

**MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL**

**13TH APRIL 2026
at 18:30**

SUPPORTING PAPERS

Please note not every Agenda Item will have a supporting paper.

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Agenda Item 2

Presentations

Council is asked to receive a short presentation each from East Preston in Bloom, East Preston Men in Sheds and East Preston Repair Café.

Over the past few years, the parish council has helped the above three organisations establish themselves in the village. This is an opportunity for the three to give us a brief update on what they have been up to and where they see themselves going.

All three organisations have confirmed their attendance.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

31st March 2026

Agenda Item 7

**Minutes of the Monthly Full Council meeting,
2nd March 2026**

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 3rd March, asking for suggested amendments by 10th March. None were received.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

11th March 2026

Agenda Item 8

Monthly Update Report

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Minute 525/25 – 118-120 Sea Road, East Preston**
- 3. Minute 176/26 – East Preston Allotments**

4. Minute 178/26 – West Sussex County Council – Vermont Drive

1. Introduction

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 2nd March 2026.

2. Minute 525/25 – 118-120 Sea Road, East Preston

The purchase of 118-120 Sea Road was completed on the afternoon of 31st March.

3. Minute 176/26 – East Preston Allotments

Cllr Gunston met with local residents willing to work with the council once any lease with ADC has been agreed.

4. Minute 178/26 – West Sussex County Council – Vermont Drive

On the afternoon of 30th March, WSCC contractors repainted the road markings at the junction of Vermont Drive and Sea Road. These had gone missing when Vermont Drive was resurfaced in August 2025 and had been subject to something of a battle to get them repainted. It appears the repainting included the double yellow lines on the western side of Sea Road at that junction. The white access protection line (APL) outside the church car-par was also reinstated.



I had been in a lot of contact particularly with one resident in The Plantation and another in South View. Upon seeing the reinstated road markings, the former said, “Success. Thank you so much for following this up.” and the latter, “Thank you for all correspondence and work in getting it sorted.” On 1st April, whilst I was stood outside the Village Hall with Cllr Toney, the resident of South View walked past, introduced herself and again thanked the council for its efforts in this matter.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2nd April 2026

Agenda Item 9a

Warren Recreation Ground

Council is asked to consider the council's next action regarding the playing of cricket on the Warren Recreation Ground.

Councillors will be aware East Preston Cricket Club has played its home matches on the Warren Recreation Ground since 1860 (long before the ground was vested to the parish council (1943) and before the ground was renamed the Warren Recreation Ground (c1981)).

Councillors will also be aware the Warren Recreation Ground Safety Group (WRGSG) has serious concerns about the advisability of cricket continuing to be played at the ground, citing the small dimensions of the ground, the nuisance experienced by residents in neighbouring properties (damage to property, risk of personal injury), the risk of personal injury to people using the Warren Recreation Ground children's playground, the Village Hall and Warren Recreation Ground car-parks and adjacent roads.

Towards the end of 2025, council agreed to initiate an independent mediation exercise with East Preston Cricket Club, the WRGSG and the council itself. A number of sessions took place, the last being on 12th March. At that session, it was agreed to attend no further sessions as the mediator could see no further benefit in doing so. One agreement from the exercise was the RoSPA report commissioned by the council and completed in December 2025 was the benchmark. This report has been circulated to all councillors, although some factual corrections may yet be made.

The following suggestions have mostly come out of the mediation exercise and are for consideration by council tonight.

Implement a dot ball local rule for a trial period (duration to be agreed) whilst investigations and fundraising towards increased safety netting take place.

Our contact at the Sussex Cricket League has confirmed local rules are allowed. There may be different interpretations of what a dot ball can mean, but Wiktionary describes it as, "A ball off which no runs are scored."

The club has commissioned and received a ball trajectory report. This aims to show the height of safety netting required at any given point around the ground. Using the ball trajectory report as a starting point, the club has contacted netting companies to quote for this work. There is a discussion to be had over whether the dot ball local rule would apply to all four boundaries or just the east and west.

The club has agreed to fundraise, assuming the sum required is affordable, but has asked the council to consider the Warren Recreation Ground charity being the nominal lead on fundraising as it would be able to claim Gift Aid, as a charity. The WRGSG has agreed to support and assist with any fundraising campaign in whatever ways it can.

Close the children's playground for the duration of any cricket matches, this to be implemented by the club from an hour before the game starts. The mechanics of this may need further discussion because even locking the gates of the children's playground and putting up relevant signage, youths will still be able to vault over the fencing and get into the children's playground.

Councillors involved in the mediation exercise have discussed whether or not to close the tennis court too, during cricket matches and agreed this is not necessary as tennis players will be aware when a cricket match is taking place.

Publicise the closure of the children’s playground in council newsletter and e-newsletter.

Provide a councillor at each match for at least an hour of observation.

There are only 12 league matches scheduled to be played at the Warren Rec this season together with a handful of friendlies and charity games, perhaps a maximum of 15/16 matches. A councillor present at each of these matches would get some feeling for how matches run and what nuisance matches may cause. There are 13 councillors; if all councillors gave up one hour, their observations would be knowledge the council would otherwise not have; a few councillors would need to volunteer for more than one hour during the season. A knowledge of cricket is probably not essential.

Organise a short conference call on the Monday morning after a match between council, club and safety group – one representative from each group to discuss the impact of the weekend’s match and to agree the wording Colin should use in his weekly report.

Currently, each week, the club supplies the council with a report of any balls which land outside the ground during matches. Some content in the report has been challenged by the WRGSG. By hosting a short conference call each Monday, with just one representative of each organisation, it is hoped the content of the report can be agreed, in a timely fashion, before it is published. The representative does not need to be the same person each week, so hopefully this would not be too onerous.

* * *

On 1st April, the council and the club both received a Letter Before Action issued by solicitors acting on behalf of the WRGSG. Both parties were given 14 days in which to reply. I asked whether any allowance was given for bank holidays and was advised, “The 14 days is inclusive of the Bank Holiday weekend.” This has been circulated electronically to all councillors with the Supporting Papers for this meeting.

Both the WRGSG and the club were asked to provide a statement for inclusion in these supporting papers. The WRGSG advised the Letter Before Action would be its statement.

The club has provided the following statement:

East Preston Cricket Club has been a central part of village life for 165 years.

The ground predates the majority of surrounding residential development, and throughout its history the Club has maintained a strong record of safety, with no known incidents of serious injury caused by cricket balls.

Despite previous objections by the Club, development has proceeded without always addressing the relationship with the cricket ground.

The Club acknowledges concerns raised by neighbouring residents and remains committed to being a responsible and considerate community asset. We have taken reasonable and economical steps to mitigate risk and regularly review safety measures where appropriate.

The Club engaged in unsuccessful mediation over a period of months which used up valuable time and expense.

The Club has now proposed temporary playing restrictions which, by its assessment, could reduce the number of balls leaving the ground by approximately 90% and cricket will be played c1.2% of daylight hours throughout the year which seems a reasonable proposal. This will ensure the continued playing of cricket in the village whilst the club work collaboratively with the Parish Council to further improve protective measures, including enhanced netting and other practical solutions.

It is important to recognise that the Cricket Club operates on land held in trust for the benefit of the village and highlighted as a 'cricket field' which provides significant social, recreational, and community value. Many residents have expressed surprise at the recent escalation in concerns.

The Club remains committed to constructive dialogue and proportionate solutions that balance the interests of safety with reality.

Peter Dallimore
Chairman
East Preston Cricket Club

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 10a

East Preston Community Boardwalk

Council is asked to consider the offer from Sea Road Beach Access Ltd to donate the boardwalk to the council.

At the Annual Parish Meeting in May 2025, Roy Allen on behalf of Sea Road Beach Access Ltd., offered to donate the East Preston Community Boardwalk to the parish council. This would be accompanied by approximately £1,000 from the company's reserves.

No promise was made as to how quickly this matter would be considered and the Amenities Committee discussed the matter at a meeting on 9th February. By then, Mr Allen was no longer a director of the company, but the company was represented at that meeting by two other directors, Lance Allsop and Ray Windust. No decision was made at that meeting.

In light of that, Mr Allen attended the monthly council meeting on 2nd March and offered to give a presentation to the council, detailing his qualifications, his experience and the design of the boardwalk. Council voted to accept Mr Allen's offer of a presentation and this took place on 30th March. Ten councillors attended, plus two directors of Sea Road Beach Access Ltd. and one member of the public. Mr Allen's presentation covered the points he had promised to cover and there was time for questions afterwards.

I have confirmation from our insurance company the premium for insuring the boardwalk would be, "Annually would work out around £149.50 including IPT. No report needed and Hiscox would not cover storm or flood." (IPT is insurance premium tax.)

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 12

Committees

Since the last Full Council meeting the following committees have met: Audit & Governance, Community Engagement and Planning & Licensing. Draft Minutes have been circulated to all councillors.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

31st March 2026

Agenda Item 12a

Amenities Committee

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in March.

Sea Road Toilets – Opening Times – In order to fall in line with ADC Cleansing’s new opening and closing times for all the toilets in the area, the committee has agreed to change the Sea Road toilets times. ADC Cleansing’s operative locks and unlocks the Sea Road Toilets on a daily basis, therefore it was necessary to make the changes.

The new opening times are 1st April – 30th September 8am-7pm and 1st October – 31st March 8am-5pm.

Village Green south-western corner improvements – Following the two consultations sessions held at the Village Green in the Autumn of 2025, the committee’s working party received the first Landscape design strategy. Following further discussions with Michal, the Landscape Architect, he is now in the process of drawing up a draft design. The working party will then present its findings to the rest of the committee for its consideration.

Warren Recreation Ground tennis court – following concerns raised during the week beginning 9th March about the misuse of the tennis court, Cllrs Linton and Wilkinson met with three local residents on 31st March. The concern was youths playing football on the court as this is not the purpose of the court and causes additional noise nuisance to neighbours. Between the incidents and the meeting, Cllr Linton had liaised with The Great Dane which agreed to tighten up its processes around giving out the key; Cllr Linton can explain further if necessary. Following one incident, Cllr Linton got the booker’s details from The Great Dane but these proved to be false. Neighbours reported youths on the roof of the pavilion on 30th March, and this information has been passed on to the cricket club. Following the meeting, no other concerns have been raised.

The committee’s next meeting remains scheduled for 18th May 2026.

Dawn Reid – **Assistant Clerk to the Council**

2nd April 2026

Agenda Item 12b

Audit & Governance Committee

Cllr Mathias is chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 9th March.

The committee considered the council's current way of handling its draft Minutes and agreed this did not need to change at the moment. The committee also considered a suggestion the council made audio recordings of all its meetings; the committee was undecided and agreed to seek advice from our internal auditor.

The committee agreed to extend our internal auditor's contract by a further three years. Although with the same company, the council would see a different person in the role after the end of the current financial year's work.

The committee agreed to review the council's insurance policy at the committee's next meeting. The committee also agreed to recommend to Finance & General Purposes the council pays for an up-to-date insurance rebuild valuation for the council's three buildings. This was a recommendation from the SLCC Sussex branch meeting I attended in January. I have asked for a quotation from our insurer broker's preferred supplier.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

10th March 2026

Agenda Item 12c

Community Engagement Committee

Cllr Linton is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 23rd March.

Some updates:

Warm Welcome Space 2026 – average attendance at the sessions held so far has increased from 23 last month to 24. Our thanks to all community volunteers who have helped so far this year: Chris and Valerie, John, Naomi, Linda, Margo and Mark. Alison, Dawn and I have all taken a turn at helping out too when the number of attendees booked has been high. The committee started to discuss some thoughts about next year.

Playscheme, October 2026 – the committee is planning a family event for October 2026, two one-hour sessions. More information in due course.

East Preston Festival, 5th to 14th June – the council is directly involved with three sessions of free tennis coaching on the Warren Recreation Ground, *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* at the Council Office on 6th June, and *Putter Madness* mini-golf on the Village Green on 9th June.

St Mary the Virgin Christmas Tree Festival, 11th to 13th December – the committee agreed the council should again participate in the Christmas Tree Festival and Cllrs Chapman and Duff agreed to lead on the council’s participation again.

Youth Provision – the council continues to work with Angmering and Rustington Parish Councils in working towards a local youth better informed about social opportunities available to them in the three villages.

Newsletter No. 78, Spring 2026 – the committee discussed possible content for the next newsletter. If any councillor has any suggestions for items, please let me know.

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Councillors and I took part in the beach clean on Sunday, 29th March. This was the first beach clean jointly organised with KEPT (Keep East Preston Tidy) and over fifty people joined in. Councillors in attendance were Cllrs Toney, Linton, Chapman, Duff and Gunston.

More rubbish was collected than has been collected for a while, not just because there were more participants.



Photograph courtesy of Sue Hickey and KEPT

Later in the day, Sue Hickey, leader of KEPT, contacted the council and thanked it for its support of the event. “Thanks to you as ever for organising the event. An event of this size is beyond KEPT at the moment but we would be happy to do it again as a joint enterprise with Parish Council.” This will need to be discussed at the committee’s next meeting. On the morning after the event, I sent a thank you message to all the community volunteers for whom I had an email address.

We have completed a feedback form to Arun District Council in recognition of the grant awarded to this year’s season of Warm Welcome Space sessions.

The committee’s next meeting will be on 8th June.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 12d

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr McElroy is the chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in March.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 12th May. One of its main items for that evening will be consideration of the applications received for this year's Grant Aid.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 12e

Major Events Committee

Cllr Linton is Chairman of the committee.

The committee did not meet in March, however an update follow.

Funday Sunday, 19th April – tickets have sold well although there are still a few left at the time of writing. Councillors helping with the event have been issued with details of what they need to be doing and when. Any questions on that should be directed to Cllr Chapman.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 20th April.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 12f

Personnel Committee

Cllr Duff is the chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in March.

Training – having agreed it would be a good idea to arrange some chairmanship training for all councillors, I have booked an evening session with Mulberry Local Authority Services on Monday, 29th June. Please put this date in your diary.

The session will be in person and led by Celia Price, until recently the Clerk at Lancing Parish Council and now a full-time trainer. The session will take place at East Preston Infant School and will start at 18:30, a bit earlier if everyone is there and ready.

Work experience – the council will be hosting a work experience student during the week beginning 1st June. The committee would like all committee chairmen to be available to spend some time with the student explaining the role of their committee(s). The student is very

interested in politics and local government and will be tasked with writing an article for the Summer 2026 Newsletter whilst working here. Councillors who are not chairmen are equally welcome to spend some time with the student explaining their own contribution to the council and how that impacts the wider village.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 20th April.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

16th March 2026

Agenda Item 12g

Planning & Licensing Committee

Cllr Bowman is chairman of the committee.

The committee only met on 9th March.

On the 9th March, the committee considered two applications. The committee agreed not to object to either.

On 18th March, Cllr Moore represented the council at a meeting of the ADC Planning Committee. Cllr Moore explained the council's concerns about the external seating proposed for the rear of the new restaurant coming to the northern shops. The Planning Officer's report to the committee addressed these concerns thus: "Building Control confirm the work would be controlled under the Building Regulations (including fire safety). There is no change of use in terms of the Building Regulations, but there is a small extension, internal alterations including ventilation to the kitchen and new toilet facilities which would be assessed. The work would require statutory consultation with the Fire Authority. The outdoor seating area and its impact on providing a clear fire route would be considered as part of that process."

There were no applications to consider on the 23rd March so the meeting was cancelled.

ADC has chosen an independent examiner for the revised East Preston Neighbourhood Plan. The Regulation 16 consultation period closed on 2nd April. I have asked ADC to let me know how many people responded to the consultation but have not yet received that information.

On 1st April, ADC informed us the council was not eligible for any Community Infrastructure Levy payments for the period October 2025 to March 2026.

The committee's next meeting is on 14th April at which it will discuss, amongst other things, a licensing application received from The Podgy Spaniel, which is looking for permission to open between 07:00 and 23:00 each day apart from Sunday, 07:00 to 22:00.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 13

Working Parties

None of the council's working parties met in March.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 13a

20mph Working Party

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this working party.

At the December Full Council meeting, it was agreed the council would canvass the public on implementing a village-wide 20mph zone and an article has been published in the Winter 2026 newsletter.

I encouraged members of the public to complete the survey before the end of March. The working party will need to meet to consider the results further, but 345 people completed the survey of which 223 voted Yes to a 20mph speed limit in the village, 115 against and 9 unsure. Asked whether they would prefer a 20mph to cover the whole village or just the original proposal of Sea Road, Fairlands and The Street), 170 said the whole village, 78 said the original three roads, 7 were unsure but only 90 said neither (90 as opposed to the 115 against a 20mph zone in the first question).

The last five freeform comments recorded show a reasonable cross-section of opinion:

“Possibly to make the road past the library one way?”

“I am not sure a 20mph limit would have any effect on some of the drivers and wonder how speeders will be recorded.”

“Also work at BN16 1JN and people speed fast all the junctions. Drivers don't think about drivers coming out of the junctions”

“Sadly, we all think “we know best” and road safety seems very low on many drivers’ agenda. I’ve noticed that the “yellow box” by the rail crossing is now often being ignored too.”

“Action should be sooner rather than later. Don’t wait for the inevitable!”

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 13b

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation **(Devo WP)**

Cllr Gunston is chairman of this working party which is currently dormant. Cllr Gunston has put forward some thoughts at Agenda Item 14a below.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th March 2026

Agenda Item 13c

Flat and Frontage Working Party (FFWP)

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman-elect of this working party.

No updates from this working party explicitly.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 13d

Leases Working Party (LWP)

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this working party.

On 25th March, our negotiator in the matter of the lease renewal to East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club advised us his counterpart had advised he was scheduled to meet with club on 10th April.

I do not anticipate a further update before this meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th March 2026

Agenda Item 14a

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Working Party

Council is asked to consider a response to the statement made to parliament by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Steve Reed MP, on 25th March.

As Chairman of the working party, Cllr Gunston will lead on this item. Cllr Gunston accepts there are some pretty big agenda items above and this item may be deferred until May.

Cllr Gunston has provided the following discussion points:

Quotes from Steve Reed letter - “The consultation revealed a concern that the two unitary proposal risks diluting the rural identity and economic profile of areas like Chichester by grouping them with coastal districts.”

- Shaping West Sussex - “Prosperous communities in the north (of Chichester) help balance economic challenges experienced in some coastal areas, creating a diverse and resilient socio-economic landscape and the opportunity to leverage the area’s combined economic strengths and social diversity to build resilience and promote balanced growth.”
- Part of Chichester is on the coast!
- Not all coastal districts have the same identity or economic profile. How different are East Preston and Littlehampton?

“I note that there was also some support from Adur and Worthing for the concept of a coastal unitary which could focus on specific coastal challenges and local needs.”

- Some support - who from?
- Arun, Adur and Worthing - circa 350,000 - well below suggested 500,000.
- West Sussex leaders discounted Arun, Adur Worthing and Southern part of Chichester - failed financial viability criteria. How is Arun, Adur and Worthing without any of Chichester viable?
- Beccy Cooper told us at our first meeting the coastal strip would happen so was the consultation a sham?

“I also received representations from other government departments that Chichester should be placed with Horsham as it would be a better fit in terms of needs and demographics..”

- Which departments?
- All district and borough councils in West Sussex supported Chichester, Arun, Worthing, Adur so why introduce another proposal?

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 15

West Sussex County Council

Council is asked to receive a report from County Councillor Roger Elkins, the representative for East Preston & Ferring Ward.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 16

Arun District Council

Council is asked to receive a report from the district councillors representing East Preston and Kingston, Cllrs Philippa Bower, Ricky Bower and Paul Kelly.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 17

Sussex Police

Council is asked to note any report from Sussex Police should one be received.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 18

Clerk's Report

1. **Introduction**
2. **Police matters**
3. **Anti-social behaviour matters**
4. **Freedom of Information / Data Protection requests**
5. **Northern shops incident, 1st March**
6. **Launch of Whistlestop Arts Arun Valley Line podcast Series 2, 11th March**
7. **Meeting with Dr Beccy Cooper MP, 13th March**
8. **Community Speedwatch (CSW), 17th March**
9. **Persimmon Homes Thames Valley community consultation, 18th March**
10. **Warm Welcome Space, 25th March**
11. **Social media**
12. **MailChimp stats**
13. **A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**
14. **Recent bouquets and complaints**
15. **Leave**
16. **April meetings and events**

1. **Introduction**

This is the report mainly covering March 2026 and matters which may not arise elsewhere on the agenda.

2. **Police matters**

Following a report from a concerned resident, I asked PCSO Raj to visit Clarence Drive a few afternoons during school pick-up time. The resident has seen an increase in arguments triggered by inconsiderate parking in Clarence Drive by parents and grandparents collecting children from the schools.

3. **Anti-social behaviour (ASB) matters**

No developments in anti-social behaviour matters in the village previously reported to ADC anti-social behaviour team.

4. **Freedom of Information (FoI) / Data Protection requests**

One Freedom of Information request this month, requiring the input of Cllr Duff as Chairman of the Personnel Committee.

5. **Northern shops incident, 1st March**

Further to the incident in January when a driver knocked over and drove over two of the council's safety bollards at the northern shops, the council included an article in the Winter 2026 Newsletter questioning whether a driver that could do that seemingly unknowingly should be driving. As councillors will know, subsequently, that driver was visited by Sussex Police and, although he had voluntarily decided to stop driving, he had his licence taken off him during that visit.

On Sunday, 1st March, an elderly lady driver was witnessed driving into the service road from the north and, apparently, accelerating rather than braking, resulting in damage to the grass verge and the street-sign. Thankfully, the street-sign slowed her down sufficiently she did not drive straight back out into traffic on North Lane.



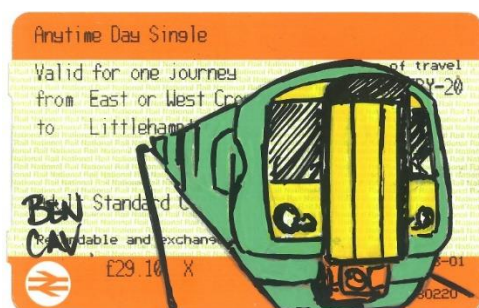
I reported the damaged street-sign to ADC, but did not report the damaged verge to WSCC as it will grow back in its own time. ADC responded quickly about the street-sign but no remedial work appears to have happened yet.

6. Launch of Whistlestop Arts Arun Valley Line podcast Series 2, 11th March

On 21st August last year, as recorded in Minute 684/25, I recorded some content for the second series of the Whistlestop Arts Arun Valley Line podcast. Today was the launch of the second series, six episodes, one for each of the six railway stations within the Arun district.

The launch was held at The Track, a coworking and business support space within an old station building. The launch was hosted by ADC. After some networking time, we were all escorted over to The Picturedrome, Screen 2, where free popcorn was available for those who wanted. After some introductory speeches, we then watched promotional videos for both series of the podcast.

The whole event lasted just under two hours during which I got to speak to some ADC officers I don't usually don't get a chance to talk to and I was also given this artwork by local artist Ben Cavanagh:



Four four-minute trailers can be found on the Whistlestop Arts YouTube channel, and the podcasts can be found at a number of podcast providers.

7. Meeting with Dr Beccy Cooper MP, 13th March

When elected in July 2024, Dr Beccy Cooper said she would meet with the parish council regularly. This was the third such meeting. To enable as many councillors as wanted to attend, the meeting was held in the meeting room at East Preston Infant School.

On this occasion, Beccy was accompanied by Ian Walker, a Constituency Support Officer. Councillors in attendance were: Cllrs Bowman, Chapman, Duff, Gale, Gunston, Linton, McElroy and Moore. Cllrs Toney, Hill and Bradshaw had given their apologies.

Topics covered included Southern Water and water quality, devolution and local government reorganisation, the future of Zachary Merton and other healthcare services, Arun's Local Plan and development, the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, Roundstone Level Crossing, Youth Emotional Support and other social care matters, and housing.

I'll let individual councillors comment upon this meeting as they wish, remembering the council is non-party political. There did not seem to be an issue Beccy was not prepared to take away and follow up on.

As the meeting drew to a close, Cllr Linton thanked Beccy for having visited. Beccy replied, thanking the parish council which, like many town and parish councils, she believed was "genuinely doing a good job."

Personally, I think the format of having as many councillors present as possible worked, as all councillors speak for different sections of the community at different times.



Dr Beccy Cooper MP, third from the left, with (l-r) Cllrs Moore, Bowman, Gunston, Linton, Gale and McElroy, photographed in the library at East Preston Infant School

8. Community Speedwatch (CSW), 17th March

Together with coordinator, Gavin Bernard, this was my first CSW shift of the year. Unexpectedly, we were joined by two Sussex Police officers, Kevin and Dale.

We were outside the Village Hall for the hour from 09:00. In that hour, there were 240 vehicle movements past us, and we recorded three cars travelling above the threshold. These will be reported to Sussex Police through the correct CSW portal.

Meanwhile, Dale spotted a woman driving into the Village Hall car-park not wearing her seatbelt. He went and spoke to her, and this uncovered the fact the woman had no insurance and a call to her insurance company did not result in her being covered there and then. The police would not let her drive or walk home, but insisted she was given a lift home by a friend. A friend was found, but then he managed to hit another car in the car-park as he was getting his car into position to drive the woman home. I suspect the situation may have worsened further but our CSW shift was over and I returned to the office.

9. Persimmon Homes Thames Valley community consultation, 18th March

I attended this event at Angmering Village Hall at which the agents for Persimmon Homes Thames Valley shared the proposals for developing the land opposite Sainsbury's better South Drive and Station Road, Angmering. The proposal is for 116 new homes, some of which would apparently be bungalows, to the north of the plot, the southern half of the plot being kept as permanent parkland:



Attendees had until 27th March to comment in this round of consultation. The event was held in the smallest possible room within the Village Hall and was well-attended at the time I was there.

This council's Planning & Licensing Committee will undoubtedly liaise with Angmering Parish Council when the company starts to submit planning applications.

10. Warm Welcome Space, 25th March

Together with Cllrs Gunston and Hill, I attended this final session of the 2026 Warm Welcome Space season. There were 30 guests. An average of 25 lunches were served each week for twelve weeks.

The mood was mixed for this session. Attendees were sad this was the last session for this season but seemed determined to make the most of it. Dawn joined us just as guests were finishing their lunch. On behalf of the council, Dawn handed a bunch of spring daffodils to each guest plus members of Royal British Legion staff. This session also played host to the oldest attendee to date, a man aged 102; he was delighted to be there and signed up to parish council e-newsletters so he does not miss out on future events and initiatives. As they left, most attendees expressed their thanks to the council, the Legion staff, the community volunteers and back this up with hugs and smiles. A couple of Thank You donations were made and these have been passed on to the Chairman's Charity.

I carried out a short survey with most of the attendees. Unsurprisingly, they all want the council to run a season of Warm Welcome Space sessions next year too. Fuller survey results will be presented to a future Community Engagement Committee meeting.

11. **Social Media**

These are the council's Facebook posts to reach more than 500 people in the past month:

- Post advising the council contractors' mower had failed part-way through mowing the Village Green and this was why the Village Green had only been partly mowed – 1,753 people
- Post advising of the temporary closure of Beechlands Close – 1,360
- Post advising of the temporary closure of Willowhayne Crescent on 18th March, an event which did not transpire – 756

(posts up to and including 7th April)

The number of Followers is currently 2,007, an increase of 14 on the last report.

12. **MailChimp stats**

Since the last papers were issued, the council has sent out the following email to local residents on the council's main e-mailing list:

Parish Council news – 26th February – sent to 956 subscribers, opened by 718 (75.1%)

Parish Council news – 5th March – sent to 955, opened by 706 (74%)

Parish Council news – 12th March – sent to 954, opened by 706 (74%)

Parish Council news – 19th March – sent to 958, opened by 690 (72%)

Parish Council news – 27th March – sent to 959, opened by 699 (73%)

Parish Council news – 2nd April – sent to 960, opened by 686 (71.5%)

13. **Things we have been asked since the last meeting**

“Do you think we should organise a funeral for [a former East Preston resident]? Would enough people attend?”

The question was asked by a solicitor acting as an executor of the former resident. This was not a question I had ever been asked before. As three weeks had already passed by the time I was asked and as the resident was known for her ability to fall out with people, I suggested a funeral was probably an unnecessary expense.

“Does the council have a policy about the scattering of ashes on council land?”

The council does not have an explicit policy. I think this has happened twice in my time, and on both occasions we simply asked those involved to be discreet.

“Someone from [a political party] has been knocking at doors and asking questions like: Did you vote in the general elections, who did you vote for, will you be voting in the local election, who will you be voting for. Is this sort of questioning allowed by law?”

I could find no relevant guidance online, so I asked ADC Elections team for some help. The head of the team provided two documents provided to prospective candidates, one of five pages, one of 97 pages. A quick look through the documents highlighted no guidance for how canvassers should treat householders. I advised the questioner to terminate the conversation should anything offensive be said and to call the police if necessary.

“I believe my property is in the wrong council tax band. How do I appeal this?”

Contact the Valuation Office Agency via <https://www.arun.gov.uk/council-tax-bands/> or 03000 501501.

“The school is thinking of hosting a car-boot sale and a colour run, what permission do we need?” No permission directly from the parish council but some permissions may be needed from Arun District Council. Contact details given.

“Do you have a contact for Preston Hall Residents’ Association?” Yes.

“Do you know who owns the cut-through from Sea Road to South Strand?” No. Referred questioner to Land Registry.

14. Recent bouquets and complaints

(In addition to anything reported above)

From a resident of The Street, after I had given him information about the allotments, “Thank you so much for the thorough update Simon. The allotments are perfect for me!”

From two residents of Lashmar Road when subscribing to the e-newsletter service, “Please enrol us in the East Preston ‘e-news’ as featured in the latest edition of the Parish Council’s winter news letter! Which, incidentally we think is excellent!”

From a resident of Hillview Crescent, “What a fantastic newsletter the latest one is.”

Thanks from a resident of Sea Road whom Alison and I looked after when she had an unstoppable nosebleed. Alison called an ambulance which took the resident to hospital when the bleeding could not be stopped.

Thanks from the Junior School contact for the information on ADC licensing, “As usual Simon, you have been very helpful.”

From the resident of Palm Court Cottages who enquired about the cut-through between Sea Road and South Strand, “Thanks for your email, very helpful as always. The map you sent will be invaluable.”

15. Leave

I have booked off the 23rd April, so far. Dawn has taken off 7th to 9th April.

16. April Meetings and Events

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change. Where committee meetings fall on the same day, the timings of these meetings may also be subject to change.

- 1st East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation committee meeting (10:00, Village Hall) (CB only)
- 11th East Preston Repair Café (10:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 13th Full Council (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 14th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 19th *Funday Sunday* (14:00-17:00, Village Hall)
- 20th Personnel Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
Major Events Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)

22nd South Strand Community Toilets Annual General Meeting (12:00, Littlehampton)

27th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 19

Other meetings and events – Part 1

Council is asked to note any reports from Members attending other meetings and events.

Meeting with Dr Beccy Cooper MP, 13th March

East Preston Infant School

As reported above, this meeting was attended by Cllrs Bowman, Chapman, Duff, Gale, Gunston, Linton, McElroy and Moore. Any of these may wish to comment upon the meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

8th April 2026

East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation meeting, 1st April

East Preston & Kingston Village Hall

The Meeting ran to schedule and all matters arising from the previous meeting were covered and discussed.

1. The EPPC and Men in Sheds were represented at the meeting to discuss the following:
 - EPPC and EPKVH discussed the result of the ROSPA Report in relation to the playing of cricket on the VG. Although fewer games will now be played in the VG the EPKVH felt that it would be prudent for them to have a copy of the fixtures for the Season to allow those Hirers using the VH on match days to be made aware. The committee felt the fixture list had not been received in recent years.
 - Discussion took place between MIS and EPKVH regarding amendments to their Policies and Procedures to bring them up to date and all amendments were agreed including an increase in the hire rate with effect from April 2026. EPKVH took on board the usual concerns about poor wi-fi and there will be an upgrade soon.
2. The ramp out of the exit doors from the Miller Barn is now in situ and the ramp only requires some form of slip matting as a runoff from the ramp and that EPPC would be looking into this.

3. A decision was made that the first priority is to replace the current boiler, which is 15 years old, due to its erratic heating! This does not affect the hot water, cooking and toilet facilities. The cost is around £5,386.86 and should take place after the Summer Festival.
4. Another large payment, which will take second priority, is to repair the flooring in the Warren Room at a hefty cost of £7,000.
5. Confirmation that no cheques from hirers will now be processed and all payments should be made by bank transfer.
6. Currently there is a hold on the replacement of the cameras as this current year has some hefty bills to pay.

Next Meeting is pencilled in for the Wednesday 24th June @ 10.00.

Cllr Christine Bowman –
**East Preston Parish Council official representative to East
Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation**

2nd April 2026

Agenda Item 21

New items to be referred to the next meeting – 11th May 2026

Please note the Annual Meeting of the Council will start at 18:00 on 11th May and will have a reduced agenda. The meeting will be followed by the Annual Parish Meeting with a scheduled start time of 19:00.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026

Agenda Item 22

118-120 Sea Road, East Preston

Council is asked to consider any matters relating to the future of 118-120 Sea Road, East Preston. Cllrs Toney, Linton, Bowman and Gunston have been leading on this for the council to date.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

7th April 2026