



Issue 5

MARCH 2015

NEWTON TONY MEMORIAL HALL NEWSLETTER



Bourne Valley Link Scheme

We're Here to get you There

Celebrating 10 years of service to the villages and communities in the Bourne Valley.

Wiltshire Link Schemes are local voluntary groups which offer a good neighbour service to local people who are in need either because they are elderly, disabled or perhaps are temporarily in need because of illness.

The Bourne Valley Link Scheme (BVLS) was initiated at a Public Meeting in the Newton Toney Memorial Hall on 23rd February, 2004. There was tremendous support from members of all five Bourne Valley Parishes who attended the meeting. Volunteers came forward to sign up and to form the founding Committee, which was chaired by Sue Blewett from Porton. With the continued invaluable assistance of Jane Sartin from the Link Project, the Committee put together a Constitution and the Bourne Valley Scheme was registered as a public charity.

It took six months of hard work, sourcing grants, setting up insurance and the phone line for the Co-ordinator, publicising the scheme and recruiting volunteers before the start date of 1st October 2004.

In September last year the Bourne Valley Link celebrated ten fantastic years at their AGM. Chairman Maureen Atkinson was joined by many volunteers, some of whom have been with BVLS since it began in 2004. Also in attendance were MP John Glen and Linda O'Gorman from Community First, who both gave wholehearted support to the scheme, emphasising the need and the important place that the Link fulfils in our local communities.

The Bourne Valley Link Scheme provides a free support service to enable those without access to transport, to use local services and facilities. The range of services includes:

- **Providing transport for**
 - * Medical Appointments
 - * Shopping
 - * Visiting relatives or friends in hospital
 - * Social visits
- **Or collecting:**
 - * Shopping
 - * Prescriptions



The BVLS hold coffee mornings four times a year and they are hosted in one of the villages. The next one is to be held in Newton Tony Memorial Hall on Saturday 21st March, 10.30am - 12 noon.

Come along and find out a bit more about what we do. Everyone is welcome!!

Volunteers also offer practical help for small tasks in the home and caring support. eg. Befriending or reading to a visually impaired client.

The Link Scheme aims to complement the provision of other services, whether statutory or voluntary. The service is provided by volunteers using their own cars.

Newton Tony is one of the villages covered by the Link Scheme, therefore, if you would like to book a volunteer, call the contact number **01980 611 117**, please remember to give at least 48 hours notice before an appointment. Bookings are taken Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

Whilst no direct charge is made, Bourne Valley Link depends on donations from its users in order to continue to operate. All donations are used to provide our service, which is run entirely by volunteers, who give their time freely, but do receive a mileage allowance and out of pocket expenses.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact our Recruitment Officer, Ruth Miles on 01980 629792.

Chairman's Comments

It was a year ago when this Memorial Hall Newsletter was first published; I believe that it has been very successful. I would like to thank Sandra Caro and her small team of editors for putting together this interesting and useful publication. The County grant for the first year's quarterly printing has now finished and we will now need to look at ways in which we can continue to fund this publication.

Rejuvenation of the Hall

The subcommittee has given its first report and made several recommendations including: more electrical sockets in the hall, repainting and decoration of all surfaces, improved lighting, purchasing new small fold up tables (getting rid of those small heavy square tables), replacing the flooring surface in the servery, replacing the curtains and buying new internal double doors and back doors. The subcommittee is currently obtaining quotations for the proposed changes and producing an order of priority for the work to be completed in phases as finance becomes available. However, this will cost a considerable amount of money and grants will be sought to add to the Hall's present capital. The exterior of the building will also require some attention this year.

Freezer

The Hall now has a larger freezer to cope with the major functions. The other small freezer and a spare fridge will be retained to be used for the Fete and occasionally for other events but these are available for villagers to use in 'an hour of need' (for a small donation).

Hornbeam

One of the trees donated by Rory Guinness in memory of his mother, Lady Iveagh, died last year possibly as a result of bark damage from Council strimming or just poor subsoil. The Parish Council and the Hall Committee have joined together to fund a replacement tree.

Moles

The Committee is very grateful to Richard Bawden who personally came to our aid in waging war against the moles; he has caught at least three so far, fortunately the cricket wicket has not been affected this year.

Kitchen and Servery

The kitchen has now been extensively cleaned, reorganised and tidied (many thanks to Marion and Sandra) and will now be locked. A key to the kitchen will of course be available to hirers of the hall and as required, from Sandra Caro. New hot water systems are now operating in the kitchen, Servery area and all the toilets.

Winter Lectures

We are considering hosting a series of winter lectures/talks given by local and visiting speakers on a variety of subject matter ranging from local historical interest to 'A day in the Life of a Phantom Pilot'. It is not intended that these be fund raisers but there may be a small entrance fee to cover tea/coffee and biscuits and help towards expenses for those guest speakers travelling from afar. More information will be given in our next newsletter.

Tim Miles -Chairman



Spotlight on

BINGO

Twice monthly Bingo evenings have now been running very successfully for more than six years in the hall. Any profits raised at the Bingo nights are given to the hall to help towards running costs.

Bingo night happens on the **1st and 3rd Monday of EVERY month**, including Bank Holiday Monday's, nothing stops these ladies and gents from playing !!!

Our Bingo evenings are very friendly and informal evenings. Margaret, our resident caller, will call at a pace that suits everyone in the room.

Cash prizes to be won, the more players we have on the night, the more we pay out!

A mini raffle is always held during the mid evening break, tea and coffee is also served along with delicious home baked cakes.

Fancy a fun evening out among friends, then why not give Newton Tony Bingo a go.

Who knows, it could be you shouting **BINGO!** and going home with some CASH!



"Eyes down" at 7pm sharp,

doors open from 6 30pm.

APRIL's Bingo Nights - Monday 6th and Monday 20th.

For more information, please call Margaret Stokes on 629648 or Jacky Barker on 629678

Dates for your Diary

Bingo - 1st and 3rd Monday of every month. 7pm start, refreshments available

Seniors Café - 2nd Thursday afternoon of every month. 2pm start

Pilates - Every Tuesday evening, 7.30pm. Contact 'Girls Love Fit' 07772 678737

Quiz Nights - Friday 27th March 7.30pm start

POLLING DAY - Thursday 7th May

FVHS Plant Sale - Sunday 17th May. 2pm start

Flower Festival - Friday 26th June - Sunday 28th June

Notes from the Parish Council

Newton Tony Parish Council – Objectives for 2015-16

As this is the time of year when we all get bills for council tax dropping through our letter-boxes, I thought I would take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about the village Parish Council (PC) finances and what we plan to do in the coming year. All of the precept (the part of our council tax paid to the Parish Council) is used for the benefit of the village.

The PC works for the benefit of the village which it does with limited resources in terms of both finance and people's time (provided on a voluntary basis by the councillors).

Over the past year, the PC has received a variety of complaints about, for example, the variable standard of grass-cutting and maintenance of fences, benches etc. In order to improve the situation in 2015, the PC has put in place some new arrangements for grass-cutting and has budgeted for a programme of maintenance for the fencing and benches. Inevitably this has meant that the PC has had to budget more funds for these items. A further pressure on costs is the reduction in the Wiltshire Council top-up grant – this is to compensate the PC for properties which are exempt from paying Council tax. The top-up grant is being phased out and this year will be £211 – less than half of the 2013-14 amount.

At the PC meetings last November and December myself and fellow councillors had a lot of discussion to try and reach a budget which would require the minimum increase to the precept but allow us to progress with the actions that the Newton Tony village community has told us it wants. We eventually agreed unanimously on a budget which will lead to a modest increase. Using the Wiltshire Council standard formula this comes out at £5.13 per year for a band D household.

The PC will be working to deliver value for money for enhancement to the village environment and here are some brief notes on our plans:

Grass-cutting

The one area the PC didn't receive any negative feedback about last year was the maintenance of the cemetery and churchyard. We decided to consolidate other grass-cutting (recreation field and summer riverbed) using the same contractors we have been using for the cemetery and churchyard. For the recreation field, the contractors will be working with Wiltshire Council contractors to alternate cuts to ensure that the field is kept in a suitable condition for recreational and sporting activities by the village and school and, of course, for fetes. If there are cricket matches we will try and co-ordinate cuts accordingly, but if this is not possible, the PC does not pay for extra pre-cricket match cuts.

The PC will pay for one cut of the riverbed and banks during July. This will be after the riverbed has dried up and the wild-flowers along the banks have begun to die off. The Environment Agency does another cut in late autumn (at no cost to the Parish). Grass-cutting is a significant cost to the parish and accounts for nearly 40% of the total budget.

Maintenance

In 2014-15 the PC replaced the bench in the cemetery. White gates were built and installed at the entrance to the village in Cholderton Road (we were advised that such gates have a positive effect in reducing speed) and the village hall and church fences painted with preservative. This work was all done on a voluntary basis by councillors and, apart from the bench, at no cost to the village.

Speeding of vehicles in the parish

The Parish Council pursued opportunities in relation to 20mph speed limit during 2014 and made an application to Wiltshire Council – unfortunately, so far, Newton Tony has not been considered sufficient priority to meet the investment criteria.

Other

We are considering the possibility to make Parish burial records more accessible (currently they are only held on paper). It is recognised that the Parish website is getting a little old-fashioned. We will be looking at options to update/re-design the website or to have an online presence using social media.

Meetings

We continue to work for the benefit the village and to do our best to take into account the views of all our Parishioners. We usually meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 19:30 in the village hall and always welcome attendance from residents (you won't have to stay for the whole meeting if you don't want to!) and currently have one vacancy for a Parish Councillor.

If you are interested, please contact the Parish Clerk, Melanie Thomas on 01980 863802 or email newtontoney@googlemail.com for further information or an informal chat.

Chris Andrews
Chairman