

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025

**Attendance:** There were a total of 25 parishioners and councillors in attendance.

- 1 **Welcome and introductions:** Cllr Christine Hamilton, Chair, welcomed those present to the annual meeting noting the impressive turnout.
- 2 **Apologies:** No apologies received
- 3 **Minutes of the 2024 Annual Parish Meeting:** The minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 published on the Parish Council website in advance of the meeting were agreed.
- 4 **Matters arising from the last meeting:** No matters raised.
- 5 **Report from the Chair, Councillor Christine Hamilton:** The Chair of the meeting presented her report, which is attached as an Appendix to the minutes.
- 6 **Reports from local organisations:** A representative of each of the organisations listed below provided brief verbal reports of the activities of their respective organisations. The Chair noted that Weeley is very lucky to have such a diverse range of voluntary organisations and hard working volunteers.

1.	1 <sup>st</sup> Weeley/Lt. Clacton Scout Group
2.	Weeley Village Hall
3.	Weeley W.I.
4.	Station Adopters
5.	Plymouth Brethren
6.	Weeley Residents Association presented by Clerk
7.	Weeley in Bloom
8.	Speedwatch Team
9.	St Andrews Parish Church
10.	Petanque Players
11.	Weeley Tree Warden
12.	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
13.	TDC Cllr Peter Harris

- 7 **Presentation of the Weeley Community Recognition Awards:** The Chair invited Jenny Beady to introduce the awards ceremony noting that this is the fourth year of recognising people in the community for voluntary work.

Cllr Beady in delivering her commendation explained that Lorraine Larkin has been helping children and adults to cross the very dangerous Clacton Road in all weathers for 26 years. She has had to stand her ground against aggressive and speeding drivers for these many years and her sterling work is appreciated by the entire community, especially parents with children needing to get to school in safety.

Cllr Hamilton then delivered her commendation to Ruth Clarke (or as she is more commonly known Mrs Christmas) saying that for 30 years now Ruth has been bringing joy to children and adults alike at Christmas. She brings Festive Spirit to every occasion and is a permanent feature now of the Christmas Tree Lighting event (no matter what the weather).

TDC Cllr Peter Harris was invited to present Lorraine and Ruth with their certificates of appreciation and all gathered for the meeting expressed their appreciation with applause.

- 8 Questions and Answers:** The issue of youngsters sunbathing on the roof of the Scout Hut was mentioned, but no answers could be provided to this so the Chair thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the meeting. She noted how impressed she is by the amount of largely unnoticed voluntary work that people offer to help to make Weeley such a lovely place to live. With that she closed the meeting and invited all those present to join her for refreshments.

## APPENDIX

### Chairman's Report – Annual Parish Meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for joining us at the 2025 village Annual Parish Meeting tonight.

As you know the Annual Parish Meeting is hosted by the Parish Council on behalf of the village, which gives local community groups a platform to share news of what they have accomplished over the previous 12 months and a preview of any projects they are working on which they would like to share.

Once we have been through the agenda items, we will announce the individuals or groups who have been nominated to receive a Certificate of Appreciation to recognise their hard work, dedication and continued contribution to improving the lives of the residents. This will be presented by our Ward Councillor, Peter Harris, after which we invite you to stay to enjoy some light refreshments with us.

As always, I would like to shine a light on the importance of the voluntary organisations in the village and the vital work they do. It is *these* organisations, and the residents who run them, which help to build cohesion within our community. Their contribution provides people with direction, a sense of purpose as well as social activities. Weeley is truly blessed with a strong network of volunteers, and this helps to vastly improve the quality of life for residents.

Weeley in Bloom continues to keep the village and heath looking beautiful which I know can be back breaking work and I hope they know that the community, and the Parish Council, is so very appreciative of their hard work.

Thanks must also go to Weeley Residents' Association for continuing to provide a wide variety of entertainment, activities and outings which for many residents is a vital lifeline.

We are also grateful to Pearl and Derrick Byford for their dedication over many years to keeping St. Andrew's Church open and functioning. This beautiful church is still a magnet for couples wishing to tie the knot and for those who would like to finally rest in its very tranquil setting so the work they do along with the rest of the PCC and the volunteers who clean the church and arrange the flowers should not be underestimated.

If you would like to volunteer with any of our local organisations, some of which are here this evening, please feel free to approach them to offer your services!

Thanks must also go to our Ward Councillor, Peter Harris and Essex County Councillor Dan Land for their help and guidance to the Parish for which we are very grateful.

I also want to thank our Vice Chair, Danny Botterell and fellow councillors Jenny Beady, Vicky Cauvain, Liz Fitzpatrick, Gilliane Foster, Kevin Green, Kevin Millar, Terry Spong and last but certainly not least, Steve Gunter, our Parish Clerk.

I would like to reflect on our activities over the last 12 months, items which are still ongoing and our plans for the next year.

- The new play area, the installation of which had a pretty rocky start as you may recall, not helped by the almost continuous rain, seems to have been a great success with more exciting apparatus for the slightly older children and a zip wire for the teenagers. We planted more trees in and around the field and I think you'll agree that the area is looking lovely now that it has 'greened up' a bit!
- Our speed watch team headed up by Jenny and Fraser Beady continue their fight against dangerous speeding traffic through the village and heath. If anyone is keen to help them fight this modern menace then I am sure Jenny and Fraser would be delighted to hear from you. Just an hour here and there by each volunteer is all that is required and would make a big difference.

- In December 2024, we held the now annual event where the Christmas tree lights are switched on by members of the Scouts and Beavers. Although the bus company promised to suspend services through the village for the hour-long event, the message was missed by a double decker so we had to thread the bus through the barriers and on their way. Not ideal!

Home-made decorations and dedications were hung on the tree, and welcome hot food and drinks provided by Green Cow Catering. Mrs. Christmas joined us which the children absolutely loved, and boxes of chocolates generously provided by the Residents' Association were distributed. We will hold a similar event on December 7<sup>th</sup> this year at 4pm when the lights will be switched on with more carol singing etc. Please put the date in your diaries.

- We were pleased - and relieved - to install new bins, mostly in Weeley Heath which previously had a distinct lack of them, whilst enjoying an increase in the dog population. The litter pickers organised by Weeley in Bloom do a fantastic job in the fight against litter around the village, so a big thank you to them, and to all the other residents who fight a lone battle with litter in their own areas.

Our plans for 2024/25:

- Unfortunately, as you are all aware, our thoughts are again dominated to a large degree by the recent government-imposed increases in housing numbers and how it will affect us here in Weeley. I do hope that you have submitted your thoughts on the consultation which TDC recently held giving your opinions on the suggested Options. We will have to wait and see what happens in the next few months.
- We are currently studying the helpful report received from Essex Wildlife Trust on how to correctly manage the Reed Pond area. We have installed a lifebuoy near the pond and we now have our own flagpole also situated among the trees.
- We are looking at the possibility of upgrading the CCTV system around the playing field and village hall as the current equipment has been in service for some time and technology has moved on apace.
- The back wall of the memorial is under threat from the vegetation and trees behind it and so we may look at how we can strengthen the current structure alongside other solutions.
- Some of you may be aware of the spinney in Clacton Road of which the Parish Council owns 2 plots gifted to us many years ago. We are looking at erecting fencing around exposed sides of it as a protective measure to prevent any unwanted incursions as parts of it are very exposed.

I am sure there will be new issues and challenges to face over the next 12 months and I encourage residents to come along to our monthly meetings to get involved with what is happening in and around the village and to raise any issues they feel need to be given airtime. Thank you again for coming along this evening and if you can, please join us for some refreshments after this meeting.

**Cllr Christine Hamilton**  
**Chair, Weeley Parish Council**