

## Easton Parish Council

### Chairman's Annual Report 2017/18

**Our Role** on the Parish Council is to look after the interests of the village as a whole, to maintain certain services for the benefit of the community as well as representing the village to outside agencies.

**The Parish Councillors.** The Parish Council election took place three years ago. The Councillors are Richard Burton, Steve Thomason, Phil Trussell, Clive Wood and myself. We are normally elected for a period of four years and complete our third year now. However, because all District Council seats are up for election this year, the Parishes were required to follow suit. So, there will be an election this year if there are more than five people nominated. I would like to thank all the councillors for all their work on behalf of the village – they have been an excellent team.

**The Roads and Road Safety.** We continue to press the County Council to repair pot holes in the roads. They are more cash limited than ever before, but we do draw matters to their attention and repairs do get done even if it takes time. They recently did extensive repairs on the Stonely Road up the hill south of the village. A passing lorry snapped an arm off the sign on the corner of Stonely Road by Avens and we are getting that arm replaced.

**Footpaths.** Hartham Street – the path between our village and Grafham – remained closed to vehicles all year to try to stabilise the surface. It may be reopened to all vehicles at the end of April but there is still a section which is in very poor condition and so we will be pressing for the closure order to be continued until much later this year.

The main byway to Spaldwick is still in poor condition despite our spreading a considerable quantity of hardcore provided by John Jolly, at the entrance to the village. Following a visit from the County Council's Rights of Way Officer agreement was reached to stabilise the surface along the first 25 metres of the track. We intend to improve the signage to make it clear that motorcyclists are also prohibited in the closed section.

**The verges.** We have been very concerned about damage to the verges throughout the village. We have asked that the Mick George lorries, travelling to the pumping station at the top of the hill south of the village, should access the site via Spaldwick and Stow Longa, which they say they will attempt to do. These lorries are by no means the only vehicles causing damage and some damage has been considerable.

**The A14 Junction.** This remains a real hazard to all entering or leaving the village. The Highways Agency have not been helpful about replying to our letters requesting action to help but we shall continue to press them.

**Flood Prevention.** The brook was cleaned out again this autumn by the Alconbury and Ellington Drainage Board. Sadly, a large quantity of spoil was left on the banks, but the Drainage Board agreed to do some rectification work. They did deepen the brook and the speed of flow has increased which was very noticeable during the recent wet period.

**The Playing Field.** The climbing ladder has been completely refurbished and is now safe. The new bark chippings were spread in the summer and we are grateful to Geoff Messenger who replaced broken wooden edging of the play areas. The large Ash tree in the corner of the field was pollarded in February and we are now working on a programme of removing dead Elm trees during the course of the year.

**The Village Website.** We have recently obtained a new name for the village website. It is [www.eastonnpc.co.uk](http://www.eastonnpc.co.uk) Although it is now open, if it accessed it will transfer you to the old website so there is a little more work for us to do in order that the new website will work as we would wish.

**Planning Matters.** We continue to be consulted by the District Council on planning matters and we do our best to look carefully at all planning applications and to represent the views of people in the village as best we can. We only have the power to comment and do not have a 'final say' on planning matters – that power is reserved to the District Council.

**Residents.** Once again I would like to thank all those who either individually or in groups make a contribution to the appearance and to the social life of the village.

The Easton Fund and Social Committee have again organised a number of well attended and enjoyable social events. The organisation of these takes time and commitment from many people but they certainly provide great entertainment and promote great community spirit.

The Reputation of the Easton 'Big Breakfast' has certainly put this village on the map and has attracted large numbers every second month on a Saturday morning. These are great community events and bring people together, both from inside and outside the village. They are greatly enjoyed but do involve much work – thanks to all who work so hard to make them possible.

The Church Council continues to maintain our beautiful Church and to look after the Churchyard as well as organising events such as the quiz evening in January.

The Trustees of the Easton United Charities work hard to look after the assets of the Charities and distribute money within the village.

Anthea Beer is a very able Parish Clerk dealing most efficiently with correspondence, communications and the organisation of our council meetings. Brian Davis is the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and again keeps us well informed about crime and policing concerns in the area. Jenny Hyde types and maintains the excellent monthly newsletter, which is delivered by the Brand family.

My particular thanks go to many individuals who help to make the village look attractive by picking up litter dropped by passing motorists.

So to all the organisations and individuals who are involved in the village I say "Thank you" and I know that the whole village community appreciates all the work you do. The efforts you make continue to make Easton a very attractive village in which to live!

Mike Baker

March 2018



# EASTON FUND AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

## CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT – MARCH 2018

The Easton Fund and Social Committee held 3 events in 2017, assisted with a 4th event and, in conjunction with the PCC, prepared 6 Big Breakfasts.

On **11<sup>th</sup> June** Committee Members assisted Beth and Brian Davis at Brook House with an Open Garden and afternoon tea to raise money for Water Aid Charity in Africa and Asia. The weather was lovely and the garden very beautiful. It was a great success with over 50 people attending.

On **24<sup>th</sup> June** a Family Fun Day took place on the playing field with a BBQ, bouncy castle and a prize winning Treasure Hunt. There were also games for adults and children including the ever popular Welly Tossing. Once again we were lucky with the weather and we had a good turnout. Brian Davis prepared an excellent Treasure Hunt for the children with a list of questions about Easton with the answers all available within the village. Many thanks to Brian.

On **25<sup>th</sup> November** we held a Murder Mystery Event in the Church expertly written and produced by Committee Member Simon Malivoire. As well as the murder 50 guests enjoyed wine and a 2 course supper. The evening was great fun and the guests joined in enthusiastically with the Carol Concert part of the evening and later were excellent amateur detectives trying to decide who had murdered Clive, aka Mr White, by the lavatory door. The winner was Angie Smith. The murderer was of course Ed Sloper, the slick and slippery Mr Sapphire. (I feel I should add for the record that the Vicar, the Reverend Black, was a completely innocent party even though the murder took place in her Church.) We are looking forward to your next creation Simon. This event was expensive to put on, mainly because of the sound and light system required and the Social Committee subsidised the event by about £900 from existing funds. The evening was attended exclusively by Easton villagers and their families.

Our final event of the year took place on **10th December**; Mulled Wine and Mince Pies. This event is now held on the second Sunday in December to avoid clashing with the Christmas Fayre at Kimbolton which takes place on the

first Sunday of the month. The profit made was £283.00 which was a welcome addition to our funds. Many thanks to Peter Gould for making the Mulled Wine.

2017 saw the preparation and service of 6 Big Breakfasts. The profit from the Breakfasts in 2017 was approximately £1,187.00 which is a valuable contribution towards the £2,000 annual insurance bill for the Church. The Big Breakfast takes place on the second Saturday of every month the next one being on **12<sup>th</sup> May**. I would like to thank everyone involved for their considerable efforts.

This year we have a number of events planned and an events Calendar has been circulated. Our first event is assisting Beth and Brian who are opening their garden at Brook House on **27<sup>th</sup> May** to raise funds for the British Trust for Ornithology. As well as tea and cakes there will be a talk in the Church by an expert on the fly catcher. On **21<sup>st</sup> July** a Safari Supper around the village is scheduled with an RAF theme and on **12<sup>th</sup> August** at Belmont a full afternoon tea with all sandwiches, scones and cakes homemade. We have a new event on **13<sup>th</sup> October** at the Church called the Pudding Club consisting of a light supper and the chance to sample 7 different traditional puddings. Our usual Mulled Wine event will take place on the second Sunday being **10<sup>th</sup> December**.

Ed Sloper and Clive Wood are presently organising the purchase and installation of an Audio Visual System for use at EFSC and PCC events in the Church and this will enable us, amongst a whole host of uses, to screen films and organise talks and presentations. The installation has been made possible by a grant from the "wind turbine" fund.

I should like to thank all Committee Members for their huge efforts during the past year but especially our Treasurer, Karen Nesbitt-Farren for her meticulous recording of our finances and our very efficient secretary Ed Sloper. Both of them do a fantastic job and I am very grateful for their help and support. I would also like to thank the village generally for supporting our events.

The Social Committee stands at 13 but we are always delighted to welcome new Members. Please contact Ed, Karen or me if you would like to join us.

Kathy Yates Chairman



22nd March 2018

## EASTON NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

### REPORT FOR YEAR TO MARCH 2018

I am glad to say that I have received no reports of actual crimes in Easton this past year, though I continue to receive notice of burglaries and other incidents in the Ellington valley (recently at Stow Longa and Catworth).

There have however, been at least two cases in which damage has been inflicted on fencing (Avens and Eversden Cottage) and also on a parked car (John Hill) outside the church by passing vehicles. In none of these did the perpetrator own up, but luckily another driver saw the incident at Avens and gave the number of the lorry, as a result of which the company is paying for repairs and has sacked the driver.

There has been a noticeable increase in large delivery vans using the Easton-Stonely road in recent times; the 'gated road' notice at Bigram's Farm having no deterrent effect!

There have been several incidents of guard dogs from Picton's barns attacking village dogs on walks so that some dog-walkers are afraid even to use the Stonely Road now.

On a more positive note, Ray Ellis has had a stream of visitors and helpers while recuperating in hospital and care-homes in Huntingdon, Hartford and Peterborough and now at his home. And several people have also been visiting John and Brian Jolly who are both partly disabled.

Brian Davis

17/3/18



## **EASTON – GOOSEY CLOSE PLAYING FIELD REPORT 2017 -2018**

The replacement of one end of the 'Monkey Bridge' climbing frame was completed in 2015 and during the last year the other end was replaced at a cost of £901, following a recommendation from the inspection of the playing field equipment by Wicksteed Leisure. We also reviewed the state of the trees and I should like to thank Steve Thomason and Mike Baker for ensuring that a tree survey was completed which resulted in branches from some trees being cut and an Ash tree in the corner of the playing field being pollarded and left in a safe condition, which cost £714, with half of the cost being met by Easton United Charities.

The saplings planted in 2014 on the village road front of the playing field by Steve Thomason and Mike Baker are now showing encouraging signs of growing into a natural hedgerow.

I should like to express my thanks to Richard Burton for organizing the repair of the climbing frame, the weeding of the play area, the topping up of the play area with play bark and the cutting of the hedge around the playing field. I should also like to thank Geoff Messenger for repairing the wood surrounds of the play area.

The playing field continues to provide a leisure facility for the benefit of the village, as well as a venue for the hosting of outdoor village events and a car parking facility for major events held in St Peter's Church. This year we spent about £2600 on repairs and the upkeep of the playing field. We would welcome any suggestions for additional improvements which might also be eligible for funding from the Wooley Hill Wind Turbine Community Fund.