

# WESTMESTON PARISH MEETING

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT WESTMESTON PARISH HALL ON 12<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2026

**PRESENT :** Cathy Mills – Chairman of Westmeston Parish Council  
Joyce Dudeney, Tessa Haughton, Rob Mills, Vincent Tickner

In Attendance: Paul Vidler – acting as Clerk to the Parish Meeting

**1. Welcome and introduction.**

The Chairman welcomed those present.

**2. To receive apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received from Mark Clark.

**3. To confirm minutes of the previous annual meeting held on 13th May 2025.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**4. To receive Chairman's report.**

The past year has been continuation of many of the issues that rural parishes face. Last May I reported that we were dealing with two large planning applications. Thanks to the hard work of this council and the residents who live near to Mid Sussex Golf Club, the application for a large padel court complex has been refused and the 6 months allowed for an appeal has now elapsed.

We still have the application for 150 houses at the top of Hundred Acre Lane which is unresolved.

Both of these applications prove the need for robust and thoroughly researched responses, whether they are welcomed or not and I would like to thank Paul Vidler our clerk, on behalf of us all for his input with both of these applications.

Along with every other parish and town council we are still battling with East Sussex Highways regarding the repair of potholes and the destruction of road edges due to volumes of traffic and yet another very wet winter. Going forward I can see that a lack of money, inefficient use of resources and year on year increases in volumes of road users, together with wetter winters is going to mean that this problem is now becoming too large and widespread for a resolution. We can only fight our own battles and hope for some small victories.

As you know we wrote to our newly elected MP James MacCleary asking for his support with a proposal for a default 40mph limit on all roads without a central white line. I followed this up with him during a one-to-one discussion and again when he attended a Q&A session at the Parish Hall in June 2025. Despite his seeming enthusiasm for taking this on, nothing I am afraid has happened. We have another session this summer and I will press him again.

During the last 12 months we have had a number of serious RTAs along the B2116, some of which were caused by careless driving by students of Plumpton College and we continue to work with the principal to try and resolve this issue.

Councillor Tessa Haughton and I attended the Annual Review & Showcase at the college in early February and Councillor Joyce Dudeney and I attended a private View Reception to mark the opening of the Centenary History Exhibition at the AgriFood Centre. Both of these events were of interest, but just as importantly helped to maintain good relations with the college.

As your chairman I have attended various meetings throughout the year including the on line Chairmans forums which are well attended and very useful. It is reassuring to know that we are not alone and are dealing with many of the same issues all PC and town councils have to deal with.

I also attended a gathering at Ditchling Village Hall organised by a local horse rider who had been involved in an RTA. It was very well attended by various groups including the rural crime team and BHS. I spoke on behalf of Westmeston in support of measures to increase awareness and the safety of riders and other road users on our lanes.

In November Cllr Tessa Haughton and I attended the SALC conference and ESALC AGM at the AMEX stadium. Presentations were given by Katy Bourne PCC, Steve Tilbury, Planning update and Jonathan Owen Chief Executive of NALC, amongst others. The main topic of interest was the proposed devolution across Sussex but no one really had any answers to the questions from the floor. It seems as if this is a continuing issue and we await this governments announcement on timings etc. So, watch this space!

The feeling is generally that parish councils will have a greater role to play but we will have to wait and see how that will affect us all.

Road safety remains one of our main concerns and in the coming year we have pledged to pursue two main goals. To explore the possibility of extending the 40mph limit along the B2116 (Lewes Road) from the junction of Spatham Lane and the Lewes Road to the boundary with Streat and to look at a one way pinch point outside Blackbrook Farm Cottages in Spatham Lane. Both of these are priorities.

As last year I continue to hope that we will work with our neighbouring parishes and businesses for the benefit of everyone. With apologies for repeating myself, but this is even more important than ever on planning matters, everything that happens has an effect on all of us, there are no lines on the roads when it comes to increased traffic due to development, nuisance caused by illegal use of land and destruction of our verges and landscape by people using what little green space remains.

Once again I would like to mention and thank, all the volunteers who turn out to pick up all the litter on our lanes, we continue to pick up large amounts of litter, although we do see a slight improvement.

Once again, I would like to say thank you to everyone for your help and support, Mark, for his work on planning, Vincent for attending numerous meetings on our behalf, Joyce, Tessa and Clare for their input and help and Rob for his unfailing support and of course Paul, who is such a support to this council. Thank you, Paul.

**5. To consider any other questions.**

No questions were raised.

**The Chairman thanked all those present and closed the meeting at 6.38pm.**

*These minutes will be approved at the next Annual Parish Meeting.*

Signed.....

Chairman, Westmeston Parish Meeting

Date.....

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