

**EASTON ROYAL ANNUAL COMMUNITY MEETING**  
**Chaired by Easton Royal Parish Council**

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025**  
Easton Royal Village Hall  
at 6.30 pm

**MINUTES**

**Present :** Anna Patterson (Chair), Peta Puyo (Clerk), Ben Cooper, Tom Doyle, Paul Narizzano, Beverley Turton, Amanda & Mark Baines, Carole & Ray Choules, Graham Cooper, Sarah Crookes, James Dickie, Tricia & Allan Duncan, Rachel & Colin Edwards, Simon Frodsham, Ben Gosset, Judy Grange, Dawn & Jim Hamblin, Hew Helps, Richard Holloway & Gaylene Marsden, Richard Howard, Anna and William Nabarro, Bill Nimmo-Scott, Liz & Brian Norman, Shirley & Chris Machin, David Patterson, Daniel Puyo, Colin Sibun, Jennifer Turton,

**1. Opening comments and welcome – Chair**

Anna Patterson welcomed everyone to the Annual Community Meeting. She explained that the meeting is to highlight and celebrate the achievements of the village over the past year, let everyone know what the PC and other village groups have been doing and that the meeting was an opportunity for questions and discussions. Finally, the bar would be open at the end of the meeting.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Emma Dickie, Barbara Frodsham, Beverley Helps, Cedric Hollinsworth, Jan Howard, Karen Nimmo-Scott, Sarah Townsend-Rose,

**3. Minutes of the Annual Community Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**APPROVED**

**4. 2024/2025 Parish Council Report – Anna Patterson (Chair)**

Recreation Ground. The PC are extremely pleased with the new ground maintenance company (Last Landscaping). They come regularly without needing to be chased. Their contract has been renewed for 2025.

No particular tree work has been required this year. This is checked regularly for safety reasons.

The playground continues to be well used. Paul Narizzano (councillor) was thanked for all of his hard work to check and maintain the equipment.

Dog fouling continues to be an issue. Reminders have been sent to the residents and posters located on entry to the Rec. We ask that everyone clears up after their pets.

Rights of Way. Last year a new Adopt a Footpath scheme was set up with volunteers taking the responsibility of maintaining certain stretches of pathways. A mower was bought by the PC and a shed will soon be installed by the Village Hall to house this and other PC equipment. The scheme worked very well and thanks were extended to all volunteers and landowners who helped carry out this large task and other maintenance on the footpaths, enabling everyone to enjoy them. Volunteers are always needed so please come forward if you can help!

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Parish Steward. The lack of work carried out by the Parish Steward remains very poor and there has been no improvement since last year. Anna asked JK to respond in his address to the meeting and to put further pressure on WCC to find a solution to this ongoing problem.

Highways. The PC have been in communication with the head of WCC highways (Samantha Howell) with regards to the state of our roads.

Her response regarding the resurfacing of the B3087 to Burbage was that it is not scheduled, however they now have a pothole machine that is more efficient and will help keep this road in a better state.

Our Village Street is not a priority for resurfacing, despite there being many patches requiring attention.

There is a new discretionary gully service to help clear the gulleys. ER is scheduled in for week 29. Landowners are reminded that they must clear and maintain ditches next to their land.

Planning. 2024/25 has been a quieter year with regards to planning applications and the majority are for tree work. Everyone is reminded that, if they are within the conservation area, tree work requires planning permission prior to work being carried out.

The PC remind everyone that they must ensure that their hedges do not encroach on to the footpaths or highways. If needed, a friendly reminder will be sent by the PC, asking them to carry out this work. The road is already narrow and vehicles are getting larger. The full width of the roads are required for the safety of all.

Precept. This year the precept had to be increased by around 11% (depending on your Band) to cover the ongoing costs of the village (principally the ground maintenance and clerk salary). There is little leeway for unexpected expenses. This year the bus stop benches had to be replaced, for example.

Thanks were extended to Phil Bates for carrying out the duties of Internal Auditor for the PC.

Thanks. Anna wished to thank all of the village groups for their tireless efforts to offer activities or general assistance to the community. She apologised if she had omitted anyone, but they included: the Village Hall and Village Bar, the Poppy Appeal and Remembrance Day ceremony and lunch, Craft Afternoon group, Coffee Morning group, Holy Trinity Church, Speedwatch Team, Heritage Group, and to all the volunteers who come forward for repairs and maintenance when called upon. Should anyone be interested and willing to invest their time and effort to any of these teams, they are always looking for new blood and energy. Some groups had written reports to share with everyone and these will be accessible on the PC website.

Finally, Anna and Peta wished to thank the Parish Council members for their four year tenure which is coming to an end on May 5<sup>th</sup>. Particular thanks to Tom Doyle, Beverley Helps, Paul Narizzano and James de Pass who are standing down. There will not be an election on 1<sup>st</sup> May for our Parish council as only five nominations were received. Rachel Edwards and Barbara Frodsham were welcomed to the new Parish council. They will join Anna Patterson, Ben Cooper and Beverley Turton who put themselves forward again. Our thanks to them all!

Two councillor seats remain, should anyone wish to put themselves forward to the Parish Council.

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#### **5. Report from Wiltshire Council – Jerry Kunkler**

JK introduced himself and said how delighted he was to see so many people present. As our present Councillor, he responded to Anna's concerns and confirmed that the new Bobcat machines were very efficient at patching potholes and the repairs were much more resistant than previous repairs. With regards to the state of the B3087, he reminded us that he is not responsible for the area beyond Conygre Farms however, he will remain in contact with Stuart Wheeler who is the Councillor for that area and see what can be done. Continuous complaints are being received with regards to the Parish Steward covering our sector. Yet another meeting is planned and they continue to hope for a solution. He is an employee of Milestone, sub-contractors to WCC for maintenance.

Special requests for gully tankers can be made to Highways, and they should carry out works within 3 months. It is suggested that the PC contact Andy Callwalder with regards to any interventions that are required.

JK confirmed that WCC has been able to keep their Council Tax increase to 4.5% ie below the authorised limit of 5%.

JK reminded everyone that the Area Board funding is available to communities for various projects and encouraged us to apply should we have any needs. New money is available from June. He was not sure if this could be used for our request to improve the access to the church but suggested that LHFIG be contacted first to see if any help could be obtained from them with regards to the parking area and gully.

The residents were congratulated on their community spirit and support. In particular he extended his compliments to the Speedwatch team.

#### Questions from the public to JK:

- JK was asked whether he had noticed an improvement to the distribution of funds allocated to improving the roads to the east side of the county. Criticism was made as to the general maintenance of signs and some minor roads (road to Wootton Rivers for example). JK believes things are improving and that Andy Callwalder is doing a very good job. Everyone is encouraged to report issues on the new MyWilts App. The PC can also contact Andy and/or Samantha Howell with regards to any particular issues.

- A number of residents reiterated that the situation with the Parish Steward is unacceptable. It was suggested to the PC that they contact Samantha Howell to see if it were possible to remove this cost from their council charges and the work be carried out by another provider.

- Planning rules are changing. Would it therefore be a good idea for even ER to have a National Development Plan? JK suggested that this may be worth looking into but even a NDP can be over-ridden by higher authorities.

#### **6. Matters of Interest**

- Concern with regards to the location of the Coronation tree and the dead branches that are falling around it from the neighbouring land. The PC confirmed that the position of this tree had been discussed and agreed at a previous PC meeting. The landowners next to this area have been contacted, asking them to clear the branches and cut back dead trees which overhang this area.

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- It has been suggested that a letter be sent to all residents asking whether they would support a greater increase in the Precept in return for improved services within the village (and what they would like to be improved). The situation at present is “survival” as we have just sufficient funds to cover our costs with little in reserve.

A member of the public wished to extend her thanks to all of the Councillors, past and new, for volunteering to fulfil these roles. Her thanks were supported by those present.

**The Annual Community Meeting closed at 7.40pm and everyone was invited to stay on as the bar was opening.**