

Westoning on Sunday

COVID-19 Update & Village News

The Newsletter of Westoning Parish Council

October 2020

STOP PRESS - High Street Pedestrian Crossing to be replaced – Act Now - STOP PRESS

Wash Hands

Cover Face

Make Space

Remembrance Sunday

The Parish Council, in conjunction with Rev Nigel Washington and other village groups have agreed a way of honouring those Westoning servicemen who gave their lives in the service of their country in the 1914-18 and 1939-45 wars and subsequent conflicts, in a COVID safe way.

This year the COVID-19 restrictions make it impossible to hold the Remembrance Sunday event at the Westoning War Memorial in the usual way, however we do propose to hold a short formal ceremony at the War Memorial at 12.00 noon on Sunday 8th November with just 6 people in attendance in line with current local and national guidance.

To reduce the risk of transmission of the virus, the Parish Council is asking individuals and organisations in the village who would like to lay a wreath or cross at the memorial to do so between 9.00 am and 11.00 am that morning. At noon, Rev Nigel Washington, the Parish Council Chairman, a British Legion representative and 3 other residents representing various village organisations and business operators will participate in a short, dignified, socially distanced service.

We are aware that many residents attach great importance to this annual event and we very much hope that it will be possible to revert to the usual arrangements next year, but with the rapidly increasing virulence of COVID-19 we feel that the changes proposed for this year are both sensible and prudent.

It is hoped that residents will respect these arrangements and not seek to attend this year's service in contravention of the 'Rule of Six'.

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DISCLAIMER

COVID advice/restrictions can change very rapidly. If there is conflict between the contents of this Newsletter and Local or national advice then local/national advice/restrictions should always be followed.

Street Lighting

In the 2019/2020 financial year the Parish Council started a phased program of converting the lamps on the street lights owned by the Parish Council to LED units. This change was designed partly to save energy but also to ensure that our streets are well illuminated as some of the older units could no longer be maintained. We are now 2 years into the 3 year programme and we hope to have completed the conversion of all PC lights by Sept 2021.

Footpath Encroachment

This is a good time of the year to trim back any trees or shrubs that either overhang or narrow the width of the footpath outside your property. Overhanging trees should be trimmed back to 2.2 metres above the path and shrubs and bushes to the line of the path edge.

Please take a minute to look at any trees, shrubs or bushes in your garden to ensure that they are not hazardous to the safety of others and take any necessary action.

Rec Ground Railings

Work should commence on 26th October (school half term week) to replace the steel railings between the Recreation Ground and Greenfield Road.

These railings were erected shortly after the end of WWII and is now very rusted and unsightly. The new railings will be similar to those at the front of the school and will resolve several safety issues connected with the old railings.

The work will take 5 to 8 working days and while the work is in progress we are proposing to place 'No Parking' cones along that stretch of Greenfield Road to avoid damage to vehicles and to give pedestrians the opportunity to step off the footpath and onto the road to avoid any work being done adjacent to the footpath next to the railings.

We apologise for any inconvenience this work may cause and the co-operation and understanding of residents will be much appreciated while these works are in progress.

High Street Crossing

The traffic light controlled pedestrian crossing between the post Office and B W Deacon is nearing the end of its service life and needs to be replaced. The cost of a similar system may be as high as £80,000. CBC Highways in their wisdom have decided to replace the crossing with a simple Zebra crossing which would be a much cheaper (and less safe) alternative.

The A5120 has well over 18,000 vehicle movements a day. How can anyone think that 18,000 drivers are going to give way to pedestrians every day? There are bound to be near misses, serious accidents and probably fatalities if this proposal goes ahead.

Please send your objection by email to:

traffic.consultation@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Quoting Reference: A00053

James Jamieson, our Ward Councillor, will be working hard within CBC to get this proposal overturned but a large public response will help enormously. Details of the proposal are displayed on the village Notice Board .

Notice Board



You may have already noticed that a new village notice board has been erected near the Christmas tree site. As you will see, the notice board has two panels, one side is reserved for Parish Council notices and the other side may be used for notices from village groups and organisations. If any village group wants to display a notice up to A4 in size it should be sent to Joyce Nethersole in M/S Word or PDF format at holmes02@icloud.com.

Joyce will ensure that the notice is displayed for a reasonable time before the event and removed when it is no longer relevant.

Christmas Event

Due to the current COVID-19 restrictions which are likely to remain in force for several months, it is with great regret that it will not be possible to hold the type of Christmas event in the village that has been held in recent years.

We will still have a Christmas tree with lights but there will be no switching-on event for the tree lights. We hope that children in the village will once again make baubles to decorate the tree and prizes will be awarded for the best entry in each age group. Details of the competition will be posted on the Parish Council website from 1st November.

In an attempt to brighten up what has been a very difficult year we are encouraging all residents to decorate the fronts of their houses or the windows at the front of their houses. If you do not have lights that can be used outdoors, perhaps some indoor lights in the window or a Christmas tree with lights visible through your window may be possible. While this is not an attempt to rival the Blackpool illuminations, or to make it ultra competitive, prizes will be awarded for the 3 most innovative and tasteful displays.

We would encourage parents to walk their children around the village, observing the decorations on and in people's houses and passing by the Christmas tree one evening in early December, observing social distancing of course, and not forming a group of more than 6 persons.

Flower Planters



Flower Planters (cont.)

The Parish Council has consulted with Central Bedfordshire Highways on the proposed location of Flower Planters in various parts of the village. We hope to have their approval to our chosen locations soon so that we can start to plan the phased program of installing these planters.

Planters are likely to be located first where parking on the grass verges is a persistent problem and where residents have volunteered to tend the plants, weed and water as required. If you would like to volunteer to look after a planter near your home, please send an email to:

parish_clerk_westoning@outlook.com

Parking on Verges

We have seen an increase in recent years of motorists parking their cars on grass verges in various parts of the village. In winter and when the weather is wet this results in scarring of the grass and deep ruts being gouged out by the wheels.

Please refrain from parking on verges and in any other locations where a parked vehicle causes danger or inconvenience to other road users or pedestrians.



Westoning Cares – still here to help

It very much looks as though the long predicted 'second wave' of COVID-19 is getting closer. Central Bedfordshire, fortunately, at the time of editing this edition of WoS, still has a relatively low level of the Virus per 100,000 of population. This is due in no short measure to the responsible way in which the residents of Central Bedfordshire have complied with the restrictions imposed by the government and observed the advice to wash hands, wear face coverings and maintain social distancing.

If the local situation deteriorates over the coming months, older and other vulnerable residents may want to avoid as much outside contact as possible. This is where 'Westoning Cares' can, once again, be of help to those people who need to shield. Our volunteers can help with shopping, collecting prescriptions from a local pharmacy and even collecting a daily newspaper each morning.

As winter approaches and the evenings draw in, being alone indoors for many more hours each day can be very depressing. If you would just like someone to chat with over the phone or via Facetime if you have a smartphone, tablet or PC, 'Westoning Cares' may be able to find someone who you can make contact with a couple of times each week to break the monotony of self isolation.

The contact information for 'Westoning Cares' is as follows:

Name of Contact	Telephone Numbers	Email Address
Steve Alcock	01525 755039 or 07710 172546	steve.alcock3@ntlworld.com
Joyce Nethersole	07770 642159	Holmes02@icloud.com
Maureen Graham	01525 873830 or 07922 011515	malcolmgraham1@ntlworld.com
Nigel Washington*	01525 714442 or 07722 297299 <small>*Please contact by email unless urgent</small>	nwashy2@gmail.com

Wash Hands

Cover Face

Make Space

PLEASE NOTE

Parish Council meetings are held at 7.30 pm on the second Wednesday of each month. For the duration of the Coronavirus restrictions, Westoning Parish Council will meet in 'virtual' meetings using ZOOM. The meeting ID and Password will be displayed on the WPC website 24 hours before the meeting commences for those members of the public who wish to view or hear the meeting. Any member of the public wishing to make use of the Public Participation facility should notify the Clerk 24 hours before the meeting.