

# EASTLEACH PARISH COUNCIL

## **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting Held on Tuesday 15th April 2025 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall, Eastleach**

In attendance: Cllr Tim Jeans (Chair), Cllr Fiona Jacovides, Cllr Julia McLellan, Cllr Richard Ebsworth, District Cllr David Fowles, Catherine Morgan (Clerk), Chris Crookall-Fallon (Furbnow), Justine Mallinson (Cotswold District Council) and approximately 10 members of the public.

### **1. Introduction**

Cllr Jeans thanked everyone for coming.

### **2. Apologies for Absence from Councillors**

Apologies were received from Cllr Jane Fenton.

### **3. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting 2024**

Minutes were approved and signed by Cllr Jeans.

### **4. Presentation by Furbnow - Developing Energy Efficient Homes**

Furbnow was introduced by Justine Mallinson, the Cotswold District Council's retrofit officer. Ms. Mallinson is a domestic energy assessor and currently can carry out free home visits to highlight home energy efficiency improvement opportunities. More information about CDC's Retrofit Engagement Scheme can be found here:

[www.cotswold.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/retrofit-engagement-scheme](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/retrofit-engagement-scheme)

Chris Crookall-Fallon is the Strategic Partnerships Lead for Furbnow - a public company that provides an end-to-end service to facilitate home energy improvements. They can plan and manage home energy upgrades, taking care of the project from start to finish. Every stage of their work is entirely optional and they are not associated with any specific installer or technology. The complete presentation slides are attached to these minutes and more information can be found here: [www.furbnow.com](http://www.furbnow.com)

Mr Crookall-Fallon enquired as to the energy efficiency of homes in the Parish, which were generally described as poorly ventilated (some struggling with mould) and running on oil as there is no gas, thus likely to provide opportunities for improvement. He highlighted that every house is different and has different challenges.

A member of the public asked whether there are currently any grants available for energy improvements. Further information of the government's Boiler Upgrade Scheme can be found here: [www.gov.uk/apply-boiler-upgrade-scheme](http://www.gov.uk/apply-boiler-upgrade-scheme)

### **5. Parochial Church Council**

Susannah Gill, Secretary to the Parochial Church Council, gave a report on the activities of the PCC, which is appended to these minutes.

## **6. Update on the Eastleach Parish Plan - Cllr Fiona Jacovides**

The detailed slides of this update are appended to these minutes.

## **7. Report from the Chair - Eastleach Parish Council**

Chairman Cllr Tim Jeans delivered a report on the work of the Parish Council, summarising its activities under the headings Place, Housing and ECT.

### **Place - our Parish and the PC's responsibility for this**

Probably the most visible element of the PC's work is the maintenance of the Village, notably the grass cutting. It was felt that in the last year it has been looking a little unkempt, therefore the PC conducted a tendering process and has changed the contractor for this. The PC will be monitoring results.

Flooding has been an issue in the last year and the PC has further work to do on this in conjunction with the various agencies responsible. Despite Gloucestershire County Council conducting its three-yearly drain-flushing last year, the problem continues, demonstrating that there are more significant issues and the existing drains likely do not have enough capacity.

The safety and maintenance of trees in the Parish continues to be a priority. A member of the public asked about the situation regarding maintenance of trees on ECT land. Cllr Jacovides and Cllr McLellan are shortly carrying out a walkabout in the parish with new ECT Managing Agent Frances Beeton and invited residents to get in touch if there are any specific areas of concern that they can raise with the ECT.

Cllr Jeans reported that he met with a representative of Gloucestershire County Council earlier that day on the stretch of damaged footpath by the river. GCC acknowledged the issue and have committed to carrying out the repair required.

### **Housing**

The outcome of the housing survey is still ongoing and, one way or another, needs to be carried forward by a housing association, such as Bromford. ECT have shown willingness to engage in the project more broadly but, as commercial developers, are not in a position to lead on this. Discussions continue to be brokered by the very knowledgeable Sarah Walker, one of the Rural Housing Enablers from Gloucestershire Rural Community Council.

### **Relationship with ECT**

The PC has worked hard in the last year on communicating with the ECT and sharing information with the Parish. Currently, there is little further to update other than that ECT are in discussions with a buyer for No. 34 and that No. 29 is currently being revalued and will be placed on the market in the next couple of months. There was broader frustration about the delay in the sale of this property, which has been vacant for more than a year, and it was suggested that this should be included in the agenda of the next PC meeting to identify whether the PC should send a formal letter regarding this, perhaps copying in Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown.

Cllr Jeans thanked all of his fellow councillors and the clerk for all of their hard work and support this year.

## **8. EPC Financial Report**

For the financial year just gone, 2024-2025, the income for the Parish Council predominantly came from the precept, which is the proportion of your council tax bill set by the Parish Council, which totalled £16,000. This was used for the operational expenditure of the council, including mowing of the Village Greens & playing field, staffing costs, a ROSPA inspection of the playground, a replacement defibrillator battery, insurance, auditing services, IT services and training for the Clerk and the Councillors.

Additionally, the Parish Council received £2,000 from the Ernest Cook Trust towards the cost of grass cutting and £1,000 generously donated by a member of the public towards additional councillor training.

In the coming year we are pleased to confirm that the Ernest Cook Trust have committed to contributing £2,500 towards grass cutting and the Parish Council has also secured £1,100 in grant funding towards the replacement of the bark chippings in the playground, reducing the cost of this project to £5,810 + VAT. We are also currently awaiting the results of another grant fund application of £825 towards the total cost of £1,100 for replacing the goalposts on the playing field, which we are hoping we will be able to install in time for the Frolics.

The Parish Council is audited every year on its financial management, governance, and accounting practices, which is currently underway. At the end of that process, the PC has a statutory obligation to publish all of its financial and governance information on its website. So for more information from mid-June you will be able to find all of this year's data on the Parish Council website. <https://eastleachparishcouncil.org/>

## **9. Report from the Village Hall Committee**

Rob Clegg delivered a report on behalf of the Village Hall (VH). The next VH AGM will be held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April in the VH. Thanks were extended to all the hard work over the years of Sue Futtu & Helen Wade, who will be stepping down, whilst David Mckenna and Rob Clegg will be getting more involved. Rob Clegg highlighted the need for more volunteers to keep the VH running and mentioned that they are planning to set up a VH website.

## **10. Open Forum**

There was discussion about the broader community engagement of the Parish and concerns about not hearing from some groups in the Parish.

There was general gratitude expressed for the work of the council.

A reminder that the apple pressing day will take place on 19<sup>th</sup> October.

The next Parish Council Meeting will take place on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May at 6:30pm in the Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 8:00pm.

## Eastleach PCC Update for EPC – April 2025

As PCC Secretary, I am pleased to report that the PCC has had a successful year. The PCC is sustained by a membership of 11 people who all play a valuable role in ensuring St Andrew's Church is run as efficiently, effectively and sustainably as possible.

I think it is worth these people being publicly name-checked at this event as so much of what they do goes under the radar, but we'd soon notice if they did not give up their time to do it for nothing.

1. Edward Arkell – Church Warden, with ex-Church Warden Tim Lawson providing valuable assistance on specific issues when required
2. Zahra Khatib-Chahidi – a brilliantly efficient Treasurer
3. Jane Reynard – organ player and my predecessor as PCC Secretary for over 30 years
4. Jane Jenkinson – flower rota organiser and responsible for making the church look so wonderful
5. Amanda Porter – Communion Assistant and organiser of the cleaning rota
6. Sue Souter – Organiser of the annual Church Electoral Roll which this year has 40 people on it
7. Rob Clegg – member of PPC and Chair of the Village Hall
8. Gordon Land – licensed lay minister who conducts a service every Sunday, not something every Parish is able to enjoy these days
9. Rev Dr Andrew Cinnamond – our Vicar
10. Gareth Griffith – our Vicar when Andrew is absent

The PCC held its APCM last Monday, with the following points being of note, which I wanted to share should anyone be able to assist in any of these areas.

- Membership of the PCC remains the same going forward – new members are always welcome! We meet 5 times a year and it's a wonderful group of people looking after a really important asset to the village.
- One of the notable highlights of the year is the Candlelit Carol Service, held in Bouthrop Church which was attended by over 130 people. Support for Sunday services throughout the year would be welcome – details are on the chalk board by the willow tree and all services, whether its Matins, Holy Communion, Christmas, Easter, Harvest or Mothering Sunday are welcoming, accessible and fun for all ages!
- The finances of the church remain stable. Along with collections, donations and small amounts for weddings and funerals, significant part of the annual costs for St Andrew come from interest from its investments. If you know anyone who would wish to donate to the church please do put them in contact with any member of the PCC. If we can at any point top up the church's investments we would put St Andrew's on a more stable footing going forward in order to deal with repairs and running costs, so it continues to be a beautiful and well-maintained place of worship.

- Talking of financial support, I would like to say a huge thank those in the village who donated to the Church Roof Appeal. This work was absolutely vital to the future of St Andrew's and I am pleased to say it was completed on time and on budget earlier this year, in no small part through the trusty management of Tim Lawson.

I must finish on my favourite village topic which is relevant to all of us. It is the biggest fundraiser of the year for the church and village hall - the Eastleach Village Fete! This is such an important event and requires so many in the village to get together and support it in many practical ways. Without a successful village fete the church and village hall would really struggle.

As the Fete Committee of one, I would welcome any support anyone would like to provide. An email went out last week, via Heidi, from me with the ways everyone can get involved ahead of the fete and on fete day. I'll be contacting people on a 1:1 basis but please drop me a line or stop me when you see me running through the village as all help is greatly appreciated and will make all the difference to how successful the fete will be in 2025.