



Castle Eaton Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes

19th May 7pm

Castle Eaton Village Hall

1. Introduction from our local Policing Team – PC Ben Lambert

The areas covered include South Marston, Highworth, Hannington and villages in this area.

Daily duties are attending local Parish meetings, patrol plans for specific ongoing incidents, adhoc/ neighbourhood incidents, police medic covering ambulance services if needed.

Email address for general queries Ben.Lambert@wiltshire.police.uk, report crimes via 101/999.

An issue of concern raised is speeding on School Lane, it is a known problem, however the Community Speeding team are having problems trying to find an appropriate place to wait. PC Lambert will chase this up with the team for further options.

Set up a Community Speed watch team as there currently isn't one, email PC Lambert with interest.

Another issue is Lorries coming through the village following their SatNav and breaking 7.5 tonne limit, residents can collate footage of Number Plate and/or Company. This data can be submitted directly online or passed on to the Parish Council.

Operation Snap, footage from dashcams of road users committing road traffic offences.

2. Chair's Report

Castle Eaton Parish Council AGM 19th April 2025

Report from Chair

This is my third year as Chair. First, I wish to record my thanks to my fellow Councillors and our Parish Clerk, for their help and support, as always. Cllr Phil Hall resigned from the Council in April 2024 and Cllr Nichola Waddicor agreed to replace him.

My thanks to Nichola for stepping into the breach. Without her willingness to join the council, CEPC would have had to resign and hand over Parish administration to SBC as the minimum number of Council members required is five.

My thanks to Phil for his contributions to the Council and particularly his efforts to get SBC to acknowledge and rectify problems with our roads. That he resorted to publishing a document entitled "Pushing Water Uphill" was an eloquent expression of how he, and we, viewed SBC responsiveness.

Our major concerns this year have been.

the expansion of the Anaerobic Digester,

SBC's wish to devolve non-statutory services to parishes,

refuse collections day alignment,

roads and drain cleaning,

budgets.

Anaerobic Digester

The proposed expansion to industrial scale of the Droveaway Anaerobic Digester, applied for in late December 2020, remains an outstanding issue. The applicant was granted multiple time extensions (March 2023, September 2023, March 2024, April 2024 and July 2024) and eventually proposed a new haul route starting at the Cricklade junction of the A419, traversing private land to join the C114 east of the A419/C114 junction.

This new haul route was first publicised to CE residents at a presentation by Privilege Finance in February 2025. Privilege claimed that all necessary highway authorisations i.e. Wiltshire CC, National Highways and SBC, had been granted. Following this meeting, CEPC asked SBC Planning, National Highways and Wiltshire County Council for confirmation that these authorisations had in fact been given, as no evidence in support of this statement by Privilege had been published on the Swindon planning portal.

Swindon Planning stated no such authorisation had been granted.

National Highways referred CEPC to its recommendation of 17th October 2024. Swindon Planning, to whom this recommendation was addressed, had chosen not to publish this document on their planning portal, meaning CEPC had no knowledge of it.

CEPC obtained a copy by requesting it from National Highways who stated the document was already in the public domain and had no idea why it had not been published by SBC on their planning portal. The National Highways document recommended refusal of the application on grounds of highway safety.

WCC responded that they had no knowledge of any application seeking to build a new haul route from the Cricklade junction on the A419 across private land to the C114 and in any case would have refused it had it been applied for.

Swindon Planning stated they had not published the 17th of October statement from National Highways on the planning portal as "it would cause confusion".

CEPC acknowledge the help of Steve Wiesinger in persuading Swindon Planning to include the National Highways document dated 17th October 2024 on the planning portal, which was eventually achieved in March 2025. However, since this date, nothing else has been publicised.

Devolving non-Statutory Services

Last year, SBC started an initiative to devolve non-statutory services to the parishes. This idea has now been abandoned by SBC as it received frankly deserved heavy criticism regarding SBC's inability to state the current costs and required service levels of the services it wished to pass on to parishes or show how this devolved state would be administered and funded.

Refuse Collection Alignment

SBC have not been entirely absent from CE. We now have properly operating refuse systems, where all collections of the same type happen on the same day for the entire village. We again acknowledge input from Steve Weisinger in this matter.

Roads and Drain Cleaning

The drains have been cleaned as part of a three-year cycle. Some potholes have been repaired, and the white lines at the junctions have been repainted. None of these actions were pre-notified to CEPC.

The approaches to the Thames bridge have been repaired. CEPC acknowledge the understanding shown by the repairs team in suspending this work to prevent potential travel disruption of an important village funeral taking place on the same date as the planned repair.

Budgets

The Precept for the coming year 2025/6 has been agreed at £20,775, an increase of 7.29%. Last year the amount was £19,363, an increase of 7.09% on the previous year (£18,080)

The CEPC continue to support the CE village hall by supplying a Grant. This year, the grant has been increased by £1917, from £4573 to £6517 (42%) In addition, the council pays £250pa to the VH for hosting the Thursday Post Office.

CEPC are the landlords of the VH and continue to charge it rent, first set in 1973, at £1.00pa.

CEPC also acknowledges and thanks David Sainsbury for his continued donation of the village playing field at a peppercorn rental pa.

Last, my thanks to all CE residents and social groups whose efforts continue to make CE a great village in which to live.

3. Annual reports from each Village Group

Cinema Club

Castle Eaton Community Cinema Club

Report to Castle Eaton Parish Council AGM,

19th April 2025, for the year 2024-25

The Cinema Club started the financial year with a balance of £2021.74 and ended with £1888.32, making a slight loss over the year of £133.42, which is a little disappointing.

Cinema Club is held every other month and has shown diverse films over the year, some requested by people in the village and others which were chosen by Teresa, Dawn and Gill when no suggestions had been received. Films shown this year were:

A Haunting in Venice, Wicked Little Letters, One Love (Bob Marley), The Bike Riders, Thelma, The Critic

The licence to show a film is expensive at around £105 and the Cinema Club also buys the DVD which we then retain, and which can be borrowed by villagers who were unable to attend the showing. To break even the Cinema Club needs around a dozen people to pay their £4.50 entrance (it's £5 in the surrounding villages) and make a contribution for a couple of glasses of wine each.

The main change instigated in the latter part of the year is the introduction of a social get together after the film. We now encourage people to stay after the showing to enjoy a further drink (wine or tea/coffee) and chat. This has been very well received by everyone and will be continued.

We welcome villagers' suggestions regarding future films, and we will then investigate whether a licence is available, without which we are unable to show a film to a paying audience.

Environmental

Environmental Group Report for PC AGM, May 2025

Members of the Environmental Group continue to plant up & maintain the tubs outside the Lych Gate, village hall, playground & on the corner of School Lane & the Street, so grateful thanks to Helen Clift, Morag Patrick, Sheila Theobald, Val Hayward & Graham Booth, & Colin & Gill Williams for keeping them looking so lovely. This is quite a commitment, especially during hot weather when they need a lot of watering. Everyone, along with myself, have agreed to keep going for another year, although we will be losing Sheila, so Morag will be looking for someone to help her with the Lych Gate planter – if anyone can help, please liaise with Morag.

We organised a big village clear up in September last year, with lots of villagers turning out to help. Huge thanks to everyone, with a special mention to David Sainsbury who always takes away all the muck & disposes of it. Hopefully this encouraged everyone to keep the paths, verges & gutters outside their homes a bit cleaner throughout the year. If anyone ever wants to do any litter picking, we do have litter pickers, bag hoops & hi- viz jackets we can lend them.

We didn't enter the Best Kept Village competition this year, due to lack of volunteers to take this on – it does involve a lot of work. We don't really have anyone formally taking the lead within the Environmental Group, anyone can put forward suggestions if you think something needs to be done around the village.

Teresa forwarded an email she received from the Great Western Community Forest Team regarding Oaks at 80', a project launched by them to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. They are offering £80.00 to Parish Councils and community groups within the Great Western Community Forest boundary to purchase a suitable oak tree (plus guard and support) to plant at their own individual event during the 2025-26 tree planting season (November 2025 to February 2026). I have registered an interest, but the big question would be where to plant it. If anyone has any ideas, please do share & we can all liaise about it

Annual Report 2025 of the Castle Eaton Gardening Club

7 May 2025 – *prepared for the Annual Parish Council by Ruth Wilkins*

The club calendar runs October – September. This is a mid-year status report.

Executive Summary

The club is celebrating its 40th year anniversary. (1985)

The club costs £2050 pa to run. £1200 of this is speaker fees which have plateaued a little. This also includes investment to some fundraising events, ie printing calendars for sale, and Scarecrow Trail.

Many fundraising activities are held each year to cover costs of speakers. The club continues its charity work through funding the scarecrow trail so that all entry fees and donations can go direct to the chosen charity, and the Christmas Craft & Gift Fair.

Giving back to the community, through members funding the growing of plants and donating to the plant and bake sales during the summer, which is open to all residents and beyond. All our talks and activities are open to all village residents.

Membership fees will maintain at current costs for 2025/26

Accounts are stable with a current balance of £1810 pre end of year, this maintenance is reliant on our fundraising efforts.

Through club fundraising efforts, the club were able to fully fund the 40th Celebrations Celebrity Speaker Nick Bailey which was a sell out and clear a small profit towards speakers for the following year.

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The Report

The Castle Eaton Gardening Club is celebrating its 40th year and we are proud to mark the event and to recognise all the contributions from residents and members who have worked hard to keep the club going over this time.

Membership varies and has been consistent at 28 members.

With the lack of active members now on the committee, most roles have fallen to Ruth Wilkins, with amazing support from Dawn Saunders, Les Wilkins and Louise Kennington, to ensure we keep the club going.

- Ruth Wilkins – Chair, Treasurer, Club Activity Lead, Programme Co-ordinator, Scarecrow Trail Leader
- Secretary – Louise Kennington
- Committee Support - Dawn Saunders, Les Wilkins
- Calendar Design - Ian Wallace

With additional ad hoc and immense support from Nina Warminger & Ian Wallace

Club Activity Calendar:

For this, members can access the following benefits:

- Monthly meetings with fantastic speakers @ the Village Hall, including Refreshments, and a Christmas Social
- Quarterly raffle
- Group membership to RHS with associated discount schemes.
- Group membership to Gardeners World Magazine, larger distribution capability, GW Online, and Premium content.
- Closed group Facebook page with updates, details of forthcoming events, meetings, gardening tips and tricks
- The Great FREE Seed Share: members share unwanted seeds for others to use.
- An Annual Garden & Produce Show where members show off their hard work and compete for cash prizes and trophies, with a fantastic produce shop at the end of the show.
- Annual Garden Visits, plus Annual Garden Party held at a member's garden.
- Plant, Bake & Product Sales throughout the Spring/Summer
- Participation in the Kings Seed Club Scheme offering significant discounts to members.
- And of-course connecting with other members to exchange tips, tricks and have some fun.

Our calendar is a full year, with speakers for 7 months of the year, plus Christmas and Summer socials, a Scarecrow Trail we fund and run for local charities. 2025 sees the cancellation of the Village Flower & Produce Show due to lack of participation vs time and cost of running the show.

All our activities are open to the Village Residents, to create a greater inclusive community spirit. We have residents who visit the talks occasionally for a topic of interest to them and some who also come along to the Garden Visits. The Christmas Social and Member Garden Trail is a member only activity.

2024/25 Calendar

DATE	SPEAKER	TALK
October	AGM Andrew Mikolajski	AGM - Plants for Free - Propagating
November	James Allison	Ponds and Biodiversity
November	Christmas Craft & Gift Fair	
December	Christmas Social	Christmas Social
January	Dominic Hamilton	The History & Restoration of Rococo Gardens
February	Andrew Tolman	Stumpery and Shady Plants
March	Mandy Bradshaw	Beyond the Garden Gate
April	NICK BAILEY	40th Anniversary Event
May	Timothy Walker	Colour in a small garden
June	Member Garden Party/Garden Trail	
August	Scarecrow Trail	CHARITY TO BE AGREED

Speakers

The cost of speakers has plateaued at circa £200+ and is averaging out at an annual cost of £1400.00. However, with the Club Plant, Bake & Produce Sales being our biggest fundraiser, and the Club Calendar we are managing to secure some great speakers. Our speakers also travel upto 90 minutes to get to us.

The club continues its charity work through funding the scarecrow trail so that all entry fees and donations can go direct to the chosen charity, and the Christmas Craft & Gift Fair.

In the Community

The club continue their inclusivity of the village community by ensuring our events and activities are open to all resident's participation. To name a few:

Our members self-fund the growing of plants from seed, compost, seedlings, and donating to the plant, bake & produce sales which are open to all residents and beyond.

Some residents attend our Garden Visit trips

The Scarecrow Trail brings along with it, a community feel around the village through residents' participation whilst being a great opportunity to raise money for charity, of which residents can nominate charities.

The 40th Celebration Celebrity Speaker brought in many residents who are not yet members of the club

➤ **Fundraising**

The club has numerous fund-raising activities throughout the year to cover the cost of speakers. These are supported immensely by club members. These are primarily:

Plant, Bake & Produce Sales – biggest fundraising events.

Club Calendar, photos taken by the members.

Membership fees

Raffles

Coffee Morning

Village Fete – not in 2025

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Financials

Current financial records as of end April 2025. The club costs £2010 pa to run, this includes investment to some fundraising events, such as printing calendars for sale, and for the Scarecrow Trail.

CEGC ACCOUNTS 2024/2025

18/10/2023	Opening Bank Balance	£	2,310.85
	<i>Speaker Budget required before closing balance 22/23</i>	£	1,837.10
18/10/2023	Opening Petty Cash Balance	£	40.00
	Annual Income	£	2,184.81
	Annual Outgoings	-£	2,591.13
16/10/2024	Closing Bank Balance	£	1,806.99
16/10/2024	Closing Petty Cash (already accounted for in accounts) c/f to next season	£	43.30

Ladies Club

The events of this year are: -

Programme of events 2025

8th January AGM with cheese and wine

5th February Wine tasting

5th March Quiz night

2nd April 'Bean a Bean' with Lizzie Bean

7th May John Cook Swindon Financial Services/St. James Place

4th June Neal's Yard Organics

2nd July Local author Hope on her book 'Angels'

6th August Summer Garden Party - hosted by Patricia Ward

3rd September Rev Catie Watson – A talk about her life

1st October Ann Summers party (TBC) / Rock n' Roll Bingo alternative

5th November Christmas Party games / music / food and drink

3rd December Wreath making

All meetings, (except garden party), are in the Village Hall 7.30pm

All residents are welcome plus a friend for a small fee. There is also a bar with donations for the upkeep of the club.

There are currently 25 members, no detailed finances, but are said to be in a good state.

Parochial Church Council

No representatives are present from the PCC.

Village Community Committee

2024 Village Fete raised £232.40 for each village group.

2024 carol singing raised approx. £370 for prospect.

The Village Fete and Barn Dance have been cancelled for 2025 due to the reduced size of the VCC group and their ability to put together the events.

More manageable smaller scale events such as Bingo and a Disco in the Village Hall are being looked at as alternatives.

Village Hall Trustees

CEVH Annual Report to CEPC

for the year to 31st March 2025

CEPC AGM 19th April 2025

Colin Williams and Gill Williams resigned their positions as Chair and Treasurer respectively at the recent VH AGM. Mark Patrick agreed to be the new Chair and Nicki Dainton-White the new Treasurer. Gill and Dawn will now share the diary management role; Dawn and Sheila Cooper Caine share the Secretary role. David Musgrave remains as a co-opted member and his background knowledge is much appreciated. Aleks Sokolowska has joined as a co-opted member to assist with access for maintenance issues. All previous office holders have agreed to support the new appointees until the new appointees feel established. It is likely that changing names and signees with Lloyds Bank will be the usual over-long process, so if required the existing signee (Gill) is happy to remain in the bank account until the new signees are fully accepted by Lloyds.

The Trustees wish to thank CEPC for their £4573 Grant this year and for the increase to £6517 for the next financial year.

The Income and Expenditure account for the financial year 2024-25 shows that expenses were £1083 less than expected and income £966 more than expected, making an overall positive difference of £2049, before including the CEPC Grant. A full copy of the (unaudited) Income and Expenditure Account will be lodged with the CEPC Clerk.

Highlights of the cost variances against budget are.

£730 less on gas and electricity

£506 less for emergency lighting repairs as this was under guarantee and therefore not payable.

£270 less on cleaning supplies

but countered by

£281 spent on the new coffee machine.

£189 overspend on Chubb annual inspection as the fire blanket and one extinguisher had reached expiry date and had to be replaced.

£183 spent on tea/coffee and other kitchen supplies.

Income variances included:

£495 in room hiring, more than expected,

£400 for room booking for one expected local election and one unexpected general election.

£200 more than expected from Pilates sessions.

£189 more than estimated from Coffee Morning attendance.

However, VH predicted overall future costs for maintenance are estimated currently at £57,500. This figure will rise with inflation plus we have no real idea of when these costs might occur, for example, the new coffee machine purchase.

The VH budget for next financial year which includes the increased Grant, shows that it might take 66 years at estimated income/ expenditure/grant levels to cover the £57,500 estimate, but it must be emphasised that this is all dependent on the accuracy of the forecasting.

Colin & Gill Williams

Village Hall Chair & Treasurer

****Move to Parish Council Annual meeting.****

The press and public are cordially invited to attend.