

**EASTLEACH PARISH
COUNCIL
NEWSLETTER**

Autumn 2023

<https://eastleachparishCouncil.org/>

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Welcome!

Hello from Eastleach Parish Council (EPC)! This is the first edition of what we hope will be a periodic newsletter. Copies of this newsletter will be posted on the village notice boards in Eastleach and Fyfield and on the Council website <https://eastleachparishCouncil.org/> Over 70% of survey respondents expressed an interest in receiving a newsletter via email, however the provisions of existing data protection legislation, and the time available to the parish council members to maintain the validate data held, mean it is not viable for the Council to use email at the current time. We will keep the parish council website up to date and all relevant documentation, including the newsletter, will be published there.

We hope that this newsletter helps answer some general questions about our work and our plans. Any comments, feedback or suggestions relating to the newsletter will be gratefully received.

Who are we and what do we do?

Eastleach Parish Council is permitted to have 7 serving Councillors. At the present time there are only 6 Councillor positions filled.

Your Councillors are Paul Bailey (Fyfield), Jane Fenton (Eastleach), Matt Hanson (Eastleach), Ed Conlan (Eastleach), Fiona Jacovides (Eastleach) and Tim Jeans (Eastleach). Vanessa Lawrence is currently locuming as our Parish Clerk.

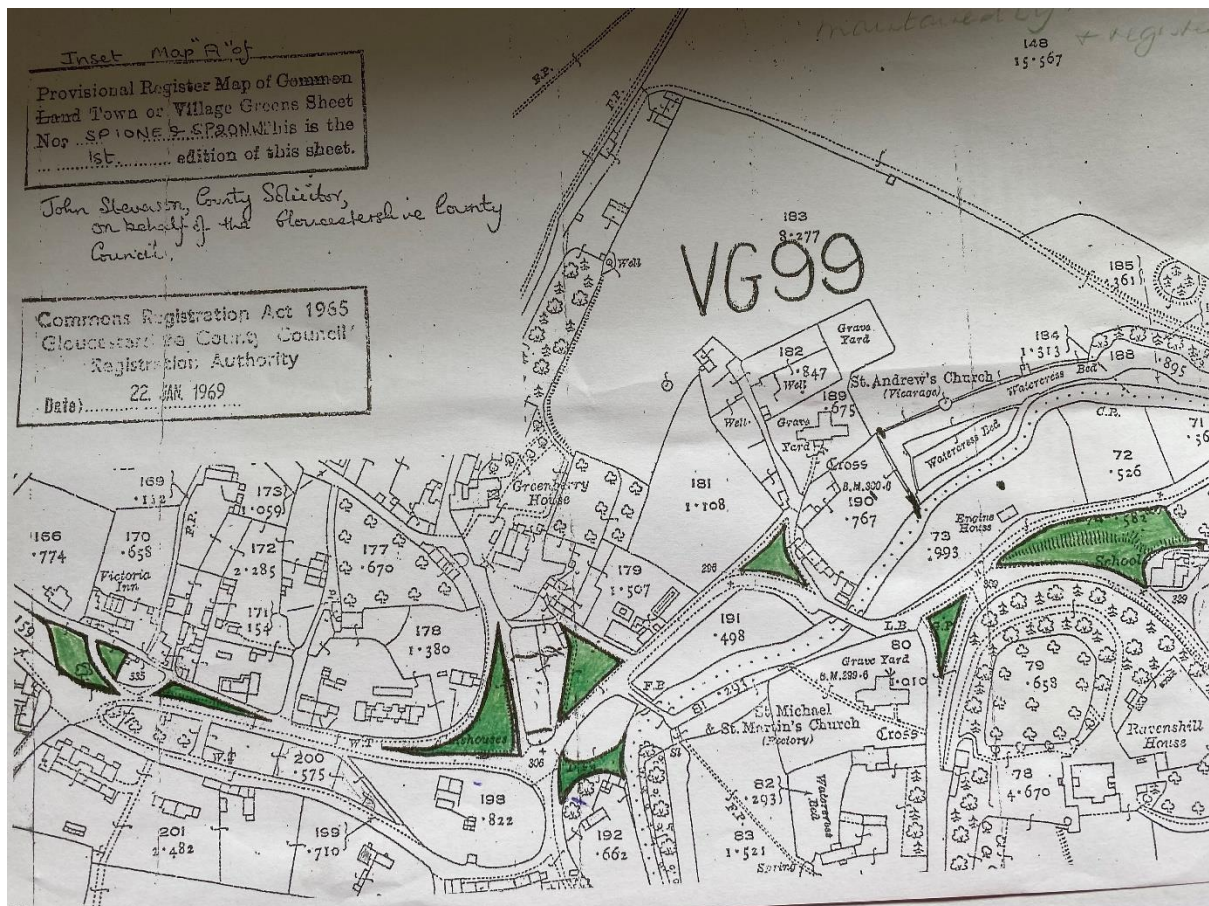
The work of the Council is discharged by the Parish Clerk. The Clerk is the engine who works as our principal advisor and is responsible for administration and finances. We are currently

advertising for this role. If you or someone you know is interested in applying, then please contact Vanessa on clerk@eastleachparishcouncil.org.

We work to identify issues which are important to our residents and seek to bring about improvements working in partnership with other agencies. Local councils have many powers which they can use, but there are many matters which fall under the governance of the District or County Council. We are a consultee only for planning applications with the District Council making the final decision.

Village Greens and Common Land

Recently we have worked to understand where the village green and common land plots are located. We wish to ensure that this land is protected, looked after and managed sustainably for the future. We hope that this means residents and visitors can enjoy our village greens for years to come. A separate leaflet details the location of village greens and sets out how we manage the land.



Use of the village greens

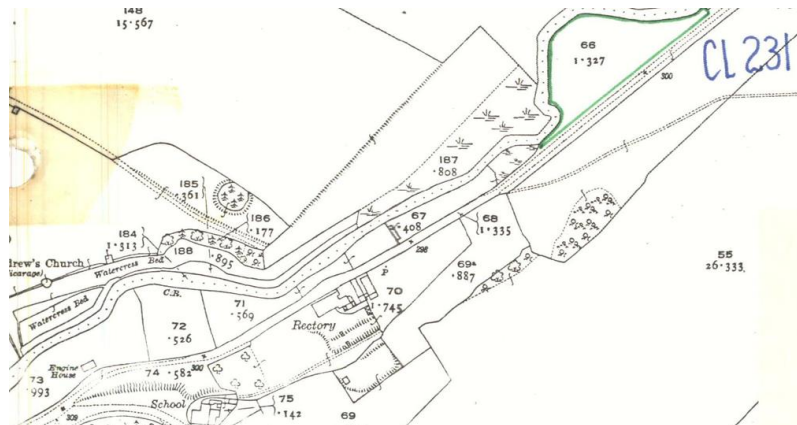
Parking on the village greens is an issue that has been raised by several residents. Following much deliberation, we decided to raise this issue in this newsletter. Parking may cause permanent damage to the Greens and affects other people's enjoyment of the land. If vehicles continue to be parked on the Greens, we may need to consider further action.

We politely request that residents:

- Do not park on the village greens
- Do not plant anything on the Greens without first seeking permission from the Parish Council

Common Land

There are two parcels of common land in the parish which are outlined below in green.



Common Land Before the Bottom of Locombe Hill



Common Land on the road to Cote Mill from Eastleach

2023 Parish Survey Summary

We decided that it would be helpful to understand what is important to local residents. The first Eastleach and Fyfield survey was undertaken in May 2023, organized by former Councillor Merry Baskin. Merry wrote the survey, distributed it and analyzed the results. Thank you to everyone who completed the Survey. We extend our thanks to Merry and her team of helpers!

This year, of the 157 surveys distributed, 91 were received back, making a total of 58% completion. This is a very pleasing response rate, however we cannot draw absolute conclusions from its results.

The survey focused on four main areas:



Some of the survey questions and responses received covered multiple areas. The general trends of thought from the survey are summarized below.

Environment

Residents are strongly interested in the condition of the local road network. There was also a strong interest in the state of the footpaths, bridleways and twittens, the condition of the local ditches and issues surrounding dog fouling.

Housing

The questionnaire was taken in May 2023, before the Earnest Cook Trust revealed its plan to sell some of its properties in Eastleach. It is possible that this section of the survey is now out of date.

- 62% of survey respondents having lived in the village for more than 20 years,
- 83% of respondents would like to see more younger people moving into the village (there is no definition of “young”)
- 80% of respondents that there should be more affordable housing in the village.
- 39% indicated they would wish to see an increase in housing stock in the village of up to 15 houses
- 38% of respondents did not wish to see any increase in housing supply at all.

Community

There was a strong Interest in and support for the following facilities:

Ranking	Facility	Percentage of respondents with a positive interest in facilities
1	Village footpaths, twittens and bridleways	95%
2	The Victoria Inn	90%
3	Broadband/Gigaclear	88%
4	Eastleach Village Hall	84%
5	Royal Mail letter boxes	83%
6	CHEQS Parish Magazine	78%
7	St Andrews Church	74%

8	St Michael/St Martins Church	70%
9	The village hall playing field	68%
10	The village hall playground	65%
11	Village noticeboards	69%
12	Parish Council website	46%
13	Public transport – one bus a day	41%

This declared interest requires further exploration – interest in and actually using these facilities may not be aligned, eg, public transport. But nevertheless, EPC might infer that all these facilities are valued by respondents.

Services and Facilities (not included above)

Important issues for the village are:

- Visitor parking – 58% of respondents
- Resident parking - 45% of respondents

There was very little interest in more playing ground equipment, allotments and the village bus.

Inferences for Community Engagement

There are a number of inferences EPC might make from the survey results:

- A large proportion of residents of Eastleach have resided here for more than 20 years and the majority of residents have lived in the village for more than five years;
- There are more “older” households than “younger” households
- Six in ten households are very actively engaged in village community activity
- Households draw value from these village facilities

Pass Wide and Slow

EPC has agreed to support the Pass Wide and Slow campaign. The campaign aims to reduce the number of accidents involving horses by informing drivers of the danger that frightened horses can pose to vehicles. We hope that by installing the banners we can increase awareness and create a safer environment for everyone.

The Highway Code includes a number of new rules, eg, Rule 214 and 215, and the provisions of these rules are broadly set out in pass more than 2 metres away from the horse and at no more than 10mph.

We are placing several new banners around the village to highlight the Pass Wide and Slow message. They will look similar to the image below.



Future Focus for EPC

The Parish Council is considering how best to apply the results of the parish survey to its activity for the remainder of the year. We are also aware of and keen to engage with the ongoing discussions between the Eastleach Action Group and the Ernest Cook Trust. Above all, we are committed to supporting Eastleach residents in their discussions with the Trust to support the community and to help safeguard the future of the village. We will continue to work with the Eastleach Action Group in its liaison with the Trust.

We are also committed to produce a Parish Plan or Neighbourhood Development Plan, subject to the wishes of the Community. At the invitation of EPC, Glos Rural Community Council, GRCC, presented details on Neighbourhood Development Plans in October to the parish to inform further discussions at parish level. We are mindful that because there is no land

designated for future new build and we are in a conservation area, we need to understand how a Neighbourhood Plan as opposed to a less formal Parish Plan might be more helpful to the parish. The development of a Neighbourhood Plan is a commitment which could take at least three years before coming to fruition and would not impact on our current situation. This would be a major activity for the whole community to consider.

In addition to the above, we will maintain liaison with:

- Gloucestershire Highways to improve our roads;
- The Environment Agency to understand their role with our river management;
- The newly appointed River Warden, Andrew Cooper, who will oversee the creation of a set of management principles for the ongoing management of the river in Eastleach;
- Mowing contractors and natural world advisors in connection with management and preservation of the village greens and common land
- Local farmers to ensure their land and livestock are not adversely affected by walkers, hikers and dogs

Your Council Needs You!

Eastleach Parish Council can only continue to serve the village if it has sufficient members of the parish who are prepared to step forward and act as Councillor. The duties are not onerous, and if managed properly would only require attendance once every other month with plus an hour or two in May for the Annual Parish meeting.

If you want to make an impact on the local environment and see the village maintain its rural character providing services to its local residents, please do consider joining the Council.

Training is provided, although the work is of course entirely voluntary.

Please do contact the Clerk for an informal chat.

THANK YOU

