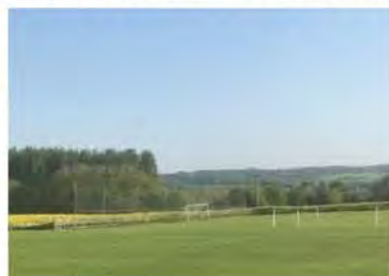




# Newton St Cyres in Bloom



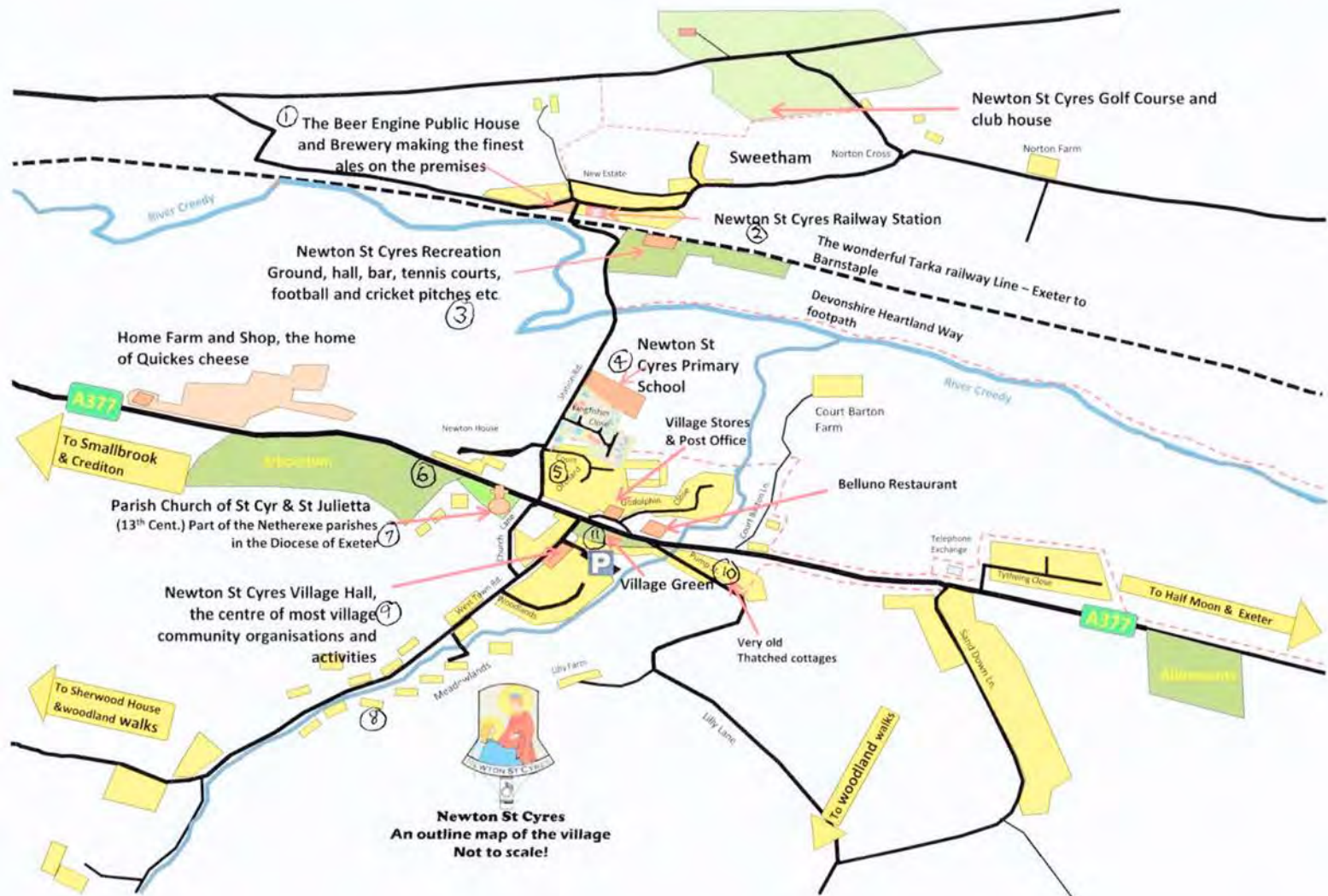
[www.newtonwonder.net](http://www.newtonwonder.net)

Pennant - Village  
July 2025



LOCATION: THE VILLAGE LIES BETWEEN EXETER CITY & CREDITON TOWN

## Newton St Cyres Village Judging Tour Points numbers 1 - 11





LOCATION: THE VILLAGE LIES BETWEEN EXETER CITY & CREDITON TOWN

# Newton St Cyres Village

**Location:** The village lies between Exeter City & Crediton Town

**Population:** circa 750

**Local Authority:** Mid Devon District Council

**Recycling Rates:** Mid Devon District Council has achieved its highest-ever ranking for waste and recycling performance. For the year 2023/24, the district council recorded a recycling rate of 57.9%, placing it 11th out of 197 local authorities. (7 May 2025)

**History & Mining:** It can be claimed that the nearby village of Upton Pyne, together with Newton St Cyres, had the first commercially successful manganese mines in the world! Current worldwide produce of manganese exceeds 30 million tons a year. This compares with the 1-10 tons a day produced in the late 1700s and early 1800s locally in open-pit mines and limited underground mining through shafts and adits.

**Land Ownership & Farming:** The Quicke surname is thought to derive from a local Saxon tribe of the area who managed to retain land through the Norman Conquest. There is a record of a Reverend Quicke in 1216, but the first member of the family of whom much is known is Andrew Quicke, who died in 1557. He was 14 generations away from the present family! The family held together through the Reformation, the Prayer Book Rebellion, and the Civil War. Working through the vicissitudes of land management and farming, the family has in the last 50 years used milk for cheese production: and now there is a virtuous circle of grass pasture, cows grazing out for 10 months of the year to produce good milk for cheese, and the waste water being returned to the land to grow the grass. Britain in Bloom Judges will be served Quicke's cheese as part of the Adonai Lunch on 1 July.

## The Village Main Businesses:

### Quicke's Cheese

[www.quickes.co.uk/](http://www.quickes.co.uk/)



### The Beer Engine Brew Pub

[www.thebeerengine.co.uk/](http://www.thebeerengine.co.uk/)



### Belluno's Italian Restaurant

[www.belluno-newton.co.uk](http://www.belluno-newton.co.uk)





# Newton St Cyres Village

## OPEN GREEN SPACES



### The Recreation Ground

The Recreation Ground Club is an area of 6 acres comprising the Club House and two sports fields for football, cricket and archery. It has two flood-lit tennis courts (with a membership of over 100) and a children's equipped play area. Through winter, the grounds are well used with senior, youth and ladies' football – and indoor sports such as darts and pool. It is a major venue for large community events such as the Annual Charity Fireworks



### The Arboretum

The Arboretum covers 9 acres. It was established in the 1760s by John Quicke, a major landowner, and many specimen trees were planted. The Arboretum was abandoned from the 1950s.

A Licence Agreement was drawn up and the Friends of the Arboretum was founded to manage the space. The Arboretum was opened to the public in 2011 and rapidly became a much-appreciated facility. There are over 130 subscribers to the Friends, plus a further cohort of volunteers.



### The Village green

The Green was created by the demolition in 1959 of cottages along the A377 boundary, with new cottages being built back from the road. Prior to this, when cottagers were in their upstairs rooms, they could shake hands with passengers on the top deck of the bus as it went through the village. The green is now the centre point of the village and is constantly being improved.



### Sherwood House

This Arts & Crafts House (1907) is set in 25 acres: a magnificent 'plantsman's garden' modelled on the original Arboretum planting, hence the presence of magnolias. It hosts numerous national collections, including, berberis, acers, and Knap Hill azaleas. It is open to local residents every week and more widely open annually through the NGS.



# Newton St Cyres Village

## Newton St Cyres Primary School (‘It’s Your School’ entry)

Head Teacher: James Durward-Akhurst

Built in 2018, the school is part of the Exe Valley Federation and has 139 pupils from 2 -11 (including 36 pre-school children). The school benefits from extensive grounds to the rear. Over the last 18 months, the School has been developing wildlife and learning gardens to create a space to support children with outdoor learning, as well as give them colourful and peaceful areas to spend time in.

The gardens have been established through pupil involvement, volunteering days and community donations. So far, we have planted 120 tree saplings (native tree species plus two orchards of apple, quince & plum trees), created a wildlife pond (perfect for pond-dipping!), a wildflower meadow, vegetable and flower beds.

As we further establish the gardens, we are developing a sensory garden filled with herbs, wind-chimes and long grasses for children to relax and enjoy watching the bees buzz by!



*Repurposed old boat found in the grounds*



The hope is that these new spaces will benefit the pupils’ well-being and learning. The project’s ambition is to connect children with nature and for them to have a space to unwind.

In parallel with the school’s initiative, volunteers from the community NEW. group (NSC Environmental Wellbeing – see p. 7) planted 400 trees in the adjacent open area next to the school fencing.

The trees are establishing now and form a valuable natural boundary for the school and the gardening projects.

[www.newton-st-cyres.devon.sch.uk/Newton-St-Cyres/](http://www.newton-st-cyres.devon.sch.uk/Newton-St-Cyres/)





# Newton St Cyres Village

## Newton Environmental Wellbeing Group

**Established in 2021, NEW is resolved to improve and protect the natural environment round Newton St Cyres. It's aims:**

- *Take action to reduce the carbon footprint of the parish*
- *Take actions that improve the environment and biodiversity of the parish*
- *Take actions to prepare residents of the parish for the necessary adaptations and mitigations that climate change will bring to our way of life*
- *Liaise with other groups, organisations and bodies (especially the Parish Council) that support these aims*



## Wilding the Village Green

In April 2022, areas at both ends of the Green, were sown with a mix of British wildflowers and grasses. The borders to the central path were sown with yellow rattle and everything was left uncut until late summer.

After this time both areas were scythed and the risings removed a few days later to leave seeds for next year's wildflowers and keep soil fertility low.

Plant species : Yarrow, Groundsel, Cornflower, Poppy, Knapweed, Meadow Buttercup, Creeping Buttercup, Cock's Foot, Quaking Grass, Fat Hen, Tansy, Wild Carrot, Fleabane, Pot Marigold, Reed Sweet Grass, Scabious, Lesser Trefoil, Sticky Mouse-ear, Ox Eye Daisy, Eyebright, Red Clover, Pignut, Queen Anne's Lace, Ragwort, Selfheal, Yellow Rattle. Bees, butterflies and a number of seed-eating birds have been seen.



## N.E.W. Coppicing Group

For the past two winters a small group of volunteers have been coppicing a small compartment of hazel within part of local landowners Quicke's woodland. The aim: to create a showcase of woodland management by opening up the canopy to light in the following spring and summer.

The group uses just traditional tools so we all get a workout as well! The forest floor now has primroses, ferns and other native species, while cut stools (protected by brash) have successfully regenerated.

The coppiced hazel is distributed to the local community for firewood, plant supports and bean poles.

## Community Allotment

In response to community-wide desire for locally-grown food, several large neglected allotments were taken on in 2022 by a group of dedicated volunteers working hard to achieve that goal.

Using the Charles Dowding no-dig minimises disturbance to the vital fungal network, keeping carbon locked up in the soil and reducing work! No artificial chemicals are used, compost is made on site or sourced locally, along with manure. Biodiversity is encouraged through providing additional habitat, serving to manage pests by encouraging beneficial predators. We have also 'up-cycled' two greenhouses. Crops include broadbeans, salad, potatoes, beetroot, carrots, onions, garlic and tomatoes. Apple trees and soft fruit beds have also been established.





# Newton St Cyres Village



## The Community Larder

Once a week during the growing season, fresh produce from the community allotment is at the Parish Hall outdoor 'Larder' for anyone to take. This has inspired other gardeners to contribute their own excess fruit and vegetables – a commendable community effort.

This has been much appreciated and a dedicated shelter has recently been constructed for the produce from which people can help themselves.

The project complements the small food bank set up in the south porch of the church nearby. Allotment bounty is also passed to the Adonai Community Kitchen, which provides two-course lunches every Tuesday and Wednesday in the Parish Hall.

Jocelyn, a local villager who is a Paris-trained chef and also a language teacher, provides excellent lunches, all "not for profit" and run by volunteers. Here is a typical menu, using veg from the Larder:

## NEW Community Orchard

As the name implies, the Court Orchard retirement housing complex was built in 1971 on an old orchard. Following discussions with residents, it was decided to bring a little piece of this apple orchard history back to brighten up the area, provide more wildlife interest and eventually create a source of autumn fruit for the community. With funding from Mid-Devon district council, the Newton Environmental Wellbeing Group planted 15 local varieties of apple tree in February 2023. Watered, mulched and weeded as required, these trees are growing strongly and should provide their first harvest this year.

Each tree has a 'name' plate and reflects Devon's rich heritage of traditional orchards. The grass surrounding the trees is left uncut during the spring and summer to promote wild flowers and provide food and shelter for insects.



*The noticeboard in Orchard Close explaining the project*



# Newton St Cyres Village



## Newton St Cyres Arboretum A Hidden Wonder

This is a tranquil haven showcasing a stunning array of trees, plants and wildlife. This community-maintained and funded treasure spans nearly 9 acres and offers visitors a serene escape into nature.

Established in the 1760s by the Quicke family, it was licensed to the Parish Council in 2008. The Friends of the Arboretum was formed in 2010 to manage the space on behalf of the Parish Council. After extensive work, the site was officially opened in May 2011.

The Arboretum is home to a unique and diverse collection of exotic and native trees. It welcomes everyone and regularly hosts the local children's nursery, primary school, yoga classes, picnics and fund-raising events such as theatre and concerts.



The 135 Friends of the Arboretum seek to maintain and enhance the biodiversity and resilience of the site with new planting. This is against the challenges of climate change, the aging profile of some of the trees and the costs of maintenance. The Friends work in partnership with other expert organisations.

The next project is to work on activities for young people with a tree nursery and orchard.

[www.newtonwonder.net/friends-of-the-arboretum.html](http://www.newtonwonder.net/friends-of-the-arboretum.html)





# Newton St Cyres Village



## Church of St Cyr and Julitta A Window Back in Time

This C14<sup>th</sup> church, with its C13<sup>th</sup> tower, stands on a small hillside overlooking the village and is dedicated to St Julitta and her young son, St Cyr.

The Saxons were permitted to adopt an acre of land around a Church for their graves - hence God's acre. This land, often walled off like St Cyr and St Julitta's, hasn't changed much since its inception hundreds of years ago, and is a habitat time capsule.

The Friends of the Churchyard, set up in 2021, aimed to nurture what they could of this incredible area and help it thrive. The churchyard grassland and meadow is typical of unimproved neutral grassland and rare. Once common, most has been lost.

We want to respect the dignity and reflective nature of the churchyard while also giving everyone a chance to look back through this window in time.

Experts have visited and advised and encouraged us to allow ours to grow and give the species a chance to seed before cutting. It also allows a rich source of nectar and pollen, encouraging insects.

In no mow period from May onwards has allowed plants to grow undisturbed in the older part of the Churchyard. In the Church porch insect, plant and bird ID charts help visitors to identify what they see. Some leave us notes of sightings, which are appreciated. It's still early days with much to be done, not least in identifying and recording, and all are welcome to help



Oak Eggar Moth



Iron Prominent Moth

An exciting indication of the rich diversity of the area was provided when an expert set up his moth traps one night - they were unharmed and set free next day. 25 species were recorded.



# Newton St Cyres Village



## Orchard View: Bees and Their Food'!

Karen and Chris Haliday have lived at Orchard View for 10 years and have been beekeeping for eight of them. Here are Karen's thoughts on the joy of life with the bees:

"There are more than 250 species of bees in the UK. Our hives can contain approximately 50,000 honey bees per hive. In any hive there are three types of honey bee: a single queen; thousands of female worker bees and, in the summer, hundreds of male drones.

Honey bees are special. Unlike wasps and bumblebees, they overwinter as a colony. The colony does not hibernate but stays active and clusters together to stay warm.

My husband Chris was called in June to collect a swarm of 10,000 bees that had settled into a crab apple tree on the village Green for a rest stop on its way to its final destination. The bees have settled in well at home and it is hoped there will be honey next year.

**Plants:** We have planted a range of flowers in the garden so bees and other pollinators have access to pollen and nectar from February to October, starting with snowdrops, hellebores, native primroses, and following on with shrubs such as Skimmia, Daphne and Sarcococca.

We have learned how bees are drawn to blue, purple and violet colours so have added Nepeta, hardy Geraniums, Lavender, Camassias and Alliums.

We are now encouraging other pollinators into the garden, such as Scabious, to attract other insects, butterflies and moths. It has rich, long-flowering blooms and the bees enjoy the seeds.

Seeds are sown in spring in our greenhouse to grow pollinator-rich annuals: Cosmos, Echium, Calendula, Lavatera, Borage, Tagetes, etc.

Honesty and foxgloves have been allowed to self-seed to create more informal planting.

We feel this is only the start on our gardening and beekeeping journey as we now would like to look at what other pollinators we can attract into the garden.

We have repeat-planted Sedums as the flowers are easily accessible to honeybees with their relatively short tongues, as well as popular with butterflies, young queen bumblebees and hoverflies."



# Newton St Cyres Village



## Pump Street & Shuttern Brook

Pump Street is a historic road in the heart of the village and the conservation area. The main feature of the road is a ford through the Shuttern Brook, which runs from farmland beyond West Town Road and under the A377 road bridge to join up with the River Creedy.

'Old Beams', on the right (below), is the oldest house in the village. Research by the University of Exeter into the seed from the original roofing thatch suggests it is probably older than the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

The planting along the boundary of the houses is all chosen and managed by residents. It is appreciated by walkers visiting the village, using the 'Village Walks' leaflet and QR code.

**Plants for the Ford Bridge are donated by Bernaville Nurseries, a family-run business set up over 65 years ago.**

## West Country Rivers Trust & the Creedy

Like many rivers across the country, the River Creedy has been suffering from various types of pollution in recent years, affecting water quality and wildlife. Over the last four years, volunteers from Newton St Cyres and nearby have been undertaking regular inspections and water-quality measurements of the Creedy and local tributaries on behalf of the West Country Trust's Citizen Science programme. The aim is to highlight issues and inform the regulatory authorities.

This local area is one of only two locations in Devon where native White Clawed Crayfish are still to be found. Volunteers have been involved in a project to save them by raising awareness, seeking funding for developing a captive breeding programme and pressing the Environment Agency to increase the numbers of regulatory farm visits across the whole

Volunteers have also been involved with a sediment fingerprinting research project to help identify sources of pollutants. It is hoped that all these actions will, in time, result in improvements in the health of the River Creedy for all wildlife.

Sue Rowell



# Newton St Cyres Village



## OPEN GARDENS WEEKEND

Newton St Cyres held its second open gardens event in June. Called 'Our Garden Havens', it featured more than 12 gardens across the village, showcasing how wildlife, horticulture and green sanctuaries are celebrated in diverse ways in our village gardens, big and small.

It was organised by the Newton Environmental Wellbeing (NEW) group, building on the interest shown from a smaller post-Covid event and inviting the whole community to take part.

Participants were supported by NEW to get their gardens ready for visitors. People were invited to buy weekend tickets and maps at £4 as a fund-raiser for the Devon Wildlife Trust and Newton Environmental Wellbeing group for community projects. Both the Parish Hall and The Beer Engine provided refreshments and toilet facilities.

From giant bug hotels to a Victorian greenhouse, grass meadows to wildlife ponds, visitors could get inspiration and take away ideas.



*Cinnabar caterpillars*



*Bug hotel*

NEW has promoted the Devon Wildlife Trust's 'Wilder Communities' initiative. Gardens which meet specific criteria to help make areas richer in nature qualify for a plaque which can be proudly displayed in the garden!

[www.devonwildlifetrust.org/wildlife-garden-award](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/wildlife-garden-award)



# Newton St Cyres Village



## Sherwood House Gardens

The gardens at Sherwood House feature 25 acres with two steep wooded valleys, wildflowers, spring bulbs (especially daffodils), and extensive collections of magnolias, camellias, rhododendrons, azaleas, berberis, heathers, maples, cotoneasters, buddleias, hydrangeas, cornus and epimedium, plus collections of magnolias, Knaphill azaleas and berberis.

It was originally hoped that Sherwood House grounds would feature in the Britain in Bloom judging tour, but the limit on time available to the judges means that's not possible this year. It's hoped that that the judging route may change in 2026 so that Sherwood can be included, as it really is an absolute show-stopper!

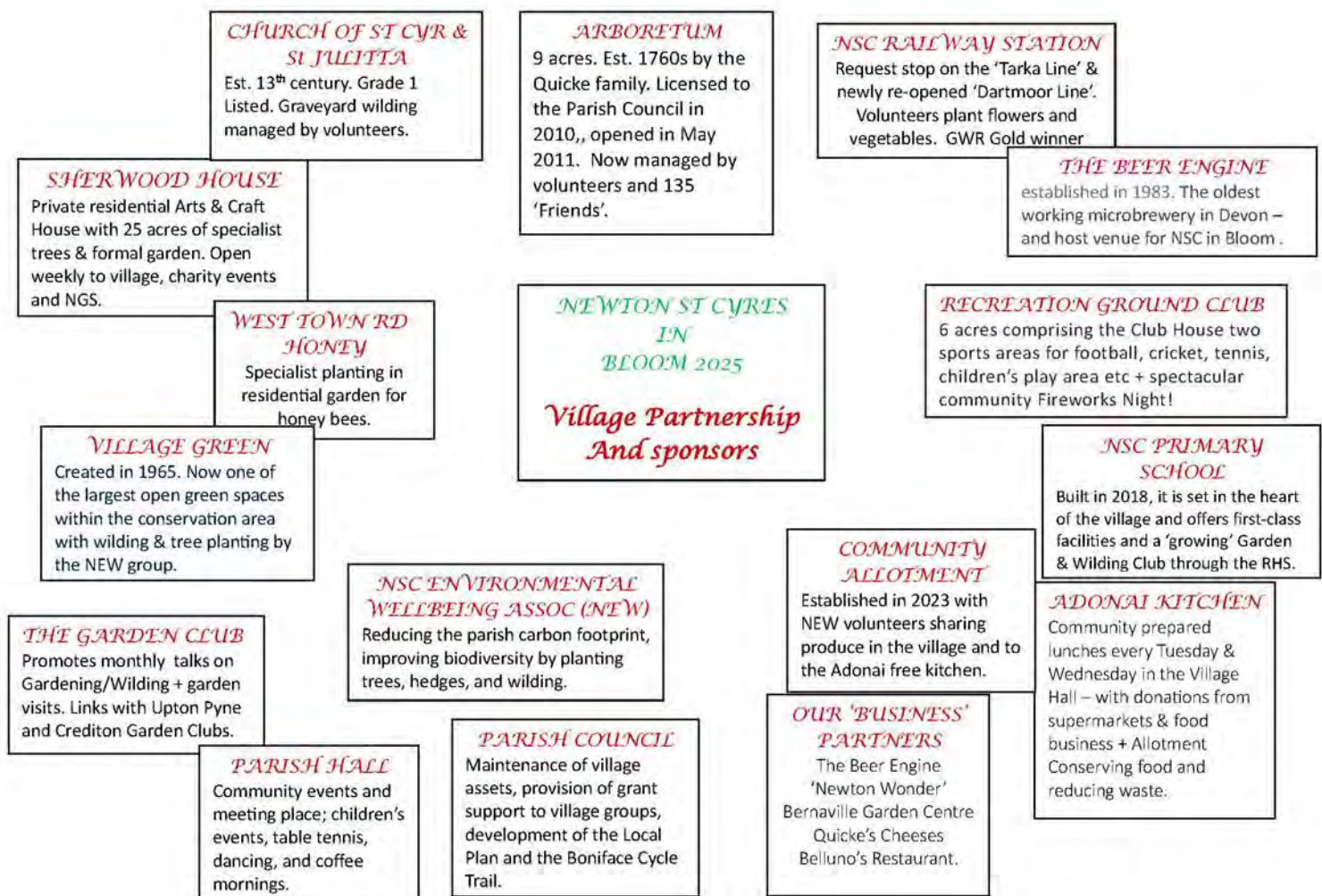
However, after lunch on 1 July, when the judging is all finished, we would be delighted to take our judges on a very brief tour by car. It would give the group great pleasure to let the judges unwind in this quite remarkable garden.





# Newton St Cyres Village

## Partnerships Diagram





# Newton St Cyres Village

## Newton St Cyres in Bloom - 2025

### COSTS & FUNDING:

Cash donations £150  
Plant donations (Bernaville Nurseries) £ 50  
Coppicing Hand Tools Grant Mid Devn £300  
Hosting Group Meeting (The Beer Engine) £ 80 (in-kind)  
Hosting Event Meeting (Parish Hall) £ 40 (in-kind)  
Donation of plants in the community £ 50 (est. in-kind and home grown)  
Design, Print + Social Media - EXETART £250 (in-kind)  
Newton Wonder Magazine – features and ads £100 (in-kind)  
Quicke's Cheese £ 80 (donation)

Portfolio edited: Peter Cordingly

NB: 'Newton St Cyres-in-Bloom' is unincorporated and therefore not eligible for main-stream grant funding. As a collaborative effort the community has come together to support the project with funds, donations and in-kind services. Many of these generous people were at the 'Volunteers Thank You' Tea-Party organised by the Parish Council with Adonai-Kitchens and hosted at Sherwood House.



*The Parish Council hosted a 'thank you' event for village volunteers, held at Sherwood House on Saturday 14 June*