

THE PARISH OF EASTINGTON

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 19th May 2015 in the Eastington Methodist Church

In attendance were Cllrs Corrie (Chair), Loveridge, Simmons, Bomberg, and Allen; Julie Shirley (Clerk), and 14 members of public. Apologies were received from District Councillor Stephen Davies, Cllrs Bullock, Edis-Bates and Evans, and those sending in written reports.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, and introduced each of the following speakers during the meeting.

1. Andrew Niblett – Eastington Community News

Andrew gave an interesting overview of the Eastington Community News from 1988 to today. The ECN is hand-delivered to each home in the parish. The advertising income covers the costs of printing, the compilation and delivery is all by volunteers. There have been 150 issues of the ECN, and the online edition is in colour whilst the printed edition remains in black and white. New volunteers are always welcome, and village organisations are invited to provide contributions for the ECN.

2. Malcolm Strang, Head Teacher of Eastington Primary School

Malcolm gave an informative talk on Eastington Primary School. The primary school was one of the first schools to carry out a survey of parents. Malcolm picked out two words from one of the responses "Trust" and "Best", which he explained highlighted the school's approach to teaching.

There have been changes to the curriculum which will now focus on broader understanding of subjects before progressing on

There are 140 children at Eastington Primary School with 6 full-time staff and 6 teaching assistants. Malcolm ran through some of the school's latest achievements and it was noted that the school is outstanding. The school has strong links with the community and also with other schools, including one in London and one in Lwanga Lwanga (Mombasa).

3. Becks Burgin – Eastington Methodist Church

Despite technical difficulties with the presentation slides, Becks gave an interesting overview of the Church's activities with church services taking place every Sunday at 11am with a less formal monthly service on the first Sunday of the month at 6pm. The church also offers Bibles Studies on Tuesdays 1-2.40pm and 8-9.30pm, prayer meetings on Tuesdays 8.15-9am and Fridays 8.30-9am. The Methodist Church organises the toddler sessions at Eastington on Mondays 10-11.30am and at Whitminster on Wednesdays 9.30am to 11.30am.

There is also the youth club on Friday evenings 7-9pm for 11-18 year olds. There is "Messy Church" each school holiday and at Harvest (the next one on Wednesday 27th May at 10am). The Cafe Church meets at 11am on the first Sunday of the month. There is tea and chat on the 1st Wednesday in the quarter (next one 3rd June at 3pm). The plans for 2015 include more drop-in cafes and closer working with the parish church.

4. Jen Empson – Eastington Youth Group

Jen gave a run-through of the Youth Group's progress with Snakey Park. A small working group of just 3 people raised £75k of funding for Snakey Park. The park opened in July 2014 with key pieces of equipment. The Youth Group have surveyed the usage and have found that more time is being spent outside with peers, adults are spending more time making contacts. The people of Eastington feel a sense of 'ownership' of the park. Fortunately, there has been very little litter and no deliberate damage to equipment. The Youth Group are working with King's Stanley to help them with their ideas for a new park!

Plans for 2015 include installing a lookout play tower, formalise the relationship with Eastington Parish Council, drawing up Deeds of Association, and continue with maintenance, inspections and monitoring. The Youth Group would like to put in more imaginative play items and exercise equipment for children, and possibly a shelter as it gets quite windswept.

There was a short break for refreshments, with thanks to Cllr Loveridge and Becks Burgin for providing tea and biscuits.

5. Tom Low – Eastington Orchard Group

Tom from the Orchard Group gave an update on the group's activities. The group went to the orchard at the Whitminster Inn and were able to make 500 litres of apple juice in one day's collection of fruit. Tom has a licence to sell the cider that the Group produce from the orchard's fruit, the proceeds of which go towards the

ongoing maintenance of the orchard. The orchard currently has 58 trees. Stone chippings on membrane have been placed around the raspberry canes in the fruit cage to make weeding and mowing easier. The Group is in the process of leasing the plot of land behind the King's Head Hotel which will need clearing in the summer; it is proposed to name this plot "Brownleigh's Orchard".

6. David Aston - EARS (Eastington's Approach to Reducing Speed in the village)

David ran through this new group's activities. They are a small group of 5 people who are interested in finding ways to naturally reduce the speed of vehicles travelling through the village. One idea is to place "farmgates" either side of the main entrances to the villages, with floral display and welcome sign. If the place looks cared for then hopefully visitors will also care for it. The Group are purchasing a flower tower to be placed near to the Co-op. The Group are fundraising by attending a car boot in July to raise funds for the flower tower.

7. Steve Gribble – Allotments

The Allotments are in their 6th year, and have maintained a full complement on the committee. The plots were re-jigged to be made slightly smaller so there are no 22 plots which are all let. A new communal shed has been purchased with funding from the Charlie Bullock Fund and will be used to enable storage of bulk-bought items and for seed swapping.

8. Ken Burgin - Cotswold Canal Trust

Ken outlined plans for the next phase of the canal restoration project which includes the section through Eastington, including the "missing mile". The next phase (1B) is anticipated to cost around £20million and a group of volunteers are putting together a funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund of £15million. Much of the work to restore the canal will be carried out by volunteers wherever possible although there will be specialist work that will have to be done by contractors. The project will be put to public consultation and there will be a consultation event in Eastington on 27th June 2-6pm in the village hall. The funding bid goes to Heritage Lottery Fund in November 2015 and the results won't be known until April 2016. If the funding is agreed then the development stage is 2016/17 with implementation 2018-2020. From 2020 onwards boats can get to Stroud and beyond.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Post Meeting Note by the Parish Clerk to Eastington Parish Council

Finance Report 2014-15

The Parish Council derives most of its income from the Precept, Local Council Tax Support Grant, and income from the burial ground. In the last financial year to 31st March 2015, this amounted to just £68,739.

The main expenditure is on running of the parish office, loan repayments, planning, grants and donations, and the grounds maintenance of the village greens, burial ground, churchyard and the community centre.

Expenditure for 2014/15 was £51,650