



Council events during the Festival

Amongst all the exciting events the Festival Committee and local organizations have arranged for this year's Festival, you will find five events wholly or partly arranged by the Parish Council.

On 2nd June, the day before the Festival starts officially, we hope to dedicate a new village clock.

On 5th June, we will be dedicating a new Field Maple which was planted in March as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative. We are delighted Dorothy Lee, lifelong East Preston resident and former Chairman of the Parish Council will be dedicating the tree to celebrate 70 years of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II's reign.

That will be followed immediately by The Big Jubilee Lunch, more details of which are below.

At 17:30 on Tuesday, 7th June, the council is hosting *The Bell Orchestra* from Beautiful Creatures Theatre in conjunction with Applause Rural Touring. *The Bell Orchestra* is an interactive musical game for families played on a set of giant chimes. Guided by performers the participant percussionists follow patterns to strike the chimes with their beaters, each chime playing a different note with striking resonance. Meanwhile, audiences stop to listen to the unique sounds, captivated by the spectacle and charmed by the joy of watching participants

learn the sequences and tuning in to each other. With a playful invitation and ceremonial tone, this unique instrument will create many memorable moments of togetherness throughout the event.

Then on Thursday, 9th June, the council invites members of the public to *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* for a hot drink, a cake and a chat about life in the village. This will be at the Council Office. Attendees are asked to pre-book a slot although drop-in attendees will be as welcome, they may just have to wait until someone is available to talk to them.



The Big Lunch – a picnic on the Village Green

The Parish Council, in conjunction with The Festival Committee, has planned a fun party with music and food on the Village Green on Sunday, 5th June as part of the nationwide Jubilee celebrations.

At midday, the music will start with the East Preston Junior School choir. They will be followed by the duo Vintage Candy at 1.15pm and 2.30pm, and finally Juice, a

five-piece band, from 3.45pm. In between, there will be music to keep you singing and dancing.

There will be food stalls selling cream teas, hog roast, sausage rolls and scotch eggs, and an ice cream van. Local hosteries are within a short walk. Feel free to bring your own picnic for your family and friends and come and join in the fun.



East Preston Festival 2022

With nearly 80 events in the ten days between 3rd and 12th June, there's plenty to choose from in this year's Festival. Full details are in the Festival programme.

On Saturday, 11th June, the Festival Parade leaves Vicarage Lane at 1.15pm arriving at the Recreation Ground at 2.30pm. It will be led by the Littlehampton Sea Cadets Band followed by the Festival Ambassadors and local community groups, all costumed to represent this year's theme, '**A Reign to Remember**', which celebrates aspects of the Queen's long reign.

On Sunday, 12th, the Festival Dog Show is back by popular request, with ten categories including best sausage catcher!

The Festival Committee is delighted John Inverdale has kindly agreed to be our Master of Ceremonies. Many will be familiar with John's broadcasting career as a presenter of prestigious sporting events, and we look forward to him being with us.

Also on the 12th, the Festival Grand Prize Draw will take place at 3.15pm, there will be a Songs of Praise on the Green at 6pm and at 6.30pm the East Preston Time Capsule will be filled, sealed and buried to be opened in 70 years' time!

All times stated above are approximate.

Keep up-to-date with all the latest Festival news on www.eastprestonfestival.co.uk and the Festival Facebook page.



Over forty years a volunteer

For the latest in our occasional series of articles featuring an East Preston resident's involvement with a charity, we met Janet Williamson. Janet has a long involvement with Worthing MENCAP, a wholly independent charity enabling people with learning disabilities to lead full and independent lives. Janet was instrumental in the setting up of the charity's Buddy's Café and later charity shop, both in South Farm Road, Worthing. The shop helps raise much-needed funds to support the charity, which covers the area from Littlehampton to Shoreham-by-Sea and north to Steyning and Henfield.

Janet became involved with Worthing MENCAP when her daughter Jodie was born with learning disabilities. Janet felt the best way to be the best possible mum to Jodie was to get involved with other parents in similar situations. That was over forty years ago, and Janet continues to contribute tirelessly to the charity and its beneficiaries. As well as having been a Trustee of the

charity for over forty years, Janet volunteers in both the café and the shop, mentoring adults during their six months' work-based training, helping them acquire the skills which will help them to acquire employment elsewhere.

Additionally, the charity hosts numerous social activities, mainly, but not exclusively, at the café. As you would imagine, Janet gets involved however she can with these events, finding every event rewarding, fun and relaxed.

Like many charities, Worthing MENCAP has a lack of volunteers. Anyone who would like to know more about volunteering as a mentor in the café or the shop or as a Trustee or the sponsor of an event should contact the team at buddys@worthingmencap.org



News from East Preston Infant School

Elsewhere in this issue, you will read about the new clock and Jubilee tree the council has arranged.

The Infant School Council agreed it would be lovely to invite His Royal Highness, Prince George to East Preston so he could dedicate either the clock or the tree in honour of his great-grandmother's platinum reign.

At the time of writing, Prince George has not yet found the time to respond to the invite but we thought you would like to see the children posting the letter.



The Friends of East Preston Infant School are looking to replace a playtrail which is nearly 15 years old and has been enjoyed by thousands of pupils during that time. Sadly, these things cannot last forever and unfortunately elements of the play trail are past feasible repairs and need to be replaced imminently.

East Preston Infant School is a UNICEF Gold Rights Respecting School and we believe all our pupils have the right to be healthy. We want our pupils to have access to play equipment that will encourage physical exploration, challenge their minds and most of all be enjoyable to play on.

The overall scheme is over £30,000 but even just £2 buys a vital nut and bolt to hold it all together; £5 buys a pair of climbing grips for the climbing wall. At the other end of the scale £2000 buys the slide, whilst £3000 buys one of the towers. If you can help in any way or would just like to know more about the project, please visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/east-preston-infant-school-new-playground>. Every donation will be very much appreciated.

Sea Road toilet block - apologies

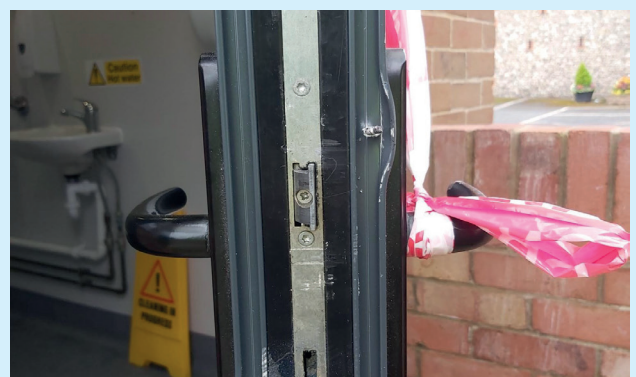
Please accept our apologies if you have been inconvenienced recently by finding the Sea Road toilets unavailable, due to factors beyond our control.

The right-hand of the two unisex cubicles needed to be forced open by the Fire & Rescue Service after a young man was accidentally locked inside by a temporary member of our cleaning contractor's staff. This should not happen again. The force used by the Fire & Rescue Service has broken the door; until a replacement door has been made and fitted, it is not possible to use that cubicle.

A few times recently, the left-hand cubicle has been blocked as a result of inconsiderate use. We do not believe this was intentional or vandalism, but people using excessive amounts of toilet paper has led to some

pretty unpleasant blockages needing to be cleared. On occasions, initial attempts to clear the blockage have resulted in the Hoist Assisted Toilet also becoming blocked and therefore not available for use until the blockage had been cleared.

Considerate use of any public facilities by everyone helps to keep those facilities available for everyone. Thank you.



Chairman's Annual Report for 2021-22



Here is the council's Annual Report for the past financial year. This will be presented to the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday, 13th June at 19:00. For more details, please contact the Council Office or look for the notices in the

council's noticeboards.

"I started last year's report saying 2020 would be the year none of us would probably ever forget, little knowing 2021 would be just as challenging for many of our residents. In some respects, many of us have incorporated managing with COVID-19 into our daily lives, but some are still afraid to go out or anywhere that might be crowded. Just as I said last year, local businesses have, on the whole, survived and we ask residents to keep supporting our local businesses. On behalf of the whole council, I really want to thank again all those business owners who adapted and worked within the government's frequently-changing guidelines to keep serving residents in ways old and new.

"Let's start this year's report where we started last year's report, with the East Preston Voluntary Service. In the middle of the summer, with life then getting back to some sort of normality, more people back at work, events taking place again and fewer restrictions in place, we wound the Voluntary Service up for a final time. In the middle of September, the council hosted a thank-you party which brought together again many of the volunteers and the people they had helped. We were delighted at the number of people who attended, and to see for ourselves the friendships that had built up over the lockdown periods and beyond. We know there are volunteers and beneficiaries still in regular contact, a lovely side effect of an unlovely time.

"Talking of events taking place again, the council decided to go ahead with both the

fifth East Preston Food & Drink Festival and the East Preston Christmas Celebrations, both attracting far larger audiences than we could have expected. Clearly residents and their friends from outside the village were very happy to be able to attend such events again, and to support them wholeheartedly. Both events will run again in 2022.

"The council's year was marred by the death of our main Village Orderly, Steve Rolph, in June. In addition to doing a great job, Steve was a great man with a lovely sense of humour. Although Steve tended to work very early in the mornings, he was greatly liked by his colleagues and the members of the public out early enough to see him. He is much missed.

"The government's concession to allow local councils to hold meetings virtually ended at the beginning of May 2021, despite requests from numerous local councils and MPs for local councils to be allowed to continue meeting online. In 2020, I was delighted with how quickly councillors and officers adapted to holding meetings online; in 2021, I am equally delighted with how quickly councillors and officers adapted to meeting in-person again and operating within socially-distancing guidelines to ensure all remained safe. Members of the public have returned to our meetings too, albeit we still ask them to pre-register to attend, and we have a small band of regular attendees willing not just to keep us on our toes but also to praise initiatives we have undertaken on your behalf.

"What are just some of those initiatives? At the Warren Recreation Ground we replaced the damaged area of the tennis court surface. The railings around the children's playground were repainted resulting in the whole area looking a lot brighter and more fun. Trees donated by both the Woodland Trust and a local resident have been planted along the southern edge and four new bicycle hoops have been provided.

"We replaced the low-level fencing the

full length of the Village Green perimeter. We chose recycled plastic which should last twenty-five years with very little maintenance required. The markings in the car-park were refurbished for the first time in a decade. The boules piste also received some refurbishment and a 6ft rootballed Norway Spruce tree has been planted which we hope will grow into a fine Christmas Tree.

“An additional planter was installed at the junction of North Lane and Lashmar Road. This will be joined by a further planter sometime this year.

“We ran a well-attended Funday Sunday event in October, giving attendees an enjoyable afternoon tea accompanied by live music and dancing. Aimed at a much lower age range, the council’s A Morning with Nature half-day playscheme was well-attended and well-received.

“In the 2021 Loo of the Year awards, the Sea Road toilet block received a Platinum Award, the highest possible. Not bad for our first attempt.

“During the summer, the council ran an online survey on environmental issues and in December, the council ran an online survey about possible further parking restrictions in North Lane and Sea Road between the junctions of Lashmar Road and Fairlands. As there was plenty of support for the latter, this has now been submitted to West Sussex County Council for it to propose a scheme.

“Tackling social isolation whilst also providing something new in the village, the council has recently set up new East Preston in Bloom and East Preston Men in Sheds groups with a view to both groups becoming autonomous in due course.

“Wrapping up the year, the council hosted a meeting between Southern Water and local residents to gain a better understanding of what improvements Southern Water will be making to our local seawater.

“The Personnel Committee oversaw the

recruitment of a new Village Orderly, and we are happy to have found Caspar Williams who has fitted into the role well.

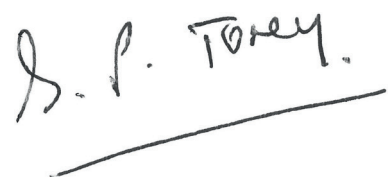
“Throughout the year, the council has worked solo and in conjunction with other local councils to stave off increasingly inappropriate attempts to build on recognised Strategic Gaps between communities. This fight continues.

“Financially, the council agreed not to increase its portion of your Council Tax for the second year running. In the current cost-of-living crisis we all know how every little helps.

“Please remember this is just some of what the council has achieved this year. There are elections taking place in May 2023 – if you think you have something to offer the village and would like to know more about becoming a councillor, please get in touch.

“The council remains always approachable and willing to consider ideas for ways in which life in the village can be improved. Please submit suggestions in writing (letter or email) so the correct committee can consider them or our officers can report on previous discussions on the same matter. We look forward to hearing your ideas and hopefully implementing some of them to make the village even lovelier.

“As in previous years, I would like to finish by thanking my fellow councillors for their hard work throughout the year and their support of me, and also by thanking the council’s officers who maintained a visible presence throughout the lockdowns and who really do work tirelessly for the village.”

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. P. Toney". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line that serves as a separator.

Steve Toney
Chairman, East Preston Parish Council

Anonymous letters

Very occasionally we receive anonymous letters from members of the public who are, usually, highly indignant about a particular bugbear about which they think this council is not doing everything it could to resolve.

Unfortunately, anonymous communications help nobody. We can and do take some action in response to anonymous communications, but if we do not know who you are, how can we tell you what action we have taken or may take? Equally, we may not be able to take any action at all, and how can we explain that to you or direct you to an organisation that may be able to help you? If we cannot respond to you about your

particular concern, how annoyed will you continue to be because you think we have not taken your concern seriously or because the situation you have reported has not changed?

Correspondence into the office is treated confidentially and is not shared with other organisations without the author's prior agreement. We understand there are occasions when you may be fearful of being recognised as the author of a complaint, but if you trust us enough to write to us in the first place, please trust us enough to respect your confidentiality.

Sometimes Christmas starts in March

I know many people complain shops promote Christmas earlier and earlier every year so imagine my surprise on seeing an invitation to help at a Christmas event published in March. All was revealed by Malcolm McLelland, Chairman of the Friends of St Mary's, when he asked for volunteers to help with the Christmas Tree Festival which will run from the 8th to 11th of December 2022.

Like many such events in the village the festival takes much time and effort to organise and preparations need to begin early. There was a good number of people willing to help with a variety of jobs ranging from installing the trees to making cups of tea and coffee. As a major contributor to the funds that keep the oldest building in our parish in good repair the Christmas Tree Festival has been sadly missed during the Covid restrictions. It is hoped there will again be over 40 sponsored, decorated trees in the church. The spectacular display and ingenuity of the tree decorations are definitely worth seeing. I hope more people than ever will take the time to visit the festival, simultaneously supporting the village's only Grade I-Listed building.

Cllr John Gunston

Village Life

June

- 2nd Platinum Jubilee Clock dedication (tbc)
- 3rd East Preston Festival starts, until 12th
- 5th Jubilee tree dedication (11:45, Village Green)
Big Jubilee lunch (12:00, Village Green)
- 6th Full Council (7pm)
- 7th *The Bell Orchestra* (17:30, Village Green)
- 9th Come and Meet Your Local Councillors (10:00, Council Office)
- 13th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
- 27th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Major Events Committee (19:00)

July

- 4th Full Council (19:00)
- 11th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
- 18th Audit & Governance Committee (14:00)
Personnel Committee (18:00)
- 25th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00)

August

- 1st Full Council (19:00 tbc)
- 8th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Amenities Committee (19:00)
- 15th Finance & General Purposes Committee (10:00)
- 22nd Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Major Events Committee (19:00)
- 27th 6th East Preston Food & Drink Festival (12:00, Village Green)

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.

DISABILITY ACTION GROUP East Preston

Please help us “Reach the Beach”

We are very fortunate here in East Preston to live in a lovely village with open spaces and the sea nearby. However, not everyone in our community is able to access the beach, e.g. people in wheelchairs, those who need to use motorised buggies to get about, or those who need an even surface to walk on, for whatever reason. That is why our Group would love to see an accessible path and flat promontory over the pebbles at the end of Sea Road (and/or Sea Lane) to enable them to enjoy the sea views.

We are delighted to report that a local civil engineer has kindly agreed to look at the original plans and advise us how to proceed. We are a very small group and really need more local people to become involved and help us to take this project forward.

Please contact Alan Hultquist (Chairman) on 07899 571007 or alan.hultquist@sky.com



East Preston Men in Sheds

Although still suffering from the lack of a venue, the East Preston Men in Sheds group has now been officially registered with the national association and by the time you read this, the group will have met four times. Official registration gives the group access to all sorts of valuable support.

In addition to chatting about a wide range of subjects, the members of the group are eager to get on with some project work, perhaps building some planters for the East Preston in Bloom group. But this is impossible without premises.

Do you have a garage you do not use?

Perhaps you would be willing to have a chat about the Men in Sheds helping to clear it in exchange for using it a couple of times a week? Or perhaps you know of some other premises you think may be suitable.

In the meantime, the group meets on the first Tuesday of every month at 14:30 in the accessible upstairs room at the Royal British Legion building in The Street.

For more information, until a Men in Sheds committee is in place, please contact the Council Office with suggestions.

Southern Water

The March meeting of the council's Environmental Initiatives Working Party, attended by 22 village residents, was given over to Dr Nick Mills, Head of Southern Water Storm Overflow task force. He explained the pressures involved with trying to cope with both rainwater runoff and sewage using the same system. Up to 30 times the normal flow can be created by severe storms, causing overflows to empty into the sea and rivers. These storms are becoming more frequent owing to climate change. Nick's team is putting together a plan which has a target to reduce discharges by 80% by 2030 - this is a tougher target than DEFRA have set the water companies - 75% by 2035.

The plan will try to slow the flow of water

into the system using new technology, such as smart water butts, as well as rainwater harvesting and tree pits to allow water to soak away naturally rather than rushing into the sewers. More infrastructure investment will also be considered to help the system cope.

Questions from the audience focussed on Southern Water's poor record on sewage discharge and what was happening now rather than a plan for the late 2020's. Nick gave honest answers to the questions and agreed to provide more information on current activity and efforts to improve on existing water quality measuring systems. He was also keen to maintain communications with the council to explore ways that we could work together in the future.

East Preston in Bloom

This new community group has 'hit the ground running'! We now have 20 volunteers, with a waiting list! We have been overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of the team who are giving their time and experience so generously.

We started with a village 'walkabout' identifying areas that could benefit from some TLC, including weeding and floral enhancement. The group has weeded/cleared several areas including the car park and surrounding areas in the south of the village, all the raised borders and pavements near the northern shops, the frontage of the Conservative Hall and the areas around the children's playground. It's all looking fantastic!

We have plans for new projects including

- Planting up raised beds with drought-tolerant shrubs at the northern shops

- Creating a small woodland glade on the south-eastern corner of the village green
- Adding floral planters to the gardens at the library to add year-round colour

The group is not only enhancing the appearance of our village but enjoying making new friends and learning new skills. Many residents have stopped to chat to the volunteers, commenting favourably on the work they are doing. If you see the team out and about do stop and say hello!



Thanks to....

The lady in Golden Avenue for the donation of brand-new jam-jars for use at the East Preston Christmas Celebrations, and to Joe for pointing her in our direction.

.....
East Preston and Kingston Village Hall Foundation, Carol Feasey, and Sam at The Seahorse Café for their support and assistance with Funday Sunday on 24th April.

.....
The East Preston Yarnbombers for another fantastic Easter project aimed at the local children (apparently of all ages).

Defibrillators update

In the last issue, we gave you a list of the defibrillators we believe are within easy reach of the village. Some of those on the list are only available some of the time because they are located within the buildings of their host organizations.

At its monthly meeting in March, the council agreed to set up a fund to provide those organizations with small grants towards the costs of providing a proper cabinet outside their buildings, effectively making their defibrillators accessible 24/7. In addition to providing this funding, the council will work with these organizations to confirm the defibrillator's governance is as good as it can be, ensuring the defibrillator is always on duty.



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



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