

# Eastington Community News

December 2012 / January 2013

Nº. 136

Welcome to the last edition for 2012 with details of many community activities inside.

Christmas regalia in shops and stores started months ago, and yet Advent remains still a week away as we prepared to go to press. It must be difficult in such times to keep the little ones' excitement and enthusiasm building up steadily to the big day itself. In hotels and offices across mainland Europe the progress through Advent is heralded each week as another of the four candles is lit. Here, of course, it is still possible to find such symbols, but what vibrancy could be rekindled if the prelude to the Christmas story could be reclaimed from the commercial hype? Leading up to Christmas in Eastington we have the Primary School's traditional Christmas Bazaar and Carol singing, together with activities and details of services from St. Michael's and Methodist Churches.

Floods, following torrential rain, have again brought misery to some homes. Could it only be back in February that the drought was being blamed for loss of produce, and that hose-pipe bans were in place over much of Britain? Those old enough to remember 1977 (and the Queen's wet Silver Jubilee,) may also recall the very fine summer of 1976 and the severe drought that it brought. Back then, a Minister of Drought was appointed, and almost within one week the heavens opened. Earlier this year a similar appointment was made to deal with the seriously dry conditions, and almost immediately it started raining. So would it seem worthwhile to appoint a Minister of Floods in the hope that these persistent rains will stop? With the Flood Meadows doing what their name suggests, there are pictures inside of some watery scenes. The Flood Wardens have timely and interesting notes for us, and Birder in the Parish suggested we might have a new local wetland.

Mud has been a serious problem during the heavy rains. Those whose livelihoods depend on harvesting and planting crops have done serious battle with the elements and thick mud. The battle against the weather even led to harvesting in the middle of the night, which caused some startled residents, woken from their slumbers, to fear the aliens had landed. There has been no escape for the rest of us either, as many tons of mud was tracked over roads and pavements. One farmer, Andrew Cozens, has written to thank residents for their patience and understanding during the muddy aftermath, and to apologise for the inconvenience suffered.

Living in a rural area is well appreciated by most who live here, and the best times are pretty much outweighed by the down sides. Keep Eastington Rural was formed over 20 years ago to steer development to be sympathetic to a rural environment rather than to give in to opportunistic speculation that in so many parts of our country have created soulless urban sprawl. A summary inside from our recent Parish Plan shows more precisely the needs of our Village.

From the Parish Council this time there is focus on roads and transport. The Local Plan features largely in a letter from our District Councillor. In case there is doubt about the high risk from urban sprawl, the housing campaign sets out the options and impacts that could be foisted upon us if some planners and developers have their way.

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**Next Deadline: All articles by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2013 please!**

**Next Delivery: Friday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2013 please!**

View the "Community News" at: [www.ecn.me.uk](http://www.ecn.me.uk)

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## Parish Council - Roads & Transport

We have taken on 'Roads & Transport – or Highways' as one of our remits during our four year stint on the Parish Council. This includes a wide variety of issues such as the familiar speeding (+ traffic calming schemes), parking and congestion in the parish (school and village centre), street furniture (lighting and signs), heavy traffic through the village, pavements and preparing for the risks of winter weather on our roads. Not to mention the ever present 'potholes' that result!!

We decided that instead of just reacting to the immediacy of everyday problems as they arise we would also spend some of this first year gathering information to see if we could develop a more strategic way of prioritising and then addressing our local difficulties. We have lots of stuff from the past, both current and the recent past from you our villagers and we have had meetings with the Highways department. So our rolling strategy will try to address priority areas that have been raised by you earlier this year in the Parish Questionnaire. We have summarised, below, your answers to all the Roads & Transport/Highways questions and hope you'll be interested to read the results.

However, to see results from this you'll have to be patient with us because, of course, we all have other issues in our lives apart from the PC! We will be asking and looking out for help from anyone with an interest in this area or who has skills that might help us.

As an example – we are expected to produce a Parish Winter Plan to help manage snow and ice issues during the winter months – should we have a bad winter! Andrew Cousins is paid by Highways to be our 'local snow plough' should there be difficulties off the main roads and he also stores extra salt/grit should it be needed to refill public grit bins. Dale Haines has volunteered to house and use a 'hand salt/grit spreader' on public pavements only – this is on wheels and evenly spreads the required very small amount of grit. There are grit bins spaced strategically around the parish for use only on public roads/lanes (steep inclines/roads without pavements etc). Both these guys will be keeping a record of public requests for help during this winter so that we can prepare a realistic plan for future years.

This is an example of local involvement so please contact them **only** for refilling public grit bins Andrew (07768747375) and Dale for gritting public pavements (07733 454 846). Please **do not** call them to clear snow or to grit your own driveways!!

The parish survey brought into focus the parishioners' concerns and possible solutions.

Of the 16 concerns, the main six identified were:

**Speeding traffic.** Over half of respondents indicated that traffic exceeding the posted speed limits is a major concern. Recent speed-checks confirmed this to be the case. However, the checks showed that it is not just through traffic speeding but *a/so* local residents leaving and returning to the village.

**Congestion at Churchend/school times.** The secondary concern expressed by over half of respondents is the congestion and inherent safety problems arising from children being dropped off and collected from the primary school at the beginning and end of school days.

**Condition of roads.** The condition of local roads drew a significant number of comments, particularly following the winter of 2010-11. Some of these problems have been addressed following lobbying of the county council highways by the parish council. However, damage to the surface still remains.

**Crossing the roads.** A third of respondents found crossing the road by the village hall to be a problem - this is also a crossing route for pedestrians to the school mentioned in above. The council will shortly debate a proposed return on the 'Lollipop Lady'.

**Volume of HGVs.** Additionally, the same number of respondents identified the number and size of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) using the village as a through route to the A419/M5.

**Traffic congestion.** Lastly, just under a third reported traffic congestion on the A419 as a problem.

Since the survey this congestion has increased due to the traffic control measures recently put in place through Stonehouse.

We would be pleased to hear from you with your ideas as to how tackle these issues.

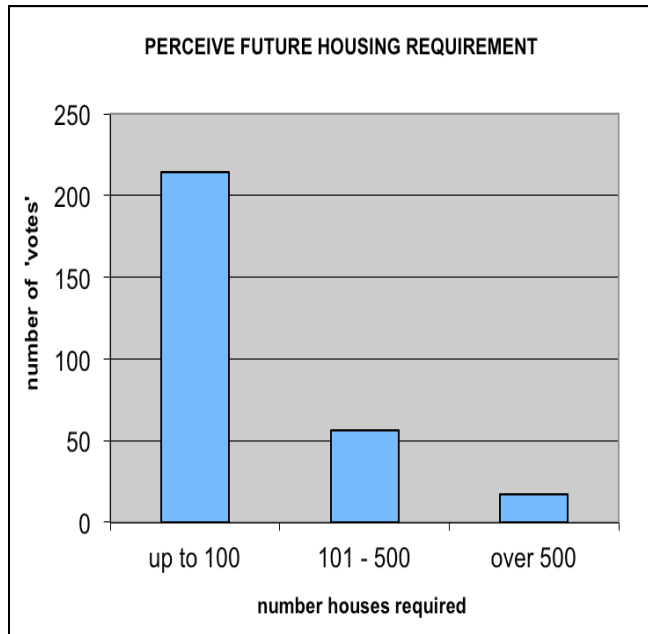
**Pauline Allen & Derek Greenaway**

# THE PARISH PLAN

The feedback from the Parish Plan Questionnaire has now been analyzed, and we are able to publish this overview of the housing conclusions:

The Village has been growing organically over the last twenty-five years, with an increase of 150 homes in that time (about 6 per year). This rate of growth seems to have ensured that business and other aspects of village life have flourished.

The parish survey indicates that the great majority of parishioners wish this to continue over the next twenty years.



## Types of Housing

The types of homes parishioners identified as being most necessary were:-

1. Bungalows and homes for older people (28%).
2. Starter Houses and Small family homes (26%).
3. Affordable homes for local people (21%)

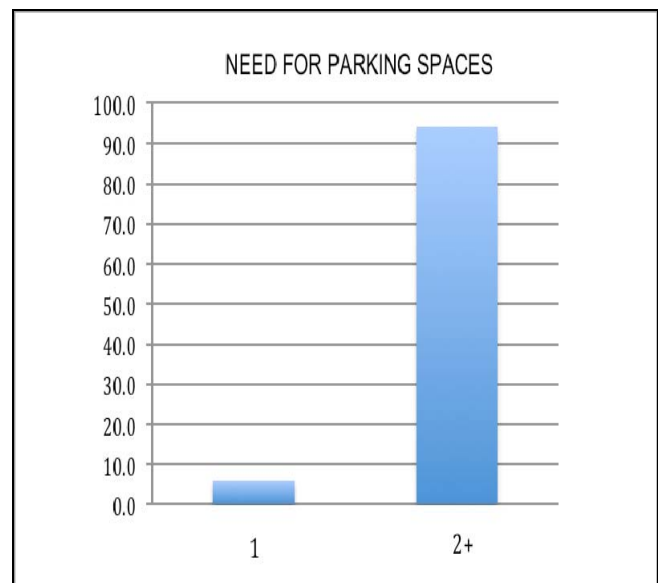
Parishioners identified that the least popular requirements were large family homes (10%), canal boats (9%) and small starter flats (4%). This is contrary to modern developer preferences. However, this apparent contradiction could be reconciled because building for older people naturally releases some larger family homes back into the community.

## Density of Housing, Parking

It is interesting that respondents found the density of development at Bradestones Way, at the top of Spring Hill, was unacceptable for our village environment.

As far as parking is concerned, the majority (95%) of the parishioners saw a need for two or more parking spaces per household.

This is again at odds with the conventional approach of national developers and the district council planning guidelines.



## Canal

The impact of the Stroudwater Canal restoration was thought to be best targeted towards tourism and leisure, and less so to housing (in the form of canal boats).

## Summary

In summary, parishioners are in favour of:-

Continued organic growth at the rate of around six or seven houses per year.

The types of housing required are affordable homes, small family and starter homes, and bungalows/homes for the elderly.

This reflects the desire to ensure that there is somewhere for the younger parishioners to stay within the village and the older folk to maintain their family and social links too.

It is clear that going down the conventional developer route (70% larger family homes, 30% affordable) would not fulfil the village's preferences.

In order to concentrate on this stated village priority (affordable homes / starter and small family homes and bungalows for the elderly, possibly downsizing), the village would need to work with either social housing providers (housing associations) or create our own Community Land Trusts).

It is proposed to follow this up at a public meeting to explore and understand the alternatives and the pros and cons of Community Land Trusts.

**Cllr. Peter Edis-Bates**

## HOUSING CAMPAIGN

At this stage the debate is all about how many houses we need. In December it will be about where they should go.

Much dialogue has taken place since the Extraordinary Council Meeting on the 3rd October where the Alliance voted against a Conservative amendment to **reduce** the housing target. Instead the Alliance voted for an **increase** from 9,250 to a range 9,250-11,500 houses in the planning period to 2031.

Since that decision:-

- ✎ David Drew has stated that the Labour group are adamantly opposed to any settlement West-of-Stonehouse and will be issuing a press release shortly making that point abundantly clear.
- ✎ David has suggested that the Labour group are of the view that new census information will suggest a downward adjustment of housing numbers to a figure closer 8,500.
- ✎ The Labour group are committed to a policy of limited dispersal which responds to the needs of Stroud's growth in the elderly population, as this group reflects the entire forecast growth in the population over the next twenty years.
- ✎ The Conservative group supports these lower numbers and the principles of localism.

Planning applications have been reported in the press and are expected in a number of areas:

- Slad Valley, Baxters Field (300 houses)
- West of Stonehouse (1,500 houses)
- Rodborough Fields (100 houses)
- Eastington, Swallowcroft (34-300 houses)
- Hardwick (200 houses)

Our neighbours in Hardwick are still reeling from the planning **approval** of the 200 houses at Sellars Farm.

These planning applications are in part being encouraged by the inflated housing numbers that are being set by Stroud District Council. These larger numbers have encouraged the developer feeding-frenzy which is now concerning so much of our district.

The chart below shows how our district is being 'padded out' with housing compared to our neighbours: Our planners wish to build more housing than in any previous targets. In contrast, our neighbours have chosen lower figures and successfully agreed them with the Government Planning Inspector.

We wish to work with SDC and other communities opposed to this developer frenzy, but to be successful SDC must have realistic plans and a sensible housing requirement for the future.

We think those plans should include:

1. Recognising that the forecast growth in population (11,000 people by 2031) is exclusively the over 65's.
2. Accepting the need for each local community to respond to its particular needs and population change.
3. Regenerating brownfield first e.g. the canal corridor and semi-derelict mills.
4. Targeting jobs and the economic growth of our towns: especially Stroud, Stonehouse and Dursley.
5. Avoiding large commuter/dormitory estates that achieve nothing for our local communities and fail to meet any of the needs of our ageing population.
6. Considering Community Land Trusts, especially for affordable starter homes and the elderly.

Stay in touch, and make your views known to your elected representatives, visit:

[WWW.NEW-TOWN.INFO](http://WWW.NEW-TOWN.INFO)

**Community Campaign Group 'Don't Strangle Stroud'**

# DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S NEWSLETTER

## LOCAL PLAN

The work on this continues. In October the council decided to change the housing figures from those used for the past year, following the report I mentioned in my last newsletter. There are many ways of looking at these numbers, and I expect you will see many versions of it, but I will use the **'residual' figure**. This is the actual number of dwellings that need to be allocated in the review period. The figures I quote will be based on the lower figure of a sliding scale. This is accepted as the base line figure by both the executive member and officers, that would be used unless there is a dramatic upturn in the economy and which was, I believe, confirmed as such in the debate on the numbers.

Up to now the residual for consultation, adopted by the previous conservative administration, was some 3,200 dwellings up to the year 2026. The figures from last October will, I understand, mean that the residual to year 2031 is 2,725. Five years have been added to the review period to bring the plan into line with government requirements. This figure, to year 2031, is several hundred below the original year 2026 figure. Indeed if this new figure is scaled back to 2026 the residual, I am told, would be 1,195. **Less than half the previous residual figure.**

This new figure means that the District can claim a 6.5 year land supply, up from 4.5 years and well above the crucial 5 year government requirement. We have been losing appeals using the previous figures. It is hoped that any inspector deciding an appeal for speculative planning applications in the interim will decide that the methodology used was correct and that the land supply figure sound. It is expected that this will be tested quite soon as I understand that, besides being applied to a recent planning application waiting for a decision, it has also been passed to an inspector who is about to make a decision on an appeal that was heard under the previous figure. These figures also mean that the district's required house build rate is reduced from some 468 per annum to some 370 per annum.

The council decision which created the above numbers was subject to the following condition: 'To review this figure before final submission of the Local Plan to accommodate any new information arising from publication of the 2011 Census data during Nov 2012 – Feb 2013 or any other relevant data'. This means that the justification for an unsuccessful amendment to reduce the numbers further, put forward on the night, can be revisited using more detailed census data and emerging policy decisions. At the time the executive member for planning considered that the lower numbers would not be accepted by an inspector because of the way they had been calculated.

It must be stressed that the housing figures that will be submitted with our Local Plan proposals to an inspector have not been decided yet. That will not happen until next year. Any figure, and wording, that is finally adopted will take into account any data that has emerged up to that date and a review of the methodology used to calculate the figure. Likewise no site allocation has been decided upon yet. I continue to oppose mass building in Eastington as a way of meeting the district's housing requirement, and my efforts to keep our Parish a rural one continue. I am supported in this by the other members of my group.

## JAVELIN PARK, INCINERATOR

The District Council has again confirmed and expanded its opposition to this proposal by a further submission to the County Council under the application consultation process. I understand that a request from the District Council to the Secretary of State to call in this application will be made if things do not change. Officers are continuously monitoring the position and I believe that the timing of such a request is all that needs to be decided.

## HIGHWAYS

I have had many people contact me on the recent instances of mud on the highway and footpaths. This is the responsibility of the County Council's Highways department and complaints should be addressed directly to them. Complaints made recently to the District Council's Environmental Health Department were, I understand, passed on to highways.

**Ken Stephens November 2012**

## Sandy Fullman

It is a little difficult to know quite where to start but a few words of thanks to all those people who attended Sandy's funeral seems an appropriate place. It was a good send off and she would have been both thrilled and modestly surprised by the turnout and tributes. Friends, neighbours and family in abundance, discrete and professional attention from the funeral directors – I think it went well and it was a pleasure to see so many at The Whitminster Inn afterwards and to have the opportunity to share some memories with everybody.

I would like to acknowledge the help and support of Sue Ryder at Leckhampton Court. The staff and facilities are magnificent and I am pleased to be able to report that donations to date have totalled £1,146.65 which includes a certain amount from the Chancellor of the Exchequer courtesy of the Gift Aid Scheme. My thanks on their behalf.

Supported by a separate collection from Sandy's colleagues at CTL, the company are installing a flowering cherry tree, a butterfly bush and a butterfly nesting box. These would have a personal meaning for Sandy.

Many in the village have seen me walking my 'new' dog, a white and black collie cross bitch. She is just ten years old and we seem to suit each other well. She is a good excuse to get out and about and it has been nice to socialise and meet folks in the street. People have been very kind and I thank you all for your condolences and good wishes, your messages of support and your time chatting. I am touched by your generosity of spirit.

I had the privilege of attending the All Souls service at St Michael and All Angels Church. This was quite uplifting and amazing too in that there were so many names of the departed - I knew so very many of them. It was good and helpful to be reminded that I am not alone in my circumstances or my grief.

In closing may I ask you not to be sorry that Sandy has died but rather be glad that you had the opportunity to know her just as she was glad to know you.

Thank you and kind regards,

**John Fullman**



- \* **Building**
- \* **Renovations**
- \* **Kitchens**
- \* **Bathrooms**
- \* **Tiling**

**No Obligation  
Estimates and  
Consultations**

**T: 01453 823686 M: 07866 600961**

## COMPLEMENTARY THERAPY

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Working with patients, carers and bereaved

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**Anita Harland 07977137955**







Nastend Lane

## Apologies and a Thank You

As one of the 'guilty' farmers, guilty of dropping mud on the road in the village area, I would hasten to add that not one of our number wishes to drop mud or inconvenience our neighbours.

We have to organise our lives by the weather, which no man *can* organise. The fact that large quantities of mud have been deposited (and the main of it cleared quickly) is due to the wettest April – November period in living memory culminating with the maize harvest. Maize is an extremely important energy feed for the dairy cow's diet, without which the production of milk would fall by approximately 25%. Without sufficient milk supplies the production of butter, cheese and cream would also be severely affected. All of northern Europe has been similarly affected by wet weather this year.

That said, we have to harvest the crop to feed our herds. We cannot go out and buy in replacement feeds readily as they are not readily available and are very expensive.

I am afraid that most consumers these days purchase their food stuffs from the retail sector and do not grow their own; the retail trade sources its food stuffs from producers like myself. Growing any crop can be 'dirty' business at times. This year will go down as one of the worst ever and will have a carry over effect into the 2013-14 harvest year as very little planting has been carried out for the forthcoming season, which will have an effect on next year's crop yields.

The methodology we used to keep the roads safe (but not necessarily clean) was to keep the road wet, yes causing dirty spray water, but no vehicle could slip on compacted clay as it might have done if the roads were left dry and the mud scraped up leaving a compacted smear on the road surface. In my own case we removed all lumps of mud as soon as possible and hired a road sweeper at the end of each working day. On completion of the harvest campaign the pavements were swept and the roadsides / kerb side also cleaned.

I liaised with both the police and Glos Highways at Stroudwater, prior to and during the harvesting days, both being satisfied that the roads were left in a safe condition once cleaned.

Although the road though the village was messy, I only received two complaints from villagers, which were attended to within a few hours. However I apologise to those who were inconvenienced but the weather circumstances were outside of our control and the crop was starting to deteriorate.

I hope that the above explains why we have had muddy roads for a day or two, and thank you for your patience.

**Andrew Cozens**



## Flooding in Eastington

This year, due to the repositioning of the jet stream, hopefully temporarily, it seems that hardly a month has gone by when there hasn't been another news item about serious flooding in the UK. The South West of the Country appears to have borne the brunt of it and Eastington has not escaped the deluge during the last week or so. Hopefully none of our homes have been actually flooded, although I know that some have come particularly close. If your property has been flooded, please let us know so that we can try and identify whether anything can be done by Stroud District Council (SDC).



One of the main problems is the amount of rain falling on already saturated land. It is therefore important that ditches and gullies/drains can cope with as much of the run off as they were intended to do. Hopefully work carried out at

**Millend Lane, 25 November:** Great fun for the dogs, Beau and Ruby, as Millend Lane floods but an anxious time for their owners. Some residents of Millend Cottages have installed sandbags just in case...

the time of the serious flooding in 2007 and ongoing maintenance by the Highways Agency and Riparian owners will ensure that they do. However, this tends to be carried out once a year so if you do see a blocked watercourse, ditch or drain it is important to report it so that action can be taken as soon as practicably possible. I'm sure the majority of Riparian Owners take their responsibilities seriously. However, if you live in an area where they don't, then please let us know and we can forward your concerns on to SDC who should assist with getting landowners to take responsibility to clear blockages etc.

Unfortunately one consequence of having been flooded is difficulty in obtaining home insurance. Our own experience of flooding has meant that until this year we have had to remain with the company who dealt with the initial claim. Although our premium has gone up, we have not been subject to a massive hike or excess that some others have experienced. Whether this remains the case only time will tell, as next year a voluntary agreement by insurers expires, even though the agreement was supposed to protect only those living on flood plains. Even those whose houses did not flood may find that, when hunting around for a policy, they could become a victim of the postcode lottery if other homes in their vicinity were flooded. If you do find this is the case, The Director General for the Association of British Insurers advises that price comparison websites are not always the best approach and contacting an insurer direct can be more effective. For the record some insurance companies will not take on any new customers whose property has flooded within the last 10 years, whereas others will be willing to take them on after 5 years. It is therefore worth shopping around. If you have any comments with regards insurance in such circumstances then please do get in touch so that experiences can be shared.

Please get in touch with any ongoing watercourse or flood issues. The Parish Council have access to a limited number of Quick Bags (sand-less sandbags) that once pre-soaked act as the equivalent of a sand bag. However, once these have been distributed it looks as though you may be able to obtain standard empty sacks from SDC but will need to purchase your own sand to fill them.

**Jan & Phil Davis**

**Watercourse Wardens for Eastington**

**[philjan@virgin.net](mailto:philjan@virgin.net)**

Get yourself in the mood for Christmas with a visit to  
Eastington Primary School Christmas Bazaar  
Noon-3pm Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December



Come and enjoy festive games, things to make and do, meet Santa in his grotto and chill out generally with a festive tipple or two. Grand raffle draw tickets now available.

### Village Agent Christmas Quiz

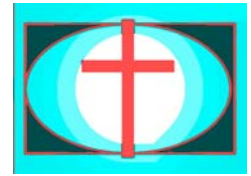
1. What time was it on "a cold and frosty morning"?
2. According to the carol, where did the three kings come from?
3. Who wrote the oratorio Messiah?
4. In the song "all I want for Christmas" is what?
5. How many days of Christmas are there?
6. Which carol refers to "a blossom as white as lily flower"?
7. Where was Jesus born?
8. William Strickland is believed to have brought the first what to Britain?
9. Where is Christmas Island?
10. Who was the first British Monarch to broadcast a Christmas message to the Nation?
11. Where does the Christmas tree that is out in Trafalgar Square come from?
12. Traditionally what is one meant to kiss under at Christmas?
13. What was given "on the fifth day of Christmas"?
14. What is the day after Christmas called?
15. In Germany they eat Stollen - what is it?
16. When is St Stephen's day?
17. Name the fruit used at Christingle.
18. Who wrote "A Christmas Carol"?
19. What did the three Kings follow?
20. How many ships came sailing by?
21. Who is your village agent?



I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and New Year  
Your Village Agent, Sue Colquhoun 07810 630 145.



## Eastington Methodist Church



### Christmas Events at EMC

#### Christmas Open the Book and Carols

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December @ 5:00pm



Loads of carols, candles and mince pies coupled with "Open the Book" style drama similar to that which is regularly performed at Eastington and Whitminster schools.

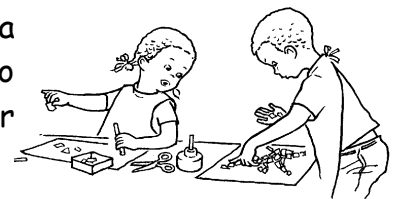
We have brought forward the start time to 5:00pm to encourage families with children and older people to be able to come along.

Please come along and be part of The Story.

#### Messy Christmas Special

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December @ 4pm - 5:30pm

Craft activities and fun for all the family with Christmas Tea thrown in. Hands on and practical, this is quite a different way to experience Christmas and we hope that you will come along for the experience.



#### Merry Christmas - A Time to Celebrate

December 25<sup>th</sup> @ 10:30am



A time to come along and celebrate the real Christmas. More carols and an informal time to greet each other and celebrate the gift of Jesus coming into the world as a baby.

.....and more! If you want to get involved in the ad-hoc choir or join the musicians who will be helping to lead the singing of the carols at the 16<sup>th</sup> December event, we are rehearsing every Sunday at about 12:30pm after our 11am morning service.

#### New Youth Work Assistant

The church now has a part time paid Youth Work Assistant, Matt Gatt, to help support the children's and youth related activities. Matt, who has grown up in the church and is currently studying music at college, is expected to be in post until next summer.

In addition to leading the Youth Alpha group, and helping out at Youth Club and Kidzone, Matt is hoping to organise a monthly church youth event on the evenings of the first Sunday of the month starting in February.

#### Kidzone Christmas Break

The last regular Kidzone meeting takes place on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December, with the opportunity to put up Christmas decorations and play party games, and it will resume at the normal time of 6:15pm on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January. The longer than usual break is to take into account school Christmas plays and the availability of leaders due to holidays. However, all the Kidzone regulars and everyone else is welcome to the Messy Christmas event at the earlier time of 4pm on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December.

#### Tea & Chat

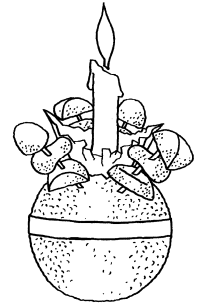
We are holding another of the popular Tea & Chat sessions at the church from 3pm to 4:30pm on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December. Please come along and bring friends or to meet friends or to make new friends.

Ken & Beck Burgin 01453 827414

[www.EastingtonMethodists.org.uk](http://www.EastingtonMethodists.org.uk)



## **St Michael and All Angels Eastington Christingle Service At 6pm On Christmas Eve**



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

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

### **Eastington Baby and Toddler Group**

We have been having fun, over recent weeks, at the Group, making a large Christmas mural, and looking into the Christmas story, and bringing it to life.

We are in the process of making our own Christmas presents. (Very hush, hush!) And on 17<sup>th</sup> December, between 10 and 11:30am we will be having a Christmas Party.

Any children (between 0 and 3) and their parents/carers are welcome to join us now, or in the New Year, when we will be starting to pass some of our older members on to Playgroup.

There are plenty of toys to play with, books, puzzles, craft activities, cooking and every other week a short Bible story. There are also healthy refreshments for the children, and a hot drink and biscuits (not quite so healthy) for the adults.

The group is very friendly and you would be most welcome to join us.

Sessions: Mondays 10-11:30am

Cost: £1.50 for 1 adult and 1 child, 50p for each extra child or adult.

**Contact: Beck Burgin 01453 827414 or 07511 197 265 Feel free to bring friends.**

### **Eastington Youth Group**

Winter is upon us and with the rain and floods I think the youth are staying tucked up inside, although they are still enjoying the activities at the Methodist Church, and the Youth Bus has visited the village again. We are now affiliated to Young Gloucestershire so will have access to their activities and groups.

Concern is rising over the PODS as they are getting weather damaged, so we need to decide their fate. The POD committee are looking at various options, so watch this space.

With Christmas just around the corner we will be at local events, so see you there.....

If you would like to contact the Youth Group, please call:-

**Tina, Secretary: 0789 1579754**

**Ali, Chair: 0788 8661303**

# ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS' CHURCH, EASTINGTON

## One of the 'Cotswold Edge' Parishes

(Eastington, Frocester, Haresfield, Moreton Valence, Standish and Whitminster)

Our mission is: to show God's love for His people, and nurture His people's love for God

## Services in December and January

Sundays→	<u>2<sup>nd</sup> December</u> <u>Advent Sunday</u> (p735 – purple) <b>Jeremiah 33.14-16 &amp; Luke 21.25-36</b> (p735/6)	<u>9<sup>th</sup> December</u> <u>2<sup>nd</sup> of Advent</u> (p737- purple) <b>Malachi 3.1-4 &amp; Luke 3.1-6</b> (p739/40)	<u>16<sup>th</sup> December</u> <u>3<sup>rd</sup> of Advent</u> (p741 - purple) <b>Zephaniah 3.14-end &amp; Luke 3.7-18</b> (p743)	<u>23<sup>rd</sup> December</u> <u>4<sup>th</sup> of Advent</u> (p744 - purple) <b>Hebrews 10.5-10 &amp; Luke 1.39-55</b> (p746)	<u>24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> December</u> <b>Midnight Mass</b> (p750) <b>Hebrews 1.1-12</b> (p751) & <b>John 1.1-14</b> (p761)
Morning Service → Readings					
Evening Service → Readings	-	-	<u>Carol Service</u>	-	<u>*Christmas Day Communion</u> <b>Isaiah 65.17-25 &amp; Luke 2.1-20</b> (p756)
Eastington	<b>10.45am</b> Holy Communion (Angela Reeder) <b>2.30pm</b> Holy Baptism (Angela Reeder) <b>Wed 5<sup>th</sup> 7.30am</b> BCP Communion	<b>10.45am</b> Holy Communion <b>Wed 12<sup>th</sup> 7.30am</b> BCP Communion	<b>3pm</b> Carol Service <b>Wed 19<sup>th</sup> 7.30am</b> BCP Communion	<b>10.45am</b> Holy Communion <b>Christmas Eve 6pm</b> Christingle	<b>11.30pm</b> Midnight Mass <b>Wed 26<sup>th</sup> 7.30am</b> BCP Communion

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> December 2012 - Benefice 'Birthday' Communion at Whitminster 10am**

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas – Colossians 3.12-17 & Luke 2.41-end**

**No other Services on this Sunday.**

Sundays →	<u>6<sup>th</sup> January</u> <u>The Epiphany</u> (p771 – White) <b>Isaiah 60.1-6 &amp; Matthew 2.1-12</b> (p771/3)	<u>13<sup>th</sup> January</u> <u>Baptism of Christ</u> (p774 – white) <b>Isaiah 43.1-7 &amp; Luke 3.15-17, 21-22</b> (p775-6)	<u>20<sup>th</sup> January</u> <u>3<sup>rd</sup> of Epiphany</u> (p777 - white) <b>1 Corinthians 12.1-11 &amp; John 2.1-11</b> (p779)	<u>27<sup>th</sup> January</u> <u>4<sup>th</sup> of Epiphany</u> (p780 - white) <b>Nehemiah 8.1-3, 5-6, 8-10 &amp; Luke 4.14-21</b> (p780/3)
Morning Service → Readings				
Evening Service → Readings	<b>As Morning</b>	<b>As Morning Or Plough Sunday</b>	<b>Psalms 96 &amp; Ephesians 4.1-16</b>	<b>As Morning</b>
Eastington	<b>10.45am</b> Holy Communion <b>Wed 2<sup>nd</sup> 7.30am</b> BCP Communion <b>Wed 9<sup>th</sup> 7.30am</b> BCP Communion	<b>10.45am</b> Holy Communion <b>Wed 16<sup>th</sup> 7.30am</b> BCP Communion	<b>6pm</b> Sung Evensong (TBA) <b>Thu 23<sup>rd</sup> 9.30am</b> BCP Communion (TBA)	<b>10.45am</b> Holy Communion <b>Wed 30<sup>th</sup> 7.30am</b> BCP Communion

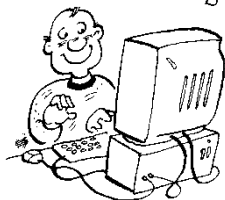
*All services are taken by the Rector unless stated otherwise*

## You and your smartphone

Does your smartphone come first in your life? It may well do. It seems a quarter of young people in Britain now sleep with their smartphone. A third of us check Facebook and email updates before we even get out of bed – before we even say good morning to the person who has been sleeping beside us.

Almost 40 per cent of Britons now own a smartphone, and a quarter of us no longer bother with watches – we look at our phone instead. Three, a mobile operator, commissioned the survey.

(from 'Parish Pump')



Dear Friends,

It hardly seems like a year since last Christmas! As usual, for me along with others December seems to be a month of trying to meet expectations. For me in the church context that entails trying to juggle the hopes of all six parishes and the Carol services, Christingles, Crib services and Communions that they want, as well as including those in care, schools and playgroups where possible. I am very grateful to all those who volunteer to help make all these happen, and to those who attend and make each service or event so special.

Within our own homes and families there are also expectations and hopes. When celebrating Christmas some families have well-established traditions, particularly when it comes to what they do, what order they do it in, and where it all happens. It sometimes feels like the solution to a game of Cluedo – ‘Christmas Eve, down the pub, with some friends’, or ‘Christmas Dinner, at Grandma’s house, with a Turkey’, or ‘Boxing Day, in bed, with indigestion’! Perhaps you could think up some alternatives...!

Surely one of the most important traditions at Christmas is that of giving and receiving gifts. After such a long and difficult economic period, many of us will be struggling to meet expectations this year – not of what we hope to receive ourselves, but what we can give. We live in a very materialistic world, and present expectations can be very high, yet a small gift given with thought and love and perhaps a little effort can mean so much more than a large and expensive present bought and presented out of duty.

Time spent with someone, time taken out of a busy life to show you care, can mean so much more to a recipient – what do you give to someone who seemingly has everything – and what presents can we exchange with God?

If Jesus’ assertion that what we do for others we do for him is taken at face value, then the gifts and time we spend with others are also for him, but this seems somehow inadequate when this just applies to those we actually like anyway, and it is more of a reflection what Jesus is really getting at. Gifts through charities that go to help people we don’t even know are more like it, and practical help is also much nearer the mark.

But what about time spent with someone? This Christmas why not put time aside to come to one or more of the regular services at Church, then carry this on into the New Year. Spend time in the company of others in worship, prayer and praise to God, and spend some time with him in the company of others, and get to know him and more of his family here on earth a bit better? After all, Christmas is a time to be with family – and families aren’t just for Christmas, are they?

*Yours in Christ,  
and Happy Christmas*

*Rector: Revd Richard Amys, The Rectory, Millend Lane, Eastington, GL10 3SG.*

*Email: [richardjramys@aol.com](mailto:richardjramys@aol.com). Tel/fax 01453 822437.*

*Day off – Saturday. (Mobile 07796 956050)*

### **Santa**

I am terrified of the Santa at the shopping centre where I work. Our HR person talked it over with me, and has discovered I am Claustrophobic.



## Birder in the Parish

**03/09/12:** really good, early Autumn weather – or late Summer as you prefer, for the past few days, with temperatures in the 20C's. Still House Martins feeding young at the nest. Although not uncommon, it's difficult to ascertain whether these are first or second broods, particularly after the awful Summer we've had. My personal feeling is that the whole natural cycle has been at least two weeks behind this year. Family groups of Swallows around the Parish, being stalked by Hobbies and Sparrowhawks.

Buddleia coming into a second flowering, but still very few butterflies, possibly the lowest count in my garden for years.

**24/09/12:** heavy overnight rain led to a blustery day with intermittent sunshine. Reports of major bird rarities coming in from most parts of the UK, but mainly from the north with a Magnolia Warbler (very charismatic North American warbler!) found on Fair Isle, and a White's Thrush on Inner Farne.

Still large flocks of *hirundines* in the Parish, with a mix of Sand Martins, House Martins and Swallows just about anywhere, but mainly over lakes and flooded fields where there is plenty of insect life.

One bird I've found difficult to locate this year has been Spotted Flycatcher, then one turns up at Millend briefly, before being chased off by the resident young male Robin.

Chiff Chaffs calling just about anywhere in the Parish – some may over-winter, or be replaced by continental birds.

Jackdaw numbers gradually building up at Millend Mill, a traditional winter roosting spot for them for all the years I've been here, but will certainly be affected by the development there. Be interesting to see just how many hang on.

**Sat. 29/09/12:** glorious day; cool breeze, but prolonged periods of good, hot sunlight (the day progressed into a stunning full moonlit night, so bright and clear, it could have been the semi-daylight of a solar eclipse). Kingfishers seem to have done really well this year, with two or three sightings every day around the Frome system in the Parish. At least nine Chiff Chaffs on the south arm, and two Grey Wagtails today.

**10/10/12:** all flights from St Just airport in Cornwall (to Scilly) cancelled due to heavy fog and poor weather, so spent a day birding around Cornwall, looking for a White's Thrush in Sennen, and Olive Backed Pipit at Pendeen – neither found! Flight booked again for 07.55 tomorrow – but I'm not hopeful as bad weather system coming in tonight. Spent the night b & b at Cape Cornwall golf club

with two fellow birders I'm hoping to stay with on St Agnes.

**Thursday, 11/10/12:** got to the airport at 07.00 – no flights as 'runway' water-logged, but hints of possible flights by lunchtime, so we decided to stay put and wait. By 11.30 a.m., there were sixteen birders all waiting for a flight to St Mary's, but everything called off, so we were bussed off to Newquay. Finally got to St Agnes at 5 p.m... bit of a hassle, but wonderful place to get to, and some really good birds, such as Irish Coal Tits and a Great Spotted Woodpecker, birds which we take for granted, but are major rarities over there!

**23/10/12:** mass migration of birds into the UK from the north east – first Redwing of the Autumn at Millend.

**24/10/12:** local patch walk, to Five Acre Grove circular. Warm and muggy, overcast and damp. As I approached the Grove, three birds came over, quite low down, causing quite a stir – one of them was a Short Eared Owl! Brilliant Parish tick, though there are a lot in the UK at the moment. It went up high over Cress Green, heading out towards Claypits, with Jackdaws still in mobbing pursuit. Forty six Redwings also there, and good numbers of Chaffinches.



**28/11/12 A new wetland in Eastington?** The flood-plain of the River Frome lives up to its name.



## The Eastington Allotments Society

Generally, articles written during this period usually incorporate a review of the year gone by. Well I'm not going to do that this time as I am sure everyone is pretty much aware of what sort of year it has been for the veg. growing community.

Despite it all though people still managed to produce a good range of crops and if nothing else it has demonstrated that allotments can still be productive even in the most unpromising conditions.

Anyway we can now look forward to having a happy and a drier year and, of course enjoying freshly picked Brussels Sprouts over a merry Christmas period.

Currently all the available plots are taken but for anyone who's New Year's Resolution will be to take up a healthy and productive activity, now is the time to get your name down on the waiting list.

To apply for a plot, visit the Allotments page on the Eastington Parish Council web site, or phone:

**Muriel Bullock on 01453 826172**  
**or Sarah Underdown on 01453 823285**

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## Did you know...?

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**There is a page on the parish council website to advertise your local business:**

**<http://community.stroud.gov.uk/busdir.asp?pid=29&pgid=1529>**

**For everyone else:**

**You may just find what you are looking for there.**



**Lakefield School**  
**Christmas Fair**  
Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December  
Frampton on Severn Community Centre, Lake Lane  
From 3.00 - 4.30pm

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Christmas Decorations

**Santa's Grotto**  
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## **A Year in the Life of a Landlady**

A year after the Old Badger Inn opened, ECN had a reflective chat with Ellie Saintey

### **Why did you take on the Victoria?**

We always felt Eastington had scope for a community based, traditional pub. As a publican (Ellie has owned the Old Spot in Dursley for 20 years), you keep an eye on the papers and estate agents and we could see the price of the Vic dropping. It has the proportions of a fine building and an excellent position. In January last year we had our first viewing, followed by more viewings and a series of architects plans. We had a good vision for the place but like to see a floor plan to make it more real.

The Planners welcomed us with open arms – they hate to see premises being de-licensed. We bought in June last year with a pretty clear plan, both for the building and for how I wanted to run the pub.

### **Did you have any scary problems early on?**

It was scary to see the sky between the roof-slates! There was no felting but fortunately the trusses were sound and the re-roofing was not as drastic as it looked. We also realised we had to do a 100% re-wire and rip out all the plumbing. That probably put £50k on top of the 100K budget. The back wall of the rear extension collapsed too and of course we had the usual asbestos to cope with.

Our main problem was convincing their carpenter that we didn't want shiny mirrors behind the bar nor melamine surfaces everywhere. But, fair play, once he "got it", he did a fantastic job of the bar and made us some of the settles, tables and bench seating.

### **And the fun bits?**

Definitely scouring auctions, sales and e-bay for all the memorabilia. Everything (like the tin signs and the mugs) is authentic and we started looking around for them after the very first viewing.

### **You had some delays: did you ever plan to be cooking by Xmas?**

No, no, never in the plan. We always wanted to open for drinks only, then food after a few months. It's important to get to know your customers, who they are, what they like and how they take to the place. There's also the need to train up staff, setting the tone you want and the standards. It's good that most of our 10 staff can walk to work, it underlines that this is a community pub.

### **You now have 40% of your business from the food – was that plain sailing?**

Our first chef was an Aussie, who sorted out the kitchen details and menu planning. It was his idea to have the Tapas menu which is very popular. Sadly, he wouldn't cook a vegetable! So we agreed to part and Julie (joint owner) joined Carly in the kitchen until we found Suzie. Now we vary the menu every 6 to 8 weeks and it has plenty off veg in it!

### **So, a year on, are you where you expected to be?**

I suppose we are already as busy as we expected to be in year 2 or 3. That's what decided me to move in upstairs full-time. Now, I really like living in Eastington, it's more peaceful than people led me to believe and there's lots of quirky things going on

Still plenty to do, you have to keep refreshing a pub for it to retain its appeal. So plans for a summer beer festival with BBQ and music like the Jubilee, expanding the car park and making the outside more sheltered. Oh, and quiz nights, themed food weeks ...

**...OK, thank you, better let you get on!**

## Orchard Group Rescues the Apple Harvest

### First, the Bad News

Nationally, the apple crop has been described as “the worst in a generation”.

Eastington was no exception, with the 25 orchards and gardens, which contributed to Apple Day 2011, whittled down to half-a-dozen this October. Wind and rain in April were to blame in preventing the bees from pollinating the flowers. Well, if you were a little bee, would *you* have tried flying about in that lot?

### Now, the Good News

Perry Pears and Cider Apples (of which Gloucestershire has more than it's share) flower later than eaters and cookers and so had better weather for the bees.

The ECO Group members travelled to Whitminster for the cider apples and Frocester for perry pears to make up for our local losses.



The picture shows Sparta, Bramley, crab apples (for pectin in jam) and some more eaters. After processing, that's probably about 120 bottles of juice plus the crab-apple jelly.

Not bad for a morning's legal scrumping by this team.

In fact, three concentrated days with above 20 volunteers saw us pasteurise over 500 bottles. After distributing a share to our generous donors, we have plenty to sell at the Stroud Market and our local Xmas fairs.

**See us next at the School Xmas event and the Playgroup Nativity Play.**

### Soft Fruit Harvest

In our own orchard at Churchend we have reaped our first serious harvest – autumn raspberries. This is a direct result of completing the fruit cage with the implementation of the roof. The walls have been keeping the deer and badgers from destroying our fruit bushes, now we can keep the birds off the ripe fruit as well!

About 12 kilos of berries were collected over four weeks and the result is a couple of dozen jars of jam to be shared amongst the members, when we have our winter meeting. Those who put in the most hours will be having the most jam, of course

### ECO Apple and Pear Juice for Xmas

Why not buy some tasty apple or apple and pear juice for Xmas? You can have the fresh taste of summer in the middle of winter or indeed give some as a present.



Ring me on 823425 or call in at Hazel Cottage to secure your supplies. We charge £ 2.50 retail but you can buy a box of six for £ 12.00 direct:

**Sweet – Apple and Pear; Medium – Apples from Nastend, Westend & Millend; Dry - Bramley**

## **Friends of St Michael's, Eastington**

### **SECOND MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY 2013, 7.30 PM**

### **IN CHURCH**

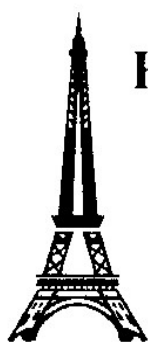
The main objective of this meeting is to get the scheme up and running. Volunteers are needed to form a small Committee and a number of important decisions need to be taken such as what the subscription rate should be, what the constitution and terms of reference should be, etc.

### **DO PUT THIS DATE IN YOUR DIARY**

So that I can get an up-to-date list of those interested in joining the scheme and keep you posted on agendas and updates on information, do please contact me (Robin Harris) by phone or email at the following: [robin@harrisnestings.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:robin@harrisnestings.fsnet.co.uk) or Tel: 01453 823433 if you wish to express an interest in joining a 'Friends of St Michael's' organisation.

**W.R.H**

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## Dog Control Orders

Dog fouling and dog control are important issues. Not picking up after your dog is a real issue that we all find unpleasant and one which poses health risks – particularly to children and teenagers. New measures, which focus on prevention, will help reduce these problems even further. These allow local authorities to adopt 'Dog Control Orders' to try and tackle the problem and Stroud District Council will be adopting them as of 1st December 2012.

Action can be taken for:

- Failing to remove dog faeces
- Not keeping a dog on a lead in a designated area
- Not putting and keeping, a dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer
- Permitting a dog to enter land from which dogs are excluded.

The order relating to dog fouling will apply to all land within the district which is open to the air and to which the public have a right of access (with or without payment). This will include all common and access land within the district, to include Rodborough, Minchinhampton, Selsley commons and Haresfield Beacon.

Council officers will be working closely with National Trust Rangers on the commons to spread the word and give out leaflets advising the public about the new orders, as part of the initial educational campaign. Patrols will then take place and anyone witnessed failing to clean up after their dog is likely to receive a fixed penalty notice.

Many complaints are received every year from walkers, mountain bikers and other dog walkers saying they have trodden, run or cycled through un-cleared dog mess or had to hose their dogs down to remove other people's dogs mess from their pet's feet. Dog waste can also cause ill health effects in cattle if they eat affected grass, in some cases causing them to abort unborn calves.

**For further information and to view the orders, please visit the council's website:**

**[www.stroud.gov.uk](http://www.stroud.gov.uk)**

**A copy of the orders may also be viewed free of charge at the Council Offices, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud between 09:00 and 17:00 Monday to Friday.**

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*'It has helped me with my confidence because before I was struggling. It has helped me with y Spelling, Writing and Maths lessons and I had a great time.'* Y6 pupil

*'My child has become more confident about being able to achieve. It has really helped him at school.'* Mrs F. (Minchinhampton)

Contact: Emma Taylor Mobile: 07870 648 007 email: [emma@taylortutoring.co.uk](mailto:emma@taylortutoring.co.uk)

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