



# East Preston Parish Council

*Working for the Local Community*



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

## Message from the Chairman

Welcome to the **FIRST** edition of the Parish Council newsletter. This is a new initiative by the Council which we hope will enable you to learn more about our work on a quarterly basis. Our aim is to achieve **"QUALITY COUNCIL STATUS"** for the Council, something which will have many benefits for the village community. One of the requirements for Quality Council Status is for the Council to produce such newsletters, keeping everyone up to date with all Council business.

It was with great regret that the Parish Council said goodbye in April to Don Rogers who had served East Preston as Parish Clerk for more than 38 years. His commitment and dedication, together with his unfailing good humour and friendliness, have been appreciated by all the past and present Councillors. We wish him and his wife Jean, our Assistant Clerk, a long and happy retirement.

At the same time, the Council was very pleased to welcome Neil Christian as our new Parish Clerk. Mr Christian recently took early retirement from Arun District Council. Like Don Rogers, he is working from his home, in Goring-by-Sea, until the Council is able to establish office accommodation in the village.

**Dorothy Lee** Chairman

## PLANNING NEWS – A bad judgement for the village

The Planning Committee meets fortnightly to consider current planning applications. Although we are not the planning authority, we take our responsibilities for comment very seriously and our local knowledge and understanding underpins all our responses.

A developer submitted three separate applications for the demolition of four bungalows on the corner of Manor Road and Sea Road and the erection of a block of flats of between 18 to 22 flats on the site. This Council made the strongest objections to these applications to build 3 storey blocks of flats, as did so many local residents and the EP Preservation Society. We objected to the overdevelopment of the site, the intensification of residential development, and the effects on the infrastructure of the area. **In January 2004 this Council had already**

**issued a statement setting out its objections to multi-storeyed flat developments.**

Arun District Council then refused all 3 of these applications. However, the developer's Appeals were heard in May and the Inspector's decision was to allow all three applications. In his Report, he said, **"In my judgement, East Preston's size and proximity to other urban areas gives it a clearly suburban character and appearance."** His report also refers to **"the ribbon development of Sea Road."**

This appeal judgement is a serious blow for East Preston. We will report any further information in the next newsletter.

**We are aware of the danger of allowing a precedent to be set for our village, which could make it virtually impossible to resist further such applications.**

**Betty Wagstaff** - Chairman of the Council's Planning Committee

## Parish Guide

The Council is pleased that the most recent edition of the Parish Guide, published in June, has met with appreciation from villagers and visitors. 2000 copies were delivered and are proving popular. There is no cost to the Council for this production – all costs are met by advertising revenue to the publishers.

## Parish Clerk

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## VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

East Preston is under considerable development pressures. Many residents feel that its character and atmosphere could be lost through incompatible development and this has been borne out by the recent Planning Appeal decision for Sea Road/Manor Road.

The Parish Council and the East Preston and Kingston Preservation Society joined together late last year to sponsor the East Preston **Village Design Statement**. The aim of the VDS is to ensure that every new development fits in with its setting and contributes to the local environment. Once the VDS is adopted by Arun District Council, it will become supplementary guidance which must be considered in deciding every planning application. It will strengthen the case for acceptable and appropriate development.

So far, a VDS circular has been sent to every household in the parish, and a public meeting was held on 16 July to discuss this further. The meeting was very well attended, with over 120 villagers taking part, and a further public meeting was held on 31 July to follow up on the findings.

Road by road surveys are now underway to define and to document distinctive characteristics, so you may well see some of our survey team in a road near you soon!

If you would like to take part in this activity, please contact either Sioned Vos on 770257 or David Sawers on 779134. We will report further progress in the winter edition of this newsletter. **Fiona MacLeod**

### Councillor Resignations

The Council has recently lost the services of two of its most able and dedicated Councillors.

**Doug Medhurst** has been a Councillor for more than 22 years, and has been responsible for many of the Council funded enhancement schemes for the village. He decided to step down in April because of his health and his many other Village commitments, including the prestigious annual Festival.

**Margaret Gilbert**, who has served on the Council for over 9 years, has been a driving force in the creation of the Parish Guide and the Village Design Statement initiative, as well as serving as the Council representative on the Village Hall Management Committee.

We thank both of them for their commitment and many years of service to East Preston.

### The Village Green

The Council can now confirm that Arun District Council has agreed the transfer of ownership of the Village Green (at the bottom of Sea Road) and the adjacent car park to the Council for a cost of £1 plus legal fees. This is a valuable asset for this Council to acquire and we hope to make some "green" enhancement initiatives in the coming months. Meanwhile this Council is now responsible for all general maintenance including grass-cutting on the Green.

### WEB SITE

The Council web site is being updated and we would welcome any suggestions for possible inclusion. These should be forwarded to the Parish Clerk.

### Village Hall Refurbishment

The Parish Council owns the Village Hall but it is managed by a Trust on the Council's behalf. The Chairman David Jarman and the Village Hall Committee, all volunteers, work very hard to make the Village Hall the busy and successful place it is in the heart of the community.

Discussions have been taking place to try to determine the most appropriate and cost-effective option for the refurbishment and possible extension of the building to provide much needed extra accommodation.

The Parish Council has now set up a joint working party with the Village Hall Committee to explore all these options. We will report further in the next newsletter.

### The Festival

No issue of the Newsletter would be complete without a brief report of the 2005 Festival, from its Chairman and long serving Parish Councillor Doug Medhurst. This was the 24th Festival and it is a jewel in the crown of this village. It is a tribute to the vision and dedication of the Committee that the Festival continues to expand to include a greater variety of events each year. "It brings such pleasure to so many people, residents and visitors alike, and the fund raising is an extra satisfaction for all the village organisations which benefit."