



A new Plan for the council

This article introduces our new Council Plan (the Plan) which sets out the Parish Council (the Council) vision for the parish, its purpose, values, objectives and key priorities for the next four years. We have based the Plan on our understanding of the community's needs gathered from our day-to-day involvement with residents and other key organisations.

By creating a Plan the Council has designed a framework for it to work within. The Plan is our statement of intent; however, the Council may have to make decisions contrary to our stated commitments if events such as budgetary constraints, new legislation or changes in our

policies make that necessary. Any changes would be reflected in an updated Plan.

It is intended that the Plan will be a 'live' document, which will enable the Council to track, and monitor its progress against the key priorities. Because the Plan will be publicly available, East Preston parishioners will also be able to monitor progress.

The initial Plan can be viewed online at <https://eastpreston-pc.gov.uk/the-parish-council/council-plan/>.

If you would like a paper copy, please contact the Council Office.

At home in East Preston

Did you know East Preston Fire Station is home to one of the county's two Fire Emergency Support Vehicles, known in the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service as an FES?

Within West Sussex, we have two FES vehicles providing invaluable support to both firefighters and members of the public during emergencies. One is based at Haywards Heath Fire Station and the second is based here at East Preston Fire Station. These vehicles not only serve the whole of West Sussex, but also parts of our neighbouring counties. Both vehicles are crewed and operated on a voluntary basis by team members of the British Red Cross. West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service workshops maintain the vehicles.

When they were first introduced into the service, they would have been used for the welfare of firefighters at large or protracted incidents for providing teas and coffees and other refreshments.

Nowadays, as fire appliances provide for making refreshments, the FES purpose is to provide care and support to the victims of fire and flood. Crew members help those affected to find alternative



accommodation if theirs is no longer inhabitable. They can also provide help with insurance paperwork.

FES vehicles can also be used by other emergency services upon request. We are very proud this vehicle has a home in East Preston.

Later in the year, the council hopes to join other local authorities in celebrating **Emergency Services Day** (on 9th September) and hopefully there will be a chance for members of the public to visit the FES for themselves in happier circumstances than might otherwise be the case.

Cruising towards retirement



After more than twenty years as an East Preston fire officer, **Richard Cruise** is retiring.

Richard was born in Southampton and started his working life in the Navy. After eleven years, he had to choose between staying in the Navy for the rest of

his career or changing to something different. Wanting to work in the emergency services, it came down to a choice between Sussex Police or the Fire & Rescue Service, and we know which won.

During an informative visit to the fire station (more on that next issue), we had a quick chat with Richard and asked him some questions.

What did you start as and what are you ending as?

I started as a Firefighter, which is an actual rank, and I have ended as both a Watch Manager in Fire Safety and a Unit Leader at East Preston.

How has East Preston fire station changed in your time?

The skillset has improved. As part of the modernisation of the Fire Service, the station has better equipment matched with better training. The Fire Emergency Support Vehicle (FES) has moved in (see front page) but we have gone from two pumps to one pump. Recently, the station has gone into a partnership with South East Coastal Ambulance Service which has seen some ambulance personnel based at the station.

What is the single most important piece of advice you have for the public?

That's simple. Fit smoke detectors and test them regularly. Chances of survival are greatly increased with working smoke detectors.

I have seen whole families in the back of the FES, soot-blackened and with most of their house and

possessions gone, but they are still alive thanks to working smoke detectors.

Is there anything you would like to say to your family?

Big thanks to my wife, Debbie, and my children for all their support over the years. Being a retained fire officer is a true vocation as a callout can come at any time of day or night and the service is no respecter of the family barbeque you have been looking forward to. Without the support of Debbie, I would not have been able to have this great career.

As you're not cruising into full retirement, what are your work plans for the next few years?

I am re-joining West Sussex County Council but as a civilian and I will be working in the Fire Safety team, working with communities to get out important messages about fire safety. You will likely see me around the village at those community events at which it is appropriate to spread our messages.

And finally, Richard, what are the best things about living in East Preston?

I know it's a cliché, but it's a nice place to live and to raise your kids. I love the community as a whole: there are good schools, a diverse range of businesses, the seaside, just everything you want from somewhere you live.

And the community as a whole is very supportive of the fire service and the fire station – at this point, can I thank the East Preston Yarnbombers for the more than £1,200 they raised for us with their fantastic Christmas tree. There are great organisations across the village, all contributing to this being... a nice place to live.



We thank you, Richard, and all your colleagues for your passionate service to the village and the surrounding area.



Preparations are underway for East Preston Festival 2022, which will run from Friday 3rd to Sunday 12th June. Coinciding with the Jubilee celebrations, the Festival will include events to honour the Queen's 70-year reign.

Get ready for a fun-filled ten days of events, entertainment and family activities with opportunities to win prizes by entering the fabulous Festival competitions.

Alongside established favourites, special events include two leading tribute acts, a Community Market,

a Circus Fun Day and a picnic on the Village Green on 5th June as part of the national Big Jubilee Lunch initiative.

Additionally, East Preston is burying a unique time capsule containing items representing village life today. What would you include? The capsule will be opened in 70 years' time. That's Festival 2092!!

Full details of all events and competitions are in the Festival programme, available locally in April. Until then, keep up-to-date with all the latest news on the Festival website and Facebook page.

Headline news....

Our congratulations to local resident, **Mhairi Sharp**, who became a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in the Queen's New Year's Honours for "services to the COVID-19 response." Working as the Chief Executive of the National Emergencies Trust (only set up in 2019), Mhairi helped to raise over £100m to help those affected by the pandemic. These funds were then distributed through a network of UK charities.

We spoke to Mhairi to find out more.

"I was born in Edinburgh in 1989 and spent my childhood in an uninspiring part of the Midlands, which inspired me to travel. I spent the best part of my early teens at sea on a tall ship, returning to dry land only to sit exams and see family members. At 16, I received a scholarship to an Army Officer training college, where I trained in everything from leadership and weapons handling to ice climbing, scuba diving and the art of being creatively mischievous. Whilst rehabilitating from a serious injury, I completed a Law Degree and set up an adventure holiday company in the French Alps.

"The National Emergencies Trust was set up in response to the issues faced by survivors of emergencies such as the Grenfell Tower fire, major weather events and terrorist attacks. The Trust was set up to be a secure place to receive and manage public donations during national emergencies. When building the Trust, I felt a huge responsibility to survivors who were passionately supportive.

"Returning to the UK through Geneva Airport on 8th March 2020, it was clear the world was starting to take Coronavirus seriously. During a slow onset emergency such as a flood or a pandemic, the Trust aims to be ahead of the curve. Looking at emerging data, by 12th March it was clear there was national significance. We recognised the need would be deep and wide, but we didn't know whether the UK public would be willing to donate significant funding for those in need. People will remember Italy was then two weeks ahead of the UK and the scale of donations there convinced the Trust the UK would be willing to give. Supported by our Patron, the Duke of Cambridge, the Trust launched its first appeal on 18th March.



"With a robust operating model in place, within an hour we had received our first £100,000 donation, and by the end of the first day we had received over £1m. Five days later, the country entered its first lockdown and funds were distributed to charities across all four home nations. Throughout the peak of the pandemic, we distributed approximately £5m per week. We have supported a wide range of needs from food and shelter, to domestic violence and education, supporting just over 14,500 charities.

"I do not know when I will collect my MBE. There is an 18-month backlog which is very welcome as I'm more than 30 weeks pregnant and unable to squeeze into a dress! It's great when your achievements are recognised and this is a fitting recognition of the dedication of everyone who came together to support the mission - the trustees, the army of volunteers, secondees, contractors, donors, and the leaders of those 14,500 charities on the ground making a difference in their local communities."

Finally, we asked Mhairi how she and her husband, Eddie – an executive head hunter in financial services, came to live in East Preston.

"We were in our tenth year of searching for the perfect place to settle down and start a family. We stumbled upon this small but perfectly-formed village whilst on a trip to Arundel. Sharing a love of the sea and watersports, we were initially attracted to the quiet and pristine beach, closely followed by the green and leafy streets. After sampling the warm welcome at the Seaview, incredible flavours from Reema, and all the tasty treats Kerry's has to offer we quickly checked the schools and local infrastructure before deciding to dedicate every spare minute to finding a home.

"We feel incredibly lucky to be living here. Ten months in and we are still pinching ourselves."

Once again, our congratulations to Mhairi and we wish Mhairi and Eddie and their future family many happy years calling East Preston home.

**Do you have an award from the Queen?
If so, please contact the Council Office to let us know.**

Sea Road/North Lane Parking Restrictions

During December we ran an online survey on the subject of additional parking restrictions in Sea Road and North Lane between the junctions of Fairlands and Lashmar Road. Many thanks to the 186 residents who responded to this survey.

An overwhelming 152 (83.06%) of you thought there should be further parking restrictions in this area, 23 (12.57%) said no and 10 (5.46%) people said they were unsure.

There were 114 freeform comments ranging from: a restriction would give problems elsewhere, to concern about the pinch point of the bus route, and because of the bends in the road visibility problems from adjoining roads as well as North/South traffic, danger to pedestrians where there is no footpath as well as concern for cyclists.

As there has been a positive response the results will be sent to West Sussex County Council (WSCC) to consider parking restrictions in this area. If accepted, WSCC will come up with a design and that will be put out for further public consultation. Whilst this is hopefully a step in the right direction for the village, be advised these things take time.



Defibrillators in East Preston

A defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy electric shock to the heart of someone who is having a heart attack. This high energy shock is called defibrillation and it's an essential part in trying to save the life of someone who's in cardiac arrest. A defibrillator may also be referred to as a defib, an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) or a PAD (Public Access Defibrillator).

Defibs are very easy to use. Although they don't all look the same, they all function in broadly the same way. You do not need training to use one because the machine gives clear spoken instructions – all you have to do is follow them. A defibrillator will not shock someone unless they need it.

These are the 24/7 defibs in and near the village:

- Council Office, 122 Sea Road, BN16 1NN
- Village Hall, 52 Sea Road, BN16 1LP
- Our Lady, Star of the Sea, Vermont Drive, BN16 1JU

- South Strand Community Toilets, South Strand, BN16 1PW
- Angmering Railway Station, Station Road, BN16 3RE

Meanwhile, these are currently stored inside and have less than 24/7 availability:

- Angmering-on-Sea Lawn Tennis Club, Homelands Avenue, BN16 1PS
- British Legion, The Street, BN16 1JL
- East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club, Sea Lane, BN16 1NG
- East Preston Football Club, Lashmar Road, BN16 1ES
- Willow Green Surgery, Station Road, Rustington, BN16 3AH

Do not worry about remembering this information as the 999 operator will direct you to the nearest available. If directed to a locked defib cabinet, the 999 operator will give you the necessary code. Thereafter follow the audio instructions given by the defib.



Correspondence Corner - Well done East Preston

Sunday the 14th November 2021 in East Preston – a reminder of the losses of life that ensured we were free to parade and remember those we lost.

I found the event very moving and emotional, tears forming in my eyes throughout.

I suffer a similar emotional feeling on hearing Elgar's 'Nimrod'.

The attendance at our Memorial Service was considerable, and note-worthy was the contingent of Junior School Children – a lovely group of smartly-dressed youngsters.

At the wreath-laying at the village's war memorial, two of these children laid their school's offering at the Memorial and said

their appropriate words. So grown up!

The occasion for me was the first Remembrance Service since my attending the Centenary Service at Ypres in 2018. I suggest anyone who feels that a dose of real First World War history is tolerable, visits the old Cloth Hall which is now a Museum. I had to leave that Museum rather urgently, unable to stomach the frightening stories, pictures etc.

Our Remembrance Sunday was an indication of a true village togetherness.

Please visit our excellent British Legion and meet Members who once served in our Forces. You will be very welcome any time.

RC



Launch of New Rotary Club

There is a new kid on the block as Rotary is creating a new club for East Preston and the surrounding area. It is at present a Satellite Club of the nearby Littlehampton Rotary Club which is acting as sponsor to the new club.

We are a team of experienced Rotarians with some keen and eager recruits, drawing up plans of how we can make a difference, whilst enjoying social activities. Our aim is to partner local groups and take on some community projects working in partnership with people and groups of all ages.

The group has already been very involved and active in joining in and sponsoring a number of local activities involving local schools, gardening groups, the British Legion and other organisations.

As part of a wider project across the patch, working with East Preston Parish Council's environmental group, we have planted some purple crocus bulbs at the Sea Road end of Two Acres. We hope when these flower they will remind viewers of the continuing fight against polio in three countries.

As membership increases, the club hopes it can be officially chartered and launch itself soon as a fully-fledged Rotary club. We do hope that by working with and supporting other groups we can make a difference.

If you are interested in joining in our activities or would like to share your thoughts or ask any questions, contact Gerald Ilesley, email: geraldillsley@gmail.com.

New groups blooming in East Preston

In the past couple of weeks, the council has facilitated the initial meetings of two new groups we hope will take off in the village, both fitting in with the council's commitment to the wellbeing of village residents.

'Men in Sheds'

Following on from the article in the last newsletter, the first meeting of the Men in Sheds group took place at the end of January.

Ten local residents attended and keenly discussed the group's possibilities in the comfort of the British Legion.

Agreement was reached that the 'shed' is a good place not only to pursue practical interests, but gives a great opportunity to meet, share experiences and skills and, perhaps most importantly, build friendships.

The main challenge is to find suitable premises for a workshop in or around East Preston. Any help or suggestions for such a venue will be welcomed.

Here in East Preston, we can make the group whatever you want it to be. This website gives more information on the national network of sheds - <https://menssheds.org.uk/>

In the meantime, the group has agreed to meet on a monthly basis at the British Legion club.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday, 1st March at 2.30 p.m. Tea and coffee and biscuits will be provided.

If you would like to join us, please let the Council Office know as we are continuing to be careful about numbers.

East Preston in Bloom

Despite all the Covid restrictions, it looks like we can now move forward with our floral planting group. With Spring around the corner, it's an ideal time to start.



We have identified four potential areas where we could enhance the village with additional flower displays. Membership commitment will be small and entirely up to each member's individual availability. The aim is not to introduce a scheme which places too great a burden on anyone.

In Bloom projects are a great opportunity to improve wellbeing by being outdoors, meeting new friends and helping our community by enhancing the appearance of the village.

We had our first meeting on 2nd February at the British Legion club, and several people had great ideas on how we can 'start small' yet make a difference.

If you would like to join, please contact the Council Office.

Who knows, in the future there may be the opportunity for the Men in Sheds to support East Preston in Bloom with all sorts of projects!



Up to the Oche!

Whilst not at the level to challenge Michael Van Gerwen and others at Alexandra Palace just yet, East Preston Cricket Club has launched a darts team with the intention of connecting club members socially over the long dark winters, having a bit of fun and dreaming of a nine dart check out one day!

The team plays in the Landlords Shield darts league which has 12 local teams and has been running for around 40 years.

If you are interested in playing darts or becoming a social or playing member of the Cricket club or volunteer, please get in touch via Facebook or email colin.smith757@btinternet.com

A review of our Neighbourhood Plan?



On 28th January, 2015, residents voted overwhelmingly in favour of adopting the East Preston Neighbourhood Plan, a document designed to try and protect the best of existing development in the village whilst seeking the best of future development for the village.

Seven years of working with the document have shown, as was always likely to be the case, some of it works well and some of it could do with some strengthening.

Would you like to volunteer to help the council with its review of the Neighbourhood Plan? At the moment, we cannot say how much work will be involved and, to some extent, that will depend upon how many people come forward. Please contact the Council Office to express your interest or to find out more. Thank you.

Should we declare a climate emergency?

The council has not yet declared a climate emergency but its Environmental Initiatives Working Party (EIWP) does feel the need to take urgent action, where possible, to mitigate the effects of climate change. Now that COP26 is yesterday's news, it is perhaps even more important we keep the issues at the heart of all we do.

To keep you informed, we have started to include at least one article in this quarterly newsletter on green matters and our regular parish council emails this year will also include at least one environmental tip. If you would like to be added to our email list or if you know of a worthwhile environmental cause within the village that could do with more publicity or support, then please get in touch.

The EIWP was established to ensure that we not only publicise green issues but also take action. We now know, for example, how much CO₂ is being emitted by most of the public buildings in the village and the next step is to start to reduce this. The East Preston in Bloom group had its first meeting this month to rejuvenate some of the village's neglected green areas and hopefully increase the wildflower beds in the village.

We continue to support the Littlehampton Community Fridge to help reduce food waste and we are working with WSCC to establish electric vehicle chargepoints in the village. If you would like to learn more about these or other issues we are working on, we are happy to talk.

We would like to start to catalogue the changes that you, our parishioners, are making in response to climate change. It may be that you have planted more wildflowers, built a pond, stopped buying fast fashion or enjoy a meat-free day each week. Whatever you are doing - as an individual or as a group, and that includes doing nothing at all, please let us know.

So should we declare a climate emergency, following the government's lead or simply continue to raise awareness and take action on some of the issues raised by climate change - what do you think?

Let us know your thoughts, contact details on the back page. Thank you.



Celebrate Spring with Funday Sunday

Following successful events in 2019 and 2021, the council is organising a third **Funday Sunday** for the afternoon of 24th April. For anyone who has not been before, these are afternoon teas with live music and dancing for those so motivated. The event will run from 2pm until 5pm and tickets will be £10 per person. Entertainment will be provided by female duo, Funky Fusion, who perform hits from the 1950s through to the 1980s – all designed to get you dancing.



Village Life

March

- 7th Full Council (7pm)
- 14th Planning & Licensing Committee (6pm)
Audit & Governance Committee (7pm)
- 28th Planning & Licensing Committee (6pm)
Community Engagement Committee (7pm)

April

- 4th Full Council (7pm)
- 11th Planning & Licensing Committee (6pm)
Personnel Committee (7pm)
- 24th *Funday Sunday* (2pm)
- 25th Planning & Licensing Committee (6pm)
Major Events Committee (7pm)

May

- 9th Annual Full Council (7pm)
- 10th Planning & Licensing Committee (6pm)
- 16th Finance & General Purposes Committee (6pm)
Amenities Committee (7pm)
- 23rd Planning & Licensing Committee (6pm)
Community Engagement Committee (7pm)

Please consult the Noticeboards and website a few days before the meeting for the Agenda and venue.

Please note the above list may be subject to change.

Tickets can be booked online
www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/funday-sunday-tickets-261691154287
or by calling Alison in the Council Office.
Book early to avoid disappointment!

Thanks to....

Everyone who supported the East Preston Christmas Celebrations in so many different ways; this was another successful event for the village.

Anyone who ever picks up someone else's litter in the village. Whilst it would be better if more people used the bins in the first place, the efforts of East Preston's own wombles do not go unnoticed.

The East Preston Yarnbombers for the Christmas tree and West Sussex County Council and Tracey Graham for the "treecycling" Christmas tree outside the library.



Please contact the office if you would like a large print version of this newsletter.



Contact point: Parish Clerk - Simon Cross, Assistant Clerk - Dawn Reid
Council Office, 122 Sea Road, East Preston BN16 1NN
Telephone: (01903) 770050 E-mail: clerk@eastpreston-pc.gov.uk
Website: <http://eastpreston-pc.gov.uk/>
Arun District Council (01903) 737500 West Sussex County Council (01243) 777100
Designed by Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton BN17 5LF

This issue was written by David Chapman, Simon Cross, Patricia Gander, John Gunston, Elizabeth Linton, Janine Nicholson, Steve Toney and Steven Wilkinson.