

**The Bi-Monthly Meeting of East Garston Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on
Thursday 13th March 2025 at 7.00pm**

MINUTES

1. **Present:** Councillors – Deana Carpenter (Chairman/DC), Sue Tulloch (Vice-Chairman/ST), Annabelle Eyre (AE), Jonathan Rabbitts (JR), and Stephen Reschwamm (SR), Liz James (Clerk)

Apologies: Liam Robson (LR)

2. **Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest.
3. **Minutes of the last meeting:** The minutes of the meeting held on 9th January 2025 were unanimously confirmed and adopted.

4. **Questions/comments from members of the public:**

Pat Glover (PG) of the East Garston Eco Group reported on WBC Town and Parish Climate Forums from 15th January and 26th February. This included feedback from the Trust for Sustainable Living and the School Climate Ambassador Scheme joint meeting at the Living Rain Forest in February, the Kennet and Avon Canalside project, and a presentation from the Cosier Homes Advice Service which is run by the Centre for Sustainable Energy. PG asked the Climate Forum if anyone had experience of parcel lockers. WBC were supportive, but this is not currently one of their work-streams. Hamstead Norrey's shop were interested and may look into getting a parcel locker: PG will follow up with them.

PG also reported that Thames Water have replanted the saplings that were lifted from the Millenium Field and that West Berkshire Countryside Society published information about their work party on Tuesday 8 April in Village Views. PG will give this information to Lee for the Parish Newsletter and to Henry for the Parish website.

PG and JR will meet with Terry Davis on Tuesday 25th March at 2.30pm to agree the work plan.

ST reported on the progress to date with an EV charger at the Queens, and the lack of response from parcel locker companies

Henry Wilson (HW) reported on the revamp of the Parish Council website. The structure has been altered to be more user friendly, and a calendar of village events has been added. The next step is an update to the background/appearance and transfer to WordPress. The Councillors felt that the new website was a great improvement and expressed their gratitude to HW for his hard work.

5. **Planning Matters since last meeting:**

25/00095/5DAY	Front Street Fell this declining multi-stemmed ash tree to a 1m coppice stool, the tree has recently had a split out lower, smaller stem (which has been cleared from the road) and has decay in the lower stems. - Front Street East Garston Hungerford
25/00178/CERTP	The Parochial Church Council has obtained an Ecclesiastical faculty from the Consistory Court of the Diocese of Oxford for the repair of the Grade II listed cob wall and coping on the northern boundary of the churchyard in accordance with a specification by Robin Nugent Architects. Mon 07 Apr
PENDING:	
24/01651/FUL	2 Burfords, East Garston RG17 7HL Replacement dwelling. PC meeting on 12 th Sept 2024 had several Objections which were lodged with WBC.

Signed:



Date:

15/3/25

2 Burfords: The PC has been asked to comment on the revised plans that have been submitted. The PC discussed the revised plans and whilst they felt that these were an improvement to the original plans, the following objections were noted:

1. The property, although on a similar footprint, is doubling in size.
2. If planning is granted it could set a precedent for other applications in Burfords, leading to over development of the cul-de-sac which is currently all small bungalows.
3. This in turn removes a number of small, affordable houses in the village.

Action: It was agreed that the Clerk should submit these comments on the WBC planning portal before the deadline.

6. Receive reports:

District Councillor Clive Hooker reported on various elements of the 2025/26 Budget set by WBC in meeting held on 27th February. Councillor Hooker’s February report was circulated before the PC meeting and can be accessed on <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/downlandsparishcouncilreport>

Chairman’s report: DC advised the PC that the Chairman’s report for the Parish Newsletter has been submitted. There was a discussion of potential advertising in the newsletter as two companies have expressed interest in doing so - it was generally felt that this was not something that the council wished to pursue. **Action: Clerk to investigate whether advertising is permitted.**

DC also reported that a parishioner has expressed concern over a dead tree in the Jubilee Meadow. **Action: JR to look at the tree.** DC also reported that the garage used for storage of spare books for the Phone Box Library is shortly to become unavailable and that alternative storage is required. AE offered space in her garage. **Action: DC to speak to Shelley Benson about the books and to liaise with AE regarding transferring the books.**

Clerk’s report: The Clerk reported that an East Garston Speed Watch group has been created with the Clerk acting as co-ordinator. The group requires two additional members before sites can be requested and next steps taken. ST and SR volunteered. **Action: Clerk to send ‘invite’ to ST and SR once received from TVP.** A proposal from WBC regarding devolving to the PC the administration of letters regarding nuisance and obstruction (in particular overhanging vegetation) was discussed. Those present felt that EG has no need for a new system. **Action: Clerk to communicate this to WBC.** The Clerk reminded the council that CIL payments have a 5yr expiration date, £1,705.47 remains from 2021 CIL payment, which will need to be utilised before May 2026. The Clerk also reported on proposed interest rate change from Unity Bank, and a small increase to the cost of Scofell contract for the coming year. Those present agreed that both changes were acceptable. **Action: Clerk to sign and return new Scofell contract.**

The Clerk also alerted the council to an overdue invoice from March 2024 which has just been received. **Action: Clerk to contact the company for further information.**

9. Finance and Compliance:

1. Payments since last meeting:

Name	Goods/Service	Amount incl VAT	Approved
Unity Bank	Service charge	6.00	
E James	Salary – Jan		ST/DC
Tactical	Dog waste – Jan	88.40	ST/DC
WBC	Library Contribution	525.00	ST/DC
E James	Salary – Feb		ST/DC
Tactical	Dog waste – Feb	88.40	ST/DC

Signed: 

Date: 15/5/25

Unity Bank	Service charge	6.00	
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2. To be paid by next meeting

X-net	Email Forwarding	20.00
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Current Account	£ 5,740.19
Deposit Account	£ 15,220.44
TOTAL	£ 20,960.63

10. Jubilee Meadow:

JR reported that there is overgrown vegetation that needs to be addressed, particularly dogwood and overgrown hedges. **Action: JR to organise a small work party to address these issues.**

11. Millenium Field & Village Maintenance:

JR reported that he has organised for hedge cutting to take place and will provide the Clerk with an invoice when available. DC informed the PC that a request has been received from the Allotment Association for a donation towards the cost of refurbishing the equipment storage container which has fallen into disrepair. The Allotment Association has applied for Match Funding for this. No funds for grants have been allocated in the budget for 2025/26 but those present felt that there may be an opportunity to utilise CIL funds for a small donation. **Action: Clerk to investigate whether a donation to the Allotment Association's container refurbishment project can be made from CIL money.**

12. Annual Parish Meeting:

ST reported that Clive Cox has agreed to be the guest speaker at the Annual Parish Meeting on 10th April. **Action: DC to ask Brian Quinn to advertise this in the upcoming Parish Newsletter.**

13. Any other business:

ST reminded the PC that it is the 80th anniversary of VE day on 8th May. EGA is meeting to discuss ways in which this could be marked in the village. ST alerted JR that celebrations may include the lighting of beacons on 8th May.

The meeting was concluded at 8.30pm

Date of next meeting Annual Parish Meeting 10th April 2025

2025 meeting dates:

8th May Annual General Meeting
10th July
11th September
13th November

Signed: 

Date: 15/5/25