

Minutes



Westbourne

Parish Council

PO Box 143
Emsworth
PO10 9DX

07775654483

clerk@westbourne-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Westbourne Parish which took place at 7pm on Wednesday 24 May 2023 at The Meeting Place, North Street, Westbourne.

In attendance: Cllr Lade Barker, Westbourne Parish Council
Cllr Roy Briscoe, Westbourne Parish Council and Chichester District Council
Cllr Kim Franks, Westbourne Parish Council
Cllr Richard Hitchcock, Westbourne Parish Council
Cllr Nigel Ricketts, Westbourne Parish Council
Cllr Laura Veltom, Westbourne Parish Council
Clare Kennett, Clerk to the Parish Council
49 members of the public
One member of the press

Meeting chaired by Cllr Hitchcock, Chairman of Westbourne Parish Council.

1. Welcome and introduction: Cllr Hitchcock opened the meeting and explained that it was not a Parish Council meeting, but organised by the Parish Council on behalf of the local community. Held annually, it was an opportunity to celebrate the excellent work that was carried out across the Parish and a chance for residents to find out more about what was happening locally and how they could get involved. Owing to Covid, the last two assemblies had been held in the open air on the Rectory Lawn. This year, having been assured that the immediate danger had passed, the meeting was being held at The Meeting Place. It was hoped that a number of village organisations/groups/clubs would be represented, as the event gave them an opportunity to share their activities in the last twelve months and possibly tempt residents to join them!

Cllr Hitchcock welcomed and introduced the guest speaker, Sir Andrew Ross, resident of Westbourne and member of His Majesty's Bodyguard of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms, who would be speaking about the role he played in the Lying in State and Funeral of the late Queen.

2. Guest speaker:

Sir Andrew Ross, a resident of Westbourne and a member of His Majesty's Bodyguard of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms, gave a presentation about the role he played in the Lying in State and Funeral of the late Queen.

The Honourable Corps was formed as the Troop of Gentlemen by King Henry VIII in 1509 to act as a mounted escort, armed with spear and lance, to protect the Sovereign. The Honourable Corps consisted of five Officers and 27 Gentlemen. The senior Officer was the Captain who was currently Baroness Williams of Trafford. It

Minutes

was a political appointment and is now always the Government Chief Whip in the House of Lords. The Gentlemen at Arms are the most senior of the Sovereign's bodyguards and are classed as "the nearest guard" to the monarch.

Sir Andrew gave a fascinating insight into the goings on behind the scenes before the funeral. While Her Majesty was brought from Balmoral to St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh and then being flown down to London, the Gentlemen at Arms had two days to rehearse the Lying in State, at first in a gym at Hyde Park Barracks. They then moved to Westminster Hall (which had been set up for the coffin to arrive) for further rehearsals with the Duke of Norfolk who is always in charge on such State occasions. The vigil lasted for eight days as the funeral would not be held on a Sunday. Sir Andrew's team did 13 out of the 20 vigils, each of which lasted six hours, 20 minutes standing stock still and then 40 minutes resting behind the scenes, taking refreshment, having a nap or having a lady from the gentlemen's outfitters Gieves & Hawkes sewing on buttons and making other repairs to the uniforms. The Corps of Gentlemen at Arms handed over duties in Westminster Hall to the Company of Archers for the final seven vigils as they had to spend the last days rehearsing for the funeral, starting with a procession through the streets of London from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey in the middle of the night, with the eerie sound of horses' hooves echoing through the otherwise quiet city streets.

On the Monday morning half of the Corps were in the Abbey awaiting the arrival of the coffin while the other half were escorting the Queen's coffin through the streets of London as her "nearest guard". At the end of the service the funeral procession went across Horse Guards up the Mall to Hyde Park Corner where the Queen's coffin was transferred to a hearse which took her to her resting place at Windsor Castle. Half of the Corps went to Windsor for that ceremony while the other half had a well-deserved rest!

Cllr Hitchcock thanked Sir Andrew for a very interesting presentation which was enjoyed greatly by all present.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7.40pm for an interval with cheese, wine and light refreshments.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 8.30pm

3. The Annual Report of the Parish Council: Cllr Hitchcock gave an overview of the work of the Parish Council over the last year. He said there were regular reports of the Council's monthly meetings in the Westbourne Magazine, as well as additional articles focusing on aspects of the Council's work. In addition, three times a year, a Parish Council newsletter was delivered to every household in the Parish. Minutes were available on the noticeboard in the Square and on the very comprehensive website, and further information was posted on the Council's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/Westbournepc. Finally, residents were more than welcome to attend live council meetings, which were held at The Meeting Place in North Street at 7.15pm on the second Thursday of the month. There's no excuse for not knowing what's going on!

Cllr Hitchcock explained that the Parish Council had achieved the following in the last year:

Minutes

- Responded to 52 planning applications and, when we have objected, attended the CDC Planning Committee to share our concerns.
- Attended and spoken at three planning appeals, two of which were dismissed (at Cemetery Lane and Foxbury Lane).
- Responded to consultations regarding the Havant Borough Council and Chichester District Council Local Plans.
- Maintained the recreation grounds and children's playgrounds at Monk's Hill and Mill Road.
- Worked together with Westbourne Community Trust, who will be providing the Parish with 12 much needed affordable homes and new children's playground equipment at Mill Road.
- Worked together with our County Councillor in putting together a Traffic Regulation Order to prevent HGVs transiting through the village.
- Had new LED bulbs installed in the Parish's 30 street lights to make them more energy-efficient. Moved to WSCC contract for electricity to cut costs.
- Had heritage streetlights installed in Whitechimney Row.
- Signed the Civility and Respect Pledge.
- Negotiated the Internal audit for all the Council's activities with no comments. Set a Precept for 2023/24
- Contributed to subsidies towards the Bourne Community Bus and the Bourne Heritage Trail.
- Awarded a grant of close to £3k to the Westbourne Community Hall for new flooring.
- Provided financial support for Westbourne History Group events.
- Consulted residents regarding traffic calming measures in Whitechimney Row and part of The Square.
- Held regular meetings with the Neighbourhood Policing Team to ensure that the Parish is provided with the kind of service it needs and deserves.
- Organised the annual Spring Clean Day, which was supported by 25 residents.
- Organised and run a Platinum Jubilee street party and a Jubilee Beacon event in June 2022.
- Organised and run a very successful Big Lunch Party in Church Road to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III. This was a village event and we thank the many people who contributed and without whom the event would not have been possible. Also, five residents helped clean village gateways and fingerpost signs as part of the Big Help Out. Thank you!

CLlr Hitchcock said that he thought residents would all agree that this was a great deal of work for a group of volunteers, several of whom also held down full-time employment. He thanked Cllrs Lade Barker, Roy Briscoe, Kim Franks, Jane Gould, David Mack, Mike Magill and Nigel Ricketts, for all their work in the last 12 months, and welcomed Cllrs Laura Veltom and Nell Attewell to the team. Thanks also went to the two co-opted Planning Committee members Frank Campbell and Kevan Pegley. Last, by no means least, the Parish Council was indebted to our invaluable Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Clare Kennett, for keeping the show on the road!

CLlr Hitchcock said that if anyone would like to help out, either by becoming a councillor or even just joining a committees, to please contact the Parish Clerk for further information (07775 654483 or clerk@westbourne-pc.gov.uk) or have an

Minutes

informal chat with one of the current councillors. Contact details could be found at www.westbourne-pc.gov.uk

4. Report from West Sussex County Council: Cllr Andrew Kerry-Bedell was not able to attend the meeting.

5. Report from Chichester District Council: Cllr Roy Briscoe thanked those that had given him their support at May's local election. He said that it meant a lot to him and he was grateful that he would represent the local community for the next four years. The District Council was mainly responsible for bins and planning. He was pleased that last year they had been able to prevent bin strikes thanks to the officers who had thrashed out a pay deal with those involved. The deal that was agreed upon recognised that finance was tight for everyone and that any increase would put pressure on the Precept, which everyone would have to pay through Council Tax. In terms of planning, it was widely recognised that no one wanted new housing but the government had set an annual target. In Chichester District, housing prices were high whereas wages were low, due to there being many rural workers, and the government's algorithm thought that by delivering more new houses the average house price would be reduced. Cllr Briscoe said that everyone knew this was not the case and they were pressing the government to reduce targets. They had managed to get it down to 575 houses per year, instead of the original target of 650. This had taken five years of evidence gathering to send to the government. Cllr Briscoe had managed to get the target reduced for Westbourne to 30 new houses, instead of 50 new houses. This would be achieved by the 12 new affordable homes that were planned for Mill Road, as well as those on Monk's Hill and Foxbury Lane. Southbourne were taking 1050 new houses and Cllr Briscoe had also managed to reduce this target by around 200. Cllr Briscoe said he was proud to have been involved in setting up a Rural Crime Team, which had been supported by the Police Crime Commissioner. This aimed to tackle poaching, hare coursing, damaging crops, theft of machinery and the dumping of rubbish. Fly tipping was another area that Cllr Briscoe worked on and this involved officers working from Westhampnett to stop carriers and issue penalty notices. Cllr Briscoe said that the District Council's Supporting You team was really excellent and helped those struggling financially. He urged residents to contact the team if they, or anyone they knew, needed help. Cllr Briscoe said that an alternative fuel payment from the government was available for those using tank or bottled gas, oil, wood or solid fuel. Applications could be made at www.gov.uk/apply-alternative-fuel-billsupport-if-not-automatic with a deadline of 31 May.

A member of the audience said there were many dangerous potholes in the village which she had reported to West Sussex County Council and some of them had been repaired. Cllr Briscoe agreed that this was a matter for the County Council and that it was easy to report them on the website at <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/make-an-enquiry-or-report-a-problem-with-a-road-or-pavement/>

A member of the audience said that many vehicles were parking on the pavement and road near Lazy Meadow on North Street which was being renovated. This blocked the pavement for disabled people and those with children walking to school which was dangerous. She had reported the vehicles to the police who had issued fixed penalty notices, and it had stopped the issue for a while, but vehicles were starting to park in inappropriate places again. It was agreed that residents should

Minutes

continue to report the issue to the police. The District Council was limited in what it could do and it was hoped that the renovation works would be completed soon.

6. Reports from local community groups and organisations: The following gave a short presentation on their work over the last year.

1st Westbourne Scouts Group

Roy Briscoe, Chairman of 1st Westbourne Scouts, said that the group had gone from strength to strength, and in his opinion, it was the best scout group in the Chichester area. 90 young people were involved across Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers which had recently been set up. The leaders were fantastic, with Derek and Glynis Chaffer being involved for 45 years, and they gave the children so much opportunity and adventure. Tim Peake was once a member and Derek said scouts had once introduced him to a life away from home but he never thought he would go that far! Roy thanked everyone in the community for their support.

Westbourne Community Hall

Sandra Ellis, Trustee, said that they had recently become registered as a charity and since 2020 they had been working on a programme of improvements to the building. This included a new water heater, boiler, gas pipes and electrics; refurbished toilets and a baby change area; new blinds and stage curtains; new tables and they could seat up to 90; replacement of the external windows; a new carpet and restoration of the two dance floors; low energy LED lights; a fire safety inspection which included a new fire alarm system and emergency lighting and they now met the required safety standards; new paving on the patio; and removal of asbestos which had been costly. The trustees were now in the process of redecorating the interior and funding received from the Parish Council had paid for new flooring which had just been completed. Sandra said they were very grateful for all the help, support and donations that had been received to complete the works. They were planning to replace the roof and install insulation. There were regular bookings throughout the week and it was used at the weekends for parties, weddings and wakes. The hourly rate was £14per hour and they were advertising widely.

Westbourne Community Trust

Frank Campbell, Chair of the Westbourne Community Trust, said it was four years since the Trust was set up and their aim was to build affordable homes for local people to rent, as well as deliver a number of community projects for the Parish. They had 110 members and seven trustees who met every two months. They had developed plans which retained the largest part of the recreation ground which had been transferred to their ownership from the District Council. They had recently secured planning permission and had appointed contractors, with work expected to start from August 2023. They would be replacing all of the play equipment and installing a jogging track that would go around the perimeter. There would be an entrance to the school so that the school children could use the facilities. They were also constructing a small storage building for the Parish Council and Allotment Association to use, and would be providing off road parking for residents on Mill Road. The total cost of the project was expected to be £3.6m and they were securing funding from Homes England, Chichester District Council, the South Downs National Park Authority and the Parish Council. They would be taking out a loan to cover remaining costs which would be financed from rental income. It was necessary for the Trust to become a registered housing provider and this was proving to be a

Minutes

complicated application process. The homes would be very energy efficient with high insulation standards, air source heat pumps, and photo voltaic cells so that they were affordable to manage. A housing survey had shown that there was a need for 45 affordable homes in the Parish and the project contributed towards meeting this need. The homes would be at 80% of the market rent and the tenancy would be controlled by the Trust. A waiting list would be opened and applicants would need to show that they had a local connection to the village.

Westbourne Allotment Association

Steve Arkle, Chairman of the Allotment Association, thanked David Lees who had been chairman for many years and had recently stepped down. Steve said that the allotments had returned to the normal post-pandemic world with people enjoying back breaking work. There were 108 plots and occupancy was at about 98%, with two that had recently become available. The association generated a small income and they were grateful for donations and support. A recent grant from the Open Gardens had enabled them to buy a BBQ to support social functions. The annual show continued to be a success and they were grateful for people's support. It had been going for over a century and always received many visitors.

Westbourne Local History Group

Jim Clarke, Publicity Officer, said that there were currently only four members and they were hoping for more people to join. Nick Rule, as the Chairman, had researched Westbourne right back to the Ice Age which showed that the entire area was under water and Monk's Hill looked like the White Cliffs of Dover. Nigel Peake is the secretary and Roger Wilding was researching local mills and had become an expert on local maps. Jim said he was putting together a record of all the lost shops and businesses of Westbourne and if anyone had any information or photographs, he would be very happy to receive them. They had held a number of open meetings to the public which had been very successful and they would be starting a new programme in the autumn.

Community Speedwatch Group

Kevan Pegley who organises the group said that it was a nationwide programme which is run by the police and relies on local volunteers to monitor the speed of passing vehicles. It was shown to encourage people to stick to the speed limit, as well as reducing noise, cutting air pollution and increasing road safety. Kevan said the group was desperately short of volunteers and it had not met since March 2022. They were looking for volunteers who would prefer to see vehicles travelling within the limits - prefer to see risk to children minimised, prefer to breathe cleaner air, prefer that their parked cars are not so liable to dents and scratches, prefer to be able to enjoy a conversation in the street. The speed of passing vehicles was recorded with a handheld radar gun and the details of any that exceed a certain threshold were passed to Sussex Police who would send a letter to the offending driver. Kevan said it was not taxing work; sessions lasted an hour and were cancelled if it was raining. Residents could volunteer for sessions as often as they liked. More information was available at www.westbourne-pc.gov.uk or by emailing the Parish Council at clerk@westbourne-pc.gov.uk

Women's Institute

Sheena Laing said that their meetings had recently moved to the Westbourne Community Hall which was a fantastic venue and meant that they could

Minutes

accommodate more people to their meetings, meaning there was no longer a waiting list. They'd had a good year and helped out at events such as the Open Gardens and Allotment show, and had very much enjoyed the Street Party in May to celebrate the King's Coronation.

Westbourne Weekend

There was no one to represent the group but Cllr Hitchcock reminded attendees that the duck race was taking place on 24 June and ducks were being sold in the Square most weekends. The Grove on the Grass was taking place on 22 July and tickets were available.

Henry Smith's Charity

Margaret Lashley, Trustee, said that Henry Smith was born in London in 1549 and died at 79. Since 1628, his charity had been helping those living in poverty thanks to his financial acumen and foresight. It was the largest grant making charity in the country with £27m given in 2014. He was the owner of many thousands of acres in London and owner of many properties. His wishes have continued through the centuries to help the sick and elderly and to relieve poverty. Westbourne is included as Henry Smith was a friend of the Earl of Stansted. In those days, Westbourne and Southbourne all came under Westbourne Parish and so the grant is shared between the two parishes now. Margaret says she finds people in the village that are entitled to the grant to help with bills, buy new bedding and pyjamas etc. She asked people to let her know if they knew anyone who needed financial support.

Westbourne Church Restoration Trust

Mary Galloway, trustee, said that the Trust was separate to the activities of the Church. They renovate and repair the important building which is the only Grade One listed building in the village. They financed the repair of the lychgate last year and were working on a number of other projects. They were looking for more trustees to join and Mary said that people didn't need to be worshippers at the Church to join.

Greening Westbourne report – Westbourne APA – May 2023

Richard Hitchcock, Chairman of Greening Westbourne, said they'd had another productive year with attendance at meetings, largely online, generally being good and a fair amount had been achieved. This was spurred on by frequent IPCC reports and concerns from various other sources (e.g. David Attenborough), which, despite presenting a pretty grim picture, suggest that all is not lost! Their focus continued to be Westbourne, although they had done what they could to monitor both the District and County Council's attempts to implement their respective Climate Emergency action plans. The Parish Council, although deciding not to declare a Climate Emergency, had established an Environmental Policy and had incorporated the natural environment into one of its existing committees. Work was ongoing on setting up an informal Natural Environment Liaison Group, which would feed into this committee. The community orchard continued to flourish and had a new neighbour at Hampshire Farm Meadows: the Ems Valley Memorial Arboretum. This would see 250 trees planted in the next four to five years. The Parish Council's tree champions continued to plant trees and FotE were a constant thorn in the side of Portsmouth Water and the Environment Agency. Progress, although it sometimes seemed glacial, was undoubtedly being made, the profile of the River Ems having been raised significantly. They were also making progress on a plastic free community

Minutes

(new soft plastics bin in the Coop) and the Climate Change group availed themselves of every opportunity to attend relevant meetings and lobby where appropriate. We had established contacts with Save our South Coast Alliance (SOSCA) and had participated in demonstrations regarding overdevelopment and poor water quality in Langstone and Chichester Harbours. The wildlife continued to be monitored and, where possible, provided with additional protection - this included the proposed wildlife corridor that ran through the Parish - and they were reaching out to young people in local schools and in the scout group. They held a Home Energy Improvement event in February and had close contact with the Petersfield Climate Action Network, with the aim of encouraging the good people of Westbourne to have their homes surveyed. This would provide them with the kind of information they need to undertake useful retrofit measures. Richard said Greening Westbourne would have a presence at this year's Open Gardens, encouraging people to make their gardens more nature/wildlife friendly. Richard said more needed to be done but it was fair to say that Greening Westbourne was making a difference.

The Ems Valley Memorial Arboretum

Brendan Gibb-Gray, Chairman of the EVMA, was unable to attend so Richard Hitchcock read the report below. Richard said the Ems Valley Memorial Arboretum was a unique community project for Westbourne and Emsworth, set on six acres of public land on Hampshire Farm Meadows. The land has been donated by Havant Borough Council. The project which was just beginning its second year had three main objectives:

- The creation of an arboretum in memory and celebration of departed loved ones.
- To help create a green canopy across the Kingdom.
- To deliver educational opportunities for residents, especially the younger generation.

Richard said they had formed a charitable trust (and hoped soon to be able to register as charity under the terms of the Charity Commission). There were eight trustees from both communities. The project had an immediate five-year plan to plant at least 250 special and beautiful trees. Tim Peake, Patron, planted the first tranche of trees at the end of 2022. They needed financial support from residents, community organisations and businesses, to ensure the success of this unique community project. The website could be viewed at www.evma.org.uk

7. Any local issue that has not already been raised: There were no further matters

8. Date of next meeting: It was agreed to hold the next meeting on Thursday 19 April 2024

Meeting closed at 9.45pm