

# Eastington Community News

November /December 2009

Nº. 118

Welcome to the last edition for 2009. We approach the close of the 'noughties', as some have described this decade. It can be interesting to look back at such artificial 'round-number' events, in a way that we may look at birthdays or anniversaries with 'noughts' on. Does it seem to you long since we approached the Millennium? Perhaps you would like to tell us about the best thing that you believe has happened since then, and maybe it could be printed in the next issue.

Sometimes, after thinking about the past, we can form an idea about what we would like to do next. Maybe to make something special happen? That could be for yourself or someone else – do you have some ideas? If you have thought about making a difference locally, you might consider getting involved in one of the many issues in this Village, close to your home.

In order to shape the future of our locality, (to let developers and planners know what we want, instead of sitting back for them to do what suits them,) we are encouraged to prepare a Parish Plan. A meeting could be organised for the County organiser to explain the process, but without even a basic level of interest it would be a waste of time. It's important to get people with a wide range of interests, so you may be the very person to get things moving.

Like most Villages, we also have a traffic problem. Cars are rather essential for us to live in this rural area, but when everyone tries to park where it's easiest, or to get from A to B in the shortest time, it is hardly surprising there are a few conflicts. There is no magic answer, but there are some things we might do to help ourselves. Some of you replied to the consultation for the first phase of traffic calming scheme. You may also have heard about the new scheme called "Traffic Watch". You can learn about this from Cllr. Chris Hill's article.

There is plenty to choose from if you are prepared to get involved with the community; the Parish Council has a Casual Vacancy to replace Cllr. Rob Gothard; the Flood Group still needs a Co-ordinator (other villages haven't taken all of the money available yet); your ideas, suggestions or assistance are still awaited to help start up new clubs, activities, or projects that are of direct benefit to residents of this Parish (funds are available; maybe something for the young people of Eastington?). Please contact the EPC Clerk, Mary Gribble 01453 825279 ([mgribble@btinternet.com](mailto:mgribble@btinternet.com)).

You can learn more about proposals to build more houses in the Parish, and an additional waste incinerator at Nastend, in the District Councillor's letter. Inside, there are choices of ways to lose weight or to get fit; all in time for Christmas, after which we can start again! Christingle details are inside, and the service times for Methodist services. If you want to think ahead to warmer times of next summer, then you might like to help prepare for the Flower Festival at St Michael & All Angel's. The Community Pond Project is well underway; it is hoped to be a learning experience for the school children, and an interesting asset for everyone; see Esther Collis' article within.

As I finish editing this Remembrance Day, it is with sadness that this was the last service before Eastington RBL Branch closes. A short history and reason for closure was prepared by Robin Harris.

Andrew Niblett (Editor) 824841 ([niblett.parish@talktalk.net](mailto:niblett.parish@talktalk.net))

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**Next Deadline:-** All articles by **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2010** please!

**Next Delivery:-** by **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2010** please!

## Thank you

Liz Haines and family would like to say a big thank you for all the cards and messages of sympathy, on the sudden death of Chris Haines in September. We also to thank all who gave donations and attended his funeral. (£440 in donations we given to Ward 7B of Gloucester Royal Hospital.)

Liz Haines

## Eastington's Amateur Running Club The Jolly Joggers!!

Meeting Tuesday's 9.15am for 9.30am start (term time) and Sundays 5.30pm for 5.45pm start (all year).

We meet at the New Community Centre,  
The Owen Harris Memorial Ground.

Aiming at beginners but all abilities  
welcome!

Contact Laura on 07855 289 159 for  
more details!



## Eastington Community Centre News

After the cleanup from the wonderful opening event last September, we've had a few T's to cross and I's to dot. Mainly, these included finishing and grassing the area that runs up to the new building which was of course, the site of the old building. We again would like to thank Brendan O'Neill of Brendan O'Neill Groundworks Services for his time in making the area level and clean for us.

### **Sponsor a chair for 'Posteriority'**

The new community centre is truly up and running now and we hope it will continue to become more and more a hive of activity. Thanks to the generous sponsorship by many individuals there are even chairs to sit on now! If you would like to sponsor a chair (or chairs) with the name of loved ones or a business (or even a pet!) please contact Gill on 828782 and she will take all the necessary details (sponsorship for one labelled chair is £15).

If you would like to sponsor a chair you can enclose your chair payment (cheques payable to OHMG please) in an envelope with your contact details, the details of how many chairs you would like to sponsor and who you would like to name on your chairs and send it to: Gill Glover, Lynton House, Alkerton, Eastington, Glos. GL10 3AA

### **Halloween Party**

In the true spirit of what we wanted for the community, Roma Hall (and several helpers) organised a fantastic Halloween Party for the village youngsters. The event was a non profit making venture, it was a community spirited effort which charged just enough to break even. Thank you to all those involved and well done to Roma for leading the way.

As if that were not enough, Roma is now organising a Christmas Party for Saturday 19th December. This will be aimed at youngsters of 11+ as this seems to be the age group needing more village based activities. See the advert elsewhere in this article for details.

### **Ink Cartridges**

Our latest box of used ink cartridges has just been sent off and this continues to raise much needed money to equip the hall and add to exterior facilities. A big thank you to all those who have recycled ink cartridges in this way and please continue to do so – there is a collection box in the post office, or you can hand them to any committee member.

#### **Contact Details for the Owen Harris Committee:**

Mark Cousins (Chair)	828557	Gill Glover (Funding Manager)	828782
Jayne Elder (Secretary)	828027	Andrew Cozens (Treasurer)	824793
Vanessa Cousins (Bookings Clerk)	828557	Website:	<a href="http://www.ohmg.org">www.ohmg.org</a>

## **Eastington Community Centre**

NOW available for weddings, parties, regular bookings, sports events, clubs.

This is now your chance.....

...to set up a user group or sports group for benefit of the children and adults of the village. Support, help and a beautiful new building are available to anyone wishing start a club or society within our village!

Telephone Vanessa on 828557 for a friendly chat to discuss your requirements and dates.



# Eastington Methodist Church



## *Special December and Christmas Services at Eastington Methodist Church*

	<b>Service</b>	<b>time</b>	<b>date</b>
	<b>Service led by the Young People (after a sleepover)</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Dec 6th</b>
	<b>Family service in the form of "Messy Church" with our minister, Reverend Noel Sharp</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Dec 13th</b>
	<b>Carols by candlelight with Howard Miles</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Dec 20th</b>
	<b>Christmas Day praise with Beck Burgin</b>	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Dec 25th</b>
<i>please visit <a href="http://www.eastingtonmethodists.org.uk">www.eastingtonmethodists.org.uk</a> for details of our other services</i>			

## **Please Make Time for Christmas**

Do you find Christmas more of a hassle than it is worth? Perhaps you are in a high intensity job and Christmas gets in the way by imposing difficult deadlines or creates frustrations because you cannot get things done because others have disappeared off and you cannot get hold of them. You work flat out until everyone else has gone home on Christmas Eve and then spend the whole of Christmas worrying about the things that need to be done when you get back.

Perhaps you hate Christmas shopping. Having to guess what to buy for someone you only see every other year with no idea of what they like, what they have already or whether someone else will buy them the same thing from their Christmas list. Are you going to set a precedent by spending too much resulting in their or other's embarrassment because they have only spent half as much on you? Even worse, you may feel under pressure to spend money you do not have on a "must have" for the children that has gone out of fashion by the New Year or on something that the recipient doesn't even want resulting in expensive debt problems which will last long into 2010 or beyond.

Perhaps your "nuclear family" goes critical when too many of them get together in one place resulting in arguments and fights.

Perhaps the worst thing of all is if you find yourself all on your own either due to the death of a loved one, a family break up or perhaps it's always been that way.

There are lots of ways to become disillusioned with Christmas but only one way to be really inspired by it. God so loved the world that he sent his Son, Jesus, and this gift offers a remedy for all of the above if only we are prepared to accept it. If we turn our focus upon Him instead of the problems and hassles, we too can enjoy Christmas whatever our circumstances and find ourselves better equipped to deal with life for the rest of the time as well. Have a happy Christmas and we hope to see you at one (or even better more) of our services this year.

Ken & Beck Burgin

01453 827414

[info@EastingtonMethodists.org](mailto:info@EastingtonMethodists.org).

# St Michael & All Angel's Flower Festival

18-20 June 2010

The theme for next year's Flower Festival is 'Creation' and I am interested to hear from anyone who would like to help with the flowers in any way. We are only just beginning to design, plan and pull together the possible 'creations' for the event so all ideas welcome at this stage.

We will be having a few regular meetings but no dates have been organized yet. We are also hoping to arrange a flower arranging lesson or two in a few months time for those interested in taking part.

Details of meetings / flower arranging lessons etc will be posted on the church notice board before Christmas.

Please phone me on 01453 822068 if you are interested in arranging flowers, on your own or sharing with someone, or just want to discuss the possibility of taking part but don't feel very brave!! Interest & enthusiasm is all that is needed!

Pauline Allen, Brook Cottage, Churchend.

The event as a whole is being organized by the St Michael's Church Fund Raising Committee chaired by Robin Harris. Please direct general inquiries about this event to him (Tel.01453 823433).

## *St Michael and All Angels*

**Eastington**

**Christingle Service**

**at 6pm**

**On Christmas Eve**



What better way to start your Christmas festivities than to come along and sing carols at this special candlelit celebration.

Lasting for about 40 minutes, the service raises money for the Children's Society, a national charity who uses the money to help disadvantaged children.

The service is suitable for all ages, and each child who brings a collecting candle will be given a Christingle - an orange decorated with sweets and a lighted candle.

Further information be will distributed at the end of November through Eastington School and Play Group, or from Jacquie Dingle 01453 825542.

## Eastington Slimming World Group

In the last issue I was telling you about Slimming World's 40th birthday celebrations. At Eastington we celebrated the evening with a wonderful food tasting night. Many of my members brought in a plate or dish to share with the rest of the group and the table was crammed full of some lovely foods. Some of the favourites included onion bhajees, chocolate cake, quiche as well as many many more. Please can I say a big thank you to all of you who brought something along. We also wore a little bit of red to mark the 40th anniversary.

As I write this piece we are only eight weeks away from Christmas nearer by the time you read this. It's not too late to lose some extra pounds for the festive season and those party outfits. We offer five differing healthy eating plans for you to choose from so there will be one for you! With the support of the group and myself you can start 2010 already on track to your target weight, so don't leave things to the new year and start now. Remember your weight is kept completely confidential and no one apart from you, me and my social team (who sign a confidentiality pledge) will actually know how much you weigh, but just how well you are doing. Slimming World can help men and women. (11-15 year olds can also attend as long as they are with an adult). So I hope to see you soon.

We will be having our Christmas party the Wednesday before Christmas on the 23rd. If any Target members would like to pop in it would be lovely to see you all.

We meet at the village hall (newly refurbished thanks to the hard work of David- thank you) on Wednesday evenings at 7pm. For any information please call Lorna 01453 821751 or just turn up.

### **What are you doing on Monday evenings?**

Would you like to be a bit more active, make friends and energy?



**Why not come along to keep fit and try a bit of salsa?**

It's effective but low impact, so you can get fit but not harm your joints.

**Monday evenings, Saul Village Hall, 8.45-9.45pm**

Ring Lucie on 01452 741835 for details



# EASTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

## ROADS AND TRANSPORT

### **Eastington Traffic Watch.**

For many years Eastington has struggled with inappropriate use of the village roads from heavy lorries to high speeds. The Parish Council receives regular requests from parishioners to deal with the issue of speeding. Earlier this year we met representatives of Gloucestershire Highways and showed them the problems we encounter in the parish. The result is a scheme covering the roundabout at the Kings Head and some speed bumps on Alkerton Road and the road out to Claypits. Many of you will have commented on the consultation which ended on 30th October. We now await GCC's next steps.

Clearly we have a speeding problem in the village – anyone heading towards the new OHMG building will have experienced vehicles accelerating out of the village and those not slowing sufficiently as they enter the 30 mph zone. We have had a near miss at Orchard Leigh – residents regularly cross the road there – and whilst the 30 mph signs are at that point many vehicles are still slowing down from the derestricted area. An accident near the school where Church End meets Springhill earlier this year illustrates another danger point.

Eastington Parish Council (EPC) has been measuring speeds and the results confirm that we have a problem. Near Orchard Leigh measurements show in excess of 90% of vehicles breaking the speed limit. Near OHMG we are seeing between 60 and 95% breaking the limit. At other locations within the village (Bath Road near Swallowcroft and Springhill) this figure is around 60 to 70% exceeding the limit. The good news is that measurements near the Victoria Inn show very low 2% exceeding the limit. This may well be down to the new flashing 30 sign.

EPC will shortly be launching a High Visibility speed check campaign. Signs will be erected to warn motorists speed checks will be in operation and you will see high visibility jacket clad volunteers checking speeds. As always we could use more volunteers so if you fancy a spell holding the speed detector please contact the Parish Clerk or email me 4hills@fsmail.net.

In Eastington we have the school junction (Churchend) in a 40 limit, the OHMG and Orchard Leigh just inside the 30 limit. As I mention above, the latter two locations we are frequently seeing over 90% of drivers break the speed limit. Average speeds are just under 40 mph. Some are doing 50 to 60mph. Many drivers passing through Eastington will not know that these are crossing points for vulnerable people. I ask you to think about this when driving elsewhere – is breaking the speed limit OK just because it appears to be safe? Do you know that no young, elderly or infirm live where you speed?

So the first thing we can do as a parish is to keep an eye on our own speed as we drive, not just in Eastington, but everywhere.

Please let the Parish Council know your views and please volunteer (email to the parish clerk mgribble@btinternet.com) to help monitor traffic issues in the parish. Travel safely.

Cllr Chris Hill

**Eastington Parish Council meetings are held on 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month  
at 19:00 in the Methodist Hall. All Parishioners are welcome to attend**

**The Allotment Society** would like to thank Eastington Parish Council for their hard work in providing us with allotment plots. We also appreciate the additional work done in providing full drainage for the site – and the restoration of the pond as a community area. Many allotmentees have already been digging their plots in anticipation of good things to come next summer.  
Sandra Morris (Secretary)



## Christmas Party

For ages 11 and over

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December**

6pm-9pm

at

*Eastington Community Centre*

*Tickets: only £1*  
*...but bring some money for the tuck shop!*

Contact Roma for tickets and information on:  
01453 823876 or 07919 686924



# The Royal British Legion

## Eastington & District Branch

Reg. Charity No. 219279

### CLOSURE of ROYAL BRITISH LEGION BRANCH.

At the Branch A.G.M. held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October Harry Elliott, the Branch Chairman and Secretary, announced that he had to relinquish all offices in the Branch on medical grounds. This had been foreshadowed in the formal notice of the A.G.M. that had been sent to all (24) members. Only 6 members were present at the meeting, and no nominations for any of the offices needed for the Branch Committee had been received. It was not found possible to fill these offices from those present

The Branch was formed in 1927 and Harry Elliott has served in nearly every office for 50 of these 83 years so it was with the utmost reluctance and sadness that he felt the Branch had to face the fact that it was no longer able to continue. All those present shared this view. A Motion was therefore proposed that action be initiated to formally close the Branch and lay up the standard. This was seconded and carried unanimously.

Until such time as the Branch is formally closed, and the standard laid up in church, probably in spring 2010, the Branch will continue to function. Meanwhile, the Poppy Appeal collection will have taken place as usual and the normal service of Remembrance will have been held in St Michael & All Angels church probably for the last time with the Branch on parade. The Poppy Appeal will continue in the village so long as there is someone willing to keep it going.

Harry has also had to resign as a Welfare caseworker. Robin Harris remains as a Welfare caseworker and any requests for help from the R.B.L. should be referred to him (Tel.01453 823433) or e-mail [robin@harrisnestings.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:robin@harrisnestings.fsnet.co.uk)

R. Harris

3 November 2009

#### **Smart Ironing**

Ironing Service

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Email [smartironing@btinternet.com](mailto:smartironing@btinternet.com)

#### **Lingos Language Tuition**



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Beginners welcome

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Eastington

#### **Casual Vacancy Eastington Parish Council**

Please Apply to the Clerk

Mary Gribble

01453 825279

[mgribble@btinternet.com](mailto:mgribble@btinternet.com)

## RESTORING A COMMUNITY POND

By Esther Collis: Great Crested Newt Project Officer +  
Biodiversity Action Plan Co-ordinator - Gloucestershire Biodiversity Partnership

The Gloucestershire Biodiversity Partnership's "**No Newts is Bad Newts**" project is working with Stroud Valleys Project and Eastington Parish Council to restore a pond at the new "Allotment Ground" (not far from the new Eastington Community Centre.) Eastington is one of five sites across the county which was selected for the project, as it is home to an important population of Great Crested Newts. These wonderfully colourful newts are one of Britain's most threatened amphibians, and the project has been set up to look after the places where they live. This includes ponds for breeding, in and unmanaged land with rough grass and/or woody areas for them to feed and hibernate in. The project also aims to create new habitat to ensure their future survival. It is hoped that the newts will eventually return to breed in the pond once it is fully restored.

The restoration project started in October and the pond was excavated at the same time the land drainage pipes for the allotment, which were laid by Spencers from Nupend. The pond was re-profiled to maximise its potential as a wildlife haven. The next phases of the restoration project will include the creation on a reedbed and bog area, which will act as filtration system. The drainage from the allotment grounds have been directed to the pond to help it retain water all year round, and the reedbed and bog area will help clean the water before it enters the pond. Some additional re-profiling is needed to create a shelf for marginal plants, and a fence will be erected around the pond to make it secure and safe. The grassy areas around the pond will also been sown with a wildflower seed mix, and a few native trees/shrubs will be planted to fill the gaps in the hedge.

It may take several years for the pond to establish as it will slowly fill with rain water before aquatic plants can be allowed to colonise naturally.

So at the moment the pond just looks like a big muddy hole, but overtime it will develop into a haven for both wildlife and people.

If you would like to find out more about the project, you can meet Nadine Smykatz-Kloss from Stroud Valleys Project on site every Wednesday morning from the 18th November up until Christmas, where she and a group of students from Gloucester College will be putting the finishing touches to the pond.

Picture 1: The overgrown pond before / Picture 2: The pond as it is at the moment showing the reedbed/bog area at the front: *Please see page 11 below*

*The "No Newts is Bad Newts" project would like to thank Easting Parish Council for their support, Eastington Allotment Association for their patience, Tony Cullimore Services for materials and the project funders. Gloucestershire Environmental Trust Company and Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund.*



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## DISTRICT COUNCILLORS NEWSLETTER

My apologies for missing the last community news. I was away. There has been a lot happening since my last report but I will concentrate mainly on; my attempts to find out how the District Council accounts for our money, the strategic housing land availability assessment, members expenses, the housing revenue account overspend and the County Councils residual household waste strategy/consultation.

### DISTRICT COUNCIL ACCOUNTING.

Residents may well remember my struggles in the past to have the minutes of council meetings actually reflect what was said at them. At a meeting in the early summer we were looking at the council's statement of accounts. You may remember that one of the results of the strike by council officers a while ago was that the council had to pay £250.000 to the staff union Unison. The total cost of the affair was put at some £351.000 and the council tried to recover this from its advisors. In the previous years accounts this was allocated as a 'contingent asset' and appeared on the asset side of the accounts. In this years accounts there was mention that this money had been recovered. Actually however only £295.000 was recovered. I asked the questions, Is it an accurate statement to say the money was recovered and where is the difference between what was on the asset side last year and the amount recovered accounted for in this years accounts. The cabinet member for finance said he would reply later in writing. However when published the minutes of the meeting did not record that I asked the questions. At the next meeting I proposed an amendment so that the 'true and accurate record' of the meeting show that I asked the questions. This amendment was voted down by the administration, supported by their main back up group. The way the hands went up it seemed to me that this had been discussed before the meeting. This to me is somewhat bizarre because not only do I have a DVD copy of the web cast showing me asking the questions I also had a written response from the cabinet member. However the historical record of the meeting will not show that I asked these questions. You do wonder what they have to hide. Incidentally the written answer basically said, 'I am not going to tell you'. The reason being that when the chief executive made the initial statement saying £295.000 had been recovered he also said that no more comments on the matter would be made. I however still cannot see how it can be such a secret as to how the accounts were made to balance. If you have a figure in the credit side that is not recovered you have to have something in the debit side to account for it. Simple accounting I would of thought, but apparently not.



**Teddy Tunes**

Action songs for babies &  
Toddlers - fun & frolics!  
Frampton Village Hall  
10am to 11am Thursdays  
Coffee & a chat afterwards  
Tel: Vanessa 01453 828557  
Join any week £4.00

**CHILDRENS PARTIES**

### STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILTY ASSESSMENT

The consultants report on the submissions made by developers etc is at the time of writing not available. The consultants are measuring them against a national set of criteria, such as deliverability, sustainability etc. The council will have to allocate land for a further 2000 houses within the district for the period from the end of the present plan up to 2026. If you are not aware yet the land put forward for consideration in Eastington Parish included land which has been put forward in the past and some new sites. Sites previously put forward are: The Nupend/Nastend site, west of Springhill to the motor way and land to the east of Swallowcroft. New sites are, the school playing field off Cotswold Avenue, a parcel of land between Chipmans Platt and the little chef roundabout, a parcel of land at the top and to the north of Millend Lane and also a small plot in Newtown. The land in Eastington Parish alone would meet the target many times over. The next phase of selecting which sites throughout the district to allocate housing on is where it gets interesting. I will be working with all interested groups in the Parish and the Parish Council in ensuring that the views of the Parish are submitted and understood during the next phase.

Cont overleaf/

## MEMBERS EXPENSES

Readers may recall that my group asked questions on this several months ago. The result was an internal audit report. It was no surprise to us that this audit found that there were irregularities both in the system and payments. The system is recommended to be tightened and proper accounting processes applied to it. I understand that there were quite a few drafts of this report before the one that was issued. I wonder if the original one might make even more interesting reading. Incidentally during this process we also became aware that there was another way expenses incurred by members were paid. This was by credit card. None of my group was aware of this method and the monies expended are not I understand included in the published public record on member's expenses. We will continue to attempt to have full and transparent accounting of what was spent on members and also why.

## HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT OVERSPEND

The rather expensive consultant's reports on this have been presented. The short version of their findings is that there were inadequate management organisation and practices and a lack of proper accounting procedures. Sounds a bit familiar to me. I would have thought that this was rather apparent at the start and that there was no need to spend £50,000 finding it out. The management structure, organisation within each unit and all the senior posts have been put in place by the present administration group. None of the holders of three main positions relative to this issue have seen fit to resign. In the businesses I was involved with when at work this sort of debacle, due to the way a manager organised and carried out the function and responsibilities of their post, would not have been a survivable incident for the post holder. If you look at the councils constitution with regard to the post of Leader of the Council one of the responsibilities is to 'Oversee the review and design of all council policy, the constructions of Council budgets and an effective performance management framework, including data quality. Similarly the post of Cabinet Member for Housing has as one of its responsibilities, 'The delivery, development and review of all Policy, Strategy, Action Plans and budgets associated with the portfolio'. I wonder if anyone who read the full reports into this issue would think that these responsibilities had been met. You might also like to know that during the civic year this overspend occurred besides the basic councillors yearly allowance of £4298. the Leader of the council received a special responsibility allowance of £15,958. and the Cabinet member for housing £9,599. I leave it to you to decide if you think this was value for money. Some people are lauding the new procedures as a breakthrough and well worth the cost. Well I can tell you that they have not invented a new wheel, and that the measures are what any project manager where I was employed would have had in place as a minimum requirement many many years ago.

## COUNTY COUNCILS WASTE MANAGEMENT CONSULTATION

Residents may recall my comments on a proposed incinerator at Javelin Park. The County Council is now consulting on a range of sites for the disposal of household residual waste. They have included a site in Nastend in this consultation. If you look at this site it also features in the district local plan as an industrial allocation. It is also in the land put forward by developers for housing. How on earth you can consult on where to have a site for this without deciding on the technology to be used is beyond me. I asked this question at the CC road show on the sites in Stonehouse recently. There was a 'well it's a bit chicken and egg really' reply which did not impress me. This is a County Council issue but I personally remain of the opinion that incineration and a plant nearly twice the size of the present amount of waste requires, is most definitely not the way to go.

I have also been involved with residents on many varying issues. - Ken Stephens, November 2009.

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The views expressed in ECN are not necessarily those of the editor.



# **NEW EASTINGTON BABY & TODDLER GROUP**

Now Under New Management.....

**Monday & Wednesday Mornings**  
**10:00 till 11:30am.**  
**Eastington Methodist Church.**  
opposite butchers.

Specific Baby Corner

Home Corner

Arts & Crafts Projects

Drink & Snack Included  
(75p per person (under 1's free))

Music & Singing

Healthy Eating Awareness

Outdoor play & gardening  
(weather permitting)

We welcome parents, grandparents, child minders, aunts, uncles and anyone else who wants their little ones to have fun in a creative learning environment.  
Co-ordinator: Clare – 07748 015034 – please phone for details.

**Come and Enjoy - First Session Free !**



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The Gloucestershire Biodiversity Partnership's "**No Newts is Bad Newts**" project is working with Stroud Valleys Project and Eastington Parish Council to restore a pond at the new "Allotment Ground" (not far from the new Eastington Community Centre.) Eastington has a population of Great Crested Newts. These wonderfully colourful newts are one of Britain's most threatened amphibians, and the project has been set up to look after the places where they live. This includes ponds for breeding, in and unmanaged land with rough grass and/or woody areas for them to feed and hibernate. The project also aims to create new habitat to ensure their future survival. It is hoped that the newts will eventually return to breed in the pond once it is fully restored.



*The overgrown pond before*

The restoration project started in October and the pond was excavated at the same time the land drainage pipes for the allotment, that were laid by Spencers from Nupend. The pond was re-profiled to maximise its potential as a wildlife haven. The next phases of the restoration project will include the creation of a reedbed and bog area, these will act as filtration system. The drainage from the allotment grounds have been directed to the pond to help it retain water all year round, and the reedbed and bog area will help clean the water before it enters the pond. Some additional re-profiling is needed to create a shelf for marginal plants, and a fence will be erected around the pond to make it secure and safe. The grassy areas around the pond will also been sown with a wildflower seed mix, and a few native trees/shrubs will be planted to fill the gaps in the hedge.

It may take several years for the pond to establish as it will slowly fill with rain water before aquatic plants can be allowed to colonise naturally.

So at the moment the pond just looks like a big muddy hole, but overtime it will develop into a haven for both wildlife and people.



The pond as it is at the moment showing the reedbed / bog area at the front

If you would like to find out more about the project, you can meet Nadine Smykatz-Kloss from Stroud Valleys Project on site every Wednesday morning from the 18th November up until Christmas, where she and a group of students from Gloucester College will be putting the finishing touches to the pond.



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Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund

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