



Bringing you key information from your Town Council

Newsletter

October 2023
Issue 1 (quarterly)



#### **Your Town Councillors**



Councillor Sophie Weaver Mayor cllr.weaver@westmersea.org



Councillor Sam Jarvis Deputy Mayor cllr.jarvis@westmersea.org



Councillor Carl Powling cllr.powling@westmersea.org



Councillor Bob Holmes cllr.holmes@westmersea.org



Councillor Thomas Hart cllr.hart@westmersea.org



Councillor Martin Parsons cllr.parsons@westmersea.org



Councillor Tessa Gibbons cllr.gibbons@westmersea.org



Councillor Robert Jenkins cllr.jenkins@westmersea.org





#### Mayor's Report



Since becoming Mayor earlier this year, there has been a lot of challenges, but also plenty to be positive about. I would like to welcome Cllr. Sam Jarvis who has accepted the Deputy Mayor position, our new councillors and also Karen Kuderovitch as Town Clerk. Although Karen was stepping into the breach as Locum Town Clerk, she is proving to be a great asset and will hopefully stay longer term. My thanks to ex-Councillor Paula Moore for her service to the community.

The first challenge was lack of councillors and forming a new council. Over the following months we became almost a full council, going from just five councillors in May to eight councillors in August. Due to the resignation of one of the original five, we are going to an election on 9th November for the final ninth place to be filled.

With a change of councillors, and also the change of Town Clerk, we have worked together well to ensure business as usual. And more than that, we have been re-evaluating various policies and processes, with the aim to make positive changes to take forward for the future. We are working together to agree priorities moving forward and how best to deliver those priorities and other workstreams.

I hope you are beginning to see some of the fruits of our labours. One important area we are trying to improve on, is our communications with you, the community. This newsletter is something we hope to do quarterly and will go out to every household to ensure we are reaching all residents. I hope you are enjoying the Mayor's Updates which I am publishing regularly. We will also be considering holding councillor surgeries so there is another opportunity for you to speak to us. In general, I hope this new council will be more proactive than previous. I would like more collaboration between council and community, and local groups and organisations. The Town Clerk and I are starting to meet with key community groups to improve relationships.

The coming months will, I am sure, present further challenges, but let's think about the positives so far:

• New benches have been installed on the Monkey Beach. They are not at all like the old concrete ones, they look really good.



- Several more compacta bins have been installed in several locations. The compacta
  bins are the ones that crunch the rubbish down so they take a greater capacity.
  They are also known as 'the talking bins' and those already installed are being
  well used.
- Positive talks have been held with MISA, and two surveys are being carried out on the Glebe pavilion.
- West Mersea Park: We will be doing a review of play equipment and repairing/replacing some items and to ensure inclusivity.
- The removal of tree stumps was agreed from West Mersea Park, Firs Road Cemetery, Parish Churchyard, Willoughby car park, Seaview car park and Glebe Recreation Ground, at a cost of £2,250. This may sound a lot, but when you consider there were a total of 48 tree stumps removed in July, that puts it into context. A review will be taken to consider replacing trees. As some trees are being deliberately damaged, Colchester City Council may install cameras in particular places. What are we coming to when a council needs to consider installing cameras for the protection of our trees?!
- The Glebe car park has now been resurfaced. This was long overdue and is a great improvement for the site.
- Granny's Garden, Coast Road we are looking at the possibility of making improvements to this area for residents to enjoy.
- Boardwalk we hope to be in a position in the future to set a budget to make improvements to this much used community facility.

When I became Mayor, I started by saying I won't have all the answers. This remains true, but I feel very positive about this new council, and I hope you, the community we serve, will see and feel this too. Let's work together more, find the answers together and get more done!

#### **Councillor Sophie Weaver**



#### THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING FOR 2024 WILL BE ON: THURSDAY 25th APRIL LOCATION TBA





#### **Town Clerk's Report**

Having spent eighteen years as a Clerk and more recently a trainer for the Essex Association of Local Councils, I decided it was time to move on for a more challenging role and that is exactly what I got! I consider myself lucky to be able to visit this beautiful island on a daily basis and everyone has been so friendly and welcoming, I am really enjoying my new role.

I have been working hard reviewing the Town Council as a whole and seeing where things can be done better, whilst always being conscious of spending money wisely. I am fully aware that the Town Council needs to quickly accept these changes in order that we can get things done.

We have one seat to be filled after the resignation of Paula Moore. I would like to thank Paula for all her support since I started and she will be missed. We had intended to fill the vacancy by co-option, but that has now been superseded by ten residents signing to call an Election. £6,000 has been allocated to the budget to cover the potential costs for this. If you are interested in joining us, please see the information further on in this newsletter. A warm welcome to our four new Councillors, Cllr. Jenkins, Gibbons, Parsons and Hart.

Our current eight Councillors have now been assigned to Committees and we have representatives in place and thankfully we have a lot of expertise in key areas now. Together, we have already achieved a great deal, but are equally aware there is much more to be done. Some people don't like change, but changes have to be made to make progress.

West Mersea has a healthy amount of money to be spent on local projects and we look forward to getting these on the move. I am currently bringing the Finance up to date and reports will be issued shortly on the website. Council business is notoriously slow as there is normally so much red tape to jump through, so although it may seem long-winded, please be assured behind the scenes we are on the ball! There are a lot of projects that have been stagnant for some time, but I am pleased to report these are now mostly being worked on, giving focus to the ones considered high importance.

Community Engagement is key, we want to hear from all residents. The residents are our eyes and ears on the ground. If you don't tell us, we cannot act upon it. So please do not feel that you are being a nuisance or a moaner, we really want to hear from you.



Please be rest assured that going forward, we will be using as many ways as possible to listen to the community. We can allow some residents to sit as members of the public on Committees and Working Groups. Please give this some thought as we would welcome anyone as the voice of the residents. This newsletter is a step forward and has been hand delivered to all houses on West Mersea to ensure inclusion. We have to remember not everyone has a computer and sometimes this magazine is their only way of knowing what is happening in the community. We will strive to continually improve our Community Engagement and hope to start Councillor surgeries.

Town Clerk (Locum) - Karen Kuderovitch



#### **Project Updates**

#### Flood Defence – received from Dave Chapman, Project Manager, Essex County Council

The outstanding survey report for 140 Coast Road will be issued on the 21st September. We will then review the report and issue to CCC. Depending on what CCC come back with, will depend on how long it will be before we can get back to site. If they are happy the report doesn't change what's already been agreed through planning it will speed up the process. If it proposes significant changes, then a new consultation for planning will need to be carried.

We'll know more about timelines and dates when we've been through this process.

#### GRANNY'S GARDEN - COAST ROAD

Historically, the responsibility for the maintenance of the garden was handed over to West Mersea Town Council. The Council have discussed options to improve the area and have allocated £6,500 into the budget. The ideas include removing the dangerous spikes from the fencing, replacing the benches, cutting trees in front of the area to restore the beautiful view. If you are interested in a memorial bench, please contact the Clerk.



#### GLEBE CAR PARK

The Town Council has now erected signage and the car park re-surfacing has now been completed. Our thanks to Centaur Construction Ltd. for an excellent job.



#### GLEBE PAVILION/MISA LEASE

At the Town Council Meeting of 14th September 2023, it was agreed for surveys of the building to proceed which is the starting point. Cllr. Powling, Cllr. Jarvis and the Town Clerk attended a meeting with representatives from MISA to discuss the lease and future plans for the building.

#### INFORMATION BOARDS - COAST ROAD

We are looking at replacing these, but with a more sustainable material for the board mounts.

#### WAR MEMORIAL

The Town Council will be looking at restoring/replacing in consultation with the Royal British Legion.



#### ALLOTMENTS

The Mayor, Groundsmen and the Town Clerk met the landowners on site recently and we discussed issues at the site, together with possible improvements. The Town Council will also be reviewing the agreements to ensure they are up to date.

#### **BOARDWALK**

The Town Council will be looking at improvements that can be made and allocating a budget for this purpose.

#### **PLAY AREAS**

The Town Clerk and Cllr. Holmes will be undertaking site visits to all play areas to review the current equipment and suggest improvements and to ensure the play equipment is inclusive. Again, any suggestions are welcome from residents.

#### WMTC OFFICE

I would like to thank the staff for their warm welcome and support they have been giving me. The staff have been working over and above to ensure swift progress is made. We are now holding regular staff meetings. We welcome your views on reducing the opening hours to Monday and Friday only, in order that we can use the office assistant on Tuesdays to assist in progressing the many projects we have ongoing. We would not implement this until January 2024, giving residents plenty of notice. The Town Council have agreed the costs to fence in the office area, providing additional security and allow the space to be utilised for storage.

I am delighted to report that William Bozwick (Boz) has been given the title of Senior Groundsman. Boz is a very valued member of staff and together with Gary Petley do a fantastic job keeping our open spaces managed.

#### **ACTION PLAN 2023-2024**

This was presented to Town Council at the meeting of 14th September 2023 and although the Councillors were pleased with the plan, it does need some tweaking, so we hope to have something for publication soon.

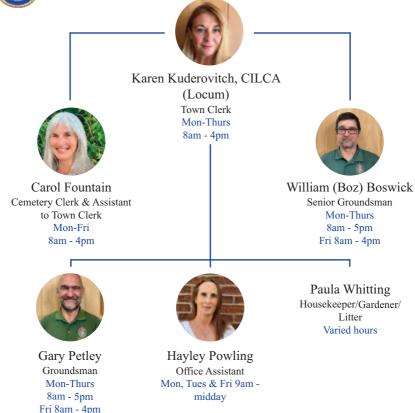
We plan to issue regularly so watch out for our next edition on December. We will then move to quarterly, March, June, September and December 2024.

Please let me know your thoughts on this newsletter.





#### **Staff Organisational Chart**



We have a fantastic team of staff, with many years of experience across the board. These staff play a key role in the day-to-day operation of the Town Council.

You are welcome to make an appointment with the Town Clerk.





#### Some of our recent completed works in photos



New benches at Monkey Beach.



New bench at The Glebe.



Footpath 20.



New signage at The Glebe. www.westmersea.org

Our gardener, Paula Whitting has been out and about making great improvements. some examples:









New bins at School Gardens.



New bin at High Street North.



Broomhills.



Fairhaven toilets garden.



#### Report from Carol Fountain - Cemetery Clerk

The Town Clerk and I are in the process of site visits to review the Cemeteries and discuss possible future improvements, to be presented to the Council for consideration. Approval has been given to replace all the waste bins at Firs Road Cemetery as a start to these improvements.

I would like to remind visitors to the areas to please take home your litter with you to help us keep the areas tidy.

The Town Council have a memorial bench policy which can be found at: https://www.westmersea.org/Policies-Procedures

West Mersea Town Council are responsible for Barfield Road Cemetery, Firs Road Cemetery, Feldy View Woodland Cemetery and the Parish Churchyard of St Peter and St Paul.

Further information can be found on the website: www.westmersea.org/Cemetery



Feldy View Woodland Cemetery.



As Chairman of the Essex Waste Partnership, I am writing to update you on progress in respect of the new Waste Strategy for Essex.

The Waste Strategy for Essex sets out the vision of the Essex Waste Partnership – which comprises of the 12 district, city and borough councils in Essex together with the county council - on how to manage waste and recycling produced by homes and businesses in Essex over the next 30 years. The strategy is an exciting opportunity to help Essex deliver against our net zero targets.

Essex County Council's Cabinet formally considered the strategy yesterday, Tuesday 12 September. I am pleased to confirm that Members have now approved the decision to launch a consultation on behalf of The EWP. This means that residents, businesses, and partners can tell us what they think about our proposals.

The consultation has launched today, Wednesday 13 September and will run for 10 weeks. You can complete the survey at the link below and request a copy of the consultation in a number of formats by calling 0345 6037625. https://www.essex.gov.uk/wastestrategy

The Waste Strategy is a detailed document and we're sure members of the public are going to have questions. We want to ensure you fully understand the consultation process and are confident that you can provide your constituents with the information they may ask for

With this in mind, you will receive further correspondence from myself inviting you on Tuesday 19 September 11:00 - 12:30 to discuss the Waste Strategy for Essex in more detail. There will be a short presentation, and then time for questions.

We hope you will be able to join us and ask that you RSVP your attendance, by signing up to the Eventbrite link when circulated by the EALC.

Thank you for your continued support

Kindest Regards

#### **Cllr Peter Schwier**

Chair of the Essex Waste Partnership Climate Czar, Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling

#### **Essex Highways**



Essex Highways is calling on landowners with ditches and low hanging trees near roads to make sure these are cleared and cut back ahead of the spring.

Carrying out this work ensures that roads and pathways are kept clear as vegetation grows during the warmer months. This makes them easier to use for pedestrians and motorists.

Landowners are responsible for maintaining trees, hedges, shrubs and ditches on their land. This is even if they are close or next to a road or pavement. They have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to prevent or reduce as far as possible the risk of injury or damage that could becaused to anyone else.

In addition, Essex Highways will resume grass cutting and weed spraying services to prevent overgrown vegetation from blocking the highway and causing flooding.

Examples of works that should be carried out by landowners include:

- Cutting back overhanging branches, which reduce the width of or block the view of the road.
- Cutting back overhanging branches that reduce the height or clearance of the road for tall vehicles such as double deck school buses.
- Removing or trimming a damaged or diseased tree that is in danger of falling onto the road or pavement.
- Trimming overgrown hedges obscuring road signs or streetlights.
- Clearing of any ditches located on private land to avoid any flooding during periods of heavy rain.

Cllr Lee Scott, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport said: "The maintenance of the vegetation found on our road network plays a crucial role in ensuring they are safe for all road users.

We will do our bit to ensure that the vegetation and ditches located on our land are maintained. However, we are unable to maintain anything located on private land. This is where we will need the help of landowners.

Please look after the area outside your home by keeping any overhanging vegetation and ditches clear and encourage your neighbours to do the same."

Visit the Essex Highways website for the latest highways, transport and travel information in Essex.

#### WE ASK RESIDENTS TO REVIEW THE ABOVE. PLEASE ACTION TO HELP KEEP OUR COMMUNITY TIDY



Initiative funded by

## Essex County Council



We support people in the community and at work with a range of health, wellbeing and day-to-day needs.

A free service, funded by Essex County Council

## What can we help you with?

- Children's Lifestyle Service

- Stop Smoking

- Physical Activity

- Social Isolation
- Improving Sleep
- Emotional Wellbeing

- Support and Independent Living Strength and Balance

Weight Management and Healthy Eating

- Reducing Alcohol Consumption
- Free NHS Health Checks or Wellbeing Check
- Essex: www.activeessex.org/find-your-active Find an activity that's right for you via Active

## What does our support look like?

support, one to one support, group support, or being include a listening ear, self-help programmes, peer Our support varies based on your needs. This can connected to one of our partner organisations.

# What if you don't know what you need?

The Essex Wellbeing Service is here for you. We are not here to judge or to tick boxes. We're here to help you live a happy and healthy life.

We'll work with you to discover what your needs are by focussing on three guestions.

- What are you able to change within your situation?
- What are your barriers and how can you work around them?
  - How can you stay motivated to maintain the change?

These questions will help you to sustain any lifestyle changes that are necessary for improving your mental and/or physical health. To get started, contact us using the details below.

initial telephone conversation to establish our needs. The woman I spoke to was "We would like to record our deepest appreciation for this service including the very professional and competent."

## Contact Information

0300 303 9988



Monday to Friday 8am - 7pm Saturday 9am - 12pm



To visit the EWS website, scan the QR code. Here you'll find health and wellbeing content out more about our services, as well as a whole bank of in the 'News' section.









I would like to receive support from Essex Wellbeing Service for (please tick box):

Reason for referra

## Telephone: 0300 303 9988

# E-mail Address: provide.essexwellbeing@nhs.net

# Online referral link: https://www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk/volunteering/support-referral

not using an approved email address this may limit the response, we can make by e mail. Note: Provide services work to NHS Connecting for Health policies and can only send responses including patient identifiable details (PID) to email addresses that are approved by them. If you are

where requested may cause delays in your referral process. Referrals sent into the Essex Wellbeing Service must contain the fields below, lack of information

Date of referral:	NHS Number:
Client details	details
Forename:	Surname:
Date of Birth:	
Full address and Postcode:	Telephone:
	Mobile:
	Home:
	Email:
	Preferred method of contact:
Referrer details (complete if not nationt's GP)	Select if nationt's CD
Name:	Job Role:
Organisation/Service:	Telephone:
CONSENT:	
I confirm that the client in question has agreed to the referral to the Essex Wellbeing Service and is happy to be contacted by the SPA (Single Point of Access)?	the referral to

#### Supporting information regarding your client and the reason for your referral: Healthy Balance, Strength and Balance Exercises (Mid Essex Only) Support to Improve Mobility (seated exercises, walking clubs) Social Isolation (specialist befriending, local social clubs, connecting with the Home Adaptations (grab rails, toilet raisers, bath rails) Carers Support Child Lifestyle Services (suitable for children aged between 4 and 17) Low Carb Weight Management Programme (exclusions – Type 1 diabetes, diagnoses and/or active eating disorder, pregnant or breastfeeding, BMI less than 25, under 18) disorder, kidney or heart failure, pregnancy, dementia, under 18, complex mental Weight Management (exclusions – BMI less than 25, diagnosed and/or active eating Lifestyle Change (emotional health, drug and alcohol reduction, sleep, confidence, and self-esteem, physical activity) Stop Smoking Other – please enter other reason in text box below: Home Safety and Security (fire service assessment, care call support) Employment Support (developing employability skills, adult learning) community) **Debt and Benefits Support** health diagnosis)









Volunteer as a Community
Special Constable in
West Mersea

Please report any incidents to the Town Council Office

Make a real difference in your town by volunteering as a Community Special Constable and play a part in keeping your neighbourhood safe. Find out more at the link below:

www.essex.police.uk/communityspecials





### Colchester City Council

#### **Latest Update - Colchester City Council**

#### Garden waste – chargeable 2024 service

We will be charging for the collection of garden waste from January 2024.

Like all local authorities, we are facing significant financial challenges. Faced with a significant budget deficit, limited government support and £10m of extra costs, councillors have agreed to a raft of savings and income generation measures enabling the council to balance its books.

The council has already made some savings and used £1.7m of our reserves in the current financial year but needs to find further savings for the next financial year.

In this context a range of budget options for saving and income generation was approved by full Council in February 2023. One of these decisions is to introduce a charge for garden waste collections has been made in order to protect essential services.

We recognise the pressures on people's household finances, so feel this is the fairer option for all residents as only those who use the service would be charged for it. The collection fees will enable the service to pay for itself, meaning any increase in operational costs in future years will not have to be funded through council tax.

Free disposal of garden waste will continue to be available at Colchester's Household Recycling Centres, and the council will also work to encourage other options such as composting.

Garden waste collections will start in January 2024. Our aim is to launch sign up to the service in October 2023.





#### Appointed at the Town Council Meeting of 14th September 2023

COMMITTEES	MEMBERS
Community Assets/	Cllr. Jarvis, (Chair) Cllr. Weaver, Cllr.
Facilities Committee	Holmes, Cllr. Powling, Cllr. Gibbons, Cllr. Jenkins
Environment & Community Services Committee	Cllr. Weaver (Chair), Cllr. Holmes, Cllr. Parsons, Cllr. Jenkins
Finance & Strategy Committee	Cllr. Weaver (Chair), Cllr. Powling, Cllr. Jarvis, Cllr. Jenkins, Cllr. Holmes
Planning & Highways Committee	Cllr. Holmes (Chair) – Cllr. Weaver, Cllr. Parsons, Cllr. Gibbons
Personnel Committee	Cllr. Weaver (Chair), Cllr. Jarvis, Cllr. Jenkins, Cllr. Holmes
WORKING GROUPS	
D-Day 80 Working Group	October agenda
Glebe Pavilion Working Group	Cllr. Jarvis/Cllr. Powling
REPRESENTATIVES	
Colchester Association of Local Councils (CALC)	Cllr. Weaver
Allotments	Cllr. Powling/Town Clerk
Health & Safety	Town Clerk
Essex Native Oyster Restoration Initiative	Cllr. Powling
Flood Defence Scheme representative	Cllr. Jarvis, Cllr. Powling
Mersea Island Sports Association (MISA) representative	Cllr. Jarvis, Cllr. Powling
Play Parks representative	Cllr. Holmes
Police & Neighbourhood Watch representative	Cllr. Jenkins
Car Park representative	Cllr. Powling

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed and adopted at the October meeting. Residents can apply to be part of the Committees and Working Groups. Once the Committees are meeting regularly, the Working Parties will also be reviewed and appointed where necessary.



## SIGNUP, SAVE LIVES



## COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH IS HERE, AND NEEDS YOUR HELP.

In collaboration with Safer Essex Roads Partnership, Community Speed Watch is looking for volunteers in your area. Sign up today to help save lives and make our roads safer.



mikeparr65@gmail.com

