



# Westleton Village Hall



Supported by the  
Britten-Pears  
Foundation



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## Annual Report for the Year 1<sup>st</sup> May 2010 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011

*Prepared by the secretary and presented at the AGM held on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2011*

### Morgan Caines

In our annual report for May 2010 we noted the death of Morgan Caines, the founding and long-standing chairman of the trustees of Westleton Village Hall. Morgan left a very generous bequest of £2,000 to the trustees. We decided that we should spend this on a memorial to Morgan to commemorate his association with the hall and to Westleton rather than use it to part-fund some other project or use it to support the general running and maintenance costs. With the support of Barbara Caines we decided that the most suitable memorial would be a custom built hardwood notice board. This was installed in March 2011 and inaugurated by Barbara.

Morgan had also been a member of Westleton Parish Council for over 50 years and had served two terms as chairman. The council installed a memorial clock in the main room of the hall.

Westleton owes much to Morgan; his contribution to the community over many years was immeasurable. He will not be forgotten.

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The Committee met on 6 occasions with most members present at all meetings.

### Peter Mitchell Bequest

The hall trustees were left a bequest of £67,767 by the late Peter Mitchell, a Westleton resident. We are beginning to consider how we can make the best use of this money and expect to appoint a working party to consider options in May 2011.

### Maintenance Work done during 2010/2011

Some minor repairs were carried out; repairs to the guttering, replacing flints on the boundary wall, repair to the drain from kitchen, replacement of faulty light switches. The exterior of the window frames was painted following the installation of the double glazed units.

### Equipment bought during 2010/2011

Thanks to the generosity of the Dunwich/Westleton WEA, the Britten-Pears Foundation and the Southwold Lions Club (and a contribution from hall funds) we were able to replace all the curtains in the hall. This has made a significant improvement to the appearance of the hall and is a great help when films are shown and illustrated lectures are held.

### Improvement to heating system and insulation

In our last annual reported we reported that we had installed double glazed windows and had insulated the space above the suspended ceiling but had not yet obtained sufficient funding to replace the heaters. During 2010/2011 The Suffolk Environmental Trust offered funding from the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme. The Westleton Indoor Bowls Club helped find the 10% third party funding we needed to obtain this grant. There is also additional money we can draw down from a grant already made available by Suffolk County Council. We have now been able to decide on the heating system that is most suited to our needs.

We have opted for a long wave radiant system that is programmable and thermostatically controlled. We have ordered and received the hardware and the system will be installed by our usual electrical contractors in August 2011.

#### Archivists

The Westleton Parish Council and Westleton Barrel Fair continue to provide financial support for the village archivists. Both bodies contribute £300 per year. This money is held in a separate "archivist" bank account and an audit trail ensures that the money is only used for the archivist service.

#### Joint Activities with St Peter's Church and Westleton Parochial Church Council

The Carol Supper in December 2010 followed the format of the previous three years and was equally successful. We will continue with this format for the next few years until further change is needed.

Over many years the church and hall have organised the Wild Flower Festival and Village Exhibition over the last weekend in July as two events running together. For the last few years the church and hall have worked more closely together to plan and organise these events. This is proving successful. We continued the practice started in 2008 of having a talk in the church on the Saturday evening. In 2010 the talk was given by Chris Millar of the Suffolk Punch Trust; a fascinating presentation.

Publicity for the event and the organisation of the craft demonstrations is now arranged by Ivor and Jean Murrell. We are very grateful for this help as it takes a lot of pressure of the Village Hall Committee.

#### Events (The money raised by these events is noted in the Treasure's report.)

The 2010 Exhibition, held in conjunction with the Wild Flower Festival at the end of July, had, again, been a success. The money raised (see Treasurer's Report) was shared equally between the hall and St Peter's Church funds.

Pat Swindell and Marianne Hecker arranged a further visit from the Eastern Angles Theatre Group. The performance was very well received and all tickets were sold.

Two quiz nights were held during the year, one run by Pat and Roy Swindell and one by Gwen and Stan Saunders. Both were enjoyable evenings but attendance was less than we would have hoped. Previously these evening had been run by our late chairman, Morgan Caines.

There is a lot of local interest and concern about the plans that the Forestry Commission and RSPB have for Dunwich Forest and Westleton Heath. Both were invited to present and explain their proposals in the hall. The evening was supplemented by a presentation by local wild-life photographer Paul Sawyer. This proved a worthwhile evening and even though not everyone is in agreement with the plans for the forest and heath at least more people understand the reasoning behind them.

RSPB are anxious to maintain good relations with their neighbours in Westleton and adjacent villages. To this end they hosted an evening and showed the film "The Minsmere Year". Another successful evening.

#### Hall Users

The Worker's Education Association organised several courses during the year covering a wide range of historical and cultural subjects. All courses were well attended and attracted participants from well outside the local area.

The other regular or frequent users of the hall during the year have been;

Linda Ginn (chiropractic clinics), the Westleton Quilters, the Westleton Indoor Bowls Club, the Westleton Art Group, the Heritage Quilters, the weekly yoga class, the Westleton Women's Institute, the Westleton Common Group, the Tallis Chamber Orchestra, the Westleton Youth Group, the Table Tennis Group, RSPB, Westleton Parish Council and the Crown Hotel for staff training.

Three new groups started to use the hall during the year. The Parish Nurses organise a "Drop-In" session with refreshments every Friday morning. This is proving very popular, especially with people who can sometimes be a little isolated. A film club has also been established. So far only two sessions have been held but both were very well supported and we are confident that this will also prove a successful venture. The Westleton Garden Club has also been established and holds regular meetings in the hall. This is also proving very successful.

We are grateful for the support of all these users and of other groups and private hirers who have used the hall for one-off meetings, courses and other events.

#### Management

There were some changes to the committee during the year. Antony Clough replaced Morgan Caines as Chairman and also replaced Morgan as the representative of Westleton Parish Council. Brian Boulanger gave notice of his wish to resign as treasurer at the end of the year 2010/2011. Ian "Alex" Alexander agreed to take over as treasurer and started to attend meeting of the committee as a guest with a view to becoming a full member of the committee in May 2011. Pat Swindell and Sheena Robertson joined as co-opted members.

Leaflets of general public interest are received from Suffolk ACRE, Suffolk Association of Voluntary Organisations, the local authorities and other bodies. These continue to be displayed in the committee room.

#### The future

We hope to be able to use the money received from Peter Mitchell's estate to deal with some of the issues raised in the Westleton Parish Plan. There is a need to improve the kitchen and storage facilities and to improve the environment for the Friday morning "drop-in" sessions and provide better facilities for chiropody and other minor personal services.

We have also submitted a bid to the National Lottery Awards-for-All fund for help in purchasing audio/video equipment for use by the film club and organisations such as WEA and RSPB who often present films and illustrated talks.

We are grateful to all the people who are not committee members who have helped us with events throughout the year. It would be impossible to name everyone who has helped (and unwise as I am bound to miss someone out).

Thanks are due to all those committee members and other volunteers who work very hard to maintain and manage the hall. Very special thanks are due to Irene Ridley for looking after the hall to a very high standard and to Mim Hendricks for dealing with all the bookings.

*John Bebbington*  
16/05/2011