and Inspector David Hammond to the meeting and invited them to report on local policing matters and sector priorities

1.2 Significant developments in the town include:-

- The Council's main priority, the delivering of Newton's Place, a community space, the Heritage Fund supported estimated £2.2m Project to deliver community rooms; a new town Museum and offices for the Town Council at the former St Leonard's Church in Wolborough Street was completed in June 2021. Along with plans to introduce a 'cultural quarter' in the town being Newton's Place, the Passmore Edwards Centre and St Leonard's Clock Tower. Members of the Council were pleased to receive the final account in this year and noted that the project was delivered at a cost of £2.5m. This was considered as value for money when taking into account the additional works carried out to the original specification and a number of unforeseen issues such as the front parapet leadwork and the columns holding up the former church's balcony;
- Ongoing involvement in the economic vitality of the town by the Town Development Manager, Mrs Sally Henley;
- The operation of the activities of the Community Interest Company Chairman via Mrs Lynn McElheron;
- Continued maintenance of Victoria Gardens (the Rose Garden) following the delivery of the project to totally transform the area into a beautiful and tranquil town centre amenity space, with views of the River Lemon;
- Ongoing maintenance of two areas of the Mill Leat adjacent to Bradley Manor/Allotments;
- Ongoing delivery of the contract for Christmas Illuminations in Newton Abbot with bespoke features procured by the Town Council delivering striking Christmas displays;
- Ongoing maintenance of the Town Quay. Sat in the shadow of the cycle/footbridge over the River Teign. The mobile refreshment facility continues to operate with a new proprietor A Bite to Eat during the Spring/Summer months;
- Ongoing maintenance of the refurbished Golden Lion Square at Bank Street, which previously saw the introduction of a new centrepiece bench designed and constructed by the students of South Devon College; with colourful backrest designs

by pupils of Wolborough Primary School which it is pleased to note is still in excellent condition;

- The previously completed total restoration of the historic. Grade II Listed War Memorial at junction with The Avenue and Queen Street which remains in pristine condition and continues to attract large crowds for the November Remembrance Sundays.

- 1.3 Regular updates at Council meetings by County and District Councillors on their activities as they affect Newton Abbot.
- 1.4 The work of the Council is carried out by delegation to various standing Committees which, in turn, delegate powers and duties to Sub-Committees. The Council has continued to operate a new streamlined Committee structure with ever evolving terms of reference, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. From May 2016 it has continued to operate a revised Committee Structure with more emphasis on community, heritage and improved financial reporting. This new structure was reviewed in late February 2017 when it was decided to continue with the revised structure. Members were of the view the new structure had worked well, and better reflected the current and future vision, aims and objectives of the Council.
- 1.5 The Council continues to undertake numerous activities and puts forward a number of representations which are suggested for detailed consideration and in many cases actioned by Teignbridge District Council, Devon County Council and other public utility services. In the past 8 years the Council has been partnering with the Chamber of Commerce on delivering CCTV through a Newton Abbot Security Trust. The partnership has worked extremely well.
- 1.6 Since 2015, the Town Council has funded the cutting of all grass verges throughout Newton Abbot arising from Devon County Council as Highway Authority cutting the service other than visibility splays for road safety purposes. For 2018, the Town Council operated a contract to maintain all areas of grass verges (including the visibility splays) and has agreed to continue with the increase of the number cuts from 4 to 6 throughout the year.
- 1.7 From November 2014 the Town Council took over the leasehold ownership and operation of the Newfoundland Way public conveniences. The conveniences have subsequently been redecorated inside and out and continue to provide a valuable facility for residents and visitors alike. In 2023 the Council has agreed to replace the ageing 'Wallgate' hand washing units.
- 1.8 In 2021 the Council embarked upon the review of its Newton Abbot & District Community Plan, first published in 2008. The consultation exercise was being driven by the Newton Abbot Community Interest Company (CIC) with the aid of the Council's Community Engagement Officer, Kate Green. The original document was the precursor to many projects identified for the public for delivery through the 20-year life of the Plan such as the refurbishment of the Rose Garden (Victoria Gardens); Golden Lion Square public open space; and the community hub (Newton's Place). The Plan has now been completed and adopted by the Council who will with the cooperation of partner organisations strive to facilitate the delivery of the numerous projects identified in the plan as priorities for the people of Newton Abbot.

2. INVOLVEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY

The Town Council has once again supported a number of community groups around the town, including Newton Abbot Community Interest Company.

Newton Abbot Community Interest Company is a local community organisation that seeks to improve the quality of life for people living and working in the town. We do this by asking people for their views and opinions, and then delivering solutions in response to the issues identified. We also support other organisations where we can. This year we have worked on the review of the Newton Abbot & District Community Plan, and many of the projects identified in the Plan will direct the future work of the CIC. Examples of the CIC's current work include running the Buckland and Courtenay Community Centres, working with volunteers on gardening projects in the town, managing the Newton Abbot Community Fridge and providing the Base Youth Club. You can find out more by visiting our website at www.bucklandcentre.org

3. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR, COMMITTEE BY COMMITTEE

3.1 **Finance & Audit Committee** (Chairman, Cllr Colin Parker; Vice-Chairman, Cllr David Corney-Walker) and **Policy & Resources Committee**, (Chairman Cllr David Corney-Walker, Vice-Chairman, Cllr Mrs Karen Crout).

These are the main Committees of the Council which meet on a regular basis to consider:

- ◆ Month by month income and expenditure statements and other detailed financial reports;
- ◆ Annual Governance and Accountability Return and internal audit reports;
- ◆ Recommend policy to the Council;
- ◆ Recommend budget and Precept to the Council;
- ◆ Consideration of all aspects of the maintenance of property and assets of the Council;
- ◆ Deals with all matters relating to the staff of the Council;
- ◆ Reports from Council representatives that serve on various outside organisations;
- ◆ Regular updates by the Police Inspector based in Newton Abbot;
- ◆ Applications for financial support.








This year detailed consideration has been given to various issues, including the following:

- ◆ The management of Newton Abbot's new Community Hub, Newton's Place and its fantastic museum;
- ◆ Involvement in Newton Abbot Community Trust to own, and maintain the public space, 'Golden Lion Square';
- ◆ Awarded a number of Shop Front Improvement grants to local business owners;
- ◆ Ongoing contributions to the funding and management of CCTV facilities in Newton Abbot;
- ◆ Refining relations with the local press;
- ◆ Review of the Town Council's Vision & Priorities;
- ◆ Review of the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other strategic and operational policies pertaining to the work of the Council;
- ◆ The management of the ever-growing threat of 'cyber-security';
- ◆ The management and reporting of Community Infrastructure Levy income
- ◆ Continuation of the Localism Act and its various regulations;
- ◆ The budget provides for grants and financial assistance to various organisations in Newton Abbot.

This year, we tried to assist as many organisations as we could, as many were still suffering the effects of the pandemic.

This year grants were made to local organisations including;

 Citizens Advice Teignbridge	£ 5500.00
 Newton Abbot Community Transport	£ 5000.00

 Newton Abbot & District Society of Arts	£ 600.00
 Green Futures	£ 500.00
 Newton Abbot Centre Association	£ 1000.00
 St Mary's Wolborough Church Tower Swift Project	£ 300.00
 Transition Newton Abbot	£ 250.00
 Kingscare League of Friends (slow cooker project)	£ 250.00
 Kingscare League of Friends (writing Group)	£ 250.00

3.2 **The Strategic Planning Forum** has concentrated not only on current budget performance but also budget strategy and the Precept for 2023/2024, together with setting out guidelines for all committee future budgets over the short and medium term. The overwhelming response from Councillors during this year's discussions was to be able to support the economic recovery and vitality of the town now that the Government restrictions due to the COVID pandemic had been lifted. For the forthcoming year, there has been an increase in the Council's budget brought about in the main by cost of living increases in fuel, utilities, nationally agreed salaries and insurance cover. The Council also took the bold step to lease a large industrial unit off The Avenue in which to locate its vehicles, tools and equipment and also to create a workshop to support the various activities performed by the Council's Facilities Maintenance Team.

3.3 **Community and Heritage Committee** - (Chairperson, Cllr Lesley Sheffield); Vice-Chairperson, Cllr Ann Jones has the responsibility for the Events, Museum, Newton in Bloom, (via the Community Engagement Group) and Allotments Sub-Committees, together with environmental issues and Town Council amenities.

This year the committee has:

- Received a presentation from representatives of Griffiths Civil Engineering who updated members on the A382/383 Link road, phase 1 project.
- Considered the proposed pedestrianisation enhancements for Queen Street.
- Formed a Road Safety Working Group to review the data downloaded from the Vehicle Activated Signs and work in partnership with the Police, County and District Councils and other organisations.
- Received reports from the Museum Curator on the work of the Museum.
- Considered the draft revised Community Plan.
- Considered complaints raised by residents regarding the poor bus service provision in the town provided by Stagecoach and acted as a voice for the community by raising the issue with Stagecoach and MP's Ann Marie Morris, Kevin Foster and Mel Stride,
- Monitored Floral provision.
- Commented on Traffic Regulation Orders for Queen Street
- Monitored and liaised with the Newton Abbot and District Community Allotment Association.
- Approved budgets for its Sub-Committees, (Events, Museum and Newton in Bloom);
- Maintained and provided street furniture within the town;
- Authorised Pavement Cafe Licence applications (for various town centre establishments).
- Management and maintenance of Newfoundland Way Public Conveniences, (a devolved service from Teignbridge District Council);
- Facilitated grass verge cutting, (a devolved service from Devon County Council);
- Maintenance of 40+ public footpaths within the Newton Abbot parish boundaries;
- Management of Victoria Gardens;
- Maintenance of the town's war memorial;
- Provided numerous floral displays within the town centre.

- Supported the Museum which has been attracting an average of 1000 visitors per month; and includes themed workshops run by the Community Engagement Officer and regular quiet sessions for those with sensory needs.

3.4 **Community Engagement Group** (Chairperson, Cllr Ann Jones; Vice-Chairperson, Cllr Alex Hall) has the responsibility for matters relating to community engagement within the town and wider community.

The focus of the Community Engagement Group during 2022 has been the review of the Newton Abbot & District Community Plan, which was first published in 2008. Some of the projects contained with the 2008 plan had been achieved, some had been superseded and others remained outstanding. In November 2022 the Council resolved to adopt the revised Community Plan.

The Community Plan can be viewed on the Town Council website, hard copies are available from Newton's Place.

3.4 (a) **Newton Abbot Town & GWR Museum Annual Report 2022/23**

Following lockdown closures and restrictions on visitor numbers in 2021, the museum finally had a full year of being open in 2022. This means we can start to see what a full year in the museum looks like and we are delighted to have welcomed **12,556** visitors to the museum and St. Leonard's Tower last year. By comparison, the previous museum saw an average of 2,000 – 2,500 visitors a year proving that the relocation to Newton's Place in the former St. Leonard's Church has been a success.

We have been receiving positive feedback from our visitors and in 2022 we received 250 comment cards:

- The average satisfaction score was 4.8 out of 5 (where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent)
- The average visitor age was 29 (this is the mean average)
- 46% of visitors who left comments were under 16s, the next largest demographic was the over 60s with 26%. Our youngest recorded visitor was 6 months old and our oldest was 104!
- The majority of our visitors are from Devon.
- Most comments (68%) expressed general positivity to the museum. 12% used the comment space to make a suggestion, 12% named their favourite part of the museum and 8% specifically praised the front of house team.
- The model train and interactive elements were named most frequently as people's favourite part.

Sample of comments:

'Very educative, the displays were very interactive and the staff were very polite. Great place to visit. Thanks'

'A beautiful space and history collection. I love all the interactive things for youngsters'

'Stepping back in time, generations of my family lived in Newton Abbot'

Thank you to everyone who has visited and supported the museum and don't forget if you haven't yet had a chance to visit, the museum is free and open Tuesday – Friday 09:30-16:30 and Saturday 09:30-13:30.

Now the museum has had a full year of opening the focus is on changing displays, temporary exhibitions and events to ensure there is something new and exciting for the community to see and participate in. To find out about upcoming events and exhibitions see the upcoming dates for the diaries section.

1. Exhibitions and changing displays

1.1 January display changes

Keeping the displays fresh by changing them is important for the conservation of the collection as well as keeping interest for returning visitors. We used the closure period in December / January to change a range of displays. This included:

- Costume case – changed to children’s clothing and toys
- Costume area, dressing table – boy’s first dress, Victorian belt and collar
- Conservation & Community area - Sandford Orleigh wooden panel on display
- New acquisition case – miner’s lamp and posters. This links to the 1980s Welsh mining strikes and the involvement of the town in supporting the miners.

In addition, the Iron Age Milber figures loan from Torquay Museum has been renewed for a further year and the medieval crucifix was returned to the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter.



Costume case featuring children’s clothing and toys

1.2 Object of the Month

We continue to change this case monthly to ensure there is always something new for visitors to see. This is an opportunity for objects that aren’t usually on display to be viewed by the public and also an opportunity for groups and members of the public to select the object they would like to see displayed. If you would like your group to select an object of the month please do get in touch!

1.3 Your Space

We like to keep changing our community cabinet to make sure that there is always something new to see. January to March saw a fascinating display of cameras collected by Community Engagement Officer Kate Green. In April a new display featured ‘What’s in Store?’ artworks made by local school children inspired by the museum’s collection of items that are usually in store and not seen by the public. This will be followed in May by a fascinating set of visual diaries created during the Covid lockdowns by Newton Abbot artist,

Jackie Bailey. Vibrant snapshots of the world during the strange times of the pandemic burst off the pages of Jackie's journals – a must see!

Then in June a much gentler collection will fill the cabinet, a collection of pottery cats! This will coincide with the exhibition of royal-themed pottery from Torquay Pottery Collectors Society, *Fired for Royalty*.

Display of cameras in the Your Space case



1.4 Ipplepen Coins

Until recently, there was little evidence of any Roman influence in Devon beyond Exeter. This all changed in 2007 when two metal detectorists discovered Roman coins at a site in Ipplepen. This soon challenged perceptions on the extent of Roman influence in the south west and led to a series of archaeological surveys and excavations run by the University of Exeter, the Portable Antiquities Scheme, the British Museum and Devon County Council.

The project revealed a local town in existence before Roman presence in the area, evident through the discovery of Iron Age roundhouses. Of particular significance at this site was the presence of 245 Roman coins and Roman pottery suggesting that an exchange in goods and money was taking place here on a larger scale than known in other villages in Britain at this time.

This site is of enormous significance for enhancing our understanding of Romano-British history and we are delighted to be exhibiting a selection of the incredible Roman coins which are kindly on loan to us from Torquay Museum.

These 2,000 year old coins are on display in the museum throughout 2023.



The coins are displayed in our new star object case. This is a high spec case suitable for the display of loans and sensitive material.

Exhibitions

1.5 Enhanced by Words, 22nd-29th April

This exhibition, in collaboration with Bright Lights Writing Group, took place in the community room in Newton's Place and was free to visit. It featured a showcase of talent by the Bright Lights Creative Writers with a mix of stories, interactives and word finding. Creative writing was also interspersed throughout the museum offering new interpretations of objects on display through a creative writing lens.

1.6 Fired for Royalty: Royal Commemoratives from the Torquay and South Devon Potteries, 10th June-6th July

In celebration of the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III

Torquay Pottery Collectors Society are collaborating with the museum to put together a unique chance to view a range of local pottery that have links to commemorative events through history.

This exhibition, displayed within the main museum gallery, will celebrate a range of ware made by local potteries, such as the Watcombe Terracotta Company, the Torquay Terracotta Company and the Aller Vale Art Pottery. Often these local pieces contained more hand-applied work than the better-known transfer decorated Staffordshire ware, so it is an exhibit not to be missed.

This exhibition is postponed from last year which had been scheduled to tie in with the Queen's jubilee year. Following the passing of the Queen we felt it would be appropriate to delay until the King's Coronation.

1.7 The Science of Collections, 2nd-31st August

The Science of Collections will explore the ways in which natural history intersects with history, heritage and museums and what we can learn from these fascinating collections.

As well as our own entomology collections, this will feature the loan of a lynx from Bristol Museum which was captured in Newton Abbot in 1903. A study of this 'big cat' was undertaken in recent years enabling us to look at the science behind this object.

Other displays will include fossils linked to a national museum project which is taking place in Newton Abbot and the geology of the area.

Lynx being loaned from
Bristol Museum
for
The Science of Collections
exhibition



1.8 St. Leonard's Tower refresh

This year sees a refresh of the displays in St. Leonard's Tower. We worked with the design team at The Creative Core, who designed the displays in the museum, to produce new interpretation within the tower.

This includes information boards on the ground and first floor, a new showcase for the tower model and interpretation. This has now been installed ready for the spring / summer opening season in May.

Other changes include a monitor on the first floor to show livestream footage of the bells and clock mechanism.

Do come along and find out about the fascinating history of this 13th century tower for yourself. St Leonard's Tower will be open again to visitors every Wednesday from 10am-1pm from 17th May to 13th September and is free to visit. It will also be open on the following Saturdays from 10am-1pm – 27th May, 9th and 16th September.

2. Family workshops and activities

2.1 Toddler Tuesdays

These free family sessions are aimed at children up to the age of 4 and continue to be a success running every Tuesday during term time from 9.30-10.30am. The sessions are led by volunteers from the Education team and involve story time, music, toys and a chance to explore the museum. On the last Tuesday of the month Kate Green, Community Engagement Officer, runs an activity for the children. Due to the high demand for these sessions we introduced a booking system which seems to be working well. Tickets can be booked via our What's On page on our website, by phone or in the museum

2.2 Museum: Make and Create

“Museum: Make and Create workshops” are sessions designed to encourage families to work together and are led by Kate Green, the Community Engagement Officer. The free sessions take place on the first Saturday of every month (pre-booking is highly recommended) and have a two-hour duration.

The workshops always have a link to the museum’s collections and the activities cover a wide range of mediums including clay, writing, sewing, planting seeds and digital formats. Recent workshops include a drop-in session at Courtenay Park during the coronation weekend making crowns and proclamations.

3. Community engagement events and projects

3.1 What’s in Store?

Our project this Spring, called ‘What’s in Store?’, aimed to share many unseen items from our collection, but through the eyes of young, talented artists in the town. We shared a range of objects with pupils from local schools and they interpreted each object using various artistic media. Their wonderful artworks were on show throughout April in our *Your Space* cabinet and community area in the museum.

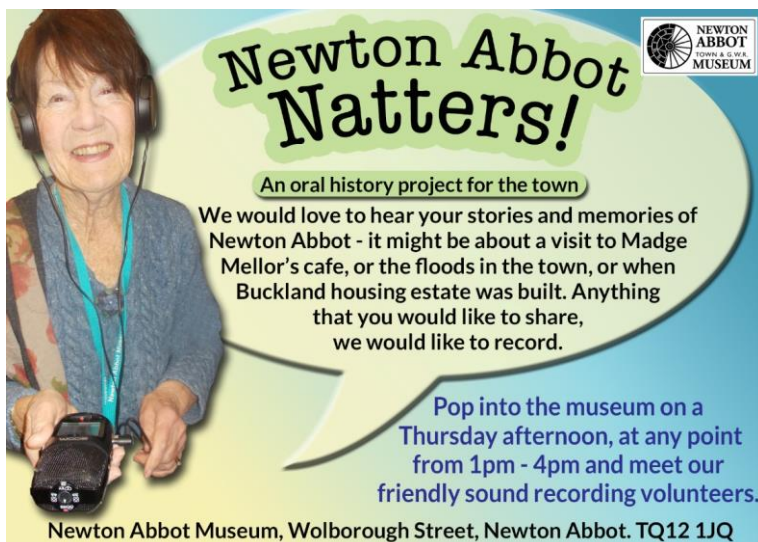
The project has been a great success. Kate Green has worked with three schools – Wolborough school, Glendinning Academy and Highweek school. We have had 46 students who have seen a wide variety of objects from the museum stores and have made a range of artworks for each object, interpreting it in different ways using paper cut outs, pastels, clay and pencil.

3.2 Twilight Sketching

A new event started at the end of 2022 in partnership with Newton Abbot Art Group is Twilight Sketching. This runs from 4-6pm every other Monday and is open to all to attend. Visitors bring their own sketchbooks and pencils and enjoy two hours of calming music and sketching being inspired by the museum and its displays. The events are well attended with new people coming each time. People are enjoying the activity and the social occasion. There is no need to book and it is free to attend.

3.3 Newton Abbot Natters, oral history project

We have launched an oral history project with volunteers to provide a regular time to record anyone with tales of Newton Abbot. This means that visitors who come in and mention that they were the chef at Madge Mellor’s for example, can be given a postcard to let them know they are able to drop in on a Thursday to make a recording with one of our volunteers. If you have an interesting local story that you would like to share with the museum do pop along on a Thursday afternoon.

A poster for the 'Newton Abbot Natters!' oral history project. It features a photograph of an elderly woman with short brown hair, wearing a blue cardigan and a lanyard, smiling and holding a small black digital voice recorder. The background is a light blue and green gradient. The title 'Newton Abbot Natters!' is written in a large, bold, black font. Below the title, it says 'An oral history project for the town'. The main text reads: 'We would love to hear your stories and memories of Newton Abbot - it might be about a visit to Madge Mellor's cafe, or the floods in the town, or when Buckland housing estate was built. Anything that you would like to share, we would like to record.' At the bottom, it says 'Pop into the museum on a Thursday afternoon, at any point from 1pm - 4pm and meet our friendly sound recording volunteers.' The Newton Abbot Museum logo is in the top right corner. The address 'Newton Abbot Museum, Wolborough Street, Newton Abbot. TQ12 1JQ' is at the bottom.

Newton Abbot Natters!

An oral history project for the town

We would love to hear your stories and memories of Newton Abbot - it might be about a visit to Madge Mellor's cafe, or the floods in the town, or when Buckland housing estate was built. Anything that you would like to share, we would like to record.

Pop into the museum on a Thursday afternoon, at any point from 1pm - 4pm and meet our friendly sound recording volunteers.

Newton Abbot Museum, Wolborough Street, Newton Abbot. TQ12 1JQ

3.3 Warm Space

Throughout the winter a free and welcoming Warm Space has taken place in Newton's Place each Friday, with the addition of homemade soup and bread which has been appreciated by those attending. The last Warm Space took place on Friday, 24th Feb. This has been a really good thing to offer the town and so instead of Warm Space, the offer has been extended to *Chat Space*, a space to come in for a tea, coffee and chat every Friday from 1-3pm.

3.4 Makaton choir

A Makaton choir are using the community rooms to rehearse weekly. This resulted in a well attended concert being performed in the building on the 25th March. This is the second time we will be hosting the Makaton choir and rehearsals and performances continue. Keep an eye on our What's On page on our website to find out when the next concert will be.

3.5 Easter and summer trails

There was an egg related trail within the museum throughout the Easter holidays. This was a free trail that was appreciated by many of our younger visitors who also received a prize of a small chick on completion of the trail.

For the summer holiday we are working with Brick Ideas to create a Lego train trail around the museum. This will be free to do and will be available throughout the summer holidays.

4. School and educational visits and outreach

We are still receiving interest in visits from school and educational groups and the team have been developing workshops and a handling collection so the children can have a unique learning experience to their usual classroom-based learning. In 2022 we welcomed:

- 872 visitors to the museum as part of school or home education visits
- 1209 visitors on group or informal education visits
- We reached 218 people during school outreach visits
- 277 people were reached during community outreach visits

Interest in school, home education, group and outreach visits continue in 2023 with demands to book visits in which is fantastic.

4.1 Home education

As well as monthly home education Lego workshops that are being run in the museum with Brick Ideas, the Community Engagement Officer is starting to run bi-monthly home education art workshops. This was requested by a home education parent who attends the Lego workshops with their child. The group came in to visit the museum in March and the next step is to run a workshop in the community rooms on the 10th May. These workshops are free to attend.

4.2 Learn Devon Notable Newtonian course

The museum is collaborating with Learn Devon to deliver a course for adults with additional needs over the span of 6 weeks which started in April. This course is focusing on notable Newtonians.

5 Accessibility

We continue to run Relaxed Visits every other month. During these visits sounds in the museum are reduced and there is a chill out room available upstairs. We also have additional resources available at the Welcome Desk all year round to support visitors to enjoy their visit including ear defenders, sensory bags, audio guides and we are currently developing a tactile booklet in collaboration with the RNIB for visitors with sight impairment.

6. Volunteers and work experience

The museum currently has 57 active volunteers who assist with a range of activities including front of house, behind the scenes collections work, education and conservation to name a few. Without our wonderful team of volunteers we simply wouldn't be able to offer the service that we can, so a huge thank you to all of our amazing volunteers.

We have been receiving several requests for work experience students for this summer. Unfortunately, due to staff changes and capacity we have not been able to pursue work experience students for this summer. We did, however, welcome a work experience student from Newton Abbot College to the museum for a week in February. The student worked on a range of projects including selecting and installing the object of the month, creating social media content, writing a blog and supporting Toddler Tuesdays.

7. British Sign Language Training

As accessibility is a core aim of the museum it was felt that it would be helpful to have a basic understanding of key words to welcome deaf or hard of hearing visitors into the museum who use BSL. On the 18th April several staff and volunteers attended an introduction to British Sign Language course run by the local Smart Signs BSL.

8. Projects

8.1 Stover Park project

Restoring Stover Park is a 3 year National Lottery Heritage funded project. The museum will receive some funding to participate in this project by working with a team of volunteers to conduct research that will feed into new interpretation around the park and that can be accessed digitally. This project commenced late April and will run until September. In August 2025 we will be putting on an exhibition linked to the project and the research that the volunteer team will have been working on.

8.2 Pilot project with the Natural History Museum

'South West Area Natural Sciences: Setting Natural Science Collections Data Free', is a collaborative pilot project between the Natural History Museum London, South West Museum Development and Bristol Museum & Art Gallery. This project will enable museums to digitally share their natural science specimens and associated data and help researchers understand more about biodiversity, as well as the influence of humanity on our natural world on our rapidly changing planet. We are delighted that Newton Abbot Museum has been selected to be included in this pilot project. We are currently the only small museum in the country to be involved at this stage to help digitise UK collections and add them to a worldwide scientific database.

A team of volunteers and staff received training from experts at the Natural History Museum where they have loaned us equipment to catalogue and photograph parts of our entomology collection. This came about following our successful award of Green Grant funding to carry out a condition check of the collection. Part of this involved going to Bristol Museum to receive

specialist training by the Natural History Curator. This project has so far revealed that there are important specimens within the museum's collection, some of which are now extinct.



Curatorial Assistant Lucy
working on the butterfly
collection

9. Friends of the Museum

We have over 70 Friends of the Museum members and the monthly talks on a range of different local topics continue to be successful – we are often fully booked!

10. Staff changes

It's all change in the museum team as Katie Petley-Jones is on maternity leave having welcomed her new baby girl into the world on the 21st March. In addition the Curator, Dr Charlotte Dixon, is also starting maternity leave.

We are delighted to have welcomed into the team Lucy Cokes who is the Curatorial Assistant maternity cover and India Jolly who is the Curator maternity cover. Both Lucy and India have settled in well and are supported by Kate Green the Community Engagement Officer and Charlotte Edwards, the Museum Administrative Assistant. Welcome Lucy and India!

11. Upcoming dates for the diary

Relaxed Visits

Newton Abbot Museum welcomes anyone who might benefit from visiting the museum at a quieter time.

Monday 19th June, 2-4pm

Toddler Tuesdays

Free informal sessions for children up unto the age of 4, every Tuesday during term-time, 9:30-10:30

May 23rd – Activity
 30th – No session (*half-term*)

June 6th
 13th
 20th
 27th – Activity

Museum: Make and Create

3rd June, 10:30-12:30 – Clay taking inspiration from our upcoming *Fired for Royalty* exhibition

1st July, 10:30-12:30 – Celebrate summer - floral headband, linked to Polish headband / plant potting

For future Make and Create sessions and to book your place please visit our website.

Twilight Sketching - In partnership with Newton Abbot Art Group

Everyone welcome! Bring your sketch pad and your pencils and relax in the magnificent surroundings of the museum. Be inspired by historical treasures and bring your creative side.

15th May, 12th June, 26th June

Exhibitions

Fired for Royalty: Royal Commemoratives from the Torquay and South Devon Potteries
10th June – 6th July

In celebration of the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III.

Torquay Pottery Collectors Society are putting together a unique chance to view a range of local pottery that have links to commemorative events through history. These wonderful pieces will be displayed within the museum for you to come and see.

The Science of Collections

2nd – 31st August

Exploring the ways in which natural history intersects with history, heritage and museums and what we can learn from these fascinating collections. As well as our own entomology items, this will feature the loan of a lynx which was captured in Newton Abbot in 1903.

For more information and upcoming events please visit the What's on Page on our website

www.museum-newtonabbot.org.uk

Email: groups@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk

Tel: 01626 201121

3.4 (b) Newton in Bloom Sponsorship 2023

Newton Abbot Town Council would like to thank local businesses, which have once again so generously sponsored many of the displays in the town centre. Thank you for your continued support.

 <p>The Foot Man The Foot Lady</p> <p>www.Footmannewtonabbot.co.uk</p> <p>37 DEVON SQUARE NEWTON ABBOT . 01626 354834</p>		 <p>idverde</p> <p>CREATING AND MAINTAINING LANDSCAPES</p>
 <p>TQ12 TAXIS</p> <p>01626 35 55 55</p> <p>4, 6 & 8 Seaters Friendly Local Service Credit Cards Accepted</p> <p>www.tq12taxis.co.uk info@tq12taxis.co.uk</p>		 <p>ROYAL BRITISH LEGION</p>
 <p>Southlands</p> <p>Residential Care Home</p>		 <p>Best Accountancy Services</p> <p>Outstanding in our field</p>

3.5 **Allotments –**

The Town Council has a management agreement with the Newton Abbot & District Cooperative Allotments Association Limited which is responsible for allotment fields at Decoy, Blake's, Cooke's, Coach Road and Bradley fields. Council representatives meet with the officers of the Association annually to discuss any issues, and more often if required. Whilst it had not been possible to meet face-to-face in the past two years because of the restrictions due to the COVID Pandemic, during which the Association has worked hard to support its members on each of the sites. Plot holders have found allotments to be extremely valuable in contributing to family's health and wellbeing during these difficult times. Face to face meetings recommended in 2022 when the legal relationship between the Council and NADCAA due to increasing issues being raised by plot holders. The Council has agreed in principle to review this situation with a view to liaising with plot holders during 2023.

The Town Council also lets part of Vicary's field as allotments and has given over the remainder to Transition Town Newton Abbot as a community garden.

Negotiations have reached a conclusion regarding an area of land Hele Park which will in 2023 become a new allotment site. Those who wish to rent a plot on this site and who are on the Association's waiting list will be contacted during 2023.

3.6 Events Sub-Committee

BAND CONCERTS – MAY TO SEPT 2022

With the bandstand back up and running and looking very good 4 out of 5 of our band concerts went ahead as planned.



At the start of the August Band Concert a plaque was unveiled in memory of Henry Cole, former Councillor and Mayor of Newton Abbot and the first Freeman of the Town.



We would like to express our gratitude to Davie Construction, Major Braden, Best Accountancy for their sponsorship of the bands last year.

A big thank you to all those who turned out to watch and support the band concerts and kindly donated to the collection. A total of £806.63 was collected at the concerts and has been added to the Mayor's Charity Account. All the monies collected during the year will be handed to the Mayor's Charity, The Ricky Grant Unit at the Annual Council Meeting in May this year.

This year we have planned the following dates:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Sunday 7 th May | - | South West Comms – as part of the Party in the Park for King Charles Coronation. |
| Sunday 11 th June | - | Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Concert Band |
| Sunday 2 nd July | - | Bay Brass |

Sunday 13th August - Exeter Railway Band

Sunday 10th September - Spectrum Music Concert Wind Band

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Major Braden for kindly allowing us to take over their sponsorship from last year to this year due to the cancelled concert in September due to the very sad loss of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.

We would also like to thank Best Accountancy, Major G.W. Braden and Davie Construction for their continued support in sponsoring band concerts again this year.

TOWN CRIER'S COMPETITION – SATURDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER

Unfortunately, this event was cancelled the day before due to the death of Queen Elizabeth.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

The Remembrance Sunday parade consisted of a few hundred people from RBL members, town councillors, local cadet groups and youngsters from the scouting and Girlguiding local units. It paraded through the town from Courtenay Street from 10.30am led by the Corps of Drums, Royal Marine Volunteers Cadet Band.

As the live streaming went well during previous years it was decided to stream again at the War Memorial so that anyone unable to attend was still able to support and view the event by watching the stream on NATC's Facebook page.

Thankyou again to the women's branch of the RBL who supplied the knitted poppies for the War Memorial rails, once again they looked fantastic on display for the service and weeks following.



CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH ON – SATURDAY 26TH NOVEMBER

The start of the Christmas celebrations began on Saturday 26th November, throughout the day children could enjoy free entertainment and crafts in Courtenay Street as well as entertainment from the cheeky Christmas pudding and fairy.

Santa was on his float as well as the Carnival Queen on hers, they both paraded through town from The Avenue, it was extremely wet but it didn't dampen the spirits of the crowds which formed at the Clock Tower.



The two floats stopped at St Leonard's Clock Tower where Santa switched on the lights of the Tower along with the Mayor Cllr Carol Bunday followed by a meet and greet with all the children.



The Town Council is grateful to the Carnival Committee, Town Councillors and volunteers who put so much time, effort and enthusiasm into making this happen.

We are also extremely grateful to businesses, for making contributions to the Christmas lights fund.

VICTORIAN EVENING – WEDNESDAY 7th DECEMBER

Wednesday 7th December saw the annual Victorian Evening take place in Newton Abbot in the Market Square. It is a well-known event now in the South Devon area and everyone looks forward to the charity evening with a Victorian atmosphere.

Once again the Market Square was jam packed with local charity stalls selling their wares. In total there were 25 stalls selling Christmas themed items from tree decorations, beautifully crafted Christmas gifts, wreaths, homemade cakes and sweets to Christmas cards and plenty of tombola's to try your luck on.

This year the 'best dressed stall' trophy went to 'HFT – Adult Support Services' they received a cheque for £50 for their charity.



This year saw a stilt walking Victorian couple in the town centre entertaining the general public throughout the evening. Children were also entertained by a gentleman on a penny farthing who was making balloon models for the children, Elfic the kids' entertainer and bell ringing at St Leonards Clock Tower.

Santa this year could be found on his sleigh near the clock tower, plus in Courtenay Street there was plenty of street food vendors to cater to everyone's needs. It was a freezing cold night but very well supported and the town was jammed packed with visitors and shoppers.

There was plenty of lovely prizes to be won on the Mayor's Charity raffle stall. All tickets were sold and the amount raised for the Mayor's Charity was nearly £220.

LANTERN PARADE – WEDNESDAY 14th DECEMBER

The return of the Lantern Parade!!!! After a few years absence due to Covid the very popular lantern parade was back to wow the people of Newton Abbot and it didn't disappoint.

All eight of the local primary schools took part again making lanterns to the theme of the 'Enchanted Garden'. Lanterns included ladybirds, badgers, elves, owls, hedgehogs and fairies. Plus a few enormous lanterns including Santa, Rudolph, mother owl and a dragon they looked truly incredible parading through the town.

The parade started from Bearn's Primary School at 6.30pm and over 200 lanterns paraded through the town up to the clock tower. The story of the Enchanted Garden was told and all the students and audience could sing and dance along. It was a great evening, and it was certainly incredible to have this much loved event back in Newton Abbot.



CAROL SERVICE

A wonderful turnout for The Mayor's Carol Service which took place by St. Leonard's Clock Tower on Wednesday 21st December.

The Service was lead by the Mayor's Chaplain, Rev. Ben Maynard with the Mayor, Councillor Carol Bunday and the Town Clerk, Mr Phil Rowe each doing a reading.



The Rock Choir once again proved a big success in assisting with singing of the carols and did a fantastic job with their rendition of Silent Night/The First Noel.

Richard Toomer also led the choir with Carol of the Bells, a traditional Ukrainian Carol.

Donations to the value of £80.99 were made towards the Mayor's Charity "The Ricky Grant Unit".

SANTA'S ON HIS SLEIGH AND CLOCK TOWER FIRESIDE SELFIES

After last year's success of Santa on his sleigh outside the clock tower it was decided to keep him outside again this year.

This worked well again and meant that not only the children got to visit him but also shoppers walking past got to enjoy seeing him and his sleigh which was illuminated and playing music.



Santa was on his sleigh for all of the late-night Wednesdays in town.



This year was a new trial of the 'Clock Tower Fireside Selfies'.

The bottom floor of the Clock Tower itself was decorated and made to look and feel like Santa's living room. It was also opened in the evening of the late night shopping Wednesdays and gave people the opportunity to go inside and get a picture or selfie on Santa's chair in front of a cosy fire. This went down very well and visitors old and young popped inside to get their selfies.



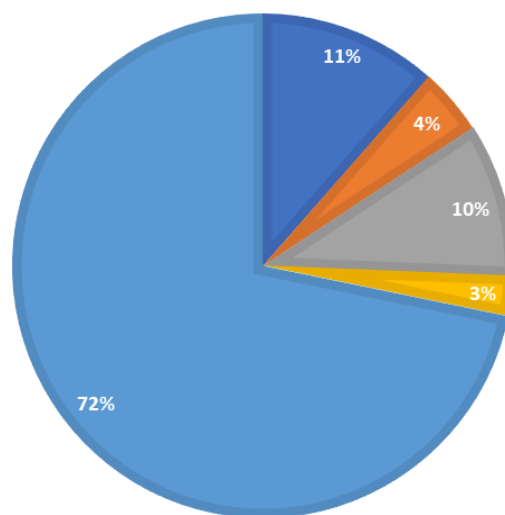
3.7 **Planning Committee** (Chairperson Cllr Anne Jones; Vice-Chairperson, Cllr Mike Ryan) meets every three weeks and looks in detail at all the planning applications affecting properties in Newton Abbot and its borders.

The Town Council doesn't have the power to grant planning permission but as a statutory consultee, the Committee comments and makes recommendations on all planning, tree works and consultations to the Local Planning Authority, Teignbridge District Council (TDC) as well as considering applications made by Devon County Council (DCC) for matters such as highways.

During the past year 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, the committee has considered and made recommendations on 168 planning applications.

**168 PLANNING APPLICATIONS CONSIDERED
1ST APRIL 2022 TO 31ST MARCH 2023**

■ Tree ■ Major ■ At variance ■ Withdrawn ■ Total applications considered



meetings to share his wealth of knowledge with the Committee.

The Planning Committee has during 2022 – 2023 had preliminary discussions and deliberations on several major applications, including the following: -

22/00579/MAJ

Development Site 22 - 26 Wolborough Street Newton Abbot Devon

Erection of a part four, part five storey building to provide 38 residential units (Class C3) and associated facilities with retail accommodation at ground floor levels.

22/00810/MAJ

Land At Wolborough Barton Newton Abbot Devon TQ12 1EJ

Approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline planning permission 17/01542/MAJ for residential development of 236 dwellings (Use Class C3), public open space including allotments and children's play space, a surface water attenuation feature and associated landscaping and infrastructure (Revised description)

22/01151/MAJ

Land At Ngr 287048 69192 Langford Bridge Kingskerswell Road Newton Abbot
Reserved Matters application for the construction of 40 dwellings including affordable housing, public open space and associated site infrastructure; pursuant to outline planning permission reference 19/00238/MAJ (approval sought for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale)

22/01027/MAJ

Linden Lea Caravan Storage Area Bovey Road Newton Abbot Devon TQ12 6PS
Outline application for 12 detached dwellings (approval sought for appearance, layout and scale)

22/01129/MAJ

17-19 Market Walk Newton Abbot Devon TQ12 2RX
Demolition of existing buildings, erection of four screen cinema building on upper levels with two Class E(a, b) units on the ground floor, associated ancillary accommodation and external works

22/01953/MAJ

Wisteria Road Regency Court Stover Devon TQ12 6BW
Variation of conditions 7, 9 and 10 of the planning permission 16/02971/MAJ (Removal of condition 8 on planning permission 14/03185/MAJ (Variation of condition on original planning permission for change of use of land for the stationing of static holiday caravans, touring caravan storage, warden's accommodation, pub, cafe, shop and ancillary facilities together with the temporary use of buildings for storage).

22/01500/MAJ

Land At Bradley Lane Newton Abbot Devon TQ12 1LZ
Demolition of existing buildings, remediation and raising of levels to construct 90 dwellings, new and upgraded estate roads, areas of open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

22/02069/MAJ

Wolborough Barton Coach Road Newton Abbot Devon TQ12 1EJ
Approval of details for phase 2 link road in accordance with condition 1 of outline planning permission 17/1452/MAJ (approval sought for appearance, layout, scale and landscaping)

The Committee continues to monitor closely the various policies and application of the Teignbridge Local Plan and responded to the following consultations:

- Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040 Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) Consultation.
- 21st Century Allotments in New Developments
- Houghton Barton and Bradmore Design Code
- Future High Street Fund – Queen Street Proposals

The Committee considered and responded to requests from TDC regarding naming of streets within new developments.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Town Council encourages members of the public to attend its meetings and its committees/sub-committees in order to listen to the debate, recommendations and decisions of the authority. Residents are also encouraged to attend to make representations or ask questions of councillors. It is pointed out that on every Agenda there is a business item entitled "Public Participation". During the Covid Pandemic the public were still able to attend and participate online meetings of the Council using access to the video links.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I take this opportunity to thank all members of staff for their support during the past twelve months, and, of course, all members of the Council on the various committees, sub-committees and working groups on which they have served. This has been a difficult year for the Council, as it has been for everyone, continuing to go about our business and deliver services in the aftermath of a global pandemic brought about by Covid-19. Those first few weeks following the March 2020 'lockdown' were strange to say the least, but everyone, staff & Councillors alike just got on with it and went the 'extra-mile' not only to ensure there were no breaks in service delivery, but to also provide additional support to the local community.

All members of staff had to quickly adjust to working from home and all the challenges that brought but continued to deliver and without any complaint. In fact, having been 'forced' into finding a way to facilitate 'business as usual' during that period had led to benefits whereby staff can work in a hybrid manner, providing flexibility and an improved work/life balance.

On the democracy front, the Council did lose three Councillors during the year, one resigned and two ceased to be councillors due to their non-attendance at any meetings of the Council in six-month period. The resignation triggered the advertisement of the vacancy but sufficient numbers of registered voters did not call for an election. Being so close to the May 2023 elections the Council chose not to co-opt. The other two vacancies being within a six-month period before the May elections did not require an advertisement and the Council again chose not to co-opt due to the proximity of the elections.

The Council is hopeful that sufficient nominations will be received for there to be contested elections in all 5 of the town's wards on May 4th 2023. This is not only good for democracy but will also enable the Council to again adopt the General Power of Competency which allows the Council to deliver services with far greater flexibility than if it did not have the Power.

Yet again I can confirm that none of the 18 Members of the Town Council receive any allowances when they act as Town Councillor. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor do however receive an allowance for their year of office.

P A Rowe
Town Clerk
April 2023

Newton Abbot Town Council 2021/2022

Income and Expenditure Account for Year Ended 31st March 2022

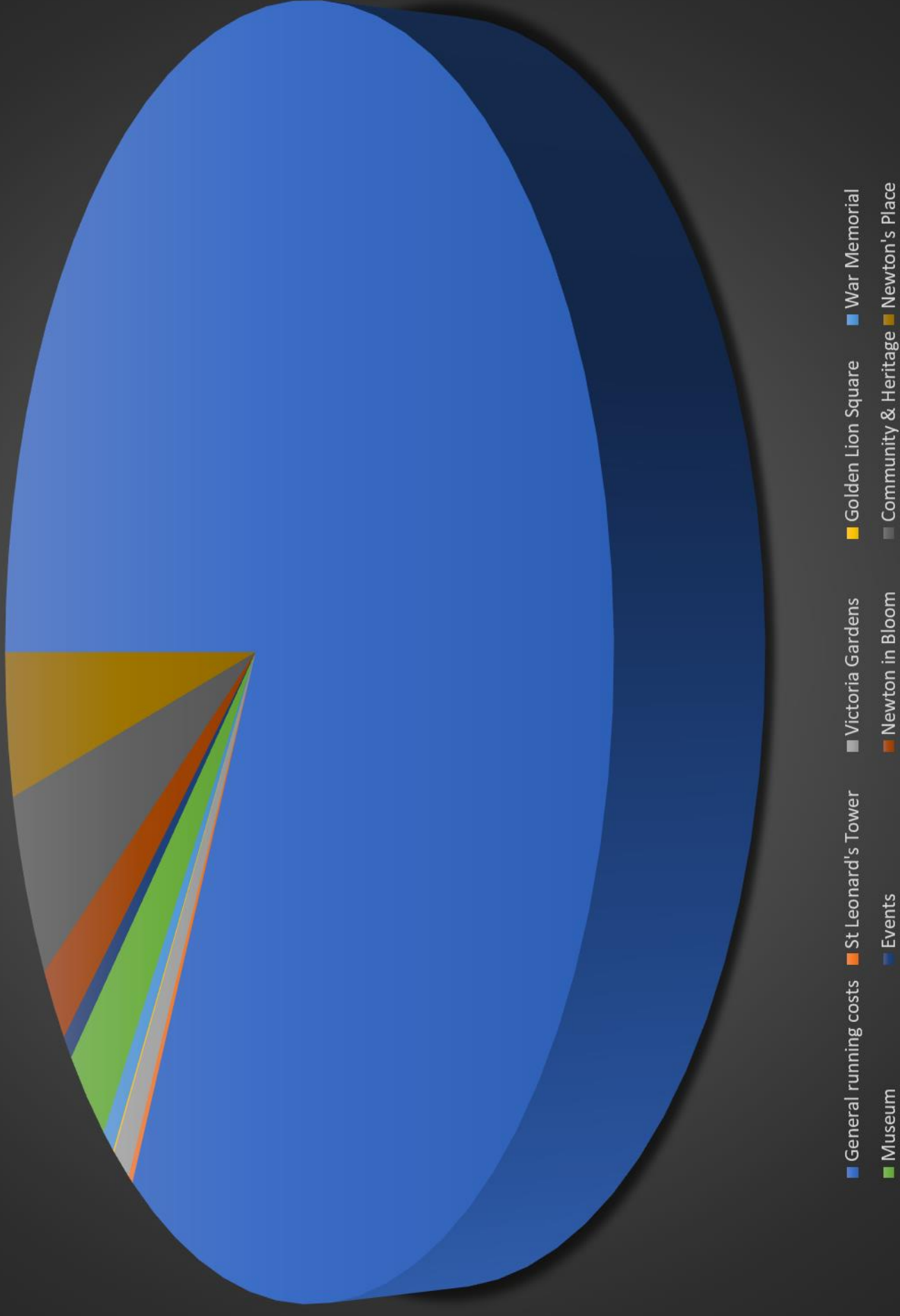
31st March 2021		31st March 2022
	Income Summary	
866,039	Precept	914,707
866,039	Sub Total	914,707
	Operating Income	
1,946	Admin F&A	1,195
118,877	Administration	125,327
4,199	NEWTON'S PLACE	4,688
52	Civic	386
600	Town Development Manager	0
0	St Leonard's Tower	66
0	CIC	83,472
6,699	Museum	11,311
0	Events	1,275
0	Newton In Bloom	1,819
1,965	Allotments	1,684
250	Town Quay	0
0	Newfoundland Way Toilets	2,212
35,695	Other Amenities	15,455
31,101	Newton's Place PROJECT	21,163
1,067,423	Total Income	1,184,760
	Running Costs	
105,565	Admin F&A	87,978
597,254	Administration	672,621
47,802	NEWTON'S PLACE	42,685
1,037	Civic	8,048
5,365	Town Development Manager	9,468
4,280	St Leonard's Tower	2,975
2,604	War Memorial	8,296
2,176	Victoria Gardens	11,880
130	Golden Lion Square	857
1,299	Newton Abbot Community Trust	250
58,959	CIC	99,601
11,891	Museum	31,560
5,084	Events	8,030
18,457	Newton In Bloom	24,423
2,855	Allotments	4,271
172	Footpaths	692
0	Bradley Leat	441
2,801	Town Quay	6,937
0	Newfoundland Way Toilets	6,095
65,173	Other Amenities	41,924
408,735	Newton's Place PROJECT	47,616
1,341,639	Total Expenditure	1,116,651

Newton Abbot Town Council 2021/2022

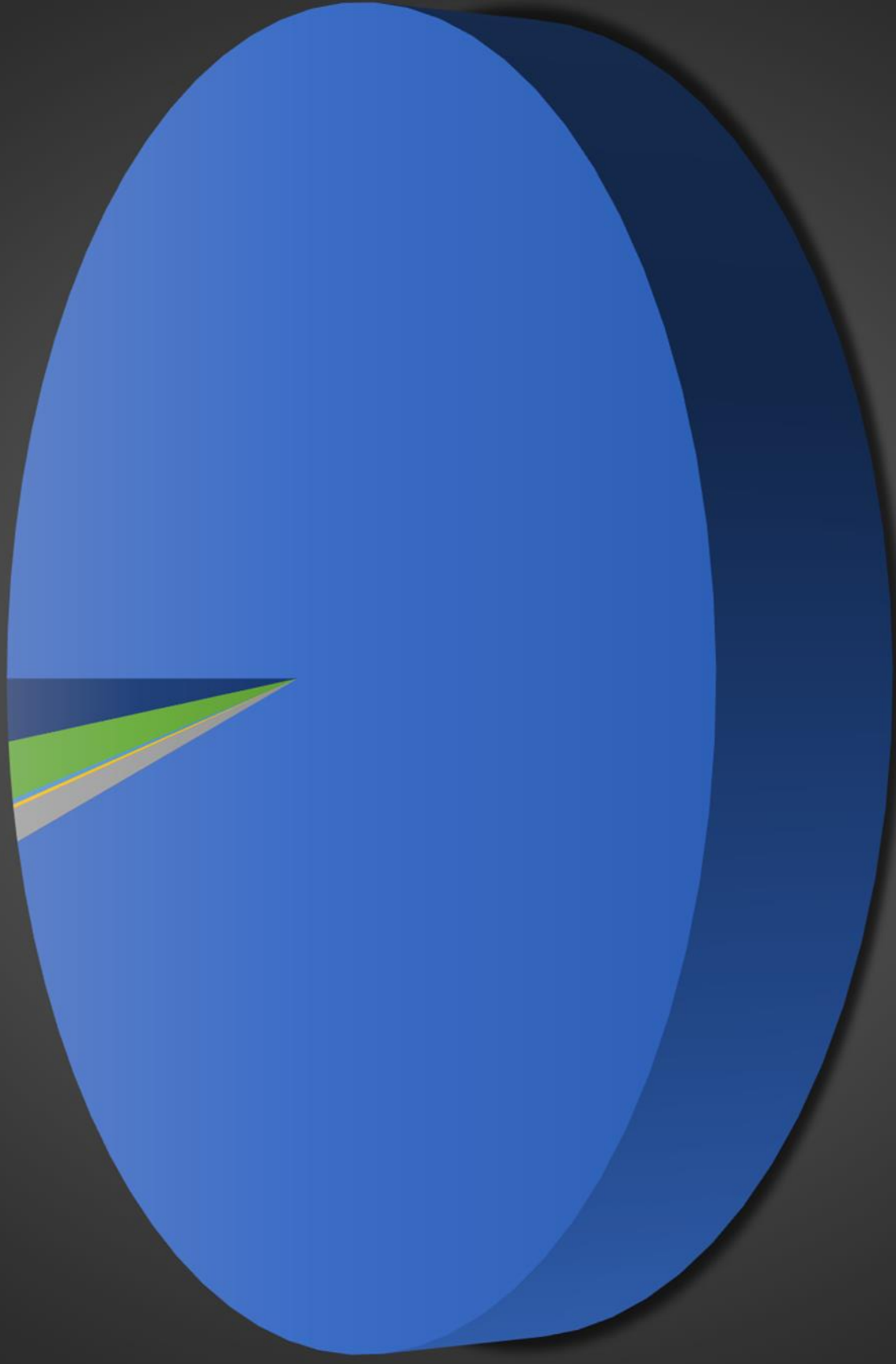
Income and Expenditure Account for Year Ended 31st March 2022

31st March 2021		31st March 2022
	General Fund Analysis	
788,848	Opening Balance	145,575
1,067,423	Plus : Income for Year	1,184,760
<hr/> 1,856,272		<hr/> 1,330,335
1,341,639	Less : Expenditure for Year	1,116,651
<hr/> 514,632		<hr/> 213,685
369,057	Transfers TO / FROM Reserves	110,473
<hr/> 145,575	Closing Balance	<hr/> 103,211

Newton Abbot Town Council Expenditure Summary YE 31st March 2022



Newton Abbot Town Council Income Summary YE 31st March 2022



■ General operating income ■ St Leonard's Tower ■ Museum ■ Events ■ Newton in Bloom ■ Community & Heritage ■ Newton's Place

FACILITY MAINTENANCE OFFICERS



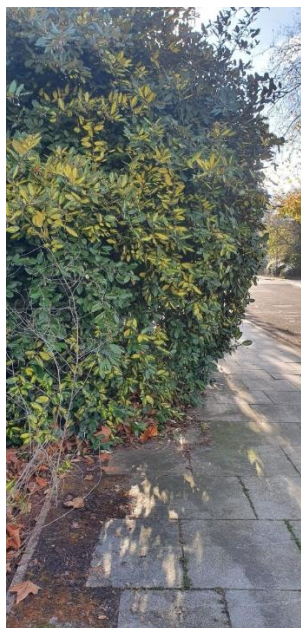
Left to right: Tony Little, Steve Ryan and David Samson

Their working week is spent out and about in all weathers, tackling any number of jobs required to keep Newton Abbot looking smart and safe. Street cleaning, graffiti removal and keeping on top of weeds that simply don't get the attention they used to from the county or district councils.

Which is why, Newton Abbot Town Council has invested in extra staff and equipment including an herbicide-free weed control system (Foamstream Machine) that can also be used for street cleansing. It kills unwanted vegetation, weeds, moss and algae using the precise application of hot water insulated by a specially formulated biodegradable and organic foam.

As a small team they achieve great results, the Town Council recognises that a clean and tidy environment is important to both residents and visitors. Not only does it make the town look better, it improves morale and, we believe, helps to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.

Highweek Way – Before and After



Tor View Road – Before & After



Town Development Manager's Report May 2023

For many businesses, the past twelve months have presented challenge upon challenge. Energy bills have featured regularly in my conversations with business owners and there has never been a time when I have wished more for a magic wand, which might provide something in the way of a solution to escalating bills. In monthly business meetings with our MP Anne Marie Morris, this topic has not moved from the top of the list of points to raise. It is a tribute to our business owners that somehow or other they are managing the situation and Newton Abbot has not seen the extensive closures which are being experienced in town centres across the land.

Reports in local media sometimes indicate that Newton Abbot is on its uppers. This kind of negativity and lack of insight is frustrating for me when I see businesses continue to invest in our town and good quality commercial premises rarely stay empty for long. In the last 12 months, we have welcomed half a dozen new businesses to the town centre and we have seen several excellent existing ones transfer into the hands of new owners. This surely is a good indicator of confidence in Newton Abbot as a hub of commerce. It has been lovely to see each of these new businesses improving their chosen premises and I'm always grateful that the town council continues to support the town centre with the availability of a shop front improvement grant scheme. Do take a look at Papa Johns in Queen Street, as an example, to see what transformation has taken place here. The shabby 1970s flat aluminium frontage has been entirely replaced with a quality wooden traditional shop front and centrally positioned door, and the premises is now an asset to this row of businesses.



The town's vacancy rate has risen, but it is still well below that of the rest of the country. Several of those units which shoppers might notice are empty, are not so because no one wants them!

Counterintuitively, it is because they are being kept vacant as the space forms part of the District Council's plan for its Future High Streets projects. We are still waiting to find out if the projects for Queen Street, a new cinema and the refurbishment of the Market Hall will be going ahead and it will be good to have final clarity from TDC. Nonetheless, with or without the funding, Newton Abbot will continue to be a destination for visitors and shoppers from far and wide, with a huge amount to offer.

I mentioned regular zoom meetings with our MP Anne Marie Morris and I am grateful for the opportunity to engage with government at this level and to try to influence national policy. I see this as being a hugely important part of my role. Having a regular dialogue with local businesses and an overview of what makes places tick, together with a knowledge of the individual challenges of our own town is absolutely vital. I take every opportunity to point out the fallacy of current government interventions in the name of 'revitalising town centres', where government assumes it knows best. Since pre- pandemic times, government has wrongly focused on the building of new things as an antidote to declining town centres, when in fact what most places are crying out for, are the funds to maintain, fix and improve what we currently have. It is frustrating that funds are made available, but only for things which tick a narrow set of boxes. If the thing your town needs most is not in those boxes, then no funding will be forthcoming. This is simply wrong.

Perhaps in recognition of my place management experience, I was humbled to be appointed as a director of the Association of Town and City Management (ATCM) early this year. The ATCM is a respected voice for town and city management at both a European and wider global level. The ATCM offers representation at various levels of government and provides a forum of support, best practice and networking. I make sure that I use this further opportunity to influence national decision making.

When I look back over the past twelve months, a lot has happened. We have delivered events and town centre entertainment on a regular basis, so that shoppers know that when they come into town, there is likely to be 'something going on'. Large events are wonderful, but they require a huge budget and once they are over, they are over. Little and often has been my goal and I'm so pleased that I have been able to achieve this. We had jazz on Golden Lion Square and bands playing in Courtenay Street; solo singers and wonderfully noisy Japanese taiko drums. We had Appalachian clog dancing and dancing round the maypole. We have a huge wealth of home-grown talent and it's great to be able to celebrate and showcase this in our town centre spaces. After a few years without, we had a fantastic classic car show in September. 'Teignbridge Classics' car club members filled our pedestrianised spaces with a wide variety of beautiful cars and it was lovely to hear shoppers reminiscing when they saw a motor they recognized from their past. We have two shows planned for this year (at the end of May and in September) and I know that everyone looks forward to these. I am indebted to Teignbridge Classic Car Club for their hard work in making these shows happen and to car owners for bringing their pride and joy into our town centre for the day.





Classic Car Show




Saturday 27th May

Newton Abbot Town Centre
9am - 4pm

In partnership with local classic car club 'Teignbridge Classics'

Featuring live music from The Liberty Sisters and singer/songwriter Simon Lee Prince

All enquiries and exhibitors to email teignbridgeclassics@gmail.com

The Town Council is keen to provide value for money and so, where possible, events and entertainment happen through volunteers and local organisations. We also like to make sure that all events are free to the public: so important when households are stretched just to cover the basics. We launched two shoppers trails last year, in partnership with the museum, the library and local department store Austins. A Lego trail and a 'Bear Hunt'. Entry was free for everyone and in addition to having fun looking for objects on the trail, there was also an opportunity to win prizes! Our latest 'Easter Eggstra-ordinary trail' was hugely successful too and so with increased demand from business and families I will see what can be done for the forthcoming summer holidays.....

I introduced 'Creative Newton Abbot' last year and every second Saturday in the month, children could look forward to making something seasonal with Kate Green our community artist. It was so popular with children (and adults too) that we have these free workshops in Courtenay Street again this year. Newton Abbot is a destination in its own right, but I hope that these events and activities add another dimension and another reason to visit our town.

Looking back at our events, I was pleased that our second Dog Friendly Carol Service was supported so well. This event, in partnership with local animal charity AID and with the Newton Abbot Christian community, saw many attend with their well-behaved pooches and it was a truly joyful event. Our late-night shopping events were also great successes. There was plenty on offer for the recent Coronation, with live music in town on the Saturday, with the Coronation Corner in the Clock Tower and balloons and walkabout characters too. A lovely family day in Courtenay Park on the Sunday was also very busy and the template perhaps for future such days. We are very proud of our historic Clock Tower and it has been great to give members of the public more opportunities to take a peek inside, when we dress it for key calendar dates. Father Christmas's parlour had lots of visitors as did King Charles study. I hope to be able to provide more such opportunities in future.



The town council recently sponsored Maltingsfest. This popular beer festival at Osborne Park attracts ale lovers from far and wide and this year was certainly no exception! The town council also worked in partnership with our local newspaper the Mid Devon Advertiser and we produced a lovely A5 sized town guide, which is available in a paper copy but also on the town council website: <https://www.newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/08/Newton-Abbot-Town-Guide.pdf>

Over the years we have gradually seen council budgets dwindle, with the result that many of the services which we used to take for granted are no longer provided. However, many of these things are nonetheless vital to the maintenance of vibrant and safe town centres. I'm talking here about cleaning, grass cutting, weeding and general repairs, as well as about essentials such as CCTV monitoring and provision of public conveniences. District and County Councils, which used to provide and fund these services, do so no longer, or provide them in a greatly reduced way. It has been reassuring that the town council recognizes the importance of these things to the community and has raised its own precept in order to make sure that funding is available to allow business as usual. Our small team of facilities maintenance officers or 'FMOs' as we call them, have done tremendous work in tackling all manner of issues from weeding to steam cleaning, to path and stairway clearing. Wherever they go, they make a difference. When I am out and about, I know that I need only take an image of a problem and it will be added to the list. I cannot tell you how fantastic it is to know that if I report something to the Town Council, it will be dealt with, if it is within our powers to do so.

I am similarly grateful to members of Newton Abbot Rotary. I have been to them with any number of gardening issues around the town and they leap into action. A wonderful example of their work is on the DCC owned bed in front of the library, which was in a terrible state with shrubs either dead or running rampant and weeds proliferating. The vegetation was also causing visibility problems with traffic on Market Street. This bed has received a complete overhaul and is now looking super.



For 12 months, my in-tray has seen a huge amount of correspondence from visitors and residents complaining about the thoughtless parking on the pavement around the library. I have been raising this with DCC on a regular basis, in the hopes that a deterrent for this antisocial behaviour might be found. You may be surprised to know that no laws or regulations are being broken, which is why neither the council nor the police have been able to fine, move-on, or tow these vehicles. Those few who are spoiling the town centre for the community and visitors should be aware that a solution is being worked up, and I hope to be able to give more news on this very soon.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking everyone for supporting local business and for shopping locally and hope to see you in town!



Newton Abbot – Streets Ahead Of The Web!

#shoplocally

www.newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk