

We look forward  
to seeing you at the  
East Garston Annual  
Parish Meeting:  
7pm for 7.30pm on  
Thursday 18 April in  
the Village Hall.

# East Garston Annual Parish Newsletter 2024

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This information was compiled in March 2024 using information provided by the organisations.

For information about the organisations' current activities and events please see the contact details at the head of each entry.

Further information about these groups – and other matters of interest to residents – will be publicised in Village Views, East Garston News, 4 LEGS Radio and Penny Post: please see the relevant entries for how to submit information to, join or subscribe to these.

# Parish Council Chair's Annual Report

The Parish Council team has remained constant and intact over the last year with the exception of recruiting a new clerk. We were very pleased to welcome Gillian Woodward who joined us in October last year. Gillian lives in Ramsbury and spent some time with Ramsbury Parish Council. I'm sure she will be a great addition to our team. Huge thanks also to Sonia Coyle who stayed in post for much longer than she wanted to until we found her replacement.

In addition, we are very grateful to Lee Michigan who has taken on the role as editor of *East Garston News* and Henry Wilson who has taken on the responsibility of the East Garston website. If you have any content for either of these please contact Lee or Henry directly on [eastgarstonnews@gmail.com](mailto:eastgarstonnews@gmail.com) or [news@eastgarston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:news@eastgarston-pc.gov.uk) respectively. It's great to have a photographic record of events in the village so please do send any photos to Henry to include.

The Parish Council has continued to support local services such as the Wantage bus service and the Lambourn Library, as well as the Village Hall's broadband. We also ensure that the defibrillator (on the wall of the Village Hall) is maintained and ready should it ever be needed.

In 2023 the Parish Council, helped by funding from the Tesco's Grant Scheme and East Garston Amenities, purchased some new chippings and re-surfaced the playground in Jubilee Meadow – many thanks to Henry Matysek, Nikki Richardson, Poppy Maspero and Ria for helping Jonathan and I to prepare and lay the new surface.

The winter of 2023/24 will be largely remembered for the heavy rain and the resulting flooding and sewage problems. The Parish Council keeps a supply of sandbags should anyone need them.

Martyn Wright has been tireless in his battle with Thames Water (TW). Between us, we arranged a public meeting in December 2023 with some of TW's Directors and technical team. We were assured that East Garston's problems had been identified and funding secured to make the necessary repairs as soon as the groundwater levels dropped. They also promised to install an ATAC filter unit to reduce the need for constant tankers. Whilst this certainly helped we still have overflowing manholes and backed-up toilets.

In March, a new group, the Sewage Action Group for the Lambourn Upper Valley (SAGLUV), which Martyn will chair, was set up to tackle sewage pollution in the East Shefford STW catchment. The group comprises the three Chairs of Lambourn, East Garston and Great Shefford Parish Councils, some additional people from each parish, plus two District Councillors. Within weeks, this had held its first meeting with senior Directors of TW to highlight problems which need dealing with now.

At the time of writing, we are waiting for news from TW on how it is going to address these. By the time of the annual parish meeting, TW should also have started rotavating and reseeded the Millennium Field following work there last year.

Last summer saw the celebration of the Coronation of King Charles III in true East Garston style. Thanks to East Garston Amenities for organising such a popular and fun community event.

This summer sees the return of the village fete which will take place on Sunday 7 July. Celebrations will start with a band night on Friday: the fete on Sunday will include the produce show, Garston Gallopers, Hungerford Band, a dog show and much, much more. We hope to see as many of you there as possible.

Parish Council costs have once again risen over the last year and regretfully we have had to increase the precept by £500 – this equates to an average increase of £2.15 per household or £1.17 per elector. We are conscious of the increase in cost of living so are doing everything we can to provide the services which are important at minimal cost.

The Parish Council is lucky to have such an enthusiastic team of volunteers who help out around East Garston. This is hugely appreciated and enables us to keep the costs down as much as we can. Despite retiring from the Parish Council last year, Chris Tonge still spends many hours working around the village, helped by Trevor Butcher, Richard Talmage and Dave Knight. Thanks also to Karen Hack and her team of volunteers who look after the churchyard. Finally, thanks to everyone who keeps the verges in front of their homes tidy and improves the look of our village.

Should anyone be interested in helping out with village chores please contact us (see p4). Much work – ranging from tidying up public areas to filling grit bins – is done by volunteers and councillors which largely goes unnoticed but is hugely appreciated.

The Parish Council welcomes any comments or ideas from parishioners on village matters and to this end you can find all our contact details below.

I would now like to hand over the remainder of this newsletter to the various organisations which help make East Garston such a delightful place to live. Our thanks go to them for all their energy and enthusiasm. The Parish Council wishes them and any other organisations which may emerge every success for the future.

Finally, thanks to *Penny Post* for producing this newsletter and for once again keeping the price the same as last year – much appreciated!

*Sue Tulloch,*  
*Chair, East Garston Parish Council*

## Parish Council Contacts

Below is a list of the Parish Councillors (as of March 2024) and their phone numbers and the phone number and email address for the Clerk. Any changes will be reflected on the Parish Council's website at [eastgarston-pc.gov.uk](http://eastgarston-pc.gov.uk).

You will also be able to find information there about the Parish Council's various activities, including the agendas and minutes of its meetings (which all residents are welcome to attend).

Sue Tulloch (Chair):	07879 421 157
Deana Carpenter (Vice-chair):	01488 648 308
Annabelle Eyre:	01488 648 238
Jonathan Rabbitts:	01488 648 736
Laim Robson:	01488 648 434
Peter Smith:	07796 274 907
Clerk:	07553 061 884
	<a href="mailto:eastgarstonpc@gmail.com">eastgarstonpc@gmail.com</a>

## Local information

- Information about the Parish Council can be found by visiting East Garston's excellent website at [www.eastgarston-pc.gov.uk](http://www.eastgarston-pc.gov.uk).
- About once a month, the Parish Council publishes on behalf of Penny Post an e-newsletter, *East Garston News*. To subscribe, email [penny@pennypost.org.uk](mailto:penny@pennypost.org.uk). If you wish to comment on anything in EGN or submit material for publication, contact [eastgarstonpc@gmail.com](mailto:eastgarstonpc@gmail.com).
- *Penny Post* (see also below) publishes a monthly e-newsletter for the upper Lambourn Valley and a weekly e-newsletter for the wider area.
- *Village Views* (see also below) publishes a monthly magazine covering East Garston, Eastbury, Lambourn and Woodlands.
- *4 LEGS Radio* (see also below) broadcasts via the internet, currently on Fridays and Saturdays.

## • **East Garston Amenities**

Contact: *Freddie Tulloch*  
Email: *freddie@ftulloch.com*  
Tel: *07770 605879*

The objective of EGA is to support the East Garston parish community, to organise a variety of different events during the year and to raise valuable funds to be used on community projects.

The big one for us is usually the Village Fete which takes place this year on Sunday 7 July. The weekend starts with a village party on the Friday night with a live band and hog roast. The fete will feature the usual favourites: the produce show, dog show, tug of war, bouncy castles and egg throwing competition as well as lots of stalls and fun for all the family (and dogs).

Other highlights include the Christmas fun run, the over-60s Christmas lunch and theatre trips to Oxford. The EGA also continues to help with the maintenance of the village and its landmarks.

Anyone in the village is encouraged to come to us with their ideas as EGA is always looking for new projects, outings or events that continue to give something for everyone.

Please get in touch if you would like to be involved with EGA or take part in its activities, if you have ideas for an event or if you think there is a worthy cause in the community that requires funds.

## • **East Garston Allotment Association**

Contact: *Martyn Wright*  
Email: *martynwright345@btinternet.com*  
Tel: *07973 953 993*

The East Garston Allotment Association is a group for members who share an interest in horticulture and growing their own. Established in 2009, it leases land in a beautiful spot on the outskirts of the village and provides a number of plots for its members to grow a wide variety of

crops. The main interest is in vegetables and fruit – there are even two small vineyards – but flowers also have a strong following.

EGAA hosts an annual Flower and Produce Show, which is open to all for entries and which grows in popularity each year. This year the Show will be held in conjunction with the Village Fete on Sunday 7 July: so start sowing and planting now. With one of the wettest winters on record, and with no sign of much change, rice might be worth a try!

Currently, EGAA has a full membership with no vacant plots but please contact us if you want to have your name put on the waiting list.

## • **East Garston Flood & Pollution Forum**

*Contact:* Martyn Wright

*Email:* [martynwright345@btinternet.com](mailto:martynwright345@btinternet.com)

*Tel:* 07973 953 993

The Lambourn Valley Flood Forum, with representatives from WBC, Thames Water, the EA and village flood wardens, addresses flood-related issues in the valley. To focus attention on matters that directly affect our village – such as flood warnings, advice and sewage – the EGFPF was established as an email communication group.

It is more than a list of people to be advised of flood and sewage warnings. By making it open to everyone to contribute discussion and suggestions about these problems, real value can be gained by all.

Over the winter of 2023/24, we had high groundwater levels and the usual impact of these on our inadequate sewerage systems. We have experienced sewage flooding and untreated sewage discharges onto our streets and into the SSSI and SAC-protected River Lambourn. A number of properties have suffered with residents not being able to use ground floor loos and showers. This is clearly unacceptable.

We have continued with our vigorous campaigning against these discharges and pressure has been applied to Thames Water and the EA.

In a further bid to stop this sewage pollution in the locality, a new group

(Sewage Action Group for the Lambourn Upper Valley, or SAGLUV) was established in March 2024 comprising the PC Chairs of Lambourn, East Garston and Great Shefford, with support from our District Councillors and others. The group's objective is "Clear Sewers and a Clean River".

More information can be found on [www.eastgarston-pc.gov.uk](http://www.eastgarston-pc.gov.uk) or [pennypost.org.uk](http://pennypost.org.uk) (search for "flood forum").

## • **East Garston Social Club and Village Hall**

*Contact:* Ed James (Village Hall)  
*Email:* [edjames@sportingagenda.co.uk](mailto:edjames@sportingagenda.co.uk)  
*Tel:* 01488 649 770 or 07802 886 307

*Contact:* Raymond Baker (Social Club)  
*Email:* [ray.douglasinstruments@gmail.com](mailto:ray.douglasinstruments@gmail.com)  
*Tel:* 07990 672 395

The Social Club is open on Friday and Saturday nights and on some evenings during the week when teams are playing at home. There is a wide selection of refreshments available including draught beers, wine, lager, Guinness and soft drinks. The club has a wide-screen TV, a darts board, a pool table, a full-size snooker table and an outside terrace.

The Hall is available to rent for events. Facilities include the bar, the kitchen, a cooker, cutlery and crockery, tables and chairs, dishwasher, staging and a skittles alley. It is currently used for yoga and pilates classes, the Table Tennis Club, the Garston Gallopers, the Valley Film Society and local billiards, pool, darts and cribbage leagues.

## • **East Garston Over-60s Coffee Club**

*Contacts:* Jackie Breadmore, 01488 648 851  
Val Montgomery, 01488 648 506  
Bonnie Pounds, 01488 648 242  
*Email:* [Jackie@breadmore.me.uk](mailto:Jackie@breadmore.me.uk)

This meets from 10.30am to noon on the last Friday of the month in the Village Hall. The committee comprises the three above-named people.

The purpose of the club is to enable people of our age group to meet for regular social interaction. Newcomers are welcome, often finding it helpful in integrating into village life. There is a small charge for refreshments and a monthly raffle.

Our highlights of 2023 were coach trips to The Watercress Line Steam Railway in June and to Winchester Christmas Market in November. We have a full programme of events planned for this year including a trip to National Trust Lacock, afternoon tea and skittles in the Village Hall and two interesting talks, including one from a Tower of London Beefeater.

## • **East Garston Bellringers**

*Contact: Maureen Velvick*

*Tel: 01488 648 294 or 07775 731 732*

*Email: maureen.velvick@outlook.com*

There is a ring of six bells in All Saints' Church, East Garston, some dating back nearly 400 years. The heaviest weighs 13cwt (646.4kg).

Our recently restored bells are proving very popular, not only locally but by bellringers from across the district and beyond. We are happily accepting visiting bands and you may hear them ring out across the village. This is quite a new experience for East Garston: previously our bells were considered too difficult to ring, which meant that ringers visiting the valley would only consider Lambourn and Great Shefford.

We held an open morning at the beginning of January and are pleased to say that we are now teaching a couple of enthusiastic learners, who are both progressing extremely well. We hope they will be able to join us for general practice and service ringing in the near future.

We are always looking for new ringers: for more information, please contact us or Nigel or Rebecca Gay, Sarah Montgomery, George Rabbitts, Hilary Re'em, Christopher Vaughan or Maureen Velvick.

We hold regular practices on Wednesdays, 7:30pm to 9pm: contact us for details. We often practise together in Lambourn and Great Shefford.



Bellringing is a service to the local community. We ring for regular services and events such as weddings and funerals but also commemorate and celebrate country-wide events.

Bellringing is also a sociable hobby. We visit some beautiful towns and villages, ring in historic churches and cathedrals, see areas of the church that are normally closed to the public and meet some very interesting people. Why not join us and find out for yourselves?

## • **East Garston History Society**

Contact: *Karen Sperrey*  
Email: *karen@kado.cloud*  
Tel: *07860 693 309*

There are no regular meetings, but talks are arranged as and when speakers can be found to do so. Anyone with ideas for future talks is warmly encouraged to make contact.

## • **Lambourn Valley Foodbank**

Contact: *Trevor Butcher*  
Tel: *01488 649 582*  
Email: *trevorandjanetbutcher@gmail.com*  
Web: *westberks.foodbank.org.uk*

The Lambourn Valley Foodbank was set up in 2012 by the places of worship in Lambourn, Eastbury and East Garston, in association with The Trussle Trust. Now under the heading of West Berks Foodbank, it continues to support the people in our valley.

It aims to help those in need of short-term support, providing food parcels with a minimum of seven days' non-perishable food donated by local people. These are provided against vouchers issued by care professionals. The Foodbank can also provide additional support to help people address the underlying cause of their situation.

During the last 12 months, residents of East Garston have donated 1,207kgs of food. We have three village collection points: All Saints

(collection box in the porch during services); Swanston in Station Road (box next to front door); and outside Priscilla's Kitchen (when open).

## • **Garston Gallopers**

*Contact:* Jackie Breadmore

*Email:* [squire@garstongallopers.co.uk](mailto:squire@garstongallopers.co.uk) (membership)  
[bagman@garstongallopers.co.uk](mailto:bagman@garstongallopers.co.uk) (bookings)

*Web:* [www.garstongallopers.co.uk](http://www.garstongallopers.co.uk)

Garston Gallopers is your local Morris-dancing side, meeting in East Garston Village Hall on Mondays from 8.00 to 9.30pm. Most of our dances are Cotswold, with a few Border-style dances. We use short sticks, long sticks or hankies and wear the village colours of green and purple.

We welcome new dancers, male and female, so drop in to one of our practices if you would like to have a go (it's also a good way of keeping fit). We'd also love to hear from musicians interested in playing for us.

Most dancing is done outdoors during the summer months, performing outside pubs or at fetes, parties, weddings and folk festivals. We have also entertained social groups such as the WI, care homes and local schools.

We have another busy summer of dancing planned including participation in folk events in Oxford, Winchester, Lyme Regis, Overton and Wantage. Our highlight will, of course, be the East Garston Fete on 7 July.

## • **East Garston Eco Group**

*Contact:* Penny Locke or Pat Glover

*Email:* [ecoeastgarston@gmail.com](mailto:ecoeastgarston@gmail.com)

*Tel:* 07768 981 658

East Garston Eco Group aims to share practical information about making ecologically-aware choices.

Last year we organised two Green Weekends, which not only showcased some of the brilliant work locally but also shared how we can help to reduce the environmental, biodiversity and inequality crises.

We would like to thank everyone who helped make these weekends so informative and enjoyable, in particular the support from East Garston Amenities which – with donations to the weekends and a grant from Veolia – have allowed us to buy a thermal camera and books on insulating and retrofitting. Please contact us if you would like to borrow these.

In line with the recommendations of the independent Climate Change Committee (set up as part of the Climate Change Act, 2008) we encourage everyone to estimate their carbon footprint (eg by using the WWF Footprint Calculator) and to plan how they will halve this by 2030. Over the past five years, Pat has reduced her footprint from 14 tonnes/year (the average for East Garston) to seven tonnes/year.

If you would like to find out more, please contact us, or come to our friendly meetings on the first Sunday of each month.

## • **All Saints' Church**

*Warden: Paul Tame; churchwarden.eastgarston@gmail.com; 01488 649 895*

*Secretary: Lise Cox; lisecox@gmail.com; 01488 648 853*

*Rev Julie Mintern; revjulie.mintern@lambournvalley.org; 01488 208 467*

The parish, together with those of Eastbury and Lambourn, forms the Benefice of the Lambourn Valley, with the Vicar based in Lambourn. The worship is central Anglican (Church of England).

Sung Holy Communion services are at 9am on the second and fourth Sundays. When there is a fifth Sunday, Holy Communion rotates around the three churches. There are also special family services such as Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festival and Benefice Services.

The church is unlocked for private prayer on Thursday to Sunday from 10am to 4pm (3pm in winter). If anyone wishes to visit at other times, please ring Paul or Lise who may be available to arrange access.

The PCC endeavours to ensure the Church is seen as part of the community and provides a refreshment marquee at local events and organises the safari supper and the village's Remembrance commemoration.

Our Grade II\* Listed Church remains a “heritage at risk” due to the state of the tower. If you can help with fundraising, please contact Paul.

If you would like to receive a copy of the weekly *Pews News* please email Julie to be added to the distribution list.

The Church aims to continue to be a place of welcome for worship and for our fellowship to be inclusive with mutual love and acceptance, to nurture existing congregations while providing activities to engage with young people and to be at the heart of village life. We are always on the lookout for any volunteers.

## • **East Garston Table Tennis Club**

Contact: Daniel O’Neill

Tel: 07391 137 146

Email: [danieloneill403@gmail.com](mailto:danieloneill403@gmail.com)

The Club organises weekly table tennis sessions (with two tables) every Wednesday and Thursday from 6.30pm to 8.00pm in the Village Hall. It aims to provide exercise, a laugh and encouragement for people of all ages.

The first two sessions are free for newcomers, whereafter there’s a charge of £1 per week. There’s no charge for under-18s or the unwaged.

## • **East Garston Quakers**

Contact: Penny Locke; Chris Whichelo

Email: [pennylocke64@gmail.com](mailto:pennylocke64@gmail.com); [cw0640@cwhichelo.plus.com](mailto:cw0640@cwhichelo.plus.com)

Tel: 07768 981 658; 07792 499 974

Quaker Meetings are from 11am to noon every Sunday in the Friends’ Meeting House. There is no programme or leader: anyone who feels called to speak may do so. After Meeting we have coffee and biscuits and a chat at which all are welcome you want to meet us informally.

We have an upright piano and if anyone would like to use it to perform to a small audience please contact us. We are continuing to making our garden wildlife-friendly with wild flowers and a brushwood habitat

and we have also started a grass labyrinth. If anyone would like to get involved in any of our activities, please contact Penny or Chris.

Individual members contribute their time to various causes as part of their witness to Quaker ideals, ranging from environmental projects to volunteering at community events. We also collect food donations for Lambourn Junction and knitted squares to be made into blankets.

The Meeting House is available for hire and includes a kitchenette, crockery, toilets and a pleasant garden.

## • **L.O.FITT**

*Contact:* Lisa O'Neill  
*Email:* [lisaoneill7@outlook.com](mailto:lisaoneill7@outlook.com)  
*Tel:* 07789 361 924

Circuit class (in the Village Hall in winter and the Jubilee Meadow when it's light enough) using body weight or equipment with lots of options to adapt exercises. Contact Lisa for details.

## • **Valley Film Society**

*Contact:* Penny Locke  
*Email:* [info@valleyfilmsociety.org](mailto:info@valleyfilmsociety.org)  
*Tel:* 07768 981 658  
*Web:* [valleyfilmsociety.org](http://valleyfilmsociety.org)

Valley Film Society shows films across a wide range of genres. We also aim to show a children's film each season, usually on a weekend afternoon. After many successful years, we are now in our eighteenth season and our aim is to continue to show a varied range of films.

Films are shown in East Garston Village Hall (which has disabled access), usually on the first Tuesday of the month from October to June. We have now introduced a matinee screening as well as the evening film. The matinee is at 2.30pm with doors opening at 2pm. Tea and cake are available to buy before the film. The evening screening is at 7.30pm; the doors and bar are open from 7pm. Meal orders are taken at the door

up to 7.20pm to be delivered during the interval. We have a four-metre-wide screen with digital 5.1 surround-sound, Blu-ray/DVD, tiered seating and a convivial atmosphere.

Membership costs £32pa. You can join at any film showing or online via our website. Guests pay £6 per film.

## • **4LEGS Community Radio**

Contact: *Chris Capel*

Email: *studio@4legsradio.org.uk*

Tel: *07834 893 251*

Web: *4legsradio.org.uk*

Now in its sixth year, 4 LEGS Community Radio continues to provide a valuable service to the Lambourn Valley community.

We broadcast on Fridays and Saturdays, covering a wide range of local topics and news, gardening tips, racing news, sport, interviews, home and professional advice, wildlife and cooking as well as great music from local presenters including ex-Radio Two and Radio London DJ Pete Brady and ex-GWR DJ Andy Westgate.

4LEGS has continued to support local charities and promote local businesses and organisations by providing them with their own slots in the schedule. In return, many are providing much-needed funds to help with operational costs.

If you would like to help 4LEGS Radio to continually improve its service to the community, a project has been set up on The Good Exchange where you can make a donation. Just look for “Funding support for West Berkshire Community Radio Station” on [thegoodexchange.com](http://thegoodexchange.com).

4LEGS would love to hear from anyone interested in being part of the team either as a presenter, a researcher or to help with social media. You can listen live or listen again at any time via [4legsradio.org.uk](http://4legsradio.org.uk) and listen live via Alexa, Sonos and the Radio Garden app.

## • Village Views

Contact: *Joanne Rabbitts*  
Email: *lornehillquilts@yahoo.co.uk*  
Tel: *01488 648 736*

*Village Views* is a monthly printed magazine, distributed to nearly 1,000 households throughout the Lambourn Valley and shared with friends and families all over the world. It's sold in local shops, pubs and cafés. Copies cost 50p each; you can also take out an annual subscription with your copy being delivered each month by one of our team of volunteers. Advertising in *Village Views* costs £60 per year.

Embracing the church and civic communities of the Lambourn Valley Benefice, it aims to provide an informative, entertaining and accessible guide to the Valley's villages and beyond. *Village Views* supports local groups, organisations and businesses and regularly publishes a wide range of articles written by local contributors.

## • Penny Post

Contacts: *Penny Locke; Brian Quinn*  
Emails: *penny@pennypost.org.uk; brian@pennypost.org.uk*  
Tels: *07768 981 658; 01488 648110*  
Web: *pennypost.org.uk*

*Penny Post* is run by long-time East Garston residents Penny Locke and her husband Brian Quinn. It provides information on most aspects of life across West Berkshire and the surrounding areas through a website, a weekly e-newsletter, a monthly e-newsletter for the Valley, social media and weekly slots on 4LEGS and Kennet Radio. *Penny Post* has nearly 5,000 subscribers, about 1,200 of whom are in the Valley.

*Penny Post* has always aimed to be constructive, informative, entertaining and topical. As well as promoting local businesses, it is also supportive of many charitable, voluntary and campaigning groups.

*Penny Post's* extensive coverage also includes news, humour, fiction, events, competitions, job adverts, recipes, courses and classes and items and properties for sale. Contributions of all kinds are welcomed.

# East Garston

*has an enviable location in wildest West Berkshire.  
It is a long, narrow parish of nearly 4,500  
acres in the far west of the county.*

*It is bordered by the parish of Lambourn to the west;  
by Letcombe Bassett (Vale of White Horse) to the north;  
by Fawley to the north and the northeast;  
by Great Shefford to the east;  
and by Hungerford to the south.*

*The village is located in the centre of the parish, in the  
valley of the river Lambourn. This winterbourne is fed  
from underground chalk aquifers and generally  
flows from the new year to the autumn.*

*The parish has about 240 dwellings and a population of  
about 525. The village itself sits just to the north of the  
unclassified road that runs along the Lambourn  
valley between Lambourn and Great Shefford.*

*Although the parish is mainly a residential area, there are  
several small firms, a number of farms and racehorse  
training stables and an agricultural machinery  
business. Racing is the primary industry  
in the valley, which has developed due  
to the ideal training conditions on  
the surrounding chalk downs.*

For more information on East Garston, visit [www.eastgarston-pc.gov.uk](http://www.eastgarston-pc.gov.uk)