

Eaton Bishop  
Annual Parish Meeting  
Reports  
2018

Reports have been submitted by the following.

Parish Council Chairman

Village Hall Management Committee

PCC Report - St Michael & All Angels Church

Footpath Officer

Tree Warden

Team EB (Fund Raising Group)

Garden Club

Eaton Camp Historical Society



# Eaton Bishop Parish Council – Annual Parish Meeting

## Chairman's Report - May 2018

The Parish Council met 11 times in the last year and the current Councillors are:

Ray Christopher – Chair  
Leon Wolverson – Vice Chair  
Caroline Hanks  
David Richards  
Matt Johnson  
Alan Tydeman  
Becky Wall

During the last year both Astrid Mick and Rosie Robinson resigned and I would like to thank them for their dedication and effort during the time spent as Parish Councillors. I would like to welcome both Alan Tydeman and Becky Wall who were co-opted onto the Parish Council last September and December.

Our Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Alison Wright, has continued to keep us all under control and I would like to thank her for the advice and commitment given, not only at our meetings but keeping everyone updated between meetings.

The current financial position of the Parish Council as of 12<sup>th</sup> April 2018 is:

Treasurer's Account	£2,026.85
Business Account	£15,252.52*

\*Contained within the Business Account total are the following amounts:

Cook's Charity deposit	£2,124.51
RPA Grant funding for Commons Projects	£3,662.03

The current Parish Council funds  
therefore amount to £11,492.83

N.B The above figures give a guide as to the position of the accounts as of 12<sup>th</sup> April 2018 and do not include any un-presented cheques.

Parish Councils are having to take on more responsibilities from the Local Authority, such as increased funding of the Lengthsman Scheme as grants from Herefordshire Council are withdrawn and less work is carried out by their contractors Balfour Beatty Living Places. With this in mind, when the budget and precept for 2018 – 2019 was discussed last November, it was agreed to raise the precept to £12,900.00.

Dr Tim Coleman remains as our internal auditor and PKF Littlejohn LLP has been appointed external auditors.

In May last year the final version of our Neighbourhood Development Plan was agreed with Herefordshire Council and the Eaton Bishop Referendum was held in July, with at the time a record turnout of 59.4% of the registered electors voting. There was an overwhelming vote of 93.5% in favour of the NDP which was adopted in August by Herefordshire Council as part of the Local Plan Core Strategy.

Many congratulations to Leon Wolverson and his team for the drive and tenacity shown in achieving such a powerful mandate and tremendous result.

I would also like to thank Louise Kirkup from our consultants Kirkwells for her advice, encouragement and support for our team.

During the year the Parish Council has discussed and commented on a number of planning applications and with the NDP now being part of the Local Plan Core Strategy our decisions are much better informed.

Of the allocated sites referred to in the NDP one site in Ruckhall has obtained outline permission for 2 dwellings and as yet no other sites have been put forward for planning.

Caroline Hanks, David Richards and their team of volunteers have again been very busy on Littlemarsh Common. Natural England have continued with funding through the Entry Level and Higher Stewardship Agreements. Some extra funding has been agreed for Capital Works but we will soon be at the stage where only maintenance funding is available. So many thanks to Caroline for sorting the paperwork and organising contractors and volunteers. Many thanks to the Littlemarsh Commoners and the volunteers for their continuing support for this project.

Last November the Littlemarsh project was nominated by Natural England for the West Midlands Land Management Awards 2017. Caroline and David attended the Awards Ceremony at the end of March and, although the project was not among the winners, to be nominated was a great achievement.

David has also been very busy clearing a section to the South East of Honeymoor Common with the eventual aim of restoring grazing to this area. This part of Honeymoor has already been transformed and so many thanks to David.

John Helme Contractors were again used to 'top' the main area of Honeymoor Common and it is planned to use them again this year. Many thanks to Clive Price for cutting the playing field on a regular basis and also thanks to Gareth Jenkins for mowing areas of Ruckhall Common up to the time that he and his family moved away towards the end of last year.

Our Lengthsman Contract is still with Paul Wright and Matthew Cobb and many thanks for the great work they do despite, as mentioned earlier, the ongoing issues we have with Herefordshire Council and their contractors Balfour Beatty with the downgrading of the Lengthsman Scheme. Paul and Matt are also our contractors for the heavier works on Littlemarsh.

Eleanor Christopher remains as our Footpaths Officer and Alan Tydeman as our Tree Warden.

The Golden Valley Safer Neighbourhood Team based at Peterchurch attend our meetings on a regular basis and advise on local crime trends and so many thanks to the officers involved.

I would like to thank our Ward Councillor for Stoney Street, Steve Williams, for his regular attendance at our monthly meetings and passing on information on various topics from Herefordshire Council.

Finally I would like to thank all the groups and organisations in particular The Village Hall Management Committee, the Parochial Church Council, Team EB and the Churchyard Mowers, who give their time and effort to improving the life in this Parish.

Everyone is welcome to come along to our monthly meetings and we are always pleased to hear your views and opinions on how we can continue to improve and enhance the life of this community and Parish.

Ray Christopher  
Chairman  
May 2018



## Eaton Bishop Village Hall Report to the PC, at the Annual Parish Meeting 2018

For the Eaton Bishop Village Hall, Management Committee (hereafter EBVH MC) the last year has been an eventful one.

### April - October 2017

- a. Since March 2016, the EBVH MC proceeded with only 4 members: RR - Chairperson; MN - Secretary and MDN and CH - both of whom dealt with general maintenance of the VH. 'Community First'<sup>1</sup> state that, typically, there are from between 6 to 12 Committee Members to manage a typical village hall.

By October 2017, RR had managed to recruit 3 additional committee members. These were elected to fulfil specific roles: JD - Bookings Co-ordinator and PD - Caretaker were co-opted and then subsequently, at the AGM, another new member was elected to take on the role of treasurer, AM. Prior to this, RR had been required to fulfil all of these 3 roles and this in addition to her position as Chairperson. In view of the assignment of specific roles and as is advised by 'ACRE'<sup>2</sup> and 'Community First', the Chairperson, RR, together with the Secretary, MN, began to draw-up, locally tailored, Job Descriptions for respective EBVH MC roles (See Appendix 1a-1d).

- b. At the AGM of the EBVH MC, on 28th October 2017, following 4 years of dedicated service, RR stepped down as Chairperson. During this period as a result of steadfast commitment and considerable effort on the part of RR as Chair and with the support of the other MC members, the Village Hall had seen vast improvement.

RR worked tirelessly to secure grants which, in turn, led to a massive upgrade/modernisation of washroom and kitchen facilities, along with the complementary replacement of old crockery and mis-matched cutlery. The VH, and the community it serves, have benefited greatly from these changes, which makes the building/place far more amenable to regular activities; one-off events and to general hire.

Additionally, the MC commissioned CH to make circular tables for social occasions and these have improved the ambiance at of various community activities and events. CH and other maintenance personnel, including MDN; PD and DD, continue to carry out a range of diverse maintenance and repair tasks, consistently ensuring that the VH functions properly.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Community First' is at the forefront of sustainable, robust community development in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. We specialise in providing high quality advice and support to community groups and organisations, to help them grow and meet the needs of the communities they serve. [http://www.comfirst.org.uk/about\\_us2](http://www.comfirst.org.uk/about_us2)

<sup>2</sup> 'ACRE' (Action with Communities in Rural England) is the national body for 38 charitable local development agencies that make up the [ACRE Network](#).

Also, with the VH working as the hub of our community in mind, RR had introduced new community groups, i.e. 'Baby and Tots', this regular activity continues to serve as a meeting point for and to offer support for young families, who may be otherwise quite isolated.

During the 2017 AGM, following the delivery of the annual financial statement (Appendix 2a + 2b) a new Chairperson, CA, was elected.

## October - December 2017

During the first 3 months in post, the new Chairperson, CA, with her partner, RB, spent a great deal of time establishing a new website for the Village Hall, <http://eatonbishopvillagehall.btck.co.uk>

During early VH MC meetings, it was recognised that there had been concerns about, the VH's visibility in the wider community and about, the transparency of various aspects of business; so, as a starting point in addressing those particular issues, it was agreed that a VH specific website should be set-up.

A cross-section of individual parishioners and representatives from parish groups, i.e. the PC; TeamEB; Gardening Club; etc.... were invited to contribute to the website pages and it was with their help and support the site got underway; since then, it has become an ongoing 'work in progress' as new items are added, and existing ones are regularly updated. As might be expected, the site includes information about:

- background to the village hall
- context/surroundings in which the hall sits
- activities and events happening there
- 'Conditions of Hall Hire' plus other Booking/Hiring Information and Hire Agreement Forms.

Most importantly, the website is the place where the 'Minutes' of all MC meetings is published so that they are accessible for parishioners to view and/or from where they may be downloaded for those who do not have access to a PC.

There is, also, a picture gallery which shows the VH building and the scenes within the village and broader parish; it illustrates, too, the ways in which, currently, the community and other hall hirers use EB village hall.

The website is becoming increasingly popular but work needs, yet, to be done to get other related VH social media up and running, e.g. Facebook.

- c. During this same time period, specifically, in November 2017, the existing village Fundraising Group, TeamEB, explained to the EBVH MC that they were no longer in a position to support the VH in fundraising to the extent that they had done in the past. This meant that in addition to the housekeeping and maintenance of the building/hall and its grounds, the EBVH MC would need, now, to take far greater initiative in terms of fundraising activities/events.



Sadly, at this point in time, with prior commitment to running the usual Christmas Market and with only a few weeks to prepare for the big annual New Year's Eve Party, there was not sufficient time to prepare for this particular fundraising event; ultimately, the EBVH MC decided that it would be more productive/constructive to sink energy and effort into an early 2018 event.

- d. CA, MN and AM met with TeamEB to discuss best ways forward in terms of fundraising and it was agreed that, although TeamEB would take a step-back from raising funds for the VH to focus, entirely, on fundraising for the Church. By and large, now, the two groups, TeamEB and VH MC, would work separately to fund-raise; nonetheless, they would aim to work together closely and in the case of the, popular and lucrative 'Curry and Quiz Nights', both groups would aim to share input and profit. In all cases, each group would support the other for all events, e.g. in terms of food preparation for the Christmas lunch, which has been a very popular TeamEB Church fundraiser, the VH MC would help; likewise, as the VH MC began to start-up their own fundraising events, TeamEB would offer advice and practical support, as and when necessary.

At this stage, it was agreed that a plan to develop and co-ordinate the separate fundraising events, for 2018, would be best made early in the New Year, when each group, TeamEB and VH MC, has had time to consider various ideas.

#### January - April 2018

- e. Early in January 2018, MN and CA, from VH MC, met again with TeamEB to share their ideas for fundraising events/activities for the year ahead. Dates and venues were agreed, for diverse, separate events and for the 4 Quiz nights, which are joint events. Subsequently, CA merged draft lists, from both groups, to compile a 'Whats On' flier (Appendix 3) which VH MC members delivered, door to door, throughout the village and copies were placed upon the VH's external notice board. Both groups website details were included for parishioners to access details and updates of specific events.
- f. In terms of planning for VH events, the MC felt, most strongly, that there should be a balance between fundraising activity and the provision of 'Not for Profit' activities/events. The MC felt that, in accordance with the 'Scheme' as defined by the Charity Commission<sup>3</sup>, 'Not for Profit' activities/events should and would, by comparison to a full-on fundraiser, provide more of a community service and be more accessible to the whole community.

The monthly Farmers Market is a long-standing example of this and now, new initiatives, i.e. regular monthly Coffee Mornings combined with 'Walk' (Appendix 4) or with 'Library and Bookshop' are now being trialled. In these most recent instances, there are no set charges for refreshments, but donations are requested to cover costs of that provided. At other planned events, e.g. 'Village Family Fun Day' and 'Bonfire Celebrations', as with the Farmers Market, there will be an element of fundraising but, it is planned that costs to parishioners will be kept to

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<sup>3</sup> The Village Hall is a registered charity and as such is required to conform to the 'Scheme' as defined on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1989. A copy of this is held by the VH Chairperson and by the Parish Council, who are the VH Trustees.



the minimum and that a significant element of the entertainment provided is free of charge.

- g. Events held during the first part of this year have gone well (See Appendix 4).

The Christmas Market, was the first big VH event in the new MC year and a record number of stalls, including the raffle, were present. Profits from this event were good and as with all seasonal markets (Christmas and Easter) VH profits were greatly boosted by the generous raffle donations of a committed parishioner, EF who, in addition, takes all responsibility for organising these very popular seasonal raffles.

At the Market, to establish what parishioners would like the VH to provide, a survey was piloted. The questionnaire was taken from a 'Community First' template and although it offered the MC some feedback, which has informed activity/event planning, in future it will be shortened, to encourage greater parishioner engagement.

Despite postponement, due to inclement weather, the first big VH fundraising event, a music performance by the Shropshire band 'Whalebone' proved a great success. The intervening Quiz Night, a fundraiser for both VH and the Church, was also very well attended.

- h. Massive commitment from individual committee members has been required to plan, publicise and organise new activities and events, on top of their regular roles, e.g. as Secretary, Caretaker etc... and including a lot more extra MC meetings. The calendar/diary of events, for 2018, may have been a little over ambitious for such a small MC group to deliver? Being so limited in numbers, becomes problematic if/when somebody is ill, or is away on holiday, and this problem is exacerbated because amongst the 7 MC members there are 2 couples so, very suddenly, 7 may be reduced to 5.

It is with huge thanks to MDN that the 'Walks for Health' are getting off the ground and to MN for kicking off a series of 'Talks' at the VH. Similarly, PD and CH have employed great energy and effort to upgrading the VH, internally and externally, by, respectively, researching insulation options and clearing overgrowth. JD has fully embraced the role of Bookings Co-ordinator and has begun to liaise effectively with the new Treasurer ES, appointed early this year.

Unfortunately, in January, due to personal circumstances AM. who had taken up the role of Treasurer in October, was no longer able to continue in post. Happily, we were able to recruit a new Treasurer, ES, who is keen to comply with the recently secured external auditor, in providing a paper trail of invoices and spreadsheets to record ongoing financial activity.

- i. Finally, in response to a letter from an individual parishioner, requesting the closure of the VH in favour of supporting the funding of the Church, the VH MC is considering proposing that, in the near future, a Referendum should be held to establish a majority decision about the future of the VH. This would be in compliance with the 'Scheme', as set-out by the Charity Commission. The MC needs clarity about the future of the VH if it is to continue to put in the levels of energy and effort required to make this Charity work.



EATON BISHOP PCC  
2018 ANNUAL REPORT

The PCC met on 5 occasions, in March, May, October and November 2017 and January 2018.

A sale was agreed on Glebe land adjacent to the White House with the proceeds going to the Diocesan clergy fund.

Repairs were carried out to the Lightning Conductor to conform with new Regulations.

The repairs to the Church as listed in the 2015 quinquennial review, which amount to a minimum need of £105k + architect fees and capital works, have yet to be completed due to failure to obtain a grant from the Heritage Lottery fund and lack of funds held by the PCC.

The PCC agreed to join the newly launched Parish Giving Scheme, which is a direct debit system for regular giving which each Church has a unique code so donations go directly into our bank account and any Gift Aid due is automatically claimed and credited.

Grubby Church has been held once a Term, but will now evolve into Messy Church for the Benefice and be held at Clehonger village hall.

To try and make the Church sustainable and fit for Christian Living the PCC wish to attract more users of the building and extend the range of functions available, which needs to be underpinned by basic 21stC facilities of W.C. and catering. A meeting was held with the Diocesan Advisory Committee to seek their advice on options for W.C. and catering facilities, removing some of the pews from the west end and relocating the Font to the east end of the south aisle to create space for social gatherings. The DAC were very supportive and suggested the next steps would be to have some simple sketches drafted to see how a range of options might work and to prepare a Statement of Significance and Need.

David Richards very kindly trimmed the Horse Chestnut tree in the new Churchyard and cleared away the snow damaged trees.

Lin Gardner has prepared a map of burials in the Old Churchyard.

The donations box which was attached to a pillar by a metal strap was stolen.

A Meeting was held with the Diocese Community Partnership & Funding Officer and Buildings Support Officer to help us look at the future of our Church.

## **Footpaths report 2018**

I would like to convey my thanks to the Parish Council for work that has been completed to continue make the footpaths safe and accessible, finger posts and stepping boards across stiles have been replaced where necessary or requested by footpath users.

Finally, after repeated requests, the necessary materials have been delivered from Balfour Beatty for improvements to access across boggy ground on Littlemarsh Common. When conditions are favourable this work will be completed by our lengthsman.

David Richard's clearance of Honeymoon Common has made the footpath EB4 towards Crossway Farm completely accessible.

EB19A running parallel to the Ancient Camp road is mostly inaccessible due to spring water and overgrowth. EB8 is little used as it comes out onto a particularly dangerous stretch of the B4352. All the others are clear.

At times some paths have been ploughed when crops have been planted which causes some inconvenience for a limited time. When asked, landowners or contractors have marked out the paths as requested,

I would like to remind footpath users to respect the countryside by keeping to the footpaths and keeping their dogs either on a lead or close by and under complete control. It is vitally important to pick up after dogs whether there are crops growing or stock in the fields.

The parish council has just taken delivery of two disposal bins for dog waste, which will be placed close to popular dog walking paths.

Another issue for landowners and farmers who rent land is the maintenance of stock fences. It has come to my attention that some have been cut through for people to allow access for their dogs. I need to remind those responsible that this action is illegal and that the consequences of stock escaping through these fences can be serious. One kissing gate has been allocated and will be delivered to a landowner for whom this has been a particular problem.

I would like to thank landowners and farmers who rent land for their cooperation and work to keep the paths open.

A big thank you also goes to volunteers, including Edward Johnson, David Richards, Charles Wall and others who have given time, energy and equipment to keep footpaths on common land clear.

It is good to see these paths being used and enjoyed by so many.

Eleanor Christopher



## Parish Tree Warden Report 2017 /2018

The Trees in the parish are succumbing to disease as is in the whole of the UK

Within the Parish we have Chalara ( Ash Dieback), Walnut Blister Mite, Sweet Chestnut Blight, Phytophthora (Alder Trees) Dutch Elm Disease

There was a Parish Walk organised in September, there were 26 attendees, the main object was to familiarisation of tree species, flora and fauna within the parish. There were on hand three local enthusiasts to answer any questions. A Picnic lunch was taken at the Queens Commemorative Bench at the Promontory

It is hoped that this year another walk will be held along a different route

The vintage Oak Trees adjacent to the public footpath through the Dingle are being considered for Tree Preservation Orders.

# TEAM EB (Eaton Bishop Fund-Raising Committee)

Report for Year Ending 30.04.18

This fund-raising committee has now been in operation for six years and our aim is to raise funds for the Village, primarily for the upkeep of the Church and the Village Hall. The Team members currently are Linda Carter, Val Coleman, Ailsa Main, Jo Craddock, Lin Gardner and myself. Rosie Robinson retired from the Team this last year and Sue Wallace joined us for a brief period before leaving due to family commitments.

Since the beginning of May last year, we organized 12 events but very unfortunately, we were forced to cancel a Safari Supper and the New Year's Eve Party due to poor ticket sales, and a BBQ Pub Night as there was a clash of events in the village.

Please note that funds raised from Open Gardens, Wild West at The White House and the Curry and Quiz in March were split equally between the Church and the Village Hall.

The list of fund-raising events for the Church is as follows:

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Profit</u>
Curry and Quiz	10.06.17	£ 238.27
Open Gardens	18.06.17	£ 117.50
Rain or Shine Theatre Co	29.07.17	£ 762.00
Wild West at The White House	09.09.17	£ 609.20
Curry and Quiz	07.10.17	£ 536.65
Rain or Shine Theatre Co	10.11.17	£ 58.75
Christmas Lunch	03.12.17	£ 903.00
Curry and Quiz	24.03.18	£ 247.30
TOTAL		£3,472.67

The list of fund-raising events for the Village Hall is as follows:

Open Gardens	18.06.17	£ 117.50
Wild West at The White House	09.09.17	£ 609.20
Pub Night	28.10.17	£ 168.16
Curry and Quiz	24.03.18	£ 247.30
TOTAL		£1,142.16
<b>JOINT TOTAL</b>		<b>£4,614.83</b>

The following figures give a comparison of fund-raising over the last six years.

2013 Joint Total - £6249.86	2016 Joint Total - £4646.90
2014 Joint Total - £7961.84	2017 Joint Total - £7254.47
2015 Joint Total - £6688.39	2018 Joint Total - £4614.83

The joint figure reduction of over £2,500 on last year's is due to several factors. I have already stated that three events were cancelled but we were also greatly affected by inclement weather. Open Gardens was held on the hottest day of the year – visitors viewed the first garden but the heat deterred them from viewing the second where tea, coffee and cakes were available to purchase. The decrease in these sales made a huge difference to the profit figure. The evening of Rain or Shine Theatre Company's production of Twelfth Night at Shepherds Meadow was one of the wettest nights of the year but as tickets were sold in



advance, the attendance was good with very few not wanting to brave the weather. The weather forecast for the Wild West at The White House day was extremely grim with very heavy rain and winds. However, as the forecast improved and so much preparation had been made, we decided to hold the event. Numbers attending were down on previous years and hence the profit was down.

Once again, we have been very fortunate in being able to source the food for our functions from local suppliers. Sean of Herefordshire Meats (who lives in Eaton Bishop) continues to supply us with meat and Locks Garage with fruit and vegetables. We aim, as always, to provide quality home-cooked food wherever possible and are most fortunate to have a band of Village cooks who are happy to offer their culinary skills.

The Eaton Bishop website [www.eatonbishop.org](http://www.eatonbishop.org) is proving to be a great success and is being used by many organisations in the Village as well as Team EB. Lin Gardner is excellent at ensuring the site is up-to-date. All our fund-raising events and reports appear on the website and we continue to use Tracking The News, Sunshine Radio and the Hereford Times for advertising. Posters throughout the Village and at key points in Madley, Clehonger, Kingstone and Allensmore, along with the noticeboards inside and outside the Village Hall display details of forthcoming events and, as far as is possible, large advertising boards are placed on Honeymoon Common. At the beginning of this year, a list of events organized for 2018 was posted through every letterbox in Eaton Bishop and Ruckhall.

There is now a new Village Hall Committee in place and fund-raising is now being organized on a new basis. Team EB will continue to organise events for the Church with the Village Hall Committee assisting, and the Village Hall Committee will organise events for the Village Hall with Team EB's assistance. In addition, the Curry and Quiz evenings will raise funds for both the Church and the Village Hall on a 50/50 split. It is hoped that this way forward will alleviate some of the workload on Team EB and will give fresh ideas, energy and enthusiasm to fund-raising in general.

Team EB's diary for the remainder of 2018 is as follows:

5 <sup>th</sup> May	Curry and Quiz – 50/50 split
15 <sup>th</sup> June	Rain or Shine Theatre Co presents Much Ado About Nothing – funds for the Church
7 <sup>th</sup> July	Quiche and Quiz – 50/50 split
21 <sup>st</sup> July	Barn Dance with Ceilidh – funds for the Church
1 <sup>st</sup> Sep	Curry and Quiz – 50/50 split
7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Harvest Lunch – funds for the Church
? Nov	Rain or Shine Theatre Co – funds for the Church
2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	Christmas Lunch – funds for the Church

The Village Hall Committee will present their fund-raising diary for 2018 separately.

As always, Team EB has been extremely fortunate to have the support of many Villagers who are very willing to give their time and skills. And, of course, all this would be in vain if no one attended. So a huge thank you to everyone who has supported us over the last year. We will continue to endeavor to primarily raise funds for the Village and welcome ideas and enthusiasm to achieve this. We aim also to continue to bring people together socially to have a jolly good time!

Mary Kimber  
Chairman, Team EB

# **EATON BISHOP GARDENING CLUB**

## **ANNUAL REPORT TO EATON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL APRIL 2018**

Welcome to the Annual General Meeting of Eaton Bishop Gardening Club. Having been your Chairman for a considerable number of years, it is difficult when preparing my report, not to repeat myself too many times. However, once again, I am pleased to report on our progress over the past year, when we have enjoyed a varied programme of talks, garden visits, competitions and of course the Annual Holiday.

We had some excellent speakers during the year and hopefully we will once again have an interesting and varied programme of talks and visits for the coming year.

The bulb growing season again was quite extended due to mixed weather conditions, but unfortunately, we again did not manage to fit in either a Snowdrop or a Daffodil walk, which we will try to rectify this coming year.

However, we did visit Biggsweir, in the Wye Valley to walk out on Offa's Dyke Path to witness a stunning display of Bluebells, Wild Garlic and other Spring Flowers. We then had a very pleasant lunch at "Tintern Station", before travelling down to Chepstow to visit the Dewstow Gardens and Caverns. This was an outing when we decided to put our trust in Satellite Navigation. I don't know which way Jim Bennett went to Chepstow but it was certainly not the quickest and my little group had to be rescued from a remote part of the Severn Estuary by the police and the SAS.

Our next trip out was due to be for the May Meeting and we were to visit the Old Rectory Garden at Thruxton, however, this had to be cancelled due to very inclement weather in the days leading up to our visit.

So, our first major event was the Holiday to visit gardens in the North Wales area. The forecast for our visit to North Wales was not too encouraging and although it was dry when we departed from Eaton Bishop, rain soon started to fall on our journey north, to visit David Austin Roses. Despite the rain, we were greeted by the most beautiful display of their many varieties of Roses, in their well laid out Rose Garden.

Our Group consisted of 40 Members and guests and we stayed for the duration of our visit at the rather "quirky" Ambassador Hotel on the sea front, at Llandudno.

We visited some really delightful gardens in the North Wales and Anglesey area and for the rest of the week the weather improved greatly.

We were most impressed with the Portmeirion Village and Gardens and its wonderful setting and walkout along the estuary.

Another stunning garden was the Plas Cadnant Hidden Gardens on Anglesey and who can fail not to enjoy the Bodnant Gardens with their stunning borders and their magnificent views over Snowdonia. Also, we were just lucky to catch



the closing flowering display of the famous laburnum arch.

Prior to our meal on Tuesday Evening, when we were away, we all raised a glass of Bucks Fizz, to the wonderful Joan Lloyd, who was celebrating her 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Joan has been on all our Holidays since we started our visits, some 15 years ago. Her vitality has to be seen to be believed. Some photographs of our Holiday and Joan Lloyd's birthday celebrations were shown on the front cover of the Parish Magazine, thanks for this must go to Val Dawkes and her photographic skills.

Also, I would like to thank John Kneale who gives support in arranging the Holidays by researching the Gardens, so that we can decide on which ones it would be best to visit.

For our Meeting held on Wednesday 19th July, 24 Members and Guests visited the gardens at Hereford Cathedral. We were welcomed by our guides, Dr Evans and his wife, who have been inspirational in recent years in developing the gardens at the Cathedral. We were given an interesting, brief history, on how the gardens were developed and changed over the centuries and then taken on our tour. We were fortunate to be shown parts of the gardens not normally open to the public and our guides were very knowledgeable on the various species of trees and shrubs and the planting conditions that they enjoy. Our visit ended with tea and cakes, in the magnificent Cathedral College Hall. It was very encouraging to know that such exceptional gardens exist in the middle of our City.

I was quite disappointed that we were not able to run the Annual Village Show this year.

There are now various people I would wish to thank for their support and help in running the Club.

I would like to thank all the Committee who try to keep me focussed in the running of the Club and especially Charlotte who has had a very difficult year, coping with family illness, but still managed, along with Linda Harding, to organise our various competitions.

Margaret Reitz handled the Club finances for a further year and once again has done a most excellent job. So, thank you Margaret, for carrying out your job most diligently and keeping us financially secure.

The Photographic Competition was again popular and this year our Winner was Roger Crisp.

The Spring Bulb Competition was not too well supported possibly due to the difficult growing conditions but the overall winner for this event was Michele Byrne.

Again, the Mid-Summer Show could have been better supported and the winner of this was Hilary Leyshon -James.

Although these events could have been better supported, the items submitted for these Competitions was considered by the various judges to be of a very high standard, so well done.



The Schedule of Competitions will change slightly over the next year but hopefully we will continue to support them.

Thanks, must go once again to Charlotte, Linda Harding and Michele Byrne for their work in staging these competitions and also thanks to the Members who supported them.

John Kneale, continues to handle the Bulb Order in his own quiet way which he does so efficiently, so thank you John. We do submit quite a healthy Bulb Order and the discounted prices make this quite viable. This year the value of our order was over £800.

I would like to thank Val Dawkes and all those Members that serve refreshments for our meetings, a new list for the coming Season is being circulated.

Our Membership base has slipped to below 60, which is quite a reduction on our numbers of a few years ago. Once again, I would emphasise that we do need to recruit more new members as the cost of running the Club increases every year. Where just a few years ago, the average cost of hiring a Speaker was in the £50 to £60 region, we are now paying over £100, when allowing for travelling expenses, especially if they are travelling any distance. We tend to rely very much on our reports and adverts in the local "Tracking the News" to publicise the Gardening Club and our Events but I would like to see us making more use of the Internet to publicise our Club and our Events. We do have a Web Site accessible from the Eaton Bishop and Madley Village Web Sites but we need to ensure this is updated at least monthly and perhaps extended to other Village Web Sites. Again, help and advice in tackling this would be most welcome.

We are fortunate with our Gardening Club in having a Committee who work behind the scenes to ensure our events run well and although they are not large in number they do make a significant contribution to the success of the Club.

Also, with our Membership, we are fortunate in having individuals who are willing to lend a helping hand when ever required and this also contributes to our success.

Looking to the future of the Gardening Club, we have a full programme of events arranged for the next 12 months and trust that you will continue to support them.

I did state at last year's AGM that I will be stepping down as Chairman at the AGM in October 2015. I have been Chairman for at least 20 years and I feel that it is right to give someone else a chance to take on this roll. Unfortunately to date we have not received any nominations for this post. We have arranged a full programme for the next 12 months and the Committee have expressed a wish to continue for a further 12 months which at the moment I am still happy to do. Also, I want to be able to assist, if required, any future Chair Person in taking on this duty, whilst I am able. I have achieved much satisfaction in being Chairman of Eaton Bishop Gardening Club and I would like to think that any one taking on this roll will consider it to be a worthwhile experience.



Thank you to all Members who have supported our events and to our Committee Members and Club Members who have worked so hard to arrange them.

All in all, I would consider that once again we have had a very enjoyable and successful year and the Committee look forward to your support in the next 12 months.

David Darts, Chairman Eaton Bishop Gardening Club.

On behalf of the Gardening Club I would like to thank Chrissie Atwell and the Village Hall Committee for the use of this excellent facility and their hard work in handling the maintenance and general upkeep of the Hall.

David Darts, Chairman.

# Eaton Camp Historical Society report to Parish Council

## 28<sup>th</sup> April 2018

### Past Events

Eaton Camp Historical Society (ECHS) started this season's public lectures on 4th May 2017 with a talk on Offa's Dyke and the western frontier of Mercia along the River Wye. This was received by a packed house and was given by Dr. Keith Ray, former Herefordshire County Archaeologist. He also informed us about the current work at Dorstone Hill (Neolithic) and Olchon Valley (Bronze age) sites.

Dr. Keith Ray later conducted a party from ECHS around the site at Dorstone on a blazing hot day in July. Members of ECHS then attended the evening meeting at Dorstone Village hall. The excitement was palpable and it was announced by Prof Julian Thomas that this site was indeed early Neolithic and that a 6500 old funerary vessel had been recovered completely intact.

On 21st September 2017 a most interesting talk was given by Margot Millar on the subject of 'St. Dubricius and the Celtic kingdom of Erwig'. This had very close connections with the locality and shone a light into life in Herefordshire in the 6th and 7th Century.

On 23rd September 2017 a parish walk was arranged by Alan Tydeman, parish tree warden, attended by 25 people. The route went from the church to Ruckhall chapel and then on to the woodland part of the common. As well as Alan there were contributions from Nick Smith (birds/trees), Mary Stevenson, and Caroline Hanks. It ended up at Eaton Camp where everyone had a picnic, and listened to a talk on the history of the hillfort. From there the party walked down to the wharf on the river Wye. It was agreed that another walk should be held next year but with a different route.

In the depth of winter on 24th January 2018 Gil McHattie gave a very interesting talk on the Knights Templar. The gatehouse at Bosbury and the Dovecote at Garway being a few examples of their architectural legacy in Herefordshire.

On 25th April 2018 at our AGM Heather Hurley talked about Trade and Transport on the Wye and Lugg.

### Future Events

- 19 September 2018 - joint event with Garden Club - Jules Hudson on "Walled Gardens"
- 7 November 2018 - "A Tale of Two Castles" by Tim Hoverd about Longtown excavations
- Proposed summer walk
- Visit to Neolithic excavations at Dorstone Hill
- April 2019 AGM with Chrissie Lloyd and the "Black Book" - a display of photos and memorabilia relating to the Pulley Estate - could this be the start of a village history project.
- Plans for a guided tour of local historical buildings by a 'House Doctor'.

**Membership** is increasing and is open to anyone with an interest in local history.

Please take one of our 2018-19 Programmes and contact Louise Hamilton Secretary 01432 35444 if you would like to join.