

Newton Stewart Initiative members

Autumn Update 2021

First of all, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Abby Gray and I have just started at NSI as a Project Support Worker. I will be responsible for organising events at Douglas Park and the Winter Fayre, as well as helping with youth work. I'm really looking forward to working with NSI on current and future projects and helping make Newton Stewart an amazing community to be part of.

I've started working on the BMX track at Douglas Park, trying to find a coach to volunteer at the track, creating events to get young people involved, as well as to start a BMX club. We are hoping to start events at the beginning of next year.

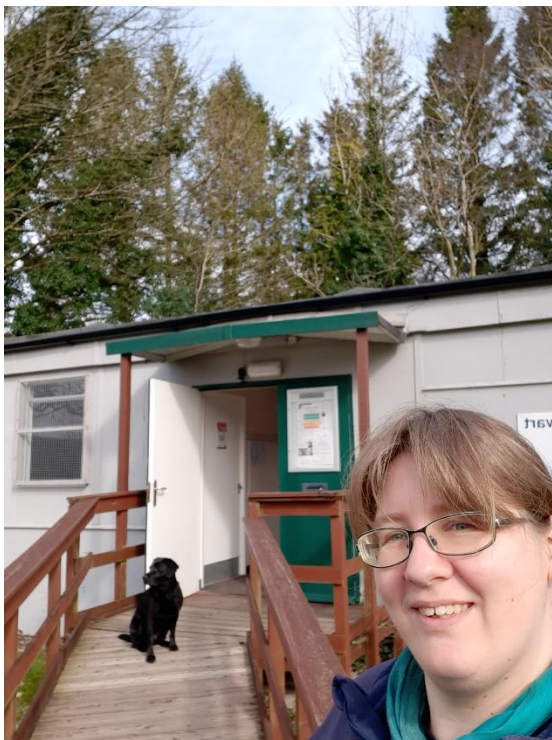
I have also redesigned www.newtonstewart.net to try and make it more user-friendly and an accessible place to find any information you need about Newton Stewart Initiative. Please check it out - any feedback is welcome.

I have started helping with some youth work as well, with the group of young people that are digging the path at Douglas Park. We are hoping to get this finished soon, and then having a Path Opening event to thank the young people that got involved, bringing a BMX coach down from Glasgow to give them a taster session on the track.



Hi, Katrina here, I'm the one responsible for the overall running of our projects at Newton Stewart Initiative. It has been a busy time for us here these last few months with trying to get the Newton Stewart Centre up and running to the standard and busyness as it used to pre-covid as well as working on old and new projects. There are still some spaces available for groups if you need a room or two to hold your group meeting or event. Also, if you have an idea for a new group or need help setting up a group let us know, and we can help!

I also have good news to share that the Newton Stewart Initiative's application to become a SCIO has been accepted by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), this means that the Newton Stewart Initiative has less restrictions in terms of the law as we will not be following Charity Law instead of Company law on many aspects. Being a SCIO also gives our members a greater control over what we do, and we will seek to honour this through engaging more with our members and the wider community about our charity. I hope this is an opportune moment for us to reach out to you as members to tell us what you think Newton Stewart needs. Our contact details are at the bottom of this update.



In terms of projects, I have been busy trying to get funding for the Inclusive play park upgrade and Changing Places toilets that we are working on getting installed in Douglas Park as a Stage 2 to our BMX track project. We have recently been awarded £85,000 from the Holywood Trust and the Hugh Fraser Foundation and have submitted other funding applications to external funders for more funding so we can complete the project. We are looking to start work on the play park development very soon.

We are also working towards the asset transfer of the Penninghame centre which will give us more opportunities to expand our centre hire services as we find that the Newton Stewart Centre is getting a 'wee bit small' for our purposes and for what people are wanting. We would love your feedback on anything specific you think the Penninghame Centre should have.

In April 2020 we started a youth project in partnership with Dumfries & Galloway Youth Team with generous funding from the Holywood Trust for young people to get involved in building a path in

Douglas Park and also learn more about Climate Change. We have had 18 young people involved in the project, which has involved digging the path out, edging it, filling it with gravel and tamping it out. Not a job for the faint of heart! The project is about to come to an end, and we are looking forward to our grand opening of the path and will keep everyone informed of the dates for this.



In terms of further youth work we are starting a lunch club at the Douglas Ewart on a Thursday and a Friday and are looking into more detached youth work or group/project youth work in partnership with other organisations. If you work in an organisation who is involved in youth work or is considering getting involved in youth work, let us know.

The Newton Stewart Initiative have played a pivotal part in getting a Town regeneration group up and running, with representatives from the Cree Valley Community Council, Cree Valley Area Development Trust, Galloway & Southern Ayrshire Biosphere and the Women of Minnigaff & Newton Stewart (WOMANS) group. The group are looking at what projects can be done to regenerate and enhance the town centre of Newton Stewart as well as surrounding area to make it more attractive and interesting to the local community and visitors. If you are a group interested in being part of this project, contact us on the details below.

The Community shop at Dashwood Square is doing very well and we are very grateful for the time our volunteers do in the shop, for donations given and of course to the people who stop by and visit. We could not do it without you! We are currently looking for some more volunteers for the shop who are interested in helping out once or twice a week with general shop duties. We can guarantee no day being the same and some great company! If you are interested in volunteering contact Abby on the contact details below.

The Community Shop is open every day apart from Sunday between 10am and 4pm. We are still taking donations but cannot accept any furniture due to our lack of storage space.

To contact us email info@newtonstewartinitiative.net or phone 01671 401449/07757 684938