



# Westbere Parish Council NEWSLETTER February 2023

Welcome to the latest edition of your Westbere Parish Council newsletter. Any comments, suggestions or contributions for consideration in future editions would be most welcome!

## WESTBERE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATES

*Parish Council meetings take place in Westbere Village Hall at 7pm on the third Monday of each month except no meeting in August and December.*

*Meetings are scheduled 20 February, 27 March (delayed by a week), 17 April, 15 May, 19 June, 17 July, (No meeting in August) 18 September, 16 October, and 20 November 2023.*

*And an additional date for the Annual Electors' meeting in March or April is yet to be confirmed.*

## IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ

The parish council has decided to make this the last hard-copy newsletter routinely delivered to all Westbere households.

Following this, in order to save printing and postage costs, we invite residents to view new editions on the parish council's website only.

However, we are also inviting you to **Opt-in** to continue to receive a hard copy edition - but to receive these you **must** contact the Clerk and must opt-in to receive a printed copy.

### Residents email address database

Westbere Parish Council has a database of residents' postal and email addresses to receive this newsletter electronically, and to update you on an adhoc basis on Parish Council business. To join the database email your name, email address and postal address, along with your written consent to hold your details for Council Business *only*, to [clerk@westbereparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@westbereparishcouncil.gov.uk). We would be delighted to add you to our data base and will not share these details with anyone. *Thank you to those of you that have already signed up!*

### Budget and Precept for 2023-2024

Three options for a precept for 2023-2024 were presented at the 21 November 2022 meeting:

OPTION 1 – a precept of £15,030 to match the forecasted budget, a 12% increase on 2022-2023

OPTION 2 – a precept of £14,154, a 5.5% increase on 2022-2023, with some budget items if required/progressed to be met from unrestricted reserves already held

OPTION 3 – a precept of £13,408, a 0% increase on 2022-2023 level, with unrestricted reserves balancing the budget.

All councillors RESOLVED to adopt a budget as set out in the supporting document of £15,030 for 2023-2024 as a forecast of where the parish council plan to spend the money and set a precept of £13,408 (OPTION 3) for 2023-2024.

### A thank you from the village hall committee

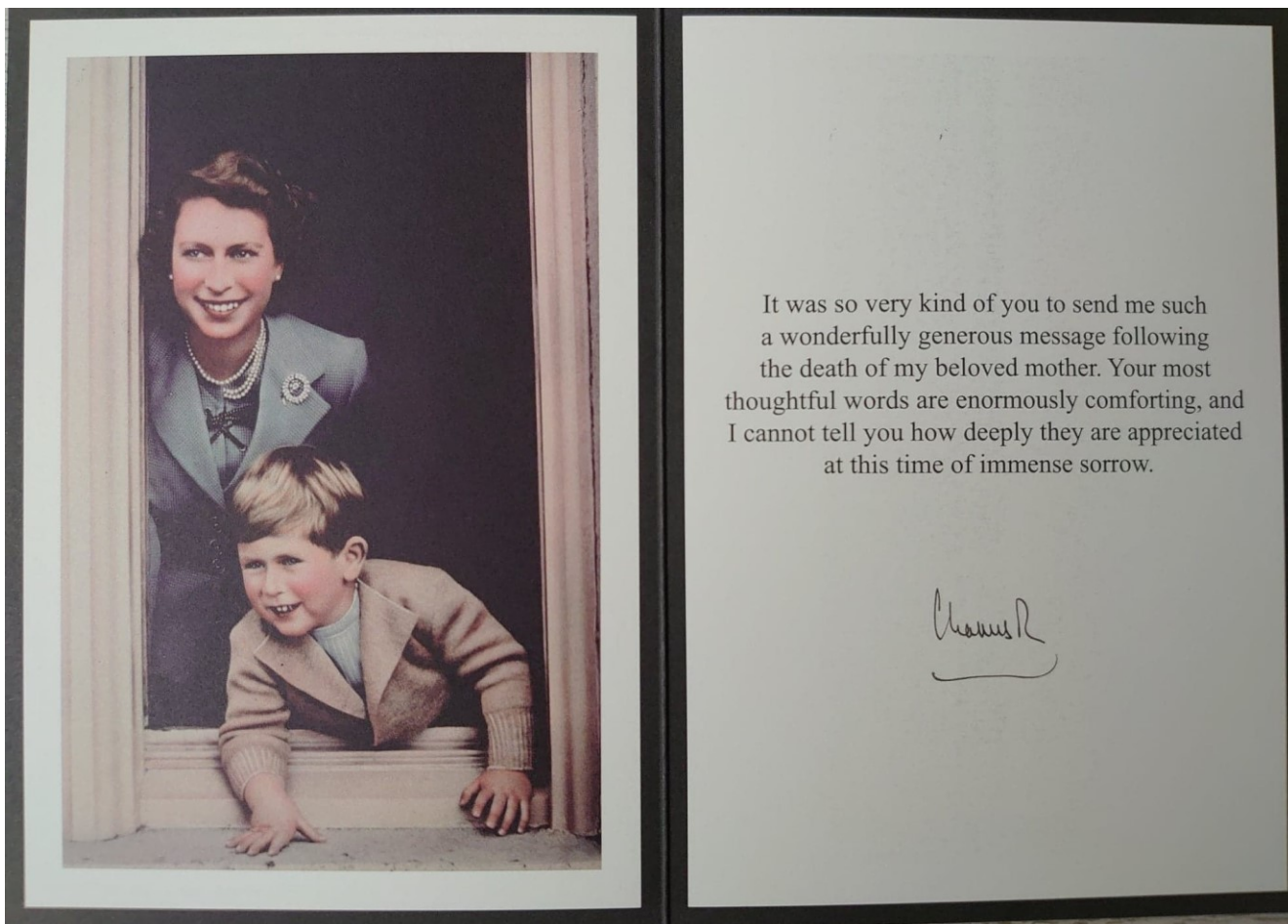
The Committee would like to thank everyone concerned for making the Christmas Lunch a success. We hope all who came enjoyed themselves. In particular, they would like to thank those who came from Broad Oak, Sturry and Canterbury and also Quex Barn for supplying the lovely turkey.

The sum of £641.35 was raised for the upkeep and maintenance of the village hall.

### A card received from Buckingham Palace

This card was sent on 17 November 2022 from Buckingham Palace acknowledging the parish council's letter of condolence sent following the passing of the Queen.

At its meeting on 21 November 2022 the councillors agreed that the original would be framed to be hung in the village hall.



### WESTBERE CHARITY

The Westbere Friend Williamson & Bread and Cheese Field Charity which is better known as Westbere Charity, has been providing discreet financial help and support to residents of Westbere since 1701

Its charter determines that it should provide financial support for educational purposes but also for the relief of poverty to people who live in Westbere.

The charity currently gives help to young people from the village who are attending further education and also donates Christmas vouchers to some people in need.

Whilst we appreciate that Westbere is a largely affluent village, the Trustees are also aware of the difficulties that some residents may be experiencing at the moment, particularly during this current economic crisis.

Whilst we do not have a huge reserve of funds, we are keen to expand our support to residents of Westbere who may be suffering financial hardship. We would for example consider helping parents with childcare costs in order to help them to return to work or offer support to any residents who are finding it difficult to pay utility bills.

If you know of anybody in Westbere who may be suffering financially at present or indeed if you are personally being affected, please don't hesitate to contact our Clerk, Malindi Tucker, who would be delighted to give you further details of how we may be able to help.

([malinditucker@btinternet.com](mailto:malinditucker@btinternet.com)), phone: 01227710209

Remember also that the Trustees are always keen to hear from villagers about any alternative or innovative ways in which Westbere Charity could provide individual help and support.

*Please be assured that every case will be considered individually and in the strictest confidence.*

## MAY 2023 ELECTIONS – IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR EVERYONE

On Thursday 4 May this year there will be elections for all 39 city councillors and in some areas of the district, elections to parish councils.

The government has decided to introduce voter identification for these elections.

If you want to vote at the polling station in these elections, then as well as being registered to vote, you will also need to show an approved form of photo ID before you can be issued with a ballot paper. Without an approved photo ID, **YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO VOTE AT THE POLLING STATION.** (This includes Proxy Voters.)

Acceptable forms of photo ID include a driver's licence with photo, passport, older persons and disabled persons concessionary bus pass, Blue Badge and any PASS-accredited forms of photo ID. An important point to note is that student passes at Canterbury's universities are not PASS-accredited.

See the full list of what is an acceptable form of photo ID at

<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/.../accepted-forms...>

Photo ID can be expired, such as an out of date passport, but there must be a likeness, and if there has been a change of name, you will need to provide evidence of this. It must also be an original document, not a copy.

If you do not have any of the approved photo ID as set out in the link above, you can now apply online for a free **Voter Authority Certificate** - go to <http://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority...> For this, you will need to provide your name, address, date of birth, National Insurance number and a photo. You must also be on the electoral register. The deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate is 5pm on Tuesday 25 April, but CCC would encourage you to apply as soon as possible.

Options to apply via a paper form and in person at the council will follow in due course.

**WE CANNOT STATE THIS STRONGLY AND CLEARLY ENOUGH. WITHOUT AN APPROVED PHOTO ID, YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO VOTE AT THE POLLING STATIONS IN THESE ELECTIONS.** Please take the time now to check you have acceptable photo ID, and if you don't, take action to get your Voter Authority Certificate.

Postal voting is not covered by the photo ID requirements for these elections. If you vote by post, you do not need to provide a photo ID. You can apply for a postal vote until 5pm on 18 April at [www.canterbury.gov.uk/voting-and-elections/apply-postal-vote](http://www.canterbury.gov.uk/voting-and-elections/apply-postal-vote)

If you are not currently registered to vote, you can register until 17 April on the CCC website: [www.canterbury.gov.uk/voting-and-elections/register-vote](http://www.canterbury.gov.uk/voting-and-elections/register-vote). If you do not know if you are registered, you can check by emailing [electoral.services@canterbury.gov.uk](mailto:electoral.services@canterbury.gov.uk) or calling 01227 862007.

If you cast a proxy vote on behalf of someone else at the polling station, you will need to have the photo ID. Find out more about proxy voting at [www.canterbury.gov.uk/voting-and-elections/apply-proxy-vote](http://www.canterbury.gov.uk/voting-and-elections/apply-proxy-vote)

Canterbury City Council's Returning Officer, Tricia Marshall, said: "This is the biggest change to voting in our district for many, many years. We do not want to have to turn anyone away from the polling station, so it is essential that local residents check these new rules on photo identification and make sure they either already have an acceptable form of ID, or take action as soon as possible to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate.

"These are important local elections for the district and we want to ensure everyone can have their say on who is elected to the city council and parish councils for the next four years."



## PLANNING DEVELOPMENTS

Westbere Parish Council keeps a watching brief on planning applications that affect the village or parish.

View and comment on applications online at <https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/planningsearch>

You have the option to search by postcode, ward, parish or Application Number. CCC's planning call centre should be able to assist with any difficulties – call 01227 862178 Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.

### Broad Oak reservoir

The Broad Oak reservoir is being progressed by South East Water – it is now in their Business Plan - to be delivered either by 2033 or by 2036 – South East Water has two alternative plans currently out to consultation.

All our water falls first as rain, but where South East Water take it from varies:

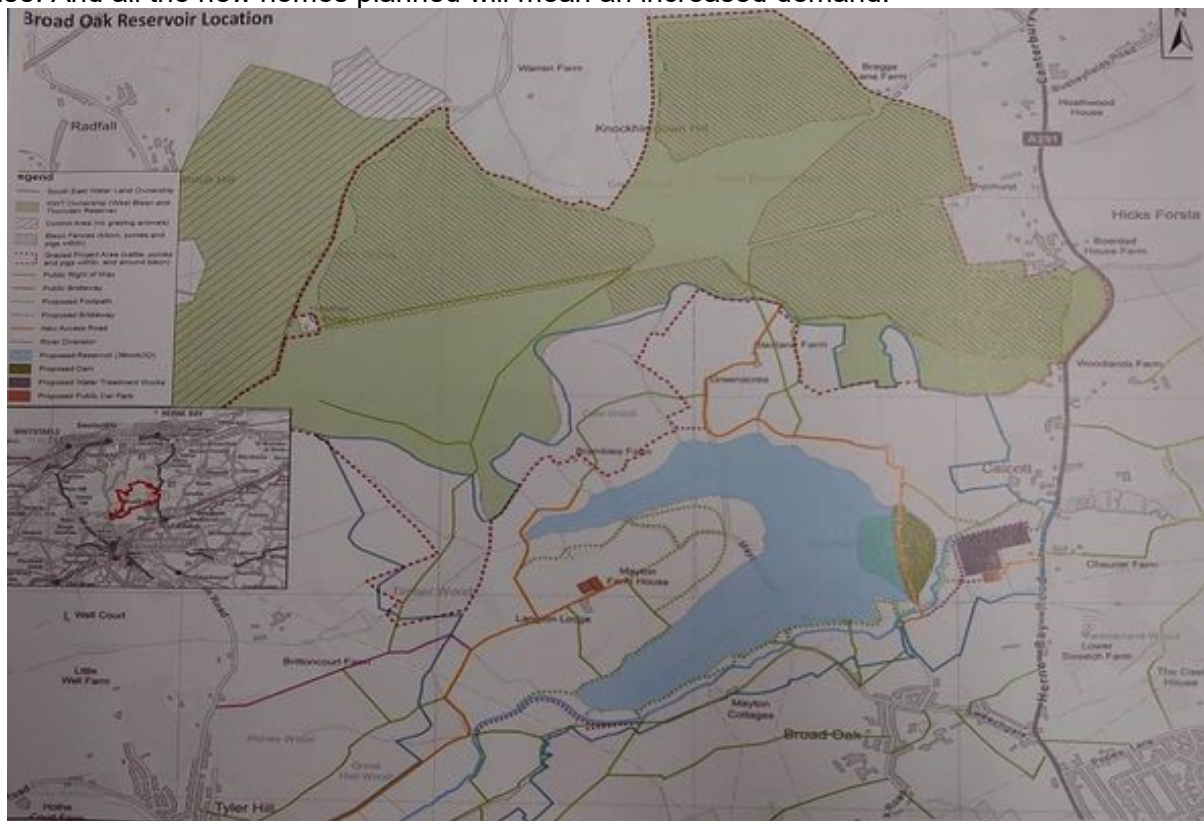
- Above ground South East Water collect around 19% of the water we use from rivers and reservoirs, but its below ground where most water is sourced.
- Around 73% of water pumped to customers' taps comes from aquifers. Rain gradually soaks through the sandstone into porous underground rocks such as chalk and sandstone. Once stored within these sponge like rocks South East Water can pump it to the surface.
- South East Water has more than 250 boreholes and wells – water from these is treated and made safe to drink.
- The remaining 8% of water comes from neighbouring water companies through the regional water grid.

The population of the South East Water supply area is set to increase by 25% to 2.81 million by 2050. There is an anticipated increase in business water use from 90 million litres a day in 2025 to 109 million litres a day by 2075.

The amount of water South East Water can abstract from the environment could reduce by 158 million litres a day by 2050.

South East Water predict that by 2075 there will be a shortfall of around 40.37 million litres of water a day in Kent, rising to 118.6 million litres a day at peak times.

Climate change will cause more extreme weather events and reduce the amount of water available for use. And all the new homes planned will mean an increased demand.



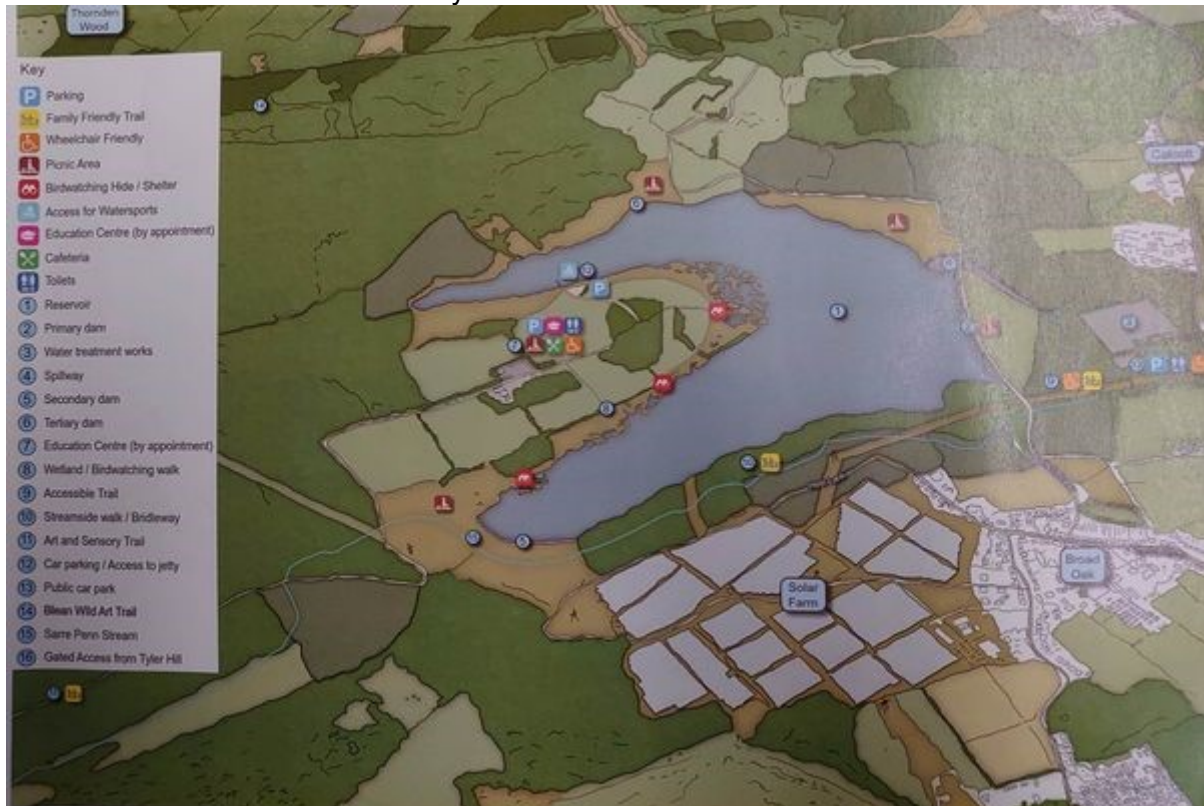
Plans to build a reservoir at Broad Oak have been on the table since the 1970s.

Since 2019 South East Water has progressed design work as well as engineering and environmental studies ahead of submitting a planning application – anticipated in 2025. The reservoir is smaller than

the original concept and would be determined by Canterbury City Council as the local planning authority (rather than being determined at a higher level as a major infrastructure project.)

The proposal includes developing recreational and educational facilities alongside the reservoir, a new water treatment works, the creation of new environmental habitats, and capturing winter flood flow in the Great Stour chalk River and pumping the water to the reservoir site.

The draft Canterbury District Local Plan (Regulation 18) now has a strategic policy - R26 – for a 440ha Broad Oak reservoir and Country Park.



### New planning applications:

**CA/22/01388 - Walnut Tree Livery, Bushy Hill Road, Westbere, CT2 0HE**

**Retrospective application for change of use of land to campsite in addition to existing use for livery/horse keeping.** The parish council's representation/objections were sent on 19 July 2022 to the CCC case officer, and our ward councillors will call the application in for it to be determined at planning committee. As this newsletter goes out a decision is still awaited.

### Sturry level crossing barriers and platform lengths

As we know, the level crossing at Sturry is closed for 17 minutes in every hour. The level crossing 'down time' is made worse as the Sturry station platforms are too short, causing any train of more than four carriages to experience "train overhang," so the barriers cannot be raised. The arrangement of the platforms is such that both up trains and down trains overlap the crossing. This issue is only going to get worse because of the housing developments for more than 2,500 homes at Sturry, Broad Oak and Hersden.

Westbere Parish Council wrote to the managing directors of both Southeastern and Network Rail during 2018 to suggest the lengthening of platforms (correspondence lacked a resolution and was dismissed by them due to a lack of funding for the necessary signal relocation requirements in the immediate and wider network area.)

Lengthening the platforms at Sturry will give immediate and long-lasting benefit to a great deal of residents and road users, not just in the local area but from the wider towns around. Westbere Parish Council decided to write to key people again in October 2022 for a further push for the lengthening of the platforms. Further to this, at the January 2023 parish council meeting Cllrs resolved that the parish council will now submit a Freedom of Information request to Network Rail for the actual requirements and actual costs of what would be involved in a platform lengthening project, such as signal changes, software and announcement changes, etc. – to then, when the level of funding requirement is known, ask CCC if it is able to capture funds for improvements through the Community Infrastructure Levy pot.

### Planning decision/notifications:

CA/22/01158 - Walnut Tree Farm, Walnut Tree Lane, Westbere, CT2 0HG

Agricultural building for use of drying fruit and vegetables. *This application was REFUSED by CCC.*

### Village Green application to KCC for the Two Fields site, Staines Hill

*Anyone not already known to the Two Fields Group and wishing to join the mailing list for updates, should contact Dr. A. G. van den Broek at [provowallis@icloud.com](mailto:provowallis@icloud.com)*

His latest email update on 25 January 2023 was that Bellway's application to the Court of Appeal (to overturn the trigger event issue) has been denied. However, it's important to remember that although this ruling has stopped Bellway from blocking the village green application, KCC has not yet determined the Village Green application.

### For the applications lodged with KCC to have more paths registered as Public Footpaths across the land -

Our application was made in July 2019 – the acknowledgement explained that there is a 3.5 year backlog for processing. We would hope therefore we may have news in our next newsletter.

### Department for Transport's £2 bus fare scheme

Stagecoach will be participating in the Department for Transport's £2 fare scheme announced on 20 December 2022. Stagecoach bus users in the south east will benefit from three months of bus fares of no more than £2 for a single journey as part of the Department for Transport's new fares initiative. All Stagecoach local bus services across Kent and East Sussex will offer a maximum fare of just £2 for any single journey between 1 January and 31 March 2023.

The government promotion aims to get more people to try buses, and reduce car use, and also reflects the current pressure on the costs of running bus services, which have increased by more than 40% since 2019. The scheme means all adult and child single tickets on eligible routes will be capped at £2, with any single tickets previously cheaper than this remaining the same price.

More information at <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/national/2-pound-fare>

| The 100 Club – results                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Winners for October:</b><br><b>Number Name Amount</b><br>9 M Bray £10<br>26 G Wenham £10<br>37 C & M Milchard £10                         | <b>Winners for November:</b><br><b>Number Name Amount</b><br>1 G Glover £10<br>45 D & J Engwell £10<br>77 G Shaw £10  | <b>Winners for December:</b><br><b>Number Name Amount</b><br>2 S & M Wakefield £10<br>3 E & J Wingfield £10<br>62 J & A Noble £10 |
| <b>Winners for January:-</b><br><b>Number Name Amount</b><br>31 K Wilson & K Fielding £10<br>51 A Hearn & B Buggins £10<br>84 S Eastwood £10 | <b>Winners for February:-</b><br><b>Number Name Amount</b><br>34 M & A Dunk £10<br>64 L Prince £10<br>94 A Cooper £10 |                                                                                                                                   |



## Lifeline

[Lifeline.canterbury.gov.uk](http://Lifeline.canterbury.gov.uk)

01227 862 540

A lifeline alarm, worn on the wrist or as a pendant, is a service provided in East Kent by Canterbury City Council's CCTV control room, 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. Having a lifeline alarm helps someone feel safe and independent in their home. To book a free demonstration or enquire call 01227 862540 or visit <https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/lifeline/>

### Sturry, Fordwich and district / Aire-Sur-La-Lys Twinning Association



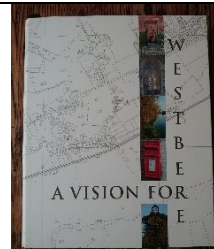
Join our mailing list to be kept up to date with events. Follow us on Facebook: Sturry, Fordwich and District Twinning Association @Sturry Twinning  
Email: [info@sturry-fordwichtwinning.co.uk](mailto:info@sturry-fordwichtwinning.co.uk)  
Website: <http://sturry-fordwichtwinning.co.uk>  
Phone: 07563 962 505

**Electricity operators' number 105:** 105 is a national and free phone number to call to report or obtain information about a power cut. Dialling 105 will connect you to the local electricity network operator – the company that manages the cables, power lines and substations that deliver electricity into homes and businesses in your area. Call 105 if you spot damage to electricity power lines and substations that could put anyone in danger. If there's serious immediate risk, call 999 too. Vulnerable customers can sign up to the Priority Services Register on 0800 169 9970, email [psr@ukpowernetworks.co.uk](mailto:psr@ukpowernetworks.co.uk) or apply at [www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/priority](http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/priority). (For a gas emergency – dial 0800 111999)

### Westbere Charities

The Charities are keen to ensure that anyone in need within the Ancient Parish of Westbere, roughly the present parish plus areas of Island Road and Fordwich Road, (ask the Westbere Charities Clerk for details) receives assistance in accordance with the terms of the Charities. The Charities are aimed particularly at residents over the age of 55 and students undertaking tertiary education. If you know of anyone who might benefit, please contact the Charities' Clerk for information and application forms: Malindi Tucker – 01227 710209. All communications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

For enquiries regarding the **Westbere Village Preservation Society** please contact the Westbere Village Preservation Society secretary, Alison Grubb, email: [wvpreservationsociety@gmail.com](mailto:wvpreservationsociety@gmail.com).



If you are new to the village and would like a copy of our parish plan "A Vision for Westbere" while stocks last, please contact the Clerk.

### Your Parish Councillors

Paul Glover (Chairman)  
Sylvia Harlow (vice chairman)  
Kathryn Wilson  
Ken Dekker

Three vacancies – for more information contact the Clerk

**For enquiries or reports, please contact the Clerk, Amanda Sparkes: 01304 365 972**  
[clerk@westbereparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@westbereparishcouncil.gov.uk)

### Canterbury City Councillors

**Georgina Glover:** 01227 711429 [georgina.glover@canterbury.gov.uk](mailto:georgina.glover@canterbury.gov.uk) and  
**Louise Harvey Quirke:** 07704 948305 [louise.harvey-quirke@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk](mailto:louise.harvey-quirke@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk)

**Our Kent County Councillor:** Alan Marsh: 01227 265112 [alan.marsh@kent.gov.uk](mailto:alan.marsh@kent.gov.uk)  
**The KCC Community Warden for Westbere, Sturry, Fordwich and Hersden** is Linda Hayes.  
Call: 07969583916. Email: [Linda.hayes@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Linda.hayes@kent.gov.uk)

Visit WPC website for more local information at: <https://westbereparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

### Neighbourhood watch and Police Reports

Please email comments/observations to Parish Cllr Kathy Wilson [kathrynwilson365@gmail.com](mailto:kathrynwilson365@gmail.com)  
Unfortunately, Kathy cannot report anything she has not personally seen to the police, so please additionally log a report on the Kent Police Website – [www.kent.police.uk](http://www.kent.police.uk), live chat is available to assist you with your report or you can call 101. To report anonymously please call CRIMESTOPPERS on 0800 555 111.

If you are new to the village and would like to receive neighbourhood watch alerts from Kathy, please email her with your email address and she will add you to her list. This will give you information on police reports, trading standards alerts and scams, and local road closures, etc.

**If you would like to receive an email or a Large Print Version of this newsletter please contact the Clerk, Amanda Sparkes on 01304 365972 or email [clerk@westbereparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@westbereparishcouncil.gov.uk)**



This Newsletter is produced, issued and distributed by **WESTBERE PARISH COUNCIL**  
For those residents who receive this newsletter as a paper copy please recycle it once read.

### **Village Green central cherry tree and surround seating**

The parish council wants to update residents on plans for the central dead Cherry tree on the village green:

The Westbere Village Preservation Society would like to retain the seating around the tree – it is popular and has been a long-term feature of the village green.

However, the seat needs some repair and refurbishment, with some of it being quite rotten in places, but possibly could be recovered and repaired.

Fortunately some WVPS volunteers have agreed to try to save the seat by removal and refurbishing it. We will then look to reposition the seat around the new replacement tree that was planted some time ago in preparation for the loss of the tree. This is only a few feet away from its original positioning.

When the seat has been recovered and removed, and the electrics for the lighting in the current tree made safe, the Clerk can then get the contractor to remove the tree and stump grind the stump, and make good the ground back to grass, before the spring. It is possible that the contractor will be doing this work in two stages.

### **Residents' views still sought on a pergola for the village green**

In our last (November 2022) newsletter, Westbere Parish Council asked for residents' views on its proposal for the village green to create a pergola in the centre of the green. A pergola could be used to hang lights for the Christmas activities and any other activities in the year, whilst looking good too. The pergola could have trailing plants added, as well as Christmas lighting.

On 23 September 2022 an application was submitted to the CCC Capital grants scheme for 2023-2024 for a 16-sided Pergola and new Christmas tree lights/trellis lighting. The Grant sought is £1,256 and the parish council's contribution if successful would be in the region of £875.80.

Westbere Parish Council still welcomes your comments. Comments so far have been mixed and equally divided in support/against the idea. A decision on whether to proceed or not will be made based on feedback received and once the outcome of whether the grant to CCC has been successful.

**Thank you for reading this newsletter – we end with a reminder that this will be the last printed hard copy with future editions available on our website, unless you contact the Clerk to 'opt-in' for a hard copy.**