



WESTFIELD
PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT
2017-18



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Chairman's Report

Parish Council update

- During the last year we co-opted three new Councillors, Carly Taylor, Tim Hills and most recently Patrick Edwards. We said goodbye to Jackie Smith, Martin McNamara and Joan Downing BEM as Councillors, and we would like to thank them for all their hard work and dedication over the years.
- The AGM of the Parish Council was held on Wednesday 2nd May and I was appointed Chairman again, and Hamish Monro as Vice-Chairman.
- Council meetings are generally held at 7pm on the first Wednesday of the month in the Church Hall. The Planning Committee meeting is held beforehand at 6.30pm. Agendas and minutes of all meetings are available to view on the village website. Agendas are also placed on all the noticeboards in the parish. Everyone is very welcome to attend meetings.
- The next elections to the Parish Council will be held in May 2019. Councillors should have a good understanding of local issues and be prepared to take an active role in the work of the Council. If you think this could be of interest, then do please get in contact with us to find out more about the roles and responsibilities of the Parish Council, and how to apply to be a candidate.

Planning Matters

- As ever, planning seems to be one of the more contentious issues. It is worth pointing out that your Parish Council is only one of many consultees on planning matters and it has no statutory powers to approve or object to planning applications. However, Council takes an objective view of all planning applications and it tries to respond to the Rother planners in the best interests of the Parish as a whole. The Window on Westfield section of the WCA magazine includes a brief summary of planning decisions for the preceding 3 months. Full details of all planning applications can be found on Rother's website at www.rother.gov.uk and you can submit your own comments on there.

What have we been up to in the last year?

- Last year an arboricultural survey was carried out on all the trees which are the responsibility of the Parish Council. Most of the trees are in good condition, and some minor remedial works have already been carried out. There are few trees around the Cricket Ground which need felling, and this work will be carried out in due course.
- Last spring saw the launch of a new junior tennis coaching session, which proved to be very successful. The sessions continued until October half term and started again in April. It costs £5 per session, and are every Monday from 5-6pm, except during the school holidays. This year the sessions are open to children from 5 years old to school leavers, and the sessions are proving to be popular again. There is no need to book, and you can just pay on the day.
- We have also implemented a new on-line booking system for the tennis courts, making it easier to see when the courts are available to play on. To register please visit: www.fastcourts.com/clubs/WestfieldTennisCourts The courts are available to hire for just £2 per hour, and you can pay your fee and pick up the key from the Londis shop on Main Road. The Parish Council is currently negotiating the terms of a new lease with the Tennis Club who are keen to attract new members.
- Several repairs have been carried out including the traverse stepper and litter bin in the Recreation Ground. Unfortunately, the dinosaur springer at Churchfield was badly vandalised, but is now back in good working order. Several of the fingerposts in the parish have recently been repaired and cleaned, and Joan's bench outside the Community hall was also given a good clean. We would like to thank Brian Firman and Paul Masters for their hard work in maintaining the Council's assets.
- Last summer the new inclusive roundabout was installed in the Recreation Ground. It has been good to see so many children using this new addition, and Council has received lots of positive feedback about the equipment.

- Council has provided financial support to the Bowls Club, Football Club, Churchyard maintenance, Royal British Legion poppy appeal and Victim Support. Council's Grants Policy and details of how to apply for a grant are available to view on the website.
- Thanks go to Toby Walsh, who very kindly made and fitted the new posts and chains and repainted the stones around the War memorial in time for Remembrance Sunday. Many thanks also to Wood Base for donating the materials for the posts. Toby and his team of volunteers continue to do a sterling job of maintaining the memorial on behalf of the Council.
- The autumn village tidy took place in October. A huge thank you to the 40+ volunteers who helped on the day, including lots of children from the Westfield Beavers group. The spring tidy took place in April, with 45 volunteers, and again there was a big collection of rubbish, which sadly demonstrates the need for the village tidies. The next tidy will take place in the autumn. Please come along, and feel free to do as much or as little as you like!
- Council recently purchased the Cricket Ground, the first major land acquisition since the Parish Field in 1810. Having leased the ground since 1927 the Parish Council have bought the freehold from the Dunkley family, and we thank them for agreeing to sell the ground to the Parish. We are also especially grateful to Roger Carrier for all his help, over the last few years, in making this happen. The Cricket Club, who have maintained the ground so beautifully over the years, can now go ahead with their plans for the new Cricket Pavilion and continue to expand youth and adult cricket in Westfield.

Finances

- Council set the budget for the next year in January. There are several large expenditures for next year which are uncertain, these include the Cottage Lane footpath, Westfield Down project and until recently the Cricket Ground. This made it a difficult budget to plan for. Council approved the budget and agreed to increase the precept to £36,000. This is an increase of £2,000 (5.88%) from last year. Because the tax base

(number of residents paying Council Tax) has increased from last year, this equates to only a 2.4% increase or just £0.02 per week increase in Council Tax for Band D. This slight increase has allowed for the purchase of the Cricket Ground and will cover the cost of new gym equipment on the Parish field, whilst building up reserves for other large planned projects.

EXTRACT FROM BUDGET SETTING IN JANUARY 2018

WESTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	2016/17	2017/18		2018/19
	Actual	estimated	Budget	budget
		to y/e		
INCOME				
Hirings	195	140	200	200
Club-rents and licences	-110	270	270	270
Miscellaneous	6	-		-
Grants	1,168	584	584	200
Precept	33,000	34,000	34,000	36,000
Interest	141	46	200	50
transfer from EM reserves			28,000	38,000
	34,400	35,040	63,254	74,720
EXPENDITURE				
Salaries, training, admin, publicity	12966	16,966	18,315	19,155
insurance	1061	1,107	1,300	1,300
Asset & grounds maintenance	7728	6,946	7,990	7,040
Large projects, equipment*		7,000	40,000	67,000
Grants & donations	2100	2,150	3,750	3,750
Transfer to EM reserves				7,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£23,855	£34,169	£71,355	£105,245
net income/expenditure	£10,545	£871	-£8,101	-£30,525

*includes Westfield Down project, Cottage Lane Footpath, inclusive roundabout, gym equipment and purchase of Cricket Ground

Ongoing and future projects

- The Parish Council is continuing to work with RDC and ESCC to provide a footway in Cottage Lane from the garage to turn off to Barracks footpath. This is a shared project with RDC/ESCC and £23,000 has been earmarked as the Parish contribution.
- Last year Council purchased the red telephone box on Churchfield. We recently conducted a survey of residents to find out what they would like to see the box used for. We had a good response, and thanks go to those who took the time to complete the survey, and to those that volunteered to help with the project. The 'Museum of Westfield; was the most popular option with 32% of the votes. Cllr Tim Hills volunteered to lead the Working Group for the project and will be in contact with volunteers to get the project started.
- Last year Council made provision to pay for an extra urban grass cut in the village, in between those provided by East Sussex Highways. A new contractor was appointed to carry this out, as well as the grass cutting around the recreation facilities that the Parish Council is responsible for. This year East Sussex Highways have cut 4 of the 6 urban cuts provided. Fortunately, RDC have agreed to pay for the shortfall in cuts this year. However, the Parish Council will have to look at options for 2019/20 but have provisionally agreed to pay for the 4 extra cuts, to ensure that the current number of cuts in the village are maintained.
- Unfortunately, last year we received confirmation that Matthew Homes had pulled out of the purchase of the Westified Down land. The current owners have since retained a consultancy firm, and have recently re-applied for various planning permissions so that when a new purchaser is found, the sale can proceed quickly. Roger Carrier has kindly agreed to remain as project manager for the project, and we hope that a new developer is agreed soon.
- Provision has been made in the year's budget to install some new outdoor gym equipment on the Parish Field and improve the play area. We will be conducting a survey in due course to establish what people

would like to have installed and will be applying for grants to help fund the project.

- Council is currently working with a team lead by Ruth Carter to have a World War 1 exhibition commemorating 100 years since Armistice Day. The 'Westfield Remembers' exhibition will take place on the weekend of the 3rd/4th November in the Church Hall, and will include a wall of remembrance for relatives of present day parishioners, wherever they came from. There will also be a film shown in the hall on the evening of the 3rd November. Further details to follow.
- It has also been agreed that the Parish Council will organise a poppy display in November, which will be placed by the trees on the grass verge on Churchfield. All the groups in the village have already been invited to make poppies. These can be made of any materials but will need to withstand the elements. If you would like to make a poppy to be displayed, would like to volunteer to help put up the display, or have some ideas you would like to share, then please let us know.

Michael Edwards, Chairman

Annual Report of the Trustees of the Parish Field

The **Westfield Parish Field** is managed as a registered charity no. 305325 and, under the conditions of the charity, all Parish Councillors are its Trustees. The Parish field has been used for several different activities over the last year including a wonderful village fete and a family fun day.

The football club continue to do a good job maintaining the grass and keeping the Parish field neat and tidy. We are currently in discussion with the Football Club about how the aesthetics of the club house can be improved.

If you belong to a group that would like to use the Parish field, please get in touch. It is an area for the whole Parish.

Michael Horley, Chairman.

Annual accounts summary

The Parish Council's accounts are prepared in accordance with the Accounts & Audit Regulations and are subject to both internal and external audit. Once the full audit is completed a copy of the audited accounts summary for the year 2017-18 is available on request. Any interested person may also inspect and make copies of the Annual Return and all books, deeds, contracts, invoices, etc. These documents will be available on reasonable notice, on application to the Clerk. Under our freedom of information scheme, a charge may be levied for copies.

The following draft figures are provided in advance of this year's audit together with a comparison with the previous year's agreed figures.

	2016-17	2017-18
INCOME	£36,329	£36,943
EXPENDITURE	£44,372	£58,773
Excess of income/ expenditure	-£8,043	-£21,830
YEAR END BALANCE AT 31ST March		
Total Cash & Investments	£81,920	£60,090

Some facts about Westfield Parish Council

Did you know that your council:

- Has 11 members who are elected every four years
- Councillors give their time for free, and do not claim any allowances
- Westfield has three electoral wards, Westfield Ward, Westfield Lane Ward and Kent Street Ward.
- Holds from 20 to 30 meetings each year, for planning, finance, recreation and full council.
- Looks after recreation spaces including tennis courts, and arranges maintenance and litter collection to keep them safe and tidy.

Community assets managed by the Council

Over the years, the Parish Council has added to the stock of community property to enhance the quality of life for residents in Westfield. A register of these assets is up-dated each year as part of the year's annual account summary.

Westfield community assets include:

- 11 dog waste bins
- 10 litter bins
- Bus shelters in Main Road (2), Church Lane, Westfield Lane, Kent Street and on the A21 near Moat Lane
- Benches on the Cricket Field, at the Community Hall, on the A28 junction with Cottage Lane, on the Recreation Ground and Churchfield play area, by the village centre and Westfield Lane bus stops.
- Play equipment at the Recreation Ground, Parish Field and Churchfield
- Public notice boards: Kent Street, Moat Lane, Westfield Lane & Main Road
- The Interpretation Board showing a village map and local places of interest near to the surgery on the A28.
- A laptop computer and projector
- Red telephone box at Churchfield

Councillors' additional responsibilities (2017-18)

Tree Warden: Sarah Green

Tennis Club rep: Roger Bowe

WCA Hall management committee: Tim Hills

Church Hall committee: Michael Horley

Rother Association of Local Councils: Michael Edwards, Michael Horley

Personnel Group: Michael Edwards, Hamish Monro

Other Service Providers in (2018-19):

Bus stop and recreation area clearance: Brian Firman

Playground inspections & general parish maintenance: Paul Masters

Community Website Team: Barbara Balkham, Frances Richardson, Phil

Tomlinson, Roger Bowe, Janice Bolton, Pauline Filsell-Page

Grass and hedge cutting: The Landscape Group

Dog-waste bins and litter bins emptied by arrangement with Rother DC

Councillors:

Chairman: Michael Edwards 8 Baldslow Down, St Leonards, TN37 7NH
01424 752272

Vice Chairman: Hamish Monro Wheel Park Farm, Wheel Lane, TN35 4SE
01424 754992

Councillor: Roger Bowe Jagreta Cottage Lane, Westfield, TN35 4QG
01424 752728

Councillor: Patrick Edwards 10 Lewis Road, St Leonards, TN38 9EJ
07791 456573

Councillor: Sarah Green 12 Churchfield, Westfield, TN35 4SN
07725 718115

Councillor: Tim Hills 13 Heathlands, Westfield, Hastings, TN35 4QZ
07832 122557

Councillor: Michael Horley Southings, Main Street, Westfield, TN35 4SL
01424 751217

Councillor: Peter Stapley Rosebank, Kent Street, Sedlescombe, TN33 0SF
01424 751499

Councillor: Min Stratford Selwood, Church Lane, Westfield, TN35 4QB
07952 995743

Councillor: Carly Taylor Hoads Farm Farmhouse, Moat Lane, TN33 0RY
07947 303 534

Councillor: James Woodhead 3 Baldslow Down, St Leonards, TN37 7NH
01424 754509

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Contact telephone numbers:

Rother District Council 01424 787000

East Sussex County Council 0345 60 80 190

Sussex Police, non-emergencies 101

Animal Wardens Ltd (to report lost or stray dogs) 01424 490034

Rother District Council (to report persistent dog fouling) 01424 787000

Rother District Council (to report fly-tipping) 01424 787000

Your District and County Councillors

Carl Maynard 01424 756586 cllr.carl.maynard@eastsussex.gov.uk

Jonathan Johnson 07850 360177 cllr.jonathan.johnson@rother.gov.uk

Parish Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer:

Kate Darbyshire 113 Westfield Lane, St Leonards-on-Sea, TN37 7NF

Tel: 01424 756 973

Email: westfieldcouncil@gmail.com

Website: www.westfieldvillage.co.uk/index.php/parish-council

Westfield Parish Council May 2018