

**The Annual General Meeting of East Garston Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on
Thursday 15th May 2025 at 7.00pm**

MINUTES

1. **Present:** Councillors – Deana Carpenter (Chairman/DC), Annabelle Eyre (AE), Liam Robson (LR), Jonathan Rabbitts (JR), and Stephen Reschwamm (SR), Liz James (Clerk)

Apologies: Sue Tulloch (ST), Cllr Clive Hooker

2. **Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest.
3. **Minutes of the last meeting:** The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13th March 2025 were unanimously confirmed and adopted, as were the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 10th April 2025.

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

Pat Glover (PG) of the East Garston Eco Group reported on the WBC Town and Parish Climate Forum from 30th April. The forum had information on an upcoming Fuel Poverty grant and the third round of the annual Solar Together bulk buying scheme, which opens for applications on 2nd June. There were presentations from [Action for the River Kennet](#), and also from the [Wild Trout Trust](#) about the diversity of river habitat needed for healthy trout, and the importance of riparian owners managing their river banks appropriately.

The Millennium Field - The saplings planted by Thames Water have not survived the recent dry weather. Following the work of the West Berkshire Countryside Society the PC agreed that Pat could prepare a sign, to be approved at the next PC meeting, to let visitors to the field know how the area is being managed for nature.

Action: Clerk to ask ST to contact Thames Water to ask that the saplings are re-planted in the Autumn.

Other - An InPost parcel locker is now available at the Post Office in Great Shefford. PG recommended [Alisa's Walks and Talks](#) as a speaker for the next Parish Meeting. PG asked if consideration could be given to planting more trees in the parish. Trees can help reduce flooding, increase biodiversity, and store carbon. More information about the role trees play is available on the [Woodland Trust](#) website.

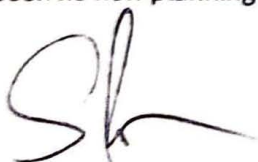
Action: Clerk to investigate the possibility of 'Alisa's Walks and Talks' as the guest speaker at next year's APM.

Mark Rogers (MR) asked the PC to consider topping/reducing the height of the trees on the southern edge of the Jubilee Meadow which border the garden of Meadow Cottage. The PC asked MR to liaise with JR regarding which trees could potentially be reduced in height, and to arrange a quote which could be considered at the next meeting. DC reminded the PC that the 2025/26 budget is very tight, and there is unlikely to be funds available for this work.

Action: JR to liaise with MR. Quote to be discussed at next meeting.

5. **Election of officers & Acceptance of Office:** DC proposed SR as Chairman, seconded by AE. SR was elected by unanimous vote. DC was elected as Vice-Chair. Acceptance of Office forms signed.
6. **Planning Information since the last meeting:**
There had been no new planning applications since the last meeting.

Signed:



Date:

15/5/25

PENDING:	
24/01651/FUL	2 Burfords, East Garston RG17 7HL Replacement dwelling. Revised plans were reviewed at the PC meeting of 13 th March, objections were lodged with WBC.

Action: AE to consider the Parish Development Plan.

7. Receive reports:

District Cllr Clive Hooker was not in attendance but his most recent report can be found here:

<https://www.westberks.gov.uk/downlandsparishcouncilreport>

Chairman's Report:

- DC reported that although it is permissible to have advertising in Parish publications, the PC was not in favour of this. The tight turn-around for production of this year's Parish newsletter made proof reading difficult and it would be better if it could be published well in advance of the APM.
Action: Clerk to remind PC at Jan meeting of the need to start work on the newsletter.
- DC also reported that the 2025/26 budget was very tight. The Wantage Bus no longer serves EG so it was agreed that the PC would not contribute. Funds to be assessed throughout the year.
- DC reported that the Phone box is in dire need of renovation and circulated a breakdown of potential costs for repainting and repair.

Action: LR agreed to start the cleaning process. Clerk to check whether CIL funds could be utilised for this project.

Clerk's Report:

- Clerk reported that a donation of £460 has been contributed to the Lambourn Library as a share of the fund for extended opening hours.
- The internal audit has been completed, and the report was positive. There were some suggestions which will be actioned for the current financial year (Bank reconciliations to be approved at bi-monthly meetings, Risk Register to be reviewed annually, Summary of receipts and payments by category to be displayed on website).
- CIL forms have been submitted to WBC for 2023/24 and 2024/25, and these are available on the website.

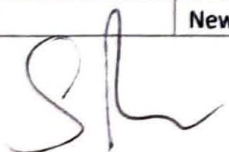
8. Finance and Compliance:

a) Payments & receipts

Payments since the previous meeting:

Name	Goods/Service	Amount incl VAT	Approved
X-Net	Email forwarding	24.00	DC/ST
Tactical Facilities	Dog waste – March	88.40	DC/ST
Autela	Payroll services	94.56	DC/ST
E James	Salary – March	271.61	DC/ST
Unity Bank	Service Charge	6.00	DC/ST
Scofell	Grounds Maintenance – March	320.81	DC/ST
X-Net	Email forwarding	24.00	DC/ST
Goodman & Goodman	Hedge cutting	180.00	DC/ST
WBCS	Donation Conservation Work	100.00	DC/ST
PJS	Mountfield lawnmower Servicing	141.80	DC/ST
E James	Salary – April	271.61	DC/ST
Tactical Facilities	Dog waste – April	88.40	DC/ST
Penny Post	Newsletter publishing	295.00	DC/ST

Signed:



Date:

10/7/25

BALC	Subscription fee 2025/26	139.17	DC/ST
Chris McGowan	Audit Fee 2024/25	90.00	DC/ST
Scofell	Grounds Maintenance – April	320.81	DC/ST
WBC	Library contribution	460.00	DC/ST
	TOTAL	£2,916.17	

To be paid before the next meeting:

E James	Clerk's expenses – stationary McAfee subscription (2 years) Microsoft 365 Subscription	268.75
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Received since the previous meeting:

HMRC	VAT Sept – April	705.12
WBC	Precept 1 st payment	5250.00
	TOTAL	£5,955.12

Bank balances:

Current Account	£ 8,773.14
Deposit Account	£ 15,316.34
TOTAL	£ 24,089.48

Funds breakdown:

General Fund	£6,059.39	
Special & Emergencies	£6,000.00	frozen
CIL Fund	£1,205.47	
Open Space Dev.	£3,934.36	
Defib. Fund	£390.26	
Playground Equipment	£6,500	

- b) Certificate of Exemption: The Certificate of Exemption was approved and signed.
- c) Annual Governance Statement: The Annual Governance Statement was completed and signed.
- d) Accounting Statements: The accounting statements for 2024/25 were approved and signed.
- e) Elector's Rights: The Clerk proposed Tuesday 3rd June to Monday 14th July for the Notice of Public Rights. These dates were accepted by the council and notice will be given accordingly.
- f) Fixed Asset Register: It was agreed that the new Toddler Playground equipment (£12,000) would be added to the fixed asset register.
- g) Insurance Register: The replacement value of Infant Play Equipment to be increased to £12,000 on the insurance register to reflect the cost of the new play equipment. Zurich insurance to be renewed.
- h) Risk Register: The risk register was accepted and signed.
- i) Annual Subscription review: the PC agreed to continue subscriptions to CCB, BALC, SLCC, and CPRE.

9. **Jubilee Meadow:** Broken equipment and stinging nettles around the toddler equipment were discussed. Stinging nettles around the toddler equipment have been removed during the installation of the new climbing frame. Nettles around perimeter of junior equipment are difficult to remove due to fencing.

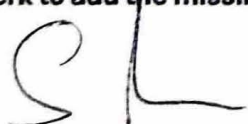
Action: Clerk to ascertain detail of Scofell contract. JR to consider methods for controlling stinging nettles.

10. Village Maintenance & Millenium Field – JR

JR reported that the grit bin at the top of Humphrey's Lane is missing, possibly moved or stolen.

Action: Clerk to add the missing bin to the newsletter in case it has been seen.

Signed:



Date:

10/7/25

11. **Any other business:** The PC would like to thank John Hunt for his efforts in stemming the Jubilee Meadow, it is much appreciated.

The meeting was concluded at 8.15pm

Date of next meeting **Thursday 10th July**

2025 meeting dates:

11th September

13th November

2026 meeting dates:

15th January

12th March

16th April Annual Parish Meeting

14th May Annual General Meeting

Signed:



Date:

10/7/25