

Minutes of Westmill Parish Council Meeting
held on **Wednesday 3 September 2025**
at **7.30pm** in **Westmill Village Hall**

Present: Cllrs Steve Cowler, Bernadette King, Tom McMullen (Chairman)
In attendance: Sarah Kubica (Parish Clerk), County Cllr Terry Smith, The Reverend Sarah Bagnall, 3 members of the public

25.36 APOLOGIES

To receive or accept apologies for absence
Cllr Beaven for reasons that are accepted. **Resolved**, to approve. Agreed unanimously
Cllr Debono for reasons that are accepted. **Resolved**, to approve. Agreed unanimously

25.37 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda
Cllr King for T&M Greg Trust in her capacity as Trustee

25.38 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To allow members of the public and councillors to raise matters of concern
The parish council welcomed The Reverend Sarah Bagnall, (recently ordained and curate to the United Benefice of Aspenden, Buntingford and Westmill), to the meeting. A resident noted that the bin on the village green had not been removed by East Herts Council (EHC) as planned. Cllr Smith advised that EHC is monitoring bin use. A representative from St Mary's confirmed that phase 1 (of 2) building work has started and should be completed before Christmas

25.39 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

To approve the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Westmill Parish Council held on [Thursday 22 May 2025](#) as an accurate record of proceedings
Resolved, that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of proceedings and duly signed. Agreed unanimously

25.40 RURAL POLICING

To receive update from officers if present, or the clerk
The clerk advised that there were no crimes reported for July and August. Residents are urged to report hare coursing and to sign up to the platform which has replaced neighbourhood watch: www.hertsconnected.co.uk

25.41 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

To receive reports from parish, district and county councillors on activities undertaken in the parish
Cllr Smith reported that Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) has salt to help local people grit their own area. Cllr Cowler will check the grit bin at the Rookery and order before the deadline of 31 October if salt is required. Cherry Green Lane earmarked for surface dressing
Cllr McMullen thanked Cllr Smith for setting up a meeting with highways contractor (see 25.44)

25.42 FINANCE

- a) To authorise payments made in accordance with the budget
- b) To note receipts
Resolved, to approve a-b. Agreed unanimously
- c) Bank statement verification
Bank statement verified in May by Cllr Debono **Noted**
- d) To check budget position
Resolved, half yearly position is satisfactory. Agreed unanimously

PAYMENTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

29/05/2025	web hosting	10.80
30/05/2025	grass cut (3)	48.20
30/05/2025	internal audit	60.00
30/05/2025	Dog bin emptying	197.87
30/05/2025	insurance renewal	518.27
11/06/2025	litter pick May	53.35
11/06/2025	grass cut (4)	48.20
11/06/2025	50% share of printer	109.35
26/06/2025	clerk April-June	418.50
01/07/2025	web hosting/ domain	22.80
15/07/2025	litter pick June	53.35
15/07/2025	grass cut (5)	48.20
15/07/2025	100 Parishes subs	10.00
30/07/2025	web hosting	10.80
05/08/2025	grass cut (6)	48.20
05/08/2025	litter pick July	53.35
05/08/2025	lime tree works	975.00
06/08/2025	ICO GDPR fee	47.00

EXPECTED PAYMENTS TO NOVEMBER

3 x 10.80	web hosting
120.00	bench repairs teak slat
4 x 53.35	litter pick
108.00	village hall hire
456.90	clerk salary Jul-Sept
151.20	defibrillator management fee
200.00	donation St Mary's churchyd
30.00	new councillor training
3 x 48.00	grass cut
5.29	A4 paper office expenses
185.00	christmas tree

RECEIPTS SINCE MAY 2025

33.79	bank interest
-------	---------------

25.43 PLANNING

To receive Planning Report and current Planning Applications

Planning Application Ref	Location	Deadline/ Decision Date	Consultation Description	Comments	LPA Appeal Ref
3/25/0355/HH	Little Bury	27/05/25	Amendment to 3/25/0355/HH Replacement conservatory	Granted	N/A
3/25/0699/HH	Lingmell Cherry Green Lane SG9 9LF	23/05/25	Demolition of side workshop. Erection of two storey and part single storey side extension incorporating a rooflight window, first floor and single storey side/rear infill extensions. Alteration to first floor front window, creation of first floor rear juliet balcony and infill garage side window	Granted	N/A
3/25/0916/HH	Holly House Westmill SG9 9LL	31/07/25	Single storey rear extension	Granted	N/A
3/24/0921/FUL	Land East Of Wakeley Farm Cherry Green	20/05/25	Change of use of the land for the siting of 2 glamping cabins. Hard surfacing for parking areas (retrospective)	Appeal allowed	4/00107/ REFUSE

25.44 HIGHWAYS

Cllr Cowler, Cllr Smith and Cllr Blackburn (Aspenden Parish Council) met with the highways contractor (Ringway) on 28 August

a) To receive an update on assessment of 3U20 (unnamed road) between Aspenden and Westmill

Ringway will surface dress this road, sorting out all the pot holes prior to the 'spray and sprinkle' and fixing some of the edge run off damage. This will not involve resurfacing as that would count as road widening which has planning implications (works ref: FM301BR6201000373259). Roadworks will start after the S278 works are completed. Drainage at the bottom of the hill after Rifford Manor heading towards Aspenden was discussed. For immediate action, contact the land owner adjacent to where the flooding occurs and work with them to dig a runoff into the drainage ditch which runs quite close to the road. Cllr Blackburn will make contact

b) To receive an update on S278 Works Aspenden Road SG9 9JS

Notice is required 2 weeks before work commences. The current understanding is that works will take 6-8 weeks. The road will be closed for one week overnight between 6.30pm and 5am with the subsequent diversion through Westmill. The rest of the works will be traffic light controlled during the day and no road closure. During the Aspenden works Ringway will monitor the 3U20 for any additional damage that might occur

c) Cherry Green footpaths and signs, reported faults

Three faults still open for missing signs or rights of way issues at Cherry Green, forward details to Cllr Smith, contact info for Rights of Way officer noted

d) To receive reports of near-misses or accidents

Residents are encouraged to send details to clerk@westmillpc.org.uk

e) To request measures to improve A10 safety

Cllr Cowler suggested VAS (vehicle activated signs) and SIDs (Speed Indicator Devices). Cllr Smith to advise of the costs and process for HCC to install or process to privately install

25.45 VILLAGE NAME SIGNS

a) To receive an update on village name sign funded by events committee

T&M Greg Trust hold the funds from the wound-up events committee and plans for a decorative sign placed at the village entrance near Westmillbury are being considered by Cllr Beaven and a parishioner representative. Cllr King was keen to share that additional monies from the events committee are available to any resident planning an event for the benefit of the community

b) To consider traditional directional sign to replace those on the village green

Three quotes requested, two received. Clerk to obtain confirmation of the sign post construction and cost for an additional footpath sign

25.46 COMMUNITY WIFI

To respond to social media query regarding the possibility of community WiFi

This was briefly discussed and as the parish council does not own any buildings and community WiFi is commonly a hotspot within a community building, this may be something the church could consider when it installs WiFi

25.47 FREE GOV.UK DOMAIN

To consider signing up to Parish Online for a free gov.uk domain name and one email mailbox for the clerk

Resolved, clerk to sign up if there is still availability. Agreed unanimously

25.48 RISK ASSESSMENT

To receive an updated risk assessment

Cllr Debono completed the risk assessment and has replaced the drain cover under the village pump. Works to the lime tree on the village green completed. Bench condition noted for repairs. Cllr Beaven to obtain replacement slats

25.49 T&M GREG TRUST

To receive a report on activities from Cllr King (circulated to councillors)

Village Hall Project - Two grants have now been received to help with the roofing repairs. The villagers have been asked(via WA and FB) for their opinions on the possible use of the Hall for residents. They have also been reminded of its availability in the evenings and weekends

Village Hall - The Nursery continues to use the Hall successfully. Monthly risk assessments are undertaken and repairs seen are attended to. A new senior leader has been appointed enabling the Nursery manager more time for administration work.

Cottages - Trustees agreed to some repair and renovations to be carried out at Number 1 cottage

Playground - Monthly risk assessments continue. Two picnic benches have been installed, replacing the old table. There are some minor repair works to be completed. A leaning tree was removed for safety reasons

Allotments - All allotments have been inspected and unsatisfactory plot licensees have been contacted

Jackson's Meadow - The grass continues to be mowed and is now in good condition

Grazing field - The tenant has agreed to remove the ragwort and then the grass will be topped. The field continues to be rented for grazing

Recreation Field - WFC continue to maintain grass cutting of the pitch. WFC main team will no longer play on it as they have made such good progress up the leagues and require a more suitable pitch, they will move to the Standon pitch in September. Sunday matches and training will continue in the village. Trustees are grateful to The Sword for allowing parking on their site on Sundays

25.50 CO-OPTION OF PARISH COUNCILLOR

To co-opt a parish councillor to fill the current vacancy

Cllr King advised that she is stepping down from the role and Cllr McMullen thanked her for her valuable contribution as councillor since May 2020. Cllr McMullen will be contacting two possible candidates for co-option before the next meeting and is looking at skills to balance the team

25.51 CLERK'S REPORT

Items for information only

12 September reminder HAPTC/HCC meeting 1pm, clerk attending

25.52 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Proposed: 26 November 2025, 11 February, 13 May, 2 September 2026 and agreed unanimously to move the start time if necessary to suit incoming councillors

The meeting closed at 8.30pm. The chairman thanked everyone for their contribution