

**WESTLETON
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2026**

DRAFT MINUTES

APM26/1 Opening and welcome by the Chair of Westleton Parish Council

The meeting was opened and chaired by Cllr Andrew Turner, Chair of Westleton Parish Council. The Chair welcome all present, remarking on the sizeable turnout, and thanked the Chestnut Group (The Westleton Crown) for its generous donation of wine for the meeting, as well as Adnams for its donation of three crates of Ghost Ship.

APM26/2 Attendance and apologies for absence

There were 59 people in attendance, including the Chair and Clerk to the Parish Council, as well as ten of Westleton's eleven parish councillors. Apologies were received from County Councillor John Matthews and District Councillor Paul Ashton.

APM26/3 Minutes of the Westleton Annual Parish Meeting 2025

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for 2025 were accepted as a true record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chair.

APM26/4 Reports from County and District Councillors

Both County Councillor John Matthews and District Councillor Paul Ashton submitted written reports, which were read verbatim by the Clerk in their absence. Copies of their reports can be found in the appended compilation of reports.

APM26/5 Report from the Parish Council

Reports were delivered by the parish councillors and Clerk to the Parish Council on the key areas listed below. Summaries of these reports can be found in the appended compilation of reports.

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|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| a) Chair's report | <i>Cllr Andrew Turner</i> |
| b) Allotments | <i>Cllr David Watson + Hillas Smith</i> |
| c) Common | <i>Cllr Ian Webber</i> |
| d) Community Field | <i>Cllr Paul Holmes</i> |
| e) Finance | <i>Cllr Ian Webber</i> |
| f) NSIPs | <i>Cllr Andrew Turner</i> |
| g) Planning / Local Plan | <i>Richard Green (Clerk)</i> |
| h) Village Survey | <i>Richard Green (Clerk)</i> |

APM26/6 Reports from parish groups and organisations

Reports were delivered on behalf of the groups and organisations listed below. Summaries of these reports can be found in the appended compilation of reports.

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|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Westleton Village Hall | <i>Barbara Buckley</i> |
| b) Death Café | <i>Judie Shore</i> |
| c) Men's Breakfast | <i>Barbara Buckley</i> |
| d) Model Railway Group | <i>Tom Ash</i> |
| e) Soup & Pud | <i>Sam Banks</i> |
| f) Tech Table | <i>Paul Shore</i> |
| g) Vive la France | <i>Sue Evans</i> |
| h) Westleton Archive Group | <i>Francis Berry</i> |
| i) Westleton Art Group | <i>Andy Gilmour</i> |
| j) Westleton Camera Club | <i>Carole Homersham</i> |
| k) Westleton Chess Club | <i>Tony Ketley</i> |
| l) Westleton Church of St Peter | <i>Joyce Burtenshaw</i> |
| m) Westleton Film Club | <i>Stephen Podgorney</i> |
| n) Westleton Gardeners | <i>Marilyn Stephens</i> |

- o) Westleton Music Group *Catherine Ash*
- p) Westleton Table Tennis Club *Tony Ketley*
- q) Westleton WI *Gill Wood*
- r) *3D 4All* *Jan Dowman*
- s) Reports from any other groups and organisations not listed on the agenda

APM26/7 Reports from parish businesses

Reports were delivered on behalf of the businesses listed below. Summaries of these reports can be found in the appended compilation of reports.

- a) Village Store & Post Office *Ian Johnson*
- b) The Crown PH *Henry Fairbanks – Chestnut Group*
- c) White Horse Inn PH *Ian Johnson & Henry Fairbanks – Chestnut Group*
- d) Reports from any other businesses not listed on the agenda

APM26/8 Resolutions, other business, and comments on any other parish matters

No resolutions were proposed by any person present, nor was any other business raised. One person present expressed their gratitude for the work of the Parish Council. The Chair thanked the attendee for their comments.

APM26/9 Date of the next meeting

Westleton's next Annual Parish Meeting is provisionally scheduled for Monday 24 May 2027

APM26/10 Closing of the meeting

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and for the variety of interesting reports. He commented on the diversity of activities within a small village.

****Meeting closed at 20:45****

WESTLETON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2026 COMPILATION OF REPORTS

Agenda item	APM26/4
Report for	County Councillor John Matthews
Delivered by	Clerk, on behalf of Cllr Matthews
Report	<p>“Congrats to Andrew for getting almost the same number of votes as the Conservatives. I am literally getting my feet under the table, but want to try and make a positive difference for all residents in the Blyth Estuary Ward - 20 parish councils in total! Therefore my time management will be efficient and that will mean attending in person, selective meetings, as yet to be determined.</p> <p>I am just in the process of discussing my brief at the SCC level - the more extensive it is, the less in person I will be. Let's see. I am almost set up for remote working.</p> <p>At this stage, I am minded to ask each PC what are their top 3 priorities over and above SZC related matters, which have prevailed [sic] for many years!</p> <p>Without yet being formalised in my role, A12 closure at the weekend by the Yoxford roundabout, we are all very aware of.</p> <p>Whilst I live in Westleton, I have to be neutral because I have the likes also of Wrentham, Southwold, Walberswick, Darsham, Middleton, Theberton, Yoxford and more. Clearly the critical issues of each PC will have commonality.</p> <p>At this stage, I will at best be reactive to inbound communication traffic bearing in mind the above. The administration is brand new and will take a little time to bed down.”</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/4
Report for	District Councillor Paul Ashton
Delivered by	Clerk, on behalf of Cllr Ashton
Report	<p>“Sorry, I can't be with you for your meetings this evening. I am recovering well from my hip replacement. I expect to be able to drive by the end of this month so I should be at your June meetings.</p> <p>I have given you verbal updates each month through the last year. Rather than summarise them I thought it would be helpful to share some of the other things I do as a member of the ESC Cabinet. Here are a few of the highlights from the last year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced a callback capability in Customer Service so residents don't have to wait to be answered. • Redesign of the ESC Website to make it easier to find things and reduce the clicks and pages to get there • New East Suffolk Council App - I personally championed this and hope you find it useful. Search for "East Suffolk Council" on your app store to find and download it. Please let me know what you think. • One of my Cabinet responsibilities is for the assets that ESC owns. I am pleased we are making progress with refurbishment of several asset types, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing refurbishment of play spaces. I was particularly pleased Wrentham was completed earlier this year. A further five play spaces will be upgraded across East Suffolk this financial year. ○ Ongoing programme of public toilets refurbishment and redecorating ○ Ongoing programme of resurfacing car parks continues with 5 more planned this year • Introduced a tree management and inspection system. There was insufficient rigour around tree inspections that is being resolved now. • Created a plan to refurbish the Caravan and Campsite at Southwold to improve profitability and generate the funds required to maintain the harbour and keep it open. • Introduced short term hires for beach huts owned by ESC leading to more people enjoying a beach hut day and generating more activity for the seaside economy. I am working on enabling mobile saunas to occupy sites at some of our beaches in the coming months • Catching up rent reviews and lease renewals for commercial property owned by ESC. When I took up my Cabinet role these were well behind. Significant progress has been made leading to more income for other Council services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full review of ESC assets leading to some disposals and income for other services for the council • Value for Money - agreed and planned £1.3M efficiency challenge for East Suffolk Services in 2026/27 • New pay and display machines in all ESC car parks inc. pay by card/contactless. I am committed to retaining at least one payment machine per car park that can take coins. • SZC engagement - Northern Transport Forum and meetings regarding the B1125 and B1387.”
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/5(a)
Report for	Parish Council – Chair’s report
Delivered by	Cllr Andrew Turner
Report	The Chair welcomed Cllr Juliet Overton and the new Clerk, Richard Green, who had both joined the Parish Council since the last Annual Parish Meeting. The Chair noted that the Clerk had been working to improve council processes and structures, which had in part resulted in the amended format of this year’s annual parish meeting.
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/5(b)
Report for	Parish Council – Allotments
Delivered by	Cllr David Watson and Hillas Smith
Report	<p><i>Cllr David Watson:</i> “Having looked at several potential sites in the village without success, I offered to make available an area of land on Grange Meadow to set up an allotment. Following a well attended public meeting it was agreed to go ahead.</p> <p>We then marked out the field into 24 beds each 8m X 16m , and proceeded to rotavate the existing grass sward leaving grass paths between each bed. As interest grew, we added another 7 beds before the rabbit and deer fence was erected. In the meantime we contacted Essex and Suffolk Water to connect to a mains supply which luckily ran through the site. We also drew up the necessary tenancy agreements. We then held a meeting where plot-holders names were drawn out of a plant pot to select their beds.</p> <p>Everyone was keen to get started, but the miserable winter had left the ground quite wet. Two months on the site is really looking like a proper allotment with 25 beds taken. There has developed a strong allotment community which has made the project a great new asset to the village.”</p> <p><i>Hillas Smith:</i> “The first few months of the new village allotments have been a tremendous success, and we owe a huge thank you to the Westleton Parish Council for all the hard work involved in setting up the site. The fencing is excellent, the water supply is in place, and everything was ready for us to get growing.</p> <p>A special mention must also go to David, who has been an absolute star with his tractor — sorting out the site itself while also patiently navigating the mountain of legal agreements needed between the landowner and the parish.</p> <p>A good number of the allotments are now well underway, and what has been most remarkable is the incredible village network that has organically grown from a tiny seed into a flourishing community in just a few months.</p> <p>Some allotments already resemble Mr McGregor’s garden, complete with sheds, compost heaps, and beautifully ordered rows of thriving plants. Others are taking a slightly more relaxed approach, bravely battling the wind, the lack of rain, and grass that has been happily living on that field for years. There are also exciting experiments underway involving cardboard and weed-suppressing membranes — with varying degrees of success!</p> <p>The allotmenters meet every couple of months in the pub for a drink and to exchange stories, advice, triumphs, and disasters. The organisation itself is really a “non-organisation” — more of a friendly collective than anything official.</p> <p>And finally, if anyone is interested in joining us, please do let me or David know. You would be very warmly welcomed into the allotment family — and absolutely no previous experience is required.”</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/5(c)
Report for	Parish Council – Common
Delivered by	Cllr Ian Webber
Report	<p>“2025 saw regular activities and some significant one-off developments on Westleton Common.</p> <p>Our local volunteers met on five Saturday mornings for a couple of hours work, mainly to clear gorse. There were six Nature Walks, attended by regulars and newcomers.</p> <p>Another team of volunteers, organised by Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape, visited in September and cleared a new footpath on the western side of the Common, linking the bottle bank layby on the B1125 to the view point at the south end of the Common. It seems to be extremely popular.</p> <p>Without the contribution of our wonderful volunteers, the Common would quickly become overgrown. We are immensely grateful for their time and labour.</p> <p>We were also pleased to welcome a second visit to the Common and Village Hall by the Suffolk Naturalists’ Society.</p> <p>In 2024, contractors restored a cliff face previously used by nesting sand martins on the southern side of the 1945 pit. The work was generously funded by Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape. Somewhat to our surprise, the sand martins returned promptly in 2025 excavating perhaps a couple of dozen nest burrows. Seeing these wonderful birds wheeling around seeking food for their chicks was glorious.</p> <p>In 2025, Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape also agreed to fund the replacement of a couple of benches which had rotted and also to install three new seats including a back-to-back double at the new view point.</p> <p>Several housekeeping tasks were done during the year including, importantly, re-cutting the firebreaks on the north common, which was repeated recently.</p> <p>2026 to date has seen Working Parties and Nature Walks. The calendar of events is readily available; please join in !</p> <p>Thank you to all who support the Common and make it such a special place to visit.”</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/5(d)
Report for	Parish Council – Community Field
Delivered by	Cllr Paul Holmes
Report	<p>“The Community Field is well used by the village and surrounding area including many holiday makers, adults and children. There are also 19 teams partaking in the Westleton boule competition this year. The Community Field continues to be maintained and the project this year is to upgrade the chippings under and around the large climbing frame by replacing with rubber matting. Also, it is planned to upgrade the wooden legs on the climbing frame in this area with metal ones. There are several other small jobs that need attention such as replacing some of the timber on the small climbing frame and additional stone topping on the boule court. We are also looking into the possibility of visitors being able to make donations for the upkeep of the community field by bank card as well as cash in the donation box on site. I would also like to say a big thank you to those who have volunteered throughout the year to help maintain the community field.”</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/5(e)
Report for	Parish Council – Finance
Delivered by	Cllr Ian Webber
Report	<p>“The Council’s financial year ended on 31 March 2026 and the unaudited accounts are available on the website and have been posted on the notice board by the shop.</p> <p>We had approximately £23,000 of regular income from the precept, grant from DEFRA for the Common, interest and recovery of VAT. There was £35,000 on-off income from the Community Infrastructure Levy – CIL – paid by property developers. Total income was £58,000. CIL money can only be spent on specified items; it is not available to cover general costs.</p>

	<p>Routine spend was approximately £26,000 – so a little more than our regular income – and was pretty much as budget. One-off expenditure was approximately £13,000 on the allotments – CIL money covers this as well as a few other items like war memorial maintenance.</p> <p>Mindful that regular costs exceed regular income and that CIL is firstly time limited – it has to be spent within five years – secondly limited in its application and thirdly unpredictable, the Council elected to increase the precept for 2026/27 modestly to be able to cover the regular shortfall when CIL money runs out. The increase totalled £1,100 spread across all residents.</p> <p>The cash / reserves position is healthy at £90,000 although approximately £42,000 is unspent CIL and £10,000 is from a donation specifically for the Common.</p> <p>For the current year 2026 / 27 we do not expect any additional CIL money. The budget shows a further small deficit which can be covered by our reserves.”</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/5(f)
Report for	Parish Council – Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)
Delivered by	Cllr Andrew Turner
Report	<p><i>“Sizewell C (SZC)</i></p> <p>SZC works continue to present issues on the local road network. Westleton Parish Council (WPC) works with SZC to manage concerns arising:</p> <p>Traffic on the B1125:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volume should decrease once Blythburgh is blocked-off and the Northern Park and Ride is fully in use. If it does not, we will discuss mitigation with SZC. - Speed: speeding through the village has been reduced by the average speed cameras, but the speed watch team has recently caught speeders on the Blythburgh road. They are noting if speeders are SZC-badged – if so they will be reported to SZC as well as the police. The speed watch team will also be used to monitor (as best as possible) the volume of SZC-badged 4x4s which is not expected to reduce as they are used on site - WPC coordinated a joint-Parish initiative calling for measures to reduce volumes and speed along the B1125 – Suffolk County Council are currently considering the request to reduce the speed limit from Westleton to Blythburgh to 50mph. <p>A12 Darsham diversions – WPC has ensured that official A12 diversions will not go via Westleton. But, drivers’ local knowledge/sat navs and smaller road routing may mean higher traffic volumes when the work on Darsham crossing starts. Monitoring will be necessary to report concerns to SZC.</p> <p>Westleton traffic calming measures are now due to be implemented late summer/early autumn. This is almost a year overdue.</p> <p><i>Sea Link</i></p> <p>The planning Inspectorate has completed its examination of the Sea link project. It will report to the Secretary of State (SoS) in 3 months’ time, the SoS will then decide to approve or not. WPC has raised concerns about increased traffic on the road network and the impacts, and cumulative impacts of all of the energy projects – on the transport, the environment and the local economy. WPC has called for a ban on the use of the B1125 by any Sea Link vehicles (this will be particularly important if the access to the Sea Link Converter Station site is via the B1122 rather than the B1121 as may be required) and called for Sea Link to pay into a SCC fund for road repairs.</p> <p><i>LionLink</i></p> <p>WPC submitted comment to the statutory consultation for LionLink. Comments focussed on the need for the projects to recognise the cumulative impacts of the NSIPs together total rather than considering the impacts of each in isolation; noted concerns about the impacts of horizontal directional drilling within 1km of Westleton; stated that the Yoxford Road is not suitable for HGV traffic so should not be a designated HGV route; called for a ban on the use of the B1125 by any LionLink vehicles (this will be particularly important if the access to the Sea Link Converter Station site is via the B1122 rather than the B1121 as may be required) and called for lionLink to pay into a SCC fund for road repairs.”</p>
Comments/questions	One attendee queried traffic volumes in the village and asked whether data was available and could be published on the website. Cllr Turner agreed to follow up on this.

Agenda item	APM26/5(g)
Report for	Parish Council – Local Plan
Delivered by	Clerk – Richard Green
Report	<p>The Clerk introduced the four sites that had been proposed by landowners in East Suffolk District Council’s Call for Sites in late 2025. The Clerk noted that all four sites had been proposed for housing and that the public consultation on the proposals would open in the coming weeks and months. He encouraged anyone with a view to get involved in the consultation, and reminded people that the Parish Council’s response will carry no more weight than any single member of the public’s.</p> <p>The Clerk proceeded to show the sites put forward in neighbouring villages, such as Darsham, and showed a map placing the sites in the wider context of East Suffolk.</p>
Comments/questions	One attendee queried who the landowners were. The Clerk stated that the Parish Council does not receive this information as part of the submissions. The attendee remarked that they would be able to obtain this information from HM Land Registry, and the Clerk advised that there would be a fee to do so.

Agenda item	APM26/5(h)
Report for	Parish Council – Village Survey
Delivered by	Clerk – Richard Green
Report	<p>The Clerk formally launched the Westleton Village Survey – a collaboration between the Parish Council, the Village Hall, and the Church of St Peter – which will run until 31 August 2026.</p> <p>The Clerk encouraged as many people as possible to respond to the survey, as the responses will guide the decisions made in the parish over the coming years.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(a)
Report for	Westleton Village Hall
Delivered by	Barbara Buckley
Report	<p>“Westleton Village Hall is a registered charity, proudly run by a dedicated team of volunteer trustees. For a village of our size, the Hall continues to “punch above its weight,” serving as a vibrant and much-valued community asset.</p> <p>An ambitious vision in the late 2010s led to the transformation of the former Grade II listed school into the excellent facility we enjoy today. This included the addition of a welcoming foyer, a professional-standard kitchen, and the appointment of a dedicated Centre Manager. These achievements were made possible—and continue to be sustained—by an extraordinary team of volunteers, whose energy and commitment remain at the heart of everything we do.</p> <p>Over the past year, the Hall has continued to thrive as an inclusive and welcoming community hub, providing a warm, safe space that supports the wellbeing of residents in Westleton and the wider local area. Through our “Hall for All” programme, we have hosted a wide range of affordable events, ensuring that entertainment and social opportunities remain accessible to all. These have included film nights, community meals, live music, and social gatherings—bringing people together and creating many enjoyable shared experiences. These activities are not only socially valuable but also vital in supporting the Hall financially.</p> <p>Over the past year, “Hall for All” events have raised more than £10,000, while providing enjoyment for hundreds of attendees through music, food, dancing, and community celebration.</p> <p>We are also extremely grateful for the continued support of the Friends of the Hall, whose regular monthly contributions have raised £6,000 over the year. In addition, our popular foyer coffee mornings and art sales—enjoyed by so many—have contributed a further £4,000. Events such as “Soup and Pud” lunches have brought people together in a different way, including the celebration of some very special milestone birthdays within our community.</p> <p>The Trustees are especially delighted to announce that, on 5th May, Westleton Village Hall was awarded a grant of £54,000 from the Sizewell C Community Fund, administered by the Suffolk Community Foundation. This significant award recognises both the impact of the Sizewell C programme on our local community and the importance of supporting lasting, positive local initiatives as part of its legacy.</p>

	<p>This funding is a strong endorsement of the valuable role the Village Hall plays at the heart of community life, and of the dedication and hard work of all those involved in its success. Together with your continued support for our fundraising efforts, it enables us to move forward with renewed confidence into the second phase of our modernisation programme.</p> <p>Our immediate priority is the replacement of the ageing windows, which have now deteriorated significantly. As a Grade II listed building, it is essential that their replacement preserves the Hall's historic character. We will therefore install high-quality wooden frames with double-glazed units, improving energy efficiency while maintaining the building's distinctive appearance.</p> <p>We also plan to refurbish an external room, currently used for storage, to create an additional consultation space. This will help us expand opportunities to host and deliver valuable local services for residents.</p> <p>The Trustees are continuing to develop further improvement plans, which we look forward to sharing with you over the coming year.</p> <p>Finally, we extend our sincere thanks to everyone who supports the Hall: those who attend events, contribute as Friends, and take part in fundraising activities. Above all, we thank our remarkable volunteers, including those who work tirelessly behind the scenes to keep the Hall running smoothly each day. Your dedication makes all of this possible, and it is deeply appreciated."</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(b)								
Report for	Death Café								
Delivered by	Judie Shore								
Report	<p>The Westleton Death Café was formed in February 2024 with open day on 21 August and formal launch on 18 September 2024. Since then 8 meetings have been held in a regular slot on the fourth Thursday of the month at 4.15pm in Westleton Village Hall. A recent decision has been to set four meetings a year.</p> <p>Death Cafes emerged from the idea of creating a safe and open space for people to discuss death and dying, inspired by the work of Swiss sociologist Bernard Crettaz who called them Café Mortels. It is a not for profit 'social franchise' or free affiliate scheme which aims to 'increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives'. Café listings can be found at www.deathcafe.com.</p> <p>There is no set agenda although we offer suggested themes of focus. Space is given for free discussion on the topic which is pertinent to all and with the added comfort of a hot drink (chargeable) and a piece of cake! Donations are suggested to cover hall costs.</p> <p>Forthcoming meetings:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Thursday 24 September</td> <td>Funerals: What, how, where?</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday 26 November</td> <td>End of Life Care</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday 28 January 2027</td> <td>Have you the Will?</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday 22 April 2027</td> <td>Power of Attorney recap</td> </tr> </table>	Thursday 24 September	Funerals: What, how, where?	Thursday 26 November	End of Life Care	Thursday 28 January 2027	Have you the Will?	Thursday 22 April 2027	Power of Attorney recap
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Comments/questions	None								

Agenda item	APM26/6(c)
Report for	Men's Breakfast
Delivered by	Barbara Buckley
Report	<p>This group was started with a small grant from Councillor Ashton as an initiative to improve male social inclusion and mental health within the Village. It had been pointed out that with the demise of the White Horse (local) there were few places that men could meet on a casual drop in basis.</p> <p>We started with 8 and now have a regular group of 20+ and I deliver also to the Garage. At Christmas, we did a full fry up and had 26 attendees and a poetry reading! The group is inclusive, supportive and provide welfare checks on non arrivals.</p> <p>I am always looking for funding to keep this going as a free, no obligation event so please spread the word. We keep it local to the Village to contain costs but we welcome those from other areas who have an affinity with our Hall.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(d)
Report for	Yoxmere Model Railway Club
Delivered by	Tom Ash
Report	<p>The Yoxmere Model Railway Club was established in 2014 by a group of Westletonians and membership soon spread to a few members from the surrounding villages hence the name. It started as a group for those interested in railways – history and engineering – but soon established itself as a club whose primary purpose was model railways.</p> <p>The group originally met in the Westleton Village Hall but soon had to move to other premises in Peasenhall. Covid resulted in activities ceasing for a couple of years, but when the group reconvened it was presented with some great opportunities. Firstly, the opportunity to move back to Westleton, secondly the recruitment of some experienced modellers and finally the offer of the beginnings of a large layout based on Kelvedon and the Tollesbury Branch in Essex.</p> <p>The club has achieved a huge amount since moving back to Westleton in 2022. Membership has grown to 11, 'Kelvedon' has gone from bare boards laid with track to much of the scenic work now complete and the complex electrical circuitry required to operate such a large model is almost finished. The club has gone from meeting fortnightly to gathering weekly.</p> <p>We hold a least one open day throughout the year, when villagers can drop in to find out what we have been up to, and a number of running days when we gather to work on the complete layout rather than individual boards. On 23rd May we will be presenting our second exhibition which will feature our own model and four visiting layouts. The foyer will be open during the exhibition to welcome anyone who fancies tea/coffee and/or cake without having to enter the exhibition for which there is a charge.</p> <p>For the future we will be working on the Tollesbury Branch which went from Kelvedon to the Wilkins Jam factory at Tiptree. We always welcome new members and anyone interested is welcome to join us for tea, cake and a chat on a Wednesday afternoon. In addition to engineering and artistic skills railway modeller draws on a number of different skills including research into local history and we have been complemented on our depiction of Kelvedon as it existed in the late 1950s/early sixties. It is a club that caters for a wide range of skills and interests. Challenges for the future include improving the storage space for our model and developing a junior section of the club to pass on the skills to younger generations and encourage their interest in the pastime.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(e)
Report for	Soup + Pud
Delivered by	Sam Banks
Report	<p>Soup + Pud provides a lunch service each Monday from 12:00 to 13:00 with a choice of soups and desserts, as well as tea and coffee, at a cost of £6.00, which can be paid by cash or card.</p> <p>Between 20 and 25 clients attend from the local community each week, with 748 meals served by a dedicated team of friendly helpers since September.</p> <p>Further helpers are needed, as well as cooks who can prepare food at home and bring it to the hall. A basic food safety and hygiene certificate is required – please speak with the Soup + Pud team if you are interested. Helpers are also needed to assist in serving food and helping in the kitchen.</p> <p>New members are always welcome, of any age. Carers also eat for free if they are accompanying a client.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(f)
Report for	Tech Table
Delivered by	Paul Shore
Report	<p>Tech Table started in October 2023, with David Collins & Paul Shore wanting to see if there was a need for technical advice within the local community – there was. By May of 2026 the Tech Table will have broken the 500-barrier for requests-to-help they have responded to - offering advice on mobile phones, tablets, laptops, & the associated range of operating systems, software & apps. Some requests are significant, some are just seeking assurance</p>

	<p>they are doing the right thing. The team can be found every Tuesday morning in the corner of the Village Hall Foyer, from 9.30 until midday.</p> <p>During 2025, Simon Pierce joined the Tech Table, allowing the team to respond more effectively to those mornings when upwards of 10+ may drop-in for help. The aspects of support given by the team has also changed over the last 2.5 years. They now manage the Parish website, modernising it to meet the emerging disability standards for the web, have updated the councillors email system to the new .gov standards, provide ongoing tech support to the councillors, plus respond to a range of services to the Village Hall infrastructure & groups when asked.</p> <p>One development in the last year has been to offer new life for old unwanted PC's & laptops. The team can now refurbish old devices & then donate them onwards. To date, 15 devices have been placed back in the community, free of charge, for people who have a need. Another aspect has been to offer the local community the choice to use free, open-source software to run their devices instead of paying hundreds of pounds in annual charges for operating systems & software tools. The village can now boast at least 10 users who have embraced this technology.</p> <p>In terms of reach, people are visiting from across the county, from Rendlesham in the south, Pakefield in the north to Halesworth in the west!</p> <p>Finally, none of this would be possible without the support of the Village Hall, providing us somewhere warm & dry to sit every week, with coffee on tap from the supportive foyer hosts. Thank you to the Village Hall trustees.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(g)
Report for	Vive la France!
Delivered by	Sue Evans
Report	<p>Vive la France is a french conversation group meeting in the village hall for an hour from 2 o'clock on Friday afternoons. The group was established in August 2023 and has now more than twenty people on our mailing list. Most of our membership are Westleton residents but others are from surrounding towns or villages together with one or two second home owners.</p> <p>Vive la France is not a class or a taught course. We are a group of people who enjoy coming together once a week to share our love of the language. There is no expectation that members attend each week and our sessions draw from seven to sixteen people in any given week. There are members who are fluent and others who haven't spoken French since their school days. We work together in a atmosphere of friendship and support.</p> <p>A subject for discussion is sent out to everyone early each week so that members can give some thought to the conversation ahead - some people enjoy spending time preparing their input but there is no expectation of this. Our subjects are wide ranging - films, books, favourite possessions, planning a guide to Suffolk, playing truth or lie are some of many examples. The subject is just an impetus to generate wide ranging conversation. We discuss in groups of three and move into different groups during the session.</p> <p>The cost is £2 each week and we use our profits to fund more social occasions. For example James Finch has made different canapés for us on several occasions which are enjoyed with a glass of wine.</p> <p>We always welcome new members and no one should feel too nervous to come along.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(h)
Report for	Westleton Archive Group
Delivered by	Frances Berry
Report	<p>In the late 1980's when record keeping started in Westleton they were first kept in my bungalow then in a purpose-built shed at the back of the village hall. Now the archives are in a room in this building. Over the years there have been several very dedicated Archivists. At present the archives are looked after by a small team of village volunteers.</p> <p>Parish events are recorded, photographed and we have a collection of written documents, online data, films and audio recordings (mainly of long term residents).</p> <p>From time to time we have an Archive Exhibition in the hall that always proves popular and is well advertised.</p>

	<p>Of very much interest is how residents homes, in some cases, have been altered over the years.</p> <p>The archives are a record of how Westleton has changed from being mainly a farming and fishing village into what it is today. I can remember when we had a Co-op! The village continues to evolve.</p> <p>A cartographer in the village is in the process of showing how much of the history of Westleton can be seen through looking at maps. If any residents can contribute in any way by donating maps or aerial photographs I can give you his email address: l.dowman@ucl.ac.uk</p> <p>Any contributions appertaining to the village would be welcome but, unfortunately due to lack of space, we cannot accept artefacts.</p> <p>Contact details for the archives are on the Parish Council website.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(i)
Report for	Westleton Art Group
Delivered by	Andy Gilmour
Report	<p>I am Andy Gilmour and a member and also treasurer of Westleton Art Group.</p> <p>The Art Group meets most Tuesday mornings in the Hall to work on their individual talents in watercolour, acrylic, pastel and other mediums. We work mainly on our own but have occasional tutorials and visits.</p> <p>This can include life drawing, tuition in various mediums, and talks, and there have been visits to galleries and other places of artistic interest.</p> <p>Each year the group hold a public exhibition here in the hall to show work by the artists, and many are for sale. This year the exhibition runs over the weekend alongside the Wild Flower Festival, on July 13th and 14th here in the hall, where all are welcome.</p> <p>We have a membership at the moment of around 15 people, ranging from beginners through to more experienced and anyone interested is more than welcome to come and have a chat to us.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(j)
Report for	Westleton Camera Club
Delivered by	Carole Homersham
Report	<p>We are a group of like minded individuals from Westleton and the surrounding villages that have a keen interest in learning more about the art of photography and improving our photographic skills.</p> <p>We meet once a month to show our photos, discuss techniques and problems and plan future events. We also try to go on an outing once a month as a group to a local venue to take pictures and generally socialise. We have also exhibited a selection of our pictures in the Foyer at the Village Hall</p> <p>The club is open to anyone with an interest in photography whatever their ability and whatever their equipment , phone or camera.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(k)
Report for	Westleton Chess Club
Delivered by	Tony Ketley
Report	<p>We are a friendly group who meet in the Village Hall on Wednesday mornings between 10-12 throughout the year. We are able to enjoy a coffee and biscuits while playing chess. There are folk who have not been playing long and others who are little more experienced. In any event we all enjoy playing each other and helping/advise if asked.</p> <p>We welcome new players or folk wanting to learn as we do offer free lessons. There is also no charge for playing.</p> <p>The ages of players varies from the very occasion schoolchildren who are on holiday to folk of 80+. This is a game which has been reported as good for you because it acts as a mental gymnasium, enhancing cognitive abilities such as memory, strategic planning, and</p>

	problem-solving skills. It stimulates the brain, potentially slowing cognitive decline in older adults while fostering patience, emotional control, and deep focus in players of all ages.
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(l)
Report for	Westleton Church of St Peter
Delivered by	Joyce Burtenshaw
Report	<p>Our Church is now part of a wider group of 8 churches with one full time minister and a member of the retired clergy serving the group. At St Peter's we have a regular congregation of 15 to 20 people. During the month we have at least 3 services which can be communion or informal worship of varying styles. In the last year we had 4 funeral services, 2 memorials, 1 burial of ashes, and 1 wedding. The seasons are marked by special services (Easter, Harvest, Advent and Christmas) which have higher attendances. The carol service is the highlight of the year and is always well supported. We also have a strong relationship with the Tallis orchestra and hosted three concerts in 2025. All events and services are advertised in the Yoxmere Fisherman, a community magazine published by the church that is delivered to homes. 2000 copies are printed.</p> <p>Over the last year we have had the drive re-laid and improved the parking and the lighting for the drive; a major project that has considerably improved access to our Church for those who are less able. We are grateful to all who donated to our appeal and especially to Jeremy Branch who put enormous effort into spearheading this project.</p> <p>For many years we have been installing and rebuilding the organ, which came from Little Saint Mary's Church in Cambridge. This is a lovely organ which is now complete and we await the inaugural concert soon.</p> <p>The annual Wildflower Festival is an important fundraiser for both the church and village hall. This unique event does much to inform the wider community about the importance of our native wildflowers. Our churchyard is renowned for its flora and we are grateful for all the help we get during the annual cut and rakes.</p> <p>The church building is there for everyone. At the moment it is not used to the full. Going forward we are open to new suggestions from the village for its use.</p> <p>Open daily our visitors book records the thoughts and feelings of those who cross the threshold. Many appreciate the quiet reflective space and the simplicity of the church.</p> <p>As a regular worshipping Sunday congregation we may be small in number, but during the week many unseen activities and unnoticed visitors call in. We will never know how much our church means to the local community but we do know that St Peter's is very much alive and well, and at our services a warm welcome awaits all who visit.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(m)
Report for	Westleton Film Club
Delivered by	Stephen Podgorney
Report	<p>The film club has now existed for many years, providing an entertaining film on the first Saturday of the month, 10 months of the year with a break in August and September. I have run the club since October 2023 with the valuable help of Chris Simpson (projection) and Fran Bartlett (ice creams).</p> <p>Audiences are, on average, about 25 and mainly drawn from Westleton villagers. Ticket price has remained constant at £5 for some time and revenue is sufficient to cover the costs of film licencing and DVD purchase. In addition there is revenue from the bar and ice creams. Overall the film club continues to contribute financially to the village funds, albeit at a level lower than pre-covid.</p> <p>We now use a film licensing system which allows us to choose from a greater selection of films and at the same time reduces costs. This differentiates us from the other local village film groups who operate from a narrow film selection. I have met with other village film groups to share ideas and problems; we all seem to be affected by a common issue of low attendance post-covid, although I sense we are surviving a little better than others.</p> <p>The evening is now enhanced by the addition of a short film before the main event. This provides added entertainment at no extra cost.</p>

	<p>The core audience is village residents with a small attendance from “outsiders”. Anecdotal evidence is that non-residents become aware of the films via word of mouth or poster advertising.</p> <p>In addition to the monthly village film, I now have a monthly informal film night for a small private email group. This is a private event paid for by me, for on average 10 attendees. The event is presented this way to avoid copyright issues and provides a further film event and income to the village hall.</p> <p>The DVD player is now showing signs of age, and it may be prudent to acquire a modern player with more inputs e.g. streaming, USB sticks and other media. This could also provide an opportunity for the hall to provide a wider range of events.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(n)
Report for	Westleton Gardeners
Delivered by	Marilyn Stephens
Report	<p>Gardeners has been running for over 15 years as a non-profit making club organised by a Committee of 7 chaired by Marilyn Stephens. We hold 6 evening, monthly meetings from September to March and there is no membership fee but currently £4 payable on the night with an ‘Open to All’ policy. At the majority of meetings there is an outside speaker presentation on various gardening subjects and after the meeting there is time for socialising over refreshments. Average attendance at meetings is about 25-30 people. During the summer months we organise at least two trips to visit gardens open to the public, which are well attended.</p> <p>Ongoing Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Gardeners’ Committee voluntarily maintain the five Parish Council flower barrels around the Village replenishing the plants in spring for a summer display and autumn to ensure they provide a colourful display, that is welcoming and attractive for residents as well as the large number of visitors we have. • Recently the Committee also took on maintaining the Village Hall planters, having renovated and replanted them to introduce more colour throughout the year. • Organise and run Plant Stalls at various village events for charity and to raise money for Gardeners when funds are running low. • Organise the two day Garden Trail alternate years, previously in conjunction with St Peter’s Church and from this year with the Village Hall. Gardeners donate their half share of the profits from this event to local charities. <p>Achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last financial year Gardeners donated the proceeds raised from a Plant Stall to the Village Hall and St Peter’s Church and also made a donation to the RNLI. • Gardeners also raised £454 from the sale of plants for ourselves to boost funds • We provide a valuable low cost service to our local residents <p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researching and booking speakers within our budget for a small gardening group • Low attendance where we run at a loss. • Encouraging and motivating attendance at meetings.
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(o)
Report for	Westleton Music Group
Delivered by	Catherine Ash
Report	<p>Since January 2024, on the second Thursday afternoon of each month, we have run a Music Session at WVH, inviting all local musicians to come and play tunes and songs of their choosing. Anyone can join in with anything they know.</p> <p>Initially, we set the session up because much of the local pub-session music had been lost following COVID. And since that time, there are fewer music sessions due to pub closures, COVID legacy and older musicians preferring afternoon to late night sessions.</p>

	<p>We believed, initially, that 6-10 musicians might gather with us in the foyer for each session. After two months, the numbers attending had risen towards 20 and we had to swop to book the hall instead of the foyer.</p> <p>We always have over 20 attending and at many sessions we have 30 or more. Admittedly, this includes a listening audience of half a dozen, but the rest are all local musicians from Westleton, Darsham, Leiston, Wenhaston, Reydon, Martlesham etc etc! Word seems to spread and newcomers just arrive.</p> <p>And the range of music on offer is very wide - stretching from amateur to professional performers and ranging through folk, shanties, blues and rock to the local poet and, occasionally, the Aldeburgh Bell Ringers.</p> <p>The session is simple, informal and has three objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a forum for musicians to play /share their music with others • Offer friendship, chat, over tea / coffee cakes and snacks at low cost • Share the joy of music with any who want to join in or simply listen. <p>The group has never missed a monthly session and when we are away other Westletonian musicians and group members from further afield just take over and run it themselves. We are very glad to have WVH available. Some are pushing for the session to take place twice a month but we are currently resisting!</p> <p>Perhaps you should drop in and check it out?</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(p)
Report for	Westleton Table Tennis Club
Delivered by	Tony Ketley
Report	<p>There are now two fun friendly groups of table tennis folk who meet on Wednesday evenings.</p> <p>The 6-7pm group consider themselves generally fairly non-competitive. This group has become so popular that there is now a waiting list to join.</p> <p>The 7-9pm group could in the past be once described as originally more competitive but not really now. This group has folk with varying levels of incompetence! There are spaces available in this group for anyone interested in joining and you would be made most welcome.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(q)
Report for	Westleton WI
Delivered by	Gill Wood
Report	<p>Westleton WI has been integral to the Village since its foundation in November 1918.</p> <p>The first meeting was a demonstration showing the women how to skin rabbits and use the fur to make mittens to sell at market. We no longer inspire women in ways such as these but we still inspire women to develop ideas, skills and confidence by providing a variety of speakers and experiences in our Monthly Programme.</p> <p>We meet on the first Tuesday of the month in the Village Hall at 7.30 and at present have 31 valuable members, but are always encouraging new members to join. We consider ourselves to be a very important organisation in the village supporting women's wellbeing; those who have lived in the village all their lives and those newly arrived.</p> <p>Since October last year we have donated £449.50 to a range of charities. We also donate items to The Pear Tree Fund and Ukraine. We sponsor a Guide Dog and Medical Detection Dog in training and share reports of their progress frequently.</p> <p>Our Annual Jumble Sale is a great village event which we organise and we also provide refreshments and volunteer at other groups organised events.</p> <p>Our challenge is to maintain or increase our membership to survive as other neighbouring WI's are folding.</p>
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(r)
Report for	3D4 All
Delivered by	Jan Dowman
Report	“Our group has evolved into one where participants meet to pursue their choice of three dimensional art, using a variety of materials, such as clay, paper, wire, wood. We discuss the work as it progresses, and give each other advice if requested. We are fortunate to have several members who possess various technical and practical skills, and are happy to share their knowledge. I provide subject matter like Still Life and occasionally real models, and refer to artists examples. Participants often pursue their own ideas, which they can and usually do, continue at home. Recent examples are clay heads, wire figures, paper mache birds, and hanging wire leaves! Newcomers are very welcome. We meet monthly have recently increased our hours to a whole afternoon session, but everyone is free to come and go when it suits them.”
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/6(s)
Report for	Any other groups not on the agenda
Delivered by	N/A
Report	No other reports were made
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/7(a)
Report for	Village Store & Post Office
Delivered by	Ian Johnson
Report	It was reported that the Village Store and Post Office have been on the market for over a year, with no meaningful interest. The Snug tea room has now closed, and unless there is any interest in the Village Store and Post Office, some difficult decisions may have to be made, such as the closure of the Post Office in order to enable the Village Store to continue operating, which the current owners intend to do for as long as is necessary until a buyer is found.
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/7(b)+(c)
Report for	The Westleton Crown and The White Horse Inn
Delivered by	Henry Fairbanks (The Chestnut Group) and Ian Johnson
Report	It was reported that it has been a very difficult year for the hospitality industry, but that the Westleton Crown continues to try to support the community as best as it can. Due to the challenges faced, The Chestnut Group remains committed to the plans for the White Horse Inn, but acknowledges that it may take time for work to start. Henry commented on how pleasing it was to see such a large turnout for the temporary reopening of the bar. In light of the above, Ian reported that the community group established to potentially run the bar is exploring ways in which this can be achieved before the full reopening of the White Horse Inn.
Comments/questions	None

Agenda item	APM26/7(d)
Report for	Any other businesses not on the agenda
Delivered by	N/A
Report	No other reports were made
Comments/questions	None