

Chairman's Report – August 2023

Has another month already passed by? This year seems to be flying. Perhaps it's the amount of fun I am having!! July into August has been another busy time.

We have met a few representatives from the Forest of Dean planning dept to discuss our serious objections (as minuted in the 22nd May 2023 planning meeting) about the proposed new development and we hope to nurture that relationship to better develop our understanding of the planning systems and our capabilities as a council within it.

We've also had a really positive meeting with a highways representative who has advised us that road markings/paintwork are due to be renewed in and around Newent shortly. Highways have also suggested that if the community notice any pavements that require attention please report and use what three words to ensure they know exactly where the issue is.

I have attended several meetings with Newent Business Group and there's a real wave of activity and conversations about the future of Newent town. We are pleased to be a part of this movement and hope to continue our great relationship once our committees can be reinstated. The Business Group are driving towards civic pride. This is something I am keen to support.

We are so lucky to live in a gem of a town like Newent, with incredible features, such as our historic buildings that pepper the town and parish, beautiful walks and cycle routes and a lovely lake. We must remember to shout about them, to remind ourselves and each other how lucky we are. I sometimes like to look at our parish as if someone from another planet, what do they see, what can we improve? I think there's things we can do better, things we can build on, and I am positive as a community we can continue to improve our locality together. Whether that be through dead heading the flowers in town, or picking up litter it's all about playing our part, about being proud of where we live.

I'm pleased to report our Council meetings are now advertised in the Newent Focus. This magazine is distributed around Newent and hopefully means more of our community will know when they can come along see us in action. Thank you to those who work so hard in the office to ensure our meetings are well organised and advertised, whether that is via social media or the Newent Focus. Thank you for humouring me.

I would also like to thank our Estates Team, as you will see from the agenda items the Estates Team have an incredible amount of maintenance work to undertake as well as having to deal with more recent vandalism and damage. This year has possibly been the most challenging with lots of changes and a wet and warm summer has meant that the grass has continued to grow - and thus need mowing. And then they have to put up with me making requests to paint the duck houses. Thank you for humouring me. There's a common theme with humouring me, I think. Here's hoping we have another month of positives, and that the weather improves.

Sara Hulbert