



**Parish Council activities and achievements: 2022 / 2023**



**The current Parish Council has served Egerton for the past four years navigating through political, economic and social challenges. At a local level, the Council has also had to deal with some active attempts to disrupt council activities, *mostly* from outside our community.**

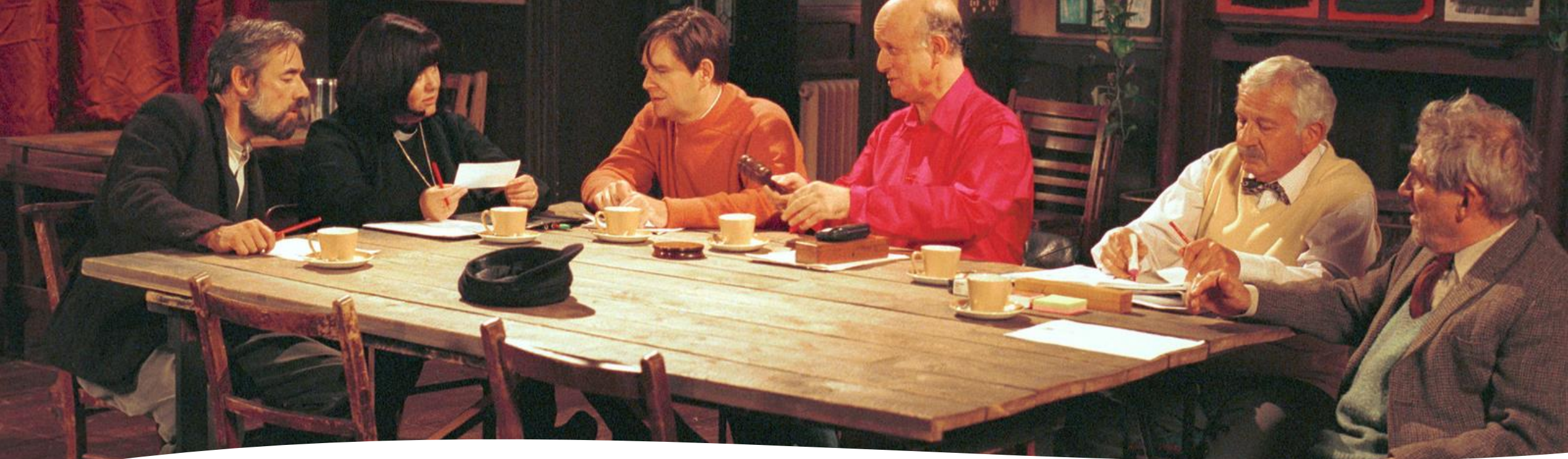
**Yet, the Parish Council has successfully managed to progress significant essential projects that continue to improve and enhance life in our community for its residents**

A photograph of a village with a church tower on a hill. The church tower is a prominent stone structure with a cross on top, situated on a hill. Below the tower, there are several houses with red roofs and chimneys. The foreground is filled with trees, some of which are bare and some have green leaves. The sky is a pale blue.

## **Major projects included:**

- **Successful adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan**
- **Plan for affordable housing for people who wish to live in their village**
- **Plans for the development of older people's housing**

**Here are some of the other initiatives progressed in the past year:**



**Parish Council meetings take place on the 1st Tuesday of every month. Eleven meetings were held in 2022 – all of which were open to the public.**

**Would you like to volunteer as a Parish Councillor to help maintain Egerton as a great place to live?**

**It's not quite 'Vicar of Dibley' though!**

**The Parish Council continues to work to deliver on the wishes of the community that were expressed in the Egerton Neighbourhood Plan.**

**The Plan was developed over 5 years by the Steering Group under the Chairmanship of Jane Carr. It was adopted by Ashford Borough Council on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022.**

**The village referendum three weeks earlier saw a record turnout of 50% (*average turnout in a Neighbourhood Plan referendum is 32.4%!)* with 91.47% voting in favour of the plan**



**An application for outline planning permission has been submitted to Ashford Borough Council and a decision is pending, after additional surveys have been completed.**

**Not only does Orchard Nurseries provide an ideal site for the accommodation for older residents who wish to downsize and remain in the village, but proceeds from the development will fund local projects, including building a new home for the pre-school in the grounds of Egerton School.**

## Orchard Nurseries





**Work on the new Pre-School will be started when funds are received from the developer of the Older People's Accommodation at Orchard Nurseries (subject to plans being approved by Ashford Borough Council).**

**It will enable the Millennium Hall to be used year-round for other events and activities and will provide more scope to make improvements and enhancements to the Hall.**

# Local Needs Housing – Sale Field

**It was discovered that in fact the site is called ‘Sale Field’ as cattle were sold there up to the mid-1900s. Following the last Parish Assembly, 22 people registered interest in one of the potential new homes so that they could maintain family ties and stay in the village they love**



# Local Needs Housing – Sale Field (contd.)



- **English Rural Housing submitted a full planning application to Ashford Borough Council on September 22nd to build 9 dwellings**
- **The planning application received many comments – some objections and some support**
- **Ashford Borough Council are expected to take a decision in the next month, taking into account comments and after additional assessments have been carried out.**
- **Three local people have pledged funds to buy a section of land behind the planned development for a public leisure area with ideas for more wildlife habitat**



**The Parish Council strongly objected to the plan to site a 17-metre monopole outside Egerton C of E School. Ashford Borough Council also objected, but the developer appealed, and permission was later granted by the Planning Inspector.**

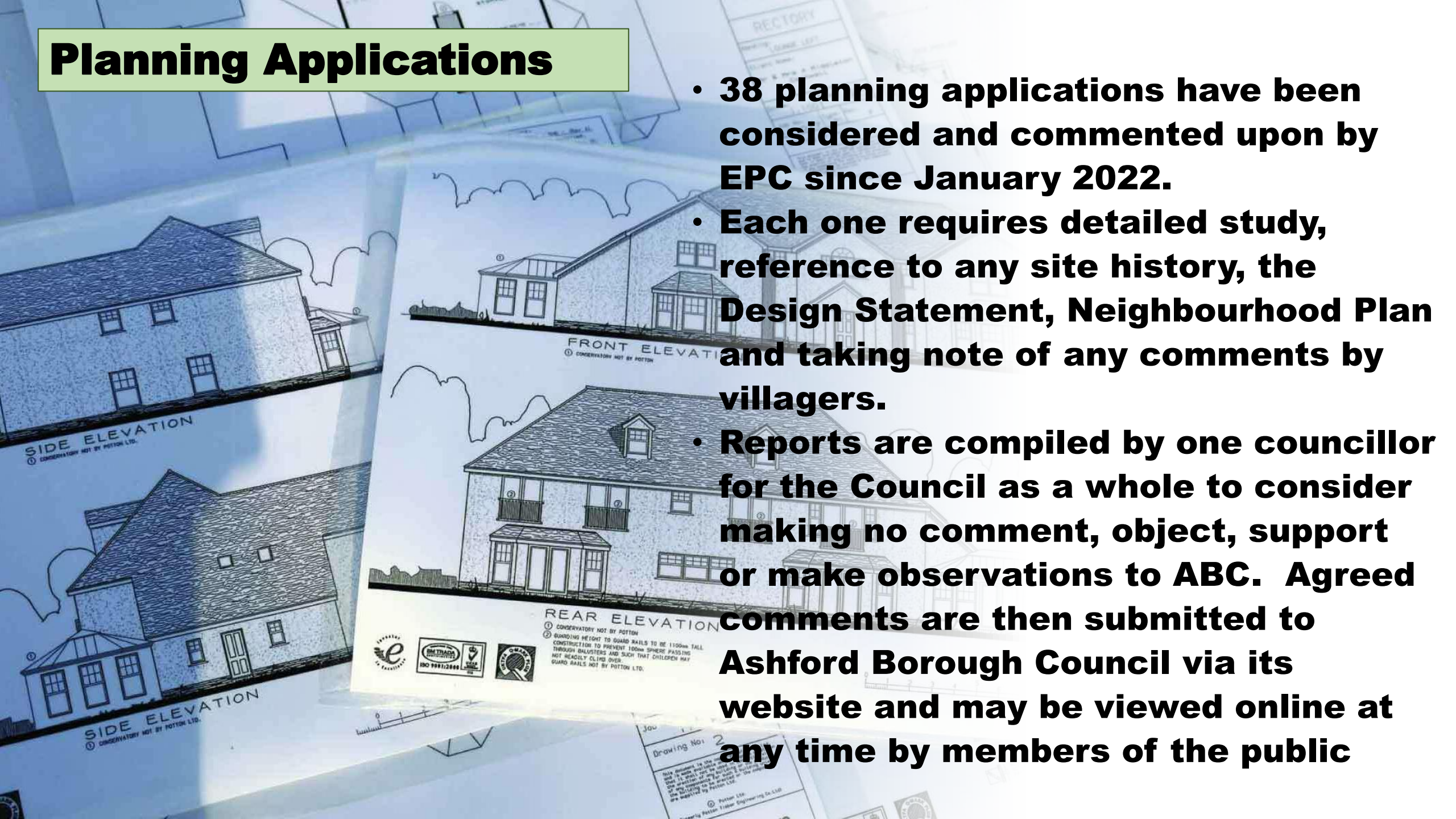
**A group of concerned parents and residents are mounting a protest campaign to try and halt the building of the monopole, calling on Damian Green MP and Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The Parish Council is supporting the group**



**Working with neighbouring parishes of Pluckley and Smarden, a campaign was mounted to retain the 123 and 124 bus services, but they were axed despite huge protests. A 10E service was introduced for children travelling to and from schools in Ashford (Mon to Fri). A village-wide survey was commissioned to determine the public transport requirements of those affected by the withdrawal of the 123 and 124 services. The project is ongoing.**

# Planning Applications

- **38 planning applications have been considered and commented upon by EPC since January 2022.**
- **Each one requires detailed study, reference to any site history, the Design Statement, Neighbourhood Plan and taking note of any comments by villagers.**
- **Reports are compiled by one councillor for the Council as a whole to consider making no comment, object, support or make observations to ABC. Agreed comments are then submitted to Ashford Borough Council via its website and may be viewed online at any time by members of the public**



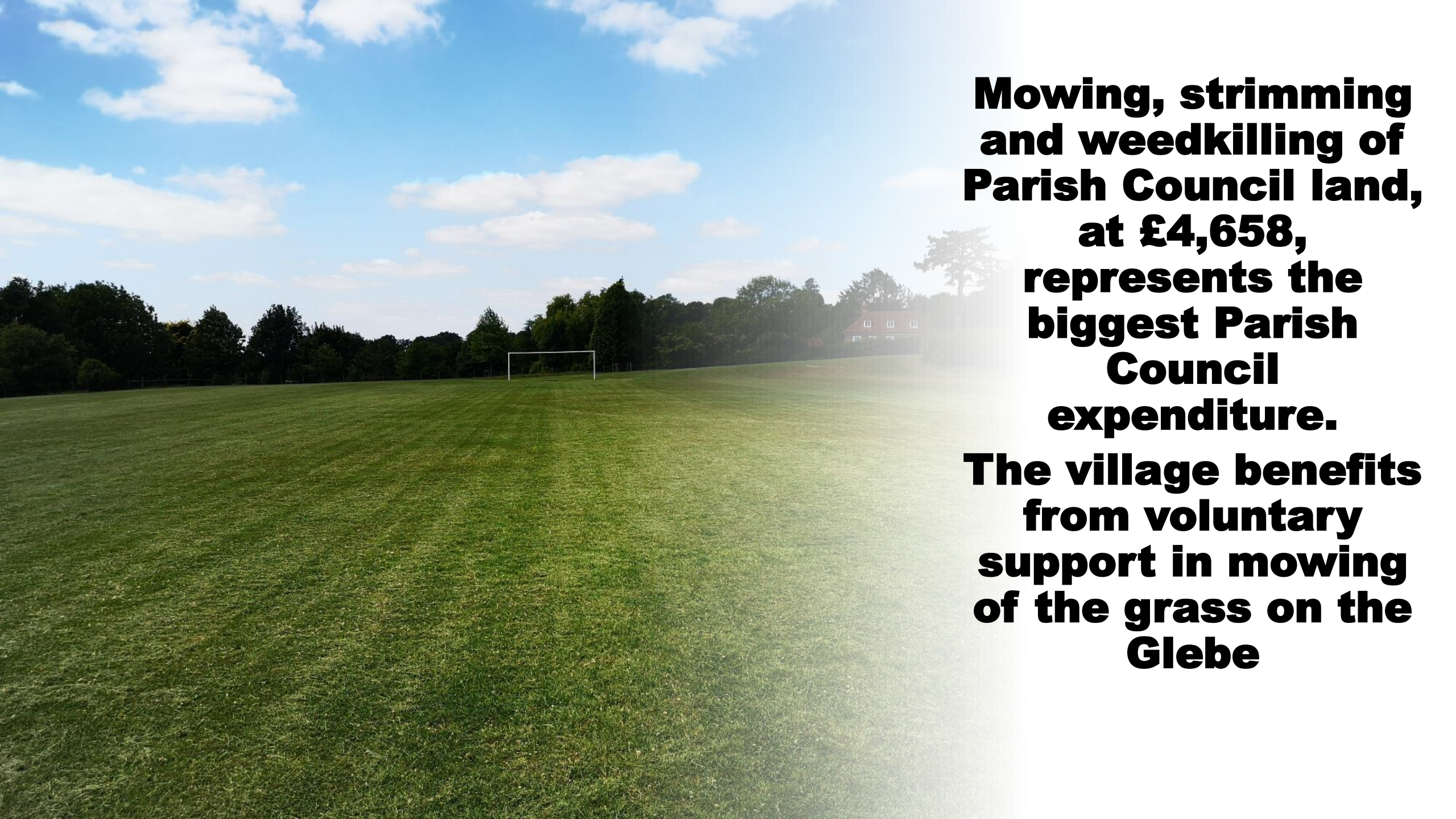


**The planning application for a housing development at North Field, which is not in the Neighbourhood Plan and to which the Council objected, was rejected by Ashford Borough Council. However, it is now the subject of an appeal. The Parish Council has sought support from a Planning Consultant, funded by concerned local residents, to fight against the appeal.**

[illegible]

**The George is  
still designated  
as an 'Asset of  
Community  
Value', after an  
application by  
the Parish  
Council in 2020  
saw it renewed  
for a further five  
years – up until  
2025**





**Mowing, strimming  
and weedkilling of  
Parish Council land,  
at £4,658,  
represents the  
biggest Parish  
Council  
expenditure.**

**The village benefits  
from voluntary  
support in mowing  
of the grass on the  
Glebe**



**Tree maintenance  
on Parish land  
continues to  
impact our  
budget.**

**The list of  
required work  
continues to grow.  
In the past year,  
£3,576 has had to  
be spent on  
urgent work**

**Demand for general maintenance in the village remained high. This included repairs to fencing at the Millennium Hall and removal of fencing at the skate park, re-siting of dog waste and litter bins closer to the football pitch and clearance and weedkilling around the Hall, totaling £1,719**



**New planters were purchased for The Glebe costing £400, ready to be put in place for summer bedding. A kind donation was received to cover the cost of these. The planters are tended so beautifully each season by voluntary support.**





**Helped by kind funding from the Geoff Wickens Trust (£25,000) and Ashford Borough Council (£5,000) and Kent County Council (£2,000), the Parish Council installed a slide and roundabout on the play area. Longer term, there are plans to replace the climbing frame and swings too. Funds may become available from the development of Orchard Nurseries**

**A new noticeboard has been purchased for Egerton Forstal to replace the dilapidated version. It's now located next to the post box in Forstal Road. It was acquired for £780 in a sale to save costs. Repairs to wind damage on the noticeboard at the Millennium Hall were carried out at a cost of £180.**



**Volunteers kindly store the village's salt and grit, which is donated each year by Kent County Council, and then use it to regularly replenish the salt bins in the village. A new bin located outside the Games Barn was acquired at a cost of £310.**



**After the new, insulated roof was installed at the Games Barn and solar panels fitted – funded in part by a donation from the Geoff Wickens Trust and Ashford Borough Council – the hiring of the facility has now recovered to its pre-pandemic levels. Overgrown vegetation was recently cleared from the perimeter.**

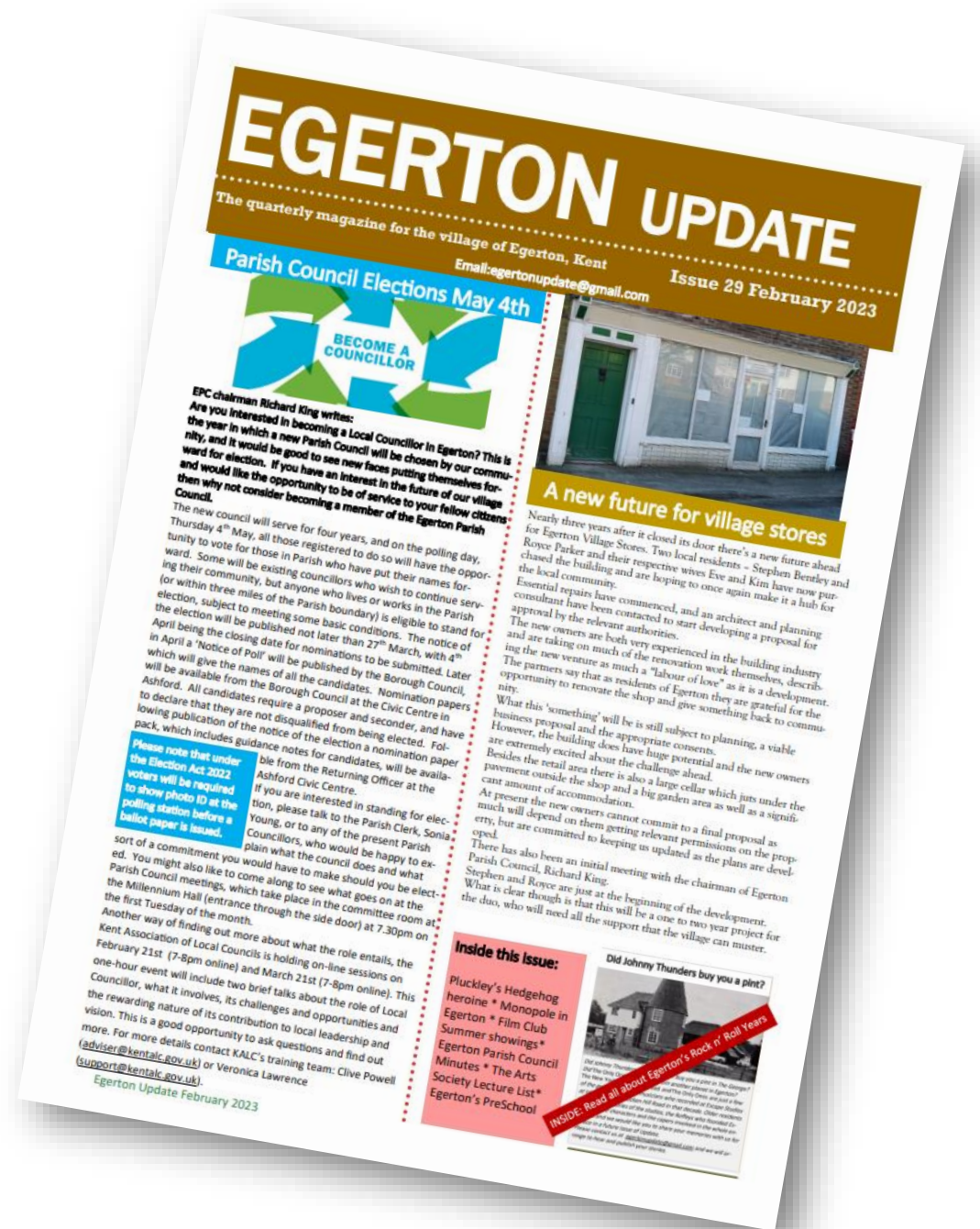




**A legacy was received  
from Ernie Mexter –  
£5,000 – ‘for the  
benefit of the village’.  
Some will be used to  
support the new  
village archive that is  
being established in  
the Computer Room by  
the ‘Archive Annies’  
comprising of Janet  
Goode, Claire Stevens,  
Jane Carr, Lois Tilden  
and Sylvia Tilman**

**Each year, four quarterly issues are published of the free Parish News magazine, *Egerton Update*. Copies are distributed free to every house in the village. Local companies support it with advertising and any profits are earmarked for good causes in the Parish.**

**Egerton Update goes from strength to strength – contracts have been renegotiated that save £400 per month on paper and printing**



## Footpaths Activities in 2022 / 23

**The Parish Council has reported footpath issues regularly to KCC Rights of Way Dept. since June 2009. Footpath, bridleway and byway issues range from:**

- **Broken or fallen fingerposts**
- **Steep slopes with no handrails for slippery weather**
- **Fly tipping on footpaths and other rights of way**
- **Fallen trees across public rights of way**
- **Broken or wobbly stiles**
- **Stile planks too high**
- **Loose/missing wooden slats on bridges over streams**
- **Overhanging trees and shrubs onto footpaths**





## Highways Activities in 2022 / 23

- **Retaining wall between Elm Close and Rock Hill Road - repaired**
- **Application for weight limit on Green Hill Lane**
- **Extension of signage on Green Hill Lane regarding unsuitability for certain vehicle types**
- **Regular interaction with KCC over diversion and road closure issues**
- **On going reporting of Highway issues to KCC**
- **Monitoring of KCC Progress in resolving issues**
- **Collation and monthly reporting of all Highway issues to Parish Council**
- **Regular meetings with our Highways Steward to discuss issues**
- **Liaison with our County Councillor to resolve issues**
- **Attendance at KCC update and Q&A for Parish Councils**

**New residents moving to Egerton are provided with a welcome pack, providing essential information on our village. The first welcome pack was delivered in July 2008. During 2022, 24 packs were issued taking the total number provided to over 200. Feedback shows that new arrivals are very pleased to receive them.**





**Spring Clean Up Day is an annual event organised by the Parish Council, where volunteers litter-pick our highways and footpaths. The latest litter pick took place on Saturday (25<sup>th</sup> March).**

**The Parish Council also employs a part-time street sweeper who keeps the main part of the village tidy**

