
East Garston Annual Parish Newsletter 2020

This information was compiled in April 2020 using information provided by the organisations themselves. This document will not be updated but will be replaced by a new one in the spring of 2021.

For information about the organisations' current activities and events please contact those mentioned at the head of each entry. The email addresses and weblinks in this document are clickable.

Further information about these groups – and other matters of interest to residents – will also be given publicity in Village Views, East Garston News, 4 Legs Radio and Penny Post: please see the relevant entries for how to submit information to or subscribe to these.

Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report

The past year has certainly had its ups and downs.

Last year was predominantly dry before the rain started in the autumn leading into severe flooding for parts of the country. Unfortunately this invariably, in the Lambourn valley, leads to sewage problems. Thames Water appears to have been so over-stretched that it couldn't provide East Garston with any tankers to assist the perforated sewage pipeline throughout the last few weeks. Apparently the problem must be severe in East Garston now, because even as I write, we appear to have an almost 24-hour tanker-sewage relief from our pumping station at the bottom end of the village. Better late than never, I suppose!

As if this wasn't enough, Coronavirus appears to have taken over the world with severe practical and financial problems everywhere. The Parish Council has been very pleased and proud of our village community volunteers who have put themselves forward to help with shopping, medical needs and even just a telephone chat with older people who have not so many relatives to keep their spirits up.

In order for Government policy to work in fighting this virus, the Parish Council urges people to follow guidelines. Whilst all functions and gatherings have been postponed or cancelled over the next few months, hopefully we will be seeing light at the end of the tunnel before too long.

Returning to normal village business, we have two new flood wardens, Henry Matysek and Nigel Gay who have taken over from Steve Velvick and Mark Brock.

We are very pleased to announce our new Parish Clerk, Alison Blackmore. Alison is replacing Alan Breadmore, who more than earned his retirement from the post. Alan will continue to run the East Garston website.

We now have a new West Berkshire Councillor in Clive Hooker who represents the Downlands area which is primarily a group of villages to

the east of East Garston.

David Ruse is at present negotiating for a flashing speed-warning sign for use on the main road by the village. Perhaps this will help to slow traffic a little.

We are still supporting two local services, the Wantage bus and Lambourn Library – remember, looking at screens all the time is not good for you!

Although unfortunately shut at the moment, Priscilla's Kitchen is a delightful place to meet, have a coffee and something delicious to eat. Please support it, as many of you already do. It's a very positive addition to the village.

Judging by the number of dogs in the village, the dog-handling lessons with Rhona Wilkins might be useful to some people – remember, it is right on your doorstep.

Finally a very big thank you to our clean-up boys; Richard Talmage, David Taylor, Dave Knight, Trevor Butcher and, last but not least, Chris Tonge.

I would also like to thank my fellow Councillors, and Alan and Alison, who have all given due care and attention to village matters.

For information about the activities of the Parish Council and life in and around the village, East Garston is singularly blessed (see p4).

I would now like to hand over the remainder of this newsletter to the various organisations which help make East Garston such a delightful place to live. Our thanks to them all for their energy and enthusiasm over the last 12 months. The Parish Council wishes them, and any other organisations which may emerge, every success for the future.

Jonathan Rabbitts

Chairman

East Garston Parish Council

01488 648736

Local information

- Information about the Council can be found by visiting East Garston's excellent website at www.eastgarston-pc.gov.uk
- In addition, about once a month the Parish Council publishes on behalf of *Penny Post* an e-newsletter, *East Garston News*, one of the best of its kind in the area. To subscribe, email penny@pennypost.org.uk. If you wish to comment on anything in *EGN* or submit anything for publication, contact eastgarstonpc@gmail.com.
- *Penny Post* (see also below) publishes a monthly e-newsletter for the Valley of the Racehorse and a weekly e-newsletter for the wider area.
- *Village Views* (see also below) publishes a monthly magazine covering Lambourn, Eastbury, Lambourn Woodlands and Woodlands St Mary as well as East Garston.
- 4 LEGS Radio (see also below) broadcasts via the internet, currently on Fridays and Saturdays.

Note: *due to the current government regulations as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, most of the organisations mentioned here have wholly or partly suspended their activities or are only operating online. When matters start to return to normal, this will be publicised in Penny Post, Village Views, East Garston News, 4 LEGS Radio and by the organisations themselves.*

East Garston Amenities

Contact: Freddie Tulloch

Email: freddie@ftulloch.com

Tel: 01488 649590

The objective of the EGA is to support the East Garston Parish community and to orchestrate a variety of different events during the year that raise valuable funds to be used on community projects.

The big one for us is the Village Fete. Last year, although it came to an abrupt end when the rain fell, we had another great day: lots of different stands, plenty to eat and drink, the raffle and of course the Garston Gallopers. For others it was all about taking part, whether it was the children's races, egg catching, fancy dress, the dog show or in the produce tent. As always, the competition was fierce but with plenty of prizes on offer, most people went home feeling like a winner.

Other highlights include the annual Christmas Fun Run and the Bridge Championships as well as trips to the theatre – last year we went to *The Importance of Being Earnest* at the Watermill.

We encourage those within the village to come to us with their ideas as the EGA is always looking for new projects, outings or events that continue to give something for everyone.

Through the year the EGA supports a number of East Garston projects (the over-60s Christmas lunch and Bonfire Night, for example) and helps with the maintenance of the village and its landmarks.

If you would like to be involved with the EGA, or to take part in any of our activities or if you have your own ideas for an event please contact me on 649590 or email freddie@ftulloch.com. Similarly, if you think that there is a worthy cause within the community that requires funds, please do not hesitate to contact me.

All Saints Church

Bob Briant; bobbriant196@gmail.com; 01488 648646

Dawn Tonge; dawnmarytonge@gmail.com; 01488 648370

Karen Sperrey; karen@kado.cloud; 01488 648365

Rev Julie Mintern: revjulie.mintern@lambournvalley.org, 01488 208467

The parish, together with those of Eastbury and Lambourn, forms the Benefice of the Lambourn Valley, with the Vicar based in Lambourn. The worship is central Anglican (Church of England)

Sung Holy Communion services are currently at 9.00am on the second and fourth Sundays each month. When there is a fifth Sunday, Holy Communion service rotates around the three churches and the singing is led by the Lambourn church choir. There are occasional Choral Evensong services at 6.30pm, also rotating. Special family services, such as on Mothering Sunday and the Harvest Festival, are normally held at noon. All services have been suspended during the pandemic.

The church is mostly kept locked during the week but is open every Saturday from 10am to 4pm. If anyone wishes to have access at other times please ring Bob or Dawn who will be pleased to unlock it. The church is closed and there is no public access during the pandemic.

The PCC has endeavoured to ensure that the church is seen to be part of the community and has provided a refreshment marquee at village events such as the village fete, Garstonbury and the local charity bluebell walk. Another successful community activity organised by the church in the summer is a safari supper.

The church has traditionally organised the Remembrance commemoration for the village and encourages young musicians with groups performing at services on Mothering Sunday, at the Harvest Festival and on Christmas Day.

The church aims to continue to be a place of welcome for worship and for our fellowship to be inclusive with mutual love and acceptance, to nurture existing congregations while providing activities to engage with young people and to be at the heart of village life.

Garston Gallopers

Contact: Jackie Breadmore

Emails: squire@garstongallopers.co.uk (membership)
bagman@garstongallopers.co.uk (bookings)

Web: www.garstongallopers.co.uk

Garston Gallopers is your local Morris dancing side, meeting in East Garston Village Hall most Mondays from 8.00 to 9:30pm. For those of you familiar with Morris styles, most of our dances are Cotswold, with a few Border-style dances. We use short sticks, long sticks or hankies and wear the village colours of green and purple.

We welcome new dancers (male and female) so drop into one of our practices if you would like to have a go. It's fun and an excellent way of keeping fit. The Social Club bar is open for much-needed refreshment.

Most of our dancing is done outdoors during the summer months, performing at fetes, parties, weddings and at Days of Dance at the invitation of other Morris sides. We have also entertained social groups such as the WI and local schools.

Our 2019 highlight was the celebration of the 10th anniversary of our formation which included the brewing of our own Anniversary Ale (thanks to Indigenous Brewery In Chaddleworth) and a cake in the shape of a carousel (thanks to Mickey at Simply Delish Lambourn.)

We also enjoyed a trip to the seaside for the annual All Things Morris in Ilfracombe where we met other Morris sides from all over the country. Another special occasion was the White Horse Festival where we danced at the top of White Horse Hill to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of Icknield Morris. We also attended several local village fetes (including East Garston's) and met up with various Morris sides to dance in the summer evenings outside favourite pubs.

We did have a busy programme planned for 2020 but due to the coronavirus situation this has had to be abandoned. Practices will resume when things improve and we hope to manage a few dance-outs later in the year.

East Garston Local History Society

Contact: Karen Sperrey
Email: karen@kado.cloud
Tel: 01488 648365

The aims of the Society are to organise talks and events about local history, to arrange visits to places of historical interest, to support local historical initiatives and to respond to requests for information about local people and places from the past.

Spurred on by collating and arranging a wide range of items and documents in 2018 for an exhibition marking the centenary of the end of WWI, further events were planned for 2020. A speaker had been secured and it was hoped that the 75th VE Day could lead to another exhibition but these have been put on hold due to Covid-19.

The main aim in 2020 remains to form a new committee of interested individuals and arrange at least one talk this year.

Lambourn Valley Foodbank

Contact: Trevor Butcher
Tel: 01488 649582
Web: westberks.foodbank.org.uk

Working in association with West Berks Foodbank and The Trussle Trust, the Lambourn Valley Foodbank was set up in 2012 by the places of worship in Lambourn, Eastbury and East Garston.

Its aim is to help families and individuals in need of short-term support to get them through a difficult period in their lives. We provide food parcels with a minimum of three days' non-perishable tinned and dried food that has been donated by people in our local community. These parcels are provided against vouchers issued by care professionals. The Foodbank can also provide additional support to help people address the underlying cause of their situation

During the last 12 months, the residents of East Garston have kindly

donated 570kgs of food which, as the Lambourn distribution centre is closed due to Covid-19, is then taken to the main Newbury Foodbank.

We have two collection points in the village: All Saints Church (all day Saturday or during services, collection box in the porch); and Swanston in Station Road (collection box next to the front door).

East Garston Bellringers

Contact: Maureen Velvick

Email: Maureen.velvick@outlook.com

Tel: 01488 648294

The bells at All Saints Church are rung for regular services and occasions such as weddings and funerals.

There are six bells, some dating back nearly 400 years, mounted in a wooden frame: the heaviest weighs 17cwt (850kg). Unfortunately, our treble (smallest) bell has cracked and currently we are unable to ring it. We are starting to raise funds in the hope that we can mend this and refurbish the full ring.

The current band of ringers was established in 1998 and we have welcomed new members since then as others have left the village. Practices are normally at neighbouring towers to get a good mix of abilities. We welcome any new members, either ringers new to the village or anyone wishing to learn.

East Garston Over 60 Coffee Club

Jackie Breadmore: 01488 648851

Dave Knight: 01488 648472

Val Montgomery: 01488 648506

Bonnie Pounds: 01488 648242

The Club meets at 10:30am on the last Friday of the month at the Friends' Meeting House. The committee comprises the four above-named people.

The purpose of the club is to enable village people of our age group, to meet in pleasant and convivial surroundings, usually the Friends Meeting House, on a regular basis. Newcomers to the village are welcome often finding it helpful in integrating into village life. Normally we enjoy several outdoor events including the annual tea and skittles afternoon, trips out and a visit, later in the year to a theatre.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, our lunch at the Queens Arms has been cancelled and other scheduled arrangements placed on temporary hold. We're grateful to Alan Breadmore for having set up a video link to enable members to chat with each other from the safety of their homes during this time. It is hoped that the situation will have improved by September when we aim to improve on last year's performance in raising over £1,300 for Macmillans.

East Garston Table Tennis Club

Contact: Peter Baldock

Email: peter@douglas.co.uk

The Club organises weekly table tennis sessions (with two tables) every Thursday from 6.30pm to 8.00pm in the Village Hall, though these have currently stopped as a result of Covid-19.

Two of our youngest players have reached league standard. The Club aims to provide exercise, a laugh and encouragement for people of all ages, in particular children.

East Garston Quakers

Contact: Penny Locke

Email: pennylocke64@gmail.com

Tel: 01488 648534

Quaker Meetings are 11.00am to noon every Sunday in the Friends' Meeting House. There is no programme or leader: anyone who feels called to speak may do so, but often Meetings are largely silent.

After Meeting we have coffee and biscuits and a general chat for half an hour or so at which all are welcome if you want to meet us informally.

Currently, there are no children in our Meeting but they are very welcome. We have a separate room where children can go under supervision so they don't have to attend the whole Meeting.

During the past year we were very pleased to support the East Garston Summer Fete and the Holiday at Home event in Lambourn in August 2019, which gave older residents who couldn't get away a lovely cruise-ship experience in the Walwyn Hall.

Individual members contribute their time to various causes as part of their witness to Quaker ideals, ranging from demonstrating at a peace rally outside the global arms fair at the Excel Centre to volunteering at the Newbury Churches Together Christmas Day lunch.

Our chosen charity this year is Young People and Children First that gives a home to people aged 16-25 in West Berkshire who are leaving care or who are homeless. We also collect knitted squares to be made into blankets and clothes for a homeless charity in Swindon.

The Meeting House is available for hire and includes a kitchenette with kettle, sink and crockery for making hot drinks, two toilets and a pleasant garden. There is wheelchair access to the Meeting room but no accessible toilet.

East Garston Allotment Association

Contact: Martyn Wright

Email: martyn-wright@lineone.net

Tel: 07973 953993

EGAA is an association for members who share an interest in horticulture and enjoy growing their own. Established in 2009, it leases land on the outskirts of the village and provides a number of plots for its members to grow a wide variety of crops. The main interest is in vegetables and fruit, but flowers also have a strong following: there are even two small vineyards.

EGAA hosts an annual Flower and Produce Show, which is open to all for entries, and which grows in popularity each year. With yet another difficult growing season last year, with its prolonged drought, the members and other local enthusiasts still managed to put on another good display. With the wettest February on record, we wait with interest to see what the rest of the year brings.

Currently, EGAA has a full membership with no vacant plots but please contact us if you want to have your name put on the waiting list.

Valley Film Society

Contact: Penny Locke

Email: info@valleyfilmsociety.org

Tel: 01488 648534

Web: valleyfilmsociety.org

The Valley Film Society is based in East Garston. We show films across a wide range of genres, including foreign subtitled, black-and-white classics as well as British independents. After many successful years, we are now in our fifteenth season.

Films are shown in the Village Hall, usually on the first Tuesday of the month from October to June, with doors and the bar open from 7pm. Orders are taken for food to be delivered during the interval. We have a four-metre wide screen with digital 5.1 surround-sound, Blu-ray/DVD, tiered seating and a convivial atmosphere. The Hall has disabled access.

We are hoping to be able to start showing films again at the start of Season Sixteen in October. Membership for Season Sixteen (2020/21), consisting of up to 10 films, costs £32. You can join at any film showing or online via our website. Guests pay £6 per film.

Our mission is to show films that you may not choose for yourself, or which you may never have heard of before but which you will find interesting and be pleased to have watched. To help ensure that this happens, the film selection process requires that some committee members watch every film in advance, and not just depend on ratings or reviews. In addition, at the end of each film we ask the audience to

rate the film anonymously. We also aim to show a children's film each season, usually on a weekend afternoon. Our aim is to continue to show a varied range of films.

East Garston Social Club and Village Hall

Village Hall:

Contact: Ed James

Email: edjames@sportingagenda.co.uk

Tels: 01488 649770 or 07802 886307

Social Club:

Contact: Raymond Baker

Email: ray.douglasinstruments@gmail.com

Tel: 07990 672395

The Social Club is open on Friday and Saturday nights and on occasional evenings through the week when teams are playing at home.

There is a wide selection of drinks available including soft drinks, draught beers, lager and Guinness and wine from our wine merchant Haynes, Hanson & Clark. The club has a wide-screen TV, a darts board, a pool table, a full-size snooker table and an outside terrace for the summer months.

The Village Hall is available to rent for all your private and corporate events. The venue has been recently refurbished. Facilities include the bar, the kitchen, a cooker, cutlery and crockery, tables and chairs, dishwasher, staging and even a skittles alley.

The Village Hall is currently regularly used for yoga and pilates classes, the Table Tennis Club, the Garston Gallopers, the Valley Film Society and local billiards, pool, darts and cribbage leagues.

Over the next 12 months or so various building works will take place, including repairing the roof of the hall. The Games Room has been completely refurbished and the old shop is now Ruth Jordan's Priscilla's Kitchen, the warm and welcoming coffee shop which serves fantastic coffee, lunches and an assortment of cakes.

Village Views

Contact: Dawn Tonge

Email: dawnmarytonge@gmail.com

Tel: 01488 648370

Village Views is a monthly magazine, distributed to nearly 1,000 households by volunteers. It is also sold in local shops. Issues are shared with friends and families all over the world. Copies cost 40p each, or £4 for an annual subscription. The purpose of *Village Views* is to inform and embrace the church and civic communities of the Lambourn Valley Benefice.

Village Views supports local organisations and businesses and publishes a wide range of articles on many topics, written by local contributors. It aims to continue to provide an informative, entertaining and accessible magazine to the Valley's villages and beyond. Due to Covid-19, publication is currently suspended.

Penny Post

Contacts: Penny Locke; Brian Quinn

Emails: penny@pennypost.org.uk; brian@pennypost.org.uk

Tels: 07768 981658; 01488 648110

Web: pennypost.org.uk

Penny Post is run by long-time East Garston resident Penny Locke and her husband Brian Quinn and provides information on almost every aspect of life across West Berkshire and the surrounding areas. This is accomplished through a website; a weekly area-wide e-newsletter; a monthly e-newsletter covering the Valley of the Racehorse; social media; and its weekly programme on 4 Legs Radio. *Penny Post* currently has over 4,200 subscribers, about 1,000 of whom are in the Valley.

Penny Post, which continues to publish as normal during Covid-19, has always aimed to be constructive, informative and topical. As well as promoting local businesses, *Penny Post* has always been supportive of the many charitable and voluntary groups in the area as well as of

campaigns on subjects including pollution, plastic use, speeding and the effects of council cuts.

Penny Post's extensive coverage also includes news, humour, fiction, event listings, recruitment adverts, seasonal recipes, courses and classes, items and properties for sale and competitions. Contributions of all kinds are welcomed.

4 Legs Community Radio for the Lambourn Valley

Contact: Chris Capel

Email: studio@4legsradio.org.uk

Tel: 07834 893251

Web: 4legsradio.org.uk

4 LEGS Community Radio has just had its second birthday and it's been another successful year with a number of planned goals achieved. These include: sponsorship from Sovereign the local housing association, an upgraded website and increased broadcasting hours (nine and a half hours on Fridays and half a day on Saturdays). Also we've secured a larger studio with better facilities and aim to move by early summer.

We've had over 220 guests and broadcast 350+ shows during the past 12 months covering a diverse range of subjects that both inform and entertain. We've also increased our listener numbers with an average live audience of 250+ every week (across all shows) and an average listen-again audience of 300+ (across all shows).

In 2019 we launched the Unsung Hero awards for the Lambourn Valley to find those people that have gone the extra mile for their communities. With 55 nominations, four awards were presented with the overall winner receiving a meal for two courtesy of The Great Shefford.

Priorities for the next 12 months are to move to the new studio, provide 4LEGS Radio access via Amazon's 'Alexa', seek further sponsorship, conduct a listener survey and extend broadcasting to two full days a week.

East Garston

*has an enviable location in wildest West Berkshire.
It is a long, narrow parish of nearly 4,500
acres in the far west of the county.*

*It is bordered by the parish of Lambourn to the west;
by Letcombe Bassett (Vale of White Horse) to the north;
by Fawley to the north and the northeast;
by Great Shefford to the east;
and by Kintbury and Hungerford to the south.*

*The village is located in the centre of the parish, in the
valley of the river Lambourn. This winterbourne is fed
from underground chalk aquifers and generally
flows from the new year to the autumn.*

*The parish has approximately 240 dwellings and a
population of 550. The village itself sits just to the
north of the unclassified road that runs from
Great Shefford along the valley to Lambourn.*

*Although the Parish is mainly a residential area, there are
several small firms, a number of farms and racehorse
training stables and an agricultural machinery
business. Racing is the primary industry
in the valley which has developed due
to the ideal training conditions on
the surrounding chalk downs.*

For more information on East Garston visit www.eastgarston-pc.gov.uk