

*Great Eccleston Parish Council*

# ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

7:00pm Monday 12th May 2025  
in  
Great Eccleston Village Centre

Welcome by the Chairman

Reports:

Parish Council Chairman's Report  
Parish Council Financial Report  
Borough Councillor's Report  
Great Eccleston in Bloom Report  
Flood Report

Police Report (if able to attend)

If you have any subjects for discussion,

Please notify the Clerk or your Councillors before the meeting of any items for discussion

[members@greateccleston.org](mailto:members@greateccleston.org)

All Parish and Town Councils throughout England are required by law to hold an Annual Parish Meeting between April and June each year. The purpose of the meeting is to allow the Parish Council and other organisations in the village to outline what they have been doing over the last 12 months. It also enables the residents of Great Eccleston to have their say on anything they consider is important to the village, this is welcomed and is the purpose of the meeting. A written record of the meeting will be taken.

## **Chairman's Report 2024/2025**

This is the Parish Council Chairman's report for 2024/2025. The Parish Council continues to operate well and to serve the ever growing village. Last year we saw the sods being turned on several building projects which will see our village grow significantly. However, in the general day to day running of the village little has changed. The village continues to operate as it has always done without noticing the changes that are afoot.

The village still looks as rural as it has always been. It is still set in a sea of grassland being dominated by farmland, but in years to come all that may change. It looks clean and tidy and it is with thanks to John Clueit and the number of volunteer litter pickers from our villagers that this has been achieved. Likewise with the gulleys at the edge of the roads, it is thanks to the villagers in their respective streets that these are kept weed free to stave off the threat of flooding. We therefore owe a lot to the villagers who are trying to keep the village a nice place to live in.

However, we are still blighted with a Square that many a time resembles an overflowing car park also parking issues in the surrounding streets are clogging up the village and causing issues. This year saw the opening (not officially though) of the new car park off Copp Lane, still little used though. Cars certainly dominate the village as this year we have seen a number of road works (many to do with the new buildings) that have closed many of the routes into and out of the village. Copp Lane, the bypass and West End all closed at sometime during the year. As the number of cars increases the threats on the roads and to the population must also increase therefore this year has seen the introduction of electronic signage to attempt to slow the traffic within the village. The sites chosen are West End, Raikes Road and Copp Lane. Even with these in place there are still dangers in the village especially around the schools. This increase in traffic has also seen an increase in the number of potholes, leaks (caused by the sheer volume of traffic on weakened roads) and damage to pavements (caused by parking heavy vehicles on pavements not designed for them). Most of these incidents are out of the PCs remit but we must continue to urge those in authority who are responsible to act.

The influence of the pandemic is now a distant memory and we are back to a normality in the village even though many stated this would not happen, but there is a change – less socialising now takes place. Many of the general population work from home and this has changed the dynamic of the village. We have with the new housing become a satellite village.

It is important that the Parish Council moves forward and works as a team, as there are bigger threats to our survival to contend with. The reorganisation of local government may see the demise of the Parish Council; if not it will certainly see a reduction in its power. It is therefore imperative that the PC is seen to be working as a team in order to maintain the environs of the village. As Central Government makes changes to the way we live we have had to grin and bear it, but as a Council we must ensure that we welcome the additions to our village with open arms.

One issue that has blighted the village is the threat of flooding and this has not gone away, it is just lying dormant. We are still in a medium to high risk of an incident within the next five years affecting the village. The affect from surface water flooding rather than river flooding is less but has been raised from low to medium. This year saw floods in the Moss side area, Copp Lane (caused by surface water) and Raikes Road (this cleared quite quickly). We must not be complacent as the threat is still present and will only get worse. The dry winters have helped to reduce this threat although wet conditions last year has increased the threat of drowning – not of people but of our fauna. It looks

like we have lost 3 more trees this year. As the climate changes we need to look at threats like fire as well as water. Therefore this year the Flood Group became the resilience group and widened its remit. We are not affected by moorland fire but 60% of fires are caused by grassland and people's gardens !

With the issues with the closure of the High St for social events, meant that some events that were planned had to be cancelled. However we had a very successful Carol service held in the Square and the PC organised the Armistice Service on a cold but dry November day. Thanks go to all those members of the general public that braved the weather to attend these services and to those that helped to organise them.

This year the market stove off threats from a changing population and the rise of the cheap supermarkets and continues to operate. It is well attended by the villagers but remember these market traders stand the market every week not just on dry sunny days and therefore need our custom if it is to survive. Remember the death of the market will affect the fabric and socialisation of our village.

We are still being blighted with the LCC rules about items being placed on the lamp posts therefore much of the street furniture has gone like the hanging baskets down Raikes Road and the Christmas lights are bracketed near the lamp posts. Having said this the Christmas trees in the Square at Christmas looked really pretty this year and brightened up the area.

As I have stated previously the village is still a rural ancient village with all year round colour from both plantings and natural vegetation. It is a delight walking through the village at all times of the year from the first flowering of the Almond trees and Snowdrops to the red and golds of the autumn foliage on the European Larch at the bottom of Raikes Road and the flowering of the Autumn crocus. As people's gardening habits change we need to preserve this rurality by encouraging more natural growth and native plantings. A report on Wyre in Bloom will be a separate document.

We celebrated a gold award in the Wyre in Bloom competition this year. And congratulations for this. As many local councils cut back on plantings it is important to this village that we strive to make it a great place to live. I would personally on behalf of the Parish Council like to thank all the villagers through their own gardens and the volunteers who help with making Wyre in Bloom and the flowering of the village a great success.

Finally, the Parish Council are there to help keep the village operational, no mean feat in this ever changing world. Rising prices has meant that the PC has had to dig deep again this year to keep within the budget. Since 1664 this village has literally been 'Great' and it is the job of the villagers and the PC to keep it that way. Therefore I would like to personally thank the members of the Parish Council for all their hard work over the past year.

I would also like to thank the Clerk to the Parish Council, Hugh Glover, for both keeping the Parish Council in check as well as acting on our behalf on other bodies. Thanks for all his hard work and patience.

David J Astall  
Chairman of the Parish Council

Income and Expenditure	Actual £	Budget £	Variance £	10-Mar-25 12	Budget 2024/202	Budget 2025/202	
					5	6	
<b>Income</b>							
Interest (yearly)	22	100	(78)		100	0	
Market	1,340	1,500	(160)		1,500	1,350	
Wyre Borough Council Precept	41,000	41,000	0		41,000	64,000	
WIB	2,900	2,900	0		2,900	2,900	
Precept support for Village Centre	6,300	6,300	0	A	6,300	0	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>51,562</b>	<b>51,800</b>	<b>(238)</b>		<b>51,800</b>	<b>68,250</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>							
Accounting, Professional & legal fees	300	300	0		300	1,400	Includes 5K for planning advice
Employee Costs	10,434	9,700	(734)		9,700	10,604	new rate + backpay 9500+1104 SPIDS and extra brackets & solar panels, 3.5K Barrel Bus Shelter .15 Friendship circle .2K
Signage/Welcome Beds/Fixed Assets	5,814	6,750	936	A	6,750	4,850	Information board 1.0K
Insurance Costs	1,035	1,035	0	A	1,035	1,537	10% from December 25
Lengthsman	4,412	4,400	(12)		4,400	3,927	3927 L @ 19.25hrs.
Watering	1,491	450	(1,041)		450	300	
Planting	3,648	3,800	152	A	3,800	2,900	To match advertising funding Summer 2.4K +Winter .5K
Membership Fees	270	270	0	A	270	325	
Printing, Postage and Stationery	647	500	(147)		500	600	
Publications	20	20	0	A	20	15	
Rates	170	170	0	A	170	200	
Repairs	627	2,000	1,373	A	2,000	4,750	Refurbish Benches 0.75K signs & Repairs to the Square £4K
Room Hire & storage	1,060	1,100	40		1,100	1,200	
Election Expenses	133	200	67		200	0	
Free resource Section 137	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	500	
Training	408	400	(8)		400	500	Training re changed planning regs
Travel	961	800	(161)		800	1,000	
Web Site Hosting and Maintenance	1,361	700	(661)		700	700	Increase due to Website Change to greatecclestone-pc.gov.uk
Xmas/ Other/Events	2,125	2,250	125		2,250	1,600	Contributions from businesses of 50% cost
Contingency	5,000	4,000	(1,000)	A	4,000	0	
Village Centre support	12,000	12,000	0	A	12,000	15,000	Support until offices let
Replenish Reserves						15,000	Create reserves 3/13*61K
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>51,916</b>	<b>51,845</b>	<b>(71)</b>		<b>51,845</b>	<b>66,908</b>	
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>(354)</b>	<b>-45</b>	<b>(309)</b>		<b>-45</b>	<b>1,342</b>	

A= Adjustment for accruals or provisions

## **COUNCILLOR SUSAN CATTERALL ANNUAL REPORT 2024 OO 2025**

The year began with my continuing with duties as the Deputy Mayor attending concerts, a veterans breakfast the funeral of a retired councillor and finally the service of thanksgiving for the Mayor at Hambleton church.

Another year varied requests from residents and organisations. It is worthy of note that I was unable to help a lady who contacted me with a problem with a wasps nest. The council no longer provide this service for the public and the lady had to find a local commercial business who could deal with the matter.

Together with Nick from the Parish Council we met with Ed Thistletwaite at the cricket club. This was as a result of a request to assist with funding for a ladies changing room. After certain enquiries I was able to put him in contact with the officer at Wyre Borough Council who allocates funding throughout the Borough. Sadly Ed did not come back to me to inform me if he had been successful in obtaining a grant.

Together with the Chairman David we attended a service of remembrance at Copp Church and in the village square.

I was asked to assist with an application for licensed premises in the old post office. Due to its unsuitability the licence would have been refused but was withdrawn by the applicant.

Neighbour issues are always one of the most common requests I receive. Various issues such as one lady who had a problem a neighbours gutter causing her issues with escaping water into her property. I was able to contact Environmental Health and within the week a builder attended to resolve the problem.

Issues between neighbours regarding the trimming of a hedge in order to have a new fence. There was nothing the council could do as it was a private matter which I was able to mediate between them both as best as I could.

Concerns arose relating to the intention to fell a 200 year old oak tree. Liaison with the tree officer resulted in his visiting to review the need for the removal or if a tree preservation order would be needed. As far as I

am aware this is still ongoing as the person who complained has not contacted me with the resolution that was reached.

Cross House Farm continues to cause concerns about the amount of building and if they have exceeded their planning permission. It has been published in the last few days that an application has been received for retrospective planning permission and I have called it in to council for the review of the planning committee.

Finally in relation to the trees on the by-pass near to West End there is an issue with the safety of split branches overhanging a dwelling where it is overhanging a green house and could cause injury.

As you may be aware I am currently undergoing health issues requiring that I receive hospital out patient treatment. It is my intention that I will continue with my duties as a Borough and Parish Councillor during this time and still do my best to help anyone who contacts me for advice or assistance with matters I am able to resolve.

Sue Catterall

**Great Ecclestone Annual Parish Council Meeting 12th May 2025**  
**Great Ecclestone in Bloom Report**

**Achievements leading up to judging in July 2024**

We were delighted to be awarded Gold in July 2024 and would like to thank the Parish Council, the Volunteers, the Contractors and Sponsorship we received from the businesses and residents to enable us to increase our score by 10 points to get 89/100 points. The main contributors were:

- Redesign and build of Welcome Beds -enhanced surround, signs and planting – sponsored by Parish Council & Volunteer fund raising
- 7 new barrels (6 self-watering) purchased by Parish Council
- Sponsorship to purchase of high visibility jackets with In Bloom logo
- Retain and recruit more Volunteers responsible for:
  - Welcome Bed signs and maintenance after rebuilding
  - Renovation of the Pinfold to become the Pinfold Friendship Garden
  - Village Centre Garden
  - Increase volunteer planting to 4 barrels
  - Hayloft outside Dentist
  - Maintenance of Pinfold & Hay basket
  - Maintenance of all round self-watering barrels
  - Maintenance of Health Centre Beds
  - Maintenance of Shady Bed
  - Maintenance of Celebration Bed
  - Weeding & new rose garden at the bungalows
  - Raising In Bloom funds with events in the Community and sponsorship
  - Engaging with Northlands to create pebble design around tree at bus stop and corner of Leckonby

<b>Great Ecclestone In Bloom Scoring out of 100 points</b>	<b>Year    Points</b>	<b>Scoring Matrix</b> 60 to 74 points = Silver   Good 75 to 84 points = Silver Gilt   Very Good 85 to 100 points = Gold   Excellent
	2021 – 74 Silver	
	2022 – 74 Silver	
	2023 – 79 Silver Gilt	
	2024 – 89 Gold	

**Projects for 2025**

- Historical and other information boards at the Bus Stop
- Craft Fair raising In Bloom funds
- Continued Maintenance by Volunteers
- New Structure celebrating Friendship plus bench and wildflower area
- New benches on Garstang Road – subject to a successful grant application
- Bench renovation outside the Deli and elsewhere
- Fruit tree pruning outside the Health Centre

On behalf of Great Ecclestone in Bloom Sub-Committee  
 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025

## **Flood Report from the Chair of the FLAG**

Even though there was a number of flood alerts issued for the river wyre this year the flood defences in the main village were not breached. There are still issues however with flooding of the Dyke at Whites bridge. As I have reported in the past few years the Levee at White's Bridge is above the height of the bridge parapet. This means that when the Dyke overtops it does so on to the A586. This also damages the structure of the bridge. UU and the EA carried out work in that are this year to try and strengthen the defences and check the bridge. The only answer is to heighten the bridge which cannot be done as the A586 is a trunk road.

Over the past few years I have on behalf of the village asked for electronic safety signs and lighting to be erected near White's Bridge to alert drivers especially at night that the road is flooded. At night with no lighting all drivers see is a dark patch of flood water; there is then the danger of accidents happening. Even though the Lancs County Councillor has promised to do something about this – nothing to date has been done.

The only major river flooding to occur in the village this year has once again been in the Moss Side area. LCC and the EA have made a study of the area to try and alleviate the problems. Even with this lack of flooding this year we should not be complacent. The yearly chance of the river flooding the village is medium (Level 3). But this is rising and is predicted to be high within 5 years.

The other form of flooding in the village is surface water flooding and this is caused by the drainage gulleys. With more and more houses being built the chances of surface water flooding rises. Currently it stands at Very low although Copp Lane, St Mary's Road and Hall lane are at Low. All incidents of flooding should be reported and villagers are urged to sign up to Flood Line if they are in the flood area.

Once again this year the infrastructure to our drainage was put to the test with water pumped to the water pumping station on water Lane again having to be baled out with tankers removing liquid from this station. Again I have complained about this especially as all the new housing will flow into it. The LCC councillor promises to do something about it, but it is no avail – yet!

Flooding is only one aspect of the issues that we could face in the village. Therefore this year I revamped the website and added a resilience section. This section looks at airbourne pollution, planning, emergencies and wildfires. The alerts have also increased to include hot and cold weather alerts and pollution alerts.

One of the initiatives that we are looking at is the use of Community Radios. If there was a main power outage in an emergency situation then no communications would work therefore it is planned to have radios installed in the village centre to operate in such an emergency. The radio use FM bandwidth which are not affected in major emergencies. This project is ongoing.

David J Astall  
Chairman Great Ecclestone FLAG