
Notes of the annual parish meeting held on Monday 22nd April 2024, 7.30pm at Evenley Village Hall

Present: cllr Matt Brown, cllr Spencer Burnham, cllr Paul Crompton, Cathy Ellis (chairman), cllr Jean Morgan, cllr Jeff Peyton-Bruhl, cllr Charles Reader, Cathy Knott (clerk), 13 presenters and 20 members of the public

1. Welcome

Cathy Ellis, chairman welcomed everyone.

2. Confirm the minutes of the virtual meeting held on Wednesday 24th April 2023

The minutes were agreed and signed.

3. Chairman's report

Welcome everyone. It is sometime since we've held an open Annual Parish Meeting so its nice to see you here tonight. The purpose of this is for us to tell you what we've been up to, to meet some of the other contributors to village life here in Evenley, put faces to names and give you an opportunity to raise any issues you may wish to with us all here tonight. With that in mind, please welcome our newest councillor, Matt Brown.

So what have we, Evenley Parish Council been doing over the last twelve months. Well it would be fair to say the year was dominated again by the planning application for one of the UK's largest anaerobic digesters to be located just off Barley Mow roundabout here in our rural parish. This came to a head in December when the planning officer recommended the strategic planning committee approved the application. After lots of behind the scenes stuff, two residents, our district councillor Rebecca and I gathered nervously at the meeting to argue our case against it. I'd been told that it would be good to get some residents there to support and asked Jeff to help. The room was packed and I am sure this had a huge impact so a big thank you to everyone who turned out. As you know the recommendation was overturned and the committee voted to refuse the application. Sadly we don't believe this is the end and indeed last week, contractors for Acorn were blocking residents driveways at Barleymow. It is highly likely Acorn will appeal the decision so we will need to pull out the stops again. We have a very small team working on this but I'd like to ask for more help please; when the time comes, everyone who objected will be asked to do so again and at that time, I believe we need a cohesive approach. I suggest we call another meeting once we know what sort of appeal we will be facing and strengthen our team and our approach accordingly. If you think you can help, please let me know. And if anyone is thinking, well will it make a difference? Let me tell you it will. And what's more, I have it on great authority (Chris Scott, Hamptons) that should the application be approved, we can expect at least a 10 per cent down turn in the value of our homes and a significant delay in selling our properties should we need to. So we must all pull together to continue to fight this.

On to other matters: we are now two years into our three year action plan and on target. Our programme of maintenance and repair for the Green is going well and we've already seen a difference. The wettest Winter for years and a contractor who is struggling to keep up hasn't helped hence the mess of grass last weekend, but this is a small issue which will be resolved by the end of this week.

We've had a grand tidy at the allotments and created a few smaller plots, which has helped reduce our waiting list and expanded the growing areas. And a big thank you to Charles here who has removed all the waste and cut back the hedges and overgrown areas.

We investigated the value and need for electric vehicle charging points in Evenley and concluded its one for the back burner at present. We've had two memorial benches made and fitted them ourselves on the Green and successfully applied for a grant from EKFB to buy a Coronation bench which, at a resident's suggestion, we fitted at the entrance to Lawyers Close. We took down a dead cherry tree in School Lane and have planted two new ones there and recently put a guard around the tree on the village green. Bat boxes have been installed in the trees at Evenley Common and we continue to trim that periodically and plant and maintain the boxes at the entrances to the village: in fact they are about to get a mini-makeover!

We organised and yet again had a great turnout for a tidy-up in St George's churchyard. The last few efforts have made a real impact and the team there are enormously grateful; thank you everyone who helped.

Event-wise, we organised Remembrance Sunday with the church, Christmas singing around the tree and a big music event, which I think you all enjoyed last May, to celebrate the King's Coronation. We are resting that this year as Evenley Matters is organising a fete but plan to bring it back in 2025.

To commemorate the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings, we are organising an evening of lighting lanterns and we look forward to your support and involvement in this.

Currently we are working on a fingerpost sign for the corner of the green opposite the pub which will direct people to Evenley Wood Garden, the church and more. We are also looking at replacing the bus shelter and are redesigning our website to be simpler, less cluttered and easier to navigate. This will be launched in the next month or so and will tie in with new email addresses for all councillors.

In between all of this, there's lots of meetings with other councils and HS2. Planning applications to look at and constant lobbying and liaising with Northants Highways and National Highways over signage, diversions, repairs and drainage. And there's the writing of your quarterly newsletter, which hopefully keeps you up to speed with what's going on, though the fastest way is to receive emails directly from Cathy, our clerk, so if you are not signed up to do so, please go and find Cathy tonight who will help you.

So I hope that gives you a flavour of what's we've been up to. Any questions/comments?

4. To receive reports

Michaela Simons, Neighbourhood Team Sergeant, Northamptonshire Police

Your local policing team is made up of dedicated neighbourhood officers and community support officers based in your community, supported by additional police officers from the wider area.

We work closely with local authorities, partner agencies, community leaders and residents to decide our policing priorities for your local area. By working together we aim to find solutions to long-standing local problems while maintaining our wider focus on reducing crime across Northamptonshire.

If you'd like to find out more about crime and policing activity in your community, sign up for [Northamptonshire Talking](#) and get updates direct to your inbox from your local neighbourhood team, as well as other policing news. You can also reply directly to your neighbourhood officers and have your say on local policing priorities.

Your Neighbourhood Team

To report an incident or crime please use the 101 non emergency number or 999 in an emergency – do not contact the team directly.

All reports must go via the Northants Police Control Room for an incident log to be created.

If you wish to discuss a particular issue, provide information or meet a member of the team please contact us via NT-SouthNorthantsBrackley@northants.pnn.police.uk

SGT 581 Michaela SIMONS - 07557 77904L - micki.simons@northants.police.uk
PCL649 Andreia MACKENZIE - 078L4 t47035 - andreia.mackenzie@northants.police.uk
PC 1313 Mohammed MIR - 07977 353939 - mohammed.mir@northants.police.uk
PCSO 7024 Colin BROOKS - 07557 778020 - colin.brooks@northarttg.police.uk

Twitter: @SthNorthantsNPT

Facebook: Daventry and South Northants Neighbourhood Policing Team

Col Phillips, USAF Commander, 501st Combat Support Wing, RAF Croughton

There are six US bases in the UK and RAF Croughton is home to the 422nd Air Base Group.

A new Group Commander will be arriving in early June to replace Col Spinelli who has retired.

We are still trying to find a replacement for Laura Haddy (community relations adviser) who left the MOD, but Amanda Hinchliffe (Chief Community Relations Adviser) has been overseeing the roles for both Croughton and Fairford and we are now re-establishing connections.

Development of the site is ongoing, and the main gate complex is slowly moving forward. Designs are being finalised and funds have been allocated but it will be another two to three years before work starts. This will give better security and safety in and around the site.

Other future projects include demolition of old facilities and renovation of the old school. There will be a £150 million investment in infrastructure but this won't make a difference to admissions which will remain the same.

We have a lot of important anniversaries coming up, including the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings and would be happy to be involved in community commemorations.

Most of our airmen live in the community with only ten percent living on the base. We are guests here and want to be part of the community; the more people we work with, the closer we're integrated into the neighbourhoods. It is beneficial for everybody to have as much contact within the local community as possible.

Cllr Rebecca Breese, WNC

See separate report.

Dave Butcher and Brenna Slade, HS2/EKFB

See separate report.

Mike Moran, Men in Sheds Brackley

See separate report.

Alison O'Hare, Marketing & Events, Evenley Wood Garden

Over the last few years, we have seen a period of transformation; members have increased and we now welcome c.20,000 visitors per year. We have recently taken on a lady to manage wellness and have regular mindfulness walks as well as running a forest school, and going forward we will have a community garden and planting programmes.

We have a good group of volunteers of all ages aiding multi-generational transfer of skills which will be complemented by the Men in Sheds programme.

Last year unfortunately we lost many trees due to Ash dieback. Fifteen thousand new trees have been planted (many by volunteers). You will soon see small areas develop including along some of the boundary lines. We are re-instating fencing and after all the wet weather are trying to divert rainfall.

If you would like to get involved in the Woods; please get in touch with Alison:

alison@evenleywoodgarden.co.uk.

For more information about the gardens, please visit www.evenleywoodgarden.co.uk

Philip Scaysbrook - Historical Society

See separate report.

Chris, Callam and Richard, Evenley Cricket Club

See separate report.

Jose Golding, St. George's Church

I am Church Warden for St. George's Church, and I am delighted to say that yesterday it was announced that following a successful interview, the Revd. George Frost from Whittlewood Benefice in Northamptonshire has been offered and has accepted the invitation to become Rector in the Astwick Vale Benefice - this is great news having been in Interregnum for two years.

We have mostly achieved two services a month which are quite well attended but we are always delighted to see new faces. Our thanks to Revd. Terry Richards and our Lay Reader Carrie for all their help with the services and pastoral care.

Our Parish Share to the Diocese is in the region of £18,000 per year - whilst we have been in Interregnum we haven't been paying the full amount, but we will be expected to next year. We are extremely grateful for those who help to support the Church.

Through the year we have events to help raise money for the Church and we also support many charities, namely; Baby Basics, Parkinson's, Air Ambulance, Brackley Food Bank, Red Cross, Combat Stress, HomeStart, Centrepont and Crisis Skylight.

Our biggest event and Fund Raiser is our Church Fete, which this year is on Saturday 6th July at 2:00pm. We very much hope to see you all there.

Thank you.

Zelda Carr, Speed Watch

See separate report.

Zelda Carr, Evenley WI

See separate report.

Guy Moody & Jean Morgan – Footpaths

Guy introduced himself as our footpath warden and explained he monitors the state of parish public footpaths and reports any obstructions or damage either to the landowner or the local council. Please contact Guy if you have an enquiry or would like to report an issue with a footpath in the parish; micro.moody@gmail.com

Cllr Jean Morgan advised she, Guy, cllr Charles Reader and the clerk had recently informally met to consider accessibility of public rights of way (PRoW). Please see the separate report.

Brian Sinclair, Bus Service Liaison

The route 500 bus passes 200 yards from our village and the first stage is to get this re-routed to include Evenley.

Please complete the survey as this will (hopefully) go towards improving local bus routes. Some routes have disappeared including our service to Brackley, Bicester and Banbury.

Please complete the survey online at: [Introduction : Brackley Area Public Transport Study - Individuals' Survey \(smartsurvey.co.uk\)](#) or blank copies are available at Forge Coffee where there is a dedicated box to leave your completed survey.

CLOSING DATE IS SUNDAY 5TH MAY 2024.

Matt Brown, ABILITY Bus

I have volunteered to be a driver for ABILITY which is a service free of charge to holders of a concessionary bus pass. The aim of ABILITY is to ensure anyone living in an isolated rural area has reliable access to essential services. They offer weekly buses into main shopping areas and operate on a flexible route, meaning they can pick you up closer to home, and drop you off where you need to be – meeting individual needs. More information can be found at: [Bus Service - Local Free Travel with ABILITY Northants cic \(abilitycic.org.uk\)](#)

Other news:

Evenley Matters is organising a summer fete again this year which will be held on 31st August (date TBC). If you would like to be involved or can help with putting up/taking down the tents etc, please contact: evenleymatters@yahoo.com

The chairman advised that to celebrate the reign of King Charles III, the parish council applied to the Cabinet Office for a free portrait which we would like to donate to the village hall.

5. Close of the meeting

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm.