

THE PARISH OF EASTINGTON

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 17th May 2011 in the Eastington Methodist Church

1. In attendance were Cllr Niblett (Chair), Cozens, Edwards, Hill, Simmons, Souster; Mary Gribble (Clerk); Chris Acock (Neighbourhood Warden); and eight members of the public. Apologies were accepted from Cllrs Bullock, Rank-Broadley, and Stephens.
2. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
3. The Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting were signed as a fair record.
4. Eastington Parish Council Committee Reports for the year 2010-11:

Planning, report by Cllr Jill Simmons

21 applications had been carefully considered by Eastington Parish Council in the last year. In addition to the many applications for extensions and alterations, there have been applications for development at the Victoria Inn, Orchard Leigh, and for seven affordable homes to the rear of the Kings Head.

Footpaths, report by Cllr Bill Edwards

6 kissing gates had been installed, including 4 on Andrew Cozen's land. Jacqui Harris, GCC Footpaths Officer, continues to work with EPC but due to the cutbacks in local government funding, has less resources. Progress has been made with the problem of mud around the kissing gates. One farmer has offered to supply and put down some stones. Work continues on footpath improvement, including a stile repair. Cllr Edwards asked that any problems are reported to him, and called for volunteers for footpath clearance work.

Roads and Transport, report by Cllr Nigel Souster

GCC is the principal authority with responsibility for roads, EPC has the following priorities:

- i. The recently installed traffic calming measures remain controversial, the effectiveness of the scheme is being measured;
- ii. evidence on speeding is gathered and passed to the police;
- iii. a list of accidents in the parish is being collated as evidence of the problems;
- iv. parking and congestion issues (including the lorry ban) continue to be monitored;
- v. requests for pavement repairs, pothole repairs, and street furniture are passed to GCC;
- vi. M5 road noise is an issue that Cllr Blackburn is taking up;
- vii. there is a 'watching brief' on the cycle route to Stonehouse
- viii. Val Taylor is monitoring the conservation road verges.

Finance, report by Cllr Nigel Souster

The main income for the Parish Council is the Precept, this year just over £30,000, which has been boosted this year by the Vibrant Village award of £500. The main expenditure is on ground maintenance of the village greens, burial ground, churchyard and OHMG. Loan repayments and salaries are the other major expenses. The parish council was more frugal this year, and has built up its financial reserve and is in a comfortable position. The parish council is trustee to the Charlie Bullock Fund, a pot of money from the sale of land, to be used for the benefit of the people of Eastington.

Chair thanked the Councillors for their reports.

5. Reports from village organisations:

Eastington School, report by Malcolm Strang:

There are 147 children at the school, which is rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted. Links have been forged with an inner London school which is of great mutual benefit. It is regrettable that cuts to the police budget have affected the road safety work. SATs results continue to place the school in the top 5% in the country; this is a proud achievement for the school as on entering the children are broadly average. Good citizenship has been a theme this year, encouraging the children to take responsibilities for their actions. The future of the school looks fair in these uncertain times, and the school is proud of its achievements.

Chair thanked Malcolm and congratulated the school on its continued success.

Cotswold Canal Trust, report by Ken Burgin:

The progress on the canal restoration was illustrated by photographs including the work on the bridge in Stroud, and the restoration of Ryeford double lock. There are plans for a hydro scheme at Dudbridge which should generate an annual income in the region of £25,000. Other planned work includes a new swing bridge at the Ocean, the replacement of the deck at Bonds Mill bridge, and work to Blunder Lock. Funding remains a huge challenge, Heritage Lottery funding is being sought. The timing of the restoration work depends on the availability of funds.

Signed

Chairman/Responsible Officer

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Eastington Methodist Church, report by Ken Burgin:

The church shares its Minister, Noel Sharp, with Hucclecote and Quedgeley. It remains a busy village church with many activities including Kidzone, the youth club, outings and residential. A new music group is flourishing. Outreach work includes 'Into the Book' at school assemblies and Alpha and Y courses locally. The 'Hymn and a Prayer' at Broadfields is now led by the Methodist Church.

Chair thanked Ken for his updates on the canal and church.

Alkerton Rangers, report by Martin Elliott:

Sadly, the first chairman of Alkerton Rangers passed away during the past year. Founded in 1972, Alkerton Rangers has two teams which play in the local leagues. Although the club has superb facilities, performance has not been good recently. The main issues are difficulties finding adults to run the Club, and in attracting funding. A new sponsor has recently come forward with funding for two new sets of kit. All visiting teams are envious of the facilities at the OHMG, and several requests to use the pitch have been received.

Chair thanked Martin for his continued work with the team.

The Eastington Allotments Society, report by Stephen Gribble:

The results of last year's hard work are now being seen. All the plots are taken, and there is a short waiting list. Two plots have been sub-divided, so even more families are involved in the allotments. Thanks are due to the parish council for enabling the allotments, to Andrew Cozens for his help, to Andrew Niblett for his donation of the money he was awarded as community volunteer, and finally to all allotmenters for making the allotments such a success.

Chair thanked Stephen, remarking that the allotments had played a big part in helping Eastington win the Vibrant Village Award.

The Eastington Community Orchard Group, report by Tom Low:

There are currently 26 people involved in this Group, which is open to everyone in Eastington. Churchend Orchard is the first, hopefully of many, in the project, and is a wonderful amenity in this historic part of the village. Soft fruit has been planted adjacent to the land currently used for burials. The group will apply for charitable status, then start applying for grants to finance the tree planting. An event is planned for Apple Day in October.

Chair thanked Tom for his work with this new village group.

The Eastington Community News, report by Val Taylor and Chair

The production team have decided to change the printing method, which will allow black and white photographs. The advertising is in for the year, generating about £2,500 income.

Chair thanked Kelvin Walsh, who has retired after many years of voluntary work for the ECN. Kelvin has been involved with ECN from the start, printing it from home on a Gestetner. Thanks were also extended to all involved with the production and delivery of ECN.

The Eastington Youth Group, report by Tony Darkes

The group has been established for a couple of weeks, catering for the 11-17 year olds of the village. The main aim is to create a youth club. Several events have been arranged, including a litter pick followed by a barbecue, and a trip to Weston. The Youth Group will be running the Eastington Fete on the 4th September, and the Duck Race. The Youth Group would like to get involved in the allotments and the Orchard Group.

Chair welcomed the newest organisation in the village, remarking what a positive step it is.

OHMGC and Community Centre, report by Mark Cousins

The bar has been an outstanding success, and is helping the funds considerably. Acoustic buffering has been installed to improve the hall further. Improvements to the car park are imminent; Smiths have a good proposal for resurfacing. The outside lighting will be addressed at the same time.

The hall has regular bookings throughout the week, including circuit training, drama group, aerobics, kick-boxing, ante-natal class, and yoga. At the weekends there is cricket, football, and parties and other celebrations.

Chair congratulated Mark on the success of the new Community Centre

Royal British Legion, written report by H.Elliott & W.R.Harris

Although the Branch in Eastington is now closed, the need to provide support for the serving and exservice community and their families is still very much alive. This is mainly provided by R.B.L. Case Workers who visit people who may need help. Robin Harris is one of these and anyone with connections to the Services who needs help from the Legion should contact him tel: 823433 or email robin@harrisnestings.fsnet.co.uk.

Of course the R.B.L. will always need funds to enable it to carry out its charitable functions. This is achieved

Signed

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mainly through the Poppy Appeal which continues in the Parish to be run by John Darwent (Tel. 01453 822040). Anyone able to help with the Poppy collection which is so vital to the work of the R.B.L. should get in touch with him.

Fruit & Flower Show, written report by H.Elliott & W.R.Harris

This is the 23rd. year of these Shows. Unfortunately the entries at both Shows have been dropping lately. Now that **TEAS** is up and running, we hope for increased entries in the future. Though these events were initiated originally by the R.B.L. Branch, they have always been open to anyone resident in the Parish. For many years now the organising Committee has been drawn from Parish and it is always on the lookout for new ideas and fresh initiatives. Anyone interested in joining the Committee should contact Harry Elliott on 01453 835194. Our Autumn Show is always on the first Saturday in September. Look out for details in the July/August edition of the Eastington Community News. Do please come along and support us.

Eastington Playgroup Report 2011, written report by Becky Mulla

It has been another busy year for us at playgroup with our main focus on becoming financially more stable and thus more sustainable in the future. Our numbers have grown steadily although we have now closed on a Friday morning to become more financially viable on all our sessions, this has been made possible as Ofsted approved us to increase our numbers from 24 to 30 children, and this is being utilised as we now have 26 children on many sessions.

The Children have been being creative in many forms, The Christmas Show 'The Last Toy' showed off many of their acting skills and the children enjoyed performing on a stage to an audience filled with parents and grandparents. Last term we had an art exhibition where the children displayed a range of paintings, sculptures, prints and some mixed media highlighting some very talented artists growing in Eastington.

This term we are looking at Farms and growing and we have discussed the book 'Do cows lay eggs', which has proved very interesting, we have started planting our runner beans and if you keep your eyes open you may see a new scarecrow appearing on the allotment shortly. The Pre-School children have all begun their sessions at school and as usual they have adapted well to the welcoming environment and the friendly faces that meet them there.

The focus of the next fundraiser will be to raise funds to fence off the decking and other outside areas so that we can maximise the use of the outside zones to the benefit of all our little villagers.

Our thanks as always go to the many supporters of playgroup both other village groups and the family and friends who choose to become involved, without you it would not be the popular, high quality care that we all expect for our children.

6. New ideas for new projects for Eastington Parish Council came forward:

- The cycle route to Stonehouse
- Faster broadband for Eastington
- A history group
- A nature group
- A skatepark

7 Renewable Energy

The recent presentation by FiVE Energy on renewable energy for Eastington was discussed. Chair briefly reminded the meeting that this was a proposal for a wind turbine which would generate in excess of £40,000 annual income. This would enable the parish council to reduce the local rates and use the money for the benefit of the people of Eastington. It was agreed that the location of the proposed turbine needs to be stated when asking the parishioners if they are in favour of this initiative.

Ken Nicholls asked if hydro power had been considered. Ken Burgin advised that the shallow weirs in Eastington pose difficulties.

AOB: None

Chair thanked everyone for their input, and closed the meeting at 9:20pm.

Signed

Chairman/Responsible Officer

Date