



Westhoughton Community Network

Meeting: 7:00pm Tuesday, 9th February 2016

at St. Bartholomew's Church

Minutes

1. Present

Groups in attendance (22)

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| 1. Bethel Crowd (BCD) | 15. Westhoughton Community Queens Association (WCQA) |
| 2. Friends of Daisy Hill Station (FDHS) | 16. Westhoughton Local History Group (WLHG) |
| 3. Friends of Eatock Lodge (FoEL) | 17. Westhoughton Methodist ADS (WMADS) |
| 4. Friends of Westhoughton Station (FWS) | 18. Westhoughton Poetry Group (WPS) |
| 5. George Formby Society (GFS) | 19. Westhoughton Townswomen's Guild (TWG) |
| 6. Howfen Radio (HFR) | 20. Westhoughton United Reformed Church (WURC) |
| 7. Rainbow Crafts (RBC) | 21. Westhoughton Youth Project (BLGC) |
| 8. Rotary Club of Westhoughton (RCW) | 22. Wingates Band (WB) |
| 9. Senior Solutions (SNS) | ~ All Souls Bolton (ASB) |
| 10. St. Bartholomew's, St. Thomas & St. George
LEP Parish (SBC) | ~ Bolton College - Westhoughton Centre (WLC) |
| 11. Travelliin' Strings (TST) | ~ Bolton Council - Community Empowerment Fund (CEF) |
| 12. Westhoughton Active Communities Organisation (WACO) | ~ Westhoughton Leisure Centre (WLC) |
| 13. Westhoughton Age Support Project (WASP) | ~ Woodlands Care Home (WCH) |
| 14. Westhoughton Art Group (WAG) | ~ Westhoughton Town Council (WTC) |

Individuals in attendance (37)

Trevor Benn (FoEL)	Janet Hope (WCH)	Jack Speight (FDHS)
Ann Benn (FoEL)	Linda James (RBC)	Andrew Suter (ASB)
Val Chadwick (WLHG)	Dennis Lee (GFS)	Jason Taylor (BCD)
David Chadwick (WTC)	Dawn Lythgoe (CEF)	Maureen Taylor (FoWS)
Johnny Crook (WPS)	Len Maycroft (WASP)	Michelle Todd (SNS)
Margaret Curme (WURC)	Kellie McGarry (WACO)	Hillary Welsby (SNS)
Wilf Dillon (WASP)	Sarah Morris (WLC)	Matt Willber (WLC)
Tim Eden (TST)	Lorraine Patel (WCH)	James Wilson (SBC)
Stephen Freeborn (FWS)	Shirley Pinches (WLC)	Ted Wisedale (WLHG)
Sandra Greenall (WCQA)	Helen Purnell (WURC)	Harold Daniels (RCW) CHAIR
Bill Greenhalgh (WMADS)	Lisa Reilly (HFR)	Chris Buckley (WCN)
Gary Hampson (GFS)	Cindy Ritchie (TWG)	
Dave Hendry (WAG)	Tony Smith (WB)	

Apologies (11)

Sue Ashcroft (Westhoughton Methodist Church); Janice Bayliss (National Association of Women's Clubs);
Sarah Dunscombe-Berry (Barking Berrys); Doreen Booth (Townswomen's Guild);
Doug Cunliffe (HACFRA/WAVE/Washacre FM); Steve Harrington (Rotary Club of Westhoughton);
Jenny Haunch (Washacre Primary School); David Kaye (Wingates Band);
Brian Leyden (Friends of Westhoughton Station); Brenda Shott (Friends of Eatock Lodge);
Mark Taylor (Hope Church)



2. Welcome/Apologies/Review of Minutes

Chair, Harold Daniels thanked St Bartholomew's for the use of the Church and kind hospitality. Congratulations noted for Barking Berrys and Friends of Westhoughton Station who had recently received Civic Awards for their achievements.

Those present signed the attendance sheet and introduced themselves and the groups they represented. Apologies noted. With no matters arising, minutes of the previous meeting were moved and seconded.

3. Community Empowerment Fund (Bolton Council)

Chair welcomed Dawn Lythgoe from Bolton Council who made a presentation about the background and aims of this fund.

Dawn began with an overview of council services in the form of a quiz/interactive session (range of services/frequency/beneficiaries) in the context of reduced budgets. She highlighted the importance of the voluntary sector, and the big impact volunteers make. Recent study: Bolton – 1,480 voluntary organisations; 1.8m 'interventions'; 32,300 volunteers giving 100,900 hours of their time.

Launched in December 2014, £500,000 has been allocated as a one-off source of funding for projects which support Council priorities and reduce demand on council services. Current priorities are the environment and providing opportunities for children and young people. Funding is available until end of 2016. To date there have been 73 applications, with 10 successful bids of which only one impacted on Westhoughton (Bolton Lads and Girls Club Youth Project, which received £50k from CEF plus £32k capital investment). 'Unsuccessful' applications would be signposted to other sources of funding.

There are two levels of investment funding: small-scale up to £2,000 to try out innovative ideas, and start-up priming of up to £40,000 over 2 years to develop and progress an innovative idea. The application cycle is ongoing with no deadlines.

Application Process: online via www.bolton.gov.uk/cef; also has guidance on completing applications, FAQs and scoring criteria.

Dawn gave some examples of applications which had not been successful and a list of those which had been, e.g. Moss Bank Community Sports Club, Bolton Solidarity, Kearsley Youth Brass Band, and the Gateway Support Group.

Dawn answered a number of questions about amounts allocated; new initiatives v. existing work. It is anticipated that the criteria will be widened in order that it will embrace more aspects of current Council work e.g. Dementia friendly communities and activities targeted at older people. Dawn invited enquiries from anyone interested. She is happy to discuss ideas and innovative projects, hoping that meetings such as this can provide the spark for community projects that can be supported.

There was a short break for refreshments and a chance to network.



4. Yarn Bombing Festival 2016

Linda James had set up a display of knitted items and handed out leaflets; photos from the successful 2015 event were shown via a slideshow.

The format of the event will be similar to last year with yarn displays from the community and local businesses, entertainment, stalls and carnival elements. Centred around Market Street but expanding outwards as other groups get involved. For example, the Community Queens crowning event will take place at the Leisure Centre; Westhoughton Art Group will be holding an art exhibition at the library. As time and event planning progresses it is hoped to add more attractions to the Yarn Bombing weekend. Info page: bit.ly/wybf16.

Chosen dates are Saturday/Sunday 2nd/3rd July.

Linda asked for knitted or craft donations of any shape or form, and for help with organising and setting up the event.

5. Westhoughton Community College

Dave Hendry asked that WCN be made aware of the confusion and uncertainty of the future of the College; an issue that had been of concern due to courses being cut and provision being “under review”. It was felt a town this size should have adult education provision and appropriate support. Centre Manager, Shirley Pinches confirmed that although no decision has been made about the future, the views and opinions of the local community were being sought, and that a public meeting would be held on 15th February, 12.00 noon (Central Drive). A letter from College Director of Curriculum, Carmen Gonzales-Eslava, was circulated detailing the situation facing Bolton College.

Councillor David Chadwick reiterated Shirley’s comments and informed WCN of a planned meeting with the Principal on 24th February regarding the future and use of the college, and he would welcome any comments or information. Note: the College is a separate entity from the Council, though leases the site from it.

With the Central Drive Centre having both an educational and community importance, the Chair suggested that all support the College, and that an update be brought to the next WCN meeting.

6. Group Updates / Information Share

Friends of Eatock Lodge – Trevor Benn reported on planned activities for Spring, including a major clean up of the lodge itself by a contractor brought in by Bolton Council. The group is looking at a project to refurbish the goalposts and improve the kick-around pitch area.

It should be noted that groups that work with and form relationships with the Council and third parties do seem to get things done, getting a favourable response in terms of resources / addressing issues.



Westhoughton Community Network

In part thanks to their involvement with WCN, the **George Formby Society** is growing in numbers - some 40-50 meet regularly at The Mercury on the last Wednesday of the month (7:40pm) to enjoy his music. Dennis Lee affirmed that the group is pleased to be involved with local groups, activities and events.

A quieter time for work, **Friends of Daisy Hill Station** (Jack Speight) is now liaising with the new managers of the franchise, preparing for ongoing amenity improvement work at the station.

Kellie McGarry updated the group on **WACO** who are still fundraising and are soon to do another round of grant awards of up to £250 for local projects. Application forms can be downloaded from the WACO page of the WCN website.

Kellie has recently taken on a community engagement role at **Westhoughton Youth Project (Bolton Lads and Girls Club)**. The new centre opened its doors in January providing Junior (8-12) and Senior (13-19) sessions Monday to Thursday evenings. It has started well with good participation, with ongoing fundraising to sustain the project. They are seeking more volunteers to provide session support, and in time hope to be able to extend activities and opening times/days.

It is hoped that the popular 'It's-a-Knockout' event will return – a WACO event in conjunction with and to support WYP. (*Confirmed for Sunday, 22nd May.*)

Introduced by Lisa Reilly, **Howfen Radio** is a new internet-based radio station featuring amateur presenters doing occasional broadcasts. There will be a community element with groups welcome to provide news and information about events. The group hopes to support community events with roadshow facilities.

A Facebook group has been set up: [facebook.com/howfenradio](https://www.facebook.com/howfenradio) – new presenters welcome. The new group received £200 from WACO to help with set-up costs.

Andrew Suter reported on the **All Souls Bolton** initiative... based in Halliwell, [All Souls](#) is a derelict church renovation project. Completed in 2015, with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, its change of use delivering a conference, meeting and event venue. [Visitors welcome.] Andrew spoke of wanting to involve community groups and schools in a summer Borough-wide History Month event, and can support history projects across Bolton including Westhoughton.

Andrew has expertise in project management and funding and would be willing to assist groups. The Chair suggested Andrew be invited back at a future date.

The Travellin' Strings go from strength to strength in supporting Alzheimer's Society with their performances and fundraising (£6,670 to date). Tim Eden updated WCN on the group's activities (website travellinstrings.com). As well as supporting local events, they now play across Bolton, including the Ladybridge Community Centre for the Women's Institute (26/2); with a main performance at a new community event, The Hulton Park Festival, 10th July.

Friends of Westhoughton Station (Steve Freeborn) continue to work at the station (1st / 3rd Sundays from 10am). Their work and efforts have helped in having installed two new shelters at the station – a welcome boost for commuters. They



Westhoughton Community Network

showed off their recent Town Council Civic Award for 'improving the environment'. Steve recommended the Streetlife networking website for local promotion.

Bethel Crowd (Jason Taylor), with the January panto, Mother Goose, and auditions for youth production, Wind in the Willows, out of the way, the busy drama society prepares for upcoming events: a murder mystery evening, 'Directing Dilemma' (9th April / 7.15pm / £5) with pasty and peas supper; 'Wind in the Willows' (10th/11th & 17th/18th June / 7.15pm (Saturday matinees 2:15pm) / £4. The September production will be 'Little Shop of Horrors' (16th/17th & 23rd/24th). Tickets can be bought online via [Ticket Source](#).

New to Westhoughton, the new **Woodlands Care Home** for Dementia sufferers is keen to be involved with the community. WCN groups and community are invited to the 'Open day' on Friday, 18th March (11:30am-4:00pm); they are keen to recruit volunteers to help with support activities for residents.

Wingates Band's Tony Smith shared information about an innovative Arts Council funded project for the brass band. Based on a weather book and series of stories therein, with new compositions by the resident, award-winning composer Lucy Pankhurst; currently in development, it is set to become a theatrical, experiential performance involving Wingates Band, a pipe band, dancers and singers... 'The Great Shindig' will premier at The Brindley, Runcorn 25th September.

W.A.S.P. (Westhoughton Age Support Project) – activities continue at the John Holt Centre (Monday afternoons) and, whilst the Winifred Kettle is being refurbished, the Daisy Hill Community Centre (Monday/Thursday evenings) until the end of March. A number of trips and events have been planned for the year.

We welcomed Johnny Crook of the **Westhoughton Poetry Group**, a new group giving wordsmiths and poets a chance to be creative and enjoy the written and spoken word. The group meets at Westhoughton Library, on the last Thursday of the month from 2pm (next meeting 25/2). All welcome.

Westhoughton History Group – well-attended meetings often with speakers 1st & 3rd Thursdays of month, 10am at library. Programme on their website. Ted Wisedale also commented on growing number of videos available online showcasing Westhoughton community activities - YouTube Channel 'Ted Wisedale'. Ted is happy to produce videos for community groups.

Senior Solutions – Michelle Todd spoke of a new group session meeting on Tuesday afternoon 1:15-3:15pm at Sacred Heart Church – a social gathering for clients, carers and volunteers (quizzes, crafts, occasional entertainment...).

They are also linking with both the High School and Pcsos with a scheme 'to keep an eye' the elderly and vulnerable. It is hoped this 'soft' alert system can help support the isolated in our community.

Senior Solutions have secured funding over the medium term to allow the continuation of existing projects – visiting service and luncheons – and participation in new schemes such as 'Fitter Fans', and a project to share and pass on skills and experiences connecting young and old.



Westhoughton Community Network

Westhoughton Methodist ADS. It's Panto Time! Bill Greenhalgh gave an update on the latest production: 'The Princess, The Penguin and the Potting Shed', to be performed 12th/13th & 19th/20th February. Beyond that the group will be working on a new comedy play, scheduled for 13th/14th May.

Church News and Grub Tubs (Urban Outreach) – James Wilson updated on both and suggested that a foodbank donation could be brought to future WCN meetings – non-perishable items; in particular UHT milk, tinned meats welcome.

94 local families; 273 singles/couples have been supported through community donations. James reported back concern for people in their 50s hit by redundancy.

James also distributed leaflets with information about Westhoughton Parish Churches services and activities planned for the Lent and Easter period, including a 'Prayer Chain' for Westhoughton streets.

Rotary Club of Westhoughton – Harold Daniels confirmed that the Santa Float collections in the lead up to Christmas raised a record £8,570 during December; to be given out to local causes/charities 17th March at the annual Brookfield Presentation Evening.

Councillor Chadwick was given the opportunity to update the group on **Westhoughton Town Council** / Council matters. Some Westhoughton residential estates will see 20mph speed limits; the Winifred Kettle modernisation for a new Health and Wellbeing Centre is due for completion during the spring offering Occupational Therapy, midwifery, community use. There was an update on rail electrification work: Farnworth Tunnel completed, but some work ahead between Lostock and Preston will affect services. Arriva Trains to take over from Northern. New train carriages on order (due 2018).

Westhoughton Leisure Centre – current leisure discounts on offer: for those over 65 free gym and swim; half-price badminton and squash for under 16s; under 17s swim free. They have also started basketball sessions on a Sunday morning – something different for the children of Westhoughton to come down and try.

Some discounted memberships are available. Call in for more info. A Community Noticeboard is available at the centre.

Groups are reminded that events can be added to the website and WCN calendar – use the online events form or by sending in information/details and updates.



Westhoughton Community Network

7. Any Other Business

- Chris Buckley commented on the very enjoyable Christmas Party at Brookfield Hall, and many of those present who attended endorsed the view. A good opportunity for group representatives to dress up, mingle socially and celebrate our community network. A grant-funding bid (£300) through Bolton CVS to fund some subsidised places was unsuccessful.
We will look at a future event - possibly a late summer ball – if it is supported and viable.
- Barking Berrys' Scarlett Berry was nominated by WCN for the Westhoughton Town Council 'Young Citizen of the Year' award for her contributions to the community and animal fundraising efforts (over £16,000 to date). The Town Mayor, Linda Lynda Winrow-Baker, presented her award at an event on 6th February. Scarlett and her family have expressed their gratitude for the nomination.
- Many of our groups have used the [Small Grants Fund](#) managed by Bolton CVS for the grant funding of projects and events - this is money allocated in the main by Bolton Council. Due to budget cuts this funding has been reduced significantly from 2016/17. Groups applying for funding should watch out for updates regarding this funding, and to be aware of the need to ensure that any bid meets set criteria and fulfils a community need to stand a better chance of success.
- The next Westhoughton with Chew Moor Area Forum takes place Thursday, 3rd March from 6:30pm for 7:00pm (main meeting) at the John Holt Centre (BL5 2NR).
On the agenda an update on the introduction of slim bins.
Note: Area Forums have been under review with a proposal to reduce the frequency of these Council-Councillor-Resident public meetings to once a year.
- Our condolences go out to family and friends of Jean Watkinson who passed away early December after a short illness. Jean attended our meetings and was a key member of Westhoughton Community Queens Association; she was part of the Westhoughton Carnival Committee for many years, and was active with her local Residents' Association. RIP.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 11th May 2016 | 7pm at Woodlands Westhoughton.

(venue provisional / subject to change if no longer available.)

Meeting finished at 9:45pm.

WesthoughtonCommunityNetwork.co.uk