

Newton Poppleford – Report 28th June 2021

I am grateful to the Parish Council for giving me such a warm welcome at their May meeting and also for taking the time to brief me on the key issues facing the Parish on 23rd June.

Newton Poppleford Branch Surgery

This is clearly a key issue for the Parish, and I have been continuing to press the CCG for clarification around their intentions for the future of the branch surgery and the provision of their services in general.

I have been provided with conflicting responses from the CCG with regards the GP situation for residents of Newton Poppleford, with the original consultation letter referring to the boundary being redrawn to exclude patients living in Newton Poppleford, but the CCG subsequently stating that this was not the case. There has also been conflicting information provided about whether residents could or could not choose currently to become patients at the Sidmouth Beacon practice. The CCG told me that patients are able to choose which GP service they wish, but then provided me a link stating that a GP surgery which falls outside the area you live in can refuse to register you.

The recent survey carried out by the Coledrige Medical Centre on the branch surgery has been very limited both in terms of the timescale (three weeks only) and the patients it has been sent to (only patients who had used the branch surgery in the six months prior to the pandemic). I have asked how many questionnaires were sent out and how many have been received. But this information has not been forthcoming.

The restrictive approach to the consultation raises, in my mind, serious questions about any weight that can be afforded to the results.

What is very important is that the CCG engage with the Parish Council to find ways to continue offering the branch surgery to patients from Newton Poppleford as this is clearly what the community wants as the community wide survey demonstrated in 2019.

I would like to see positive engagement on the part of the CCG with the Parish Council – the Parish Council have already stated their wish to work with the CCG. If there are barriers, physical or other, to the continued operation of the branch surgery, then the CCG should be working with the Parish Council to overcome these.

I am keen to support the Parish Council to ensure that patients can receive services at the most local level, particularly those residents who have difficulties in accessing services beyond Newton Poppleford.

Road Safety Issues in Newton Poppleford

I am most concerned by the road safety issues faced by Newton Poppleford – in particular the fact that the 20mph request seems to have fallen into abeyance – pending a DCC trial at Newton Abbot. And also, the lack of pedestrian crossings across the A3052. I will be working on ways in which I can resolve these issues in the coming weeks.

Cllr Ranger raised a concern with me about the shortness of time for pedestrians crossing at the traffic lights. Mike Brown neighbourhood highways officer has advised me that the time adjusts

to the person who is actually crossing. However, if there are still concerns about the shortness allowed for crossing, please do let me know.

Footpath 1

I note that the Parish Council wishes to make progress with upgrading this footpath and I have contacted DCC rights of way officers in relation to this.

Footpath 3

A grant application for £750 for works to this footpath was submitted to Claire Wright, via the Invest in Devon Programme. This application has now been passed to me and I have approved the payment.

EDDC – local plan review; involving DCC as a consultee

The interactive plan showing all the sites that landowners have put forward under the local plan is now live on EDDC's website. [Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment - East Devon](#). There are 12 sites around Newton Poppleford which have been put forward.

Devon County Council as highways and education authority will be consulted as part of this HELAA process whereby the sites are considered before their possible inclusion in the Local Plan. DCC highways department are unable to commit to a particular date to review the sites, so EDDC's approach will be to consider the largest sites first.

As part of the consideration of whether the sites are potentially "achievable", the sites will be looked at by the HELAA panel. EDDC officers advised that "Membership of the Panel is representative of a broad cross section of the housing and economic development sectors, including house builders (volume and smaller scale schemes) social landlords, local property agents, and other related professions, local community representatives and other agencies". I have sought greater openness and transparency on the make-up of the panel and have requested a report from officers before this panel first meets.

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