



Should the parish council adopt the Conservative Hall? – part 2

Over 90% of you who have taken part in the survey about the future of the Conservative Hall agreed the parish council should adopt this venue in the heart of the village. (At the time of writing: Yes – 90.49%, No – 4.6%, Unsure – 5.21%)

With that amount of support, the council believes adopting the venue is the right thing for the village. It is proceeding cautiously, with no final decision yet taken, and it is seeking some more legal advice before committing the village to this project.

And it will be a project. The council has had a survey carried out, which probably needs updating, but which gave a clear indication of improvement works needed. Several of the comments made in the community survey showed how aware you already are about these works.

Although many of you believe the hall will be used even more after it has had some work done, realistically, nobody can predict the future with any certainty. The council will do its best to ensure the hall does not become a financial drain on the village.

Below we have tried to answer some of the questions which came up from several respondents.

Who would pay for the upkeep?

Once the venue has been improved, it is hoped the income will offset usual maintenance and a fund could be set up for larger, future repairs.

Could the name be changed?

As the parish council is non-political the name would be changed in due course.

Would one set of Trustees be able to manage both venues?

This is an option under consideration.

Maybe the council could commission a structural survey before committing?

The council has already had such a survey completed.

Could the council sell off the land for flats or houses?

The Trustees will want a reassurance the council would not do that before handing over the building. The council would need a clause giving provision for how the building could be disposed of should it become overly costly to run sometime in the future.

Who would the council foresee as managers?

Possibly a committee or a paid employee. These are options to be considered and agreed.

What will the financial implications be for residents of East Preston?

The article in the last newsletter specifically used the word initially when referring to no increase in the council tax. The council will do what it can to ensure the hall is self-financing once it has been improved.



Chairman's Annual Report for 2023-24



Steve Toney
Chairman, East Preston
Parish Council

Cllr Steve Toney, Chairman of the Council, will present this report to the Annual Parish Meeting on 13th May. Here we publish an edited version of his report.

"I start by thanking everyone who has made a positive contribution to the village during the past year. No day passes without something in the village making me proud to live here. There are many voluntary organizations beavering away in the village and you will appreciate your own favourites.

"The council year started with local elections. Patricia Gander stood down and was replaced by Helen Hill. Now a year into the role, we hope Helen is finding being a councillor rewarding. Our longest-standing member of staff, Tracy Khoo, left the council in July after close to twenty years and we have welcomed Adrian Vyse to look after the council's finances. Our thanks to Tracy.

"The year saw more successful council events – a Food & Drink Festival, two half-day playschemes for local children, a *FunDay Sunday* for the young-at-heart, two beach cleans and a Christmas Celebrations event. We also worked with the East Preston Festival Committee to host an enjoyable Big Coronation Lunch on the Village Green, marking the Coronation of King Charles III.

"At the end of May, the council launched a bus service to the southern end of the village, extending the Littlehampton to Rustington no. 12 service. Appreciated by those who do use it, too few people use it currently and the council has decided to stop funding the service at the end of August. If a cost-effective alternative can be found, the council will consider it accordingly.

"As Trustee of the Warren Recreation Ground, the council installed security gates at the vehicle entrance on to the recreation ground itself and three new lights in the car-park. In conjunction with East Preston Cricket Club, the council maintained the recreation ground and will work with East Preston in Bloom to improve various aspects this year. The council also installed an outdoor chess table, thanks to the generosity of East Preston Film Society.

"Increasing the council's Community Engagement work, from late in 2023, the council is now attending

the St Mary the Virgin Church Welcome Café once a quarter and joining the Field House monthly coffee morning once every six months. If your group would like a visit from a couple of councillors, please get in touch.

"In September, the council installed four new planters on the island opposite the Council Office. Although they have not been successful in tackling inconsiderate parking on and beside the island, the planters have been well-received by members of the public.

"Although initially supported by West Sussex County Council, the council's proposal for a 20mph Zone had to be scaled back and a revised proposal submitted.

"In the annual Loo of the Year Awards, the Sea Road toilet block received the Platinum Plus award, the top award for this size of toilet.

"Starting on New Year's Day, the council supported Warm Welcome Spaces at the British Legion and at St Mary the Virgin Church. During the three months of the scheme, over 330 lunches were served to people from over 40 households in the village. Those attending the sessions were very appreciative.

"Once again, the council did not put up its portion of your Council Tax. During the past year, councillors and officers have received specific finance training, more general refresher training, Data Protection training as well as attending seminars to update their knowledge. The council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return was audited independently with nothing requiring any attention.

"I thank all councillors and officers for making this job a relatively easy one.

"Above everything, thank you to any of you who regularly show your faith in and support for the council. We hope to continue to improve the village where we can. Thank you."

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. P. Toney". Below the signature is a horizontal line.

** Please note, as 13th May falls in the middle of the distribution period for this newsletter, it is possible you have only received this newsletter after the Annual Parish Meeting.

Making waves at No.10



Back in issue No. 60, Autumn 2021, we featured East Preston-based charity Waves Music Therapy which works with local people of all ages, using music to help improve lives.

As part of this year's Comic Relief, the BBC made a short film about the work of the charity, focusing on its rap workshops; you can see the film by visiting the Waves Music Therapy webpage. One outcome from the filming was an approach by the Prime Minister's wife, Akshata Murty, to deliver a workshop at No. 10 Downing Street for her Lessons at 10 initiative. This programme brings children from primary schools across the country behind the doors of No.10 to learn from leading educators and charities.

Pupils from schools in Hertfordshire and Lancashire joined Mrs Murty for the Waves rap workshop. They worked in teams to explore a beat, writing lyrics based on rhyming exercises and shared their rap skills in a short performance to improve creative techniques for the future.

Founder & CEO Waves Music Therapy, Victoria Hartkemeyer said:

"This was an incredible opportunity to demonstrate the power of music-making to connect and inspire young people and to give them an effective way of having a voice. It was also an important platform for us to share with those in power, just how critical the mental health and funding crisis is in our schools.

"Our Rapper in Residence programme uses professional rap artists, alongside our therapists, to



engage young people in positive, creative music-making, which builds relationships, confidence, self-esteem, community and most critically helps young people to feel heard. Music is a powerful tool to engage young people and support their mental health and wellness.

The invitation was a huge endorsement of the work that our charity does. We were all delighted to share the work with the children attending today's Lessons at 10 and Mrs Murty, and to have the opportunity to share how music therapy positively impacts those with additional needs."

If you would like more information you can contact Victoria and the team at

hello@wavesmusictherapy.com

Instagram: [wavesmusictherapy](https://www.instagram.com/wavesmusictherapy)

X: [@wavesmt](https://twitter.com/wavesmt).

If you would like to read more their website is

www.wavesmusictherapy.com and if you would like to donate the link is

www.wavesmusictherapy.com/donate or you can donate through the Charities Aid Foundation.

Help needed at East Preston & Kingston Village Hall

The Village Hall has a small, friendly committee which is in need of some extra bodies.

The committee is completely voluntary and is currently looking for some help in the following areas:

- Accounts / bookkeeping
- Secretarial skills
- General computer skills
- Social media
- Handyman / maintenance with some experience of Health & Safety legislation

All offers of help would be gratefully received. To find out more, please email the Chairman, Mrs Toni McElroy – chair@epkvh.co.uk.

East Preston Festival 2024

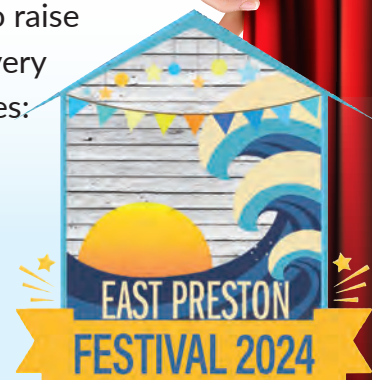
Friday 31st May to Sunday 9th June

Get ready to enjoy a programme of great events and activities at East Preston's annual ten-day Festival. Alongside established favourites are super evenings out – a 'George Michael' Tribute, Race Night, Festival Bingo, Call My Wine Bluff and Squinty McGinty's Barn Dance. The Community Fete on Saturday 1st June is packed with family entertainment and on Sunday 2nd June, as part of the national commemorations to mark the 80th Anniversary, is the Big D-Day Lunch.

On Saturday 8th June, come and cheer on the costumed Parade, reflecting this year's theme of 'In the Sea, On the Sea, By the Sea'. On Sunday 9th June, have a great family day out at the Fun Dog Show, hosted once again by sports presenter John Inverdale, and stay for the Party on the Green.

Many local charities and community groups also organise events to raise money for themselves, by supporting these you are helping some very worthy causes. There are also Festival competitions with cash prizes: why not join in the fun and have a go?

Programmes available from East Preston shops or visit www.eastprestonfestival.co.uk. Tickets on sale from Buds 'n' Blooms and Seaview Stores. Keep up-to-date by following the Festival on Facebook.



Flushed with success

Nearly five years ago, a group of East Preston residents took over the lease of the toilets at the end of South Strand to prevent them from closure, which would have resulted in beach hut users, walkers, children from the local school and visitors having a trek to the nearest facilities. South Strand Community Toilets (SSCT), a non-profit entity, was formed by volunteers who set out to raise money to maintain and manage the toilets.

SSCT is funded solely by the generosity of the local community, beach hut owners and visitors. Since SSCT was formed many improvements have been introduced; the members are extremely proud of all that has been achieved. SSCT have been decorated inside and out, improving appearance, with cracked basins and broken taps replaced, a hot water system installed, new outside drinking water taps, and essential maintenance carried out throughout the building. In addition, through the generosity of our members a defibrillator was purchased and is situated on the West side of the building.



SSCT strives to raise money every year to ensure the toilets can remain operational for everyone, and every donation no matter how large or small is put to good use. Currently we are hoping to raise enough money to have essential repairs carried out on our roof. If you would like to help towards this, please contact us at southstrandcommunitytoilets@gmail.com or donate via the QR code above, all donations are warmly welcomed and will be put to very good use.

George Schlich – Chairman, SSCT

Council events during Festival 2024

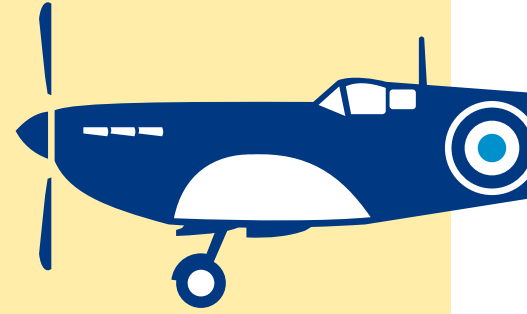
On 1st June, between 10:00 and 12:00, the council will be hosting its usual Come and Meet Your Local Councillors event. Drop in to the Council Office and talk to us about living in East Preston. We cannot fix everything, but we will listen and can usually refer your concerns to people that may be able to help. Timed slots can be booked by contacting the Council Office or you can just drop in.

On 2nd June, as mentioned in the Festival Committee's article, we are helping to run the Big D-Day Lunch on the Village Green, partly to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings on 6th June. Bring your own picnic or buy something from the stallholders, be entertained by live music (including the East

Preston Infant School Choir kicking off the show at 12:15), and have your photograph taken with a replica Spitfire.

The council's third contribution to this year's Festival is a visit by Dunreyth Alpacas. Pop along to the Village Green between 17:30 and 19:00 on Tuesday, 4th June and have a chance to say hello to a gentle and intelligent alpaca. **Please note:**

for the duration of the visit, no dogs will be allowed on to the Village Green. Alpacas can be afraid of dogs and may attack them.



Launching East Preston Repair Café

A fantastic group of volunteers, with the backing of East Preston Parish Council, is ready to open the East Preston Repair Café. We will be accepting items for repair from 10:00 to 12:00 on **Saturday, 11th May**, at the Spire Room, St Mary's Church, Vicarage Lane. The next date will be **June 15th** to avoid clashing with the East Preston Festival Carnival Parade. After that, the Repair Café will then operate on the second Saturday of every month except August.

Our band of volunteers have electrical, mechanical, general DIY and sewing skills. So if you have a broken item that you do not want to go to landfill why not bring it along and we'll try and fix it for you. While you wait you can enjoy a cup of tea or coffee for a modest amount.

Here are a few of our house rules so you know what to expect:-

- All children must be accompanied by an adult and kept away from repair stations.
- We are unable to work on any item still under warranty.
- Please do not ask us to repair anything of great monetary or sentimental value.
- If our repairer is unable to repair your item, we will advise you if there is somewhere else you can take it.
- All our repairers are experienced volunteers. There is no charge for their time, skill or advice. You are invited to make a voluntary donation to cover costs.
- You will normally be responsible for providing any additional items such as leads, plugs, fuses,



zips, etc. that are needed for your repair. You may need to make a second visit for your repair to be completed.

- Where applicable, electrical equipment will be subject to a Portable Appliance Test (PAT) prior to leaving the Repair Café. Our repairer will either deem the appliance safe to use, or not safe to use.
- You are responsible for the removal of all items you bring into the Repair Café.
- We are not able to provide any warranty or guarantee on repairs carried out and as such are not liable should an item subsequently not work properly or fail again or cause any consequential loss or damage.

We look forward to welcoming you to our village Repair Café.

** Please note, as 11th May falls in the middle of the distribution period for this newsletter, it is possible you have only received this newsletter after the Repair Café has started.

Walking around our village

Do you fancy learning a little more about our beautiful village?

If you do, then pick up a copy of the parish council's new walking map and spend a couple of hours enjoying a stroll round historic East Preston. The route is just under 2½ miles and includes QR codes linked to four short films explaining a little more about the history of our ancient village. St Mary's Church, the Workhouse, Homestead Farm and the Coastguard cottages are featured in the films.

Not only will you learn a little more about the place we call home but we also hope that you enjoy the walk as part of our plan to encourage more active travel in East Preston.

The maps will be available from East Preston Library and the Council Office later in May. If you know of anyone who would like multiple copies of the map, perhaps for retail outlets or rental properties in the village please get in touch.



Southern Rail timetable

Last summer, Southern Rail undertook a public consultation on timetable changes. On behalf of the council, Cllr John Gunston attended a drop-in session at Worthing station, one of only a very few such sessions Southern Rail hosted.

One of Cllr Gunston's concerns, and it was included in this council's official response to the proposed timetable changes, was the impact additional services along the West Coastway line would have on downtime at the village's two level crossings – Angmering Station and Roundstone. When asked about this impact, we received no answer, and now the timetable changes have been approved and residents are rightly worried about how much longer the level crossing gates will be down each hour.

The revised services start on **Monday, 3rd June**. To date, we have been unable to get any information from Network Rail, which controls the level crossings, as to the expected impact. Without that information, we are unable to prepare you fully about the impact of the new timetable. For any of us whose daily travel means crossing the railway line, as a pedestrian, a cyclist or a motorist, it is likely we will need to summon up extra patience each day. However, for railway users, there will be an increased choice of trains in both directions which may prove useful.

At the time of writing, this is a link to the Southern Rail webpage about the timetable changes - <https://www.southernrailway.com/westcoastway>

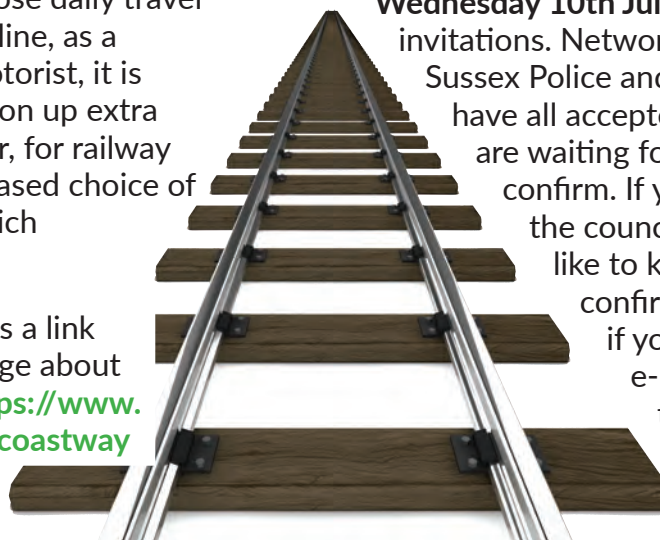


Help our crossing!

As some of you will know, in March we had hoped to have a public meeting to discuss the impact the Roundstone Level Crossing has on the village, with major stakeholders such as Network Rail and West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Highways and Stagecoach South present. The idea is those organisations could hear first-hand how lives are affected by the crossing and for residents to hear first-hand the barriers (no pun intended) to improving the situation at the level crossing. The meeting will also be a chance for everyone to hear some of the ideas local residents have, some of which may be new to all of us.

We were tentatively working towards a date but two weeks before that date, WSCC Highways asked us to defer the meeting to enable it to send along the right representatives.

We have another date we are working towards, **Wednesday 10th July**, and have issued invitations. Network Rail, Stagecoach South, Sussex Police and other organisations have all accepted the invitation, but we are waiting for WSCC Highways to confirm. If you are not a recipient of the council's e-newsletter but would like to know when the date is confirmed, please let us know; if you are a recipient of the e-newsletter, details will be in there as soon as we know we can go ahead.



REACH - Renewable Energy Access for Communities and Households

East Preston and Angmering Parish Councils are working on a renewable energy plan for our residents and businesses. Our partners include West Sussex County Council and companies that specialise in developing energy projects with communities.

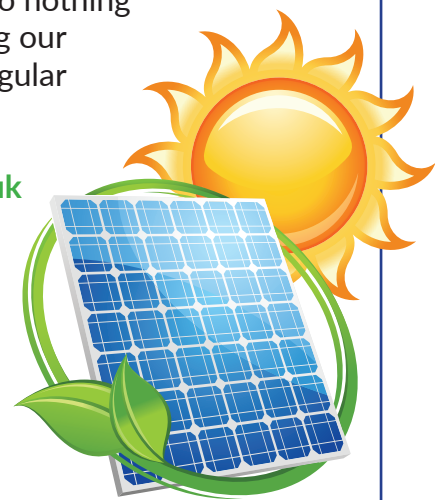
Our project, managed by a local energy community interest company, will install solar panels and batteries offering a 'buy now' or no upfront cost Pay As You Go service to households, businesses and community buildings. We are now looking for 200-300 houses and other buildings to sign up to the scheme. Managing these in a coordinated way can support the electricity network and earn extra income. Our twin goals are to reduce energy costs by an estimated 10-25% while also mitigating the effects of climate change.

We have held a couple of public meetings to explain our proposals and we are now looking for more people to express interest. So far we have the backing of over 40 residents, as well as a number of community groups, schools and local businesses. Our plan has also attracted the backing of all tiers of local government.

At the moment we are looking to obtain grants to conduct a feasibility study to confirm our plan is viable. Your expression of interest will help us demonstrate community backing for our scheme.

If you would like more information visit our website <https://eastpreston-pc.gov.uk/reach> or you can watch our short film by scanning the QR code below.

To register an expression of interest - which commits you to nothing more than supporting our plan and receiving regular updates - email cllr.john.gunston@eastpreston-pc.gov.uk with the title "Count me in."



Bus Stop Press

Despite working closely with our colleagues at Rustington Parish Council and at Compass Travel, rapidly increasing costs and a lack of funding from other sources mean we have had to take the difficult decision to withdraw the No. 12 bus service on **Friday, 30th August 2024**.



We very much appreciate our regular users but regret the predicted costs of providing the service beyond this date make it not viable. Recent feedback received has included comments such as, "Just to say how wonderful the no 12 bus is, I use it at least twice a week as it is very reliable" and "It's been an absolute lifesaver. I've been able to chat to the other bus users and meet more people from the village. All in all, I wanted to thank the Parish Council for arranging to get the bus down to the southern end of the village." Public transport provides so much more than just a journey from A to B.

We are exploring other ways to provide a service to the southern end of the village but these are limited. We will, of course, keep you updated. Many thanks again to our loyal passengers of the No 12.

Village Life

June

- 1st Come and Meet Your Local Councillors (10:00, Council Office)
- 2nd Big D-Day Lunch (12:00, Village Green)
- 3rd Full Council (18:30 tbc)
- 4th Come and Meet Some Alpacas (17:00, Village Green)
- 10th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00)
- 15th East Preston Repair Café (10:00, Spire Room)
- 17th Major Events Committee (19:00)
- 24th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)

July

- 1st Full Council (18:30 tbc)
- 8th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
- 13th East Preston Repair Café (10:00, Spire Room)
- 15th Personnel Committee (18:00)
Audit & Governance Committee (19:00)
- 22nd Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00)

August

- 5th Full Council (tbc)
- 12th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Amenities Committee (19:00)
- 19th Finance & General Purposes Committee (18:00)
Major Events Committee (19:00)
- 24th East Preston Food & Drink Festival (12:00, Village Green)
- 27th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00 tbc)

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.

Thanks to...

All the organisers and volunteers at The Baytree Lunch Club, providing a weekly social focus and hot meal for local residents

Everyone who supported, in many different ways, the Warm Welcome Space sessions the council oversaw this year

Everyone who took part in the Beach Clean on Sunday, 7th April, and Melanie and her team at SALT for helping with refreshments

Everyone who supported and enjoyed *Funday Sunday* on Sunday, 21st April

The community volunteers who work tirelessly at the Littlehampton Community Fridge on Tour sessions in the village – Sue, Sue, Ken, Pat and Steve



Special thanks to Rose who, from the very beginning of East Preston in Bloom, contributed so much to the village. You will be much missed



Council e-news

Would you like to be kept up to date with more East Preston news?

The Council has an email circulation list which is used to keep subscribers informed of local news and events. Subscriber details are not shared with any other organisation.

Please send us an email, details below, if you would like to subscribe to our email list – over 900 households and businesses already subscribe.



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

Unless otherwise noted, this issue was written by Simon Cross, John Gunston, Helen Hill, Elizabeth Linton, Janine Nicholson and Steve Toney.