



February 2018

Dear Newenden Resident,

The **Annual Parish Meeting** will take place in the Village Hall on Tuesday 20 March beginning at 7.30 pm. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be served from 7.00 pm. See the agenda attached.

As you probably know, there are several important projects under way or being considered in the village. This meeting will hear reports of all of them, as well as from the Parish Council, from our representatives on the Ashford and Kent County Councils, from the police and from several of the charities and voluntary organisations based in Newenden.

Thanks to generous volunteer support, the Parish Council expenditure can be kept down. As a result, we have been able to maintain the precept (that part of the Council tax that relates specifically to Newenden) at the previous level. However, the village tax base is shrinking and this means a reduction in the budget available to the Parish Council.

Next year, 2019, will see elections for a new Parish Council. Participating in the elections and standing as a candidate Councillor is the most important thing you can do for the democracy and longer-term civic health of the village. We would very much encourage you to consider standing for the elections next year, and would be more than happy to explain what's involved and how you can make a difference.

Your Parish Council welcomes your views, queries and ideas at all times and we are grateful for your continued and helpful input at Township meetings and the surgery evenings at the White Hart the first Wednesday of every month. But the annual Parish Meeting – the Village AGM if you like – remains the most important date in the village calendar. I hope you will make a special effort to attend on the 20th, as your views and comments are important and much appreciated.

I look forward to seeing you all at the meeting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Åke Nilson', written in a cursive style.

Åke Nilson  
Chairman

ake.nilson@newenden.org  
01797 252030

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*Newenden from River Rother.*



## **Annual Parish Meeting of Newenden**

20 March at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 28 March 2017  
(attached)
3. Kent County Councillor Mr Mike Hill
4. Ashford Borough Councillor Mr Mike Bennett
5. Police report
6. Report from Newenden Parish Council  
(including updates on the precept, village maintenance and more)
7. Parish Council financial statement 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018  
(including Selmes Trust management accounts for same period)
8. Report of the Newenden Trust
9. Village Hall matters
10. Report of the Community Land Trust Steering Group
11. Report and accounts of the Samuel Bishop Foundation
12. Report of the Friends of St Peter's
13. Report of Newenden Cricket Club
14. Public adjournment for any other business

**Minutes of Newenden Annual Parish Meeting held on 28 March 2017** in the village hall at 7.30 pm

Present:

Mr A Nilson (chairman)

Parish Council

Mr D Richardson

Mrs R Edmonds

Mrs C Baker

Mrs E Hannavy-Cousen

Kent County Council

Councillor M Hill

Ashford Borough Council

Councillor M Bennett

Police

PCSO Mr D Smith

There were 22 residents of Newenden present.

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

**General**

Before opening the meeting the chairman explained that the new village hall was not on the agenda and would not be discussed as a separate meeting at which proposals would be discussed in detail was arranged for 30 March.

**Apologies for Absence**

1. Apologies were received from Mr and Mrs C Turnbull, Mrs J Livesey, Mr D Button and Reverend C Hodgkins.

**Minutes of the Meeting on 5 April 2016**

2. Having been circulated the minutes of the meeting on 5 April 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

**Report from Kent County Council**

3. Kent County Councillor Mike Hill reported on the work of the County Council which had been

overshadowed by the need to make significant financial savings. Like other Councils in the country there was a problem in financing adult social services and the position in Council run homes was of particular concern. The Council was working in collaboration with the NHS to try to resolve social care problems but this was difficult because the two organisations operated different management structures.

4. In relation to roads with the onset of Spring, Kent Highways were about to start their pothole mending programme. There were already signs of a big improvement in the state of the surface of the roads as a result of repairs that had been carried out. On a wider note the County Council were expecting an imminent announcement from the Government about the construction of a third Dartford Thames crossing. This was very necessary because there was severe traffic congestion in the Dartford area.

5. A new Police and Crime Commissioner had been appointed and the work of the Police and Crime Panel was now going well. Despite severe financial constraints the Council's discretionary services for which he was responsible, continued to run and there had been no closures for instance in the Library Service. The County Council had recruited a number of voluntary community wardens who were available to provide advice and assistance. Finally, in the Tenterden area he reported on the establishment of a multi academy trust covering both primary and secondary schools. This would provide better educational resources in the area.

#### **Report from Ashford Borough Council**

6. Ashford Borough Councillor Mike Bennett reported that the Borough Council had rejected the idea of forming a larger unitary authority with other Councils in East Kent. To help with budget reductions the Council had become involved with two commercial property developments in Ashford which also had the benefit of increasing employment and business in the town.

7. Councillor Bennett said that he supported the plans for a new village hall and proposals to set up a community land trust. He was particularly concerned about the protection of conservation areas in towns and villages so that their character was preserved for the community. A series of roadshows was being organised and he planned to hold one in the locality in the near future.

#### **Police report**

8. PCSO Dan Smith introduced himself and explained that he covered a large number of parishes in the district. The village fortunately had a very low crime rate and he had no incidents to report. Mrs Chitty mentioned that in the summer there had been a number of thefts from boats moored on the river. He was aware that speeding through the village was a problem and he would have a presence from time to time to help reduce it. If residents needed to contact him they should use the Kent police website.

#### **Report from Newenden Parish Council**

9. The chairman of the Parish Council Ake Nilson, explained that the Parish Council had been pressing Kent County Council Highways to construct a round-about at the junction of the A268 and A28 where there continued to be a number of accidents. The cost of a round-about would be significant and the County Council did not have the funds nor did they consider there was sufficient justification for the work. The Parish Council would continue to record accidents at the junction so that they could press their case. Referring to Councillor Hill's mention of pothole

repairs the chairman said that the Parish Council reported any repairs that were required through Kent Highways website. Residents were also able to report potholes needing repair through this website.

10. The Parish Council only received a few planning applications during the year and generally supported them unless what was proposed was significantly out of keeping with surroundings.

11. On broadband the Parish Council had pressed British Telecommunications and others to improve connections in the village and as a result a new cabinet had been installed bringing fibre to the village. This would provide speeds of up to 72 megabits a second in the near future.

12. Representatives from the Parish Council attended meetings of the Tenterden Forum chaired by Councillor Hill and the Kent Association of Local Councils Ashford Group. The Borough Council had consulted on a new local plan and the Parish Council had asked to be included in the dark sky zone.

13. The Boundary Commission had consulted on local changes to electoral boundaries. No changes were proposed for Newenden but the Parish Council had asked for the ward to include the name of Newenden in the title.

14. The Parish Council had been trying to establish a village maintenance scheme to amalgamate the different grass cutting contracts for the cricket ground, the children's playground, Copt Hall and the churchyard into a single contract. Although the Borough Council had agreed to increase what they would contribute, the County Council claimed they did not do any work in the Parish and so were not willing to contribute. Consequently, potential funding was about £1,500 less than needed and the existing arrangements would have to be maintained for a further year. The chairman wondered whether there might be residents who wanted work carried out in their gardens the cost of which might make up the shortfall in funding. The Parish Council were also open to any other ideas for increasing funding so that a maintenance scheme could be started.

15. The Parish Council were proposing to create a wetland area on the Selmes field. This would take the form of a shallow scrape that would be allowed to fill with water. Work to carry out the scrape would take place in late summer.

16. On the river there was a problem in relation to two boats one of which was completely sunk and the other half sunk. Mr Seal, the river warden said that the half sunk boat was to be removed this weekend, but removal of the sunk boat remained a problem.

17. The chairman reported that the Parish Council had organised celebrations for the Queen's 90th birthday and had held a party. The Council was also exploring the possibility of twinning Newenden with somewhere on the continent.

18. The chairman reported that the Council had received a request for a contribution to the air ambulance. It was the policy of the Council not to make contributions to charities as funds were limited and it would be very difficult to decide which to support and which not to. Residents felt that they wished to support the air ambulance given the rural location of the village.

19. The chairman told residents that the Council had been able to maintain the precept at the same level as last year and there would be no increase. He thanked volunteer litter pickers, flood and river wardens for their work and said that there would be further days of action during the year to maintain the village.

## **Parish Council Financial Report 1 April 2016 to 27 March 2017**

20. Copies of the financial statement had been circulated. The clerk reported that there had been little significant expenditure during the year and that in consequence as the chairman had announced, the Parish Council had been able to maintain the precept at the same level. In the future the increase in insurance premium tax and the need to carry out some maintenance to equipment in the children's playground would slightly increase expenditure in the forthcoming year. The large balance of about £6,100 in the management account was because the Council had been unable to hold a meeting with the Selmes Trust and divide the sum as provided in the management agreement with them.

### **Report of the Newenden Trust**

21. Mr Gould said that the Trust had now opened a bank account and had a small balance of about £1,200 as there had not yet been any expenditure. The Trust currently had three trustees, but more were needed because there would be an increase in activity with the new village hall and the creation of a footpath from Northiam across the bridge to the village. In response to this request Mr Seal, Mr Richardson and Mrs Broughton were elected as additional trustees.

### **Report of the Community Land Trust**

22. Mr Livesey, Mrs Hannavy-Cousen and Mr Chitty gave a presentation on Community Land Trusts. They referred to the Housing Needs Survey that had shown a requirement for three affordable houses in the village. Following the survey four possible sites had been identified including one that had been bought by a developer (Battery Bank). A site owned by the Bourne family had been selected as the most suitable and that owned by the developer rejected. New houses could not normally be built in Newenden but under an exception policy they were permitted if it could be shown that they were meeting local affordable needs.

23. A Community Land Trust could be formed to develop affordable housing in conjunction with a Housing Association. The Housing Association would be responsible for building and managing the affordable houses and no developers would be involved. A Community Land Trust could be established in Newenden but those proposing it needed to know whether residents supported the idea. There was a vote by show of hands and residents agreed that a Community Land Trust should be formed.

### **Report of the Samuel Bishop Foundation**

24. Mrs Eldridge explained that the charity had been set up to provide financial help towards the education of children living in the village. The charity had two investments in charitable funds through which they raised money. The Foundation also raised additional funds through holding an event and this year they would be holding a garden party in early July.

25. At present there were a large number of secondary school children living in the village (18 or 19) and this put pressure on available funds. Nevertheless, the Foundation had made the usual small grants to each child.

The Foundation needed an additional trustee who should not be a parent of a child receiving a grant. There was little work involved beyond an annual meeting in October of each year and she invited volunteers.

**Friends of St Peters**

26. Mr Seal explained that the Friends of St Peters raised funds to maintain the fabric of St Peters church. There would be various fund raising events held in the year ahead, but at present expenditure was greater than the amounts that they were raising.

**Report of Newenden Cricket Club**

27. Mr Bourne said that the cricket club had had a successful season winning many of the matches that they had played. The cricket ground was popular with visiting sides and they liked to play on it. The club had a juniors' side that took children as young as five.

**Any Other Business**

28. None.

Chairman.....

Date.....