

Minutes of the East Knoyle Parish Council

Convened at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 3rd September 2025 at East Knoyle Village Hall

Present: Councillor Garry Staunton, Councillor Ian Tait, Councillor Ann Ambrose, Councillor Ann White, Councillor Hugo Middleton, Councillor Eric Brunner, Councillor McCarthy, Councillor Bateman, EK Parish Clerk, Councillor Wayman Wiltshire Council

Apologies: Councillor Entwistle

Public Open Forum

Mr and Mrs Dykes in attendance but only to observe.

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 4th June 2025

Draft minutes were recommended for approval. Proposed Cllr Tait seconded Cllr McCarthy – unanimously approved and signed as a true record.

Matters arising

None outstanding - all others matters covered in agenda items.

Planning Applications

PL/2025/06739. Proposed works to replace flat roofs with pitch roofs.

Councillors supported this application. Proposed Cllr Middleton, seconded Cllr White

PL/2025/06818. Proposed works to various trees. Councillors supported this application subject to a comment that felled trees be replaced with native species.

Proposed Cllr Middleton seconded Cllr Tait

PL/2025/06446. Demolition of existing outbuilding and erection of a new ancillary outbuilding in its place. Councillors supported this application subject to a comment that it be compliant with night skies position. Proposed Cllr Middleton seconded Cllr Bateman.

To receive a report from Bridget Wayman (Wiltshire Council)

Cllr Wayman noted that the requested new signs had been installed at the top and bottom of Church Rails. She had asked Paul Shaddock from Wiltshire Council to inspect the signs given their size and he had confirmed they were as specified. She would further look into whether the signs could be better if switched to avoid any potential confusion.

Cllr Wayman confirmed that the new Wilts Connect bus service would start on 1st September at a cost of £3 per journey. Users merely had to ring the Wilts Connect number to book their journey.

Cllr Wayman reported that Dorset Council as of October 2025 planned to introduce an online booking system and fee for non-Dorset residents using the Shaftesbury household recycling plant, Fee yet to be notified but would be less than £10. New system would feature an ANPR to verify addresses. The nearest free sites for East Knoyle residents would be Warminster and Salisbury. Councillors expressed a concern that this new plan could increase the incidence of fly-tipping.

Cllr Wayman noted that the My Wilts app was being reviewed and a consultation underway. Cllr McCarthy noted that the postcode locator needed enhancing.

Similarly a consultation on the Wiltshire Council Business Plan was underway and feedback was requested.

Councillors ongoing concerns surrounding the A350 were discussed. Cllr Wayman said she would organize a meeting with Sedgehill and Semley Parish Councils with a view to developing a joint response to the recent report. Cllr's White, Ambrose and McCarthy said they would represent EKPC at this meeting.

Cllr Bateman raised the issue of the Milton turn-off sign on the side of the A350 as it descended into the parish being invisible due to overgrown vegetation. Councillors believed this was the responsibility of Wiltshire Council as the landowner and asked Cllr Wayman to look into this potential road safety matter.

Cllr Wayman noted that the new "Walking the Knoyles" leaflet contained a mistake which was being corrected.

Parish Clerk enquired about the new Government £104 million LHFIG grant funding but Cllr Wayman was of the view this would filter down to small parishes like East Knoyle.

Highways – Cllr McCarthy

Cllr McCarthy noted that small works continued to be undertaken by the Parish Steward. Most notable being the new topping on Friars Lane.

He briefed the Parish Council on an introductory meeting as requested by the new owner of the Milton Barns. He is eager to ensure the planned works cause the least possible disruption.

Vice Chairs Report – Cllr Staunton

- a) Shared with Councillors the heartfelt thanks Neil Southerden had expressed to him for his farewell gift
- b) EKPC has the opportunity to avail itself of a £1000 community grant from Wrens Shop. Potential projects would be consulted upon. Cllr Bruner raised the topic of the proposed metal Fire Basket to support future Beacons. He will now contact local supplier to investigate costs based on the standard template.
- c) The Vice Chair briefed the Parish Council on the process it would be following to appoint a new Chair pursuant to Cllr Entwistle's resignation as Chair though he noted she would remain a Parish Councillor. Chair appointment was solely an internal Parish Council appointment and until an election was called the Vice Chair would step-up accordingly.

- d) Vice Chair noted that there were still 2 remaining vacancies on the Parish Council. Councillors view was that having preliminary conversations with prospects was most likely to be successful, along with continual promotion in the EKNL
- e) Vice Chair asked Councillors as to whether a PC whatsapp group might improve communication in addition to emails. Councillors were not in favour of this option.
- f) Vice Chair briefed Councillors on an approach from a resident to hold a Beer Festival at the Village Hall on June 6th 2026. This would involve the use of the EKPC marquee. Councillors had no objection subject to an appropriate risk assessment.

Finance Committee Report

Cllr Tait presented the Budget analysis which showed that expenditure was tracking as predicted.

Councillors agreed that the PC's subscription to the Open Spaces Society would not be renewed as not being used.

The future of the EKPC charity, Open Space, was discussed. This Charity had existed since 1963 but in the recent had filed "no activity" reports with the Charity Commission. It held no assets, had no liabilities and was effectively dormant. Cllr Tait proposed, seconded by Cllr White that the Parish Clerk take the necessary steps to close the Open Space charity. Unanimously approved.

Parish Clerk presented payments due for approval – Proposed Cllr White, seconded Cllr Staunton

Village Hall – Cllr Ambrose

Cllr Ambrose noted that the next Village Hall meeting would be on 10th September, otherwise nothing to report.

Common Lands – Cllr Ambrose

Cllr Ambrose noted that the required tree works at the Windmill location which would result in an improved vista were planned to start on September 8th and be ongoing for some time, weather dependent. Communications about the works would be posted on the PC noticeboards and pre/post photos taken to showcase the work outcome. Cllr Tait noted that the cost of these works would come from the Windmill fund not the general operating accounts.

Cllr Ambrose advised that work would be happening over the Autumn to thin-out and manage the new samplings, also replace those damaged by recent SSSEN works.

Cllr Ambrose thanked the Clarow volunteers for their tremendous efforts in tackling invasive Himalayan balsam over the last 5 years.

Post Office and Village Shop

The Wrens Shop AGM was held on 24th July. A new Chair, Kevin Stow has been appointed subsequent to Liz Quantrell resigning as Chair. There are several open committee positions.

Cllr Tait briefed the PC on the enhanced security measures now in place at Wrens Shop, which had, in part, been funded by the POST Office.

KHG/Playground – Cllr Staunton

Cllr Staunton updated Councillors on the recently received ROSPA on the Playground. Given the prior years report it contained a surprising number of findings, all of which were either rated green or amber – no red findings. Once the report had been fully scrutinized an action plan would be developed to address all points starting with the amber items. A budget for these unplanned costs would need to be prepared. Cllr Brunner indicated he would initially follow-up on some of the items with local contacts to mitigate costs.

Whilst the 2 new signs for the Playground have been received installation is pending due to the need for a kango hammer to achieve the required fixing depth.

Cllr Staunton reported that the shed has now been fully cleared and that the PC's barriers have been secured therein.

Cllr Staunton has been in contact with a Mere based youth organization, Seeds4Success which includes individuals from East Knoyle, with a view to using them, as part of their accredited work programme, to move and place in situ the new bark on the recently cleared area by the large slide.

Correspondence Received

Owner of the Coach House requested that the large metal slide adjacent to her property be relocated elsewhere on the Playground. Councillors were unable to support this request and tasked the Parish Clerk to respond accordingly.

Martin Brown, on behalf of concerned residents, submitted a signed letter and proposed actions in respects of The Dips.

The Parish Council reviewed and discussed at some length the submitted documents but did not feel able to make a fully informed decision during the meeting. It therefore decided to invite concerned residents to present their thoughts in person at the next 1st October EKPC meeting. It wanted to have this direct engagement to better understand the recommendations, impact on the landscape and how they could be funded.

Cllr McCarthy did raise the offer of an available digger to level the area, but this was not agreed.

As such EKPC seeks to invite concerned local residents to attend this next EKPC meeting so as to further share their views in the Public Forum. They would then be able to observe the Councillors subsequent debate if they so desired. This appeared to Councillors as the most open and transparent means of discussing the various concerns surrounding The Dips, which does remain an active Police case. A long term viable and sustainable solution is what EKPC is aspiring to achieve for the benefit of all parties. The Parish Clerk was tasked to respond to Mr Brown accordingly.

Urgent Items

None

Any other Business.

There being no other business the East Knoyle Parish Council finished at 8.45 pm

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 1st October 2025 at 7.30pm East Knoyle Village Hall

Approved: Garry Staunton.....Vice Chair

Date: 1st October 2025.....