

KEMPSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Teresa Griffin, Winterwood, Whelford, Fairford, Glos. GL7 4EB
Telephone No: 07818626158; E-mail: clerk@kempsfordparishcouncil.net

DRAFT

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting Held Monday 7th April 2025

Present:

Parish Councillors -	Mark Strange (Chairman), Christine Nugent, John O'Connell, Karen Saunders, Neil Green, Stephen Andrews and Debbie Watson
Teresa Griffin	Parish Council Clerk
Tristan Wilkinson	CDC Councillor
Mr J Greenhalgh	Resident & 4x4 Response Team
Daniel Tiffney	GCC Highways
Emma Wellman	RAFCTE
Matthew Davies	RAFCTE
Col. Smith	RAF Fairford
Zoey Peace	RAF Fairford
Ian Housley	Kempsford Village Hall
Andy Gray	Kempsford Village Hall
Rev. Catie Watson	Church
Ann O'Hara	St. Mary's Church PCC
Rosemary Andrews	Church
Jacqui Howlett	Kempsford Community Garden
Tony Williams	Resident
Bob & Lyn Slade	Resident
Carol Schaming	Resident
Trisha James	Resident
Alison Ward	Resident
John Bagshaw	Resident
Gill Northen	Resident
Allan Morriss	Resident
Helen Cheese-Probert	Resident
Jenny Bennett	Resident

- 1. Apologies –**
Dom Morris (Gloucestershire County Councillor)
Squadron Leader Jayne Robertson (RAF Fairford)
- 2. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting 30th April 2024 –** approved and signed by Chair.
- 3. Kempsford Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report –** Chairman Mark Strange gave his report through a presentation outlining the following –
Kempsford Annual Parish Meeting 2025

Your Parish Council

- Mark Strange – Chairman
- John O'Connell – Vice Chair
- Christine Nugent
- Karen Saunders
- Neil Green
- Debbie Watson
- Stephen Andrews
- Teresa Griffin - Clerk

A New Government!?

- Changes to Planning Law – what does that mean for Kempsford?
- Unitary Authorities – what can we expect to happen?

A Village Shop

- History of shops in Kempsford
- Attempts to have a new shop
- How might Kempsford have a shop?

Flooding + Climate change

- Flooding events
- Who is going to help you?
- Flood Wardens?

Play Facilities at Hazel View

- Finally coming together
- Upgraded car park
- Football pitch
- Sub committee to run it

The Elephant In The Room

- Hannington Wick Road Closure
- Contacted Wales & West (twice) – little to no response
- Contacted our MP (Dr Roz this time) – she has not fared much better!?
- Update from Daniel Tiffney

4. **District Councillors Report**– Tristan Wilkinson reported –

- The unification changes are something I feel passionate about. I think there are real dangers for communities like yours, but also some really good opportunities as well. My personal view is that the size of that unified council and the distance between the things that they are going to focus on and the needs of a community like yours, there is a danger that the gap could become a little too much. It will become really important that communities like yours really step in to some of those breaches. We have some ideas on what CDC can do in the transition period.
- Flooding – I am leading the flooding work on behalf of our MP Roz Savage. The reality is that climate change is having an impact, in addition to some of the housing challenges that we have. If you look at the Cotswold District, 80% of it is an area of outstanding natural beauty and the remaining 20% is flood plain. So where do we put houses? The reality is that there are designated sites, you're not one of them, but that could change. It is really important that you don't have to go as far as a Neighbourhood Plan, but as a community having views of where would you put some houses, try and get ahead of that. The worst thing that can happen to any community is that these things get done to you, and not done with you. I believe having conversations about the type of housing you need as a community, where they will go, are the sort of things that are really important.
With regards to flooding, we are working with various agencies to put together a comprehensive plan. Most communities know what will make a difference. We are deliberately taking a different approach, so our plan is after doing community consultations we will go to the water companies, and GCC Highways etc. under Chatham House Rules. The feedback that we have had is that they are much more likely to be open and honest about what they can and can't do, as opposed to when they stand up in a forum like this, they have their legal and PR people putting constraints around answers.
Flood Wardens – I am really happy to facilitate flood wardens coming along to talk to you about it involves. Surprisingly, it can be really rewarding and fun. Bibury has two flood wardens, and generally what they are doing is looking at data, looking at river levels. They have phone trees, where if something does happen, they know who to call to get help, and they liaise with all the agencies.
- Hannington Road – I am happy to chase Roz Savage, particularly if we decide to go down the route of involving the press.
- I would like to thank RAF Fairford for turning up. They are a big part of our community and it is really important that we work together and have a good relationship.

- Finally, I would like to thank the Parish Council as they work very hard on your behalf. In particular, Stephen, despite being on the 'other side', has exceptional expertise and knowledge around planning and the environment and he has really pushed me.

Questions/comments:

1. It is nice to see you here and thank you. There are two District Councillors and unfortunately your colleague has not appeared for two years, and this is not just in Kempford. Democratically, I do not believe this is sound and does not reflect well on your party.
Mark Strange advised that this has been raised with the District Council Leader and that not attending parish and town council meetings does not disqualify her, providing she attends a certain number of District Council meetings.
2. Stephen Andrews thanked Tristan and highlighted some of the many meetings attended by the Parish Councillors such as -
 - Coln River Catchment in conjunction with Fairford Town Council
 - Quarry Liaison meetings

5. Reports from Representatives of Local Organisations

a) RAF Fairford – Colonel Smith –

- I am Col. Smith, deputy to Col. Phillips at RAF Fairford, and I am here with Zoey Peace our Community Relations Adviser.
- You will have noticed we also have a change in Government, but despite the ongoing changes you will hear our politicians, in both congress and the executive, talk about how important the US and UK relationship is. It maintains the number one military strategic relationship, and that is right here in Fairford. You'll notice a lot of construction still going on. US and NATO have invested over \$5 million in RAF Fairford.
- The personnel footprint in 2019 was around 15 people and their families. It is currently around 200 plus families and will grow over the next 5 years as you see the fruits of these investments to a little over 400. 85% of our personnel live in the local communities with the remaining 15% on-base. This percentage will stay roughly the same and personnel will continue to live in your communities. On behalf of Col. Phillips, I would like to say thank you. From my own personal experience of living at Fairford, we love it.
- We currently have Exercise Ramsden Flag at RAF Fairford. It is the RAF's 76th year in NATO and this is a NATO exercise. There are 15 nations across 12 bases taking part with 90 participating aircraft.
- If anyone has a volunteer organisation that is looking for volunteers, we always have airmen that are looking for things to do. Zoey Peace asked for people to get in touch as she has a monthly volunteer calendar.

Questions:

1. *Is there anything you can do to help with spotters parking on the Whelford to Kempford cycleway?*
Unfortunately, it is not within our jurisdiction but Zoey can reach out to the plane spotters' group.
2. *Ian Housley gave his thanks on behalf of the Kempford Village Hall for allowing one of the U2 pilots to come and give a talk. It was very popular and hopefully something we can do again.*

b) RAFCTE - Report by Emma Wellman -

- I am the Director of Operation for RIAT and am joined by Matt Davies, our PR Engagement Officer.
- Our theme this year is 'Eyes in the Sky' and as it approaches, we are all getting excited. I hope it is an event that you look forward to despite the impact it has.

Questions:

1. *Is Thursday being included again this year as the number of days seem to increase?*
No, it isn't. We had one year, which was the 100th year that included an extra day. Officially it is Friday, where we have a short flying day and invite all the school children to come in, and then Saturday and Sunday which are the full open days.
2. *Could the barriers that you put up along the cycleway be extended all the way to Kempford?*
The parking issue is a real problem for us and our safety when people collect and try and watch the show from wherever they want to do it. If we have too many people collecting, we have to stop the flying and

the whole show, so we don't want them either. Every year we are trying to do more to stop it but unfortunately there will always be people that want to take advantage of the show without taking part in it.

3. *I would like to offer a thank you, as I was on the base last year collecting additional Resident Car Stickers, and the officer in charge of distributing them was doing a great job sorting out who actually was a resident. We try hard to ensure that they are only given to residents.*

4. *I had an issue with a helicopter hovering over our garden last year during a training day as I have livestock, which was resolved easily.*

We have a volunteer who liaises with the control room and local landowners/livestock owners. I am glad to hear it worked for you.

5. *Can you confirm that Resident Car Stickers will be distributed with the Parish Newsletter again this year, and that any additional stickers required will have to be collected from the RAFCTE offices?*

Yes, this will be the same as last year.

6. *Will there be any change to the routes this year?*

No, there is no changes to the routes. We are making some changes to the traffic management companies we use. In previous years we've worked with one company who have dealt with part of the traffic management. This year, we are giving all of it to them, putting a lot more cameras out on the roads, more ANPR and CCTV. This will enable us to better monitor the flows of traffic and respond quicker.

7. *There is an issue with the 2 traffic lights at Eysey bridge. Will you override those earlier in the week, rather than just Friday, Saturday and Sunday? It is becoming increasingly busier earlier in the week in the build up, and in particular the Wednesday and Thursday.*

We take control of them for the show and don't want to disrupt the traffic flows for residents too early.

We are meeting with the traffic management company next week and it is something we can look at.

8. *Stephen Andrews advised that the Parish Council is aware of most of the issues and hope that we will get a meeting beforehand to discuss these.*

Yes, we have done this previously and very happy to do it again. We do want to do everything we can to help.

c) **Churches** – Report from Rev Catie Watson –

For those of you that don't know me, my name is Rev Catie Watson and I am the Curate here in Kempsford and also the other 5 villages.

I would like to extend my thanks to the Council, as I know how much goes on behind the scenes and how much they care about us all in the community.

To rec-cap on 2024 for you-

- More thanks to the Parish Council for helping us with the purchase of a new noticeboard in the area outside the cemetery. It is very smart and very helpful. Thank you for your support with the tree works.
- The graveyard is really starting to fill up now and not many spaces left. We are looking in to how we can expand that. It may mean that it is just for cremated remains, but we just don't know at the moment. This is on-going and the Parish Council is very supportive.
- For those of you that knew Rev Kim, it is actually a year today since she did her last service. She resigned due to ill health and I am delighted to report that in her new chapter of life, she is really well and loving life. It was a good move for her, and whilst we miss her, we are pleased that she is well.
- We are in the process of seeking a replacement Vicar. The first advert went out after Christmas, and we did have some applications, but they weren't pursued for various reasons. There is a second batch of adverts going out after Easter, and the way the process works, we will be looking to do interviews mid-July followed by an appointment. I remain here, I'm still in training, but not the Vicar.
- Progress is being made with the planning for the development within the Church. This will give us a loo, disable loo and servery. There are so many hoops to go through, but we are working hard and lots of fundraising going on. We are very grateful to Ann and Myra who are working there sock off on this.
- Last year in the Church we had 2 weddings, 2 renewal of vows, 3 funerals and several interments of ashes. Our normal pattern of services continues, including our monthly family service held at 4pm in the afternoon.
- The Church has to pay something called Parish Share, which is paid to the Diocese and it goes up every year. It is going up quite steeply and we are looking at that. The Parish Share pays the Clergy's wages, pensions and all sorts of things. It is very separate to all the funds of properties etc. It is up to the

Churches to pay their Parish Share to pay for the Vicar. Any donations towards this we will always be grateful, and anyone who wants to regularly contribute to the Church in that way can discuss it with our Treasurer Jacqui.

- Last year, Rev Kim started 'The Long Table'. It is a great thing, whereby we got the community together, we cooked a meal and it is a long table. We no longer have the chefs to continue it. I have been talking to the Long Table people in Cirencester and they are really keen to try and help us do it again.

Lastly, you may have heard rumours about things going on in the church with a strange man around. There is a young gentleman, who is deeply troubled, going round local churches including Kempsford, leaving cards saying 'the church has lied to you' and similar things. Following a couple of incidents that had to be reported to the Police, we are now advised to call 999 should we see him.

d) **Church Fundraising** – Ann O'Hara reported on fundraising events held and future events –
Kempsford & Whelford P.C.C. - Church in the Community, Events & Fundraising Report
January 2024 – December 2024

Open the Book

Once a week throughout the school year, the Open the Book Team continue to visit Kempsford C.E. Primary to share and act out Bible stories. The team are registered with the Bible Society as Open the Book storytellers, attend periodic training and all are CRB checked.

This year, the longest standing member of the team, Doreen Hale, had to step back from Open the Book. Doreen completed almost 22 years of Open the Book storytelling with children at the school and the team wishes to record heartfelt appreciation for her enthusiasm, her organization of resources, her love of narrating the stories and pleasure in seeing the children grow in confidence.

We welcomed two new, part time, members to the Open the Book team, Kathy Woodward and Kate O'Connor, who have joined Annie Ellis, Margaret Wolfenden, Rosemary Andrews and Ann O'Hara to make up the current team. Each week, children of all ages take part in helping the team to act out a Bible story. A member of staff leads the reflection time, guiding the children in thinking about what the story can teach us and identifying the school values shown by characters in the story.

Prayer spaces

The Prayer spaces reflections day, 19th March 2024, was based on the theme 'Light of the World'. Members of the Prayer Spaces team had all worked with the school in different ways - through the church, Open the Book, Youth Work and the school's governing body (Myra Shepard, Ann O'Hara, Margaret Wolfenden, Annie Ellis, Chris Saunders, Rev'd Kim Brown and Alex Ballard)

Children from the school experienced four 'Activity and Reflection Spaces' all linked to a Bible story:

1. Jesus the light of the world – we need light to show us the way with a focus on noticing the school values and acts of kindness.
2. Light in the darkness - Light always chases away darkness/worries/fears, with a focus on thinking who or what can help you with your worries.
3. Joyful moments – what brought light to our lives, with a focus on noticing personal effort and achievement and how that makes us feel.
4. KS2 Doves of Peace KS2 - bringing the light of peace to areas of war, with a focus on thinking about what values or actions might help create peace once more.

KS1 Comfort blanket – bringing comfort and help, with a focus on daily life and what families might need e.g. to keep warm.

The light box, which responded to the children's claps, was used at the end of each of the 3 sessions to bring all of the Prayer Space learning together : Jesus said 'I am the light of the world' and now you can look at all the ways you can bring kindness and light up the world for others.

Feedback from the school noted that the children really enjoyed the creativeness of the activities; the pitch was well matched to the age of the children and met their interests.

Family Services

A Family Service was held at St Mary's Kempsford at 4.00pm on the 3rd Sunday of every month throughout 2024, with the exception of July due to Air Show and August due to the school summer holiday period.

Information about each service is posted on Kempsford Facebook page and the Family Service WhatsApp

group on the Thursday prior to the Family Service. We have a regular team comprising Rev'd Kim Brown, then Rev'd Catie Watson, with Margaret Wolfenden, Sue Brown and Ann O'Hara.

When the weather is kind to us, we meet in the grounds of the church. When it is cold or very wet, we gather inside St Mary's to begin the service. The service is totally family friendly, informal in nature, and based around a simple sequence of initial time to talk followed by exploring the theme for the week through the children's experiences, a children's story from the Bible and practical activities for all around the theme. We end with time for reflection and refreshments.

e) **Gloucestershire Highways** – An update from Daniel Tiffney

Hopefully this is the last year that I will come and speak to you about the Hannington Wick Road.

There is quite a lot to tell you today, some things of which I am pretty confident of but need confirmation from Wales & West, so I'll start with those –

- They are putting in a bypass for the gas main. The person I have been dealing with has been on leave this week but they are due back tomorrow, so hopefully I will be able to email the Parish Council tomorrow with confirmation of what needs to be done.
- The design is complete and they are pretty much ready to get on site. The only outstanding item is the Easement Agreement, which the landowner has signed, but is sat with solicitors. I am just waiting for a copy of the Easement.
- We will then have an agreement with the landowner, which we will sign and make all the relevant payments.
- There is a bit of ecology work to be done and the preliminary understanding is there is only invasive species there which we can get rid of, so nothing to stop us getting on site.
- Hopefully, Wales & West will be able to get on site soon. We will be doing the bridges for RIAT, but because 90% of Wales & West work is off highway the two will be able to run concurrently.
- We've pencilled in the date for the culvert work, starting 28th July 2025. My only reservation about this is that I don't know at what stage they will turn the gas off on the existing main for us to dig it all out. I imagine this will be the very last thing they do on their scheme, as they will want to build all the new infrastructure, get the connection ready and then turn the gas off. So, we can't get on site until the gas has been turned off to the existing main.
- Resurfacing will follow the culvert works and this will run until the 19th September 2025, assuming we can meet all the dates. The vegetation will be cut back and collect all the TM that is sat in the ditches and take away. I am very, very confident that this is how it will go.

Questions:

1. *Last year you were pretty confident that work would start in August?*

Yes, however I am more confident about the plans now and would say we are 90% there for 5 months. There has been so much that has been outside on mine and GCC's control. The landowner has been great and not held it up in any way. I don't want to point fingers, but this is not a priority scheme for Wales & West, and if our culverts hadn't collapsed, they wouldn't be doing this work. I do have respect for them as they have a lot of assets to maintain and probably ones that are failing and do need replacing. The legal work has been holding it up, with it being sat with solicitors. We were ready to go in August last year. Our programme for the culverts and resurfacing is about 10 weeks. We have 12 weeks until RIAT. If I could get them to sign tomorrow and be absolutely confident that when we start digging there is going to be no surprises in that ground, then I would go. I haven't got that confidence. I can't start digging with no contingency in that window.

2. *Are we putting it off for RIAT?*

No, not really. There is probably a week's delay.

3. *We have been told time and time again that you are confident, and as residents have put up with an awful lot, having RIAT year after year. I know that in other parts of the country they have put up temporary bridges and councils have taken over these bridges. Why has this not happened after the first year?*

Because, when the bridges are on that road, that is at RIAT's risk, not GCC's risk. If those bridges were to stay after RIAT that would be at GCC's risk. They are not illuminated, you can not have 2-way traffic on them, and you cannot have pedestrians/cyclists/horse riders meeting on that road. When it is open for RIAT, that road is essentially closed, and is manned/controlled by gatemen. That cannot happen if that road is open to the general public. So, the reason is that it is just not safe, and we cannot take that risk.

4. *If you are not starting until two thirds of the way through summer, could rain effect the schedule?*

Rain and water conditions could affect the Wales & West works, but in terms of GCC's work, we could shutter it off and work in a controlled environment. Our scheme should be fine.

5. *When the gas is switched over to the new diversion how long will we be without gas?*
I can't answer that. Wales & West will notify you.
6. *Debbie Watson advised that the Parish Council has considered going to the Press, but it was agreed that at present it wouldn't achieve anything. If it is not completed by the end of September, then we would be prepared to go to the Press and make Wales & West answer for the hold up, with the support of the community.*
7. As a resident, I have raised it on the Facebook page to see what reaction it got. I like many others am incredibly frustrated, particularly given the state of the Castle Eaton Road. We seem to facing so many difficulties on different fronts and don't hear what is happening. Hannington very kindly put on their Facebook page details of the resurfacing work at Whelford and what was happening at Highworth, which is fantastic
Stephen Andrews advised that he had tried to put details of the Castle Eaton repairs on the village Facebook page but it didn't go through. On the 25th April, the Castle Eaton bridge will be closed for the day. Details of the Whelford Road closure have been put on the Kempsford Facebook page.
8. *When the Whelford to Kempsford road is resurfaced will the yellow lines be reinstated, and extended down Washpool Lane?*
Yes, existing yellow lines will be reinstated but no additional restrictions/lines can be done without a Traffic Road Order. However, there is a scheme where we are encouraged to put a restriction on the highway in line with a runway to stop any parking. Whether we can incorporate some other changes under this scheme, I am not sure. We do have some Section 106 money from the new quarry licence to do some improvement works on Washpool Lane.
9. *Stephen Andrews asked if the Washpool Lane improvement works will include hardening of the road surface at the Whelford Road junction?*
This may be a separate condition to the money we are getting, but I will check it out.
10. *When the Whelford Road resurfacing work is carried out can you confirm lorries will not be allowed to use Ham Lane?*
No, we are in discussions with the quarry about how to maintain their access.
11. Does the Whelford resurfacing scheme include the little loop road by the Church?
No, although I know it is really bad. I will raise it again with my colleague.
12. *With regards to the parking issues with plane spotters, is it possible to synchronise the traffic warden visiting with aircraft movements advertised on the spotters Facebook pages? One idea may be to have a short, sharp spell of enforcement and post in on social media.*
That is a good idea.
13. *Do you have any communication over the speed of which the gravel lorries pass through?*
No, sorry this is a Police matter.
The Parish Clerk advised calling the specific companies with registration details, or contacting Kempsford Quarry.
14. *Are there any plans to refurbish the Kempsford to Whelford cycleway as due to the amount of vehicles parking on it, it has many dips on it?*
The money we have got is over 2 financial years and is not as much as I asked for. We are going to put together a 'wish list' of what we want to do with the money and I will add this to it.
15. Do you cover the C124? Why has some patches been done and not others?
The road changes County boundaries several times. The good bits are in Gloucestershire. We notified Wiltshire when we were resurfacing our bits to ask them if they would like to make use of the road closures to do theirs but they didn't.

f) **Kempsford School** – no representatives present.

g) **Village Hall** – Ian Housley gave a presentation of the following -

Kempsford Village Hall

A summary of 2024/25 for Annual Parish Council Meeting 7th April 2025

Ian Housley

Cash Flow ££ £000's			
	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23
Gross Profit	£18.7	£12.9	£9.5
Overheads			
Utilities	£4.0	£3.4	£2.8
Garden Maintenance	£0.8	£2.7	£0.3
Accountancy Fees	£0.5	£0.7	£0.6
Cleaning	£1.9	£1.6	£2.1
Other *Legal Fees CIO, VAT Fees	£4.4*	£3.1	£2.4
Surplus (Deficit)	£7.1	£1.4	£1.3

Successes and Challenges

- More regular events/hirers
- Pilates, Short Mat Bowls, Youth Club, Darts, Zumba, Waterways Group, Café, Chippy Van, Pizza Van, Community Garden
- More events
- Music Nights, Xmas Darts, Beer Festival, Family Café, Village Fete, Flight Night,
- Increased number of private hires
- Improved Revenue
- New CIO Charity Established
- Old charity will be closed down
- Land being registered and ownership being transferred
- Good effective management committee and volunteers

But a few challenges

- Higher utility costs
- Exterior walls need insulating
- Leaking roof/roof will need replacing
- Decorating both inside and out

This Hasn't Just Happened

Our Business Plan (Short term Plans, 1 – 2 years)

- Ensuring the running costs of the hall are covered by income raised from its hire charges and donations.
- Carrying out fundraising activities to support the building maintenance.
- Maintaining a reserve fund equivalent to six months operating costs.
- Reviewing hire charges on an annual basis
- Increasing the number of hirers
- Increasing the number of organised village events
- Ensuring that events arranged by the Village Hall Committee recoup the costs expended (including the hire of the hall)

Much More To Be Done

Our Business Plan (Long term Plan, 3 – 5 years)

- The plan for 2023/24 is to fully cost and explore options and then develop a long-term plan.
- Quotes have been received for the work, £30k for the insulation and anything from £70k to £100k for the roof. Very little funding currently available.
- A few challenges along the way; Constitution, CIO, Land Registration

h) **GW 4x4 Response Team** – Report from Jerry Greenhalgh (Chair)

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**GLOUCESTERSHIRE & WORCESTERSHIRE 4X4 RESPONSE
GW4x4R
Registered Charity 1172533 (CIO) - www.gw4x4r.co.uk
Report to Kempford Parish Council – 2025**



GW4x4R consists of volunteers using their own 4x4 vehicles. We are all DBS checked and undertake BORDA standard off road driving training.

“The object of the CIO is to preserve and protect life and property, in particular but not exclusively, by providing equipment, vehicles and other resources to offer support in adverse conditions.”

GW4x4R is affiliated with 4x4R UK which has circa 34 Teams covering the UK.

We have mutual aid arrangements in place which means we can call upon neighbouring teams to assist with larger incidents and events.

Responders own and maintain their own 4x4 vehicles. Vehicles range from unmodified ‘off the shelf’ to those modified to cope with more challenging conditions. About 75% are capable of driving on unmetalled roads and tracks and about 25% have some capability in flooding. Each Responder is required to carry a specified list of equipment such as first aid kit, fire extinguisher, emergency blanket, and recovery equipment etc.

We currently have 30 fully operational Responders with 5 new ones under training. 8 Controllers who work from home and take incoming calls for assistance and dispatch responders to the task, and 6 Support members.

We need additional Responders and are presently recruiting. Any 4x4 vehicle is suitable for our tasks, but a 4x4 is not necessary to undertake Control or Support roles.

We generally assist NHS Trusts, Care Homes, and Local Authorities transporting staff to and from their place of employment in adverse weather when their own, or other forms of transport, are not available. We can also assist the Blue Light Services and Highway Authorities if required.

We are constituent members of Gloucestershire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and Worcestershire CVEC.

The climate is clearly undergoing significant change and recent weather patterns have changed from limited snow events to more flood related incidents, but this can still give rise to challenging road conditions and difficult travelling.

We have our own internet-based radio system (Zello) to communicate with our members and use a computer-based control and deployment package - Advanced Response Management (ARM) which includes a database of all members and team assets.

We are self-funded and raise money by marshaling triathlons and running events, car parking at Cotswold Show, general duties at Gloucestershire Vintage & Country Extravaganza at South Cerney, Astwood Bank Carnival in Worcestershire and various other shows and events.

If you are interested in joining or require more information please contact:-

membership@gw4x4r.co.uk or chair@gw4x4r.co.uk



i) **Community First Responders** – Stephen Andrews reported -

Community First Responder Report for Kempford Annual Parish Meeting 2025

When on duty, volunteer Community First Responders (CFR) are called by the Ambulance Control to incidents within their rural area. Originally, the focus was upon immediate life critical events, such as Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Now CFRs are trained to deal with just about anything that an Ambulance may be called to – except Road Traffic Collisions and pub fights!

Pressure on the Ambulance Service continues, and that means more calls for us.

Members of the Group also helped the community in other ways over the last year, including running community events and working with Farmors School to introduce their students to CPR/Defibs. Ambulances were redeployed, Community Defibrillators regularly checked as “rescue ready” and with the help of the Lechlade and District Lions more added across the Fairford and Lechlade area with 18 now in place and a

further 2 planned. The support that we receive from the Friends of Fairford and Lechlade Communities is essential to that.

Having just brought another kit into service, the Fairford and Lechlade Responder group currently has 8 Responders and 8 sets of equipment, 4 of which have a special chair which allow us to lift patients off of the floor. We have lost three Responders over the year and are still looking for volunteers to join us – full training given.

A further recruiting drive will start formally in the Summer. If you are interested in joining us, get in touch. We would love to see you.

Stephen Andrews
Community First Responder
Fairford and Lechlade First Responder Group

j) **Community Speed Watch** – Report from Karen Saunders –

Speeding continues, unfortunately.

Speed camera signs were put up a few months ago and there has been a slight improvement.

Sadly, there are a number of locals that are regulars on the cameras, for example 40 times a month.

The Clerk submits data weekly to the Police, which is 10 from each camera. This is not necessarily the highest 10 offenders, but the most persistent. Often when it is a busy week at the quarry we focus on the gravel lorries. The Parish Council pays the postage cost of letters sent by the Police.

As mentioned earlier we often call the haulage companies direct and the quarry operator, who are very supportive.

The Whelford Community Speed Watch Group are starting sessions again as this does have more impact, despite the abuse.

When the road is resurfaced, we expect the speeds to be even faster.

We believe the Top Road vehicle activated sign is very effective.

k) **Gloucestershire Police** – the following Crime Statistics for Kempsford Parish were read out by John O’Connell

Crime comparison statistics for Kepsford Parish

6th April 2024 to 6th April 2025

Parish=Kempsford

HO Band	Crime 06APR24 06APR25	Crime 06APR23 06APR24	+/-	% Crime Diff	Detect 06APR24 06APR25	Detect 06APR23 06APR24	+/-	% Detect Diff
Violence	13	18	-5	(27.78%)	0	2	-2	0.00%
Sexual offences	3	1	2	200.0%	1	0	1	0.00%
Burglary	0	1	-1	0.00%	0	0	0	0.00%
Theft	0	3	-3	0.00%	0	0	0	0.00%
Criminal damage	0	1	-1	0.00%	0	1	-1	0.00%
Drugs	1	2	-1	(50.00%)	2	1	1	100.0%
Other notifiable	0	1	-1	0.00%	0	0	0	0.00%
=	17	27	-10	(37.04%)	3	4	-1	(25.00%)

l) **Kempsford Community Garden** – Report from Jacqui Howlett –

- As you may have seen, we have cut part of the hedge around the back to let more light in. I would like to thank our newcomers to the village at Paradise Farm for covering the cost of the chipping.
- We have had one family fund event, and have another two planned. These encourage families and children to come along and learn about gardening.
- One of the biggest projects we would like to do after being donated a pile of pavers some years ago, is to lay a patio out the back. This would help the village have fundraising events. It is a shame that we don’t have a ‘men’s’ group in the village that could get together and help lay this, as most of the volunteer group are women, and although we might be strong enough, we don’t have the skills.
- We are finding it hard to recruit volunteers for the garden, so if anyone knows any gardeners, they would be very welcome.

6. Parishioners Questions –

1. *Do the new houses on the High Street have allocated parking as parking on the main road is getting silly? I have seen several near-misses.*

Mark Strange advised that the houses do have parking behind, but I suspect that some of the people parking on the High Street may be residents of Cross Tree Flats, who have no allocated parking.

2. *We had a problem with low water pressure before Christmas and someone from Thames Water came out and put a device on the tap and measured it for about 10 days. He found it is just over the minimum, which is not good. He then made some enquiries and advised that pressure to the village has been turned down.* Stephen Andrews requested the resident email details as there is a meeting coming up with Thames Water and the Environment Agency. We can then use this as an example, as previously other people have complained about low water pressure, but we have no evidence of readings etc.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm.