

Edgton Village General Meeting 21st May 2025

Present:

Kate Whapham (Chair); John Higson (Treasurer); Janet Cobb (Clerk); Cllr Ruth Houghton; Jon & Michelle Simpson; Mike & Krista Hutchings ; Chris Harris; Pierre Brayford; Paul & Fiona Harding-Jones; Sue & Ian Ford; Margaret & David Bill.

Apologies:

Alan Roberts, Tanis & Martin Jordan; Gilli Coston; Jean Brayford; Peter Whapham, Wendy Buswell.

Minutes from 9th October 2024:

accepted as a correct record – unanimous

Matters arising from these minutes

- Jubilee tree – Plaque put on a block which works well for now
- Ash die back tree – tree department contacted, no imminent danger but village needs to remain vigilant in relation to the disease. Post Scrip: Ash tree to be removed & authorised by Shropshire Council Tree Department.
- Paint for village hall – floor to be renovated first
- Golden Elm – dead branch needs removing – Janet to ask Liam to look at this.

Chairs report :

Any concerns about the precept need to be raised directly with either the chair or the clerk.

The raise in precept was agreed at the last village meeting on 9th October 2024, minutes are available.

The raise in precept amounted to around £7 per house hold per year – this raise is to cover increased costs, predominantly related to the defibrillator.

If Edgton were to join another council the precept would significantly rise to cover the cost of a paid clerk.

Everyone agreed that maintaining the defibrillator was for the mutual benefit of all in the village and we are lucky to have Wendy as our fantastic circuit guardian.

Treasurer report:

Edgton needs to maintain an amount in the Village Meeting account to cover all costs, predominantly

- Defibrillator
- Insurance including public liability
- Any unforeseen costs
- SALC membership

Banking problems since last October have been significant and in the end decision was taken to stay with Barclays BUT we are now able to make transactions on-line.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) needs to be completed annually. Edgton is exempt from an annual external audit as we are so small but we still need to complete the return as an annual governance exercise. Local residents can request to see the return. Part of this return needs to be co signed by an independent volunteer.

Paul Harding-Jones volunteered to do this task with John Higson and the notice is available to see on request.

All documentation will be available to see on-line via the Village hall website as a holding exercise until we investigate the possibility and costs of a Village Meeting website.

Defibrillator update.

Very many thanks to Wendy Buswell for her vigilant work on ensuring the defibrillator is maintained properly. New batteries have been bought recently and we need to have the machine serviced this year. Service agreed.

See appendix report.

Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust Grant

The Parish meeting secured a grant from the Trust in 2024 to fund winter nature talks and develop a bespoke Nature Recovery Plan. This fits with County and National work on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) <https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/environment/ecology-and-biodiversity/shropshire-and-telford-wrekin-local-nature-recovery-strategy/>

The grant covered the costs of several talks, workshops & a barn owl box. Gilli Coston funded a second box privately.

There was an underspend of around £600 which Edgton has been allowed to carry over into 2025.

Planned are

- 5 more winter wildlife talks (1st one will be on Wednesday 15th October, 6.30-8.30 – Pine Martins)
- Development of the bespoke nature recovery plan TBC
- Moth trapping 9am on Monday 2nd June, at The Old Vicarage, Edgton
- Mammal surveying 8am Sunday 22nd June- Ridgeway woods BOOKING ESSENTIAL via Kate or Janet

Stockwell repairs & noticeboard.

The well has been damaged, top stones and frame dislodged and in need of repair.

Estimated costs for materials is £500. Kate and Jon have discussed and proposal was circulated. Unanimous agreement to go ahead with this and Ruth suggested approaching Blakemoor Foundation for a small grant towards this and a new village notice board.

See appendix artist impression

Website

Request to village hall for a page on the website that can be used for village meeting information initially as a holding situation whilst development of a separate village meeting website and email address is investigated.

Agreed at the meeting – in the meantime paper copies of the minutes, AGAR information and defibrillator update will be made available in the hall and minutes on the Barn.

Cllr Ruth Houghton update

Congratulations expressed to Ruth for winning the local seat on behalf of the Lib Dems. The local elections have overturned to previous Conservative administration and have resulted in many new Town & Parish councillors with no previous experience and a difficult situation financially.

Ruth will be responsible for Child & Adult social care and the new Cabinet & responsibilities are still being ratified. Information should be available via Shropshire Council website soon.

HOWEVER the new council is being asked to make savings of £57M and has only reserves of £5M. There is £30M of unspent CIL money that is being investigated. The previous administration borrowed a further £26M to stop bankruptcy being declared but this is costing £1.3M annual interest payments. Price Waterhouse Cooper was costing £8.5 M and have been given notice.

The plan to pipe sewage treated water from the Clun to the Onny has been stopped but pressure is being applied from the Gov to build 2000 houses per year across the county.

SpArC pool has been given a grant of £2.7 M for decarbonization and Ruth thanked Edgton Village for their previous donation towards fundraising to save the facility.

Bishop's Castle Hospital has reopened thanks to local public pressure and awareness raising.

Highways work to commence on A 488 - 4/6 weeks between June & July.

AOB

Janet requested funds for a new file to replace the meeting book – agreed at the meeting

Whatsapp Group – request for anyone not already on this group to join, just need a mobile number – is a fast way to communicate any issues.

AGM date Wednesday October 22nd , 6.30 – 8.30 in the village hall

Any items for discussion please send to Kate or Janet by 15th October

Plan is to move the AGM date in 2026 to May not October as a better fit with the account submissions.

Thanks to all for attending

Meeting closed at 7.30 pm