

Westbourne Parish Council Newsletter

| Winter 2023



Westbourne
Parish Council

www.westbourne-pc.gov.uk



Success in reducing speed on Monk's Hill

The speed limit on Monk's Hill outside the recreation ground is to be reduced from 60mph to 30mph, as agreed by West Sussex County Council. This will see much safer road conditions for those using the recreation ground, children's play area and car park.

Cllr Nigel Ricketts said: "We've been asking the County Council to reduce the speed limit at the top of Monk's Hill for years. It's never made sense to have a 60mph limit outside the Common and to us it was an accident waiting to happen. Thankfully, a recent change to the County's speed policy meant our latest application was successful and we're now in discussion to get it reduced as soon as possible. We'd like to thank the 400 residents who signed our petition which showed local support for the change."

The 30mph zone will be extended around 300m north of its current location to give drivers plenty of notice to reduce their speed before reaching the Common. The Parish Council has also agreed to buy a new speed indicator device (SID) to be located on a lamppost mid-way down Monk's Hill to remind drivers of the speed limit and to monitor the speed of passing traffic.

Please get in touch if you'd like to help with speeding issues in the village, either by helping us with the SIDs or joining our community speedwatch group. Find out more at www.westbourne-pc.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Plan review

Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan has been and still is a very important document. Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided. Neighbourhood planning, therefore, provides a powerful set of tools for local people to plan for the types of development to meet their community's needs.

Westbourne's Neighbourhood Plan, available at www.westbourne-pc.gov.uk, came into force in September 2021 and, since then, has been cited by both the Parish and District Councils in the context of numerous planning applications and appeals.

However, the Plan is not valid for ever and, in order for it to carry the weight it needs when responding to planning applications, it does need to be reviewed. Without an up-to-date Plan, Westbourne will have difficulty resisting undesirable development.

It is hoped to begin this process in the relatively near future **but this is only possible with your help!** Whilst the Parish Council will provide all the help and guidance it can, we again need to set up a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. If you are interested, please let us know.



Budget setting

The Parish Council is starting to plan its budget for 2024/25 and is keen to hear from residents about any new initiatives or projects that you'd like to see delivered in the Parish. This will be a key item of discussion at Parish Council meetings until the end of January when we inform Chichester District Council of our Precept requirement. Please come along to meetings if you'd like to hear or be involved in the discussion.

Highways improvements in Westbourne

Earlier this year, we consulted with residents on proposed highways improvements to Whitechimney Row and the one-way section of The Square in Westbourne. We received many responses from residents which were discussed by the Council in March, and are available in full at www.westbourne-pc.gov.uk

Due to the strength of the feedback received, councillors held a meeting with a senior highways officer in September who came to visit Westbourne and discuss potential solutions.

It was discussed that many HGVs, apart from those delivering to local businesses, travel through Westbourne as a result of their Sat Nav systems. It is virtually impossible to ban HGVs from using the highway but it may be possible to install 'road not suitable' signs at the entrances to the village to discourage through traffic. However, in order to do this, we need to provide the County Council with video and photo evidence. We have already gathered some but should you have any yourself, please email them to clerk@westbourne-pc.gov.uk

Discussions also took place regarding the narrow section of Whitechimney Row and the one-way section of The Square. The issues here are, however, more challenging, as illustrated by the very diverse solutions put forward by residents in the recent consultation. The Parish Council has submitted a community highways scheme application to the County Council for the one-way section of The Square to request that the pavement is widened to accommodate a number of bollards to prevent parking on the pavement, vehicles blocking the road and damage to properties. There is no decision as yet for both roads but discussions continue.

Aldsworth, especially Aldsworth Bridge, has been an accident black spot for years and the hope is that, in addition to the speed limit being reduced from 40mph to 30mph, village gateways and horse rider warning signs will soon be installed.

Speed on the periphery of Westbourne is also an issue and plans are afoot to reduce the speed limit on Old Farm Lane and Foxbury Lane to 40mph, and to extend the 20mph speed limit to the whole of Whitechimney Row.

As you can see, working with the County Council, we are doing all we can to address highway issues in the Parish. However, there are a number of financial and strategic constraints which mean that we can't always get what we want when we want it.

Memorial safety inspection at St John the Baptist Church

The Parish Council is responsible for the closed churchyard in Westbourne. We are committed to ensuring the safety of anyone visiting or working in the closed churchyard and will make certain that all reasonably practicable measures are taken to ensure this, including regular memorial surveys and repairs.

In the next few months, a safety inspection of all the memorials will be made by a specialist contractor. We will be working closely with the Church, including to identify the holders of the exclusive right of burial for each grave. As the churchyard was closed in 1859, it is possible that records may no longer be available. The exact dates for the inspection will be published on our website and in the noticeboards in The Square.

Each memorial will be given a visual check to assess its condition followed by a push test to check its stability. The results of the test will be logged and recorded. A warning notice will be attached to any memorial if it is found to be in an unsafe condition and we will arrange for it to be repaired by a qualified, registered monumental mason. It may be necessary to make memorials temporarily safe if it is considered to be high risk. In this case, the memorial would be laid flat with a warning notice until it was repaired.

We will make every attempt to contact the owners of the exclusive rights of burial. If we have not contacted you, it may be because we do not have your current address. Please contact us at clerk@westbourne-pc.gov.uk or **0775 654483** to check or update your contact details.



New parish councillors

We'd like to welcome Cllr Laura Dyke Veltom who was elected to the Parish Council in May and Cllr Neil Attewell who was co-opted by the Parish Council in June. Cllr Dyke Veltom lives near Aldsworth and aims to improve road and traffic conditions on Emsworth Common Road during her term of office. Cllr Attewell lives in Emsworth and brings a wealth of community experience from his role running The Meeting Place.



The Parish Council is looking for one more parish councillor to join to fill its remaining vacancy. We'd really like to have a full council and be in a position to deliver the very best for the Parish and to help share the workload – with more people, we'll be able to achieve more for the Parish.

More information about being a parish councillor is available at www.westbourne-pc.gov.uk. We welcome applications from all backgrounds, no experience is required and training is available.

Being a parish councillor is about giving back to the community and making a difference to local people and how local matters are dealt with. It's a rewarding experience and would involve you to work with a small and friendly group of people.

New memorial bench

A new bench has been installed at the Common on Monk's Hill by a resident in memory of her grandad, Alan Jones, who lived in Westbourne when he was a child. Alan lived on Mill Road and went to Westbourne Primary School, and had many great memories of the village. Alan sadly passed away last year. We hope that residents enjoy the new bench which is a lovely contribution to the Common. Please get in touch if you'd like to install a bench in memory of a loved one.



Winter litter picking event

Please join us on Sunday 26 November to help collect litter around the village. We'll be meeting in The Square at 2pm and refreshments will be provided afterwards at 3.30pm at The Meeting Place.

Following the success of the event in April, it was agreed that we would hold another in November. It is being held in partnership with the Final Straw Foundation and Greening Westbourne and aims to make Westbourne an even nicer place to live. Litter picking equipment will be provided.

Find out more information
visit www.westbourne-pc.gov.uk
email clerk@westbourne-pc.gov.uk
call **07775654483**

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