



Drive with care to keep our village safe

Are you a careful and considerate driver?

Over the past few months residents have noted and reported an increase in dangerous driving in and around East Preston especially, but not just, around the village's two level crossings. This behaviour can include accelerating to beat the gates, pushing out from North Lane against the road priorities, driving on the wrong side of the road (particularly) at the junction of Station and Worthing Roads. We know it is only a relatively small number of drivers, but the consequences could affect every one of us.

We can all agree the delays we experience because of the level crossings are, at best, inconvenient, but these are here to stay for the foreseeable future. This does not make it acceptable to ignore, constantly and blatantly, the Highway Code, long-established to provide safety for our village and its visitors.

Rightly or wrongly, alternatives routes in and out of the village are available. If you choose to sit and wait, please be more patient and adhere to the rules of the road; if dangerous driving continues, it could cause a serious accident or take a life.

We are all on the road trying to get somewhere. If you are in a hurry and the crossing delays you, please do not be tempted to break the rules as your aggressive driving and poor choices will always have consequences.

East Preston Parish Council continues to liaise with varying agencies at local meetings, at which all parties are committed to reaching a solution to address some of the major issues experienced regularly to local residents. Updates will be posted as things progress.

In 2023, the Department of Transport, estimated 1,624 fatalities in reported road collisions. This figure is falling, but the rate at which it is falling is slowing down. Of those fatalities, 35% were on urban roads and 28% were aged under 30. In 57.7% of fatal collisions, vehicle speed was recorded as a factor. (Source: Reported road casualties Great Britain, annual report: 2023, published September 2024)

Please let's keep our community safe. There is an amazing community spirit in East Preston. Let's all "Drive with care to keep our village safe".



East Preston buses update

Photo © Stagecoach South



On 21st January, Stagecoach South announced changes to bus services in the Worthing and Littlehampton area, affecting East Preston. The changes have mainly been brought about to improve reliability, particularly since the introduction of Southern Rail's new timetable in June which saw an increase in downtime at local level crossings, affecting bus services just as much as private drivers.

Stagecoach South says, "Our current 700 service between Littlehampton and Worthing will be replaced by new routes 11 and 701. The new routes mean we'll be running more buses across Worthing & Littlehampton, especially in the evening

and at the weekends! We'll also be adding more time to our timetables and avoiding level crossings to reduce the risk of running late. A new direct link on the 701 from Littlehampton to Worthing Hospital will also make it easier for those needing to access healthcare.

"We know buses get delayed waiting for trains at level crossings. This impacts everyone waiting for a bus to arrive at their stop, then being late for work or important appointments. The new routes will help keep buses on time, with fewer trips over level crossings at East Preston and Ferring."

The 11 will travel between Anchor Springs and Worthing bus depot in Marine Parade. The service will be half-hourly on weekdays and Saturdays and hourly on Sundays.

The 701 will mainly follow the route of the existing 700 between Anchor Springs and Lancing, except it will miss out East Preston and from Rustington will travel along the A259 until turning south at Goring Street.

There will be no change to the existing No. 9 service which skirts the western side of the village.

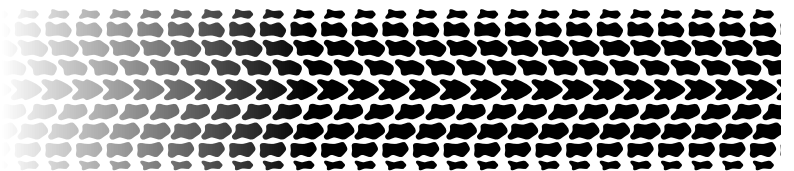
More information on the changes can be found here - <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/south/worthing-changes-2025>

For the time being, Compass Travel continues to run the weekday No. 12 service between the village and Littlehampton via the centre of Rustington.

Community Speedwatch update

Further to the article in our Autumn 2024 Newsletter, the council is still looking for a new coordinator for the village's Community Speedwatch (CSW) team. There is a willing team of volunteers, but without a coordinator that cannot happen, and for all good reasons, none of the team members is currently able to step into the coordinator role. The small team of trained volunteers is representative of our local community, sharing a strong commitment to help make our village a safer place to live and work in.

The coordinator will plan the group's watches using the official Community Speedwatch website, and following each watch, the coordinator will report the output through the website. The coordinator will make initial contact with potential volunteers and provide roadside training once they have completed their online training. Finally, the coordinator will also ensure the group's equipment is kept safe and available when needed.



The coordinator will need good IT skills as the role revolves around the CSW website. The team's prime motivator is not the catching and reporting of drivers speeding but is about being a visible presence which causes drivers to reflect upon their driving speed and to adjust it accordingly. The group prioritises watches, not on sites where we are likely to catch most speeding drivers, but on sites where there is the greatest risk of accident and injury.

Anyone wishing to learn more about CSW should visit the very accessible and informative website: <https://www.communityspeedwatch.org>

If you are interested in taking on this valuable role within the village, please contact the Council Office to arrange a time to chat further about the role.

Without a coordinator, the team simply cannot operate.

How East Preston Parish Council works to support the Five Ways to Wellbeing

Many of you will have heard of the five-a-day advice about eating enough fruit and veg. The Five Ways to Wellbeing* can be seen as the mental health equivalent. The Five Ways to Wellbeing are:

Positive connections, Be active, Take notice, Keep learning and Give. It is a useful way of describing the things we can all do to help us keep mentally and emotionally well.

Here in East Preston, the parish council supports local people to embrace the Five Ways to Wellbeing. Below are just a few examples.

| Positive connections | Be active | Take notice | Keep learning | Give |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| Warm Welcome Space. Every Monday lunchtime (January to March) | Visit the following: Warren Recreation Ground, Lashmar Recreation Ground, Village Green and others | Being neighbourly, not just with your immediate neighbours | East Preston Library | Become an East Preston Festival Maker |
| Funday Sunday: afternoon tea, music and dancing (April); afternoon quiz (October) | Football, Cricket, Tennis, Stoolball, Bowls clubs and boule piste for outdoor sports | East Preston Beach Cleans (April and September) | A variety of regular classes across the village | There are usually plenty of volunteering opportunities in the village |
| East Preston Food & Drink Festival (August) | Badminton, Table Tennis, dancing, martial arts and more for indoor sports | Sussex Day (June); Merchant Navy Day (September); Emergency Services Day (September) | East Preston & Kingston Preservation Society talks | Support the local Scout and Girlguiding troupes |
| East Preston Christmas Celebrations (November) | East Preston in Bloom; East Preston Men in Sheds | Remembrance Day (November) | Arun Healthy Walks – every Thursday | Take part in a KEPT – Keep East Preston Tidy event |
| Numerous other clubs and societies covering a wide range of interests | Outdoor table tennis, chess and table football available in the village | East Preston Repair Café (monthly) | Festival week activities (June) | Take a neighbour shopping sometimes |

Perhaps not surprisingly, many of the activities shown in the table above sit across more than one of the Five Ways. This underlines how positive an impact small changes to your lifestyle can have.

The council is committed to the mental and physical wellbeing of the village and will continue to provide and support new opportunities as they arise.

For more information, scan the QR code, visit <https://arun.westsussexwellbeing.org.uk/> or contact the Council Office. There are so many ways to get involved in our beautiful and vibrant village.



* Developed by the New Economics Foundation

Give a hedgehog a helping hand

Hedgehogs are welcome visitors to a number of gardens in East Preston and our Environmental Initiatives Working Party, comprising parish councillors and parishioners, would like to see them thrive. Here are a few hints to make your garden more hedgehog-friendly.

Hedgehogs are peculiar mammals, unchanged for the past 15 million years and best-known for their coat made up of 5000-7000 spines which are modified hairs. Since 2000, over half of their population has vanished, making them listed as vulnerable to extinction. Recent evidence shows that urban landscapes offer hope, with gardens, parks, and derelict land serving as vital habitats despite challenges like habitat fragmentation caused by fences, roads, and developments.

To thrive, hedgehogs need three key habitat features: quality food, shelter, and habitat connectivity. They eat slugs, earthworms, caterpillars, and even adders! They also accept cat food or minced meat and drink water. Gardens with short pesticide-free grass rich in earthworms, shrubs, and hedgerows offer both food and shelter. Nocturnal, their day nests tend to be hidden in long grass while robust winter nests are built with twigs, grass, and leaves. Quiet areas with dense vegetation, incorporating features such as dead wood and piled rocks, attract invertebrates and appeal more to hedgehogs. Even tidy gardens can incorporate these elements with thoughtful design.

Accessibility and safety are equally important. Small openings (13x13 cm) in fences and walls form "hedgehog highways" that connect habitats. Ponds should have gently-sloped edges for safe egress, and grass should be checked before mowing. Fallen leaves are best kept in heaps for hibernation. Pesticides and slug pellets should be avoided, as



they harm hedgehogs. Ready-made hedgehog highways are available from the council, call in for details.

Spotting wild animals in our gardens and public open spaces is exciting and has mental health benefits, provoking positive emotions and bolstering our spiritual connection with nature. By making conscious positive changes to our surroundings and shifting our approach to the perception of beauty, we can create attractive spaces where hedgehogs and other wildlife can thrive next to us. If you want to know more British Hedgehog Preservation Society (<https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/>) and People's Trust for Endangered Species (<https://ptes.org/>) are useful websites.



2025/26 precept

A portion of the Council Tax every household pays to Arun District Council annually funds most of the work the parish council undertakes on behalf of and in the village. That portion is called the precept.

A council's precept generally goes up each year, roughly in line with inflation. Sometimes the increase is a bit more than inflation if the council has a project it wishes to undertake on your behalf.

Because we try to spend your money carefully, for the fifth year running, the council has been able to freeze the precept, effectively giving you a small amount of extra money to spend in the village.

More council tax money will come to the parish council this year because of the increased charges for second homes in the village.

Spring starts with Funday Sunday



Following successful events in the past few years, the council is organising another Funday Sunday for the afternoon of 27th April.

If you have not been before, you can look forward to an afternoon tea with live music and optional dancing. The event will run from 14:00 until 17:00 and tickets will be £10 per person.

Entertainment will be provided by Carrie-Louise, who will be singing you hits from the 40s, 50s and 60s along with some modern numbers, followed by a disco and more dancing.

Tickets can be booked by scanning this QR code or by calling Alison in the Council Office. Book early to avoid disappointment!

Christmas Celebrations fireworks

The council apologises for having had to cancel these fireworks twice now, but we really would like to share them with the village before too much longer.

If you have any thoughts on when we might be able to hold this short fireworks display, please get in touch. Thanks.

Chairman's Charity

In 2023, the council decided to start selecting an annual Chairman's Charity, towards which small bits of money raised by councillors could be directed.

The RNLI lifeboat station at Littlehampton was chosen as the charity for 2024, and about £200 was donated, this money having been raised through the council's collection tins during the Festival Carnival Parade and councillors and officers wearing Christmas jumpers at the council's December meeting.

At that same meeting, councillors voted Air Ambulance Charity – Kent, Surrey and Sussex (<https://aakss.org.uk/>) to be the Chairman's Charity for 2025. Please look out for collection tins in the Council Office, at some council meetings and at council events throughout the year.

KSS saves lives when every second counts, able to reach any location within 30 minutes. KSS helicopters are flying emergency rooms, operated by a team of skilled, sector-leading experts responding to over 3,300 incidents annually across Kent, Surrey, and Sussex. From open heart surgery to emergency anaesthesia, KSS does not stop, 24/7, 365 days a year.

Please help the council support this great work if you can.



Photo ©Chris Howe Photography

KSS
AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY
KENT SURREY SUSSEX
Saving lives when every
second counts

Village Life

March

- 3rd Full Council (19:00)
10th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Audit & Governance Committee (19:00)
24th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00)

April

- 6th East Preston Beach Clean (11:00, Sea Road)
7th Full Council (19:00)
14th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Personnel Committee (19:00)
27th Funday Sunday (14:00)
28th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Major Events Committee (19:00)

May

- 12th Full Council (18:00)
Annual Parish Meeting (19:00)
13th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Finance & General Purposes Committee (19:00)
19th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Amenities Committee (19:00)

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

Council events in 2025

The council has scheduled these events for the coming year:

- 6th April East Preston Beach Clean (11:00)
27th April Funday Sunday (14:00)
7th June Come and Meet Your Local Councillors (10:00 to 12:00)
10th June Come and Meet Ems Friendly Farm (17:00 to 19:00)
23rd August East Preston Food & Drink Festival (12:00 to 17:00)
28th September East Preston Beach Clean (11:00)
22nd November East Preston Christmas Celebrations (12:00 to 17:00)

N.B. All events are subject to change or cancellation at short notice.

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.

Neighbourhood Plan update

Led by the council, the review of the East Preston Neighbourhood Plan is continuing.

An initial, informal review by Arun District Council's Neighbourhood Planning officers, has provided much useful feedback to confirm the review is well on track.

Public consultation is expected to take place this spring, but if you would like to get involved sooner, please just contact the Council Office and we will get you involved.

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: <https://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