

## **WHATLINGTON PARISH ASSEMBLY**

To be held on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025 in the village hall at 7.00 p.m.

Hosted by Whatlington  
Parish Council  
Issued 17<sup>th</sup> March

### **AGENDA:**

**Presentation by County Cllr. Kathryn Field**

### **REPORTS FROM: -**

- 1. WPC Chairman Cllr. Roger Fisher**
- 2. RDC Cllr. Sue Burton**
- 3. St. Mary Magdalene Parochial Church Council – Church Warden Jeffrey Bridges.**
- 4. Whatlington Village Hall - Chair Linda Walker**
- 5. Speedwatch – Anne Smith**
- 6. Community Connectors - Steve Turner Chair**
- 7. Footpaths and Rights of Way - Bev Martin**

## Chairman's Annual Report 2025

This year saw the death of our Clerk, Valerie Bennett. She had served diligently for 43 years in this role. Her commitment to the Parish and wider community was rightly recognised with the award of an MBE. A pillar of common sense, knowledge and experience in the functioning of the Council, she will be missed not only by her family but also the wider local community.

We were fortunate in being able to appoint, with the assistance of ESALC (East Sussex Association of Local Councils), the very experienced Phil Burgess as a locum Clerk, thus enabling the Council to continue with its business. I would place on record my thanks to ESALC for their support and particularly Phil for providing a seamless transition during this difficult time.

I would also thank Valerie's family for forgoing the salary that was due to her estate, which has helped the funding for our locum as we had, naturally, not planned for this expense.

I am pleased to report the appointment of Tracy Dixon as our new Parish Clerk. An enthusiastic and experienced Clerk, who I'm sure will make a positive impact and contribution to our activities, she takes up this role April 1st.

This year the Council was significantly engaged with the Highways A21 improvements team regarding establishing a footpath in the village. Several meetings were held and substantial agreement achieved but we continue to wait for "physical progress".

Meanwhile concerns continue to be raised on speeding, not only on the A21 but also surrounding roads. The activities of the local Speedwatch team hopefully makes a contribution to ameliorating the issue despite them being severely limited as to where they can take (and be observed taking) speed measuring.

This issue, I think, contributed to a rise in Parishioner attendance at meetings...at an average of nearly 5 per meeting this was the highest for several years! The Council, I know, will continue to highlight the issue in the hope of satisfactory resolutions.

The precept was raised by 10%, a decision not taken lightly but our reserves continued to diminish as the cost of maintenance of village assets continued to rise. During the year we purchased a new defibrillator ( the previous one being over 10 years old) and refurbished the bus shelter as well as updating elements of the website to meet current regulations, amongst other lesser costs.

The issue of finance will continue to feature in the coming 2 years with the proposed local government reorganisation seeking to increase the workload and responsibilities of Parishes with no clear indication of enhanced funding streams.

The year has seen a continuation of the Council reflecting local concerns to those who can assist in resolving matters, a significant role for all Councillors, Parish, Parochial, District and County

To them my thanks for their continued activity and to the Community activists : the Village Hall Committee ,Whatlington Connectors, Speedwatch, The Village news and its distributors, our Footpath Warden They all contribute to making the Parish a safer, stronger and healthier community