

East Preston Christmas Celebrations

Saturday 22nd November 12:00 to 17:00



In East Preston Christmas starts on 22nd November this year.

The East Preston Christmas Celebrations will again be a great way of starting your Christmas season. Officially, the event runs from 12:00 until 17:00, although some hospitality venues in the village will also extend your celebrations into the evening.

The numbers on this map identify specific event locations as detailed in the timetable overleaf.

For many children, Storytime with Father Christmas is a big highlight of the event. Father Christmas will be reading stories in his temporary grotto in the hall at Our Lady, Star of the Sea Church in Vermont Drive. Storytime slots will be at 13:00, 14:00 and 15:00. All children will receive a gift bag at the end of the story. It will be necessary to **pre-book for Storytime with Father Christmas**. Tickets are now available online – visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk> then search for East Preston Parish Council.

There will be other children's entertainments on offer at the cricket pavilion on the Warren Recreation Ground, and more details on these and the whole event, can be found by following East Preston Christmas Celebrations on Facebook.

In and around the Village Hall will be a craft and gift fair. Come and support local groups and charities along Sea Road. There will also be Fairground rides and hot food stalls in Sea Road. Father Christmas will lead the children's lantern procession from Warren Recreation Ground car park at 16:45.

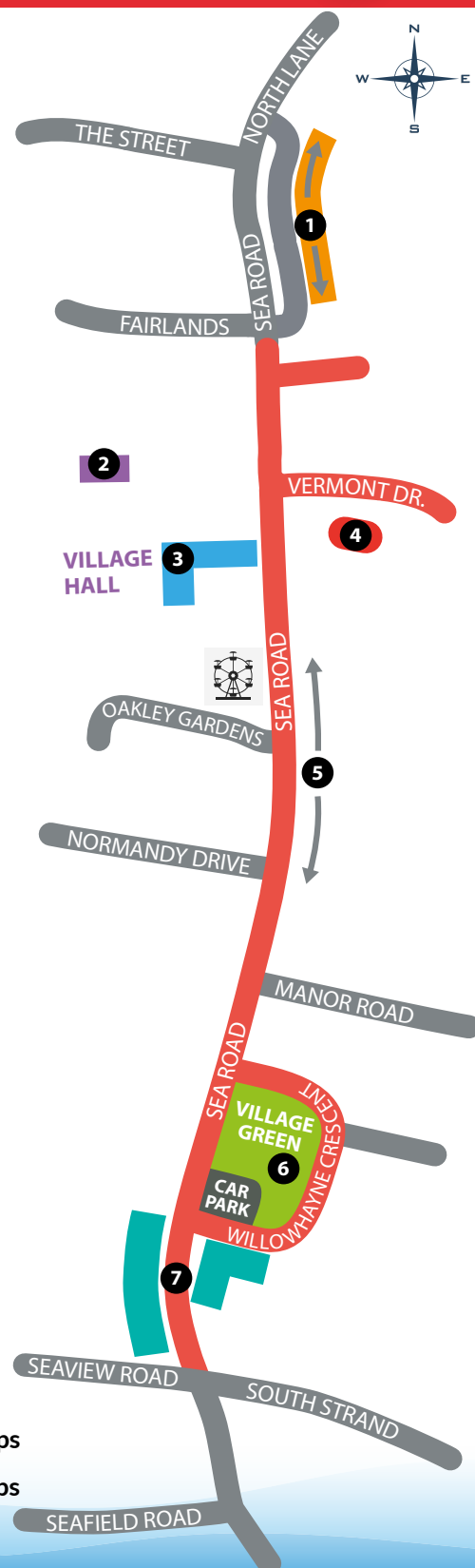
Please join us around the Village Green Christmas Tree for a short fireworks display at 17:00. Please take extra care of any pets which are nervous of fireworks.

Please remember there will be road closures on Saturday. If you usually park in Sea Road, please could you ensure your vehicle is parked elsewhere by 09:00 on the day. This will help with the success of the event. Thanks.

Special thanks to all the community volunteers and local businesses who willingly give their time, imagination and care to the event.



- = Northern shops
- = Southern shops
- = Road closed



East Preston Christmas Celebrations

Saturday 22nd November 12:00 to 17:00
Event Guide - see overleaf for map of event locations

- Unless otherwise stated, all events run **from 12:00 onwards**
- **All event details may be subject to change**
- Keep up to date by liking East Preston Christmas Celebrations on Facebook



Timetable of events

- NORTHERN AND CENTRAL BUSINESSES**
 - Goody bags for children, Graham Butt estate agents, 12:00 onwards
 - Christmas window displays
 - Other activities to be confirmed
- CRICKET PAVILION, Warren Recreation Ground**
 - Badge-making, bauble-making and lantern-making for children, **until 15:30**
- VILLAGE HALL (N.B. only assistance dogs allowed inside)**
 - Craft and Gift Fair, **12:00 to 17:00**
 - Lighthouse Café light refreshments, **12:00 to 16:30**
- OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA CHURCH, Vermont Drive**
 - Storytime with Father Christmas, **13:00, 14:00 and 15:00** (pre-booking essential)
- SEA ROAD AREA**
 - Hot Food stalls
 - Charity stalls
 - Fun fair, 12:00 to 18:00
 - Children's Lantern Procession, **16:45** (assemble in the Warren Recreation Ground car-park)
- VILLAGE GREEN**
 - Short firework display, **17:00**
- SOUTHERN SHOPS**
 - Christmas window displays
 - Other activities to be confirmed

Merry, mindful and money-smart: Your guide to a greener Christmas



The festive season should be a time of joy, generosity, and togetherness – but it can also be a time of excess and stress. Overspending, overeating, creating mountains of waste: Christmas often leaves a hefty footprint on our wallets and the planet. It doesn't have to be that way! Cllr Andrea Chapman suggests how to celebrate a meaningful, magical Christmas while saving money and being kind to the environment.

Gift thoughtfully, not expensively

- **DIY gifts:** Handmade candles, baked goods, knitted scarves add a personal touch and cost far less than bought items.
- **Experience gifts:** Give memories instead of materials—think cinema nights, museum passes, or homemade coupons for babysitting or dinner.
- **Secondhand treasures:** Charity shops and vintage stores are goldmines for unique, affordable gifts with a smaller carbon footprint.

Wrap sustainably

- **Ditch the glitter:** Most shiny wrapping paper isn't recyclable. Opt for brown paper, newspaper, or reusable fabric wraps.
- **Decorate creatively:** Use natural elements like pine sprigs, dried orange slices, or cinnamon sticks for a festive flair.
- **Reuse and repurpose:** Save gift bags, ribbons, and boxes from previous years—your future self will thank you.

Feast without waste

- **Plan Portions:** Avoid food waste by calculating servings and freezing leftovers.
- **Shop local and seasonal:** Support nearby farmers and reduce transport emissions by choosing in-season produce.
- **Compost Scraps:** Turn peelings and trimmings into nutrient-rich compost for your garden.

Deck the halls efficiently

- **LED Lights:** They use up to 80% less energy and last longer than traditional bulbs.
- **Timer settings:** Set lights to turn off automatically at bedtime to save electricity.
- **Natural decorations:** Swap plastic for pinecones, holly, and handmade ornaments.

Embrace simplicity

The most sustainable and budget-friendly Christmas is one focused on connection, not consumption. Play board games, or take a winter walk with loved ones. These moments cost nothing – but mean everything.

2026 calendar



It's nearly Christmas time, so why not think about buying yourself or your friends an East Preston Calendar for 2026, full of colourful photographs of the village. Thank you to everyone who submitted photographs this year. We expect the calendars to be available for purchase by the time you read this article.

We believe this is our best yet, so please buy early. £5 will secure you a copy whilst stocks last, available from the Council Office.

118-120 Sea Road

The council's purchase of the office at 118 Sea Road and the flat above it (120 Sea Road) is moving ahead slowly.

The council has carried out a number of surveys, gathering information on what works need to be undertaken to make the accommodation something simple and multifunctional.

First priority will be to separate out the living accommodation and to get a tenant in. That income will help the council realise plans for the ground floor, providing a space for various community activities, as previously mentioned.

Thank you to everyone who is being actively supportive of this project.



Warm Welcome Space 2026

We are pleased to announce we will be running Warm Welcome Space lunches again during the first three months of 2026.

We are still finalising details, so please look out for further announcements in e-newsletters and on noticeboards around the village.

If you would like to register your interest now, please email or call the Council Office, details on the back page.

Village Life

December

- 1st Full Council (19:00)
- 8th Finance & General Purposes Committee (18:00)
- 15th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Major Events Committee (19:00)

January

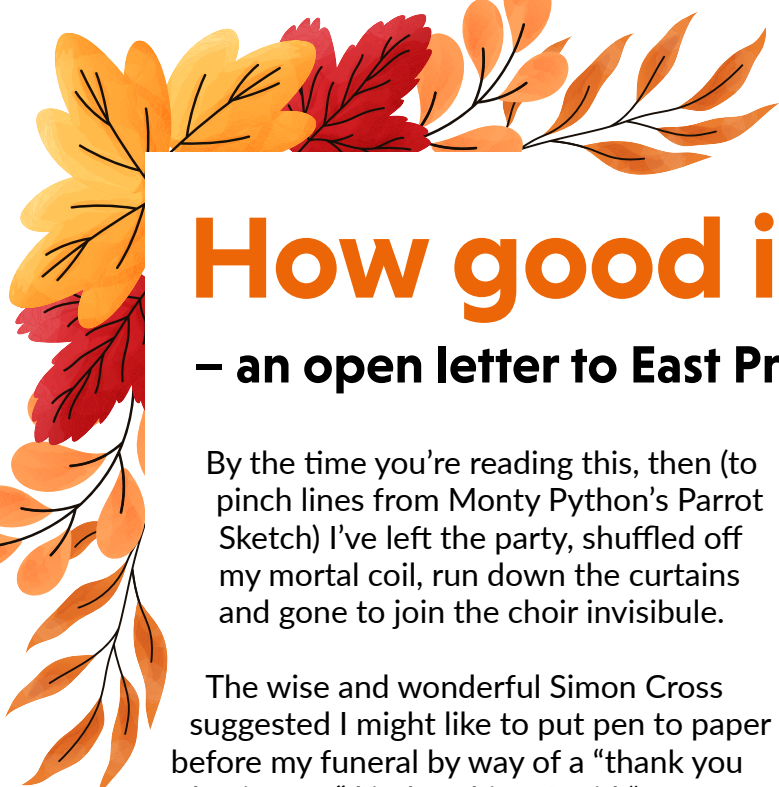
- 5th Full Council (19:00)
- 6th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
- 12th Personnel Committee (19:00)
- 19th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00)

February

- 2nd Full Council (19:00)
- 9th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Amenities Committee (19:00)
- 16th Finance & General Purposes Committee (18:00)
Major Events Committee (19:00)
- 23rd Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)

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.



How good is that?

– an open letter to East Preston



By the time you're reading this, then (to pinch lines from Monty Python's Parrot Sketch) I've left the party, shuffled off my mortal coil, run down the curtains and gone to join the choir invisibile.

The wise and wonderful Simon Cross suggested I might like to put pen to paper before my funeral by way of a "thank you for having me" kind of thing. I said "Over my dead body!" He said "Precisely". So what follows are a couple of reflections and ponderings on my all-too-brief time living and working in the village.

We moved to East Preston and I took up post as Vicar in October of 2017. In this job people often say "Were you called here?" - the idea that God either rings you up, sends you a WhatsApp or gives you some sort of incontrovertible Sign that THIS is the place. My experience is that most often you can really only detect God's call when you look back - at the time things don't always seem clear and maybe sometimes we have to take things on trust a bit (faith seems to be like that). So the Church - in the person of the bishop - asked me to look at East Preston and I said "OK, why not?". The more I looked, the more attractive it became - Church, parish and village. And thus started 8 brilliant years of being part of this community.

In a job like this one it is almost impossible to tell if you're doing a 'good enough job' - it's rare to get feedback (other than "lovely funeral/wedding, Vicar!"), so I tended to bumble along doing what I could and being me - aware that sometimes that worked, and sometimes it didn't (!).

However since my diagnosis (February 2025) there has been an astounding outpouring of appreciation from both Church and village community. Although the prognosis was grim, as I kept saying I was actually very lucky to get to

hear my eulogy before my funeral - a privilege not many of us are afforded. So thank you.

There are two aspects of this response which I think say something significant about the spirituality of this village and the kind of ethos that we seem to embrace. So bear with: here we go:

The first has been that we have been overwhelmed by the number of cards, letters, e mails, texts etc that people have sent saying thank you for the ministry that has been offered at St Mary's over the last eight years. We seem to be a village who knows how to say - and is prepared to say - thank you. Maybe that shouldn't be surprising, because we are also a village who knows how to celebrate - and the two are very closely linked. To celebrate shows an appreciation of something, and a willingness to acknowledge its importance in our lives - to consciously say "thank you". And boy does East Preston celebrate! The food and drink festival; the East Preston Festival; Remembrance tide; Merchant Navy Day; anniversaries of historic events which have enabled our current way of life; fireworks; Christmas Fayres; the Fabulous Yarnbombers; the seasons of the Church's year; Christmas Tree Festivals; Music Events; Flower Festivals... All this (and more) illustrates an openness to life, a thankfulness for our blessings, a willingness to include others and an ability to motivate ourselves to celebrate. How good is that? A community that is prepared to say 'thank you' is a fantastic place in which to live and work and I feel very privileged to have been a part of that.

The second has been - in particular - an appreciation of the role humour has played. Many people have mentioned this. I'm not unique in having a sense of humour - I've always found life funny - but I've become more and more convinced as I've got older about the deeply significant redemptive theological virtue of

humour. Of course humour can be misused - it can be destructive and belittling, aggressive and wounding. But it can also be fabulously liberating, healing, fear-reducing and offer the hope of a different perspective. Archbishop Desmond Tutu used to say that he enjoyed making people laugh, because when their mouths were open laughing he could drop a tiny morsel of truth in. Good humour and good theology share a great deal in common, and a community which appreciates humour is a community which appreciates theology - whether or not we label it as such. How good is that? A community that is prepared to laugh is a community that delights in the absurdity, oddity and brilliance of life.

The third of my two points (!) is about the way we have been welcomed and accepted. We might not have been what people were expecting, or what you've had in the past from a Vicarage family, but as a family with disability we have felt included and appreciated, despite our difference. This hasn't been our universal experience of parish life, which makes it all the more significant when and where it happens. Comedian Francesca Martinez (who has cerebral palsy) says "The world is divided into two types of people: the disabled and the not-yet-disabled." The temperature in church has changed over the last eight years: more people with disability are finding a welcome, and those with dementia, those who are different, neurodivergent or hesitant and questioning. This has been in large part because you have embraced a family with difference. How good is that? A community that is inclusive is a community that cares and shows practical love and acceptance in action.

So thank you for having me as your vicar and us as a family over the last few years: we've loved it. East Preston (and St Mary's) may not be perfect, but we have a brilliant community that includes, laughs, celebrates and says thank you for the many, many blessings we experience.

How good is that?

Fr Andrew Perry:
Vicar of St Mary's 2017-2025:
Windswept, interesting and forever loved.
[headstone wording]



Hello from our Village Hall!



We are the East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation Trustees and we just wanted to share a quick update about what's happening at the village hall.

All the upgrades for the internal fire regulations works were carried out this summer, which cost just over £11,000. Mostly these were required to comply with new legislation.

Soon, there will be two external disabled fire escape ramps, fitted for both halls. A generous grant towards the cost from our landlords, East Preston Parish Council, is gratefully appreciated!

We would like to give a warm welcome to Val Ellis, Kaz Bradshaw and Rick McElroy who have all joined the committee. Rick, has always pitched in with regular hands-on help for maintenance jobs at our village hall.

The committee is made up entirely of volunteers who give their time without payment to support and keep the village hall running and maintained.

If you would like to join in at the village hall, give your support in any way throughout the year, it would be much appreciated, please contact bookings@epkvh.co.uk.

Please look at our timetable - <https://epkvh.co.uk/> - to see what activities we have for you. To name just a few: painting, dancing, yoga, badminton, Tai Chi, table tennis, bridge and let's not forget the weekly Baytree Lunch Club.

With warm wishes from all the trustees
Toni, Liz, Kaz, Val, Rick and Nicola

A very quick review

As another year rolls steadily to a close, a very quick review of some of the council's events of 2025.

In April, we hosted another enjoyable Funday Sunday afternoon of dancing and tea. This event sold out and we hope we will be able to say the same about next year's which will be on 19th April. Tickets will go on sale in the new year.

As part of East Preston Festival, in June we hosted a very successful visit from Ems Friendly Farm, with sheep, goats, a pig and a pony.

The council would seem to have been blessed with better weather conditions in the second half of the year as the Food and Drink Festival was better attended than ever. There was something for everyone and if not, please let us know what else could have been included.

As you will see from the front page of this newsletter, we are hoping the weather stays fine for our Christmas Celebrations event. Fingers crossed, we will finally be able to set off the 2024 Christmas Celebrations fireworks!

Twice we ran successful beach cleans and each week the council supports the visits of the Littlehampton Community Fridge on Tour.

This is just a small overview of some of the ways in which the council has hoped to entertain the village this year.



Ems Friendly Farm

Water quality - local information



The dire state of our rivers and seas and the failings and fines of Southern Water (SW) have been well documented. The parish council was therefore keen to send a representative to two recent meetings on the subject of water, one hosted by Arun District Council (ADC) and then one by our MP, Dr Beccy Cooper.

Western Sussex Rivers Trust (WSRT) was invited by ADC to present to a number of local councils to highlight the issues facing our rivers. According to The Rivers Trust State of Our Rivers Report 2024 none of our rivers have a good overall health status.

Beccy Cooper, our local MP, organised a session on water quality attended by SW and Councillor Vicki Wells, Worthing Borough Council Cabinet Member for Environmental Services. The presentations and questions concentrated on the challenges faced by SW and the work it is doing in Worthing to reduce sewer outflows.

So what did we learn? SW has recently unveiled a £1.5bn investment in Clean Rivers and Seas that plans to cut spills by 8,000 a year by 2035. They are keen to work with councils and local groups in initiatives such as the Yellow Fish campaign. This is aimed at ensuring that only rain goes down our drains. (<https://www.arun.gov.uk/water-quality/>)

A vital part of how we can all help improve water quality comes from some key messages in a

statement provided by the Environment Agency to Beccy Cooper...

- Only rain down the drain
- Put litter in the bin
- Pick up after your dog
- Check your drainage at home
- 3 P's down the loo (pee, poo and (toilet) paper)

Arun District Council has set up a Flood Forum working with SW, the Environment Agency and West Sussex County Council to understand the issues behind local flooding.

Local volunteers are also playing their part. Western Sussex Rivers Trust have a number of River Guardians monitoring local rivers. Their website wsrt.org.uk has more details.

There are a number of places to get information on water quality in surrounding areas.

Bathing water quality

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/>

Storm outflows

<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/our-region/clean-rivers-and-seas-task-force/rivers-and-seas-watch/>

Where to swim

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/>

To understand what is happening here the parish council has asked SW to visit and to provide any specific information relating to the village. At time of going to print we await a response.

Correspondence corner

I may be considered to be a 'hard-liner' on this particular issue, but I believe the only way that selfish and inconsiderate drivers may be 'persuaded' to change their ways for the benefit of their community is for them to be reported to Sussex Police for each illegal obstruction of pedestrian pathways, particularly around schools, to be followed by appropriate sanction.

Only if that happened sufficiently often, might word get about in the community that this behaviour is potentially seriously harmful to families and less able people, and will not be tolerated.

Passing police personnel are too often inclined to 'turn a blind eye' to circumstances such as

these, when they should be protecting the community by taking positive action. I personally witnessed recently a liveried Sussex Police patrol car passing the other way a young male rider on an e-scooter without a protective helmet, at speed on the east-bound carriageway of Worthing Road in north East Preston, and driving on without doing anything constructive about that unsafe and blatantly illegal behaviour.

The only answer I can think of, beyond what has already been done, is to address the issue directly to our esteemed Police and Crime Commissioner, Katy Bourne. It may be wise not to hold one's breath while waiting for a constructive response.

DRM

Extended mix



This year, at its monthly meetings, the council has received presentations from the following organizations: Surrey and Sussex Police Cyber Crime team, Below the Belt, Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex, Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester, 4SIGHT Vision Support and Rustington Death Café. Additionally, in March, the council received a presentation from Ian Hart Funeral Services describing the future use of the Conservative Hall as a funeral venue.

All of these presentations have been open to and attended by members of the public. We usually schedule a few through the year, always at monthly council meetings, and welcome members of the public to attend. The presentations are always early in the meeting, allowing members of the public to leave after the presentation or stay for the rest of the meeting.

Look out in e-newsletters and noticeboards for details of forthcoming presentations. If you know a non-political organization would welcome the chance to give a short presentation to the council, please get in touch.

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.

Thanks to...

Everyone who contributed to second Beach Clean of this year, especially Arun District Council, KEPT – Keep East Preston Tidy and, very especially, Melanie at SALT Kiosk for your support of beach cleans over the past few years – we are sorry you are leaving and wish you luck for your next venture

John Wintle and Lindy Hinsley for setting up and running KEPT – Keep East Preston Tidy and supporting various litter-picking initiatives in the village.

KEPT will continue and we hope to provide more information in the next issue

Richard Richards for his tireless work as the Neighbourhood Watch coordinator for Kingston, work which regularly had a positive impact upon East Preston

Everyone who has contributed positively to life in the village this year

Lest we forget



Our thanks also to the East Preston Yarnbombers who, once again, have provided a Remembrance Day display for the village. This year, a number of poppies have been laid at the feet of a Silent Soldier in the middle of the Village Green.

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



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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