

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 22nd April 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, New Road, Easton on the Hill

Present Councillors; Cllr Bates, Cllr Green, Cllr Holwell, Cllr Lawson, Cllr Nicol and Cllr Watson.

Clerk J Rice

Members of the public: 11

1. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 27th April 2023.

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

2. To receive and note reports from;

- a) **Ward Councillor** – Helen Harrison was not able to attend nor send a report.
- b) **Parish Council** including finance report. Cllr Nicol gave a presentation of the Parish Council's activities and finances over the last year. See below.

<p style="text-align: center;">Easton on the Hill Parish Council</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Annual Parish Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monday, April 22nd 2024</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tim Nicol, Chairman</p>	<p>How are we doing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This council (11 members) elected May 2021, term ends May 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently 1 vacancy • Focus on getting tangible things done, nicely <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things that fall in our limited area of responsibility • Observing correct procedures and practice (often over-complex) • Having proper debate but keeping it civil and brief • Observing the 7 Principles of Public Life • Keeping Finances under control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stick to budget • Build back reserves • Deliver value for money <p style="text-align: right;">Easton on the Hill Parish Council</p>
<p>Agenda</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 27th April 2023. 2) To receive and note reports from: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ward Councillor. b) Parish Council Chairman Tim Nicol, including finance report, and Playing Field WG c) Other Parish Council committee and working groups (Trees and Greens incl Nature Recovery, Traffic Working Group, Planning Committee.) 3) To receive and note reports from village groups: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The History Club – Ian Lawson b) The T21 Birch Tree Café Trust c) The Garford Trust d) The Village Hall – Chris Briers e) The Horticultural Society – Joy Osborne f) Volunteer Action g) The Little Lane Nursery h) Friends of the Church – Pat Firth i) Cycle path project – Jo Willis 4) To receive comment from residents of the village on any other parish matters of concern. 	<p>2023/4 Highlights/headlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pavilion taken over from Cricket Club at end of 2023 season • Playing Field survey done July 23 • Tree Planting at the Playing Field • Rebuilding the Polish War Memorial and improvements to Spring Close <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorial surround, new path with new access from Stamford Road, benches painting, new fence and posts • Highly successful Commemoration Event in September <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very positive coverage and feedback • Playing Field Car park and Ketton Drift issues ongoing • Volunteers getting stuck in – thanks to all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly checks, filling grit bins, etc etc • Finances in good shape • Good “spirit” around the council <p style="text-align: right;">Easton on the Hill Parish Council</p>
<p>What does the Parish Council do?</p> <p>Our Role and Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of Parks, Playing Fields and Open Spaces • Street Lighting • Planning- as consultees • Allotments (1 of the 3 sites in the village); • War and other Memorials • Installing Dog Waste and Litter Bins • Bus Shelter • Licensing- as consultees • Public Seating • Tourism Development • Grants to voluntary bodies. <p>We do this via the full council and a number of sub committees and Working Groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Committee • Finance Committee • Playing Field Working Group • Trees and Greens Working Group • Traffic and VADs Working Group • Staffing Committee • Complaints Committee. <p style="text-align: right;">Easton on the Hill Parish Council</p>	<p>Finance Report Headlines 2023-24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Income £66,535 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of which “regular income” £43,016 • Total Payments (inc VAT) £64,936 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of which “basic payments”, 89% budget; £27,333 • Of which Project Spend £25,138 • Surplus transfer to General Reserves at year end £14,064 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now stand at £24,921 • Of which earmarked reserves of £7,920 • And general reserve £17,001 <p style="text-align: right;">Easton on the Hill Parish Council</p>

Signed by Chairman _____ Date _____

<p>Main priorities 2024-25</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To increase Community Engagement and involvement from residents in the work of the council and issues affecting the village 2. To manage and develop a PC that is respected and recognised for hard work and effectiveness. 3. To maintain a suitable and useable access to the Playing Field. 4. To improve the condition of the Playing Field Car Park 5. To continue to monitor, maintain & improve all council owned open spaces 6. Continual developments and improvements to Playing Field, especially the Sports Pavilion 7. To improve countryside access via footpaths and cycleways. 8. Improve traffic management 9. Mitigate as far as possible the impact of energy price inflation on the council 10. Establish clear ownership and registration of council land 													
<p>Finance Report; 2024-25 Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total "ongoing expenditure" increases by 26%, or £6,732. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority due to increased staffing costs; Clerks national pay award, more hours and Grounds Maintenance Contractor Earmarked Project costs included in 2024-5 are £2,500, £1,250 less than 2023-4 budget: <table border="0" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td>• Contribution to village clock maintenance</td><td style="text-align: right;">£200</td></tr> <tr><td>• Election (to reserves)</td><td style="text-align: right;">£300</td></tr> <tr><td>• Land Registry Fees</td><td style="text-align: right;">£600</td></tr> <tr><td>• Speed sign</td><td style="text-align: right;">£1,500</td></tr> <tr><td>• Playing Field Improvement Budget exc grants and carry-over</td><td style="text-align: right;">£6,750</td></tr> <tr><td>• Total project spend</td><td style="text-align: right;">£9,350</td></tr> </table> Additional income from Playing Field rental is assumed to be £4,500. Precept increases by 3%, to £40,012 or £7.20/month, for a Band D household <p style="text-align: right;"></p>	• Contribution to village clock maintenance	£200	• Election (to reserves)	£300	• Land Registry Fees	£600	• Speed sign	£1,500	• Playing Field Improvement Budget exc grants and carry-over	£6,750	• Total project spend	£9,350	<p>Playing Field Working Group Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023/4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PFWG established Grounds Maintenance Contractor (Kevin) appointed Grants obtained for mains power and refurbishment Many minor improvements carried out Agreement with Wittering Premier Football Club to play and assist in refurbishment (eg A/C, heating) Agreement with Addida Cricket Club Both clubs very open to participation from villagers Break-in- improving security Compliance being introduced (H&S etc) <p style="text-align: right;"></p>
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<p>Public Engagement in Parish Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public time at Parish Council Meetings Keep an eye on "What's on the Hill", Facebook, Parish Council Website http://www.eastononthehill-pc.gov.uk Leader for Neighbourhood Plan wanted (if we want a plan) Friends of the Playing Field group to be established Apart from the PC, many clubs need new blood <p style="text-align: right;"></p>	<p>Playing Field Working Group Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024/5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car Park solution to be found Pavilion to be clad in durable material- 62% grant funded New side windows -donated Roof to be cleaned instead of repainted Changing room floors to be replaced – 92% grant funded New benches to be installed - delivered Addida Cricket Club to replace wicket and repair nets, and play from 2025 Woodland area to be improved (NRG) Total spend planned £13,000 <p style="text-align: right;"></p>												

c) Other Parish Council committee and working groups (Trees and Greens incl Nature Recovery, Traffic Working Group, Planning Committee.)
Cllr Green and Cllr Lawson gave updates as follows and Cllr Woodman provided a report from the Traffic Working Group:

Trees and Greens Working Group

The Trees and Greens Working Group continue to maintain and improve the green spaces within Easton-on-the-Hill.

The trees in the village have been professionally inspected and no issues have arisen.

A village working party spent a day in pond and tidying up around Spring Close in addition to other jobs around the village as part of the Big Help Out for the Coronation

The railings have been replaced at Spring Close

Maroon tulips from the Parachute and Airborne Memorial Group planted in November, now flowering in conjunction with many other airborne memorial sites across

Members of Trees and Greens are working with the Rockingham Forest Vision, to link up the green spaces in the area

Cllr Chloe Green, on behalf of Trees and Greens Working Group

Signed by Chairman _____ Date _____

Planning Committee

1. The Committee has met during most months and considered applications that have mainly been for the improvement to properties or the removal/pruning of trees, and most have been supported.
2. Agendas are always posted to the council website and notice board 3 clear days before the date of the meeting.
3. Members of the public have attended on several occasions.
In particular to object to the storage and distribution unit.
4. The application for a 44-bed care home on land at the rear of El Camino has been withdrawn.
5. We have objected to the building of a storage and distribution unit off Cliffe Road.
6. Villagers should be aware that Hollins Strategic Land are still interested in building houses on the South side of Stamford Road [A43] and that they may be conducting a Village survey sometime in the future.

Ian Lawson

Councillor and Chair of the Planning Committee

Traffic working Group / Footpaths

The Parish has 3 speed signs 2 on the main Rd at each end of the village.

And one on High Street opposite the Blue Bell

The sign that's near Café Cottages collects some very detailed information on speed Etc.

Here are some of the details.

It's been on for 551 days in that time almost 3 million vehicles have pass it in both directions.

Av of 3901 from Easton to Colly and 3353 Colly to Easton per day.

Av Speed 34.9mph Easton to Colly and 36.44mph Colly to Easton.

Burghley Saturday had a 150% increase for a Saturday to almost 5000 vehicles.

Christmas Day it was down to only 33% of a normal day.

We are looking into buy a second speed sign with another grant this one will probably go on Westfields as we have had a few complaints about speeding there.

Footpaths

Not a lot to report in the year except the foot bridge from Park Walk to The Main Rd Has been repaired and the footpath along the main rd. towards Stamford will be cleared back to make it wider again hopefully in next few months (reported on Street doctor will a completion date within 12 months.)

Cllr Woodman, TWG

Signed by Chairman _____ Date _____

d) To receive and note reports from village groups:

The History Club – Ian Lawson gave an update on the History Club as follows;

Easton on the Hill History Group Annual Report

1. We will be hosting eight meetings this year, which now take place on the third Monday of the Month. The subjects continue to be wide ranging and include Test flying in the 1980's and Northants Victorian Inventors & Inventions. Attendance has been very good, usually over 30.
2. Any village history is of interest to us so please continue to provide material which could be archived.
3. We continue to answer queries received from the village website or through social media. These are usually from people inquiring about their relatives who had lived in the village. A recent one was from a relative of a pilot who had been killed at RAF Collyweston during WW1. His name appears on our War Memorial.
4. We designed and partly funded the new information board at Spring Close.
5. The Display about the Polish Parachute which we had on show at the memorial dedication day can now be seen in the Priest's House on West Street.
6. The Rev. Percy Hooson's War diaries have now been transcribed. Discussions are taking place with Ben Hooson as to how they might be published.

The T21 Birch Tree Café Trust. Tim Nicol, Trustee, gave an update on the Birch Tree café as follows;



Developing Activities; Cookery
Monthly Lunches for Evergreen Trust



The Horticultural Society – Joy Osborne - Horticultural and Crafts Society Report 2023

Jan 2023 – AGM. The current committee was re elected. Marion Cutforth continues in her position as Chair. New committee members have already started to introduce some new events as well as reviving previous successful events. Like many other groups the society is always looking for committee members and volunteers to ensure the continued success of the established popular events.

2023 Activities – A light calendar of events with a Plant fayre, Rose Day, Coach Trip, Annual Show (104th) and discounted seed offer.

Annual Show – The 104th Annual show was held at the village hall and Garford Hall. Almost back to pre pandemic shows with good attendance and impressive exhibits.

Membership 2023

The society continued in 2023 with 3 main officers and a free of charge membership fee where members, subscribers, receive updates from the Society. In the 2024 AGM the membership has reverted back to a annual fee and members can look forward to an exciting calendar of member only and discounted events.

Show Chairman - Marion Cutforth, Membership Secretary – Faye Bronson, Treasurer - Barbara Connolly, General Secretary - Joy Forster

Volunteer Action. Representative volunteer, Lloyd Martin, gave an update from the Community Charity that provides a service for friendship/ for isolation and loneliness plus a car service for lifts to appointments, shopping etc. He explained that residents do not use the befriending service at the moment but do use the car service – which actually is a costly journey for volunteers as there are no volunteers living in or near Easton n the Hill. He appealed for people to come forward and help if possible and re-iterated the number of hours is up to volunteers and car insurance is not affected. There are leaflets available for more information, please contact the Clerk.

The Little Lane Nursery -there was no-one available to attend or send a report.

Friends of the Church. Representative, Deborah Davenport, gave an update on getting a new Priest in 2023 and new readers in his wife and Emma Hanson, who gives a service on the 2nd Sunday of each month. She reported that fundraising has been successful and help out days of clean ups and yard maintenance is gratefully ongoing. A plea for help with a “re-order of the church” project was made and it was stressed that the church remains open and accessible all the time.

Cycle path project – Resident Jo Willis gave an update on the proposed cycle path project from Easton to Collyweston to Duddington to Fineshade and the stages that it has gone through, eg help with grants, from MOD Wittering, with Burghley Estates – which is where it is at present -

Signed by Chairman _____ Date _____

awaiting an agreed route, 25-year contract, backing and funds. More grants will be applied for when necessary. Cllr Nicol explained that Kier Contractors for NNC say they will widen the existing path to Stamford.

Easton on the Hill village hall by Chris Briers

Easton on the Hill Village Hall is a registered charity and is governed by a conveyance document and trust deed established in 1976. This report focuses on activities for the last twelve months up until 22nd April 2024.

This last year has seen the hall usage increase by 15% and LFL income increase in line with this. Our LFL expenditure is also down. Our financial year end is 30th April, and we will be able to report more fully then.

Marketing has again been a major focus for the last 12 months. We continue to develop our website and we include an update in the monthly What's on the Hill newsletter. Our Facebook page goes from strength to strength and is our major marketing tool for our events. Our followers have almost doubled in the last year. Our Google presence is also bringing us more ad hoc bookings.

Following our pricing review and subsequent price increases in 2022, we have reviewed prices this year and agreed that there will be no increase for 2024. We have however agreed to stop the special offer on children's parties which has been in place for the last three years. We will continue to review hire rates annually.

During the last year we continue to run several hall managed events which have been very popular, and we have had sell out events, which has been a first. Our bingo night was particularly successful, and this will be repeated. We held one very successful book and craft fair with Friends of Stamford Hospital. We are also enjoying a partnership with Greensleeves florist for wreath making workshops and flower arranging demos. Regular weekly bookings remain steady. We have lost T'ai Chi and CIPS Pilates but have welcomed Sam back with Pilates and Chair Pilates classes. It is great to continue to use the hall for wellbeing of our village community and we continue to welcome the church every week for their fantastic Winter warmer activity and monthly Summer Social. We continue to have our loyal monthly users as well as new clients. Our children's party business is still strong, and it has been good to also welcome other parties and events including baby showers, naming ceremonies and family celebrations. We are very grateful for all bookings and thank everyone for their support.

Health and Safety remains a key priority. The required annual checks of PAT testing, fire extinguisher check, and gas safety inspection have all been carried out successfully with no issues to report.

Our five yearly rebuild valuation has also been completed with no issues.

A new Wi-Fi contract has been negotiated which has much improved the speed and service levels. Gas and electricity contracts will need to be re-negotiated in 2025.

Our major project for the year was our refurbishment in the summer. The hall has been redecorated, the floor has been sanded and varnished, new curtains have been bought as well as a new projector and sound system and a major refurb of the front doors. The changes have received very positive feedback. This was all funded by a NNC community grant, grants received during Covid and funds raised by hall events in 2023. We are extremely grateful to the Hall Trustees and helpers for all their support and hardwork during the refurbishment. We have some smaller tasks still to finish - fitting an exterior light, refurbishment of the flagpole and refurbishment

Signed by Chairman _____ Date _____

of the gate. Again, huge thanks to trustees and their helpers for keeping these changes at a very low cost.

We are grateful to Patsy Bates for the continued support of managing the Hall Clock and thank her for the weekly winding and follow up with maintenance and any issues. The PC continue to fund the annual service, thank you.

We have welcomed Gavin to the role of Treasurer.

We said goodbye to Margaret this year who has been our loyal cleaner for over 25 years, a huge achievement and many thanks to her for that. We have welcomed Rebecca as our new cleaner.

Our business plan for 2024 includes running more hall managed events, increasing the number of village activities as well as more regular weekly hirings and ad hoc bookings.

We look forward to a busy year where the hall continues to build itself at the heart of our village community as a centre for socialising, meetings and village and local events. We also look forward to planning further refurbishment to take place over the next couple of years.

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW)

- To join the local scheme, go to www.ourwatch.org.uk and click on Join Us
- Receive newsletters direct to your inbox, plus...
 - Crime prevention advice
 - Loneliness and vulnerability advice
 - Youth isolation advice
 - Neighbourhood alert messages
- Attend events
- Receive offers and deals on crime prevention resources ie drive alerts/alarms

Do you want to be the local NHW Co-ordinator?

You will be able to;

- Invite more people from the community to join
- Send newsletters out direct to the community
- Share local information, deals, training, advice and alerts to the community

Contact the Clerk if you can help. clerk@eastononthehill-pc.gov.uk or 07889669550

April Newsletter – copy available to read and is uploaded to the website www.eastononthehill-pc.gov.uk

Jenny Rice, Clerk to the Parish Council

Garford Trust

Steve Forster gave an update, saying the Trust is now a Charity Incorporated Organisation (CIO) They are still giving out grants to those needing help towards education and support with studies

Signed by Chairman _____ Date _____

etc. Th new Garford Hall has provided a useful new venue, space and additional hire income, working with the village hall offering different opportunities.

They did some successful fundraising last year, and this has enabled them to provide £2200 for 13 applications for funding. They are in need of more volunteers and Trustees if anyone can offer their time.

e) To receive comment from residents of the village on any other parish matters of concern.

There was one concern raised regarding the state of the pavements and the cars that are often parked over the pavement and road, blocking the safe passing of pushchairs and mobility scooters. Cllr Nicol encouraged the reporting of potholes etc to NNC via www.fixmystreet and will re-iterate the parking guidance issued previously via What's on the Hill newsletter.