

WESTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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Chairman: Cllr R Moss Parish Clerk: Mrs L J Welch FILCM



Established 2011

PRECEPT 2016/17

This year, Westfield Parish Council has introduced a very small increase in its Band D equivalent on the precept which will amount to a £1.93 increase per annum on the 2015/6 rate for a Band D equivalent home. The precept tax for a Band D equivalent home for the year 2016/17 will be £98.72. This is taken from a total precept for Westfield in 2016/17 of £179900.

The purpose of this leaflet is to set out the main areas of our work and to highlight where the public money is spent within the Parish Council.

Why have we increased the Band D Equivalent this year?

Westfield Parish Council faces the same inflationary increases in the cost of products and services as all organisations. In recent years the increase in new homes built in the Parish and the corresponding additional Parish Council Precept income has meant that our increased costs could be met by the increase in homes. However, 2015/16 has not seen the same high increase in new homes and this, coupled with the staged loss of vital income from a Local Government grant, means that our increased costs cannot be so easily offset by our income. With careful budget planning and monitoring the Parish Council is pleased to have kept the increased cost to residents down to a very small 2% increase on last year whilst still maintaining the high service and planning projects of benefit to the Parish.

Exactly what services does the Parish Council offer?

The Parish Council manages **sports and leisure facilities** at Norton Hill Recreation Ground and Westhill Recreation Ground. These facilities offer football pitches, a tennis court, play areas, BMX track, table tennis, boules, basketball and bowling (with one rink open to non-bowling club members). It manages the emptying of most of the dog bins in the parish and maintains some of the benches.



It supports the **parish environment** by funding the Christmas Lights, the hanging baskets and the planting schemes in the decorative pit trucks around the parish, the raised beds at Jubilee Green shops and the curved end of the raised flower bed outside the Westfield Methodist Church. The Parish Council also supports **local organisations** through grant funding.



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The Parish Council provides a local voice on **planning applications, highways and environmental matters**. It is working with Bath and North East Somerset Council towards a Neighbourhood Plan for Westfield, which, once approved will guide future developments in the Parish.

How did the Parish Council perform in the last year?

In June 2015 the Westfield Fun Day exceeded even the previous year in its success. It was attended by a record number of residents and visitors and offered a variety of entertainment and activities.



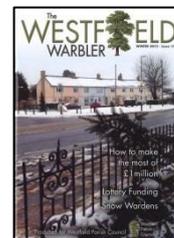
Equally well attended and well received was the second visit of the Fun Fair at Norton Hill Recreation Ground which came for four days during May and was attended by many hundreds of residents and visitors to the area. The Parish Council was pleased that the recreation ground returned to its former high standard in a very short time.

Improvements were made to our hanging basket trees by installing automatic watering systems and the Parish Council linked up with Westfield Allotments and Gardening Society (WAGS) and Fosse Way School to plant and maintain the flower beds and coal truck planters. Meanwhile the second annual Front Garden Competition saw the number of entrants doubled with neighbours as well as individuals nominating Westfield's finest displays. In the Autumn a hardy group of volunteers met to plant 4000 daffodil bulbs along the green areas at Wesley Avenue and Jubilee Green so that the main road through the Parish will be awash with colour in the Spring.

The Parish Council was successful in being granted £9,300 by Awards for All which, matched with Parish Council reserves, is being used to add new and improved play equipment at Westhill Recreation Ground.

We were delighted to have achieved Quality status in the new Local Councils Award Scheme this year. The award is a mark of the Parish Council's high standards of working and commitment to the community. This award led to the Council being awarded Council of the Week by the National Association of Local Councils in November.

The Parish Council's quarterly newsletter The Westfield Warbler was given a new lease of life in 2015 when it was taken on by Ignyte Publishing. It now boasts a bumper 30 pages with glossy photographs, articles and advertisements.



We continue to work with Big Local Radstock & Westfield to provide banking and financial support in our role as Locally Trusted Organisation and the fee for this work has helped to fund community events such as the Fun Day and the Christmas Craft Fair.





In the office, the administration of payroll was brought in-house which has been a considerable saving for the Council and the electronic payments system has saved a great deal of time and money on postage and administration.

Finally, in November the Christmas Lights were enhanced by decorations on lampposts through the Parish which brightened up the dreary evenings as well as providing some daytime Christmas cheer with their colourful designs. The switch-on event was the best attended yet with music from the Silver Band and Westfield Ladies Choir, mince pies, mulled wine, an address from newly-appointed Rev Jan Tate and, of course, a visit from Father Christmas.

What is new for the next financial year?

Westfield is now moving forward with work on its Neighbourhood Plan which will see Councillors and residents come together to create a vision for the future of the Parish. In its first phase, residents will be surveyed for their views on the housing needs of Westfield. If you would like to take an active part in the Plan, please contact the Parish Council office.

We hope that our community events and initiatives will continue to flourish as they start to take their place in the annual Parish calendar. A new contractor has been appointed for delivery and maintenance of the hanging baskets and we look forward to this summer's beautiful displays.

The unfortunate rise in anti-social behaviour and vandalism at both recreation grounds has seen the need to budget more for repairs and for the installation of CCTV at the Westhill ground.

Your Parish Council is working to provide the best possible environment and services for the people of Westfield. We positively encourage your views and suggestions for the future of our Parish.

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