



WESTCOTT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

**Agenda & Minutes: Committee Meet Thursday 12th September 2024
7.30pm at Westcott Village Hall – Side Meeting Room**

Attendance: James Leaver, Nick Lund, Jo Astor, Paul Goddard,
Magesh Ramakrishnan

Agenda:

- 1) Apologies - none required
- 2) Our 2024/25 planned objectives / activities / organisation – What are we going to aim to do and how are we going to aim to do it?
To include how to address A25 footpath safety, succession plans generally for committee members and how to improve the working relationship with elected Councillors
- 3) Christmas tree CIL application & bus stop / dovecote status
- 4) Matters to be specifically discussed:
 - i) Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan next steps
 - ii) Village hall planning application – WVA actions required
- 5) Updates from each member in turn on any other current and ongoing matters: – please circulate any written reports to all members if possible before the meeting
- 6) Review of last meeting minutes – discuss ongoing matters not concluded / discussed elsewhere
- 7) AGM minutes – agree them & actions arising especially the thought to streamline Westcott organisations
- 8) December 2024 Open Meeting - venue / requirements and agenda
- 9) Confirm remaining 2024 meetings:
Committee Meets: 7th Nov. Open Meet 5th Dec. & discuss 2025 dates
- 10) AOB

Agenda Item 2 incorporating Item 3

- Given the Committee have limited time and with only five members a discussion was held to set 24/25 priorities with the following conclusions on what are, or continue to be the priorities:
 - I. To launch and progress the revision of the WNDP is the most important objective, and to complete it by the end of 2025.
Actions: see Agenda Point 4 for next steps
 - II. Village Forum participants are seen as the most likely candidates to become WVA Committee members in future. Appeals for new Committee members will continue in appropriate newsletters. JL, NL and PRG

confirmed it was their intention to leave the Committee at the 2025 AGM. Action: Committee Members to continue to publicise the need for new Committee Members at every opportunity. If no one comes forward, the ongoing existence of the WVA is in doubt

- III. The clear message to the WVA Committee and to Local and County Councillors present at the 2024 AGM is that residents feel unsafe when using the pavements alongside the A25 – due to the combination of vehicle speeds, narrow pavements obstructed by invading soil and vegetation. Action: PRG has written to the Agent of Wootton Estates asking to meet and discuss concerns & solutions west of the Village. Contact to be made with Westcott House and the Girl Guides to discuss concerns and solutions east of the Village. Local Councillors to be kept informed of progress or otherwise, and asked for help and support where possible.
- IV. Continue to monitor and comment upon planning applications relating to property and land within the Westcott Ward as defined by the WNDP within the responsibility set out in the WNDP. Action: To continue as now with the weekly review & comment from JL
- V. Continue to monitor, comment and seek consultation on the two likely housing developments at Sondes Place and at Milton Court Farm. Action: principally JL but supported wholeheartedly by the Committee and by residents when necessary – weight of protest is important.
- VI. Attempt to improve the relationship with other Westcott organisations and with the Local Councillors. After some discussion, this was felt to be achievable using the Village Forum and the WNDP review process as this will need direct and full involvement of both these groups. Note that MVDC have confirmed that there are no reasons why Local Councillors cannot participate in that Village Forum. It was felt that any thought of merging / or synergies from merging village organisations would probably only be realistic when the Village Hall project is concluded. Note Only
- VII. It was agreed that the following local events would be directly supported by the WVA: 1) Remembrance Soldier and Poppies 2) Buying and erecting the Christmas tree on the Green – scheduled for 7/12, with suggested Tree Carols on 20/12 - & 3) 2025 WestFest, though not necessarily with a Bottle Tombola but potentially with other activities. It was not envisaged at this time that the WVA would be involved in any other local event. Note Only
- VIII. To conclude one way or the other on the proposed projects to 1) insert a permanent metal sleeve for the tree and duct a mains power supply from the bus stop / lamp close by on the A25 as a power point for the Green – this is subject to a live CIL bid at present, 2) repair and renew the dovecote and bus stop and 3) install a new VAS sign on the triangle outside the Cricketers. Action: To be progressed to a conclusion as necessary by JL, JA and NL respectively

- IX. To continue to follow the progress and conclusions of the AONB Boundary Consultation and the Rights of Way Consultation and respond to additional consultations as necessary. Action: JL and PRG respectively
- X. 2025 AGM Agenda to concentrate only on AGM business in order to be shorter and more focussed. Drinks afterwards still envisaged. Note only
- XI. Open Meetings will preferably be held at the Prince of Wales with speakers along the lines of the March 2024 Meeting. The programme might be dictated by the progress and meeting requirements of the WNDP. An Open Meeting is still scheduled for 5th December but will be confirmed at the 12th November Committee Meeting. Note Only
- XII. To continue to urge residents to use the MVDC and SCC problem reporting mechanisms covering most aspects of council responsibilities. Note only
- XIII. To continue to communicate regularly with residents via Email, Village Magazine and social media but not necessarily every month. Note only
- XIV. To support and promote SpeedWatch activity as necessary. Note only
- XV. To support and promote Highway Improvements as much as possible including double yellow lines around the Green and supporting SHASS with their Safe Routes to School assessment looking at local traffic, parking hazards and obstacles which challenge and potentially risk the safety of parents and children on their way to and from school. Action NL

Agenda Item 4:

- i) Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP)
 - The Committee discussed and confirmed the vital importance of formally updating the WNDP by the end of 2025. This update to include revised and updated policies to support Village requirements including for instance, commercial interests, parking needs, sustainability policies and potentially a call for sites to enable further infill housing development.
 - The first step is to convene a Village Forum and nominate and agree individuals for key roles - which may or may not be WVA committee members. The Forum will have the full wholehearted support and backing of the WVA and all current WVA committee members committed to participate actively in the Forum.
 - A Forum Chair is needed. Action: JL to approach a potential candidate
 - About twenty village residents have put forward their name to join the Village Forum – a body required by law to be convened to consider and progress then plan. Another twenty to twenty five are required such that the Forum is representative of Westcott ward as a whole including businesses and organisations such as the Church and School. Those that took part in the last VF who still live in the Village to be approached

first to see if they will participate again - suggested using a letter from the Chair if possible. Action: JA / JL

- We need to confirm and agree with MVDC that the Westcott WNDP area boundary will be as it is for the existing WNDP and will not be related to current local council ward boundaries. Action: JL
- ii) Village hall planning application – WVA actions required
- JL has circulated a draft letter for the Committee to consider once Committee members have looked at planning application when publicly circulated by MVDC. Agreed final letter to be submitted on behalf of the WVA. Individuals are also encouraged to submit representations on a personal basis as weight of numbers as well as arrange of respondents is best. PRG to co ordinate. Action All

Agenda Item 5

- Updates covered and documented within other parts of the minutes apart from noting that Jo is to talk again with Jon Mears about the use of St Johns to ensure the WVA is acting consistently with regard to local businesses and that commercial activities in the village comply with planning and other relevant regulations. Action: JA
- The Treasurer noted that the WVA has circa £12k cash in the bank.

Agenda Item 6:

- All items covered elsewhere

Agenda Item 7:

- Committee to confirm their approval of the Draft minutes circulated by the Secretary. Done by JL & NL. Action: JA/MR to confirm

Agenda Item 8:

- Still likely that December Open Meeting would be at PoW if their activity schedule allows. Action: PRG to confirm that PoW is available for 5/12

Agenda Item 9:

- November 24 meet date changed to Tuesday 12th November.
Action: PRG to confirm village hall side room is available.
- Agreed that Committee would aim for monthly meets / Zoom meets in order to minimise email and to better co ordinate and discuss WVA activity. Suggested first half 2025 dates are as follows:

Thursdays - 9th January, 13th February, 13th March – potentially an Open Meeting - , 10th April, 8th May, 5th June with AGM on 26th June

Agenda Item 10: No AOB raised.

The meeting finished at 22.15

