



Westbere Parish Council NEWSLETTER May 2020

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!

Your Parish Councillors

Tom Hopkins (Chairman)
Stephen Laws (Vice Chairman)
Sylvia Harlow
Maria Morcom
Kathryn Wilson
Karen Williams
One vacancy

For enquiries or reports, please contact the Clerk in the first instance – Clerk - Amanda Sparkes:
01304 365 972 amanda.sparkes@sky.com

Canterbury City Councillors – Westbere has two ward councillors:

Georgina Glover: 01227 711429

georgina.glover@canterbury.gov.uk and

Louise Harvey Quirk: 07704 948305

louise.harvey-quirke@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk

Our Kent County Councillor

Alan Marsh: 01227 265112

alan.marsh@kent.gov.uk

You can visit WPC website for more local information at:
<http://www.westberepc.kentparishes.gov.uk>

Cllr Responsibilities

- Cllr Tom Hopkins – Chairman, Street lights and Transport
- Cllr Stephen Laws – Vice-Chairman, Planning, Fire Hydrants
- Cllr Sylvia Harlow – Planning, parish plan, KMBR reports
- Cllr Kathy Wilson - Neighbourhood Watch, Chair Village Hall committee
- Cllr Karen Williams – Monitoring salt bins; Village events, and parish council representative on the Village Hall committee
- Cllr Maria Morcom – Parish Council rep for Westbere Village Preservation Society (WVPS) and attend WVPS meetings; and rep for the Sturry, Fordwich and District / Aire-Sur-La-Lys Twinning Association
- One other councillor – vacancy at present

WESTBERE PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS AND MEETING DATES

Regulations enabling town and parish councils to lawfully conduct virtual meetings by video and telephone conferencing until May 2021 have been published. The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 came into force on 4 April. The legislation allows for virtual meetings if required up to May 2021.

Our virtual meetings are still open to the public and we have an adjournment early in the agenda proceedings to give any resident the opportunity to speak.

The next virtual meeting will take place at 6pm on
Tuesday 26 May 2020.

This meeting will be held using Microsoft Teams as a virtual hosting platform. Members of the public may still “attend” the meeting either online or by telephone but to do so will need to contact the Clerk for details of the meeting link or phone number and the PIN code for access to enter.

Diary dates:

Village Green Party on the green Sunday 5 July 2020. This date is now under review as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and restrictions on social gatherings. More details will be available on the village noticeboards when confirmed.

Coping with coronavirus in Westbere

Westbere Parish Council sent a note to all households in the village asking for

- volunteers to help any residents self-isolating who need help with shopping, medicines, post, or just a friendly chat. Or**
- If you are self-isolating and need help with anything? Contact Cllr Kathy Wilson on 07969 093715 or email kathrynwilson365@gmail.com and give your name, address, phone number and email address and details of what you can offer, or what you need, and we will do our best to help. Or email Cllr Maria Morcom at maria.westberenetwork@gmail.com**

Please be assured that under GDPR requirements your personal data will be protected and not be shared for any other purpose. We also recognise that the situation may change and of course that adherence to government guidelines is crucial and these government guidelines may of course also change.

SOURCES OF ADVICE

The coronavirus situation is fast-moving and there is an increasing amount of misinformation online. The [government's main source of advice on coronavirus](#) includes information on the social distancing alongside a wide range of other information. This is at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

If you would like to keep up-to-date with the government information as it comes out then you can [sign up to their Covid-19 response bulletin](#) at <https://www.gov.uk/email-signup?link=/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

[Public Health England \(PHE\)](#) has FAQs that will be updated regularly at <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>

Contacts

If you are self-isolating, you could contact one of these organisations for help and support:

[Age UK](#) 0800 678 1602
[Asthma UK](#) 0300 222 5800
[BHF](#) 0300 330 3311
[Diabetes UK](#) 0345 123 2399
[Mind](#) 0300 123 3393
[Scope](#) 0808 800 3333
[The Silver Line](#) 0800 470 8090

Launch of

New Mental Wellbeing Support Info Hub

Health partners and providers, local authorities and emergency services across Kent and Medway are working together to provide information on local support services to help people's mental wellbeing during the ongoing Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic crisis.

Information is available at www.kent.gov.uk/wellbeing for people experiencing bereavement and loss, debt and financial difficulties, pregnant women and new mums needing extra support, families looking for help with young children or teenagers.

There is support for those who might already have pre-existing mental health conditions, are victims of domestic abuse or are people in the shielded community.

The site also offers help for people with learning disabilities, people who don't use English as a first language, carers and NHS staff, care staff and other key workers.

KCC Director of Public Health, Andrew Scott-Clark said: "The challenging reality of lockdown is creating uncertainty and anxiety for many. The

constant news can feel overwhelming and you may be adjusting to a different way of life, with children off school, many people not working or working from home, as well as not seeing family, friends and colleagues.

"This anxiety is natural, and we are all feeling it. Fortunately, there are things that we can do to protect our mental health and to support the wellbeing of our friends and family. At www.kent.gov.uk/wellbeing you can find information, advice and signposting to other great sites which can help, whatever your situation and need. This is #kenttogether."

Thanks to all of those supplying content to www.kent.gov.uk/wellbeing including: Kent County Council; Medway Council; Public Health England; NHS England; Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group; Kent Community NHS Foundation Trust; Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust; Live Well Kent; Healthwatch Kent; Kent Community Foundation; Headstart Kent; Carers UK; Kent's Integrated Domestic Abuse Support Services; KCC Children's Centres; Citizen's Advice and Age Concern.

As part of the Release the Pressure campaign, a new text service is now available - by texting the word "Kent" or "Medway" to 85258, you will start a conversation with one of the many trained and experienced volunteers who can give support at any time, wherever you are. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. Texts are free on all major mobile networks and the service is provided by SHOUT and the Crisis Text Line.

The service will run in addition to the current 24/7 freephone helpline and is funded by the Kent and Medway Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) which is a collaboration between Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust and all the NHS organisations across Kent and Medway.

Vulnerable people in Kent who need urgent help, supplies or medication are also reminded of the helpline – called Kent Together – which provides a single, convenient point of contact for anyone in the county who is in urgent need of help during the Coronavirus outbreak. It is a collaboration between KCC, central Government, District, Borough and local councils, the voluntary and community sector, the NHS and other partners to ensure help is at hand for vulnerable people. If you are vulnerable and have an urgent need that cannot be met through existing support networks, you can contact the Kent Together helpline at www.kent.gov.uk/KentTogether or by calling on 03000 41 92 92. It is a 24-hour service.

The Kent Together service is a single, convenient point of contact for anyone in Kent who is in urgent need of help during the coronavirus outbreak at www.kent.gov.uk/kenttogether and on 03000 41 92 92

Kent libraries closed from 20 March 2020

Due to COVID-19, KCC implemented the following temporary changes:

- All 99 libraries were closed to the public, including the mobile library service, from 20 March 2020 until further notice.
- All loan periods are extended for all customers until the end of June. If you need further extensions after June, please let the library know via email: libraries@kent.gov.uk or call 03000 41 31 31.
- If you have reservations, or reservations on order, they will be kept safe until KCC re-opens libraries. Once they re-open, they will be available for 10 days before going back into circulation. If you cannot collect the reservation during that time KCC will refund you the reservation fee or re-order it at no additional charge.
- Remember digital collections are always available. These include reference resources as well as free e-books, e-audio books, a vast range of the latest e-magazines and daily e-newspapers. These can be accessed at kent.gov.uk/libs
- The Ask a Kent Librarian Service remains available on 03000 41 64 38, email akl@kent.gov.uk or via 24/7 chat at www.kent.gov.uk/askakentlibrarian

Shelagh Wenham 1934 – 2020

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Shelagh Wenham on 3rd February 2020, aged 85. Shelagh was the Westbere Parish Council Clerk for 10 years, from 1994 to 2004.

She enjoyed a varied working life as a nurse, a secretary, and as a parish council clerk. She moved to Westbere to take up the role of Clerk to Westbere Parish Council, arriving just before the centenary of WPC was celebrated.

She produced a history of the Council, based on the recorded minutes of its proceedings for the first 100 years and organised the production of some fine bone china commemorative mugs, bearing a design by the late Charles Wright, a retired architect who lived in Westbere.

Shelagh was involved in the community in other ways too. She was the booking clerk and key holder for the Village Hall, liaising with those hiring the hall for various events. Some parishioners also knew her as the Poppy Lady. She visited all the houses in the village with her tray of poppies every November, collecting donations for the annual Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. She attended church services regularly for as long as she was able.

Our thoughts are with Gerald, her husband of 54 years; her brother, Philip Davies, and her friends and neighbours in Westbere and further afield.

Why has the bill for Westbere Parish Council risen by 22.8% on this year's council tax bill when all the other changes (rises) are between 2 and 5.2%?

Whilst there has been a reduction in the tax base due to the boundary changes, this was only by 15 households so although this would have impacted it is not overly significant.

Last year's precept (2019-2020) was £11,981.12 and this year's (2020-2021) is £14,423.00, so the difference is £2,441.88, not large in absolute terms.

The main increases may be explained as follows:

1. New provision for traffic related initiatives of £1,200 – this was allocated based on feedback from residents attending parish council meetings and raising issues.
2. New Website hosting requirement of £995 – KCC EiS will not host free of charge from 01 September 2020, and the alternative preferred provider KCC Cantium initially quoted £995 in the first year (2020-2021). Whilst this has now been removed for all parishes with a precept below £30,000 the precept had already had to be ratified and advised to CCC by December 2019, and the announcement of its removal came after the CCC deadline. (So, this provision in the budget now becomes an unrestricted reserve and can be allocated to any other project in 2020-2021 or retained as a reserve).
3. Tree stump sculpture - £250 was allocated to this potential project (see next page in this newsletter as this will not now go ahead.)
4. Capital project – new Cherry tree for the village green - £225 has been allocated, the rest of the project costs to be met through a CCC capital grant now paid in April 2020.



Possible tree stump art sculpture UPDATE

Our Arboriculture Survey undertaken in 2019, highlighted the need to consider felling a large Cypress in the West Churchyard. The Parish Council consider this a feature tree and feel its loss would impact and wondered about felling it to a height of 6-8 feet and for the stump to be crafted into an artwork/sculpture.

The parish council resolved to undertake consultation with WVPS and residents first. The majority of WVPS were not in favour. Residents' comments from our last newsletter consultation were reported to the 17 March 2020 parish council meeting. There is very little support for the idea and most responders are opposed to the suggestion. The parish council has therefore taken the decision not to go ahead with this.

A climbing inspection to inform the council of its condition and give more information on its future is being commissioned. In the meantime, the following has been suggested as an alternative project - please let us have your views!

A picnic table for the Village Green?

Two WVPS Members whose houses overlook the Village Green – and who keep a watchful eye on it – would like to provide and plant some spring bulbs to “prettify” it

for next year. They asked whether it might be possible to have some sort of picnic table/bench too as they would like to be able to eat lunch there?

The picnic table could form the basis of a capital grant application to CCC for 2021-2022 assuming CCC offers the scheme again this year. As the tree stump sculpture is not going ahead the budget provision of £250 could be reallocated to the new project instead.

CCC Capital grant for 2020-2021 - Update

Councillors resolved that a capital project for the CCC Parish Council Capital Grant scheme for 2020-2021 should be an application for the planting of a mature replacement tree on the village green - to become the feature tree when the existing Cherry tree finally needs total removal.

A capital grant with total project costs of £550 for the supply of a 10-12 foot mature Cherry tree and protective cage has been successful and the parish council has received a grant of £241.58. We will arrange planting at an appropriate time.

If any nearby residents would be willing to help water the new tree that would be most welcomed. This does not have to be clean water – grey water such as your washing up water can be used! Please let us know if you can help with this.

Two fields, Staines Hill, A28:

We have two applications lodged with KCC:

- i) **To get more paths registered as Public Footpaths across the land** (application made July 2019). There is a backlog of 3 years for the Footpaths application to be assessed and for a decision. [We will keep you updated.](#)
- ii) **To obtain Village Green status for the Two Fields site** - The Sturry and Westbere Two Fields Action Group submitted an application for the Two Fields to be designated a Village Green to KCC at County Hall on 08 November 2019. Two of the four landowners submitted objections. A response to the objections is being worked on by The Two Fields Action Group.

Keep Kent Clean

A reminder that rogue traders are fly-tipping across Kent.

If your waste is fly-tipped by a fake waste disposal service you'll face a £400 fine.

Before you hire a waste disposal service ask for the:

- Waste Carrier Licence
- Where they dispose of their waste
- A receipt or invoice

Vacancy on the Parish Council You – A Parish Councillor?

Passionate about your community?
Full of ideas for your neighbourhood?
Could you represent local people?
What can you bring to local government?

A vacancy exists on Westbere Parish Council and the council have been given the power to co-opt to fill this.

Nominations are welcomed from local residents – You don't need to be a member of any Political Party – you do need a genuine interest in what happens in your community. Ever wondered what a Parish Councillor has to do and if this is for you?

- Attend Parish Council meetings – usually once a month
- Take any issues raised by residents to the parish council on the residents' behalf
- Carry out duties to uphold the local by-laws, to protect the local environment and infrastructure, footpaths and highways, lobby for improvements to services, implement new projects for the benefit of the parish such as new play areas and better sports facilities, fund raising for new projects, etc
- Comment on all planning applications within the parish
- Sit on sub-committees where appropriate, such as Planning, Finance, Amenities, Countryside, Recreation, and Open Spaces.

Eligibility

You must be aged 18 years or over, be a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or a citizen of another member state of the European Community, and

- (1) Be on the electoral roll in the parish; Or
- (2) During the preceding twelve months occupied land or other premises as owner or tenant in the parish; Or
- (3) During the same period, resided in that area or within three miles (4.8km) thereof; Or
- (4) During the same period, had your principal or only place of work in that area.

Parish Councillors are elected for a term of four years. They retire together on the fourth day after the date of elections every four years. A person, if duly qualified, may be elected as a parish councillor for more than one parish or community.

A parish councillor has no personal financial liability in respect of anything done in good faith for the purpose of any of the council's statutory functions.

If you wish to become involved, or require more information, contact either the Clerk Amanda Sparkes: Telephone 01304 365 972, Email: amanda.sparkes@sky.com or speak to any Westbere Parish Councillor.

Our Annual Parish Electors' meeting scheduled for 27 April 2020 was cancelled due to the restrictions on social gatherings during the coronavirus pandemic. The parish council intends to reschedule this when able, ideally before Christmas. This will be advertised to all households in due course.

This meeting receives reports from the Chairman, city and county councillors and the village's Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator.

We also receive the Westbere Charities and the Westbere Village Hall's annual accounts.

Cllr Hopkins is working on his Chairman's Annual Report, and we will run it in the next edition of this newsletter and it will also be uploaded to the parish council's website in due course.

In the meantime, the Westbere Charities and the Westbere Village Hall's annual accounts may be read on the parish council website.



Lifeline.canterbury.gov.uk
01227 862 540

A lifeline alarm, which can be fashionably worn on your 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 would help you or a family member feel safe and independent in the home. To book your free demonstration or to make an enquiry please call 01227 862540 or visit www.lifeline.canterbury.gov.uk

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
Website: <http://sturry-fordwichtwinning.co.uk>
Phone: 07563 962 505

Westbere Village 100 Club:

Winners for March:-

Number	Name	Amount
12	S Stranner	£10
79	K & I Gandon	£10
83	J Halley	£10

PLANNING DEVELOPMENTS

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

A28 Link Road

KCC/CA/0091/2019 - Construction of part of a new road (A28 Link Road) including viaduct between A28 Sturry Road and A291 Sturry Hill and associated on-line improvements. A28 Sturry Link Road, Sturry, Canterbury.

View documents at:

<https://www.kentplanningapplications.co.uk/Planning/Display/KCC/CA/0091/2019>

The application is still awaiting determination by KCC.

**CA/20/00761 - Spice Master, Island Road, East Of Staines Hill, Sturry, CT2 0EZ
Proposed 10 no. detached two-storey dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping.**

The parish council is working on a draft response to meet the 15 May consultation period deadline. The parish council has access and speed of traffic concerns. The response will also request a condition that if CCC is minded to grant the application that there be no contractor parking in Pennington Close during construction - the developer should make alternative provision on site.

To view planning applications visit the home page of Canterbury City Council www.canterbury.gov.uk then select 'planning and building' then the option to 'search and comment on planning applications' Then click on the pink box in the middle of the screen "search planning applications". You then 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.

Report crimes and incidents on the Kent Police website:

Report **crimes and incidents** as well as **non-injury road traffic collisions** ONLINE directly to Kent Police through www.kent.police.uk . Once a report is made online, the user receives a unique reference number and a return email confirming receipt. If you prefer non-digital contact, continue to call 101 on non-urgent issues.

Electricity operators' number 105: 105 is a national phone number launched by electricity network operators to call to report or obtain information about a power cut. Dialling 105 is free of charge, and 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 who would like to sign up to the Priority Services Register can still call 0800 169 9970, email psr@ukpowernetworks.co.uk or apply at www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/priority (For a gas emergency – dial 0800 111999)

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

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.

Highways Improvements - Westbere Parish Council continues to strive for further highways improvements. Our next endeavor is to try and get the 40mph stretch of the A28 from Sturry to the Lakesview roundabout reduced to 30mph. There is a known accident history here, and with all the new homes being built in the locality we feel a push for a speed reduction is appropriate. Our KCC Cllr Alan Marsh is leading on this. We will keep you updated.

PCSO and KCC Community Warden

Westbere is covered by a Police Community Support Officer and KCC Community Warden, who occasionally patrol the village in uniform.

Our KCC Warden is Susan Beeney;- susan.beeney@kent.gov.uk . Susan also covers Sturry and Fordwich. Contact number is 07811271257.

Our PCSO is Christopher Healy [\[mailto:christopher.healy@kent.pnn.police.uk\]](mailto:christopher.healy@kent.pnn.police.uk) or call and leave a message for him through Kent Police in any non-emergency situation on 101 anytime day or night. You can also call 101 to report a crime.

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 amanda.sparkes@sky.com

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