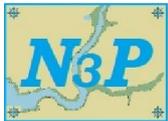




You may be struggling knee-deep in grandchildren at the minute or practicing night and day for the regatta rowing finals (**Saturday 13th followed by the fireworks**), but please take a moment to read this, our fifth Newsletter of the year. We have articles for you about the Yealm Hotel, smart meters, the Lord Seaton and, as usual, a couple of contentious planning applications. But first an update on the neighbourhood plan

Newton and Noss Neighbourhood Plan

www.n3p.co.uk



At last the Neighbourhood Plan is beginning to gather some momentum. There are now 35 people actively working on the Plan (you can see who they all are by going to the website), 60 people have indicated their willingness to provide comment/opinion through on line questionnaires and a total of almost 290 households have asked to be kept informed of events as the programme moves forward.

Two public consultations have recently been held and these have provided useful input to the Shared Vision statement that is currently being put in place. If you have not contributed we would strongly encourage you to do so by going to the (very short) online questionnaire at <http://www.n3p.co.uk/a-shared-vision-for-newton-and-noss/> and completing it.

We reported in our last edition that Devon Communities Together had just completed a Housing Needs Survey for the Parish. We are now pleased to further report that its findings have been fully accepted by the Parish Council. You can read the full report by going to the N3P website (It is in the Housing Section on the Library page). However the 'headlines' are as follows:

- 40% of the 975 households responded to the survey and, of those individuals who did so, 72% were over the age of 55.
- 25 families in the Parish are in need of (and qualify for) affordable housing.
- 85% of those who responded said they would be in favour of one or more small developments which would include some affordable housing for local people.
- 70 respondents over the age of 55 indicated that they wish to downsize to smaller accommodation within the Parish, mainly, but not entirely, in order to live somewhere that was more manageable.
- Of the second home owners who responded, only 26% stated that they intended to make their second home their principle residence at some time in the future.

The next step will now be to refine the figures in the context of wider issues such as the impact of Brexit on the housing and employment markets, regional developments such as Sherford and any housing targets that may be mandated upon us through the West Devon Joint Local Plan. This has been called the Wider Issues Study (WIS); if you feel that you might be able to help with it, please contact the team through the Contact page on the website <http://www.n3p.co.uk>. They will be delighted to hear from you.

The Yealm Hotel

As many of you will have heard, following the company's move into voluntary liquidation, the Yealm Hotel has now gone on the market with Marchand Petit and Savills. It is to be sold by private treaty, either in its entirety or as two lots (the hotel plus the adjacent apartment building and the foreshore and separately a smaller parcel of land to the west with some outbuildings). The asking price is £1.5M.



It will be of concern to many members to know that the property is described as “a superb development opportunity” and that preliminary discussions have already been held by the vendors’ agents with SHDC Planning Department. On first hearing of the likelihood of a sale some months ago, we investigated the possibility of having the building listed in order to protect it. This had already been attempted privately by a member in 2011, but although built in 1898 as the railway hotel, thus representing something of a local historic landmark, English Heritage did not consider it of sufficient architectural or historic merit to warrant such a move.

We are told that great interest has been shown in the sale, over 50 enquiries having been made almost as soon as the property went on the market. Not surprisingly the rumour mill has also been hard at work. Amongst other stories we have been told that Olga Polizzi (she of Rocco Forte Hotels) is interested; also that Chris Dawson might buy it. However the latter rumour did not go quite so far as to suggest that we will soon have a Range Superstore in our midst.

We will continue to investigate ways in which the interests of the community might be best served and keep members informed through the Newsletter.

Did you Know?

..... that we have a hero of Waterloo in our midst?

Lord Seaton – or Sir John Colborne as he was known at the time of the Battle of Waterloo – is credited by many military historians with making the decisive move that defeated Napoleon. One biography records: “Colborne, acting without authority but with boldness and brilliant initiative, swung the 52nd [Regiment of Foot] out of line and led it in a daring charge that immediately swept back the Imperial Guard in a rout. As the Guard fell back in confusion, the rest of the French army collapsed in complete disarray along the road to Charleroi. Colborne’s bold stroke has been credited with assuring victory at Waterloo”.



A painting of him (right) hangs in Apsley House, Wellington’s London home, in a collection assembled by the Field Marshal and featuring his commanders at the time of the famous battle. Many would say that this is the most striking portrait in the whole collection.

So what is Sir John Colborne's connection with Newton and Noss? The answer is that he is buried in Holy Cross churchyard. Colborne, who was born in Hampshire, married into a local Devon family, the Yonges, in 1813. He subsequently had 3 daughters and five sons and his descendants still live in his home in Sparkwell in Beechwood House.



Colborne went on to be Lieutenant Governor of Guernsey, Governor General of British North America, High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands and Commander-in-Chief Ireland. He ended up as Field Marshal John Colborne, 1st Baron Seaton in the County of Devonshire. He died in Torquay in 1863.

This statue of him was initially erected in Mount Wise, Devonport, but later moved via Seaton Barracks, Crownhill, to Peninsular Barracks in Winchester in the 1990s where it stands to this day.



The Newton and Noss contribution to mark the 200th anniversary of Waterloo was a commemoration service held at Lord Seaton's graveside in June 2015. Conducted by the Rev Anne Legge, the service was attended by a group of Napoleonic War re-enactors who ended the event by firing a 3 round salute from a cannon pointed at Noss Mayo. When the smoke cleared, much to the disappointment of a few spectators, no discernible damage appeared to have been done to Newton Ferrers' much respected neighbour!

Smart Meters

You are probably aware that Smart Meters are being gradually introduced by the Big Six energy companies. Generally they should be a good thing as they will give the householders information enabling them to use their energy consumption more 'smartly'. There have been concerns however about how much data on you they will also give the energy company. There are also bound to be teething problems in the early days that you might want to avoid.



A resident has recently raised the following experience that we are now passing on.

As a result of pressure to have a smart meter installed by an energy company, he allowed this to be done last year, having been offered free electricity at weekends but having to pay a penalty for switching provider. However when the fitter came to change the meter he found he couldn't do so because there was no mobile phone signal at the house. Result - householder left in the lurch after incurring expenses! Apparently the energy company have no obligation to check on your suitability to receive a Smart Meter first. So be warned.

More information on Smart Meters is available at <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/home-energy-efficiency/smart-meters/smart-meter-roll-out-faqs>

And if you are considering making a switch you may find the information on the U-switch website very useful too <https://www.uswitch.com/gas-electricity/guides/smart-meters-explained/>

The Post Office

You will be aware that changes are afoot in the Village Post Office. At a very well attended public meeting in the school on 28th July it was explained that the PO counter would be moved and combined with the retail counter, the sales area would be re-arranged and a café introduced. It was hoped that this would all happen some time in the autumn once the business had moved back into community ownership and after a week long closure.

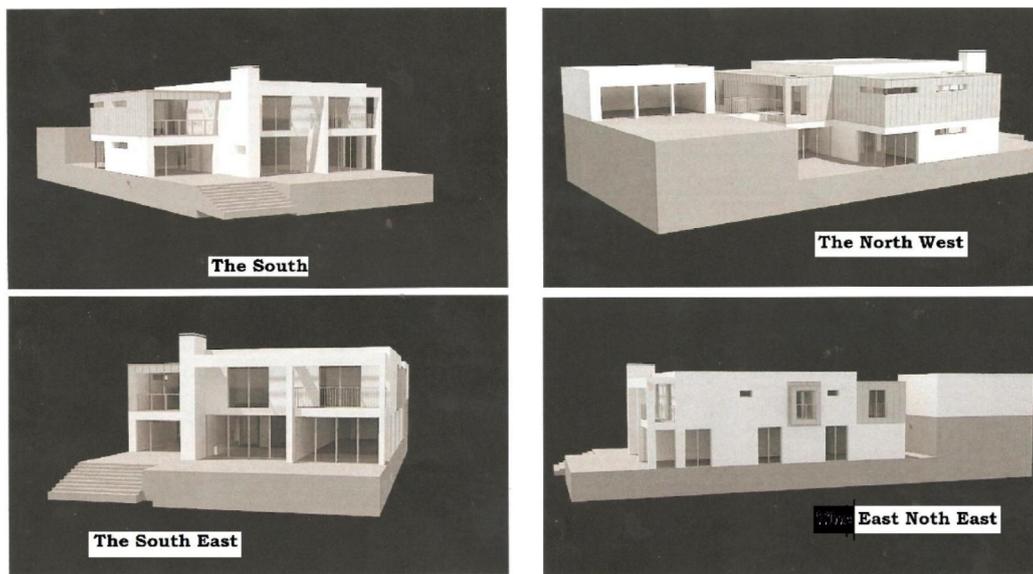
Post Office questionnaires have now been placed on the shop counter and we would encourage you to pick one up and fill it in. In addition we have offered the services of the RYDA to provide an online survey of residents to the shop committee in order to ascertain how you would like the shop and café to be run and what you would suggest is stocked. We will let you know the website address for the survey as this becomes available.

Planning Applications

Barnicott

In the No 05/2016 edition of the Newsletter we reported at length on an application to build a house in the grounds of Barnicott to the east of Bridgend Hill and outside the village development boundary. The picture below is copied from that article. The application was denied by SHDC on two grounds:

- a. that it would involve “the erosion of rural character, the visually harmful incursion of the built environment into the countryside and the coalescence of two distinct and separate urban environments within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The new access would be damaging to the character and appearance of Bridgend Hill”.
- b. that it would be “likely to generate an increase in pedestrian traffic on a single track highway lacking adequate footways and street lighting with consequent additional danger to all users of the road.”



A new application has now been submitted involving substantially the same design of house, but moving it away from the road, altering floor levels (details not available) and changing some of the materials used to (it is claimed) soften the visual impact of the building. The new application is incomplete but it appears to involve a pitched, zinc-clad roof.

Kegwell Farm

There is now so much development activity along Parsonage Road between Butts Park and Parsonage Farm that we are having difficulty distinguishing one from another in the Newsletter. So we have had to call this one the 'Kegwell Farm Application'. However you will find it listed just as 'Parsonage Road' by both the applicant and SHDC. It is for two detached chalet style bungalows located just beyond the current affordable housing building site on the way out of Newton. The site is therefore outside the current village development boundary.



The justifications given in the application for building here are as follows:

- a. The houses are for occupancy by the sons of the land owner and they are both engaged in farming on the adjacent land.
- b. The site on which the houses are to be built is a 'brownfield' site, having previously been used by a company engaged to lay pipework in Newton Ferrers.

Regrettably we find so many things wrong with this application that it is hard to know where to begin. However, in brief, we feel that it should be denied because:

- a. The site is located on a high spot within the AONB and thus will be clearly visible from many vantage points. No attempt has been made to demonstrate that there are no alternative, less sensitive sites on the farm (said to be 100 acres). Close to the farmhouse would be a much more suitable location since it is not located on a skyline. (It is on the back lane running from Butts Park towards Puslinch opposite the electricity sub-station.)
- b. Building on this site will contribute to ribbon development along the B3186 and the eventual joining of Newton Ferrers to the development at Collaton.
- c. Since the site is outside the development boundary, we assume that application is being made for two agricultural dwellings to be accompanied by the usual Agricultural Occupancy Conditions (AOC), commonly known as 'agricultural ties'. However this is not stated in the application. An AOC ties the dwelling to that particular agricultural occupancy in perpetuity.
- d. No evidence has been presented that the two occupants are employed in agricultural work or that the nature of the work demands that they live on the farm. Both of these are necessary before granting planning approval with AOC. It would seem to us that if the two occupants are indeed employed on the farm, a much more obvious and more convenient location for their dwellings would have been close to the farmhouse and the associated farm buildings. The buildings that it is proposed to locate them beside belong to another farm!

e. We have been to inspect the site and by no stretch of the imagination do we believe that it could be described as a 'brownfield' site. There is one single abandoned rusting cement mixer there surrounded by untended farmland. We would encourage members to go and have a look for themselves.

f. The surrounding area does not appear to have been used for farming recently. So why it is necessary to live there is quite unclear.

Please give us your comments before we make representations on your behalf. You will find more details and be able to comment for yourself at:

<http://www.southhams.gov.uk/planningdetails?RefType=APPPlanCase&KeyNo=0&KeyText=162289>

Footnote:

One of the articles in this edition of RYDA News has been contributed by a member to whom we offer our thanks. If you have a bee in your bonnet or just want to take advantage of a captive audience, why not get in touch with us? Perhaps you are able to contribute to the "Did you know" feature? We would be very pleased to hear from you at rydamembers@yahoo.co.uk