

Town Plan Progress Review August 2012

Summary

Good progress has been made on most areas of the Town Plan aims, objectives and project deliverables (see Appendix for detailed review). Notably, activities such as the dedication garden, the January 2012 events planning meeting, the Conference for Older People and the wide-ranging project funding through the grants scheme, have all made a huge impact in Newbiggin by the Sea for a relatively small amount of funding.

Partnerships continue to develop and provide many rewards, in particular through BVAL, NMC and the Portas project. Relationships with NCC staff are positive and lead to much work being done either in anticipation of or in response to requests.

The Town Council budget is achieving much for very little, and the Town Council remains focused on achieving its Town Plan aims and objectives.

Areas needing more attention

- Tuition based activities. Suggestions:
 - Friends of Woodhorn Church and NCEA to put on a joint concert at the Church.
 - Steel band to play in the band stand in late September.
 - Wansbeck Music Festival should be more widely promoted in Newbiggin by the Sea.
- Action week. Suggestions:
 - Work in partnership with the emergency services and Wansbeck CVS to deliver this in early 2013.
- Signage project.
 - Initial work has been undertaken by NMC, and now needs to be coordinated into a Signage Working Group to provide a final recommendation to the Town Council and other interested groups (such as the NMC and/or Newbiggin Heritage Partnership Board).
- Empty buildings initiatives and Woodhorn Church future.
 - Links with the Portas project and the Newbiggin Partnership Trust need to be supported.
- Adult learning resources promotion. Suggestions:
 - Assist agencies such as Northumberland Learning Trust to promote their learning opportunities more broadly.
- Business start-up units ideas.
 - Links with the Portas project and the Newbiggin Partnership Trust need to be supported.

Environmental Projects overview

There are many small projects currently being undertaken in Newbiggin by the Sea and it is important that this work is considered together to make best use of resources. The main issues include:

- Litter and general cleanliness, including sand on the prom, dog fouling and control, horses, litter and bins;
- Empty buildings, including business premises and old schools;
- Community issues, such as local street cleanliness;
- Other environmental issues, including wildlife and environmental preservation and improvement, wildlife tourism, SSSIs and nature areas and education.

Many groups already exist who tackle some of these issues, such as the Bay Environment Group, the Portas Project town teams, Newbiggin in Bloom Association, Groundwork Northumberland, Bernicia and NCC. Many initiatives are also being undertaken to look at specific aspects of work, such as those by the Northumberland Learning Trust, NMC, NCEA, Alcan, NiBA etc.

What is needed is a higher level strategic group to oversee ideas and plans, to coordinate projects, progress agendas and strategies, provide a central point of advice, guidance and coordination, and lead on developing strategies and direction. These activities will be increasingly important as services are considered for transfer across to the Town Council, and resource implications, limitations and priorities must be clearly identified.

An Environmental Strategy Group could be established as a time-limited group, working towards the April 2013 Annual Assembly themed around these issues. Members should include key agencies and groups within the community, with one representative from each of the following:

- Newbiggin Town Council (Community representation and central policy);
- Bernicia (Housing areas);
- Newbiggin in Bloom Association (Central horticulture);
- Bay Environment Group (Sea scape);
- Newbiggin Partnership Trust (Empty school buildings);
- Portas Town Team 1 (High street renewal);
- Groundwork Northumberland (Community regeneration);
- Newbiggin County Councillors (Community and NCC representation).

Appendix: Detailed Review

Town Council Aims and Objectives

1. **Raise aspirations and prosperity of all our constituents, especially the young.**
 - 1.1. Encourage all children to actively participate in arts, sports, literary or community activities, so that active partnerships are developed with key providers in the next two years.
 - 1.1.1. We will work with partners from the voluntary, education and leisure sectors to deliver a range of activities for children throughout the year.
 - BVAL activities funded for two years and have an active partnership with them.
 - Funded and supported NMC and many other organisations and community groups.
 - 1.1.2. We will work with library services and schools to run a literary event for children.
 - 2011 - Literary festival with NCEA.
 - 2012 - Heritage festival with NMC.
 - 1.2. Provide tuition-based opportunities for all 7 to 10 year old children in the town over the next three years.
 - 1.2.1. We will work with partners from the voluntary and education sectors to expand existing tuition-based activities, to meet and increase demand.
 - Steel Band funding.
 - Wansbeck Music Festival funding and bursary.
 - 1.3. Facilitate the training of ten future community workers over the next three years.
 - 1.3.1. We will work with voluntary and government sectors to promote opportunities and recruit community workers.
 - Funding through Bad Apples CIC, BVAL, NMC etc.
 - 1.3.2. We will support community worker professional development by funding activities for children and employing workers in Newbiggin by the Sea.
 - Funding through Bad Apples, BVAL, NMC, NAF etc.
2. **Improve our environment, providing a clean, tidy and aesthetically pleasing place to live, work and visit.**
 - 2.1. Increase the area of woodland around the community by a minimum of one acre per year over the next three years.
 - 2.1.1. Work with Northumberland County Council on decisions affecting the location of tree planting and the variety of species through the Trees and Bees scheme.
 - New woodland planted, though delayed due to problems with horses.
 - New orchard by Moorside school.
 - 2.1.2. We will provide a dedicated area within Newbiggin by the Sea where trees can be planted in dedication to loved ones.
 - 8 trees have been planted in the dedication garden in two ceremonies. 4 trees are privately dedicated.
 - 2.2. Work with other agencies to promote responsible dog control to reduce the number of complaints received by the Town Council.
 - 2.2.1. We will work with Northumberland County Council to enforce dog bylaws and encourage responsible dog ownership.
 - Dog control orders have been reviewed with the County Council. Working with the Bay Environment Group and NCC to enhance provision for dog owners.
 - Encouraging reporting of offenders to NCC through awareness campaign.
 - Supporting NCC through intelligence-led responses.
 - 2.3. Maintain Northumbria in Bloom RHS Silver Gilt status annually for the next two years.
 - 2.3.1. We will work with the voluntary sector, schools, Northumberland County Council, businesses, residents' associations and individuals to develop unique provisions throughout Newbiggin by the Sea, including grow-your-own initiatives.
 - Support the Allotments Association, Northumberland Learning Trust, Newbiggin in Bloom Association in their work.
 - Memorial Park is now undertaken by Newbiggin in Bloom Association and the Royal British Legion.

- Gardens competition continues to be supported by the Town Council and Newbiggin in Bloom Association.
 - Only Bronze has been awarded in the last two years.
- 2.3.2. We will review the Northumberland County Council service schedule for planting and maintenance and identify areas for service level enhancement or change of service for the improvement of Newbiggin by the Sea.
- Adopted annual planting costs from April 2012.
 - Work with NCC to review planting, maintenance and grass cutting, along with other neighbourhood services.
 - £7500 of horticultural improvements have been made throughout the town.
- 2.3.3. We will work with the voluntary sector, schools, Northumberland County Council, businesses, residents' associations and individuals to redevelop wasteland areas in Newbiggin by the Sea for the benefit of wildlife, residents and visitors.
- A section 106 request was made on the Tuc's caravan site development.
 - Dedication Garden has been established.
- 2.3.4. We will establish and support a Seafront Strategy Group to oversee developments on the promenade and beach, maintain the area and seek funding for its continued improvement.
- The Bay Environment Group has been established and acts as a coordinator of many local interests.
- 2.3.5. We will seek to instigate regular and frequent litter picks throughout the town, involving residents and other interested parties.
- Established on the second Sunday of every month.
- 2.3.6. We will continue to run an annual Gardens' Competition.
- This competition is now in its fourth year, and has seen an increase in number of entries to 12.

3. To encourage and support an increase in tourism.

- 3.1. Investigate the feasibility of hosting a regular town farmers' market, to decide on continued feasibility by August 2010.
- 3.1.1. We will continue to support the Farmers' Market by continuing funding and promoting this event, and working with local traders and other interested parties to ensure its continued success.
- This was trialled for two years but failed in the second year due to a number of spiralling factors.
 - Replaced by six band stand events in 2012 and £1100 of Winter/Spring activities in Jan to Apr 2012.
- 3.2. Support a programme of sporting, arts and community events throughout the year.
- 3.2.1. We will support the creation of an annual events leaflet to advertise activities within the town throughout the year.
- Annual events leaflet in third year.
 - Planning meeting held in January 2012 to better plan and develop activities and leaflet.
 - Leaflet has been widely distributed throughout the region.
- 3.2.2. We will continue to provide a small grants scheme to support activities for the benefit of Newbiggin by the Sea.
- Approx £19000 of grants have been distributed through the small grants scheme.
 - Jubilee party grants scheme gave out nearly £700 for local street parties.
- 3.2.3. We will continue to support key sporting events in Newbiggin by the Sea, including the Triathlon and Power-lifting championships.
- Both activities were funded and triathlon continues to receive considerable funding.
- 3.2.4. We will commission groups within Newbiggin by the Sea to host events throughout the year.
- Many activities have been funded, including January 2012 events planning meeting, BVAL funding and extra support, other funding for events, NMC activities, Jan to Apr 2012 events, online promotion of activities.
- 3.2.5. We will host an annual community meeting to promote groups and activities within the town, encourage links between groups, and develop a cohesive and comprehensive calendar of activities within Newbiggin by the Sea for the year.

- Conference for Older People, April 2012.
 - January 2012 events planning meeting.
 - Both were extremely successful and well attended.
- 3.2.6. We will work with the voluntary sector and Northumberland County Council to host an annual Action week to promote community cohesion, personal safety, community pride and individual responsibility.
- No progress.
- 3.3. Investigate tourist information, parking and toilet facilities, producing fully researched and costed proposals for consideration at the December 2010 budget meeting.
- 3.3.1. We will consider innovative ways of providing good quality public toilets throughout Newbiggin by the Sea.
- A new public toilet block is currently out to planning consultation.
- 3.3.2. We will enhance the service level provision for toilet cleaning at the Prospect Place toilets.
- Funded for the last 3 years.
- 3.3.3. We will work with relevant organisations and Northumberland County Council to develop a Traffic Management Plan for the town, including tourist information and public parking.
- Views have been fed into the Local Transport Plan for the last 3 years and have been incorporated at various levels.
 - A temporary parking scheme is being investigated.
 - NCC are considering tourist information and other services for the town.
- 3.3.4. We will work with appropriate agencies to provide improved signage throughout the town, to identify and repair damaged road surfaces, to improve general road safety and to improve signage on major routes near Newbiggin by the Sea.
- Improved signage is being investigated with NMC.
- 3.3.5. Set priorities and work with the Northumberland County Council Highways Authority to identify and deliver local traffic safety schemes including our Local Transport Plan priorities.
- The safe route to school has been delivered.
 - The Local Transport Plan priorities have been incorporated at NCC.
- 3.3.6. Work with relevant partners, including Friends of Woodhorn Church, Northumberland County Council, English Heritage, the Church and building owners, to secure a positive future for Woodhorn Church.
- Several alternatives have already been considered.
- 4. To increase the skills base within the town, supporting adults into work.**
- 4.1. Support the creation of apprenticeships and training opportunities within the town, creating six opportunities for Newbiggin by the Sea residents within the next three years.
- 4.1.1. We will work with voluntary, business and government sectors to promote opportunities for apprenticeships and training in Newbiggin by the Sea.
- 3 apprentices are currently learning at NMC, partly funded by the Town Council.
 - 3 other apprentices are built into the Portas pilot project.
 - Plans by Newbiggin Partnership Trust are being supported by the Town Council.
- 4.1.2. We will work with education, statutory and voluntary organisations to promote adult learning resources and opportunities.
- No progress.
- 4.1.3. Work towards the provision of business start-up units.
- No progress.
- 5. To support an ageing population.**
- 5.1. Investigate the requirements for community transport, producing a fully researched and costed proposal for the December 2010 budget meeting.
- 5.1.1. We will continue to contribute to the funding of the Newbiggin Nipper community bus to provide sustainable community transport, in conjunction with Northumberland County Council, provided that sufficient demand for this service is demonstrated.
- The Nipper is in its third year of funding.
- In addition, the Conference for Older People has been hosted.

Other projects

- Tourist telescopes. Under investigation.
- Empty buildings policy. Under consideration.
- Community Allotment. Alternatives are currently in use, including the Northumberland Learning Trust garden and the learning allotment in Spital.
- Childcare provision.
- Neighbourhood watch.
- Recording minor incidents.
- B1334 gateway feature. This has been postponed for now.

Service Delivery

- Bus shelters. Refurbishment, replacement and new shelters are being provided in 2012.
- Public seats. 1 new dedicated seat has been donated in 2012. Several seats have been relocated, replaced or fixed.
- War memorial maintenance is being funded from April 2012.
- Litter bin provision and maintenance. New bins have been provided along the promenade.
- Play areas. Maintenance regime is funded by the Town Council.