

**Newtown Community Association Open Forum Meeting**  
**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2014 at 10.30am, Belmont Hut**

**Minutes**

**Present:** Su Aves (Secretary), Joan Bond (Holding Trustee), Richard Branston, (Councillor) Derek Burnside (Treasurer), Julia Crockett (Woodcraft Folk), Chris Dent (Holding Trustee), Liam Garrett (Student Warden), James Leigh (Hut upkeep), Debbie McNeile, Rory McNeile (Chair), Elena Milego, Sally Palmer, Steve Palmer, Nina Parnell (West Bank League of Friends), Michael Parrott (Vice Chair & Publicity), Roger Spackman (Councillor), Saxon Spence, Alasdair Wood (Student Warden), Gill Wyatt (Exeter Community Energy).

**Apologies:** Jayne Clarke (Neighbourhood Health Watch), Fiona Daughton, Jacky Cox, George Dumble, Gaby Dumble, Muriel Forrest, Jackie Holdstock (Hut Bookings Manager), Peter Montgomery (Webmaster), PCSO Nick Unsworth, Richard Westlake.

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Action by:</u>
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome</b> from the chair.	
<b>2</b>	<b>George Dumble's</b> apologies were noted, as was his resignation from the Management Committee due to ill health, after many years of faithful service to NCA. A gift has been purchased to mark this. We noted our huge gratitude for all his significant contributions over the years.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Last Minutes.</b> Were approved, and there were no issues that were not covered on the agenda.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Nina Parnell (West Bank League of Friends)</b> <b>'Neighbourhood Health Watch'</b> empowers communities to support the vulnerable, and Nina explained how it works. Six pilot areas have been established in Devon; Newton St Cyres is a particularly impressive example, with the pub providing a hub for such activities as internet shopping. In Lymptone, support for Marine wives has been established. Heavitree has appointed 'Street Champions'. Volunteers are centrally overseen, and a board governs the overall scheme and ensures that sufficient support is available. Jayne Clarke would be willing to offer advice if Newtown wished to initiate such a scheme. Her details were provided to the meeting. <b>'Neighbourhood Friends'</b> Volunteers are being mobilised to support over-75-year-olds in the Exeter area with 2 or more formally- recognised health issues, who will benefit from increased help in the home to avoid preventable hospital admissions. 48 volunteers have already been identified and trained. 'Rapid response', 'welcome home' and a 'wellbeing friend' are the sort of volunteer roles required. Partnership exists with Yealm Ward and the Stroke Rehab services. Pledges of volunteer support are requested, and Nina brought the necessary forms.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Treasurer's Report.</b> Derek Burnside presented the accounts to date, which are available on the website. Income has fallen slightly due to some regular hut users ceasing their activities, and expenditure on water, power, rubbish collection etc. are all increasing. (Saxon Spence again suggested that we might consider introducing a membership scheme, which could create some additional income; the committee will consider whether the significant increased administration associated with such a move would be worth the potential revenue.) The general fund is thus likely to make a slight loss this year, (currently it's just under £400) although the grants secured to the value of £1075 will offset this. Exeter Community Accounting are doing the Independent Examiners report on our Annual Report for Dec 2013, as agreed by the trustees, for the Charity Commission.	RM

6	<p><b>Police report.</b> PCSO Nick Unsworth sent his apologies and a written report which included the following:  A ‘Designated Public Places Order’ may be secured for the park, depending on incoming further legislative changes. (DPPOs give officials a little more authority when trying to move anti-social drinkers and others on.) Anti-social behaviour has been reported and investigated in and around the toilets at the bottom of Blackboy Road.  Student noise has been a problem; addresses have been visited where they can be identified, and discussions with local students held. Where this is a problem initial complaints should be made <i>as the problem is occurring</i> to the University Estates Patrol (01392 723999); failing that, call 101. No noise complaints emanating from the park hut have been received by the police.</p>	
7	<p><b>Newtown Ward Councillors’ report</b>  <b>Richard Branston</b> reported that the bowling club’s green is in poor condition and some other clubs are refusing to play league matches on it. The reasons for the deterioration are currently being investigated.  <b>Roger Spackman</b> reported that complaints about drug abuse in Newtown had been increasing, although the situation seems recently to be improving. He also drew our attention to the ‘Facing the Future Together’ consultation about how the reduced budget is to be allocated. We were all encouraged to get involved.</p>	
8	<p><b>University Community Wardens</b>  <b>Liam and Alasdair</b> joined us, who will be in post until July. Their main role is peer-support and the enhancement of good community relations with students living out of halls of residence. A student residents’ guide has been distributed to try to raise general awareness and prevent the escalation of unhelpful behaviour that may lead to the involvement of the Estates’ Patrol, the Community Liaison Officer or the police. Where students have been thoughtful and proactive it is greatly appreciated by local residents. In the light of local council cuts the work of the Community Wardens is particularly valuable. The need to ensure good contact with and support of International Students was underlined.  Projects that seek to bring the community and students together are welcomed; for example bulb planting and street parties have recently taken place in other parts of the city. We should alert our student wardens to such opportunities as they arise.</p>	
9	<p><b>The Vision update</b>  Rory reiterated progress to date (see the previous minutes).   Rory had met recently with the Community Council of Devon’s David Ross. Evidencing potential community enhancement from the re-build remains a priority. Exeter University Guild Of Undergraduates has provided a very helpful letter of support following a recent meeting with the new Guild President.  Rory has also attended a recent meeting of the Clinical Commissioning Group and will continue to explore the potential of the new hut in delivering future health care initiatives in the community.   We noted that the Newtown St Matthews Community Pre-school and the Scrap Store are also looking for new buildings or for improving a current building, although our discussions with them initially suggest that the varying needs of the groups would make a shared facility impractical.</p>	
10	<p><b>Gill Wyatt: Exeter Community Energy (‘Making energy work for everyone’)</b>  Formed in January 2014, ECOE is a not-for-profit cooperative seeking to encourage local community-owned renewable energy projects, with the goal of lowering energy costs, cutting carbon emissions, reducing fuel poverty and enhancing local communities. A well-qualified board guides the project.  Solar PV1 is the initial project, seeking to place solar panels on suitable community roofs (that can enter into a 20 year lease and can provide a 20 kilowatt yield - 4 times the size of an average house roof) . Occupiers will benefit from unit prices of about 7 to 8p. There is no installation cost to the building owner. About £300k worth of investment in community shares will soon be sought; shares will start at £100 and can go up to £100k. 4% interest will be paid on the investment, which will qualify for tax relief raising the interest to about 9%. (Higher rates of interest are available with other similar initiatives , although this project is paying money into local community initiatives.) 6 initial roofs have been identified.</p>	

	<p>We can get involved by signing up for the newsletter, coming to events (the next one is on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November, 6.45pm, Stephens Scown Meeting Room), volunteering, telling ECOE about a suitable roof, and investing when the share offer launches. <a href="mailto:info@ecoe.org.uk">info@ecoe.org.uk</a>.</p> <p>We noted that The Vision project could benefit from this: ECOE could, for example, pay for the new hut's roof and maintain it.</p>	
11	<p><b>Event Reports.</b></p> <p>The <b>Dog Walkers' Cafe</b> on 20<sup>th</sup> July did not draw many punters, and the Palmers' advice is that it should not be repeated.</p> <p>The <b>WW1 Commemoration</b> (3<sup>rd</sup> August) was a huge success, and the bunting may well be used in future community events in the city.</p> <p>The <b>Food Festival</b> (14<sup>th</sup> Sept) was extremely well-supported and attended; although it experienced some minor logistical issues it was a great event.</p> <p><b>Litter Pick</b> also went well, which was part of Keep Britain Tidy's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. Orinoco the Womble's participation was greatly appreciated; Ben Bradshaw, the Mayor and Dennis the Dustcart also attended. Waitrose's partnership was sponsoring the event.</p> <p><b>Great West Run</b> (Sun 19<sup>th</sup> October) went very well. Next year's race is likely to be based again from the park. The accidental demolition of the football/graffiti wall by an event vehicle will be recompensed by Go2events.</p> <p><b>Future events:</b></p> <p><b>Halloween Event</b> (Sat 25<sup>th</sup> October) from 5 to 7pm.</p> <p><b>Craft Fair</b> (Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2 - 5pm) Stall holder enquiries are already coming in. The table price has been reduced from £10 to £6 because of the reduced hours, plus an item to be donated for the raffle by each stall. Ten stalls. Posters are available for display in windows, and a Facebook profile is also now on line. Contact Elena for more information or posters.</p> <p><b>Winter Warmer</b> (Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December 6 – 8pm). The choir are booked, and Sally Palmer has very kindly volunteered to run the cafe. We will consider making an entrance charge for this event.</p>	
12	<p><b>Hut Issues</b></p> <p><b>Complaints</b> from Gordon Road residents about noise have been received during the summer, and the committee are considering whether any changes to the hut use rules are needed. A discussion was held about times people felt were appropriate for the hut rental to finish at night.</p> <p><b>Joan Bond</b> kindly volunteered to oversee the Health and Safety requirements of the hut during her visits to the Social Cafe.</p>	JB
13	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>'Extreme Imagination' events are occurring over half term – details at <a href="http://kaleider.com/events">kaleider.com/events</a>.</p> <p>New Committee members are always needed, and invited to volunteer! The AGM will be on Sat 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 2014, so offers in advance of that date are welcomed.</p>	
14	<p><b>Date of next Open Forum meeting/AGM: Sat 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 2015, Belmont Park Hut, 10.30am</b></p>	