

Eastington Community News

June / July 2013

Nº. 139

Bare countryside and grey-green grass outstayed their yearly visit this time, as the talons of winter held their vice-like grip well past Easter. The first flowers of an overdue Spring were so much sweeter following their long absence, that even dandelions were a welcome sight. It was a joy to watch the frenzied feasting of bees on this yellow sea, and the fluffy white clocks that followed were harvested by the Goldfinches that were nesting in our garden. In past times I might have been tempted to spray-out or hoe-down these weeds, but the company of our winged companions now seemed to me worth the risk of 'seven years weeds from one year's seeds.'

The impact of such a long wet and then cold season brought serious pressure on those who grow and provide our food. Such conditions can require adaptation and a different approach. If you had wondered if an inland sea had mysteriously appeared in open countryside, then read on; Nick Spencer's account of his battle with the elements explains the measures taken to counter our unpredictable climate.

Change comes too in the built, as well as the agricultural world. Progress has been made in relegating the proposal, to build a new town in the north of our Parish, to 'reserved matters.' Such weasel-words and rhetoric thinly veil the dormant threat by stone-deaf planners and developers - to be back someday soon. The ridiculous proposal to stuff high-rise, London-density housing into open countryside to the south of the Village, defied both national planning guidelines and Stroud District's own policy objectives; yet set-in-their-way planning officers continued to bleat out-dated recommendations. Local people worked hard to show the folly of the plan, and together with formal representation by the Parish Council and District Councillors, the tide was turned. You can read more on these issues from DSS, KER, Parish Matters and our District Councillor.

If ever I need enthusing that the future is bright, that there are talented, dependable young people who one day will take up the running of our organisations and businesses, then I need only visit Eastington Primary School for that tonic; see 'School News' inside.

The interactive consultation for the proposed playground and park was well-attended at Eastington Community Centre held on 19th May. Eastington Youth Group (EYG) is committed to providing much-needed activities for Eastington children, and you will find feedback inside. It will be important to give careful consideration to where the playground and park will be located, and to ensure that a fair proportion of community assets are made available to the young people of this Parish.

Eastington Parish has a truly remarkable Community building, ten acres of prime recreational and amenity land and a significant amount of public land and Village Greens. An open debate is anticipated about best use of such community assets, and the need to acquire more, as our Neighbourhood Plan develops. The impact of accommodating a further hundred houses in the Parish over the next 20 years, will need careful consideration and involvement of the whole Parish.

We still look forward to hearing more about Stroud Youth Football Club's proposal to expand facilities for their teams at our Eastington Community Centre. Could some organised sporting activities for children of Eastington be part of that process? Your views and comments about any of the content of this publication would be welcomed.

Attendance at the Annual Parish Meeting on 21st May might have been a little less this year, but the quality and variety of activities presented by the wide range of organisations, demonstrates the vibrancy of this Parish. To any armchair doubter, I recommend to savour the menu and to experience directly the inspiration at future Annual Parish Meetings.

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Parish Matters

Following the Annual Meeting of Eastington Parish Council, 14th May, EPC started another new 'council' year. This time, all councillors have completed at least a year on EPC, and what a busy time it has been. Firstly, may I thank those councillors who voted me as Chairman for another year. I am pleased that Cllr. Muriel Bullock was elected as Vice Chair again, as her support during the past twelve months has been invaluable and immense. We are in the process of reforming committees and task working groups to more clearly define what is being done by EPC and by whom. I have always believed that one of the responsibilities of a Parish Councillor is to have good connection to you, the electorate, and to help explain what exactly goes on in the Parish Council and what each councillor does. Towards that aim, I have compiled a rota of two councillors to write an insight for each edition of Eastington Community News of Parish Council workings, or an update of what they have been doing. I would like to thank both Cllr. Bill Edwards and Cllr. Pauline Allen for volunteering and preparing articles below for this edition. The two councillors who were on the top of the list will now have an extra two months to write something for the next edition of Parish Matters.

There are summaries of the major planning issues in this edition, so I will refrain from repeating just here. These have been, and remain important issues and both have been strongly supported by the Parish Council.

It will be important to carefully plan together our own future to take our Parish into the next Local Plan period to 2031. If we are to rebuff developers foisting their favoured proposals on us, then we need to be clear about what needs to be built, where and when.

The Parish Plan was the starting position for this process and you can also read about that in this issue; you will soon receive your personal copy. Preparing our own Neighbourhood Plan is the next step. Already we have formally notified the District Council that we have begun this process. A necessary part of our Plan is a formal Housing Needs survey, and this also has begun. Options, for building homes under our control, are currently being explored and formal discussions are in progress. We have three parishioners who have volunteered to work alongside Parish Councillors in preparation of our Neighbourhood Plan.

We will bring this to your consultation shortly, including a public meeting, and with opportunity for your participation in the formation of our Plan. Please be alert to notices of such events.

Parish Clerk to Eastington Parish Council is Andrea Durn. The new landline number is still 'in progress' and not available for the moment, but for the time being please continue to direct EPC enquiries to eastingtonparishcouncil@gmail.com. If you are unable to use e-mail, please contact a Parish Councillor who will help you.

Eastington Parish Council meetings are held in the Methodist Hall on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 19:30. Parishioners are most welcome to attend.

Traffic calming in the village

The Roads & Transport group on the Parish Council (Pauline Allen and Derek Greenaway) has been looking at a variety of ways to address 'traffic calming' across the parish. Gloucestershire Rural Community Council have produced a document called '*Toolkit - community approaches to reducing traffic speed*' to be found at <http://www.gloucestershire-pcc.gov.uk/Document-Library/Speed-toolkit-VERSION-10.pdf>, which has some suggestions to help us with this. An initial project will be in the designated 30mph village zone.

The majority of speeding motorists are regular users of the roads and it has been shown that 'occasional reminders' can be useful in drawing their attention to the fact that there is a speed limit on the road they are travelling. We are proposing to ask villagers to try 30mph stickers on the fortnightly collection of wheelie-bins.

We would like to hear from anyone living in the 30mph zone who would be prepared to put large (42 x 30cm) stickers on their bin. Derek and I are also planning to put a letter through doors of those in the zone asking for help with this, and any other project. Please come and discuss it with us if you see us around (we have Parish Council badges!) or email ideas. We hope to have some stickers in place by the end of June.

If you want to help with this please contact

Cllr. Pauline Allen Tel: 01453 822068 email: p.allen@saqnet.co.uk

Footpath News - good news for footpaths!



We now have TWO display cases in the village with large-scale maps showing not only where all our local footpaths are but also showing their allocated identity number.

This means that if you find a problem on any footpath you can easily identify it and let me or Derek know about it.

The large display case is on the Co-op wall next to the Parish Council display case (left). The smaller case is on the front wall of The Old Badger.

I would like to thank, firstly, Garry Dingle for making the beautiful oak cases and

freely giving his time and expertise. I would also like to thank the Co-op for allowing us to use their wall to hang our display case and my thanks also to Ellie for allowing us to put the display case on the wall at The Old Badger.

Other good news:

Two local landowners have allowed the footpaths on their land to be upgraded. Thank you, Nick Spencer and Mr. Fawkes. The upgraded paths are EEA43 and MST15. Now you have maps available in the display cases, you should be able to find these paths.

I'll give you a clue: they run alongside the River Frome!

We've also been luckier with the weather for the last month or so. Both the May Bank Holidays were very sunny. But at the time of writing toward the end of the month, the weather has turned wet again, and cold. This could mean that we are back to muddy fields...

After such a long, wet winter, the farmers are inevitably late with some of their ploughing; please be patient if the footpaths across ploughed fields are not immediately re-instated. Our local farmers are pretty good at getting them back in to shape and 'spraying out' crops that are grown across footpaths in order to make the paths visible again.

So let's hope the weather brightens up again and we can all get out walking!

If you have any problems or need advice on footpaths, please contact me:

Cllr. Bill Edwards Tel: 01453 824452 or Cllr. Derek Greenaway Tel: 01453 823376

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S NEWSLETTER

Changes to the Council's Organisation

At the recent Stroud District Council Annual General Meeting the council finalized the change from a cabinet/executive system of organization/decision-making to a committee structure. Now instead of Cabinet/Executive members making a lot of the decisions, committees with members of all political parties on them will now carry out this work.

There are four main committees. They are:

- Strategy and Resources Committee
- Housing Committee
- Environment Committee and
- Community Services Committee

There are also committees that will deal with Development Control, Audit and Licensing matters. It is accepted that the senior committee will be Strategy and Resources. The chairman of this committee will also be considered to be the Leader of the Council. For the next civic year I will be a member of the Development Control Committee and was re-elected Chairman of that committee at the AGM. With this reorganization a review of the allowances paid to councillors was undertaken. Because of the changes in responsibilities the monies in the members' allowances budget have been redistributed. This with other knock on effects has resulted, I am told, in a saving on the members allowance budget of just over fifty thousand pounds per year. For any residents with an interest in how our Local Plan will progress now that there is no executive lead for planning, reports on this will go first to the Environment Committee and then on to the Strategy and Resources Committee before final decisions at full council. Chairs and Vice chairs of the main decision making committees are taken from the three political parties that form what has been called 'the alliance'. The chair and vice chair of Strategy and Resources are members of the labour group. I understand that it was decided that the position of chairman of the Audit and Licensing Committees would be for the opposition conservative group to nominate to. At the AGM they declined to make any nominations.

Local Plan

Work on this continues. It is no secret that there are differences in housing number requirement and location sites being suggested by council officers and the ones thought correct by my group. At a recent planning strategy panel meeting a slightly different position was put forward by officers. Following another review of housing number requirement by the consultant previously engaged they have changed their recommendation from a range of new house builds from 9250 to over 11000 to a single fixed number of 9500. The yearly calculation on the completion/commitments figure has recently been completed and because of this the actual number of houses needed (the residual figure) has been reduced. Officers now propose allocating these houses between sites in Hunts Grove extension, North East Cam, Stroud Valleys, Sharpness and a number for the council's own house building program, dispersal, windfalls, exception and CLT sites. They also suggest that in case the Inspector at an Examination in Public of our Local Plan Proposals decides that more houses are required than we have allocated sites for, the Nupend/Nastend (West of Stonehouse) site should be the back up site. I personally found the presentation by the consultant very unconvincing to say the least and my group has not changed its thinking from the position I described in my last newsletter. The work to get any mass build option in our parish removed from the council's Local Plan Proposals continues.

I continue to be involved in a wide range of matters with residents.

Ken Stephens May 2013.



**Dear Walker
Trial Crop. Please
keep your dogs on a lead
while in this field.**

Thank you.

Some of you will have seen these signs on the foot path entrances to our field. The one in the photo is at Cress Green. Do not be alarmed! The sea of plastic that confronts you will not last long as it is bio-degradable. Under the plastic we have planted forage maize that will be harvested in September to make silage to feed the dairy herd.

The reason we have called it a 'trial crop' is that, to us, it is an expensive experiment in an attempt to increase our winter forage stocks when the cows are housed in the wet dark days of winter, though there has not been much difference in the past twelve months.

Maize is essentially a warm climate plant but has in recent years been grown more in the UK for its quality energy supply, which is a crucial part of the dairy cow's ration. The seed needs a soil temperature of 10-12 degrees Celsius to germinate and the plant a long sunny growing period to soak up sunlight to turn into good quality cobs full of energy. You can still see immature dead maize crops standing in fields on the A38 on the way to Berkeley, the result of last year's disastrous weather. So in an attempt to prolong the growing season, we have resorted to bio-degradable plastic to create a mini poly tunnel effect. The company pushing this system claim the extra quality and quantity of crop far outweigh the extra cost - we shall see!

My son Ed did some temperature comparisons a few days after sowing. The outside air temperature was 12 degrees and under the plastic 20. The outside soil temperature was 8 and under 12, so as you can see only after a few days there is a marked difference.

To give you some idea of the problems facing agriculture due to the weather over the last twelve months this fifteen acre field was ploughed in August to be reseeded to grass, but as the field remained too wet to prepare a seed bed the seed stayed in the bags. Time moved on and it became too late to plant the grass seed so some seed corn destined for another field was drilled at 3am on the 5th December when there was a hard enough frost for the tractors to travel. Initially the crop looked good but as the weather stayed wet the plant rotted off at ground level. Spring sort of turned up and the crop was assessed - not enough plants left to make it a viable crop so we turned to maize under plastic. We count ourselves lucky we are dairy farmers and that this is a small problem compared to the thousands of acres some arable farmers are trying to plant. Please think of this when you next buy a loaf of bread or a carton of milk.

Nick Spencer

Middle Hall Farm

Keep Eastington Rural – Swallowcroft Extension Killed Off

A team of determined KER volunteers successfully saw off a multi-million pound development company determined to ruin our favourite footpaths with an inner-city style housing estate. The Parish Council weighed in with a resident's meeting and their retained specialist, Ian Stuart, penned an excellent report.

From the initial application, opposition rained in on Stroud's Planning Website. By mid-May there were 63 objections and ZERO letters of support. No wonder!

When a KER team from Bath Road, Swallowcroft and Millend built this mock-up, Stroud Councillors were convinced the proposal was ludicrously out of proportion with the adjacent Swallowcroft bungalows.



A picture is worth a thousand words

The buildings would have been 32 feet high, compared to the bungalows of Swallowcroft at 15 feet!

Planning officers in SDC were humbled by the councillors of the Development Control Committee on 14th May.

First, our local councillor, Ken Stephens, then our Parish Council professional, Ian Stuart, pointed out the absurdity of the proposal. A few words from KER and that was it!

Committee voted 8 to 0 to accept Eastington's reasons for refusal and planning officers and the developer had to accept defeat.

The long-term significance of this decision is significant on two levels:

- the reputation of Eastington as a fighting parish has been re-enforced
- all other villages in Stroud District can tell developers they will not tolerate inner-city style housing estates on their boundaries

Eastington can now concentrate on a POSITIVE housing plan, which parishioners voted for in the Parish Survey, recently completed. The resulting Parish Plan will be delivered to every household during June.

KER supports the Parish Plan of 100 to 120 houses in the next 20 years – sensible organic growth.

You will be hearing more about both the Neighbourhood Development Plan (a legally-enforceable extension of the Parish Plan) and a Community Land Trust (CLT) very soon. The CLT will ensure that we, who live in Eastington, dictate what housing is built here.

Thanks to the dozens of people who helped in this KER campaign, with e-mails, screwdrivers or their visible presence at the Village Hall and at Ebley Mill's Council Chamber. You all made it happen.

Tom Low May 2013

The West-of-Stonehouse Housing and Planning Update

Incinerator

The first is the rejection of the Incinerator Planning application. Every councillor on the county committee rejected the application. Congratulations to Sue Oppenheimer and all the very many folk who worked with Sue to successfully resist this completely barmy proposal. The recent County Council elections now mean there is no Party in overall control. Given that situation it seems unlikely that the incinerator will return but that is not yet certain and we would all be foolish to be complacent. This great result indicates that a coherent and well-argued case can persuade councillors to make the right decision. Eastington Parish Council made a very strong case for refusing the incinerator as did all the surrounding parishes. As well as leading the resistance to the incinerator Sue is also Standish Parish Council Chairman and as such has been very supportive of our campaign against the West Of Stonehouse development of 2,500 houses, as of course has our own Eastington Parish Council.

Arguments for a New Town

Since March much has happened. The SDC Planning Advisor Panel (PAP) met again in April. The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have published their latest housing projections for the Country and our own District. DSS and others having been in close contact with the DCLG over the last year and we were pleased to see their calculations were entirely consistent with the evidence base submitted by DSS, but sadly rejected by SDC.

West-of-Stonehouse a reserve site

Following lack of support from Councillors, Officers proposed that West Of Stonehouse be designated a 'Reserve Site'. It is difficult to imagine a reserve site of that scale (2,500 houses) which is totally inconsistent with need.

In March I indicated that the housing numbers in other agreed areas had suddenly been reduced by 1,000 and West of Stonehouse increased by 1,000 to 2,500 to make the development affordable. It is a requirement of local councils that they produce evidence to support all the numbers used. As a DSS member, Mike Evans tells me that he has asked on five occasions over the last month for the evidence that supports the 1,000 house reduction; to date no evidence has been provided.

1. Twenty years ago there were nine dairy farms in this area. This proposal will close the last one.
2. This farm produces 7,000 pints of milk a day. That is the equivalent of four day's supply of one pint for every man, woman and child in Eastington parish.
3. The proposal creates 15,000 extra car journeys a day onto the busy A419 and the B4008.
4. The photograph demonstrates the complete disconnect from Stonehouse, cut-off as it is by two railway lines.
5. The Labour Group in the alliance are completely opposed to this proposal. Geoff Wheeler (Council Leader): "We will oppose large developments on green field sites unrelated to existing towns and villages, including W. of Stonehouse"
6. DSS value enormously the considerable efforts by our local councillor Ken Stevens and David Drew who are utterly opposed to this proposal.
7. Rhiannon Wigzell, Conservative, Shadow Lead Planning Strategy, states: "We have consistently made the case for Stroud District Council to adopt lower housing numbers but were not supported in the critical vote by any of the Alliance parties. The higher the housing numbers the more likely it is that green fields such as those West of Stonehouse

will be developed." the Conservatives have been very interested and supportive and have shown understanding of the complexities of the number crunching which determines future housing requirements.

8. The Liberal Democrats have been in favour of this development proposal for 2500 houses West of Stonehouse, as have some members of the Green party.
9. The Department of Communities and Local Government have recently published new figures suggesting housing numbers by 2031 that confirm the DSS figures.
10. They do however use a pre-recession figure for job's growth which is now recognised as unrealistic. When adjusted for the reality of employment growth the housing requirement falls somewhat, confirming that there is no need for a large strategic site, such as West of Stonehouse.



The 'Giants Graves' in our fields

Some of you will have noticed the large excavations in the proposed development area, so Peter Edis-Bates and I hitched a ride in an aeroplane to photograph the extent of the proposed development now around 350 acres. You can see all these pictures in colour on the DSS website (new-town.info) with the development area and roads clearly marked. In the consultation document last year officers suggested that one of the main advantages of this site was that it was in the ownership of one landowner. Not true; in addition to the developer there are five other landowners between them controlling all the proposed access roads.

Daniel James for DSS

Stroud District Council - Support for older and vulnerable residents

I am in the very fortunate position of running Stroud District Council's Careline Service, supporting the elderly and vulnerable in the district. With the older population nearly doubling in the next 15 years the Careline offers a valuable resource

What is a Careline?

It is a way of getting help through your telephone system quickly and efficiently at all times of the day or night. A small personal radio transmitter is worn as a pendant around the neck or on a wrist-strap. This is linked to a special unit – the Careline - which plugs into a modern telephone point with an adjacent 13amp electrical socket. It will maintain independence and peace of mind for the older person and their family and friends.

How does it work?

By pressing the pendant, a signal is sent to Careline, which will then automatically dial our Control Room run by Hereford Housing. Pre-programmed personal details will appear on a computer screen and a fully-trained Operator will be able to talk to the customer through a very powerful speaker and listen through a very sensitive microphone within the Careline.

How will they help?

The Control Room will quickly establish what assistance is required i.e. - an Ambulance, Doctor, or perhaps one of your nominated contacts (neighbour, friend or a family member who ideally holds a key to your property). The Control Room Staff will stay on the line to provide reassurance until help arrives. Carelines are available from £1.51 per week.

Since the computerisation of the service in 1997 SDC has helped in excess of 8500 people. Last year the Careline Service helped over 450 people, many of whom are aged 80+. We currently have 1770 customers and would very much like to reach the landmark of 2000 customers.

If you have any queries or wish to have a free consultation please contact me for an appointment on the number below or alternatively by email careline@stroud.gov.uk.

Mike Godwin
Community Safety Officer
Stroud District Council
Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf
Stroud GL5 4UB
Telephone 01453 754149
www.stroud.gov.uk



Village Agent News

If you have difficulty seeing things clearly, it does not mean you have to give up your independence and stop doing the things that you enjoy.

For those of you who may be in this situation, we would like to tell you about some of the common sense solutions that the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) can provide that could help visually impaired people to get on with their lives and continue enjoying things, without fuss or bother.

Apart from Easy- to-See Clocks, Watches and Telephones the RNIB can provide:

- Easy- to-See Bathroom Scales, which have a large flip-up LCD display in stones, pounds or kilograms.
- For the cooks amongst you there are electric Talking Kitchen Scales.
- Nail Clippers with an adjustable magnifier giving a clearer view to cut your nails more easily.
- A Portable Light for close up activities, such as reading and sewing.
- A Large Print Dictionary and Thesaurus, for those of you who enjoy doing crosswords.
- Large Print game of Scrabble, as well as an Easy-to-See version of Dominoes, Easy-to-See Playing Cards and Easy-to-See Bingo Cards.
- Talking books, which can also be a wonderful source of enjoyment.

If you would like to find out more about what help the RNIB can give, to those who are visually impaired, and for the costs of the items we have listed above, please contact **RNIB Customer Services on 0845 702 3153**. Alternatively you can find a full range of their products online at:

<http://onlineshop.rnib.org.uk>. Gloucestershire County Association for the Blind are also a good source of help and information –Tel 01242 221170.

If you would like more information about this article or any other matters please contact your Village Agent, Sue Colquhoun 07810 630 145.



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The Cross, Eastington T:01453 791251



SCHOOL NEWS.....

Dear All

As always, the summer term is proving as busy and enjoyable as ever with the children involved in a whole range of activities in support of their learning.

What's happening in the Classrooms?

As part of their theme 'What can I do?' children in Classes 1 and 2 have been testing the accessibility of the school buildings for wheelchair users. Using a wheelchair, the children have manoeuvred through entrances, exits, class bases and our play areas. This has raised awareness for everyone and helped with our understanding of the many challenges faced by those with different needs. More recently, the younger children visited Gloucester folk museum in support of their project on 'Toys – Past and Present'. Interestingly, in our world of high technology, the children found huge delight playing with hoops and spinning tops...with not a computer screen in sight.....(quite refreshing really!). As part of their geography work this term, pupils in the older Classes have been studying our locality, the influences of the past and how decisions we make now affect the community in years to come.

It is at this time of year pupils in Class 5 form a Business Enterprise to design, make and sell a product. Within the 'Articles of a Limited Company', children decide upon their business structure including, a workforce, team managers, financial consultants, marketing and sales reps, all guided by an elected company Director. Their target is to ensure a profit margin that helps fund their trip to London to visit their 'pen friends' at Charles Dickens Primary School in Southwark later this term. With the price of rail fares today.....they have a challenging target!

Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 have recently completed their national assessments (SAT's) and we await the results. We are always extremely proud of the children's achievements and most importantly how this reflects their attitude to learning and the contribution they make in our world today.

Whilst there are many examples, two of our more recent projects highlight how young people make a difference. Firstly, following our Christmas performances, a donation of £1100 was presented to the Cotswold Care Hospice and, as a result of the high flood water earlier this year, a group of children have been working with a staff member and school governor to clear a section of the River Frome. Much of the debris is recyclable which has been categorised and sent to the appropriate contractors for reuse.

The school continues to focus on the core subjects (English, Maths, and Science). We have currently a whole school focus on the development of writing to further improve standards and presentation. As part of their study of 'persuasive texts' and the use of emotive language, pupils in Class 4 wrote to the Chair of the Parish Council with their views on the proposal to build an additional 30 houses in Eastington. As a stimulus, they studied the planning application, visited the proposed site and read many of the residents' letters posted on the SDC website. Whilst their writing demonstrated a real energy and robustness, it also highlighted the children's voice in real issues that affect them now and in the future.

To evaluate how the children apply their understanding of number, we have planned a whole week of mathematics. Previous theme weeks have provided a fantastic opportunity for children to extend their knowledge through 'hands-on' workshops led by all the staff.

Making music....literally!

Many children continue to enjoy a range of music in the school. Whether learning to play the recorder or achieving a recognised national grade in flute, clarinet, guitar or piano, the strong music tradition is upheld. A group of older children will be working with David Ayre (professional musician) to create their own music based on 'Our local environment'. The aim is that pupils in Year 5 will create a musical 'performance' and present their ideas to the rest of the school in only one day!

A sporting update...

'Well done' to all our young athletes who continue to represent the school in a number of sporting events. Some of our successes so far include, finishing runners up in the Stroud schools junior football league. Not to outdone, the girls football team were finalists in the Millennium Trophy held at Stratford Park losing only by single a goal in a well matched final. As one of the 'smallest' schools in the competition the girls were superb and showed just what can be achieved! Having won their individual league, we wish our senior tag rugby team every success as they prepare for the area finals to be held later this term. We are currently preparing to re-capture the Stroud Schools Athletic shield we held two years ago. Fingers crossed for fine weather for our own annual sports day to be held at the end of the summer term.

Our day in court

Our Mock Trial team won their case as part of the Stroud Schools Mock Trial competition. We successfully defended the 'accused' during a tense 'verbal battle' with a team from Avening Primary. The event requires schools to plan and present a case in a 'real court' situation overseen by magistrates and the police. Whilst it provides a fantastic opportunity for young people to demonstrate their powers of persuasion within the context of the law, it also enables them to experience, first hand, the workings of our judicial system. 'Well done' to our young legal team.

Online safety

The school has developed an 'Acceptable User' policy for all the children related to the safe use of the internet. We constantly remind the children about the 'do's and don'ts' when using the internet and whilst we have a clear policy within school we are very aware that this practice needs to apply at all times. Our experience is that more children are online and, in particular, using interactive games that involves contact with others. The purpose is that this simple code of practice reinforces the need for young people to be 'safe' users....at all times.

Maintaining traditions

The children elected Abigail O'Neill (Year 6 pupil) as 2013 May Queen. Abigail was crowned on Friday 24th May as the 104th representative, ably supported by her attendants from the infant classes. The ceremony included traditional Maypole dancing, tea, cakes and lots of smiles!

Our special visitors

The school enjoyed a very special morning when Japanese students joined with some of our older pupils to share ideas and gain a further understanding of our different cultures. Following a brief tour of the school, our friends from Uguisudani Junior School, Tokyo showed the children the art of calligraphy and origami. The morning concluded with a short musical presentation and lots of photographs!

'Sounds' great

Following a very special 'one off' performance at school, John Mills (internationally renowned classical guitarist) requested the use of the school hall to record his latest CD celebrating the works of virtuoso guitarist Andres Segovia. Apparently, the hall space is acoustically perfect for classical guitars and Eastington Primary will be recognised as the place where it all happened! We are hoping to persuade John Mills to give another concert in the autumn term ...watch this space.

Finally, we hope to see you at our **ANNUAL SUMMER EVENT** including the Duck Races (of course!) on **SUNDAY 30TH JUNE** (12.15pm onwards in the field opposite the school).

Thank you for your continued support

MJ Strang

Headteacher

Eastington Primary School Parents Association

*Invite YOU to join us at the field opposite Eastington Primary School on
Sunday 30th June 2013 (12.15pm - 15:00pm)
For our annual Duck Race and Summer Fete.*

Entry and great atmosphere are free!

- Birds of prey
- Tea shop
- BBQ
- Thai Food Stall
- Local Real Ale and cider tent
- Live Band 'Menoah'
- Traditional games
- Local Community Groups
- Bouncy castle
- Duck races down the stream!

Eastington Bake Off

Sponsored and judged by Sugar Craft of Stonehouse!

Why not turn out a cake for judging this year in one of the following categories: Best child cake, best adult cake or best decorated cake.

Bring your plated cake to the tea tent for judging by 12.15pm. No entry fee but please don't expect it back as we would love to sell it to raise funds for school.

The judges' decision is final!



**Mad Hatters Tea party
and Teddy Bears PICNIC**

At
The Nestings Nupend Eastington
Tea and Cakes and Garden Games
Fancy Dress competition for the:
"Mad Hatter" , "Alice" and "Teddy Bear"
23rd June 2013
At 2.30pm entrance fee 20p
Contact: Robin Harris 01453 823433

William Morris Students plant their Community Orchard

A group of students at William Morris House have been spending time and (considerable) effort creating a Community Orchard under the guidance of David Geula, House Co-ordinator.

David has been helpful to the Eastington Community Orchard Group over recent years whilst we have been using the William Morris kitchens for bottling ECO apple juice. We were more than happy to give what advice we could, particularly about guarding the young trees against the local deer and badgers.

Celebration Orchard

This orchard was inspired by the landmark of 33 years of the charity taking over the old Eastington Workhouse, now run as a part-residential special school. The new orchard is on recently acquired land, most of which will be used for extra workshops.

David already has responsibility for looking after the Estate and some mature fruit trees in the main grounds of William Morris House. The apples are made into juice for the use of the WM Community.

Learning by working

All the gardening and tree culture is done co-operatively as a learning experience for the students, mainly under the tutor's expert eye.

On the right, David is assisted by student Hamish, ensuring the tree goes to the correct depth.

Students also work in the Food Processing Workshop, learning culinary skills and teamwork whilst producing apple juice and various jams for their dining tables.



ECO Advice – guard those baby trees!

ECO learned the hard way that the real costs in planting an orchard lie in the fencing and guarding, rather than the trees themselves.

David has copied our design with a variation in the material for the mesh. Learning Support Worker Tom here has the final result. Really like the mallet guys!

Because of the transient nature of the student population (and to some extent the co-worker team as well) William Morris House has become a full member of the ECO Group. If, someday, they lose their orchard skills, we have promised to step in and help out.

Notice of AGM for ECO Group

The third AGM will be held in the Committee Room of the Old Badger at 8.00 pm on Wednesday June 5th. All members welcome, including this year's new recruits.

Tom Low, May 2013



Eastington Cricket Club in the early 1970s

(Keith Dench, Derek Cripps, Ian Wright, Don Gibbons, Ron Greenaway, Ron Bomberg, Chris Stafford, Chris Smith, Tom Hulbert, Tony Pitman, Mike Johns)

The Club were one of the best village sides in the county: Holloway KO Cup winners, Stroud League winners and, later on, Gloucestershire inter-league champions. Formed in the middle of the nineteenth century, ECC has fielded as many as 4 (one mid-week and 3 weekend) teams in one week but now it is struggling to field one! Players have always: moved away, got married, retired, produced families, taken on new work patterns/hobbies etc , but it has become more difficult recently to replace them.

So Your cricket club needs you!

If you are over 11 (ideally 14+) and fancy having a game, or you know someone else who might, then please get in contact with us. Test match experience is not required! We have good facilities, games every Saturday, and it's not very expensive!

Fixture Sec. Roger Beese Tel: 01453-823128;
Mobile: 07884438417

Captain Steve. Gallagher Tel: 01453-791209;
Mobile: 07836273768

Secretary Keith Dench Tel: 01453-764990.

The Eastington Allotments Society

You may have noticed that the TEAS article has been lying dormant for the last couple of issues but, with the weather finally warming up...(and I will caveat that with the statement that this was written two weeks ago)....it seems a good time to bring it out of hibernation..

Despite the fact that it already seems to have been a better start than last season, things are still slow to get going, with generally lower than average temperatures for the time of year. This has not necessarily been a bad thing on the allotments as it has given everyone chance to recover their plots from the ravages of the long wet winter. Certainly a great deal of hard digging and rotovating has been required to get the soil back into any sort of decent condition, and especially for anyone trying to create a bed suitable for germinating seeds in. And it is at times like this the advice given in the gardening books and on the back of the seed packets should be taken as purely general guidelines when it comes to sowing and planting dates. There is still plenty of time to get things started and who knows we could end up with some decent late Autumn weather with good cropping opportunities running well into October and November.



What does help though is having the facilities to start off most plants indoors and those of us fortunate to have greenhouses will hopefully have already started planting out some well advanced specimens. Although some seeds prefer to be sown directly in the position where they are to grow, most plants will survive and prosper if they can be transplanted with little or no disturbance to the root system. Also the more mature specimens tend not to be as appealing as the younger, tender shoots do to the ever present population of the *Leporidae* family... Ahhhh!!!! How cute

Hopefully next year, all allotmenters will have the ability to start their young plants off undercover as I believe that planning permission for the communal polytunnel has finally been submitted. Look out for a call for volunteers, especially those with flat pack assembly skills, to help in getting it erected.

Finally I have been informed that there are some new and recently vacated plots still available, As mentioned above, there is still plenty of time to get started and produce some excellent crops of veggies this year. If you are interested please visit the Allotments page on the Eastington Parish Council web site, or phone **Muriel Bullock on 01453 826172** or **Sarah Underdown on 01453 823285**

A poster for the 'Walk 4 Wildlife' event. At the top, it says 'WALK 4 WILDLIFE' in large green letters. Below that, it says 'SUNDAY 9TH JUNE 2013 11AM'. The main text reads 'LOWER WOODS NATURE RESERVE NEAR WICKWAR' and 'FIVE MILE SPONSORED WALK AND FUN DAY IN AID OF THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST AND BRITISH HEART FOUNDATION.' There are several small images: a butterfly, a group of people, a dog, and a hedgehog. At the bottom, it says 'REGISTRATION FEES APPLY FOR EARLYBIRD OFFER AND MORE INFORMATION' and provides the website 'www.gloucestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk/walk-4-wildlife' and the phone number '01452 383333'. There is also a QR code and a Facebook logo.

G W T are sending you a special invitation to join them on this years ' Walk 4 Wildlife 2013 ' .

With the *State of Nature* report being published this week and with the natural world 'in for a bumpy ride' your support is needed more than ever.

We are planning a great day with post-walk fun including charcoal burning demos, wood carving displays and bushcraft activities. Food and beer tent to refresh you after your exertions. Some rescued wildlife including owls, a kestrel and hedgehogs courtesy of the Help a Hedgehog Hospital and the Hawk and Owl Trust.

Lower Woods is looking spectacular at the moment and if you've never visited before you are in for a real treat. Please help us make this event a show of support and celebration for wildlife!

www.gloucestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk/walk-4-wildlife

A Birder in the Parish

MARCH 6th: wandered up the Frome south arm to count Chiff Chaffs, only two present, and singing. Also found the Long-tailed Tit pair with their half finished nest. Three Buzzards in the vicinity of Millend, and I'm convinced a pair will set up breeding territory soon, but maybe not this year. Big flock of mixed Redwings and Fieldfares singing their hearts out in the big willows; they are also taking on breeding plumage and looking stunning.

On the north arm of the river, three Kingfishers together, obviously some territory jousting going on here, because I was completely ignored as they kept flying close by!

Reports today of a Sand Martin in the country, somewhere in Suffolk I think, so good signs of Spring migration; also, a number of wader species on the Severn estuary, particularly Bar-tailed Godwits (probably over-wintering), and wild Avocets at WWT Slimbridge.

7th: unsettled weather, after a few days of fine sunshine. A lot of bird activity at the feeders. The highlights are Bramblings, with a maximum count of 11 on February 11th - an exceptional number for the Parish! They really are an attractive bird, particularly now as the males develop their stunning breeding plumage. Bramblings are winter visitors to the UK, an irruptive species where national numbers can fluctuate annually; some winters hardly any are recorded, favourable winters like this one with fairly good numbers. A number of birders have called in to see them and taken photos from their parked cars - birds don't seem to mind this at all, the car makes a very good bird hide!

Also at the feeders, at least 29 Chaffinches, up to 11 Greenfinches, two Lesser Redpolls and six Siskin so far, though Siskin numbers generally start to build up by the end of March, and I have had up to 40 here in previous years; to wake up to their lovely trilling song en masse on a March morning, is joy!

Have also had four Jays here; they are peanut freaks. They will gather up to twenty one peanuts at a time, storing them in their crop and winging off to cache them. Stunning bird, but very much with a legacy of fear around humans after generations of persecution, so still a very wary bird.

Two male Blackcaps have spent the winter here also, adopting a new feeding method by sitting on the sunflower heart feeder, and readily taking them; they are well known for their aggressive territorial behaviour, where they will try to control a number of feeders and drive all other birds away - but this hasn't quite worked out for them here since I put the Blue Tit nest box back up on the garden shed! The territorial dynamics changed overnight, the general trend being as follows: a feisty male Great Tit will see off the male Blackcap; the male Blue Tit (who owns the nest-box) will see off the male Great Tit; Blackcap sees off male Blue Tit; Robin sees off male Blackcap; male Blackcap exhausted... and is completely ignored by a scruffy looking female Great Tit, who then has the feeder to herself; Long-tailed Tit pair can't get a look in at any of the feeders..! Fascinating stuff!

9th: Six Sand Martins turned up, really good to see these first *hirundines* of the year, with their continuous, swooping flight, a joy to see! These are always the first 'swallow' species to arrive, and, with the coming week's weather, they are going to find it hard going, being airborne insect feeders. Also today, reports of a Swallow in the country. Spent some time scanning for a reported Green Winged Teal, but still no luck, but a migratory Woodlark came into view, calling right overhead, flying south! A rare bird in the west of the UK, and rare indeed in Gloucestershire - so a very pleasing find!

Still some good birds at the feeders, with a count of 40+ Chaffinches and the first ever record of Reed Bunting here, when a pair visited early a.m., but didn't stay long, being mobbed by Siskins.

10th: weather turning very cold again, from the north east. Still four Bramblings at the feeders, a female showing signs of the 'gapes', looking listless and fluffed up; no matter how clean I keep the feeding area, still some birds succumb, so must re-arrange the feeders again, and have another clean up.

Snowdrops still in full flower, with hawthorn beginning to leaf - early season still a bit haywire! But the wildlife just seems to be trying hard to get on with it! It will be interesting to see how the year develops, and I keep reminding myself that the first day of Spring is not until the 20th!

14th: lovely day to start but clouding over by afternoon, and looks changeable again - almost as if for each good day's weather, we have to be punished with spells of freezing cold, or rain! Very unsettling.

23rd: snow about, and still large numbers of birds at the feeders. A Spoonbill turned up at WWT Slimbridge today, usually get one in the County at this time of year, and can't wait for them to start breeding here - very unlikely yet as only single birds turn up. Small stronghold of breeding pairs in Norfolk I believe. Also three Little Plovers there, but no sign yet of noticeable passerine migration, getting a bit late, but persistent north easterlies holding everything back.

24th: still three Bramblings with good mixed finch flock here, and a male House Sparrow now showing more frequently. Records of Reed Buntings and Hawfinches coming to garden feeders, and Barn Owls hunting in open daylight. Avocets, Marsh Harriers and Ringed Plovers arriving in the county, and the first Osprey, so things beginning to move!

By the **28th**, another Osprey through and the first Wheatears of the season at Aylburton Warth. Surprise package has been at least eight Garganey - usually only singles or pairs each year, so a very good count.

APRIL 4th: first Swallow seen today, and Ring Ouzels feeding in snow on Cleeve Hill, their traditional stopping off point in Glos on their way north to breeding sites.

7th: reports of an adult Eagle Owl, heard then photographed at Westridge Woods, North Nibley, caused quite a stir amongst the local birders; even though very probably an escape, they are impressive birds to see in open habitat (this bird was eventually noticed to have jessies - so was an escape).

15th: after good southerlies, a mass of migrants in at last, including Willow Warblers, Chiff Chaffs, Wood Warblers, Reed and Sedge Warblers - everything piling in after weeks of north easterlies.

The resident Crow comes calling when he sees me in the kitchen, so I go out and give him his bread; getting quite tame now, but he isn't enjoying the Buzzard pair which are trying to make a territory here.

17th saw the first Nightingales arriving, and at least three Cuckoos. The Jackdaw flock at Millend Mill has greatly diminished as the building work continues, and in fact I'm not sure if any now are breeding in the mill building, but are nesting in one or two chimneys along the Row. Still a few Feral Pigeons there.

19th: massive movement of Arctic Terns in the County, with hundreds reported on the Severn Estuary.

28th: turned very breezy from the west, after very cold north winds of recent days. South coast observatories reporting a real slow down in incoming migration, with lower numbers of warblers, Wheatears and *hirundines*. Swifts now in the County, but not yet seen in the Parish. Whiskered Tern found among the remaining Arctic Terns on Townfield Lake. Trees very slowly coming into leaf.

MAY 10th: very stormy overnight, with very strong winds. Couldn't get down to Fretherne for what turned out to be a spectacular morning's birding, with Pomarine, Great and Arctic Skuas through up-river, and a Gannet drifting up on the tide! Weather now very unsettled after a good hot spell. The season has already been late and it will be interesting to see how the numbers add up; fully fledged young Blackbirds are already being seen, obviously they made the most of the dry spell in April. But for our summer insect feeders - Swallow, House Martin and Swifts, it won't be good if this poor weather continues. These species are still arriving in the UK on migration, and have yet to get to their breeding sites.

22nd: returned from ten days in the Wyre Forest in Worcestershire, one of my favourite wild-life sites in the UK. A relative of mine there said she had a 'small woodpecker' coming to her peanut feeder. I had a feeling it was a female Great Spotted as, although the only other small woodpecker we have is the Lesser Spotted, this is an uncommon bird in Britain, a declining breeder for some years in Gloucestershire, though they are still at Highnam Woods, and are occasionally seen and heard in the Forest of Dean. As I hadn't even heard one in the Wyre Forest for some time, I wasn't expecting to see a male Lesser Spotted Woodpecker coming to a peanut feeder not ten feet away from the sitting-room window - but that's what it was! Stunning little bird, and very friendly, not wanting to fly off when we went out onto the patio to feed the pheasants (that's another story!) - absolutely delighted to get such close views of a rare bird.

Good to see Kingfishers nesting on the Severn near there, with Common Sandpipers around, Mandarins at nest sites, Blackcaps, two pairs of Song Thrushes, Chaffinch and Wren all nesting, and Spotted Flycatcher, Pied Flycatcher, Osprey and male Goshawk passing through - all these birds still trying to get on with breeding in another late Spring season, with very low amounts of insects - let's see if what has turned out to be a fantastic blossom 'year' will help.

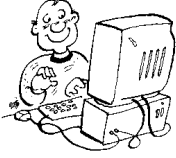
St. Michael and All Angels' Church, Eastington

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

THE RECTOR WRITES



Dear Friends,

As I am writing this in April, just before I leave on sabbatical, I have no idea what will be going on in the world when you will be reading it, so this letter will be rather vague I'm afraid. However, it gives me the opportunity to cheat a little and use some material I have stashed away but have been unable to put in due to lack of space! This is a story about the last Pope, just before he abdicated...

After Benedict's luggage was loaded into the limo, (and he doesn't travel light), the driver notices the Pope is still standing on the curb. 'Excuse me, Your Holiness,' says the driver, 'Would you please take your seat so we can leave?' Well, to tell you the truth,' says the Pope, 'they never let me drive at the Vatican when I was a cardinal, and I'd really like to drive today.' 'I'm sorry, Your Holiness, but I cannot let you do that. I'd lose my job! What if something should happen?' protests the driver, wishing he'd never gone to work that morning. 'Who's going to tell?' says the Pope with a smile. Reluctantly, the driver gets in the back as the Pope climbs in behind the wheel. The driver quickly regrets his decision when, after exiting the airport, the Pontiff floors it, accelerating the limo to 205 kph. 'Please slow down, Your Holiness!' pleads the worried driver, but the Pope keeps the pedal to the metal until they hear sirens. 'Oh, dear God, I'm going to lose my license -- and my job!' moans the driver. The Pope pulls over and rolls down the window as the cop approaches, but the cop takes one look at him, goes back to his motorcycle, and gets on the radio. 'I need to talk to the Chief,' he says to the dispatcher. The Chief gets on the radio and the cop tells him that he's stopped a limo going 205 kph. 'So bust him,' says the Chief. 'I don't think we want to do that, he's really important,' said the cop. The Chief exclaimed, 'All the more reason!' 'No, I mean *really* important,' said the cop with a bit of persistence. The Chief then asked, 'Who do you have there, the mayor?' Cop: 'Bigger.' Chief: 'A senator?' Cop: 'Bigger.' Chief: 'The Prime Minister?' Cop: 'Bigger.' 'Well,' said the Chief, 'who is it?' Cop: 'I think it's God!' The Chief is even more puzzled and curious, 'What makes you think it's God?' Cop: 'His chauffeur is the Pope!'

The parish priest was preoccupied with thoughts of how he was going to ask the congregation to come up with more money than they were expecting for repairs to the church building. Therefore, he was annoyed to find that the regular organist was sick and a substitute had been brought in at the last minute. The substitute wanted to know what to play. "Here's a copy of the service," he said impatiently. "But, you'll have to think of something to play after I make the announcement about the finances." During the service, the parish priest paused and said, "Brothers and Sisters, we are in great difficulty; the roof repairs cost twice as much as we expected and we need \$4,000 more. Any of you who can pledge \$100 or more, **please stand up!**" At that moment, the substitute organist played "The National Anthem" And that is how the substitute became the regular organist!

Is the Lord always there to help? A little boy was afraid of the dark. One night his mother told him to go out to the back porch and fetch the broom. The little boy turned to his mother and said, "Mummy, I don't want to go out there. It's dark." The mother smiled reassuringly at her son. "You don't have to be afraid of the dark," she explained. "Jesus is out there. He'll look after you and protect you." The little boy looked at his mother real hard and asked, "Are you sure he's out there?" "Yes, I'm sure. He is everywhere, and he is always ready to help you when you need him," she said. The little boy thought about that for a minute and then went to the back door and cracked it a little. Peering out into the darkness, he called, "Jesus? If you're out there, would you please hand me the broom?"

Yours in Christ,

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

Email: richardjramys@aol.com. Tel/fax 01453 822437. Day off – Saturday. (Mobile 07796 956050)



July 14 at Eastington Church

7.30pm FREE ADMISSION (RETIRING COLLECTION)

Euphony is an auditioned female choir, comprising students aged between 14 and 17 years. The choir is a nationally recognized and regular award-winning choir in New Zealand's prestigious Secondary Schools competition, "The Big Sing"



Services in June and July

<u>2nd June</u> <u>1st after Trinity</u> (p932 - green) 1 Kings 8.22-23, 41-43 and Luke 7.1-10 (p952/4) 10.45am Holy Communion (Sue Phillipson- Masters) Thur 6th 9.30am BCP Communion	<u>9th June</u> <u>2nd after Trinity</u> (p932 - green) 1 Kings 17.17-end and Luke 7.11-17 (p954/6)	<u>16th June</u> <u>3rd after Trinity</u> (p933 – green) Galatians 2.15-21 and Luke 7.36-8.3 (p964)	<u>23rd June</u> <u>4th after Trinity</u> (p934 - green) Galatians 3.23-29 and Luke 8.26-39 (p971)	<u>30th June</u> <u>5th After Trinity</u> (p935 – green) Galatians 5.1, 13-25 and Luke 9.51-end (p976-7)
10.45am Holy Communion (Sue Phillipson- Masters) Thur 6th 9.30am BCP Communion	10.45am Holy Communion (Richard Bryant) Thur 13th 9.30am No Service	6pm Sung Evensong (Martyn Sheppard) Thur 20th 9.30am BCP Communion	10.45am Holy Communion (Tony Minchin) Thur 27th 9.30am No Service	10am Benefice Service at Whitminster (Peter Cheeseman) Thur 4th 9.30am BCP Communion

<u>7th July</u> <u>6th after Trinity</u> (p935 - green) Galatians 6.7-16 and Luke 10.1-11, 16-20 (p982/3)	<u>14th July</u> <u>7th after Trinity</u> (p936 - green) Colossians 1.1-14 and Luke 10.25-37 (p988)	<u>21st July</u> <u>8th after Trinity</u> (p937 – green) Colossians 1.15-28 and Luke 10.38-42 (p993/4)	<u>28th July</u> <u>9th after Trinity</u> (p938 - green) Genesis 18.20-32 and Luke 11.1-13 (p1162)
10.45am Holy Communion (Rev John Paul Hoskins) Thur 11th 9.30am BCP Communion	10.45am Holy Communion (John Hunnisett) Thur 18th 9.30am No Service	6pm Sung Evensong (Martyn Sheppard) Thur 25th 9.30am BCP Communion	10.45am Holy Communion (Richard Bryant) Thur 1st 9.30am BCP Communion (Rector) Sat 3rd 11am Holy Baptism

All services are taken by the Revd Angela Reeder unless stated otherwise

Eastington - Winner of Gloucestershire Vibrant Village of the Year 2010

Eastington old Churchyard.

The old churchyard in Eastington is a joy to behold at this time of year. Do go to see it if you can.

Some years ago, the area south-east of the church was designated, uniquely, as an 'Eastington Parish Nature Area'. From February to May there is a carpet of wildflowers - first of snowdrops, then primroses and cowslips which, in their turn, attract insects and birds. In May, starry blue germander speedwell and pink lady's smock. There is tall, snowy cow parsley along the road side, with a few paths for access mown through like a maze.



The maintenance of the churchyard and the burial ground is the responsibility of Eastington Parish Council. The mowing is carried out with care by Mr Loveridge in favour of the spring flora and with great respect for those who lie interred in this lovely setting. It takes three days to complete the task - not just a quick mow around.

Since my late husband's ashes lie here, in the area next to the River Frome reserved for such, I regularly pass through the churchyard to say 'hello'. About two and a half years ago an engraving, on an old brass plate, commemorating a former Parish Clerk and his wife (transcribed below) caught my eye and started off what has turned out to be quite a large task...

*In Memory of
THOMAS EVANS
who was clerk of this Parish
30 Years, he departed
this life June the 15th 1817
□ tatis 83 Years
Also of ANN his Wife
She departed this life
September the 30th 1823
Aged 88 Years*

I was in want of a project to see me through the winter so I started to photograph some of the brass plates, the older headstones and tombs and to transcribe the inscriptions if legible. I soon realised that, for my labours to be of any potential value, I would need to photograph and transcribe *all the inscriptions in the churchyard!* Along the way, I have also attempted a description of most memorials (there are nearly 400!), recorded wild flowers and other wildlife. After two and a half years, over 1000 photographs and a 70 page document, the end is in sight...

Eastington churchyard has, of course, been 'done' before, first by **Ralph Bigland** (b.1712 – d.1784) and more recently by **John Brooker** (1989).

Most of the 18th century limestone headstones and ledgers recorded by **Bigland** have either been moved, have sunk into the ground or become illegible after centuries of weathering. Nevertheless, his work has been helpful in deciphering parts of the inscriptions on the English Heritage Grade 2 listed chest tombs, some of which are in surprisingly good condition with charming carvings (e.g. left).



In 1989, in just three months, **John Brooker** listed all the names, dates and ages of death of those commemorated in the old churchyard, the new burial ground, the memorials inside the church, *and* he produced a sketch map showing the position of the memorials in the churchyard. This map has been of particular value to me. John's work is lodged at the Gloucestershire Archive and Richard Amys, our Rector, holds a copy.

Using the modern aids of computer and digital camera, I have built upon the work of my two predecessors. I feel privileged to have been able to spend so much time in a beautiful corner of our parish.

Val Taylor. Email: valtaylor@cressgreen.myzen.co.uk

What a busy term so far – please read on.....

Pamper and Treat Evening

A big thank you to all of you who came to support our pamper evening – we managed to raise £500 which will enable us to replenish some tired toys and restock resources. It was a very enjoyable evening with some great raffle prizes donated by stall holders and local businesses - we hope to run another again next year.

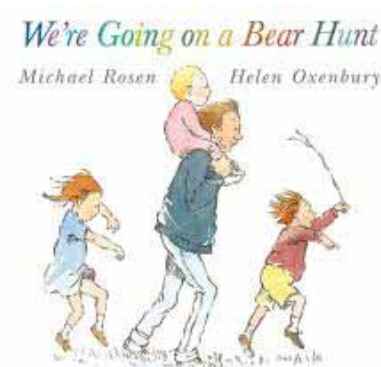


Topics for the half term



We started the summer term with a book called the 'Rainbow Fish' and we used some 'shiny and sparkly' materials collected from our sponsored collect to make a display, followed by painting still life pictures of daffodils and spring flowers the following week.

We also dressed up as Knights and Princesses the week of 22nd April to celebrate St George's Day and made castles and accessories with junk modelling materials, such as swords and shields, crowns and armour. All the children joined in the process of designing and making their outfits, problem solving how to join and stick resources together. To finish off the last few weeks of term we have been going on a Bear Hunt and the children have been retelling the story in different ways, through painting and mask making, story mapping, acting out the tale along with growing grass to make part of the scenery. So Beware you might spot lots of little Bears in Eastington but don't worry they're usually very friendly!



Our children, who will be leaving us in July to move to school, have been busy attending Pre-School sessions with Mandy and Donna at Eastington Primary School. This will help them to settle into routines and feel familiar with their new surroundings in the autumn. We wish them all good luck in the future.

Meanwhile we are busy getting ready to welcome lots of new children to Playgroup in September. We've had an induction morning for them to meet us and the other children and join in with their favourite activities. We look forward to welcoming them all to Eastington Playgroup.

Our playgroup offers care and education for children from 2 ½ to 4 years 11 months in a well established community based group.

We offer your children a safe and stimulating environment in which they can grow and blossom into self confident, self reliant and positive little people.

Our ultimate goal is to enable the children to have fun, explore and have the freedom to express their individuality, while forming the basis of their education.

We currently have a few spaces left and operate 4 days a week offering full and half day sessions. We accept government nursery vouchers and other types of employer supported childcare vouchers.

If you would like more details please contact Mandy Owen, Playleader on 07977 342 742

email eastingtonplaygroup@eygloucescscershire.co.uk

or our website www.eastingtonplaygroup.wordpress.co.uk

ACUPUNCTURE

Safe & Professional Treatment for

Joint & Muscle Pain
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EASTINGTON YOUTH GROUP

Community Park Project

Another milestone passed on the way to a new park area.

The small but enthusiastic community park group hosted a consultation event on the 19th May, providing the ideal opportunity for all Parishioners to make their mark on the project and show support.

Everyone who attended the event, were given six coloured coded stickers [Stickers were split into six age groups ranging from under 4's to over 65's] these were then placed on images of park equipment, based on personal choice. The collective results will help plan the eventual park, and just as importantly help to cement the ideal that this for the community, by the community.

In addition to the sticker placing, Parishioners were invited to fill out a simple survey sheet. Again, information from these will help point the project in the right direction. There was also a section asking if anyone could help with the project; I'm pleased to report there several people have ticked the right boxes, thank you.



Above: One young man applying his last sticker to what already looks like a popular choice.



Above: Nothing is out of reach with the right support.

General feedback on the day was tremendously encouraging and reemphasised the lack of community facilities in the Parish.

We have been given some good ideas to complement our own thoughts, and at time of writing this article we are collating all this information ready to reshape the project plan.

There is still time to fill out a survey sheet, please contact us and we'll make sure a copy is sent out. (Contact details below) We have over 40 survey sheets returned to date, but more would be welcome.

We need to move forward with fundraising, and whilst grants are researched we need to come up with some community ideas. This will not only help to raise cash but also 'grease the wheels' with grant applications. If anyone has any fundraising ideas or opportunities then please contact us.

We'd like to thank all the people who helped deliver nearly 600 flyers, sorry if we did not reach everyone. (No points for spotting the deliberate mistakes....)

Also, thanks to Eastington Cricket, the Orchard group, Eastington Allotments and OHMG for supporting us on the day



Email - eastington.yg@gmail.com

Tel -01453 827401

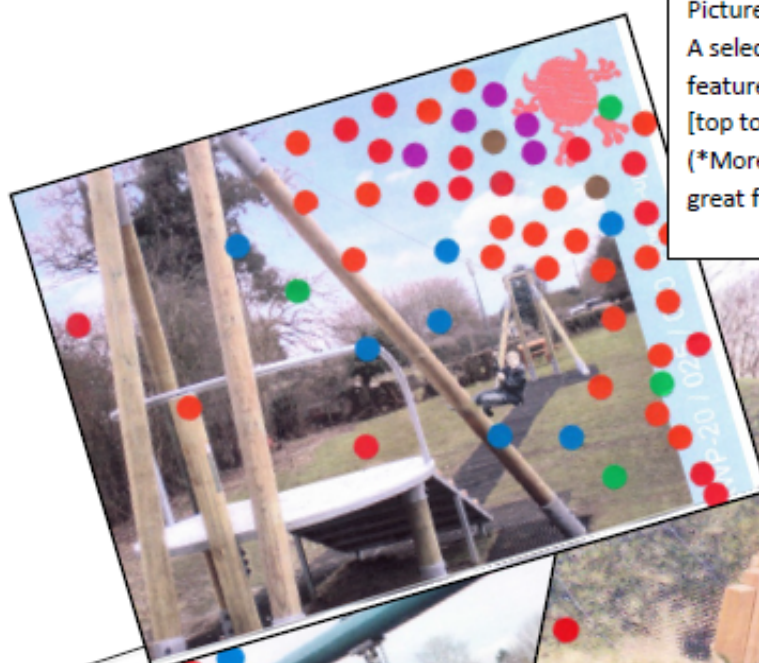
Web -.www.facebook.com/Eastington.playground.project



EASTINGTON YOUTH GROUP

Community Park Project

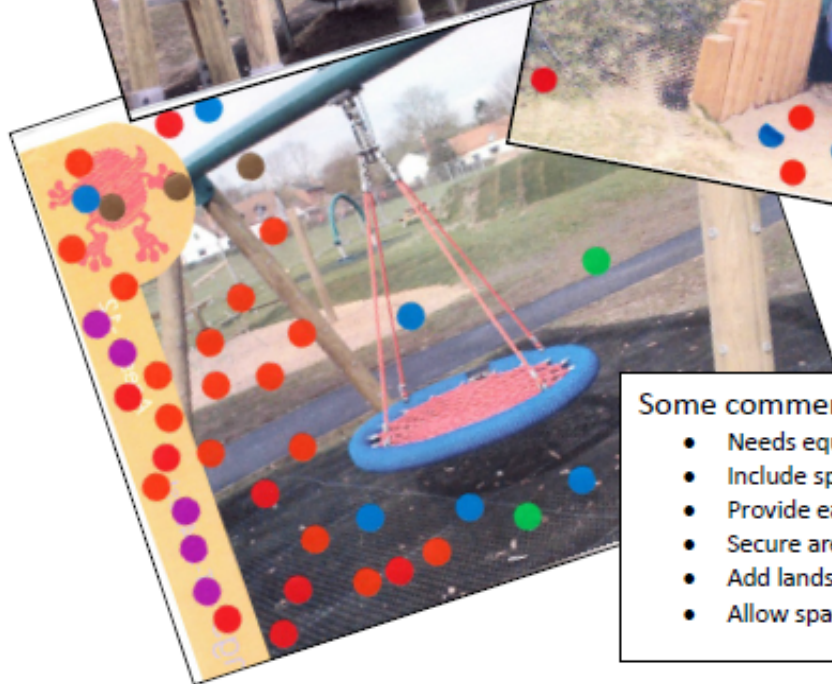
An Encouraging Consultation



Pictures below:

A selection of the most popular pieces of equipment featured stickers from all age groups.

[top to bottom] Zip wire, Hidden slide & Team swing*
(*More nauseating than any ride at Alton Towers... great fun)



Some comments received via the survey:

- Needs equipment for all ages
- Include space with benches, shelter & picnic tables.
- Provide easy access including car parking.
- Secure area, to be fully fenced.
- Add landscaping; mounds, trees and other fauna.
- Allow space for a willow structure.

It appears that people are travelling far and wide in the pursuit of a fun and family friendly park, these include; Whitminster, Saul, Kings Stanley, Stratford Park, Frocester, Dursley and Stonehouse.

The park at Saul rates very highly, if you get the chance to go there you will see why. It has most aspects mentioned in the comments above and really has the essence of the environment we hope to create here in Eastington.

Final note; The Youth Group AGM will be held on June 12th (Venue and time to be set)

We warmly welcome new members to join in any capacity. Please contact us if you're interested in coming along.



As most of you know, EMC is very active in our own locality but we do also support other organisations working to help people in much poorer societies in various places around the world. About once a quarter, one of our 11am Sunday services is taken by one of the organisations we support and I thought I would let you know about a couple of them here:-

Compassion



Compassion is an international Christian child development and child advocacy ministry. Partnering with local churches and individual sponsors, it is committed to the spiritual, economic, social and physical development of children living in extreme poverty in 26 countries, enabling them to become responsible, fulfilled Christian adults.

The Sunday Club at EMC has been sponsoring Seble Teckle in Ethiopia since 2004. She was 9 years old and is now a young lady of 17. This sort of sponsorship provides healthcare and education so empowers those who benefit with the means to break out of the cycle of poverty in which so many in poorer countries find themselves trapped. The expectation is that the effect of this will ripple out into their local society and provide a wider benefit.

Seble in 2004

Seble in 2013

More information can be found at:

<http://www.compassionuk.org>



Tumaini Fund *"Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed." Psalm 82:3*

Tumaini is the Swahili word for Hope and is a Christian charity seeking to alleviate the terrible suffering of Aids widows and orphans in Kagera, the North-West province of Tanzania. The average life expectancy there is approximately 43 years, HIV carriage is thought to be 28% with, perhaps, 1 in 3 mothers delivering babies being HIV positive, a subsistence farmer will earn in the region of £55 each year, with which to support 6-8 family members. There may be 200,000 orphans in this region.

Tumaini work in and with communities in order to:

- Support AIDs orphans within their own community rather than sending them to orphanages,
- Provide Parish workers and social workers for children,
- Provide school equipment and vital mosquito nets,
- Build houses,
- Fund secondary school education which many cannot afford at £35 per year,
- Higher education in the form of teacher-training, university and vocational training to lift young adults and their families out of poverty for good,
- AIDs prevention and treatment,
- Water and sanitation programmes- 12% of infants under 1 year old die of unsafe drinking water

100% of every donation goes out to Kagera.

More information: <http://www.tumainifund.org.uk>

Meanwhile back in Eastington

The Friday evening youth club has been enjoying high attendance levels recently with nearly 30 coming along sometimes. We held a successful themed sleepover at the end of March and are planning to hold a second over the last weekend in June.

We will soon be looking ahead to the summer holidays and expect to organise a number of outings again over the school July-August break.

There is a Methodist District Youth Weekend this year on Friday 4th – Sunday 6th October. These are good fun and we hope a good sized group will want to go this time.

Please look at the website to see what else is going on.

Ken Burgin – Senior Steward

Ken & Beck Burgin 01453 827414

www.EastingtonMethodists.org.uk



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www.ohmg.org.uk

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- ◆ Veranda area
- ◆ Fenced play area

The Committee is always looking for new members with new ideas and energy. If you would like to get involved in a local group that is committed to improving the facility for the benefit of people in the Parish please do get in touch.

Mondays: ZUMBA! 7.30-8.30pm
Tuesdays 7-8pm & Fridays 12-1pm: Tai Chi Health Training
Thursdays: YOGA 8 - 9.30pm

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