

**The East Garston Annual Parish Meeting was held in the Village Hall on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April  
2026 at 7.30pm**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors – Stephen Reschwamm (Chair/SR), Deana Carpenter (Vice-Chair/DC), Sue Tulloch (ST), Annabelle Eyre (AE), Hamish Riddoch (HR), Liz James (Clerk), Patricia Glover, Martyn Wright, Matthew Clayton

Parishioners - 22

1. **Apologies:** Jonathan Rabbitts (JR), District Councillor Clive Hooker
2. **Chairman's Remarks:** The Chair welcomed those in attendance and introduced members of the Parish Council. The Chair welcomed Hamish Riddoch who has been co-opted as Councillor to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Liam Robson. The Chair directed parishioners to his report in the Parish Newsletter which was distributed earlier in the month and provides details of the PC's work over the past year.

The Chair informed those present that there has been no update on the PJS planning application and highlighted the backlog faced by the West Berkshire Planning Committee. The PC will provide an update as soon as one is available. The Chair also highlighted recent discussions with West Berkshire Council regarding the proposed 20mph speed limit in the village, something which will take effect at some point in the future.

The Chair reported that the PC is keen to continue maintaining the appearance and cleanliness of the village through village clean ups, thanking those who have volunteered and aided these efforts in the past. The PC is keen to encourage youth involvement in these efforts.

The Chair asked for anyone willing to volunteer towards village maintenance efforts to make themselves known to the Chair/Clerk ([clerk@eastgarston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@eastgarston-pc.gov.uk)). Involvement is completely voluntary.

3. **Financial Report – Clerk, Liz James:** The April 2026 Bank Reconciliation, 2026/27 Budget, and Fixed Asset Register were distributed to those present. The Clerk reported that once again the PC was close to operating within budget for the year 2025/26, although rising costs and unexpected expenses continue to make this difficult.

Outgoings for the year 2025/26 were £24,918 - this is £11,332 more than the previous year, but included payment of £12,000 for the new toddler play equipment in Jubilee Meadow. The Clerk thanked villagers and EGA for contributions towards the fundraising for this equipment. Village Maintenance and Facilities cost £11,471 (excl VAT) and included the new play equipment, removal of trees in Jubilee Meadow, the new playground sign, play inspections etc. Ground Maintenance (mowing) remains the biggest annual expense at £2,406 PA. Dog Waste removal is also a large expense and alternative providers are being considered to reduce costs.

Income for the year included £10,500 from the Parish Precept, £3500 in playground donations (from Greenham Common Trust, and EGA), and £1300 from Thames Water towards making good the Millenium Field following last year's sewage works.

The PC has agreed to a small increase of £500 to the Parish Precept for the coming year, taking the total to £11,000. The PC has also agreed to make some payments from the Open Space Development Fund to meet budget constraints.

Signed:



Date:

14/5/26

**4. District Councillor Clive Hooker:**

Councillor Cliver Hooker was unable to attend but his March report can be found at <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/downlandsparishcouncilreport>

**5. East Garston Eco Group Report: Pat Glover (PG) provided a detailed overview of the work of the East Garston Eco-group and made a call for volunteers ([ecoeastgarston@gmail.com](mailto:ecoeastgarston@gmail.com))**

The group have undertaken planning of bulbs throughout the village, and have also undertaken work on improving the eco credentials in the Village Hall. Winter electrical usage has significantly decreased due to the introduction of solar panels and a new air source heat pump. PG highlighted that the eco group has a Thermo-Camera available for villagers to borrow.

PG also reported on her Carbon Literacy credentials and can provide Carbon Literacy training free of charge should anyone be interested.

**SAGLUV Report:** Martyn Wright (MW) provided a detailed overview of the work of the SAGLUV group and the water/sewage situation in the local area. MW informed those present that ST has decided to step down from SAGLUV and that MW is standing down as Flood Warden. HR will be joining SAGLUV and assuming the role of Flood Warden in due course.

MW reported on meeting with Thames Water which took place on 15/04/2026. Highlighting that there is both good and bad news. Increased rainfall meant that the ATAK unit had to be utilised. Thames Water have committed to re-lining the whole catchment sewage system. A reed bed filter has been proposed for the area downstream of Great Shefford.

Lise Cox expressed thanks on behalf of the village for MW's and SAGLUV's continued efforts.

**6. Guest Speaker – Matthew Clayton:**

Matthew Clayton (MC) outlined his background and his current role as Speed Management Technician for West Berkshire Council. He provided an interesting and informative overview of speed management in the area, along with details of the work he has undertaken testing equipment along the top road. He also outlined potential avenues that could be explored by the PC in the future. Matthew's talk was warmly received by those present.

**7. Any Other Business:**

All Saints' PCC – Church Meeting of Parishioners and APCM takes place on 11<sup>th</sup> May in the Friends Meeting House at 7pm.

Fibre optic broadband – BT Openreach have been installing fibre optic broadband connection in the village. BT will let residents know when it is available.

Missing waste bin – the bin outside the village hall has gone missing. Clerk to contact WBC.

Articulated lorries in village – concerns were raised following recent incident near Church Cottage, concerns also raised about potential damage to bridges in the village. Clerk to contact WBC to discuss.

**The Chairman closed the meeting by thanking attendees and the guest speaker.**

**The meeting closed at 8.35pm**

Signed:



Date:

14/5/26