**EASTON GREY PARISH MEETING**

MINUTES OF MEETING 14th July 2025

Meeting at 18.00hrs Mill House

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| **Attendees:** | **Apologies:** |
| George Clarke – Chair | Rosie and Edward Harford |
| Jane Clarke | Tessa and Michael Green |
| Nick Vale | Ken Camerier |
| Jocelyn Dehnert |  |
| Rob Dehert |  |
| Helen McLeish |  |
| Viv Tremayne |  |
| Penny Farquharson |  |
| Anthony Wright |  |
| Jason Stokes |  |
| Henry Jodrell |  |
| Tina Jodrell |  |
| Mark Kempson |  |
| Poppy Shadbolt |  |
| Sue Thompson |  |
| Chris Garrett |  |
| Coral Murphy |  |
| Garth Chapman |  |
| Sheila Chapman |  |
| Keith Waterhouse |  |
| Martyn Leyfield |  |
| Julie Wodecki |  |
| Martin Smith - WCC member |  |

| **Minute and item introduction** | **Discussion and agreed Action** |
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| 1. **Minutes of Previous meeting**   Review and sign off 2024 Minutes.  Proposed: Henry Jodrell  Seconded: Poppy Shadbolt  Minutes to be signed and dated by George Clarke | Outstanding Items not covered elsewhere on the agenda:   * WhatsApp group – ongoing need to ensure everyone who wants to be on it is on it especially for things such as flood warnings etc. |
| 1. **Accounts for 2024/5**   Balance at 5th April 2025 = £3859.04  No interest is payable on the account held at Lloyds Bank.  Expenditure for 2024 = £651.75  A £1,500 precept was paid into the account in the year 0n 28th April 2025  £4.25, from June £4.67, monthly service charge has been imposed on all Lloyd’s Bank non charitable community accounts.  Current Balance = £3,688.13 on 14th July 2024  Accounts accepted:  Proposed: Jocelyn Dehnert  Seconded: Viv Tremayne | 1. In the financial year a payment of £267.50 was paid to Garth Chapman to cover the costs of verge posts between the telephone box and Bees Cottage. That payment was net of a personal contribution he kindly made. 2. On bank charges whilst the Chair noted that he was pursuing a complaint to try and overturn the imposition, Sue Thompson noted that this was being done across the board with other organisations and there was little prospect for success. The Chair and Treasurer will review alternative banks if those charges cannot be overturned. 3. With regards to signage around the bridge and bridge road straightening we obtained LHFIG funding for this work against a commitment to contribute £1,700. The road work has been completed. But we have an application in for additional signage to give a priority right of way for those exiting the village towards Norton. There is a bollard on order to be placed on the downriver side on the exit to Norton. It is hoped that this will further reduce the risk of vehicle strike to the bridge. 4. We will need to continue to build reserves to pay for village gates to warn of narrow bridge ahead unsuitable for HGV and long vehicles and reinforce the 30-mph speed limit. 5. CCTV installation to monitor bridge strike is in abeyance as we hope the adjustments to the bridge will reduce the potential for bridge strikes. Following discussion, it was agreed that this can be reviewed again if we continue to have issues. 6. If residents observe a bridge strike they are encouraged to record it and the vehicle registration so that WCC can be notified. The relevant owners and their insurers can then be identified to fund works to make good. WCC have indicated they are happy to take this on. 7. Budget maybe required to fund our LHFIG request to better sign the road between Easton Grey and the Norton Ford as single-track road that is unsuitable for HGV. We ae are also asking that the speed limit be revisited; that also has a cost implication with another traffic speed survey. Counter intuitively one needs to show that road users already go at speeds in line with the requested speed limit. Efforts to do this in conjunction with Foxley and Norton Parish as they appear not to want to engage. Martin Smith advised that WCC under new leadership are looking to change the policy on speed limits to give villages more freedom of action and to ease the process to reduce speed limits to 20mph. With that in mind the village was of the view that we should attempt to reduce the speed limit through the village to 20mph and to 40mph between Easton Grey and the Norton Splash and to the North of the village on the road to Shipton Moyne. It was noted that on “Google” maps and “Waze” reports of delays, blockages, unsuitability for HGVs etc. affect the algorithms so it is worth people doing this. |
| 1. **Easton Grey Road Bridge**   Wiltshire Council Highways have completed the works to re-align the traffic approach and widen the road to give more space. Bollard planting is still to be done as are road markings. Subsequently noted on the village WhatsApp we have an application in for additional signage to give a priority right of way for those exiting the village towards Norton. The scheme was estimated to cost circa £20k to £30k and was funded by LHFIG with £1,700 coming from the Easton Grey parish.  The Tremaynes have agreed that the Village steward, or other workers, can enter their land between the road and the river to keep the vegetation cut back and the gullies clear to maintain better sight lines and water egress.  We still have an application in with LHFIG for better signage. | The Chair to continue to push LHFIG and Steve Hind of Wiltshire Council and to ensure that new signage put is in place |
| 1. **Flood Warden update**   The Chair thanked Doug and Helen McLeish who continue with this role on. There is a flood plan and last winter gel bags were obtained/deployed to give some modicum of protection to Bridge House.  The works on the bridge did not increase the height of the road to the south of the bridge, as this provides a flood relief mechanism for excess water. It was noted that the gullies near the bridge will need to be regularly dug out by the Parish Steward, and this has been raised with him. | Chair to carry on with getting the Parish Steward to keep the gullies clear and vegetation cut back. |
| 1. **Single Track Road between Norton and Easton Grey**   As already noted, we have an outstanding LHFIG request to better sign the road between Easton Grey and the ford at Norton as single-track road that is unsuitable for HGV and to redo the florescent bands on the marking posts. Drivers continue to destroy the verges rather than using the passing places. Residents are asked to use the WCC app to report the deep holes at the edges of the road as potholes. As noted last year this would also become important if we start to get traffic impact from Lime Down Solar. | Chair to work with Wiltshire Council highways, our local councillor, Martin Smith to identify how this can be improved. |
| 1. **Village Gates**   We have an application to LHFIG for these gates. WCC has visited and the officer responsible has approved the position in principle. One gate on the left-hand verge as the road descends into the village from the B4040. Two gates on both verges by the existing village sign on the Easton Grey to Norton single track road. This is likely to involve the Parish in contributing to cost.  The Chair sought confirmation that he be given the authority to negotiate any such cost contribution and agree to it within the existing finance available in our Lloyds bank account.  Proposed: Helen McLeish  Seconded: Rob Dehnert | The Chair to continue to push LHFIG and Steve Hind of Wiltshire Council and to ensure that village gates with suitable wording are put in place and agree a contribution to the costs within our existing funds. |
| 1. **Precept for 2025/6**   It was suggested by the chair that the 2026/27 precept be raised roughly in line with inflation to £1,600. This will help with our application to LHFIG for village gates and better road signage.  Following discussion, it was agreed to keep it at £1,500.  Proposed by: Poppy Shadbolt  Seconded by: Helen McLeish | The discussion around the precept was around building up a fund to enable the village to take on identified projects such as village gates and improved signage. The policy to do this was agreed. That said this can be reviewed in future years.  The Treasurer to apply for 2026-2027 Precept of £1,500. This is to be submitted by 18th January 2026. |
| 1. **Planning and Lime Down Solar**   **Planning**  It was noted there had been the following planning applications in the year:  **Determined Applications**   * Ruckley House – fell dead trees * Mill House – fell Ash dieback tree * Buffdown – improvements   **Outstanding application(s)**   * Queenies Cottage – removal of single storey extension and erection of two storey extension.   **Lime Down Solar**  Lime Down Solar is not a usual planning application. It is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure project (NSIP). The developer (now ultimately Macquarie an Australian operated fund) seeks a development consent order which is a statutory instrument. The application will be to operate Solar and battery storage for 60 years over 2,000 plus acre sites between Easton Grey and the M4. There will be a six-month examination in 2026 leading to a report by the Examining Authority recommending acceptance or otherwise. The final decision is that of the Secretary of State. The Lime Down Solar Farm proposal continues to cause much debate and anxiety across many local communities. At last year’s meeting an overwhelming majority voted in favour of the Chair representing the Parish in objecting to the solar park. That resulted in a letter of objection being sent by the Chair in response to the statutory consultation earlier this year. A copy of the objection letter is on the parish website.  There was a further targeted consultation on !5 changes. The Chair did file a response on behalf of the village, but the response has yet to be posted on the website. Hard copies were made available at the meeting.  . | **Determined Applications**  No objections were received.  **Outstanding application(s)**  The following concerns have been expressed.   1. The submitted Design and Access Statement provides no comment or information on access.  The property has no private driveway and does not abut the public highway.      1. Concerns over the amount of traffic the proposal will generate during construction with no confirmation of storage of equipment, materials, waste etc. Upper Street is for residents and not suitable for HGVs. There are concerns over the structural integrity of the walls behind Post Office cottage, Bees Cottage and River View Cottage that support Upper Street.      1. In the heart of the village parking is limited with mainly on street parking and a few private parking spaces.  The proposal will cause congestion during the construction of the property.      1. It was suggested that the Council consults with Highways on the proposed project prior to a recommendation being made.      1. Any objections be reconsidered once information has been provided on a suitable access and construction method statement which should include how machinery and building materials are accessed and stored without affecting neighbouring residents.      1. No comments on the design of the proposal save that it should ensure that the Environmental Agency Licence conditions on not allowing surface water to enter the village sewage plant should be met. 2. We will leave it for the Listed Building Officer to provide their professional recommendation on preserving the listed property and protecting Easton Grey’s Conservation Area.   The Chair was asked to make these points to the planners but again Individuals and households can make representation to WCC.  **Lime Down Solar**  A discussion on Lime Down took place and further explanations were given on the process by Jane Clarke who is on the “Stop Lime Down” committee.  Martin Smith noted that WCC were working with Stop Lime Down to ensure that proper and thorough input into the Examining Authority. Wiltshire County Councill is to discuss and vote on a resolution to oppose this development Martin Smith is significantly engaged with this.  (postscript; WCC subsequently voted to oppose the application)  Martin Smith further noted that the new South Cotswolds MP Dr Roz Savage (Liberal Democrat) will be campaigning against it.  Generally, the sentiment is supportive of solar and renewable energy but that this scheme continues to be considered too large and located in the wrong location by many people.  The Greens and the Harford households having given apologies for not attending have already stated that they continue to oppose the proposal. A confirmatory vote was put to those in the room on whether they would give the Parish Chair authority to speak on behalf of the village, in opposition to the proposal. With one abstention, due to a professional conflict of interest, the meeting was unanimous in support of that proposal and in its opposition to Lime Down.  The Chair will therefore make submissions to the Planning Inspectorate in line with the submission on the statutory consultation and assuming that there are insufficient changes to the proposed scheme, to oppose it on behalf of the village.    This does not mean that individuals are unable to have a personal view and to represent that view in any future planning consultations Indeed individuals and households are encouraged to make their views known to the Planning Inspectorate when the DCO application has been accepted and details of the scheme are known. Both the quality and quantity of representation count.  The Chair to keep the village up to date on developments in the Lime Down Solar Farm applications and respond when asked for comment on behalf of Eaton Grey Parish Meeting. Where possible drafts of any communications will be circulated for comment in advance, if appropriate, by posting on the village website.  Individuals and households to make their views known directly in addition to comments made on behalf of the parish. |
| 1. **Wiltshire Council Matters not covered elsewhere on the agenda** | Martin Smith noted that the Sherston GP surgery and its continuation was still unresolved. There is a petition on this that can be reviewed and signed at the Coop and/or at the surgery itself. It is also available on our MP Ros Savage’s website. Members of the community are encouraged to review and sign if they wish to support this. |
| 1. **Frequency and timing of future meetings**   The Chair sort views on the frequency and timing of future meetings. | After discussion it was agreed that we should continue with one annual meeting on the same format as at present. However, if a particular matter arose during the year that needed a meeting, then the Chair should call such a meeting in addition to the annual meeting. |
| 1. **Election of Officers**   George Clarke agreed to stand for another year was proposed as Chairman and Treasurer for 2025-2026  Proposed: Henry Jodrell  Seconded: Jocelyn Dehnert |  |
| 1. **AOB** | Henry Jodrell proposed a vote of thanks to Jane Clarke for her work in maintain/repairing the dry-stone walls on the road down to the village.  It was noted that the hedge on path on the way up from the village to the church was overgrown again and the Chair was asked to speak to the Greens to get this cut back.  The Village phone box needs to be kept clean and will need repainting. Henry Jodrell noted that BT had to maintain the phone as the bottom of the village had no mobile signal. Realistically cleaning and re-painting would need to be done by volunteers in the village. That would be a project for the coming year.  Mention was made of the state of the organ in the village church. Whist that is a church parochial council matter there is no reason why the village WhatsApp and website should not be used as platforms to raise money or make announcements. |
| **Meeting ended at 1920 hrs** |  |

Signed Date 14 July 2025

George Clarke

Chair of Easton Grey Parish Meeting

**Parish Steward Scheme Tasks – 2025**

* + hand clearing and cutting of growth from drainage grips and drain gully covers.
  + hand clearing of blocked gullies.
  + rodding of drainage systems
  + clearing of small culverts, pipes, and pits
  + clearing storm debris
  + trimming encroaching hedges and vegetation from around road signs and railings
  + cleaning and straightening small road signs.
  + hand cutting small visibility areas.
  + reactive emergency repairs including pothole repairs (In accordance with Wiltshire Councils Highways Inspection Manual 2018)
  + find, fix & record potholes (cold repairs only)
  + responding to road closure requests from the emergency services
  + removal of ragwort (hand pulling or strimming of defined areas)
  + treatment/removal of weeds
  + graffiti and fly posting removal.
  + clearance of debris and materials from scenes of road traffic collisions including clinical waste.
  + siding out of footways and carriageways
  + clearance of storm damaged trees from the Highway including the use of a chainsaw

The following works cannot be undertaken by the Parish Steward without support as they require a two-person operation. These works can be undertaken on an ADHOC day, which is typically a Friday, but this is flexible.

* Minor Carriageway repairs including vehicle overruns.
* Works requiring traffic management (including Stop and Go or manual controlling of temporary traffic signals in accordance with Chapter 8)

Examples of types of emergency reactive local highway work which is to be undertaken by the Highway Stewards includes (but is not exclusive to). These issues can take the steward from their programme:

* resolving flooding issues – clearing drainage grips and drain gully covers, clearing of small culverts, pipes, and pits etc.
* placing emergency signage and traffic management
* fence and pedestrian barrier safe
* clearing structures and fixings and make safe.
* hand cutting vegetation in visibility areas.
* reactive pothole repair
* responding to road closure requests from the emergency services
* small masonry type works such as repairs to slabs and damaged kerbs.
* clearance of debris and materials from scenes of road traffic collisions including clinical waste
* clearance of storm damaged trees from the Highway including the use of a chainsaw – requires additional operative.