

# THE PARISH OF EASTINGTON

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 25th May 2010 in the Eastington Community Centre

1. In attendance were parish councillors Andrew Niblett (Chair), Cozens, Stephens, Edwards, Hill, Hadley, Simmons, Souster and 12 parishioners. Apologies were accepted from Anne Shill, David Storey and PCSO Ward.
2. Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.
3. Cllr Cozens proposed approval of the Minutes of the 2009 Annual Parish Meeting, seconded by Cllr Souster and carried. The Minutes were signed as a fair record.
4. Eastington Parish Council Committee Reports for the year 2008-09 were heard
  - 4.1 **Planning Report, Cllr Simmons:**

The planning committee reviewed every application and in most cases visited the site, taking into account neighbouring properties concerns. A refuse store incorporating a bat roost and the alterations to Eastington Park have been among the varied and interesting applications through the year.

**Core Strategy Report, Cllr Hill:** SDC's 'Your District, Your Future' publication contains strategies for future development, including options to build 2000 houses in Eastington. In line with the continued strongly felt wish to remain a rural parish, professional help was enlisted to make strong representation to SDC on the proposed options. The parish council represents the view of the majority of parishioners that while this parish is happy to grow, evolution not revolution is needed.
  - 4.2 **Footpaths Report, Cllr Edwards:** Improvements to the footpaths this year including 8 kissing gates installed and 2 stiles repaired. A further 8 kissing gates have been purchased and are awaiting installation. Volunteers are needed to help maintain the footpaths.
  - 4.3 **Roads and Transport, Cllr Souster:** several roads and transport issues were covered
    - The recently installed traffic calming had caused a great deal of debate. Further measures are required to slow down traffic out towards Claypits and past Orchard Leigh. The continued speed gun campaign is documenting the issues and data will be passed to GCC and the police.
    - Parking continues to be an issue around the Co-op and at Churchend. There is no immediate solution, but ideas are under investigation.
    - A lorry ban came into force last summer.
    - Pedestrian safety along Millend Lane is being watched.
    - A mirror at the exit from Chipmans Platt was requested, but turned down by GCC who cited distorted perception of speed of traffic in mirrors.
    - Cycle route: reinvigoration of SECTA to lobby for improved cycle and pedestrian route from Stonehouse into Eastington.
  - 4.4 **Finance Report, Cllr Souster:**

The parish council is in a good state financially. The hope that people feel the precept is well spent – the accounts are open for inspection and the parish council would value any comments made. One expensive item last financial year was the appointment of a planning professional to assist in Eastington Parish Council's response to Stroud District Council's Core Strategy Consultation. Chair remarked how good it is to see the allotments thriving on the land recently purchased by the parish council. The sale of the 'Fox House Land' bequeathed by Charlie Bullock is felt to be a 'win-win'.
5. To hear reports from village organisations and projects impacting the village

## **Cotswold Canal Trust, report by Richard Attwood**

Richard reported that work on this 4 year long project to complete Phase 1A from the Ocean at Stonehouse to Brimscombe continues. There have been some delays where work has been put on hold to allow for nesting birds and badger setts. The volunteers at Chipmans Platt are building a new boat for public trips. The discovery of rot in the gates at Blunder Lock is a serious concern. Their restoration is a vital part of the re-establishment of the link through to Saul then on to the main canal network. Background work is ongoing to acquire land along the canal route. A multi-user cycle trail to Saul is part of the project.

Signed .....

Chairman/Responsible Officer

Date .....

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### **Playgroup, report by Becky Mulla**

Becky was pleased to be able to report that the playgroup is now full, and that the 45 children love the new building! Becky thanked everyone involved in the building of the new Community Centre. It has enabled staff to offer a varied curriculum in a warm and welcoming environment. Fund raising is now a priority, and all are welcome at the Fete on 17<sup>th</sup> July.

### **Rainbows, report by Victoria Fudge**

Rainbow's "Sunbeam" spoke of the fun Rainbows were having this Centenary year. Celebrations and events have included 'One World One Beat' where the girls learnt to salsa. Voluntary and community work has included raising £250 for Kidscape, the anti-bullying campaign.

### **The Eastington Allotments Society (TEAS), report by Stephen Gribble**

Stephen thanked the parish council for buying and draining the land for the allotments. TEAS first had access to the land last November, and despite the weather, allotment holders began to dig in immediately. There are 25 plots, and a short waiting list is held. The transformation of the field has been amazing, and a rough estimate is that over 90 people (including family members) are benefitting from the allotments. There is a small area that it is hoped the school might be interested in using.

### **Eastington School, report by Malcolm Strang**

Malcolm Strang opened his report by referring to "Gaffer Morris's" school log of 1948 which showed that traffic through the village was a problem then too.

The school is full, and proud to be a 'Category 1' school, maintaining its 'outstanding' Ofsted grade, being the top school in Gloucestershire (14<sup>th</sup> in the country).

Pupils' achievements this year have included winning the Gloucestershire Young Photographer of the Year Award, and the Mock Trial at Stroud Magistrates Court.

Malcolm spoke of this time of transition for schools, with great opportunities for more freedoms and innovation. After much recent focus on 'rights', an agenda putting an emphasis on responsibilities is hoped to foster citizens who will take on their civic and moral responsibilities.

The school continues its tradition of working with the church and the police, and looks forward to enjoying the community pond.

### **Eastington Community Centre, report by Mark Cousins**

Mark thanked everyone who helped to get the Centre built, giving Gill Glover, Tom Low and Mike Hadley special mention. Mike has produced a video documenting the build. Material from the old building has been re-used to make the bar counter. Bookings are going well, including Pilates, aerobics, dancing and karate classes. The solar technology is working well, enabling the boiler to be turned off at the end of March until November, and approximately £300 of electricity is exported. The next challenges are an extension to the building, and repairs to the car park.

### **Keep Eastington Rural, report by Tom Low**

Tom assured the meeting that KER will keep watch for the replacement to the Regional Spatial Strategy, the demise of which has very recently been announced. KER is following Hunter Page's proposed development at Sharpness with great interest. The KER website is well-subscribed and has a strong core of people ready to react to threats to Eastington's rural nature and strive to prevent over-development.

### **Stroud Valleys Project, report by Mark Claridge**

Mark explained that his post was funded by Cullimores to reimburse the biodiversity loss through aggregate extraction. This funding will finish in March 2011. He will help produce a maintenance plan and planting plan for the pond to enable the work to continue after that date. He will also contribute to education packages for the school. Community events are planned, including an evening pond dipping on 17<sup>th</sup> June.

### **Bluebells, written report from Anne Shill**

Chair read out Anne's report. Although the membership has dropped, various entertainments and outings have been enjoyed over the year, including Morris dancing, cake icing and film shows. Bluebells are now 39 years old.

Signed .....

Chairman/Responsible Officer

Date .....

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### Eastington Village Hall, written report from David Storey

Chair read out David's report. The extensive improvement and refurbishment of the Hall is now complete and the Hall now ranks among the best in Gloucestershire. The Hall continues to enjoy reasonable levels of occupancy and gives much enjoyment to its users who all seem to be thrilled with its makeover.

6. Chair asked for ideas for the possible uses for the residual land at Alkerton Green  
In view of the problems with anti-social behaviour driven by lack of facilities for young teenage children in the village, many of the ideas focused on youth facilities. Ideas forthcoming were:
  - Relocate the play equipment from its current isolated spot
  - Build bike humps
  - A skateboard ramp
  - A zip wire
  - Tennis court
  - Basket ball court
  - Youth club in a portacabin type buildingIt was noted that some of these ideas would be better on the land where the play equipment and basketball court are currently in place. A leaflet drop to ask children what they wanted was suggested.
7. Ideas for new projects for Eastington Parish Council were discussed. Projects addressing the anti-social behaviour issues were agreed to be of high importance. Parking was the other issue raised but it was agreed that a car park, if it were feasible, would urbanise the village centre.
8. The 'Fun Day' on 19<sup>th</sup> September is the next step in the Parish Plan. Ideas for the use of the remaining land at Alkerton, and ideas for projects for the parish council are to be sought in the parish plan questionnaire. This questionnaire will be delivered to every home in the parish, and a statement of what the village wants to see happen – the parish plan – will develop from this.  
Becky volunteered to co-ordinate input from Playgroup, assisted by Victoria. Andrew Cozens offered to help with the beer tent.  
Nigel Souster suggested the whale bones could be brought out.  
The establishment of a celebratory annual event was agreed to be a great idea.

AOB: None

The meeting closed at 9:05

Signed .....

Chairman/Responsible Officer

Date .....