

EASTNOR & DONNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk: Mrs J Chester, Mapleside, Ashperton, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2RZ Tel: 01531 670036
email: clerk@eastnoranddonnington-pc.gov.uk website:- <https://eastnoranddonningtonpc.gov.uk>

Minutes of the Meeting of the Annual Parish Council held on Monday 11th May 2026

Present

Councillors Michael Hall, Ben Tandy, Shane Howells, Jim Sandford, Shirley Roberts, Robin Smith and Chritine Stallard-Daniels

In Attendance

Janet Chester – Parish Clerk
Ledbury South Ward Councillor Stef Simmons

Members of the Public: 1

The Vice-Chairman Cllr Hall welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. To Elect the Chairman of the Parish Council and Sign the Declaration of Acceptance Form

Cllr Hall proposed by Cllr Tandy and seconded by Cllr Howells, Unanimously supported. There being no other nominations Cllr Hall accepted the position and duly signed the declaration form.

2. To Elect the Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council and Sign the Declaration of Acceptance Form

Cllr Tandy proposed by Cllr Hall and seconded by Cllr Smith. Unanimously supported. There being no other nominations Cllr Tandy accepted the position and duly signed the declaration form

3. To Note any Apologies for Absence and Note the Reason None

4. To Record any Declarations of Interest and Consider any Requests for Dispensations - None

5. To receive any Nominations to fill councillor vacancy (Eastnor) by co-option

None. However one resident was attending the meeting with a view to being a future parish councillor.

6. To Consider Approval of Minutes of Parish Council meeting held 9th March 2026

The minutes were APPROVED as accurate and duly signed by the Chairman

7. To Receive a Brief Report from Ledbury South Ward Councillor Stef Simmons

Road Resurfacing and Safety Improvements - After two years of recording the multiplying potholes, raising the problem at council meetings, and working with residents, highways engineers and the Balfour Beatty locality steward, five local roads have been partially resurfaced; Dymock Road, New Street, Martins Way, Biddulph Way and the A438 through Eastnor. Still much more to do however and I am keen to ensure Clenchers Mill Lane and the remainder of the B4216 to Dymock is resurfaced rather than continually patched. Safety improvements asked for have been made at Eastnor with coloured tarmac, larger max 25mph and school hazard signs. At Parkway the two new pedestrian crossing signs I requested were installed, alongside the town council funded speed indicator device. Due to continued excessive speeds at Parkway further works are being planned to include village gates, speed countdown signs and a new permanent SID. I have asked the police to enforce speed limits at Parkway, Gloucester Road and Leadon Way and they now regularly conduct monitoring and spot checks here. A new contractor M Group has now been appointed to replace BBLP, with

75 roles being brought in house on 31st May to ensure a more responsive and improved highways maintenance programme.

Housing Growth and Planning - With the Government's requirement to build 1.5 millions homes, 27,000+ have been allocated to Herefordshire with pressure being placed on Hereford and the Market Towns to take the brunt of this. Major house builders are already looking speculatively at the fields around Ledbury. Given that Ledbury has had 1,200 new homes forced on us at appeal, and that Herefordshire's local development plan is still being formulated, these new proposals are not being developed in the best interests of Ledbury or with reference to what the town desperately needs. I am working to ensure if planning applications are submitted, they fully address resident concerns about infrastructure delivery, affordable housing and protection of the environment. As Ward Member I worked with planners to deliver changes to plans submitted for the new Lidl supermarket to ensure delivery of improved bus, cycle and walking connections, conditions to protect residents from noise and enhance the hedgerow boundary, and measures to encourage rapid delivery of the medical centre and children's nursery on the site. Facilities for Ledbury and its Villages Many residents of Ledbury, Donnington and Eastnor are concerned about the increased pressure a 3,500-house new town site at Glynchbrook within the Forest of Dean District, adjacent to Eastnor and Donnington, would put on local roads and struggling services. It would also negatively impact the National Landscape of the Malvern Hills. I attended the public consultation meeting and have written and spoken in opposition to inclusion of the site within the Forest of Dean draft Local Plan. The plan evidence base had not considered, as required, the huge impact the new homes would have across the county border. I also met with Herefordshire council planners to discuss their robust response and continue to oppose this site's inclusion in the final plan. With increased housing and numbers of residents in Ledbury and surrounding villages it is vital that facilities are improved and extended to cope. In the last year I supported both Ledbury Health Partnership and the Patient Participation Group in speaking at planning committee in favour of the outline proposals for the development of a Medical Centre on land off Leaden Way. In December, when Sir Chris Witty (England's Chief Medical Officer) came to Ledbury I told him about some of the big problems for people in Ledbury, like getting access to healthcare and the pressure on the health services from new housing developments. I am also supporting Ledbury Football Club to find a new site and upgrade their facilities to provide football for all ages, and Ledbury Rugby Club in accessing £106 money to improve facilities for women's and girls' rugby and all ability rugby. The Ledbury Listening Project asked 650 Ledbury school pupils what facilities they wanted locally, and one of the popular suggestions was a bike pump track. So, over the last year I have been working with young people, council officers, and Ledbury Town Council to drive forward the project to bring this facility to the Deer Park play space. The money has been secured from the housing developer contributions, a design co produced and a planning application will e in the coming month to enable local people to comment.

Public Transport Services and Infrastructure - Government announced this year that Ledbury wouldn't receive funding in round one for better access to Platform 1 at Ledbury train station. The bridge and steps are a barrier to disabled and elderly people, and those with young children. Working with fellow Ledbury councillors Justine Peberdy and Liz Harvey I met and discussed plans and costings with Ellie Chowns MP, Network Rail and West Midlands Railway - ready to apply for the next round of Government funding. If you are unable to access Platform 1, a taxi service to the next accessible station is available free of charge. Pre-book by calling 0800 024 8998 or visit: <https://www.westmidlandsrailway.co.uk/travel-information/accessible-travel> I have also been working with my fellow Ledbury ward councillors, officers and bus operators to improve Ledbury's bus services. This has helped secure more frequent services, extended bus routes and installed new stops and bus shelters. In July, bus operators, users, campaigners and council officers got together at a summit meeting, I requested at Full Council, to thrash out what further improvements are needed and how these can be delivered with falling investment from Government.

Ledbury's Green Spaces and Natural Environment - With so much development in Ledbury and its surrounding villages it is vital we work together to ensure we protect and enhance our natural environment and vital green spaces for both people to enjoy and wildlife to thrive. Over the last year I have worked with Sustainable Ledbury to plant marginal plants in the damp areas of the Town Trail, helped Ledbury Community Hub with planting of Oatley's Meadow with a living willow play area, ensured developers replace failed trees on the Hawk Rise estate and to replace and replant the Leaden Way areas damaged by the Hopfield development works. I am currently working with Herefordshire Wildlife Trust and their Verging on Wild project to protect Bee Orchids and other native flora along Ledbury's roadside verges.

Other Council Roles - In addition to my work in the Ledbury South Ward as your local representative, I also fulfil my role on planning committee considering applications that are redirected for democratic oversight and decision making. In my role as Group Leader for the Greens, I also attend Full Council and Cabinet Meetings, substitute for colleagues on other committees and meetings, and sit on the Employment Panel. In January this year, when I took on the role of Green Group Leader, I stepped down after three years as Vice Chair of Herefordshire Council where I fulfilled civic roles as diverse as opening of the May Fair in Hereford, attending and speaking at Armed Forces Covenant meetings and representing Herefordshire at British Citizenship Ceremonies to celebrate and welcome those who have attained British Nationality. I hold a monthly Ward Surgery at Ledbury Rugby Club on Tuesdays 6:30 – 7:30pm by appointment, or I can visit individuals if mobility an issue. I am contactable via email stef.simmons@herefordshire.gov.uk or phone 07792881706.

8. Public Participation Session for Local Residents to raise matters relevant to the Parish Council

(Please note: Decisions cannot be made on items not on the agenda) *This item to be limited at the discretion of the chairman –*

A question was asked if more room could be made on the Woodshed noticeboard for public notices. It was thought that a parish councillor could manage the centre locked unit and put public notices in it.

The clerk advised that BT have agreed to repaint the public phone box opposite The Woodshed entrance.

9. Planning: NB: no paper copies of applications are available to view at the meeting unless specified

a) To Consider any Planning Applications referred for comment: **(to be viewed online prior to the meeting)**

260719 The Old Rectory, Upper Road, Eastnor HR8 1RB Rebuild of two chimneys like for like

PC Comment: The Parish Council have no objections to this application

261021 Birchams Grange, Eastnor HR8 1RW Conversion of four existing bedrooms (rooms 2,3,14 & 15) into two larger bedrooms. Construction of new single storey wing in northwest of site containing two new bedrooms (no overall increase in occupancy) together with pastry kitchen for residents use and covered outdoor seating area.

PC Comment: The Parish Council have no objections to this application

261248 Eastnor Home Farm HR8 1RD Ash Tree – advanced basal decay mainly from Ganoderma and Perenniporia decay fungi. Also some inonotus hispidus canker in the upper crown. Danger of tree toppling into garden – safety risk to the residents and property. Works is to fell the tree into the paddock between two cherry trees. Replacement planting with a young 2m cherry tree.

PC Comment: The Parish Council have no objections to this application

b) To Note Details of Decision Notices Received from Hereford Council: as per planning record – NOTED

10. To Review and Adopt the following Policies for Eastnor & Donnington Parish Council

i. Standing Orders ii. Code of Conduct iii. Financial Regulations iv. Donations/Grants Policy v. Assets Register vi. Risk Assessment Schedule vii. Risk Management Policy viii. Scheme of Delegation to Parish Clerk ix. Co-option Policy x. Complaints Policy xi. Training & Development Policy xii. IT Policy xiii. Media Policy xiv. Social Media Policy xv. Communications Policy xvi. Equal Opportunities Policy xvii. Bullying & Harassment Policy xviii. Health & Safety Policy xix. Unacceptable Behaviour Policy xx. Freedom of Information Requests xxi. Discipline & Grievance Policy xxii. Policy for Planning Applications received between meetings xxiii. GDPR Data Protection Policy xxiv. GDPR Privacy Policy xxv. GDPR Privacy Notices xxvi. GDPR Data Subject Access Policy xxvii. GDPR Consent Form

RESOLVED All above policies were reviewed and there being no changes re-adopted.

11. Appointments

- a) To Appoint HALC Eastern Area Representative - clerk
- b) To Appoint GDPR Data Protection Officer (DPO) - clerk
- c) To Appoint Website Manager - clerk
- d) To Appoint Internal Auditor – Mrs Paula Badham

RESOLVED The above appointments were **AGREED**

12. Finance:

- a) To Consider and Confirm Compliance with the requirements under Assertion 10 – Audit 2025-26
 - i. To Confirm IT Policy held - CONFIRMED
 - ii. To Confirm the PC has and uses a generic email account hosted on an authority owned domain - CONFIRMED
 - iii. To Confirm that the PC meets legal requirements for its .gov website – The clerk REPORTED that the web provider had confirmed that the website meets legal requirements

- iv. To Confirm that the PC has an accessibility statement on the website and to Confirm this has been reviewed – The clerk CONFIRMED that there is an accessibility statement on the website that is reviewed annually alongside the other policies. The web provider CONFIRMED that this statement is in compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2AA
- v. To Confirm that the website includes published documentation as specified in the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 - CONFIRMED
- vi. To Confirm that the PC has a Data Protection Policy which is reviewed annually and adheres to the principles therein - CONFIRMED

b) To Receive 2025/26 End of Year Accounts –

Opening balance 1.4.2025 – Lloyds Bank £5303.10 Scottish Widows £3293.94
Income – £8330.61
Expenditure – £7218.38
Closing Balance 31.3.2026 – Lloyds Bank £7393.58 Scottish Widows £3431.94

The EOY bank reconciliation and bank statement were APPROVED and signed as evidence of bank reconciliation and budget monitoring. It was RESOLVED that bank signatories would remain as Cllrs Hall, Smith, Howells, Tandy and Stallard-Daniels.

- c) To Note that the Parish Council are Selected for Intermediate Review by External Auditor - NOTED
- d) To Consider Internal Auditors Report – The Internal Audit Report was APPROVED. There were no issues raised therein
- e) To Approve the Annual Governance Statement for the External Auditor – The Annual Governance Statement was considered, agreed and APPROVED. The statement was signed by the clerk and Chair.
- f) To Approve the Annual Accounting Statements for the External Auditor – The Annual Accounting Statements were considered and APPROVED. The statements were then signed by the Chair.
- g) To Consider Completing the Certificate of Exemption for External Audit of End of Year Accounts - The Clerk REPORTED that the Council did meet the eligibility criteria to be exempt from an external audit. The Certificate of Exemption was signed by the RFO and the Chair. It was RESOLVED that the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights would be Wednesday 3rd June – Tuesday 14th July 2026
- h) To Note Finance Report and Bank Balances – Noted
Bank Balances as at 28.4.2026 Lloyds £9698.98 Scottish Widows £3441.48
- i) To Consider Payments of Outstanding Accounts
000647: Autela Payroll Services – Payroll 1 Dec 2025 – 31 March 2026 - £105.60
000648: J Chester, clerk salary March-April as agreed plus expenses £326.97 Printer and Ink
D/Debit: HMRC – PAYE Feb – April - £211.60
RESOLVED All above payments agreed

13. Highways/Footpaths:

- a) To Note any New Highway & Footpath Defects

The Parish Council has been invited to apply for a PROW grant from Herefordshire Council.

RESOLVED Councillors will send the clerk a list of projects required before the end of the week as the application has to be submitted by the 15th.

14. Information Section / Correspondence / Discussion:

- a) To Review Information and Outstanding Actions - Reviewed and updated.

Councillors were reminded of the importance of setting up and using their .gov emails to comply with GDPR.

15. Reports:

The clerk had attended the Parish Summit and the HALC Conference and AGM

16. Training: To note any forthcoming training dates – the latest HALC diary has been circulated.

17. To Raise Items for next scheduled Parish Council Meeting (no discussion)

Eastnor Councillor Vacancy, Bleed Kits

18. To Confirm Dates and Time and Location of Meetings for the ensuing year

2026 – Monday 13th July (Brooms Green), Monday 14th September (Eastnor), Monday 30th November (Brooms Green),

2027 - Monday 8th March (Eastnor) Monday 10th May (Eastnor)

Meeting closed at 20.45pm

Signed:..... Dated:.....

INFORMATION SHEET

MEETING DATES

2026 – Monday 11th May (Eastnor), Monday 13th July (Brooms Green), Monday 14th September (Eastnor), Monday 30th November (Brooms Green)

2027 – Monday 8th March (Eastnor), Monday 10th May (Eastnor)

PARISH CLERK UPDATE

- Road defects reported to Locality Steward / Herefordshire Council via website
- Website updated
- .gov website & emails chased
- Policies reviewed and updated where necessary
- Assertion 10 Requirements checked and confirmed
- Year End Accounts Prepared and Internal Audit Completed

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- Balfour Beatty – Weekly Locality briefings *
- Balfour Beatty – road closure notices *
- Balfour Beatty – Parish Briefing Notes *
- HALC – Information Corner & Training Schedule *
- Herefordshire Council – Talk Community Correspondence *

* Circulated to Cllrs.

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS – These are the consolidated actions outstanding after the last meeting:-

DATE	ACTION	STATUS	AGENDA ITEM	DETAIL
Sept 2025	Clerk	Complete	8a	Request changeover to .gov website and emails (£800 budget)
Sept 2025	Clerk	Ongoing	9c	Update Lloyds Bank Account Mandate and investigate online authorisation of payments
Nov 2025	Clerk	Ongoing	11b	Clerk to check with BT if they are responsible for maintenance of phonebox
Jan 2026	Clerk	Reported	10a	The hedge by Parkway garage needs cutting back. There are potholes in both Eastnor & Donnington parishes in need of repair – Eastnor outside school and along Clenchers Mill Lane. Donnington by noticeboard and on the A417. On the Dymock road it is thought a tree root is blocking a drain. Flooding on the Dymock Road is also occurring by the old pumping station and Highbridge.
March 2026	Clerk	Ongoing	8a	.gov website up and running. .gov cllr emails set up – cllrs to confirm to clerk when successfully working

PLANNING RECORD – (last six months)

251769 – Eastnor Cricket Club, Clenchers Mill Lane, Eastnor HR8 1RR Proposed single storey rear extension to pavilion

PC Comment – support

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL DECISION: Granted 8.8.2025

252217 - Hillview, Hollybush, HR8 1ET Proposed repairs and alterations to Hill View Cottage.

P C Comment – The Parish Council support this application

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL DECISION: Granted 15.10.25

252040 – Hill Farm (Gladwin) \Eastnor, HR8 1EF – Proposed conversion and refit of barns and annexe. Western barn to a dwelling

for flexible usage for either holiday/long term let, ancillary accommodation for farmhouse guests. Northern barn to multi use space. Annexe to make it fully habitable. Extension of farmhouse Refacing/rendering courtyard walls. Demolition of modern elements within site. **HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL DECISION: Granted 8.9.25**

252105 – St John The Baptists Church, Upper Road, Eastnor, HR8 1RB – T1 Yew - remove ring of ivy from ground level up to head height. All around lower crown up to half height, reduce 2-3m on three sides and by 4m on north side over path. T2 Oak - severe crown lift to 4m to clear stem. T3, T7, T8 Yew - remove ring of ivy from ground level to head height. SG4 Box - no work. G5 Irish Yews - remove ring of ivy from ground level up to head height. G6 Yews x6 - Coppice central stem leaning NE over road.

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL DECISION: Granted 2.9.25

260032 – Hillside, Colwall, WR13 6HR Demolition of existing 1960's domestic additions. Two storey and single storey extensions, retaining wall and landscaping works including some earth moving works to rear garden. To provide multi-generational family home

PC Comment: The Parish Council have no objections to this application

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL DECISION:

DRAFT