

OLD NEWTON & GIPPING EVERGREEN CLUB

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REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 27th APRIL 2022.

Mr. Chairman,

From its inception in 1950, the Old Newton and Gipping Evergreen Club had operated continually until the forced cessation of its programme in March 2020 in consequence of the restrictions which were imposed as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. The membership as a whole, was considered to fall within the 'vulnerable persons' category, therefore, the Club's committee was averse to any form of risk to the health of its members. Once the vaccination process got under way, however, members could not wait to take advantage of something which would enable them to socialise again.

Members of the Village Hall Fundraising Group kindly invited Evergreen Club members to an afternoon tea gathering which took place in the Village Hall on Tuesday 18th August 2021. For some members this was an opportunity to 'test the water' – should masks be worn or not?? About thirty five brave souls decided that the need to have a chat and catch up with gossip outweighed any risks. The Fundraising Group members had seen this as a means of kickstarting some form of social activity in the community and they achieved their objective. Wednesday 15th September 2021 saw the revival of a programme of events for members which has then continued on a monthly basis. Initially, attendance was relatively low but numbers have increased as people have grown in confidence, even though the virus stubbornly remains within local communities.

January 2022 saw the commencement of the first full programme of events to cover the whole year. This will include the compulsory three lunch outings – Spring, Summer and pre-Christmas and the annual church service and Strawberry Tea. A series of musical entertainment events will be interspersed with informative presentations from a number of speakers which will include food-tasting; an explanation of the role of Suffolk's Police and Crime Commissioner by the man himself; an explanation of the work of the Street Forge Workshops; an update on the work of the Chernobyl Childrens' Charity and it would be impossible to forget the Harvest Auction event.

Membership of the Club stands at about forty five and the band of volunteers who complete so many different functions, continue to keep activities lively and pertinent.

The lapse due to the pandemic had a profound effect on fund-raising activities but the Club's finances remain on a relatively even keel due, in the main, to the generosity of members.

Finally, I would report that although the Club's activities can be seen as somewhat sedentary, the old grey matter is as strong as ever amongst Evergreen Club members.

Tony Arnold.
Secretary.

