

ANNUAL PARISH REPORT 2020/21

Westleton Parish Council is a tier of local government for the parish of Westleton and is committed to working together with the residents of Westleton for the benefit of the Parish. The Council has 11 councillors who are elected every 4 years and one part time employee, the Clerk, who carries out the administration and financial duties.

Over the past 12 months the Covid outbreak has largely dominated everyone's lives and we have done what we can to lend help and support. The restrictions have without doubt been difficult for everyone but the community spirit of Westleton has shone through with people being willing to go the extra mile. We would like to pay our particular thanks and appreciation here to Annie Groves (the Centre Manager at the Village Hall) who, during the closure of the building, did a wonderful job in co-ordinating the local support network and issuing regular bulletins to ensure people were kept informed and updated. As the lockdown measures ease, we now join everyone in looking forward to the full re-opening of the Village Hall and with it the reinstatement of events and the regular activities programme.

The pandemic meant that we had to scale down on our own plans and activities, but we did at least still manage to hold some regular monthly meetings where it was permissible to do so. Of late, we have achieved a first for the Parish Council and moved to the 'virtual age' by holding online meetings.

By closely following guidelines, we were also able to largely keep open the community field and play area whilst also undertaking a major upgrade to the Boules Court. The Common has proved yet again a great local amenity and asset to enjoy. We continue in this respect to thank the volunteers on the Working Groups who look after and maintain these areas in what have clearly been difficult circumstances to operate over the last 12 months.

As a body we are continuing to try to tackle speeding issues through the village and recently purchased a new Portable Speed Indicator device which we hope will prove effective. We have also again made strong representations to the County Council over the state of some of the local roads with concerns about flooding issues which make sections of the Blythburgh Road virtually impassable in wet weather. We understand that additional funds are being made available to prioritise and bring about much needed improvements. We will continue to monitor this situation closely. On the subject of roads – if you do spot a problem such as a dangerous pothole please visit the County website reporting tool www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/highway-maintenance/report-a-highways-issue/ to directly log details.

The Community Bottle Bank has now been moved to a new site located in the lay-by off the B1125 Reckford Road. The Parish Council (working with Suffolk Norse) have been seeking a permanent home for the bins and the idea of relocating slightly away from the centre will hopefully mean less noise disturbance to residents as well as not being placed in such a conspicuous site directly next to the popular village pond. The arrangement is in place on a 6 month trial basis (due to be reviewed in June 2021).

Unfortunately, Westleton has suffered with a slight increase in fly tipping with one serious large scale incident on the edge of The Common. There is no easy solution to preventing this, but we will keep under review and ask residents to be vigilant.

Notwithstanding, Westleton still remains a great place to live and somewhere we can be rightfully proud. We will continue to do all we can to help preserve the local environment.

Paul Holmes
Chairman – Westleton Parish Council