



Westleton Village Hall Committee
Reg. Charity Number 1026353



Notes of joint meeting of Westleton Village Hall Committee, Westleton Parochial Church Council and Helpers held 17/09/2008.

Present - Morgan Caines, John Bebbington, Sheila Collett, Sue Foster, Roger Driver, Janie Driver, Roy Swindell, Pat Swindell, Helen Williams, Mary Macgilp, Ivor Murrell, Jean Murrell, Richard Ginn, Stan Saunders, Antony Clough.

Agenda

1 - Decide who will chair the meeting

At Morgan Caines's suggestion Roger Driver chaired the meeting.

2 - Apologies

Apologies from - Amanda Freeman, Brian Boulanger, Judy Boulanger, Alison Paul, Esmé Sillito, Ann Bebbington, Gwen Saunders.

3 - Wild Flower Festival and Exhibition feedback - lessons for next year.

Sue reported from the recent PCC meeting. Main points;

Asked if newspapers were told of event (John had contacted EADT and local free sheet.)
Church recorded 1100 visitors.

John outlined financial reports received from Brian. Net receipts £1700 each for church and hall. Income from "door" receipts and Quilters, down on previous year. Plant and other sales well up. Peggy Cole talk made a significant contribution. Improved sales and the Peggy Cole talk ensured that income was broadly in line with last year. Without those contributions the event would have been far less financially successful.

John briefly outlined comments submitted by people not at meeting. Most issues raised are covered in these notes.

Need to clarify parking arrangements for cars used by people with disabilities.

Need to get more people actively involved.

Richard - main problem was weather, it was too good so people stayed outdoors.

Morgan - based on experience at the Dunwich Museum and from other contacts visitor numbers at other attractions were lower this year.

Publicity survey indicated that the roadside notices generated most visitors, followed by people who found out about the event "accidentally" as they were passing through. Other very useful publicity methods are the posters, newspapers and other publications, word of mouth. Less successful were the A12 banners, Yoxmere Fisherman and web sites. Other comments on publicity were;

Roadside publicity on the northbound route through Westleton was good but publicity going south was poor.

Need better coverage in EADT. A double page spread the week before as the Barrel Fair and Sibfest got would be well worth while.

Stan - we need to write to newspapers twice - to both the editorial and advertising people - as information sent to one will not get to the other.

Richard suggested AA signs but these were considered too expensive.

General agreement that we need to put more effort into publicity both in Westleton and

the wider visitor catchment area.

Roger suggested a publicity group to deal with all publicity matters. Ivor agreed and argued that we need to emphasise the uniqueness; there are lots of flower festivals about but not many wild flower festivals combined with an exhibition of village life. Ivor also argued that the publicity group should deal with all matters of publicity to avoid confusion. Ivor and Stan agreed to serve on this group. Stan would represent the PCC. VHC needs to identify a member at its next meeting (Amanda was suggested). Guy Campbell, as a media professional was also suggested as a member. John to contact.

John to circulate a general request for help, probably via notice boards, Fisherman and website.

(Comments John Bebbington;

Over the last couple of years we have rationalised the distribution lists and rotas for posters. I will pass that information to the publicity group together with my contact list for publications, web sites and other media.)

Roger asked if we need to rethink the content of the event. The Peggy Cole talk was well worth while, although John observed that most people who attended were not from Westleton. Stan argued that the %age of Westleton people attending the Peggy Cole talk and similar events outside the festival was high, even though the numbers were low. We need to find a "hook" to attract the locals and to do things that are different and to publicise that difference.

Morgan reminded us that in the early days of the festival there was an event in the church every night. Roger had heard a comment that the musicians tended to distract people from going round all the displays in the church.

Helen - there is a danger that we will not get enough support for nightly events.

Suggestions for events in the church were;

An evening of old silent films.

Invite the gentleman from Leiston with the local film archive.

RSPB films

Sizewell publicity films.

Barbara Caines has the details of a potential speaker and will pass the information on to John.

We need to clarify if we are thinking of 1 or more evenings.

John to contact above and Damien Evans to explore possibilities but NOT invite at this stage.

(Comment John Bebbington;

Roger, Gordon (Turner) and I attended the WEA study day lead by Clive Paine on "Decorating Suffolk Churches". He would be willing to give a talk on, say, the Saturday of the festival. He could talk about the history and archaeology of Westleton Church and combine this with an explanatory tour of the church. The format could be 45 min talk and tour, wine and nibbles, another 45 min talk and tour. He would charge £100. We three thought this could be well worth while. What do the rest of you think? Will we get enough local people interested? Will it be sufficiently interesting to people outside Westleton? If we set a ticket price at, say, £10 to include free wine and "crisps" we need to sell at least 50 tickets to pay Clive and make a decent profit. Can we sell at least 50 tickets? Clive has pencilled us in; we need to confirm round about the turn of the year.)

4 - Carol Supper/Service due on 18 December.

Last year's event was agreed to have been a success and that we should repeat it this year.

WI has confirmed that they will do the catering.

Date confirmed as 18 December. Same format and time as last year. John to ask band if they could manage a 7 pm start as many people in Westleton would prefer an earlier finish. (John - I will try but many of the band do need to get home from work so I suspect this may not be possible.)

Some concern that people who do not like going to church but do like singing carols miss out. Some discussion of having carols in the hall as well. Agreed this is probably unrealistic as the band need to set themselves up in the hall and the hall needs to be set up for the supper. Agreed we need to make it clear that the carol service in the church is for everyone and not just the regular church goers. Everyone is welcome.

At Richard's suggestion we call it "Carols for All".

VHC to firm up arrangements at next meeting and keep PCC informed.

5 - Other joint events.

Morgan described the 100 club and asked for help in distributing the papers.

Stan asked if direct debit was useful. Doubtful.

Ideas generated;

More music,

Monthly village talks where people talk about what interests them,

Garden societies,

Roger - we need to understand if events are for community cohesion or for fundraising.

He suggested that we appoint a PCC/VHC subgroup to explore ideas. Sheila reminded us that there was a "Friends of the Village Hall" group and this could be a similar idea.

Stan suggested that the PCC and VHC both appoint 3 people to such a group. Richard and Morgan as chairmen of the PCC/VHC to attend meetings as required but do not need to be members of the group.

Agreed to try and set this group up and that the members should be people who will do things not just talk about them. Other people could be co-opted as required and it would be important to maintain a dialogue with Barrel Fair, Parish Council, WI and other groups as relevant.

Jean suggested we need a "What's On" sheet for the village that notes regular and irregular events such as yoga, WI, bowls.

6 - AOB

2009 WFF/Ex will be Friday 31 July to Monday 3 August.

Roger - Dunwich have offered to lend us of their flower festival banner.

No need to meet before Carols for All/Carol Supper. VHC and PCC to advise each other of progress.

Next Meeting in January 2009 to start planning WFF/Ex and review progress on all items discussed above. John to set up.

Comment John Bebbington

To save paper I'll circulate these notes by email to those of you for whom I have an email address. As some of you have difficulties with my attachments I have sent it out as a PDF file. I think you can all read them. Panic if you cannot. Manual copies to Amanda, Mim, Sheila, Mary, Esmé.

I will also put it on the website so other people in Westleton know what we have in mind. I hope this is OK.

John Bebbington
22/09/2008

