



Congratulations to Westbury on Severn Young Farmers Club

This year's Gloucestershire Young Farmers' County Rally was held on Saturday 15th May at Grove Farm, Flaxley, when all the Young Farmers Clubs within the county competed against one another in a wide variety of competitions. It is with great pleasure that I congratulate Westbury YFC on being successful in once again winning the County Rally. The Club has had an unprecedented run at winning this competition for more years than any other club within the county. The members have shown their skills and

dedication in achieving this wonderful result, which demonstrates the diversity of skills and abilities of these young people within our community. Membership of the club is open to all young people within the age range of 10 to 28 years and it is for all young people with an interest in the rural community and countryside, and not solely for those with a farming background. If you have or know of any youngsters who are interested in becoming members please get in touch.

*Simon Phelps, President,
Westbury Young Farmers Club.*

Parish Council

May is the month when the Parish Council has its Annual Parish meeting, its Annual Council meeting and its monthly meeting, so I'm afraid this report will be a bit longer than usual!

Peter Radley had sent his apologies but all the other Parish councillors were there, with Chairman Simon Phelps also being our District Councillor and Philip Robinson, our County Councillor, also present. Unfortunately our PCSO did not attend and the crime figures supplied for our information were so well encrypted that no-one could open them! Both Simon and Philip Robinson will mention this to those responsible.

Simon then gave his Chairman's report in which he outlined the difficulties that have been involved in planning a new playing field for the school in order to extend the burial ground, and the resulting increase in the precept. However, the result will be of benefit to the parish with the school having an excellent playing field and parishioners able to choose to be buried in their own parish, and the project is now progressing well. On the subject of Highways, and the ongoing safety issues at Jordans Hill railway bridge, he reported Network Rail have agreed to clear the overgrown area which blocks drivers' view of oncoming traffic and look at other safety measures while the line is closed later this summer. The County Council's Highways department are also looking at this problem, as well as the overgrown footway through the village.

Simon also talked about the improvement in the maintenance of the closed churchyard and the good work of the parish's litter pickers. He then thanked everyone for their help, especially our clerk, Fiona Wallbank. As our District Councillor, he added that the housing development plan is moving away from the "new town"

ideas to a system of dispersed development instead. He stressed the importance of improving employment opportunities in the Forest in order to keep young people in the area and also reduce the amount of traffic on roads in and out of the area.

Philip Robinson then gave his County



*County Councillor
Philip Robinson*

Councillor's report in which he talked about the current County Council budget and the allocation of £30k to each councillor to spend on high-ways schemes within their division, £5000

of which will be earmarked for Westbury. He also drew our attention to the Flood Guide, which is available on the County Council website, and to the fact that Gloucestershire is hosting a stage of the 2022 Women's Tour on 8th June and stage six of the Tour of Britain on 9th September. Gloucestershire is also waiting to hear if the Oldbury/Berkeley site has been shortlisted as the site for a new nuclear fusion power plant. The county has now got 52 children from Ukraine already placed in its schools and 21 awaiting places. Philip described some of the difficulties these children are encountering, as many of them had been traumatised by their experiences.

Simon thanked Philip for his help and support, especially regarding the school playing field costs. As there were no comments or questions from the public, that marked the end of the Annual Parish meeting.

The Annual Council meeting followed and was quite brief as Simon was unanimously re-elected as Chairman and everyone else was willing to carry on with

their existing roles. John Henry thanked Simon for all his hard work during a particularly difficult time, a view shared by us all. And so, on to our normal monthly business.

Planning With no public comment, we started on the planning applications, the first being for change of use of land from agricultural to residential and for conversion of an agricultural barn to form a residential dwelling at Little Oaklands Farm. This led to some discussion, and opinion was divided so it was agreed that we make no comment to the District Council and let them decide the matter. The next application concerned, rather confusingly, Oaklands Farm for which a variation for roof amendments was noted. Next up was Severn View Cottage, Red Barn Pound Farm, Elton where the change of use from a self-catering tourism unit to ancillary annexe together with a single storey extension and associated works was noted. The final application was for the erection of a single storey extension with associated works at Chaxhill Garage, to which we had no objection. Fiona then updated us on the results of previous applications, most of which had been granted.

Finance The auditor's fee has increased to £83.50 but this was still felt to be reasonable and was agreed. The annual accounts will be signed off next month. Fiona's current laptop is past its best and is making her job more difficult and so it was agreed that a new one be provided. Fiona will have the old one wiped and then enquire about charities that might welcome it as a donation.

Highways Philip Robinson talked to us about a new £600,000 Community Speedwatch Safety Fund which aims to give communities the tools they need to combat speeding in their areas and to make the roads safer for all road users.

Although we already have vehicle activated speed signs in Westbury, they are very heavy and have to be taken down and recharged quite frequently – a job that Peter Radley has been quietly doing without complaint for a long time. It was therefore suggested that we apply either for solar panels to charge the existing signs or for new vehicle activated signs that would also have number plate recognition and therefore be even more effective. Fiona will find out more for us.

Concerns have been raised about the safety of the crossroads near the Parish Hall. It was felt that there is increased traffic now that the GP surgery is open every weekday, and that people coming to the surgery by bus from Newnham may have difficulty in safely crossing the A48, as traffic often approaches the crossroads at some speed.

Other problems included a fallen tree branch which was resting on the telephone cable in Ampney Lane (which has now been moved) and damage done to a ditch going towards Strand Lane by a lorry getting stuck in it. The footways along the A48 are becoming very overgrown and Hunt Hill is still full of pot holes. Simon will be talking to our Highways manager about all these issues and if you have been wondering why there are so many white marks on all the local roads, it is all down to the Bicycle Races.



Gloucestershire to host its first full stage of the Tour of Britain

Burial Ground Extension We are just waiting now for the District Council to accept our contractors' plans for the school playing field and then work can begin.

Play Area Mike Townsend has done some repairs to the wetpour base and will be doing some more patching as needed.

Footpaths Mike has also contacted the Public Rights of Way team to ask for some stone to be used to fill a very boggy bridle path near Ampney Lane. However, it was felt that the footbridge behind the church and another at the end of Goose Lane were the priorities at present.

Other business We ran through the local plans for celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. There is a programme of events at the Parish Hall, a service at the Church, a street party at Northwood Green and a beacon is to be lit at Flaxley Deer Park. Commemorative gifts for the school children are on order.

Concerns have been raised about the amount of hemlock water dropwort that is growing on the verges, especially in Rodley. It is a very common plant but it is poisonous to cattle if grazed. Simon has spoken to the Highways manager about this, who has advised that we should not attempt to deal with this ourselves.

The emergency plan for the Parish is under review, so we shall be all set for bad weather this winter.

Our next meeting will be on Monday 13th June at 7pm. *Di Landon*

Road Closure

Part of Church Lane will be closed for about 20 metres either side of the railway crossing for barrier maintenance works from 23:00 on 5th June until 05:00 on 6th June. Part of Stantway Lane from Stantway Court Farm to Little Stantway Farm will be closed between 09:30 and 15:30 on 17th June for about 123 metres to carry out a pole test.

Closed Churchyard

We had another glorious sunny day for our May working party in the churchyard and as there was a visiting team of bellringers in the church tower, we were able to tackle the excessive goosegrass or cleavers, nettles and ivy to the accompaniment of the church bells. The churchyard was looking a picture and James Walkley-Cox has cut several new paths which makes it easier to wander around and enjoy it to the full.

Our next session will be on Saturday 11th June between 10—1pm. All are welcome.

Capture the Character of the Forest of Dean

Forest of Dean District Council is inviting residents and communities to share their views on what they believe makes the area such a great place to live, which will help to shape an update of the Forest of Dean Residential Design Guide. This guide is used by the Council to assess whether the design of new homes and other residential developments, meet the standards residents expect in their area and add to, not damage, the highly distinctive character of the area. An updated Residential Design guide will enable the Council to have a stronger influence on design standards in planning applications, to make sure that new designs celebrate, protect and even enhance local character, and it is also an opportunity to raise standards on issues such as carbon reduction and access to facilities. The Council would like residents to let them know what they believe makes their parish, village or town special and distinctive. Once you've thought about what is important about where you live, you can go online at <https://fodresidentialdesignguide.online> to complete a survey.



Although the number attending our monthly meetings has fallen slightly since Covid, we had been reminded how well the Hall is supported when one of the NHS representatives at a recent meeting had expressed astonishment at how many committee members had shown up. And at our meeting on 10th May, we were able to welcome another member, Max Skipsey, as the new rugby rep who will share the role with Phil Ayland - and it was especially good to see another younger face around the tables.

The first good news was that the mouse problem has been sorted but we still need to keep an eye on the rabbit situation.

Treasurer's report This had been circulated to the committee and Sarah Mitten had also reported that the annual accounts for last year have been signed and submitted to the Charity Commission, who have also been informed of changes to the trustees. A re-evaluation regarding the rent for the GP surgery has been carried out and so this is still in the hands of solicitors at present.

Projects The hearing loop is currently on hold as our speakers and amplifiers were not compatible with the hearing loop that was being considered, and a compatible system may mean extra expense. The possibility of a grant to help with the cost will be investigated.

Severndipity Report More good news was that the bar take had increased due to more functions and the start of the cricket season, and this will reduce ullage. While

the sale of bottled beer avoids this problem, it is not a popular alternative. It is hoped that the Wednesday bar opening will increase takings as there will be some cricket and possibly some rugby training on Wednesdays as well. An event is being planned to rejuvenate the bar, for which a grant has been received.

Fundraising Jan went through the full list of events planned to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and asked for more volunteers to help with the preparations. Providing two barbecues, an afternoon tea and a Jubilee lunch together with Teddy Bears' picnic and various other entertainments will need lots of helpers. The monthly Nosh and Natters continue to be popular and the Flower and Produce Show will take place on 4th September.

Rent Review The rents have been increased as agreed, although feedback is still awaited from the Sports Clubs regarding their rents.

Any Other Business After discussing some of the future bookings, we turned to the question of various equipment that is stored in the changing rooms. Jan said that several disused filing cabinets are up there and it was agreed that these would be removed when the RFC had a working party on 15th May and Jan would also find out what needs to be kept of the Summer Show equipment. Mark Brill asked about publicity for the Jubilee events and suggested involving YFC. It had been suggested that a noticeboard in the play area would help to inform people of local events and it was agreed to look at what is available. Mike Edginton suggested that we look into how to reduce our gas usage as our current costs are unsustainable and offered to go through what could be done about this at the next meeting, which is on Tuesday 14th June 2022 at 8pm

Nosh and Natter

Westbury Parish Hall
Thursday 9th June 2022

Food served between
12.30pm and 1.30pm
(please note change of time)

Soup of the day

Dish of the day

Pudding of the day

£8.00 two courses £10.00 three
courses

*We are going to see what we have left
after the Platinum Jubilee celebrations
and make up the menu accordingly – we
should have devised the menu by the
Monday of that week, if you need to know
what it is, otherwise come on the day and
see what we have prepared*

*Please call us to say that you are coming
and please let us know in advance if you
have any dietary requirements*

**Please either see in person or call
Gail on 760495/ Jan on 760630**

*Looking forward to seeing you all and, of
course, if you have not been before we
look forward to meeting you too*



Good to see the lion back again

Westbury School

My name is Anna-Mai Armstrong and I am the new Headteacher at Westbury-on-Severn CE Primary school. I started working at the school at the end of April and this term I have been busy-ing myself getting to know everyone, learning all the children's names and spending time in classrooms with the teachers. I have sent out surveys to parents, staff and pupils asking them about the school so that I can get a really clear view of the school's current strengths. The staff and I have lots of exciting ideas about how best to move the school forwards which we will be sharing with governors in the coming months. I am absolutely thrilled to be given this opportunity to develop Westbury-on-Severn C of E Primary for the local community. If you have any skills or time that you can offer the school, do get in touch.

Previous to this role I was Assistant Headteacher at a village school the other side of Gloucestershire, in Kemble. I live in Stroud and have lived in the parish of Rodborough for 19 years. I have a longer commute now and I'm looking into moving to an electric car to reduce my carbon footprint. As well as being passionate about education and young children's life chances, I love nature and feel strongly about preserving the environment. I have three sons, aged 22, 20 and 16 who went to schools local to us in Stroud.

Westbury-on-Severn C of E is in the most beautiful setting and I enjoy seeing the river every day as I arrive and leave. I feel very excited about getting to know a new and unfamiliar community this side of the river and I look forward to meeting you if you are a parent at the school. Please do visit our website at <https://www.westburyceschool.co.uk/website>

Kind Regards,
Anna-Mai Armstrong

Cafe on the Green



Another successful coffee morning on a beautiful day. We were able to welcome most of the regulars and a good time was had by all. A special thanks to the bakers and helpers and to all those who made a donation in lieu of attendance.

We made £153.50 for the Samaritans and I was able to hand it over personally as the director of the Gloucester branch attended and got to know one or two people during the course of the morning.

Our next one is on 4th of June when the beneficiary will be Sheppard House Day Centre in Newent. I know it's a busy weekend but please try to give us your support. See you there

Weather Report

While we all tend to think of April in relation to the proverbial April showers, it can actually be one of the drier months as Simon Phelps's recordings show. This April, the total rainfall for the month was only 18.5mm, with 9.5mm of that falling on the wettest day which was 12th, and a total of only six wet days. The temperature rose to 22.5C on 15th, which was the warmest day, but was -5C on the coldest night of 2nd April. The average maximum temperature was 15.3C and the average minimum 2.4C. The winds were noticeably light and generally mixed directions.

Some weather proverbs for June include:

A good leak in June, sets all in tune!

Rain on St. John's Day [24th] and we may expect a wet harvest.

When it is hottest in June, it will be coldest in the corresponding days of the next February. (You'd need to be very organised to check that one!)

Church News

Once a month we hold a special service at 10am which involves all the family and we would love you to come and enjoy it with us.

On Sunday 19th June I shall be asking 'Who's hungry?' as Jesus hosts a picnic.

And speaking of food, every Sunday throughout the summer we will be offering a delicious selection of homemade cakes and tea at the west door of the church. When it's gloriously sunny, many take their tea out into the churchyard so that they can enjoy all the work the 'Friends of Westbury Church' have been doing and admire the wild flowers.

We look forward to meeting up with you.

Rev Sarah



I think we should be going, Viola.

Westbury Players

We have recently held our AGM and so it seems a good opportunity to give you a brief summary of what we are up to at the moment.

Our officers and committee are now:

Mark Landon : Chairman, Dave D'Am-brogio : Treasurer and Elke Landon : Secretary (membership and social media)

Committee members are Mike Edginton (and Parish Hall representative), Tim Smith, Colin Cotterell, May Brass, Sue Pemberton and Claire McCartney (and Youth Project Liaison)

May Brass has stood down as Secretary after many years of service and, on behalf of us all, I'd like to thank her for all her work and efforts in that time. She remains on the committee of course.

In terms of upcoming performances, Beauty and The Beast will be the 2023 Pantomime, and it will be performed on the last two weekends in January, so some normality has returned which is very welcome for us all I am sure.



A scene from this year's pantomime which had had to be postponed until March due to covid.

Regarding membership - we have in the last few years been a bit vague as to who is a member of Westbury Players and who is more of a supporter. As members technically have a vote and input into Westbury Players we felt it would be best to formalise membership a little, so we will be launching a membership system

whereby members, in exchange for a nominal £2 membership fee will be entitled to some priority bookings for performances (2 tickets per member) which can be booked and paid for in advance of the box office. Members must be aged 14 or above.

Those who do not wish to become a member but remain connected will continue to get updates via email and of course can follow us via Facebook and the website, which is

<https://www.westburyplayers.com/>

As always, we are keen to hear from anyone interested in performing or participating in any way.

Mark Landon



Northwood Green Gardening Club

Our annual plant sale over the weekend of 14-15th May was a great success and, unlike last year, we were blessed with glorious weather on the Saturday. Many thanks to our members, who donated so many beautiful plants for us to sell, to the amazing volunteers who gave up their time to help - and of course to all of you who came to buy.

Our programme of speakers has now finished for this season, as we are all busy in our gardens over the summer. We do have an evening visit to a garden on Glasshouse Hill organised on the evening of Thursday 9 June and a full day visit to two gardens near Cheltenham on 11 August. There is a modest charge for these visits, which will include the admission fee and light refreshments. For the full day visit, lunch can be arranged at a local pub at extra cost.

Our annual social event will be held in a member's garden at Minsterworth on the evening of Thursday 7 July. There is a small charge to cover the cost of drinks and canapes.

Non-members are welcome to join us at any of these events - please contact karen.f.johnson@btinternet.com or call 01452 760970 for more details.

Our regular meetings, with guest speakers, will resume in September - more information will follow in a later magazine.

Karen Johnson

A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except for learning how to grow in rows.

Sherlock Holmes was gardening when Watson came over and asked what he was planting.

"A lemon tree, my dear Watson".

Council Tax Rebate

Forest of Dean District Council has opened applications for a scheme to provide financial support to those most in need who were not eligible for the recent £150 council tax rebate.

The original £150 rebate scheme was targeted at households in council tax bands A-D. The new scheme is intended to help support those most in need during the current cost of living crisis.

Full criteria is available on the council's website or you can telephone the council for advice and support although the council is encouraging people to apply online where at all possible to free up phone lines for those who need it most.

More information on the rebate can be found on the council website at fdean.gov.uk/150rebate.

Walmore Hill School



A big thank you to everyone that came to our Jubilee coffee morning. It was such a great turn out. We're really proud of the children and how patiently they waited to see if they had the winning raffle ticket! Thank you for all the kind donations of prizes and cakes. We're going to buy a new bench for the playground to commemorate the Jubilee.

Rugby

Westbury vets select XV 55 Severnside Vets 0

At the last match of the season on 30th April, Westbury founder, chairman and legend Ken Boulton was pre-



sented with lifelong membership of the Forest Combination, an honour only bestowed on eight persons previously. It was a great occasion and a much needed home fixture for Westbury.

There were tries from Max Kaufmann, Robbie Pritchard, Billy Roberts, Ben Stephens, Aled Halford-Tuffley, Max Skipsey, Tom Longley and Alex Pearce and sterling performances from Robbie Wynman, Billy Head, Ed Lawson, Teigan Shapley, Matt Hart and Lee Prince.

It was therefore a great end to a difficult season, and massive thanks must go to DOR / Coach Matt Hart, Skipper Robbie Pritchard, Simon Roberts and fixture secretary Phil Ayland who battled every week to get a side on the field and a fixture played. Also thanks to Cheltenham Civil service, Smiths, Cheltenham Saracens and Cinderford Stags, for all their help and support.

Q: Why did the referee send the chicken to the sin bin?

A: For fowl play.

Q: Why don't grasshoppers play rugby?

A: They prefer cricket!



And Westbury RFC recently took delivery of their leisure shirts for next season, kindly sponsored by our friendly local pub and restaurant The Lyon Inn. It's great to keep it local

Cricket



Westbury 2nds played Woodmancote 2nds on 7th May and won by 33 runs

Westbury 1st XI v Hawkesbury Upton 1st XI on 22nd May

The cricket season is now well upon us, and both the firsts and seconds are three games into their league campaigns.

For those anxious to skip onto the parish council report, I can briefly relate that the 1sts have lost their first three games and the seconds have won two and lost one. No centuries or five wicket hauls to report yet.

For the rest, I have only managed to actually watch one game, almost in its entirety, and that is the 1st XI game against Hawkesbury Upton 1st XI (HU) from now on. Where's that, you ask? Good question but apparently between Nailsworth and Chipping Sodbury, so we learnt something before a ball was even bowled.

Westbury took to the field to have first crack at the HU and were soon making inroads once Alex Wyman took over from an uncharacteristically wayward opening spell by Greg Artus. Last season Alex was a batsman but over the winter seems to have metamorphosed into a bowler of some zippiness and quickly claimed two wickets.

At the other end Charlie Gayther was bowling a miserly spell of bendy middle

paced stuff, claiming one wicket, a sharp stumping via Ian Dunn, and the HU batsmen were making slow progress. Sadly for Westbury, their opening batsman seemed to be their star player and sailed on whilst wickets fell at the other end to make 70-odd.

The spinners took over from Gayther and Wyman, with Devin Rogers and Dan Hockaday managing to pick up a wicket apiece as HU marched forward with the odd boundary keeping them moving in the right direction.

At this stage, as if through destiny, Chairman Emeritus of Westbury FC, Westbury Players, Cricket Club President, King of the Seven Kingdoms etc etc Tempest hove into view on the boundary just as his nemesis Tom Landon ex Westbury footie Captain, and now playing for another (arguably better) club, came on to bowl.

To his anguish and torn loyalties he was forced to watch Landon Jr claim three wickets, courtesy of two remarkable catches by a diving Dan Hockaday at first slip and a collapsing Ian Dunn as keeper - although it may have also been a dive. Tempest's ire continued when I advised him that Westbury FC are scheduled to play Landon's new team in a preseason friendly and he took to sitting, arms firmly crossed on a bench with the other village elders, by the erection in the far corner of the playing field.

HU ended their innings with what looked like a slightly below par total of 187 and we looked forward to an exciting run chase. However, as Westbury moved smoothly to 11-5 we realised that something was afoot. This came primarily with the realization that HU had a paid Australian fast bowler !! Even beyond the boundary rope, club elder Dave D'Ambrogio was nervously shuffling towards the hedge as the antipodean monster sprinted in to bowl. A rather smug HU

fielder on the boundary gleefully reported that "he's usually quicker in his second spell".

As is often the case, the bowlers at the other end also claimed wickets as the batsmen endeavoured to make hay at their end before having to face the fusillade coming at them from the other end. Fortunately Devin Rogers put up a doughty defence and Dan Jarvis, who is in good form at the moment prevented the innings from collapsing before the bar was open...er...I mean before a reasonable total was amassed.

However, wickets continued to fall to their lesser bowlers, who weren't that great frankly but feasted on the carcass of the innings anyway, and Westbury's chase ended up at 71 all out. Something of a shellacking but heads were held high and it's unlikely that Westbury will come up against bowling of that calibre every week. Well hopefully not anyway.

For cricketing nerds, in what must surely be a first, Westbury's top four batsmen were also the first four bowlers on display. The other seven clearly need to pull their socks up !

The day was not entirely without its positives though as the new roller was unveiled, a magnificent gleaming machine that the Club President especially took to stroking fondly, almost lovingly, as it sat proudly in the new building facility.

Post match festivities were a little muted as the 2nds dispersed around the county although Rich Edginton made an appearance to give us a report on the game which I have failed to relate here (apologies), and the 1sts had a birthday party to attend, but the supporters made their best efforts to keep the bar busy as the paragliders / microlighters swirled above and arguments about cloud formations, and the traditional Guardian vs Daily Mail debates raged into the early evening.

We move on to June and hope for the 1sts

to claim their first win and for the 2nds to continue their good form. *Mark Landon*



Pete Woodhall and Charlotte Dunn celebrate a wicket against Woodpeckers CC, who they beat by two wickets on 22nd May. (Photo thanks to Pete Wilson)

Junior Cricket

Junior Cricket has started again and it is great to see so many juniors back on the field laughing, having fun and building on their skills.

The under 15s Westbury and Newnham team played Ruardean Hill on Monday 23rd May. Unfortunately rain stopped play when they had Ruardean 18-4, with one wicket for Ethan Kane, one for Will Keane and two for William Nice.



Editor: Andrew Landon Everything else: Di Landon diana.landon12@gmail.com Hayden Farm, Rodley, Westbury-on-Severn GL14 1RE 01452 760531
