

**EASTHAM PARISH COUNCIL  
CHARIMAN'S REPORT  
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 25<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2010**

As in previous years I looked back at what was in last year's report and I have to say that regrettably very little progress had been made to deal with the various shortcomings.

**ROADS**

The condition of the roads in the parish continues to be a source of concern and irritation; the very occasional filling of a pothole here and there does little to resolve their continuing deterioration. Last winter's snow and ice made most of the roads in the Parish virtually unusable for severable weeks. A lack of grit bins in the parish and the gritting done by the County Council was pathetically inadequate. It was widely felt that once again the rate-payers of Eastham were getting a very poor service for their Council Tax money. It was therefore decided to ask Mr John Wallace, the County Highways Liaison Engineer to attend the public session of the March Parish Council Meeting. Every household was informed of this meeting and it was well attended. Mr Wallace apologized for the failure to grit the Highwood road despite the fact that it is a designated secondary gritting road – this was assumed to be an error by the gritting lorry driver. One grit bin was put at Pipers Brook but this deemed to be inadequate in several ways. A request for an essential bin where the Highwood residents gain access to the Highwood road has been made and the Council will press for this and other salt bins to be installed before next winter.

The long standing problem of the land slide on the Highwood has now been resolved although some damaged fencing has not been replaced. As one problem is resolved another rears its head, this time in the form of Eastham Bridge becoming unusable. This time it wasn't the County Council's fault but Severn Trent's leaking water main washing away part of the bridge's foundations; the bridge is now back in use after nine weeks but communications with the Parish was pathetically inadequate.

**LENGTHSMAN**

We were very disappointed that our previous excellent Lengthsman had to retire through ill-health. A new man has been appointed and we will be sharing him with Knighton-on-Teme. As I pointed out last year, the cost of the Lengthsman is met by a grant from Worcestershire County Council; this grant is still of course a part, if only a very small part of our council tax bills.

**PLANNING**

The Council has received three planning applications during the past year which the Council did not see fit to endorse and that one has gone to appeal. Another application that the Council felt refusal by Malvern was unwarranted did on appeal get the go-ahead. It is always worth seeking support from the Parish Council if it is felt that a decision by the planning authorities is unreasonable.

**BUDGET**

When we agreed this year's precept the Council continues to be mindful of the need to build up a reserve against unexpected expenditure such as the possibility of any legal challenge taken against the Council or the expense of an election. The Council has received quotations to paint the railings around the hall but as grants are being sort no decision has yet been made.

**COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

With the retirement of Reg Farmer; Dr Ken Pollock was elected as our new County Councillor and I was pleased to see him giving support at the Eastham Bridge problem. District Councillor Gill Farmer continues to give quick response to any requests for assistance.

I am grateful to my fellow councilors for their hard work and support over the past year and I would especially like to thank Geoff Brookes who oversees minor planning applications in consultation with other Councilors and the Clerk. Finally thank you to Sue Burrows for her efficient grip on the office of Parish Clerk.

**John Inge - Chairman of Eastham Parish Council**