

Easton Parish Council

Chairman's Annual Report 2025/2026

The role of 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 current Councillors were elected in 2022 and have served for their total period of office – four years, therefore if more than five people put their names forward for nomination there will be elections on May 7th. The current Councillors are Pam Bell, Richard Burton, Steve Thomason, Clive Wood and myself.

Traffic Speeds

We again applied for the village to be a 20mph area but we were again told that other areas had greater priority and we were unlikely to be considered favourably in the next few years. The interactive sign as vehicles enter the village from the A14 works well and does have some effect on speed reduction. A year ago we invested in a solar panel which has worked well, preventing the need to change batteries every couple of months.

Development of the village

The District Council highlighted areas in the district which could be used for housing development and one of the areas was in Easton. The Parish Council opposed the idea of development alongside Easton Road between Crown Cottage and Belmont on a number of grounds and the District Council have dropped the idea.

The State of the Roads

This has worsened considerably this year. We saw some improvements at the A14 junction but potholes elsewhere seem to take the County Council longer to repair.

Stonely Road south of the village is in a very poor state and the whole surface is breaking. We constantly report poor surfaces but the county has been noticeably slower to repair them.

The A14

The Highways Agency have resurfaced the central reservation at the Easton Junction but the repainted arrows for vehicles travelling eastbound and entering the village do cause some concern and we intend to discuss this with the route manager. As the volume of traffic on the road has steadily increased over the last few years, so joining and leaving the road has become more difficult.

There is still no money available to provide a deceleration lane on the west bound carriageway or to provide a separate road to Spaldwick.

Flood Prevention

No homes were flooded this year and the Brook did not overflow at any time. It is maintained by the Alconbury and Ellington Drainage Board.

Fortunately, the new Bypass ditch to protect Stonely Road properties has not been tested yet!

Weir Lane

The Parish Council Has put in a claim to own this piece of land which is regarded as a public right of way. We are waiting to hear from the Land Registry.

The Land where Chapel Lane meets The Lane

This corner has become unsightly due to parking on the grass and the Parish Council will be improving this area shortly. We have had the offer of a mini digger to landscape the area prior to planting some trees. This area is owned by Highways and we have had their permission to carry out planting.

The Playing Field

Playing equipment is inspected annually. This year fresh bark was purchased to improve the surface of the play area and one of the small rides was repositioned and re-concreted in.

The Coffee Morning

A remarkable new initiative has been “The Coffee Morning”, on the first Monday of each month. It is remarkable because it has proved immensely popular and is very well attended. Thanks are due to the group of enthusiastic ladies who prepare the food. Money raised is to be used to improve the heating in the Church.

Village Defibrillator

Despite a couple of requests for volunteers to re-house the defibrillator, no offers were forthcoming and so our thanks go to Pam Bell who kindly agreed to have it placed on her outside wall in Broadweir. The church porch was considered as an option but the Parish Council felt it posed too much of a security risk.

IT Strategy

A few years ago the government set out new rules about how local authorities should manage their IT resources; data, websites, and email. Parish Councils were included in this governance and many smaller authorities struggled with the resource to put this all in place. The cut off date for this work was March 2026, and we are pleased to say that this is all now in place for Easton.

Grass Cutting

We are grateful to Anthony Abbs for his maintenance of the village verges and to Derek Jolly who has cut the grass on the playing field.

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

The Easton Fund and Social Committee have again organised a number of enjoyable social events. Their organisation of these takes time and commitment from many people but they certainly provide great entertainment and promote great community spirit. The “Big Breakfast” continues to great acclaim from many both within and outside the village.

The Church Council continues to maintain our beautiful church and look after the churchyard as well as organising events.

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, competent and hardworking Parish Clerk, dealing most effectively with correspondence, communications and the organisation of our council meetings. Dave Hindmarsh is the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator where his police background is immensely useful. Janet Thomason continues to produce the village newsletter – thanks are due to her and to Angie Smith who delivers it.

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

Mike Baker

March 2026