

Edingale Parish Council – Annual Report 2025–2026

For the Annual Assembly of the Parish

1. Introduction

The Parish Council has had a busy and productive year, working on behalf of residents to maintain village services, respond to local concerns, manage parish assets, and engage with wider district and county initiatives. This report summarises the Council's activities from April 2025 to March 2026.

2. Membership and Governance

- **Co-option:**
 - David Layland co-opted in May 2025.
- **Clerk transition:**
 - Long-serving Clerk Mrs Margaret Jones retired in July 2025 after 13 years.
 - Mrs Kate Pritchard appointed as the new Clerk.
- **Policies reviewed and adopted:**
 - Co-option Policy
 - Standing Orders & Financial Regulations
 - Health & Safety Policy
 - Code of Conduct
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Disciplinary & Grievance Policy
 - Dignity & Respect Pledge
 - Scheme of Delegation
 - Training Policy
 - Lone Working Policy
 - Biodiversity Policy
 - IT Policy
 - Financial Risk Assessment
 - Earmarked Reserves
 - Grant Application Policy

3. Planning Matters

The Council considered several planning applications, including:

- **Black Horse Pub – Change of Use**

- **Local Plan**
- **Other applications**
 - Various household applications reviewed with no objections.
 - Solar Farm EIA screening noted.

4. Highways, Flooding & Environment

The Council has been active in reporting and escalating issues:

Highways

- Repeated reporting of potholes, especially near the school and Croxall Road.
- Engagement with Staffordshire Highways on:
 - Chetwynd Bridge traffic and weight enforcement
 - Chicane road markings
 - Road closures and drainage works
 - Gully cleaning
 - Flood resilience measures and depth marker proposals

Flooding

- Ongoing liaison with SCC flood resilience team.
- Residents encouraged to submit photos and videos of flooding events.

Environmental Work

- Himalayan Balsam removal undertaken by councillors and volunteers.
- Engagement with Trent Rivers Trust and Water Rangers.
- Tree inspections requested repeatedly; tree works approved in early 2026.
- Wildflower area on Blakeways approved and work commenced.
- Sakura Cherry Tree planted January 2026.

5. Village Assets & Maintenance

- Lease of land off School Lane progressed and submitted for Land Registry registration.
- **Noticeboards:**
 - New noticeboard approved in principle; quotes under review.
- **Defibrillators:**
 - Replacement batteries approved and installed.
- **Grounds maintenance:**
 - Contract renewed for 2026.

- Regular strimming, sign clearing, hedge trimming and tree management.

6. Community Engagement & Events

Best Kept Village Competition

- Entry submitted for 2025
- Judges visited in June 2025.
- Edingale received a category win, with a £500 voucher and commemorative sculpture.

Village Hall

- Council approved £3,000 donation for insurance and playpark repairs.
- Ongoing liaison with Village Hall Committee.

Local concerns raised by residents

- Speeding through the village
- Bus manoeuvring issues on School Lane
- Cannabis odour reports
- Fly-tipping
- Abandoned vehicles
- Footpath signage
- Mobile connectivity issues

The Council responded to each issue through reporting, liaison with authorities, or direct action.

7. Finance

Financial Management

- Regular financial reports approved monthly.
- Bank reconciliation maintained and monitored.
- Earmarked reserves confirmed.

Precept

- Precept increased to £20,000 for 2026/27 to support rising costs and community grants.

8. Communications

- Website updates maintained.
- Increased use of Facebook for notices, BKV updates, and Highways information.
- Engagement with MP Sarah Edwards' office and County/District Councillors.

9. Looking Ahead

Key ongoing priorities include:

- Continued monitoring of Chetwynd Bridge and flood resilience measures
- Progress on mobile connectivity improvements
- Completion of tree inspections and works
- Development of the Blakeways wildflower area
- Replacement noticeboard and potential history board
- Preparation for Best Kept Village 2026
- Monitoring of Mease Valley pipeline works
- Ensuring strong financial governance and community engagement

10. Conclusion

The Parish Council has worked consistently throughout 2025–26 to support residents, maintain village services, and represent Edingale in wider district and county matters. The Council thanks all volunteers, community groups, and residents who have contributed to village life over the past year.