



WESTCOTT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

**Committee Meeting of The Westcott Village Association
Thursday, 11th March 2021 by Zoom video conference at 7.45pm
Agenda and updated action points from the last meeting 14/1/21**

1. Apologies
2. Action points from last meeting - led by PRG
3. Verges / pavements A25 through the village: HW to brief meeting on progress / action
4. Leith Hill Greenway / Wolvens Lane
 - a. Signage led by TEW
 - b. Wolvens Lane - SCC Consultation led by JL - also see letter from Debbie Jones dated 26th February 2021
5. CIL Money Projects – progress reports:
 - a. Extension of cycleway led by TEW
 - b. Community Hall / Surgery led by TEW
 - c. Masters House Cafe led by JL
 - d. Fibre Optic Broadband led by JL - also see attached papers
6. Highways – Noise and Speed watch led by NL
7. Countryside Matters including Green Dog Walker Scheme - see chichester.gov.uk/greendogwalkers
8. Planning Applications led by JL
9. Financial Report led by EH
10. AOB including
 - a. Second Defibrillator led by EH
 - b. Local Green Space designated in MV Local Plan led by TEW
 - c. Proposed 6th Form closure: Prior School led by TEW
 - d. WESTfest 2021 participation
 - e. Proposed BBQ at the AGM
11. Next Meeting scheduled for 13th May, AGM for 24th June

Committee Attendees:

Trustees: Tim Way as Chairman, Simon Bradley, Hugh Broom, Edwin Harland, Sally Hewetson, James Leaver, Nick Lund, Paul Goddard

Also on line: James Friend, Mole Valley District Councillor, Hazel Watson, Surrey County Councillor

Apologies: Andrew Copeland & Sandra Ede

Note: In these Minutes, Surrey County Council is referred to as SCC and Mole Valley District Council as MVDC.

Agenda Point 2: 14th January Meeting Points - with updates where provided prior to the Meeting:

- Westcott Walking Tour - will be progressed when copies of the Westcott Local History leaflets are available. Action : PRG

Update for 11th March: Carry forward

- Dog Poo Signs have been made and will be put up on Cradhurst and the worst affected footpaths during February/March. Action: TEW

Update for 11th March: Posts and fixing brackets have all been purchased and sites identified around the village. These will be put up when TEW is mobile again after his foot operation.

- WVA Website information layouts etc - potential design and information improvement to be proposed. Action: PRG

Update for 11th March: Carry forward

Agenda Point 3: Verges/pavements A25 through the village

Following intense lobbying by JF and HW through their respective Councils and by TEW to the Chief Executive of SCC, HW was able to confirm that SCC Highways Dept. has started to improve and make safer the pavements / paths and verges along the A25 at the east side of the village near Westcott House. The exact scope of work and the timescales for completion are not known but is expected to include both the east and west sides where pedestrian safety is being compromised. Progress will be monitored and noted. Action: TEW

Some discussion also took place about what the Committee believe is a Wotton Estate responsibility for cutting back overhanging trees and vegetation next to the A25 - again to improve pedestrian and road safety. Clarity and action from Estate Management to be requested using the Estate land map from JL. Other Landowners concerned covering both the East and West entries to Westcott to be contacted if necessary. Action : TEW

On behalf of the Committee, EH thanked Tim, Hazel and James for their time and commitment to resolving this ongoing problem.

EH also noted that he had made progress in persuading SCC Highways Dept. to replace the broken light on the 30mph sign at the entry to the Village on the west side. The contacts he has made will be useful in helping to resolve any future such problems. EH will update on completion. TEW thanked EH for taking the initiative on this.

Agenda Point 4a: Leith Hill Greenway:

TEW noted his ongoing discussions with Rob Fairbanks, Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding National Beauty Director. The outcome is that AONB have been putting up the signage along the Greenway through the Village but have declined to do anything specifically about the safety of the route along Hole Hill/Balchins Lane/The Rookery. They will erect small temporary signs at the Balchins Lane/The Rookery junction with the A25, warning users of the Greenway to take care in crossing the A25, but do not want to do more at this time for fear of detracting from the positive message of providing this multi-user pathway through the Surrey Hills. TEW reiterated his concerns about the speed of vehicles approaching this crossing point from both East and West and reinforced his view that there was an accident waiting to happen.

As a result, TEW will continue to pursue a discussion with Zena Curry, the nominated senior manager at SCC Highways Dept. to discuss and agree signage and works needed to reduce vehicle speeds at the Balchins Lane / The Rookery crossing of the A25 and along Balchins Lane to reduce risks to Greenway and other Users. Action: TEW

The signs warning Greenway Path Users approaching Rookery Drive to be aware of the road were identified as potentially requiring improvement. On further review, it was agreed - with a clean up - they are suitable. As with any sign, it relies on Users to read them and take note as well as Users' general responsibility to take care at all times.

JF noted that Rookery Drive is in fact a private road, managed by a 'Rookery Road Residents Group'. Whilst Residents probably drive safely, it is Visitors and Delivery Drivers who do not. Contact to be made with Nick Jordan Moss / Murray Stephen to discuss any Residents Group response to the Greenway Initiative. Action: TEW

Agenda Point 4b: Wolvens Lane - Public Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT)

JL gave a synopsis of the Consultation Document and process initiated by Debbie Jones, Senior Countryside Access Officer, SCC following the completion of repairs and improvements to Wolvens Lane. Four options on next steps are set out for consideration in the Consultation, with an invitation for the public to comment on them by 19th April.

The WVA March news update includes salient details on this Consultation and asks Westcott Residents to copy the WVA with their submissions in order that the WVA can gauge the mood and ultimately frame a formal response. In the meantime, JL continues to liaise with the Parish Councils of Wotton and Capel with a view to establishing a common approach/outcome. Action: TEW/JL

SH noted the response to the Consultation from Dan Brown who runs a business which includes taking horse and cart rides onto Leith Hill. He says Option 1 would adversely impact his business. TEW agreed to look at this and ensure it was taken into account in the formal WVA response. This response will be made available for comment and / or discussion by the Committee before submission.

Agenda Point 5: Progress Reports:

a) Extending Cycleway from St John's Bridge into the New Development: Matter is with Claire Summers of the Rights of Way Office of SCC who is sourcing quotes. Action: HB will stay in touch with CS

b) Community Hall/ Surgery: Given his role as an Advisor to the project chaired by Bernd Ratzke, JL noted that the Surgery / Hut / Reading Room Project Team have prepared a Consultation Pack to be used at Public Meetings once Covid Rules allow.

In response to a question from SH, JF expressed his understanding that the current Riverbank Surgery is not at risk of closing in the near term.

c) Masters House: The sale of the building has been completed and the shop replacing the bakery has opened.

The new Owners have kindly agreed to continue to provide electricity to the defibrillator on the outside wall of the building.

d) Fibre Optic Broadband: There was another wide ranging discussion on the potential for upgrading the current network. The lack of interest from Residents suggest the network is largely satisfactory. No actions or follow up were noted except that TEW agreed to inform Alan Reif who had raised the issue with him in the first place. Action: TEW

Agenda Point 6: Speeding & Traffic Noise

NL confirmed the VAS is being replaced on the East side of the Village. Completion date not known.

The Surrey & Sussex Police are merging their Speed Watch Programmes which will give Users improved systems and more automation. Initial online training has taken place with five Volunteers - another follow-up session will be scheduled to clear queries and questions. All proposed sites have been agreed. The aim is to still to start kerbside activity as soon as Covid restrictions allow. Action: NL

Agenda Point 7: Countryside Matters

Initiated by JL, a short discussion took place about the merits of the Green Dog Walker Scheme operating in Chichester and elsewhere in the UK. All agreed in principle that it could operate to our advantage in Westcott given the ongoing 'Dog Poo Problem' in and around the village, but that it should be sponsored by MVDC for the whole of the Surrey

Hills area not least because of the £500 set up costs. TEW agreed to write to the Dog Warden at MVDC. JF and HW both pledged their support.

Action: TEW

Agenda Point 8: Planning Applications

- i) Westcott Old Dairy, Garden Hill: JL has written to MVDC in support of the Westcott Residents directly affected by this application. The Committee added their thanks to James to those of several Residents affected for this response. MVDC reaction awaited.
- ii) Nothing to report on progress with 'The Cricketers'.

Agenda Point 9: Financial Report

- EH confirmed c£9,000 cleared funds available. Gift Aid of £500 approved by HMRC.
- The bill for the Surrey Hills School laptops has not been received from Louise Jeffers.

Agenda Point 10: Any Other Business

- a. The Second Westcott Defibrillator will be installed on 18th March. Chris Smewing to be notified. Action: EH
- b. Local Green Space designation in the MV Local Plan - TEW has confirmed to MVDC the reasons why the Craddock needs to remain as recreation green space and this submission has been acknowledged by the Planning Officer.
- c. Proposed 6th Form closure: Prior School: Other than expressing regret, no other comments were made on this.
- d. WESTfest 2021, Sunday 18th July WVA participation agreed - likely to be a Tombola and Cake stall, the latter pending Sandra Ede agreement.
- e. AGM date and proposed BBQ: The consensus was to continue to plan for this date and activity pending announcements on future Covid regulations
- f. SH made the Committee aware of a Start Up Chimney Sweep service now available based in the Village.

Next Meeting: 13th May 2021.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 21.19hours.

PRG : 17th March 2021