



PARISH OF NEWDIGATE

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

held on **Monday 10th March 2025 at 8pm**

In Newdigate Village Hall

In Attendance: Cllr William Harmsworth (Chair)
Cllr Phill Crutcher
Cllr Bill Kear
Cllr Ameeta Garga
Cllr John McKenzie-Sage
Cllr Peter Perdue
Cllr Richard Tyson-Davies

Also Present: Cllr Kirstie Havard
Clerk – J Tyrrell
7 members of the public

The Chairman welcome all present and thanked them for attending.

Apologies

Cllr Sarah MacDonald

Minutes

The minutes from the 2024 Annual Meeting of the Parish held on 11th March 2024 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Chair's Report

Parish Council business has continued throughout the year with regular monthly meetings held in the village hall, it is pleasing that we have a small group of residents in the public gallery who ask questions of the Parish Council about local issues. We receive on a consistent basis a number of planning applications to which we review and comment accordingly; we certainly add to the discussion our local knowledge and history of a number of sites.

The General Election held in early July resulted in a change of government and the subsequent changes to how we were to be governed and expected to be taxed. Whilst the country elected to support a Labour majority with a change of Prime Minister, the District Council remained controlled by a Lib-Dem team. We are aware of the local devolution initiative, which will see Surrey become a unitary authority the format of which is still being discussed. This could involve Parish Councils' playing an important role at local level and no doubt the need for Councillor and Clerks training will become evident.

The District Council adopted and approved the Mole Valley Local Plan and all planning applications should use the various policies that have been adopted. It is interesting to note that the Planning Inspectorate has already made reference to the Local Plan when dealing with planning appeals. We are aware that the MVDC Enforcement team have taken a robust view with

regard to unplanned developments; however, we were surprised and disappointed by the decision made by the Inspector on one of the unplanned developments.

Progress has been made by the speed-watch team in making motorists using the village roads to be more aware of their vehicle speed and we must thank Cllr Peter Perdue for his diligence and hard work for progressing this project. We have one flashing repeater sign installed this will 'flash' when a motorist enters the area above the prescribed speed limit. We are trying to finalise the location of the other two repeater signs.

We have a written agreement with Surrey Wildlife Trust, which will enable the Parish Council to have a greater involvement with management and maintenance of the Newdigate Brickworks. Some initial clearance work has been achieved and we hope to improve the surface of the car park. We must thank Cllr Bill Kear who has taken on the role as the NPC representative and coordinate with SWT the schedule of work to be performed.

As reported at previous Annual meetings there has been an ongoing discussion with Capel Parish Council, MVDC and SCC with regard to Trig Street upgrade from a footpath to a bridleway. SCC has conducted a feasibility and safety study, subsequent budget costs were indicated to be in the order of £80,000. This project is on hold until the question of funding is made.

I would like to conclude my report with thanks to all Councillors, our Clerk, Village organisations that support our community and you the residents of Newdigate for keeping our Parish a community we want to be.

Presentation by Cllr Bill Kear

Newdigate Community Centre – Summary

Responsible for village hall, children's playground, tennis courts and The Brocus. Also the Bowls Club, Cricket Clubhouse and Football pitch were are tenanted.

Financially we have broken even with a successful Bonfire night.

This year we have plans to install a footpath, useable all year round, around the Brocus to enable all users to benefit from this space. It will start at the clubhouse, go towards Bob's shop, around the football pitch/cricket club and end back at the village hall.

Repairs to the wall in the car park have now been completed and to hopefully prevent future damage, a barrier has been installed.

Brickworks Nature Reserve

We continue with our partnership with Surrey Wildlife Trust, with a meeting with Sarah Jane Chim..... (CEO) scheduled for the end of the month to discuss future plans.

Residents personally donated sums of money to go towards improvements and the Parish Council holds this in a separate bank account.

Two new footpaths have been constructed and replacement of the boardwalk completed.

Plans for the future – a new footpath towards Springfield Farm and a tidying up of the car park.

Written Reports

- Newdigate Bowls Club – Diana Banthorpe
- Sports & Social Club – Elaine Borg
- St Peter’s Church – Rev Andrew Coe
- Surrey County Council – Helyn Clack
- GACC – Peter Barclay

All submitted reports can be found on the Parish Council website.

The Chairman thanked all those for attending and residents were invited to stay for refreshments.

The Annual Meeting of the Parish was duly closed.

¹ Note: In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 s.13(1) this meeting is called for all local government electors of the Parish. All residents are welcome to attend, whether or not they are registered electors. However, in the event of any matter requiring a vote to be taken, only those who are registered to vote will be able to take part.

Report from Newdigate Bowls Club

For the Annual Meeting of the Parish

10th March 2025

Following on from a successful recruitment drive in the first part of 2024, when thirteen new members joined NBC, the playing season up until the end of September was deemed a success. Club internal competitions came to an exciting conclusion in September, and the Border League team were able to put out a competitive side on Thursday evenings. The Tuesday Club nights were well attended, with a range of additional social events organised for non-playing members. Over the course of the winter months, we have embedded a new indoor Boccia league into the schedule which has been well supported and enjoyed. We are currently recruiting for the 2025 season, again focusing on attracting interest from local villages.

Newdigate Sports & Social Club 2024

Jan-March

The club hosted Knitter Natter monday afternoons where the ladies come for a light lunch and socialise while knitting. Then Monday evening Youth club.

Fundraising Darts competitions, raffles and quiz night all in aid of prostate Cancer a grand total £1,785

March we also had the annual Easter egg Hunt and childrens easter party, where all children in the village are invited to take part with the help of the Easter Bunny (Mr. Dan Killick) to find easter eggs in the playground and Brocus they then recieve a easter egg supplied by the club and have a party in our games room.

We also hosted Easter Bingo.

April- July

Our annual "Shaun shield" darts knockout competition to help raise more money for Shaun's rehabilitation Total raised £780

Our mens Darts Team won the Dorking summer league darts

We hosted Village day and raised money towards the Multi sports court.

We started Friday night family night so families could come together Friday evenings the children could play while the parents could socialise and we had BBQ's

August - Dec

Knitter Natters continues , the Youth club stopped in Oct due to bad behaviour but we started Youth Darts on a Thursday which went really well.

We hosted our annual Halloween children's Party again, this is totally funded by the club for the village children. We have a pumpkin carving competition and the best fancy dress.

We started Hosting the Vault National darts knockout in September. This is a competition which happens throughout the UK. We are very proud to be a venue, it started just once a week but this year we have been offered two nights .

Christmas at the club - Children's Christmas party funded by the club they have a visit from Santa and a small gift.

Christmas raffles, darts knockouts and Bingo.

New years eve family Party.

The club offers sky sports and continues to be a community club for families of the village.

St Peter's Church Report for Newdigate Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting, Monday 10th March 2025

The year of 2025 is a most significant one in the life of St Peter's Church and Newdigate Village. It is St Peter's 850th Anniversary year (1175 – 2025). A special focus happens in a couple of weeks' time. On Saturday evening 22nd March, there is a special presentation in Church 'They made their mark, from Crusaders to the current day'. This will be an evening of Drama, words, light and pictures to illustrate the 850 years of Church life. On Sunday 23rd March at 10am there is special Celebration service in Church at 10am at which we will be joined by the Bishop of Dorking, the Rt. Revd Paul Davies. All are welcome to join us. At the Service we will also be giving thanks for the successful completion of the Spire renovation works, the biggest building project on the Church building for over 40 years. Thank to everyone who has given support and interest, and helped us to complete this project.

During the last year we have continued to build up Church and community life. St Peter's continues to provide opportunities for people to meet others, build friendships and perhaps feel less lonely and isolated. The weekly Coffee under the Bells on Wednesday mornings in Church remains popular. Once a month the 'Hear, Here' hearing aid advice group comes along, as also does MVDC local Cllr Jo Farrar-Astrop to provide her councillors surgery. We hosted two 'Newcomers to the Village' welcome events in the Village Hall. These gave an opportunity for those who'd recently moved to Newdigate to get to know others, and be able to find out community information, and ask any questions they may have about the local area.

St Peter's has continued to offer a mid-week service of Morning Prayer by Zoom, which still attracts over 20 people most weeks. Various mid-week DVD and discussion courses have been held in the last year, both during the day, and in the evening. In the last year we have started an occasional Sunday afternoon meeting held on a Sunday afternoon at 4pm in the Village hall, 'St P's Gathering, which has proved very popular. The bi-monthly overnight prayer meetings running from 6pm to 6am in one's own home have continued, and have been getting over 25 people taking part. Our children's and teenage youth work continues with regular twice monthly meetings taking place. It has been good to host Newdigate School when they come across to Church for 'Acts of Worship', and other festival Services. We are so grateful to our team of pastoral assistants, clergy and other members of the congregation and community who help to keep contact with many people throughout the village to offer friendship and support.

St Peter's remains at the heart of village life, and we try to serve the community and its pastoral and spiritual needs as best we can. We're conscious of the many folks who like to visit the Church during the week to spend a few moments in quiet prayerful thought and reflection.

Can I take this opportunity, once again, to thank the community of Newdigate for their outstanding support for Dorking Foodbank. Their generosity is overwhelming. The Church is a collection point for Foodbank donations and, at the Foodbank, Newdigate continues to be regarded as one of their most generous and supportive communities.

On behalf of St Peter's, I would also like to record our appreciation to the Parish Council for the financial support you have given towards the costs of the upkeep of the Churchyard, as well as to the parish magazine. Your support is very much appreciated and makes a big difference. Thank you.

On a personal note, you may have heard that I am retiring at the end of April. If I could thank everyone for their support and friendship over the last 22 years. Our farewell Service is at 10am on Sunday 27th April. All are invited to join us on this occasion, before our move to Great Bookham.

Rev Andrew Coe, Rector, St Peter's Church.

I think it might be helpful to say something about the changes coming to Local Government in Surrey. This is what we know so far and as I understand it.

The government has confirmed that Surrey is to be part of the first wave of areas looking to take the opportunities presented by the government's devolution agenda. The unique position of our county was referred to by the Secretary of State in her speech to Parliament regarding the debt that has built up amongst some of the boroughs and districts being unsustainable and that this reorganisation will need to address this. One reason why the Government has decided to fast-track the Surrey councils.

The Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution confirmed to Surrey County Council's Leader, Tim Oliver, that the government has decided to postpone Surrey's local elections in May until 2026. Elections in 2025 were expected to cost about £2,000,000 across the whole county, funding the coordination of printing of ballots, including the cost of post and postal votes, employment of polling stations and officials etc across all 11 boroughs and districts and the 81-county council electoral divisions for over 1,000,00 voters. This money will now be used to help fund the transition.

In Mole Valley where the local council is elected by one third over four years, it is expected these will be cancelled in 2026.

Instead, the elections in 2026 will be to elect new representatives to the new Unitary Authority in our area followed by elections in 2027 to elect a Mayor for all of Surrey and any other part that is included in the new Mayoral Authority. The powers of the new Mayoral authority may well include Police, Fire and Rescue, Strategic Planning and Transport, Public Health and Economic Growth. County and District Councils will be abolished along with their elected councillors on vestment day which will be sometime between the two elections.

The Unitary authority should follow HMG guidelines, each authority is advised to be around 500,000 plus residents. Surrey has a population of 1.2million and in Mole Valley District Council there are 80,000 residents currently. The County Council is working with the county 11 Districts and Boroughs to establish the best way to ensure parity across any proposed unitary authorities.

County Council services will have to be disaggregated to Unitaries - services like Social Care for children and adults, highways, libraries, registrations, countryside and environment and much more. The district councils will aggregate their services like planning and leisure. Waste collection and disposal will be brought together. It is also important to note that some areas of the county have higher levels of deprivation, debt and lower abilities to raise council taxes than others when considering the geography of the new unitary boundaries.

There is a huge amount of work to do in a very tight time frame. Surrey County Council employs around 8,000 people or full-time equivalents for example, and it is important to support them in the transition to their new employers.

A draft submission to HMG in March by the councils in Surrey will then be followed by HMG comments and directions in May. The Government is proposing consultation with partners but not a public referendum. It is anticipated that the new framework for the unitary councils will be in place in the Autumn of this year.

For councillors, it is being proposed that the latest divisional boundaries set by the Local Government Boundary Commission in 2024 will be the elected areas for 2026. The Government is keen to avoid the expense of a new boundary commission and the new Unitaries can call for a new boundary review once they have been vested, this would normally happen every ten years or so. Currently there are about 500 elected councillors, excluding towns and parish councils in Surrey. Two or even three councillors per division are being considered.

This reorganisation does not include Town and Parish Councils.

The LGA has also published notes and guidance on Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation here [The devolution and LG reorganisation hub | Local Government Association](#) which includes Frequently Asked Questions

This is a very fast-moving plan, and I expect there will be a lot of changes and additions along the journey, which I will report back to residents about. I hope this helps!

Helyn Clack

Surrey County Councillor for Dorking Rural Division

Soon to be abolished...

Mrs Helyn Clack

Member for Dorking Rural Division

Surrey County Council

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GACC NEWSLETTER

Number 143

MARCH 1st 2025

The Secretary of State for Transport has today made a decision stating that she is "minded to grant consent" for the development of Gatwick Airport based on an amended plan. Further consultation is now expected with a final decision earmarked for October 2025.

Somewhat of a surprise particularly as on the days running up to the announcement the press and pundits were all forecasting an approval statement.

As you can imagine we've spent a pretty active day with the press and achieved good coverage for our campaign across radio and tv and with the local and national newspapers.

Our Press release went out on the 27th and you can see it [here](#).

For details of the Secretary of State's statement click [here](#).

And for the Planning Inspectors' Report click [here](#) and for the appendices [here](#).

The Planning Inspectorate has recommended against the expansion plan. However the Secretary of State's office have suggested that if Gatwick complies with revised conditions relating to Surface Transport Access and Noise Mitigation they will reconsider the application favourably.

We have scheduled a 'brain storming' session for next Monday 3rd March in Charlwood Parish Hall to discuss the contents of the papers and plan our action. Anyone interested in joining should email us at info@gacc.org.uk to get more details.

We feel there is no need for this or any other airport expansion in the UK. That climate change has been downgraded to just another issue to consider after the Government has indicated its desire to proceed is completely unacceptable. On Wednesday, the Climate Change Committee stated that no additional airport capacity is needed until at least 2035 and then only if Sustainable Aviation Fuels become viable. Since the Gatwick consultation finished, we have passed 1.5C global warming for the past year, and last week the Channel Tunnel announced plans to expand connectivity to Europe. It is time for the government to back trains not planes, and instigate the repeated calls of their independent Climate Change Committee to introduce a plan to manage down demand for flying instead.

In our press statement yesterday we said GACC are putting the Government on notice that should they go ahead with what seems to be their revised plan we will legally challenge what is still a dangerous and irresponsible decision. We are calling out the Government's failure to recognise Gatwick's false economic claims and its plans to fly in the face of climate breakdown. Equally concerning is the government's failure to listen to the evidence of the significant negative impact on local communities in terms of noise, air

pollution, overloading of infrastructure and a general worsening of people's lives.

Fundraiser for Legal Challenges

To meet the legal challenges GACC has launched a fundraising campaign to support these legal challenges.

The link to the campaign is here: <https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/gacc/>

Please donate to the campaign to help us continue to challenge the expansion of Gatwick Airport and the disastrous consequences that expansion would have on local people as well as globally. With your support we can ensure that issues like night flights, noise, air quality, and climate change do not go unnoticed. Commitments and promises dropped will not go unchallenged and we will keep on working to stop Gatwick's unsustainable expansion from becoming a terrible reality.

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Joining GACC: please spread the word

Please encourage your friends, family and neighbours to join GACC and help protect the interests of communities around the airport and under flight paths. Information on how to join is on our website here: <http://www.gacc.org.uk/contact-us.php>.

GACC contact details

Email: info@gacc.org.uk

Website: <http://www.gacc.org.uk>

Twitter: [@GCgatwick](https://twitter.com/GCgatwick)