

Minutes of the
WESTMILL ANNUAL PARISH (COMMUNITY) MEETING
held on **Wednesday 15 MAY 2024**
at **7pm** in **Westmill Village Hall**

Present: Cllrs Jim Beaven, Steve Cowler, Sue Debono, Anne Downes, Bernadette King, Tom McMullen (Chairman)

In attendance: Sarah Kubica (Parish Clerk), County Cllr Jeff Jones
6 members of the public

24/1 APOLOGIES

To receive and accept apologies for absence

District Cllr Aubrey Holt, Andrew Figgis - East Herts representative

24/2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

To approve the [Minutes of the Westmill Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 17 May 2023](#) as an accurate record of proceedings

The Minutes were signed as a true and accurate record of proceedings

24/3 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

To receive the Westmill annual report

Cllr McMullen welcomed everyone to the meeting and was pleased to see representatives from village groups. He then set out, in general terms, the work of the parish council over the past year. There had been 4 formal parish council meetings. The Council is complete, with 6 councilors, and is supported by Sarah Kubica as the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. Sarah is the sole employee and remains a great asset. She is also assisting other parish councils, which gives WPC the opportunity to learn from the workings and experiences of other parishes. Much of the council's role is to consider planning applications and this has continued throughout the year, including significant time spent in relation to the retrospective Cherry Green Lane application which was eventually approved by E.H.D.C. Development Management Committee in [February] 2024. Work has continued to address the concerns of residents in relation to speeding cars and Cllr McMullen thanked Jeff Jones, for his assistance with Highways, and the councilors generally for their involvement with road signage improvements. Residents continue to be concerned about the risk of accidents on the A10's north junction and while discussions continue with Highways temporary measures to improve the visibility of the junction have been taken. The council continue to report road maintenance to Highways and chase up where appropriate. WPC continue to be responsible for the village green, pump and housing, lime trees, village defibrillator and the old phone box. Low level fly-tipping continues to be an issue in areas surrounding the village and Sam Wood of E.H.D.C has proven to be particularly helpful

24/4 REPORT FROM EAST HERTS RURAL NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM

To receive a report- no police present

Clerk shared an update from the police of one recorded crime in April (theft of number plates). WPC has been advised of increased car crime, both locally and nationally, and has been asked to pass on advice to parishioners to keep vehicles locked and free of valuable items and to report the make, model and registration of suspicious or nuisance vehicles

24/5 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

To receive information on the [UKSPE](#)

Applications for projects providing a benefit to the community are invited and grants must be spent by March 2025, an amount of matched funding must be present, this can take the form of finance or be less tangible such as local business, labour or volunteers' time for example.

Applications must meet a criteria and specify the outcomes they wish to achieve

24/6 ANNUAL REPORTS

Reports from Westmill Groups, Clubs or Societies:

Buntingford Festival Choir, Jan James

BFC is a free-to-join amateur choir with members from Westmill, Buntingford and the surrounding villages. Membership requires the ability to read music at a basic level, sing in tune and hold a musical line in harmony with others allowing the choir to sing more challenging, unaccompanied choral music. After successful performances in Westmill and Buntingford, the next event is in August at St Mary's Church, Westmill with a raffle from which a portion will be donated to the church. New members are warmly welcomed, contact sing@buntingfordfestivalchoir.org

Friends of Westmill Church, Jan James

A massive thank you to the village in helping to raise £45k in 3 years and over the last ten years the village lottery has contributed £13k to the church

St Mary the Virgin - Colin Wilson, Treasurer

Improvements to the church are planned to enhance the space for community use providing toilet facilities, tea-point and a moveable screen across the Lady Chapel to provide a flexible space to encourage use as a community facility. The church now has a postbox and plans for Wi-Fi in the near future

T&M Greg Trust - Bernadette King, Trustee

Village Hall (VH) Roof project - Continuing research into grants available for the renovation of the building is ongoing. The roof works will now not take place this year, due to planning and conservation permissions required. We are also required to have an Ecology survey carried out to ensure there are no bats housing in the present roof.

VH usage - Nursery continues to use the Hall. Used by other groups, eg Aspenden PC, Hamels Residents Association AGM, EH as polling station, some private hire. A new electricity contract with Scottish Power is now in place.

Cottages - The Trust are planning to have external redecoration done to the Almshouses in the summer, along with work on the chimney at No 1.

Playground - Regular risk assessment and grass cutting ongoing.

Jackson's Meadow - The project is completed with fencing, a plaque, informal seating and a bench in place.

Recreation Field - broken fences are to be removed and not replaced as not deemed to be necessary.

Grazing Field - Continues to be used by current user for her horses.

The Trust currently has 6 trustees - who formally meet four times per year. Frequent meetings and discussions are ongoing with our tenants and contractors to ensure all the properties and land owned by the Trust are maintained and kept in good order.

(Westmill FC looking to develop a discrete car park area. Councillor King was invited to update the parish council of any development plans that the Greg Trust or football club were considering)

24/7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Proposed: Wednesday 21 May 2025