

EDGMOND PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Monday 9th APRIL 2018

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Parish Council is bound by a legal code called the Transparency Code. This means that all discussions, decisions, agendas and minutes of meetings must be freely available to members of the public. Residents can obtain information about Parish Council meetings, decisions, minutes of meetings and future meetings either by contacting the Clerk, looking on the Village web site or looking on the Parish notice boards.

The Clerk is the spokesperson of the Parish Council and is the appropriate person to contact if you require information about what the Parish Council is doing or if you have comments or concerns about issues in the Parish. The Clerk always has her finger on the pulse and can give answers about particular concerns quickly and decisively. If she can't do so she knows who to contact in order to find any required information. The position of Clerk is a paid one and so she is an employee of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council is unanimous in thanking Katrina for the work she does for Edgmond. She works way in excess of her contractual hours and this has never been more-so during the writing of the Neighbourhood Plan. The other way to have contact with the Parish Council is to attend one of our bi monthly meetings in the Village Hall. Every meeting begins with a public session, which enables residents to bring concerns and issues to the attention of the Parish Council. Members of the public are then welcome to stay for the whole of the meeting if they wish although they will, usually, not be able to participate further.

The important thing to remember is that the Parish Council represents you, as residents of Edgmond, and we are not aware of your issues unless you contact us to let us know your views.

The Parish website has been completely revamped and is very easy to access. All of the information concerning the Parish Council is on the web site and this means that your Parish Council fully complies with the Transparency Code. Indeed, the Website has been praised by other Parish Councils as an example to follow. Thanks must go to Councillor Doherty and the Clerk for ensuring that it is so well thought of by others.

As has been stated many times in the past, no Parish Councillors claim any expenses, even though they are entitled to do so. Several of our members attend related meetings elsewhere in the surrounding villages and do not claim travelling expenses for their attendance.

The Neighbourhood Plan has occupied the minds of Parish Councillors, the Clerk and, indeed, a great many residents of the village over a period of several months. All contributions and suggestions have been gratefully received and have been taken into consideration.

Despite the potential distractions of the Neighbourhood Plan your Parish Council has continued to work hard at its other duties in order to do the best it can for the Parish.

I can report that the two vacancies on the Parish Council have been filled and we can look forward to working with our full complement of councillors. We have already welcomed the two new members who are: Keith Arbuthnot and Allan Wilson.

The tree project is continuing to move forward and many trees have been planted around the parish. Councillor Edwards has said she is not allowed to move and plant any Ash trees due to continued problems with Ash Dieback. Councillor Edwards is to be congratulated for her work on the tree project, which has been on the go for a number of years.

The footpath project is now nearing completion. Thanks must go to Councillor Doherty for working tirelessly on this project.

The Parish Council is aware that the speed of vehicles on our roads remains a concern. I can report that the Community Speedwatch scheme is still in the pipeline, although it is moving at a snails pace. The equipment for use in Edgmond is available and we are waiting for T&W and the Police to finally complete their legal matters. Training of volunteers will then commence.

When you receive Parish Council communications in the future, you will see that a new Parish Council logo has been produced. Thanks must go to Councillors M. Barton and P. Doherty who have worked on this logo alongside a graphic designer. We hope you will agree that this represents Edgmond and its rural environment very well.

You may well have noticed that the damaged paintwork on the seat by the MUGA has been repaired. The Parish Council hopes that its users appreciate this and that further damage will not occur. You may also have noticed that the rusty, grey and redundant post boxes, that were dotted around the village, have now been removed.

Volunteers are carrying out a lot of maintenance of flower beds and some footpaths. This is not advertised anywhere they just get on with it whenever it is necessary. Thanks go to these unsung heroes who are helping to make the village a pleasant place to live.

The Parish Council is still investigating the resurfacing of the Shrewsbury Road car park and the route of the walking bus. T&W Council is investigating costs but we know the car park will be expensive which means they are rather reluctant to commit to the work. We will, however, continue to press for this to be carried out.

Obviously the best news for the village has been the final withdrawal of the planning application to build on Egremont Meadow and the Gladman application to build off the B5062. Thanks must go to the T&W planning department for refusing the application in the first place and for providing a robust case against it at the planning appeal. Thanks also go to those residents who wrote to T&W with their objections and to PHE who made a robust case against the application at the appeal, along with the Parish Council. It was significant that the planning inspector was able to produce her decision against building very quickly.

The final piece of good news is, of course, the Inspector's approval of the Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan. After minor modifications this is now going forward to referendum on 19th April. Your Parish Council hopes for a full turnout of voters and a very positive 'yes' vote. After all, this is the only way that development in Edgmond can be influenced, by the local community, until 2031.

There have been a few incidents of burglary in the village in recent weeks and some reports of suspicious vehicles driving around the village. It is important that residents continue to be vigilant and should be prepared to ring the police on 101 if there is concern about suspicious happenings. Even frequent calls to the 101 number are not, we are told by the police, regarded as nuisance calls. Mention has been made, by the police, of the possibility of becoming a 'Smart Water' village. They may be able to negotiate a cheap price if the majority of the village agree to join. It is my understanding that 'Smart Water' is a permanent marker and potential burglars may have second thoughts about stealing possessions if they see 'Smart Water' notices around the village. The Parish Council will keep you informed.

Harper Adams University

Your Parish Council continues to have regular meetings with Harper Adams University and this enables it to maintain good relationships. The University keeps the Parish Council abreast of future plans.

The University is recognised nationally and internationally as a high achieving academic institution and one of the best in its field.

The Student Union is aware of the proximity of the University to the village and especially Edgmond Marsh. To this end it is aware of the effect its social events have on some village residents. The posting of information about an upcoming social event is a great step forward, as is the concern about placement of entertainment venues and sound monitoring so that excessive noise late at night can be reduced.

Lastly I know the Parish Council has praised our Clerk, Katrina Baker, on many occasions. However, this year during our complicated and time-consuming writing of the Neighbourhood Plan she has worked tirelessly. Without her extensive knowledge and commitment the plan would not have reached the stage it is at now.

Councillor Robert Higginson

Chairman Edgmond Parish Council