



Westhoughton Community Network

Meeting: 7:00pm Tuesday, 5th September 2017

at Westhoughton Methodist Church Hall

Minutes

1. Present

Groups in attendance (20)

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| 1. Bethel Crowd (BCD) | 12. Washacre Primary School (WPS) |
| 2. Friends of Daisy Hill Station (FDHS) | 13. Westhoughton Art Group (WAG) |
| 3. Friends of Eatock Lodge (FoEL) | 14. Westhoughton Community Hub (WHUB) |
| 4. Friends of Westhoughton Station (FWS) | 15. Westhoughton Methodist ADS (WMADS) |
| 5. George Formby Society (GFS) | 16. Westhoughton Methodist Church (WMC) |
| 6. Hindley's And Clough Farm Residents Association (HACFRA) | 17. Westhoughton Poetry Group WPG) |
| 7. Hope Church/Centre (HOPE) | 18. Wingates Band (WB) |
| 8. Howfen Radio (HFR) | 19. Yarn Bombing (YB) |
| 9. Senior Solutions (SNS) | 20. Westhoughton Active Volunteer Enterprise (WAVE) |
| 10. Travelliin' Strings (TST) | ~ BAND (Building A New Direction) |
| 11. Westhoughton Active Communities Organisation (WACO) | ~ Bolton CVS (BCVS) |
| | ~ PSoup (PSP) |
| | ~ Red Lion Apartments (SIL-UK) |

Individuals in attendance (35)

Dawn Bellis (BAND)	Garry Hampson (GFS)	Jack Speight (FDHS)
Trevor Benn (FoEL)	Nick Haworth (SIL)	Jean Spencer (YBM)
Martin Boggan (SIL)	Dave Hendry (WAG)	Samantha Swift (WMADS)
Charlotte Carlin (PSP)	Darren Knight (BCVS)	Jason Taylor (BCD)
Johnny Crook (WPS)	Julie Loughran (SNS)	Lauren Taziker (WPS)
Doug Cunliffe (HACFRA/WAVE)	Melanie McFarland (WB)	Michelle Todd (SNS)
Rev'd Lesley Dinham (WMC)	Tony McGarry (WACO)	Stefanie W. (WHUB)
Tim Eden (TST)	Joy Mooney (WB)	Mike Wood (HACFRA/WAVE)
Janice Estcourt (GFS)	Julie Poundall (WPS)	Ann Benn (FoEL) SECRETARY
Dave Fensome (WMADS)	Gaynor Ratcliff (WHUB)	Chris Buckley (WCN)
Stephen Freeborn (FWS)	Lisa Reilly (HFR)	Mark Taylor (HOPE) CHAIR
Colin Gradwell (WMADS)	Jan Ryder (BAND)	

Apologies (20)

Janice Bayliss (Women of Westhoughton); Doreen Booth (Townswomen's Guild);
Chris Brewster (Westhoughton Library); Ann Butler (Westhoughton High School); Paul Buxton (Scouts Association);
Val Chadwick (Westhoughton Local History Group); David Chadwick (Westhoughton Town Council); Wilf Dillon -
Stephen Hesketh - Len Maycroft (Westhoughton Age Support Project); Sarah Dunscombe-Berry (Barking Berrys);
Sandra Greenall (Westhoughton Community Royalty); Steve Harrington (Rotary Club of Westhoughton);
Brian Leyden (Friends of Westhoughton Station); Kellie McGarry (W.A.C.O.); Susan Missin (Harold Daniels Legacy Fund);
Brenda Shott (Friends of Eatock Lodge); Veronica Swinburne (Daisy Hill in Bloom);
James Wilson (Westhoughton Churches/Foodbanks); Ted Wisedale (Westhoughton Local History Group).



2. Welcome/Apologies/Review of Minutes

With WCN now adopting a system of different chairs for each meeting, Mark Taylor of the Hope Centre and Hope Church took on Chair duties. He welcomed everyone and extended thanks to Westhoughton Methodist Church and Westhoughton Methodist ADS providing this evening's venue and break-time refreshments.

There were a number of apologies (noted). Chris Buckley read out a message from Susan Missin (Harold Daniels Legacy Fund), giving updates on grants given, the Road Safety Quiz project involving local schools and the Rotary Club; Susan also thanked everyone for their kindness and support during the recent anniversary of Harold Daniels' death and the court trial. She enjoyed being part of the 6th Birthday celebration.

Those present were asked to introduce themselves and groups represented.

Dave Hendry of Westhoughton Art Group, before excusing himself, thanked all for their interest in the summer 'WAG Art Exhibition', confirming that the group is now based at the John Holt Centre, and is now looking for new members and artists.

3. Westhoughton Community Hub

Gaynor Ratcliff, Chair of Westhoughton Community Vision, updated everyone on the progress with taking on of the former College. Whilst there are already a number of activities and groups in place, the formal opening has been deferred until April next year to allow the project to grow and develop.

Gaynor outlined some current activities including: Education and Training with meeting and storage rooms available for hire; services such as PAT testing; sewing groups; post-natal makeovers to 'lift spirits'; hair and beauty rooms; fitness activities such as dancing (Aspire Dance) and yoga, introduction to boxing and other related activities. A DIY facility is being set-up by Alan Clare (WCN M23 and since helping out at Washacre Primary School) offering services and training in woodworking, electrics and plastering.

Other things in the pipeline are 'hot desks', a Community Café Bar ('Hubway'), a studio for Howfen Radio; Bolton Film and Media School; Zen Men (Mental Health Issues); walking groups (starts 22nd Sept); a Dementia Champions initiative, and some pre-school provision. The Hub will be involved in Children in Need 'jumping for Pudsey' at Air Vault on Wingates Industrial Estate.

The Hub will host a Healthwatch (Bolton) Community Engagement Consultation on Tuesday, 26th Sept (10:30am-2:30pm) - lunch provided and booking necessary. (Alison Colley - westhoughtoncv@gmail.com | 07958 402905).

A fundraising Sportsmen's Dinner fundraiser is planned for February 2018 involving businesses, community and local upcoming boxers, with Westhoughton v. Manchester bouts.

Gaynor invited all to check online for current and future activities, and encouraged all present to visit and to be involved in the development and future of this venture.



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A short Q&A session included support and congratulations on current progress and promotion of the project the development; the importance of ongoing conversation and communication with established groups was highlighted in order to avoid impacting on and duplicating activities at existing community hubs.

4. BAND (Building a New Direction)

Jan Ryder gave an overview of past and current activities of this successful Bolton-based group looking to re-establish itself in Westhoughton. Going 20 years, it is primarily run by volunteers as a 'self-help' initiative, offering drop-ins, a mental health 'toolbox' and positive activities and events to help with engagement and confidence. BAND is looking to consult in Westhoughton and provide much needed services for the town. It is believed 1 in 4 people have some degree of mental health issues. More info: band.org.uk.

During the Information Share there was a short break at 7:50pm for refreshments and networking.

5. Information Share

Senior Solutions – Michelle Todd informed us that the Winifred Kettle-based service, offering a visiting service, luncheon clubs, carer respite and support... recently celebrated 20years. The relatively new Tuesday group of activities, speakers and occasional entertainment has proven very popular. With Hillary Welsby retiring, Julie Loughran has been recruited.

The AGM will be held on Tuesday, 26th Sept (2:15pm) at Sacred Heart Church. There are some ongoing issues within funding, and new support is required in order to provide the annual Christmas party celebration.

Bolton CVS – Darren Knight joined us and spoke about the refurbishment of 'The Hub' in Bolton town centre, and funding opportunities ([Big Bolton Fund](#)), including the Small Grants Fund (up to £1,500), deadlines Monday 11th Sept, and then 29th Jan 2018; Bolton at Home Community Investment Grants (up to £500) deadlines: 30th Oct, and 26th Feb 2018; Hate Crime Awareness Grants (up to £2,000), apply by 28th Nov; 'Thrive' Small Investments of up to £2000 for projects that will improve the mental health of young people. Details to be confirmed.

In addition, a new stream of funding from the 'Community Investment Programme', which has delegated authority through the 'Neighbourhood Investment Programme' (see also upcoming Healthwatch consultation meeting on 26th Sept). A total of £425K per annum over the next 2 years will be available commencing October. This will be discussed in detail at the meeting, or go to the [Bolton Health Matters](#) website.

[Bolton CVS](#) provides help, support and guidance to community groups.



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Red Lion Apartments – WCN welcomed Martin Boggan of [SIL-UK \(Lifeways\)](#) who gave a brief description of the role of the new apartments at the site of the former pub; a private mental health facility, providing accommodation for people with mental health issues post-hospital and prior to discharge from formal care. As part of the short-term tenancies offered (via referral from Mental Health Services), the key aim and role is to reintegrate individuals back into normal life; they provide 24-hour support, help individuals build networks and acquire skills to get on with life. This 'not-for-profit' also company has facilities in Wigan, Rochdale and Warrington.

A short Q&A session followed, highlighting the issues faced – lack of resources, stigma... The average stay at a facility is 21 months.

Friends of Eatock Lodge – Trevor Benn reported on the success of the recent Funday event (previous Sunday, 3rd Sept) – despite the atrocious weather! A good number attending enjoying the usual activities, which now include a local petting farm (Little Barn Farm). Special thanks to Alan Clare for stepping in at the last minute to provide some wood craft activities. The group is involved in the Bolton Green Forum network, which is led by Lancashire Wildlife Trust, and encourages good practice and skills/information sharing amongst Bolton's outdoor groups.

Howfen Radio—Lisa Reilly gave information about the 'Howfenbury' music event on Saturday, 16th Sept (12-10pm) at the White Horse carpark; stalls including the Barking Berrys... There will be a range of local artists performing. Again, supporting the community, the stage will be provided by local scaffold company Rarecrest.

Westhoughton Poetry Group – Johnny Crook talked about 'National Poetry Day' on Thursday, 28th Sept when Westhoughton will be involved in the Bolton-wide event at the Central Library, with the theme of 'Freedom'.

Locally the group is available for readings, in e.g. care homes, at schools and at other venues. Proving a popular attraction, Johnny is available to provide a 'Town Crier' at local events and happenings.

Friends of Westhoughton Station – after the years of work Steve Freeborn enthused that the gardens are maturing beautifully and widely admired – the Bethel Crowd's Jason Taylor passing on admiring comments (the 'best station') he had heard on the radio. The strength of support by both community and volunteers is most appreciated and continues to grow. The group expressed their gratitude to W.A.C.O. for the grant for a secure tool box. Volunteers soon to embark on a wood preservation programme. The group - a social bunch - meets every Sunday (from 10am) attended by some 10-15 people – the only things missing at the moment is trains! (Due to the embankment collapse in Bolton.) Steve, reminded people that if they wander down the (trains to) Wigan Platform, they will see and can have a moment at the 'Harold Daniels Memorial Garden' that the group has lovingly created in his honour.



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George Formby Society – Garry Hampson reported on they many (some 25) local gigs already performed this year, which has included entertainment in residential homes, and a concert here at Westhoughton Methodist Church. As they have done for the last 18 years, the ukulele group continue to meet the last Wednesday in the month from 7:30pm at the Mercury Hotel. New players welcome, but others welcome to come and listen.

W.A.C.O. – Tony McGarry, a brief respite following the great success of the summer's 'It's-a-Knockout' event, which saw some 5,000 people attend and raised thousands of pounds for local causes. The group has provided grants to many local groups for activities and events, and is currently simplifying the application form.

Congratulations to Chair, Kellie McGarry, who is to become landlady of The Rosehill Tavern ('The Bug') this month.

Wingates Band – Melanie McFarland had joined us from rehearsal, and Joy Mooney gave WCN an update. The brass band continues to perform at local and national events, not only competitions, but also supporting local organisations, schools, and the wider community including a charity concert for Clatterbridge Hospital. Coming soon Wingates Band returns to the elite table by competing at the 'British Open' at the Birmingham Symphony Hall – the piece recently rehearsed in public at St. Bart's. There are a number of upcoming concerts – a 'Best of British' at St. Bart's on Saturday, 21st Oct (7:30pm); performing with the Band of the King's Division at The Brindley Theatre in Runcorn, Sunday, 19th Nov (7.30pm). With local Christmas Concerts to look forward to at St John's Wingates, Thursday, 7th Dec then the Victoria Hall in Bolton on Saturday, 9th Dec (both 7.30pm).

On a more concerning note Joy announced that due to financial difficulties the 144 year old Westhoughton brass band are on the brink of folding. There are initiatives to try to address this such as a relaunched [Supporters Club](#), applying for grants and widening the remit of the band to be more involved in education and schools, even using music as therapy, e.g., PTSD and mental health.

Costs of the running the band and competing are significant, as is keeping the band hall going – itself in need of investment. Despite the success of rising up the league table of brass bands (top 30 in the world), the band has been struggling financially for some time... all in the room were shocked and offered their support and best wishes for the survival of this local institution and well-respected ambassadors for Westhoughton.

Bethel Crowd – Jason Taylor listed future productions, which include a 'sold out' 'You Can't Stop the Beat!' musical review on Saturday, 16th Sept; a fundraising 'Quiz Night' on Saturday, 21st Oct (7:30pm); a special youth production for Christmas 'Children of the World' on Saturday, 16th Dec (7:15pm – tickets £5). Preparations and rehearsals are ongoing for the 2018 Pantomime Aladdin, 19th/20th and 26th/27th January (7:15pm with Saturday matinees at 2:15pm) – tickets £6. The programme is ongoing, with a production of The Wizard of Oz coming in 2018... tickets for all shows and events can be purchased [online](#).



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Travelling Strings continue to perform, raising money for Alzheimer's and other local charities. Always willing to support local groups and events, including turning out for the WCN 6th birthday party in August... they are back performing at the Westhoughton Golf Club Beer Festival (Friday, 8th Sept); and have a gig at Lady of Lourdes, Farnworth Friday, 29th Sept supporting the Farnworth Foodbank. The 9-piece group is busier than ever fitting in rehearsing in Chew Moor and their many bookings, with a growing reputation as top entertainment. Other upcoming gigs include: a Soroptimist event (improving the lives of women and girls) at Leigh Rugby Club (30th Sept - £12.50 inc. buffet), and a 'Stars in Your Eyes' Variety Night at Horwich RMI for Horwich Dementia Support (20th Oct - £7 inc. pasty and peas supper). More info: TravellingStrings.com.

Psoup – warmly welcomed, Charlotte Carlin will have more to report next time...

Westhoughton Methodist ADS – new Chair, Dave Fensome, introduced himself and gave an update on the Amateur Dramatic Group's activities. It has recently 'toured' a Murder Mystery. A new one will be performed here in Westhoughton Fri/Sat 27th/28th Oct, with a pasty and peas supper. The Panto, Jack and the Beanstalk, is in preparation for performances in February (2nd/3rd and 9th/10th). Having lost some key people, the ADS is looking for new members particularly in the age group 20-40. Rehearsals are on a Monday evening. Info/contact details on WCN website.

As for **Westhoughton Methodist Church**, Rev'd Lesley Dinham, told of the free BBQ on 10th Sept to encourage local involvement in the Church and its many community activities. She reported on the success of this year's auction and upcoming Christmas events.

Friends of Daisy Hill Station – Jack Speight pointed out that Daisy Hill does currently see trains! Work at the station continues – keeping it tidy and maintaining the plants (drums and hangers). There are ongoing parking issues affecting station users and local residents. The group is looking to obtain a greenhouse in order to grow more plants from seed. The group won first prize for their displays at the recent Yarn Bombing Festival (Congratulations!!). There is a project to commemorate the late Bill Greenhalgh of Westhoughton Methodist ADS with a plaque and bench referencing his journey by train from China to Daisy Hill (his sister doing a write-up).

Westhoughton Yarn Bombing Festival – Jack Speight gave an update on the August event, though lower key, with Linda James stepping back, and missing the draw of the funfair which failed to show as previously indicated... the town centre and beyond did see yarn displays and did attract attention. The event will return over the weekend of 14th and 15th July 2018; it is hoped that with planning and promotion over a longer period the wider community can be involved to make this event a success. Contact WCN.



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HACFRA / WAVE - Doug Cunliffe reported on activities at the John Holt Centre, where many activities take place, including cinema afternoons, a new Scouts group, and a new Youth Club starting soon.

The centre was a distribution point for the Urban Outreach 'BL Lunches' handing out some 60 packed lunches a day during the school holidays. A celebratory party involving Get Active and with Dave Bagley doing the barbecue took place at the end of August.

Washacre Primary School – Julie Poundall (PTA) told of the success of the summer fayre, money raised was given out as decided by the children in a 'Dragon's Den' event at the school. Julie gave information about a MacMillan Coffee Morning on Friday, 29th Sept (9-10:30am), and the school's Christmas Fayre on Tuesday, 19th Dec (from 2pm). Donations and volunteers needed.

Hope Centre & Church – Mark Taylor stated that the Centre had a busy schedule with many events and activities including a toddlers group, art group, dancing, keep fit... the Sunday service is at 10:30am – all welcome.

6. Any Other Business

Whilst updates will go on WCN website and a [downloadable](#) info sheet will be produced, Chris Buckley gave an update on some other upcoming events from our groups...

- 'Heritage Open Day' weekend (9th and 10th Sept)– there are a number of free events: including at **St. James Church** Daisy Hill, 'Coffee Concert' of classical music ft musician Eleanor Guénault, 'Find the Snail' and 'Heritage and Sunday Tea'; and at **Brookfield Hall** a Wedding Fayre and 'Inside Freemasonry' event.
- **Daisy Hill in Bloom** will be staging the first 'Daisy Hill Flower, Fruit and Veg Show' on Sunday, 17th Sept (2-4pm) at Daisy Hill Cricket Club. A chance for local gardeners to show off their best blooms and garden produce... Details about the categories, etc., can be found at DaisyHillinBloom.org.uk.
- **Westhoughton Local History Group** launches its latest exhibition - 'Aspects of Howfen', which covers many facets of the town's rich industrial, social, cultural, educational and sporting history. A free exhibition, held on the upper floor and viewable during Library opening hours. It will run from Saturday, 23rd Sept until Tuesday, 31st Oct.

The official opening and unveiling of a permanent Westhoughton History 'Timeline' exhibit, itself the idea of the late Pam Clarke to whom it is dedicated, will take place on the opening Saturday at 11am, with speeches, background information and refreshments. All WCN groups are most welcome.

'Aspects of Howfen' will also see the launch of two new WLHG publications linked to the Timeline project; one expanding upon the history of the Timeline, the other a display of water-colour paintings illustrating the Westhoughton of yesteryear by local artist Tom Newton.



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- Autumn/winter programmes for both **Women of Westhoughton** (Hope Centre, Thursdays 7:30pm) and **Westhoughton Townswomen's Guild** (John Holt Centre, 3rd Monday of month 7:30pm) have been updated on the WCN website.
- It is '[Mental Health Awareness Day](#)' 10th October with a number of health and wellbeing events, including a large event at Manchester University – 'Living Well through the Ages' and 'Suicide Awareness'. The Westhoughton Hub will be involved.
- The **Barking Berry's** Charity Christmas Dog Show will take place at Lands Farm on Hindley Road, Westhoughton (BL5 2DU) (11-3pm), as the group heads towards its new goal of £30,000 raised for animal charities.

7. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 29th November at The John Holt Youth and Community Centre.

Meeting finished at 9:15pm.

WesthoughtonCommunityNetwork.co.uk