

# WESTHORPE

## PARISH COUNCIL



Clerk to the Council  
Street Farm, Westhorpe  
Tel: 07926 223042

Minutes of the Westhorpe Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 8 May 2018 in the Village Hall.

In attendance:

Mr D Barker (Chairman), Mrs H. Wilkinson, Mr. R. Lambert, Mr S. Christian

Present:

Camilla Kennedy (Clerk)

Jane Storey, Suffolk Country Councillor

### Public participation

There were 12 members of the public present.

### Visiting speakers.

Sally Connick, of the Safer Neighbours Scheme.

#### 18.1 Apologies for Absence

These were received from Cllr. Gladders, Cllr. Caley and Cllr. Cotgrove

#### 18.2 Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 2 May 2017

These were approved at the 4 July 2017 Parish Council meeting.

#### 18.3 Annual report of the Parish Council

Report was given by the Chairman, a copy is attached herewith.

#### 18.4 Annual Reviews/Reports

- a) Suffolk County Councillor was in attendance and gave her report, a copy is attached herewith.
- b) Mid Suffolk District Councillor was not in attendance.
- c) Westhorpe Trust report was read by the Chairman, a copy is attached herewith.
- d) The Chairman of the Village Hall Committee gave her report, a copy is attached herewith.

#### 18.5 Visiting Speaker – Sally Connick, Safer Neighbours Scheme

The Safer Neighbours Scheme is set up from lottery funding, with a five year commitment. It aims to tackle loneliness and isolation across Suffolk. It is designed as a support network that builds on the kind acts that are already happening, linking people with things that are going on in their community. It is not an emergency or care service, it is a team of volunteers with a mobile telephone offering help for low level tasks that some members of the community feel unable to undertake, such as shopping, heavy lifting, changing light bulbs or batteries. It costs approximately £400 to £600 to set up, requires a committee and a team of 20 to 30 committed volunteers. Ongoing running costs (for example, public liability insurance, DBS checks and phone costs) are approximately £150 per annum.

There are presently schemes in Bacton, Cotton and Wyverstone, and when one resident highlighted that Bacton hadn't wanted him as a volunteer on their scheme as he didn't live in Bacton, it was suggested that if more volunteers were able to commit then an existing scheme would be more likely to amend their constitution.

# WESTHORPE

## PARISH COUNCIL



Clerk to the Council  
Street Farm, Westhorpe  
Tel: 07926 223042

Another resident asked how many vulnerable people there were in Westhorpe that aren't already being looked after in this way by the community. Councillors were not sure that there were, but Sally highlighted that there might be people who didn't feel comfortable asking individuals for assistance, where the structure and stability of a scheme in place might give them an opportunity to ask for assistance.

Cllr. Wilkinson highlighted that there are already many acts of kindness going unrecognised in the village.

Cllr. Christian pointed out that many are already on committees and the same individuals run the risk of being overburdened.

It was asked if this could be raised at the next meeting.

### 18.6 Open Forum

#### a) Broadband

There have been issues with UK Power Networks ("UKPN") refusing to run a trench over the village green due to its protected status. Some residents queried the meaning of "protected", and others the right of the Chairman to title of the land. On the latter point the Chairman stated that his father had purchased a bundle of deeds in 1963, within which was lordship of the manor of Westhorpe, which conveys a claim to the verges.

Regarding the former point, it was ascertained that whilst not specifically protected, the village green is designated as a county wildlife site by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust and this was enough for UKPN to call it protected and refuse to dig. The Chairman said he would take this up again with UKPN and the Open Reach contact he has. When asked by residents to give a timescale, the Chairman was reluctant to do so as the program was already almost two months behind schedule.

#### b) Bus Routes 456 and 459

There was much concern amongst residents about the cancellation of these two bus routes.

The 456 takes school children to Hartismere High School and Cllr. Storey was able to confirm that from 4 June the EE313 bus route would be amended to accommodate Finningham, Westhorpe and Bacton.

Cllr. Storey was confident that the concerns regarding safety and timeliness would be addressed as this new service is not operated by Galloways. Cllr. Storey also confirmed that this service was not temporary and would continue as a permanent service.

The 459 route into Stowmarket is used by some residents for their commute to work. A new proposed timetable listed the last bus leaving Stowmarket at 16:45, which for the 8 regular users from Finningham and Westhorpe, departs before they finish their working day. Cllr. Storey agreed that the last bus needed to be moved to 18:00 and said this change would be likely as the service is sponsored by Suffolk County Council. She will report back.

# WESTHORPE

## PARISH COUNCIL



Clerk to the Council  
Street Farm, Westhorpe  
Tel: 07926 223042

There was mention of a lady that uses the bus on a weekly basis to get from Bury St Edmunds to a relative in Westhorpe Hall. The Chairman agreed to pass the details of this specific situation to Cllr. Storey as she might be in a position to give details of community transfers.

c) Pot holes

Whilst Suffolk County Council are working to repair pot holes in all roads, on unclassified roads (as in Westhorpe) they aim to repair pot holes within 14 weeks of them being reported. It became apparent that only some of the pot holes in the village had been reported and it was concluded that for efficiency the Parish Council would report potholes, if individual residents were not in a position to use the Suffolk County Council online reporting tool.

d) Lottery Funding for the Church Bells

The subject of the process of obtaining lottery funding for restoration of the church bells was raised in the Parish Council meeting. Whilst it was agreed that this wasn't a Parish Council matter, Cllr Christian was able to briefly address the matter. The bells themselves are on a very long list of items for repair in the church, and are by far the most costly. The additional structural work that would be required to support the bells make it a likely costs of approximately £80,000.

e) Dog waste bins

One resident requested information on the criteria used by the Parish Council to select the locations of the dog waste bins. Her concern is that it is situated next to a Grade 1 listed telephone box and ruins the esthetics and symmetry of the village.

The Councillors indicated that it is the convergence of two footpaths (north and south) with the road (east and west). It couldn't be situated in the Churchyard without the Consistory Court of the Church of England's permission, which could be applied for at a cost of £250, which would be retained in the likely event that they decided against granting permission.

The Chairman confirmed that the Council had communicated with the residents of Town Yard and other adjoining properties. The location of the Town Yard bins on refuse collection days, meant that the dog waste bin had to be moved further west along the road, towards the telephone box.

The resident raising her concern with the location of the bin indicated three viable alternatives for the location of the dog bin, namely Kells House footpath, Westhorpe Hall footpath, and the footpath opposite The Crescent. She wished it to be noted that she was registering her objection to the present location of the bin.

One other resident, who stated that he didn't know anything about this matter, wished to register that he thought the Parish Council had made a grave mistake.

# WESTHORPE

PARISH COUNCIL



Clerk to the Council  
Street Farm, Westhorpe  
Tel: 07926 223042

One dog walking resident highlighted that for many, Kells House was too far out the village walking "loop" to be a viable alternative. Another resident proposed moving the bin to Kells House footpath for a trial period to see how much it was utilised.

One resident suggested painting the bin a different colour and the Clerk will confirm with MSDC that this would be acceptable to them.

This matter will be raised at the next meeting.

f) Speeding signs

The matter of speed warning signs was briefly raised, but following the research in the latter part of 2017 undertaken by the Clerk, the Chairman was able to confirm that the costs of these signs were hugely prohibitive, in the region of £3,500, inclusive of VAT.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 21:40.

Camilla Kennedy  
Clerk to Westhorpe Parish Council.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. E. Foster'.

10/7/2018

①

Annual Parish Meeting 8.5.2018.

### Chairman's Report

Thank Camilla Kennedy taken over as clerk a year ago, great to work with very efficient big thank you.

Thank Steve Caley - Vice chairman and all the councillors for support and guidance.

New village hall opened March 2017 full year of meetings - publicly Saturdays LEADT put forward for an award!

Several issues during year:-

- (1) Bacton Middle School site planning issues nothing decided but a degree of common sense prevailed including moving primary school to this site.
- (2) Dog waste bins pressure from residents due to dog fouling in the main area of church also roadside verges. Westhope Trust agreed to meet the cost. Met with several local residents at the church to discuss best site agreed near old Phase Box Working party put 2x Dog waste bins. Cost £207.48 p. + post. Post mix
- (3) Street signs discussion continues (1 to replace all 4 2x Church Road 1x The Hub 1x The Crescent. Trying to get H.S.D.C. to pay however Roy Barber has donated £600 from his Locality Fund now all spent.
- (4) New Parish Council Noticeboard well almost new John Fomer repaired the old notice board exceptional job paid him £100 toward his expenses erected Saturday morning outside Village hall



(2)

- (5) Roy's Locality money helped with purchase of a lectum for village hall cost £148. Actually came damaged and claimed a replacement, did not want the damaged one back so church has a lectum as well.
- (6) Church Alarm System installed 2 lead thefts.
- (7) Wooden Westhore Signs cleaned and painted
- (8) Community Emergency Plan signed off last July now on website
- (9) November Consultation N.S.D.C. District Plan did not support the extent of the suggested sites see note 17.39 minutes.
- (10) Roy reported the N.S.D.C. Badwell Ash Ward will be split under Boundary Commission changes. Westhore, Wyvestone and Finchesham go with Bacton and Cotton felt best way forward. Roy will stand down in a year time after 16 years.
- (11) Litter Pick March 29<sup>th</sup>. assorted litter issues during year.
- (12) Bus Problems. School bus service Hextonmore School and bus service to Stowmarket being reduced.
- (13) Broadband Ugh Saga of Improved Broadband First asked by Morrison's the contractor of a cabinet could be sited on the Ullayre green I pointed out it was a County Wildlife Site and registered green. Indicated preferred site, signed a wayleave to allow electric supply down post across road. Everything installed but U.K. Power Networks refused to connect the cabinet to the pole some 30 yards away.

③ Stunned is an understatement involved our H.P. and top man at Openreach but U.K. Power networks refuse to connect. I told the man at U.K. Power Networks he was mad!

Morrison's had not been aware of U.K. Power Networks taking this stance.

So now we have to dig a trench for the broadband connecting cable from the corner along village green under drive to Westhyme Hall to opposite Rose Cottage where a small green feeder box will be situated.

Totally frustrated out of my head as some one who sits in front of my computer watching the speed go from slow to nil. Told Openreach the saga is like a sketch from Monty Python.

Apparently you go on Openreach website says we have high speed broadband.

I get people raising me up offering high speed broadband - resist blowing my gasket!

Discussed speed camera £3,400 cost!

Westhorpe Village Hall Committee

**Report for the Annual Parish Meeting May 8<sup>th</sup> 2018**

At the time of the last annual parish meeting, the new village hall had been open for a little over five weeks. It was already being used for activities which had taken place in the old hall such as yoga, gardening club, carpet bowls and film night. Soon afterwards new, regular activities began and continue to develop.

We now have a thriving art club, line dancing classes for adults, children's dancing classes, craft club, IT classes, keep fit and pilates. A Mother and Toddler group has operated for a while. Suffolk Rural Coffee Caravan makes regular visits and provides a wealth of information about support services.

We have had a number of very successful one off events. Examples include talks on local wildlife, local dialect, a talk by Terry Waite, one by Bob Flowerdew, concerts by local groups, a Big Lunch, a canapé evening, a conference and a training day for reflexologists, Friends and Neighbours meetings, business meetings, coffee mornings, a New Year's Eve party, other parties and celebrations.

We have consolidated our link with Finningham and each village has a representative on the other's village hall or social committee. We advertise our events in the local Parish magazines and people from several villages in the area come to our clubs and events.

Anticipating a request from the Big Lottery for a detailed progress report on the project one year after opening, a sub committee designed and circulated an evaluation questionnaire in January this year. We had 80 responses and collected feedback at village events and activities as well as from the visitors book.

From the start of the project our organisational aim has been 'To build a thriving self-supporting community to reduce the impact of social and rural isolation in Westhorpe and surrounding villages'.

This aim gave rise to three objectives:

- To facilitate the provision of a range of social groups and events relevant to the different needs and age range of the local community.
- To enable residents to organise community activities according to local need and interest e.g. toddler groups.
- To provide a central information point.

These objectives gave rise to nine targets. We have more than met these in eight cases. The last one is impossible to meet because we simply do not have the number of children and young people in the village at the moment to allow us to do so.

All this is a bit dry. Comments from the feedback like-

'The village has come alive after many years'

'The village hall is the BEST thing which has happened to Westhorpe'

'This is a perfect village hall and has made a great deal of difference to the community'

'It is a true community hub'

'I have lived in the village for 46 years and only got to know people here when the new hall was built . Now I am part of village life'

- give a more human flavour.

All this has been possible because of the exceptional quality of the village hall, recognised in last Saturday's East Anglian Daily Times, the skills, effort and team work of the members of the management committee and the enthusiastic participation of the village residents, plus some from other villages.

Draft accounts on the running of the village hall for the financial year ending March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018 show that our income is very nearly equal to our expenditure. However, we have had a publicity leaflet designed and continue to seek ways to increase the income to make the future of the village hall secure.

Sue Hull, Chairman.



# THE WESTHORPE TRUST

## REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – MAY 2018

Most of the Trust's income derives from its investments. Following the advice of its independent financial adviser and the objectives laid down in the Investment Policy Statement the Trust has had a satisfactory year.

During the past twelve months nearly £7,500 has been distributed to residents covering personal grants, assistance with heating costs, academic and education, family and transport grants, and the provision of 2 dog poo bins

There is information about the history of the Trust and how it works on the Westhorpe Village website. There is also information about how to apply for grants, a downloadable application form and information about how to contact Trustees. The same information is available inside the Village Hall and in the Parish magazine.

The Westhorpe Trust is registered with the Charity Commission, charity number: 263332 and its details and financial overview may be viewed on the website on the Register of Charities: [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk)

All requests for assistance from the Trust are treated with the utmost confidence and may be addressed to me – details below – or any of the Trustees:

Revd Philip Merry [Chairman]  
Mrs Audrey Thomas  
Mrs Rosemary Mees  
Mrs Gilly Christian  
Mr Steve Christian

Claire Barker  
Secretary



# Suffolk County Council Thedwastre North 2018

## 2017/18 News highlights

### **On 4 May 2017, Suffolk Conservatives won the County Council elections with a majority of 29**

I stood for election and have the honour to represent Thedwastre North for another four years. There was a 36.71% turn out, and of the 75 Suffolk County Councillors, 52 are now Conservative Councillors.

We stood on a manifesto of strong financial control. We are always mindful that it's your hard-earned money that pays for the services we provide to the most vulnerable people in Suffolk, from protecting children to helping older people with social care support. After one of the worst winters on record, with a number of extremely damaging frosts, we have begun the permanent repair programme - as we do each year, once our crews have stopped their gritting work. We spend about £15m a year on our roads and we all want to spend more. That's why, as per our manifesto, we are borrowing £21m over the next 4 years to surface dress over 1,000 miles of our 4,000 mile network.

### **More news highlights from 2017/18**

Here is a selection of news items from Suffolk County Council that featured over the last 12 months. For further details on any of these stories, and more, visit <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/>.

### **Suffolk passes 90% fibre broadband milestone as commitment to connect entire county is reiterated**

On 21 July 2017, new figures were published that show that nine out of every 10 homes and businesses in Suffolk now have superfast broadband available. Suffolk County Council and Openreach have signed a new contract to extend coverage to 98% during 2020. Plans are being developed for the remaining 2% to complete the Better Broadband for Suffolk programme.

Around 315,000 properties now have the option of using fibre broadband, an increase of more than 127,000 from when the Better Broadband for Suffolk programme started deployment in 2013. It comes as Suffolk County Council reiterates its commitment to

provide high-speed internet access for all properties in the county – no-one will be left behind.

### **Suffolk County Council's Children's Services continue to improve following Ofsted pilot inspection**

On 6 November 2017, it was announced that the council's Children's Services are now rated 'Good' in all areas. Ofsted have developed a new framework for their future inspections of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS). Earlier this year, Suffolk County Council was asked to be a pilot site for this new inspection framework.

Suffolk County Council's Children's Services were previously judged 'Good' overall at the end of 2015, a grade that only a third of Local Authorities have achieved.

Whilst this was positive, the council recognised that there were still areas for improvement and Ofsted's latest report reflects the action taken to improve in all areas. All areas are now judged to be 'Good'. This puts Suffolk County Council in the top 25% of all Local Authorities.

### **Suffolk County Council's 2018/19 budget proposals published**

On 14 November 2017, proposals to balance Suffolk County Council's budget in 2018/19 were published. These included an option to increase the basic rate of council tax for the first time in seven years and a range of savings plans.

All local authorities across the country continue to face significant challenges to meet frontline service requirements in a climate where there is less money and resource available. Once again, the council has carefully considered financial forecasts and projected demand to ensure the most vulnerable people in society continue to receive the highest level of support possible in the future.

The council also continues to develop new and innovative ways to deliver services and make further savings. This includes using digital technology to improve efficiency and ensuring health and social care services working better together to improve access for the people that need help. These programmes will support the authority as it seeks to make savings of £56 million by 2021.

### **Suffolk is chosen as one of only 10 pilot areas to retain 100% of business rates**

On 20 December 2017, the amount of money allocated to each Local Authority in England for the next financial year was announced by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javid.

As part of the announcement, Suffolk County Council was named as one of the pilot areas for a new Government scheme to retain 100% of business rates from Council Tax in 2018/19. In future, Business Rates will be an even greater income stream for all local authorities.

### **Additional £21 million to resurface and repair Suffolk's roads**

On 15 January 2018, Suffolk County Council announced new plans to invest an additional £21 million in resurfacing and repairing the county's roads in the next three years.

The plans will see 1,000 miles of roads in Suffolk resurfaced by March 2021, a quarter of all the roads that Suffolk County Council is responsible for. This is a commitment made in the council's Our Priorities report published in 2017.

This investment will improve the quality of roads, reduce the number of potholes and enhance the experience of Suffolk's road users. It also makes sound financial sense as preventing deterioration will avoid the need to spend more money on reactive maintenance over the same period and in future years. Over 227 miles of Suffolk roads were surface dressed or machined surfaced during the summer of 2017.

The funding will boost Suffolk Highways' road maintenance and improvement spending in 2018/19 alone by 21% - £40 million in total. The extra money will be allocated to roads and infrastructure where there is the greatest need. These works will be planned carefully to make the most of the warmer summer weather when surface dressing needs to be done and conditions are the best for machine surfacing. This work will be fully coordinated to reduce the impact on road users.

**A reminder:** You can access up-to-date information about roadworks, road and street closures and how they affect you, as well as information about road improvements projects in Suffolk. The interactive map can be found at [www.roadworks.org](http://www.roadworks.org)

## Revised GCSE and A Level results reflect progress of Suffolk students

The Department for Education published revised GCSE and A Level results on 25 January 2018.

The validated figures confirm that 3% more students in Suffolk are achieving the expected standards in English and Maths at GCSE compared with last year. 63.1% of students in the county are achieving the expected standard in English and Maths and Suffolk has closed the gap to national to less than 1%. Suffolk has also risen by 26 places in national league tables for this measure, to 83rd out of 151 authorities. The county has risen 5 places in national rankings for the percentage of students achieving the English Baccalaureate.

The Revised A Level figures confirm that Suffolk pupils have once again performed well with the General Applied entry and Tech Level entries remaining above the national average figures.

Since the launch of the council's Raising the Bar programme in 2012, Suffolk has risen 59 places in national rankings for GCSE attainment in English and Maths. 87% of schools in Suffolk are judged by Ofsted to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.

## New Chief Executive for Suffolk County Council

In March 2018, Nicola Beach was appointed as Suffolk County Council's new Chief Executive.

Nicola, who is currently Executive Director of Infrastructure and Environment at Essex County Council, will take up her new role this summer. She was appointed due to the wealth of experience she has in local government, having been Chief Executive at Braintree District

Council before joining Essex County Council, and having held various other roles in authorities across the East of England.

## Locality Budget 2017/18

Commitments Carried forward from previous year £2,452.00

Budget allocated for 2017/2018 £8,000.00

Total available budget for 2017/2018 £10,452.

22/07/2015 Norton Parish Council Refurbishment of the War Memorial (Committed 2015-16)  
£2,000.00

20/12/2016 Bury St Edmunds Past & Present Society. Digitisation of glass photo images of villages in the division by Spanton & Jarman (Committed 2016-17) £250.00

22/03/2017 Woolpit Parish Council Refurbishment of the War Memorial (Committed 2016-17)  
£202.00

16/10/2017 Great Ashfield Parish Council Mini-SID (speed indicator device) £1,200.00

16/10/2017 Great Ashfield Lord Thurlow Hall New windows for the Lord Thurlow Hall £1,200.00

Commitments 25/10/2017 Woolpit Cricket Club Broadband installation charges £2,874.00

Total allocated £7,726.00

Remaining balance 21/03/2018 £2,726.00

These figures can be checked, along with other information, on the Suffolk County Council website - <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/council-and-democracy/councillors-and-elected-representatives/locality/Mid-Suffolk-Locality-Budget.pdf>