

East Preston Village Festival 2026

Friday 5th June to Sunday 14th June

Get ready to enjoy a full programme of entertainment at this year's Festival which includes a Rolling Stones Tribute and the Silhouettes Vintage Party Night. Popular events returning are Race Night, Shuffleboard Evening, Call My Wine Bluff and the Festival Quiz. Explore the Open Gardens and Art Trail, follow the Scarecrow Tour and enter the competitions, based on this year's Festival theme of 'East Preston Goes Wild', to win a cash prize. Please also support the local charities and community groups who organise fund-raising events for their own very worthy causes.

The Community Fête is on Saturday 6th June and there is a Classic Car Show on Sunday 7th. Come along to cheer the costumed Parade on Saturday 13th and don't miss the Tug of War on the village Green at 3pm. On Sunday 14th June, have a great family day out at the Fun Dog Show, hosted by sports presenter John Inverdale, and stay for the Party on the Green.



Programmes are available from lots of East Preston businesses and venues 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.

Council events this Festival



East Preston Festival is the biggest event in the village calendar. First held in 1981, the Festival has gone from strength to strength.

This year, the council will be hosting three events during the Festival.

Come and Meet Your Local Councillors on Saturday 6th June. This is an opportunity to have an informal chat with parish councillors about life around the village. The event will run between 10:00 and 12:00 at the Council Office, 122 Sea Road, BN16 1NN. You can just drop in or if you would prefer, please email

clerk@eastpreston-pc.gov.uk to book a 15-minute slot. Refreshments will include a hot drink and some homemade cake.

Come and try your hand at **Putter Madness**, a mini, family-friendly golf course on the Village Green. Organised with Globetrotters, a company offering premium mini-golf courses for events across Sussex. A fun and free event for all the family. No booking necessary. Tuesday 9th June, between 16:00 and 19:00.

Free Tennis Coaching - in conjunction with Angmering-on-Sea Lawn Tennis Club, the council will host one hour sessions for up to eight people, led by the club's head coach, Andrew Cook. These are suitable for beginners or rusty players and will be on Friday 5th June 10:30-11:30, Tuesday 9th June 12:30-13:30 and Friday 12th June 10:30-11:30. All equipment will be provided as necessary. Booking essential, email angmeringlawntennisclub@btinternet.com.

Chairman's Annual Report for 2025-26



Cllr Steve Toney, Chairman of the Council, presented this report to the Annual Parish Meeting on 11th May.

"Once again, I am pleased to start by thanking everyone who has made a positive contribution to the village during the past year. It's been a challenging year in many ways, but a rewarding year in just as many ways.

"A major advantage for the council was the building at 118-120 Sea Road coming up for sale. Right next door to the Council Office, this was not a matter the council could stall on. With public support gained at a pair of extra council meetings, the seller eventually accepted an offer from the council to buy the building. Further public support was gained in a survey in the Summer 2025 Newsletter which showed over 90% of respondents supported the purchase. Thank you to everyone who took part in the survey; all comments were seen by all councillors. By the time you hear or see this report, the purchase will be complete.

"118 Sea Road is the office space on the ground floor. The council plans to make this into a community hub, a building for local groups to use for small meetings and events, and which we also hope will be able to host organisations such as Citizens Advice and Sussex Police for regular surgeries. We thank our MP, Dr Becca Cooper as she has supported this development from the start.

"120 Sea Road is the flat above the office. The council's first task will be to make this space self-contained, up to standard and let out. The council considered asking Arun District Council to manage this letting on our behalf but felt with local government reorganisation now was not the time to ask this. This council will reconsider this suggestion once the dust of local government reorganisation has settled. On that subject, this council has taken part in each possible consultation and meeting but has no greater insight than most other people.

"Events wise, the council was able to run a full Food & Drink Festival again and a full Christmas Celebrations again, following the rained off or reduced 2024 events. The council's policy of changing roughly half of the stalls at each Food & Drink Festival continues to work well and attendance numbers are pretty consistent. The council would like to offer something different for its Christmas offering this year and will probably reveal more about that in the Summer 2026 Newsletter. In the meantime, our thanks to all the volunteers who have helped the council in any way at either of these events.

"Other successful events during the year included Funday Sunday in April, Come and Meet Your Local Councillors and Come and Meet Ems Friendly Farm during the Festival and two Beach Cleans. This year we hope to add a bingo afternoon to our list of popular events.

"During the year, the council worked with East Preston Cricket Club and the Warren Recreation Ground Safety Group in trying to address the concerns of the latter organisation. The council initiated an independent mediation exercise for all three parties and will be assessing its options following the completion of that exercise in March.

"Although I would not usually refer to local residents passing away during the year, it would be remiss of me not to mention the passing of Fr Andrew Perry in September. A very good friend to the council and councillors alike, Andrew's positive impact upon the village, in just seven short years, cannot be underestimated. Much-loved across the village, he will be remembered for many years to come.

"Each December, the council chooses a Chairman's Charity for the coming year, and the council does a little fundraising for that charity. In 2025, the council raised £276.71 for Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey and Sussex. In 2026, the Chairman's Charity is Chestnut Tree House, our local children's hospice. The charity receives just 14% of its funding from the NHS, which means the charity relies heavily on the generosity of local people to keep running. The council has a couple of collecting tins in the office; please consider donating if you are in or near the office. Thank you.

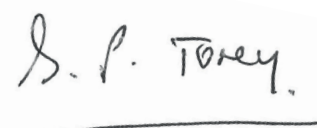
"Over the past year, the council has seen some residents become particularly focused on specific issues. Often, this level of engagement is helpful, it highlights areas where the council can make improvements; at other times it can lead to tension, which is not productive. The council does not have the capacity to concentrate its efforts on a single issue - especially when multiple matters require attention at the same time. Each day, priorities must be carefully balanced, and these will not always align with the individual concerns of every resident.

"When members of the public attend council meetings, it is important to recognize that the council may ask detailed or probing questions. This is not intended to challenge individuals unnecessarily, but to clarify facts and ensure that decisions are made on a well-informed basis.

"East Preston is a great place, not by chance. It is down to the people who make it what it is. Every day, as I walk around the village, I notice something in the village reinforcing my pride in living here. Our voluntary organizations and individual volunteers work tirelessly to enhance the village; everyone reading this article will have their own favourites.

"I thank every councillor and officer for making this job a relatively easy one.

"To any and all of you who regularly show faith in and support for the council, we hope to continue to improve the village wherever we can. Thank you."


Steve Toney

Community spotlight: The East Preston and Kingston Horticultural Society

With Spring in full swing and the flowers in magnificent bloom, East Preston and Kingston Horticultural Society hit their stride in their busiest time of year. They come fresh from the recent success of their Spring Show in April, which enlivened the Village Hall with wonderful displays and the charge of convivial competitive spirit from their floral, vegetable and home baking contests. With plant sales, horticultural talks, and their main flagship Summer Flower Show event fast approaching in what promises to be an action-packed schedule, the society continues to build upon their record of colourful events.

East Preston's first Flower Show occurred in 1928, with the first Spring Show being launched in 1978, the group's golden jubilee year. Formally launching as the East Preston and Kingston Horticultural Society in 1988, their distinctive Summer Flower Show and Fête remains their signature event, and has continued to evolve year upon year ever since. Collaborating with local businesses and charities, and supported by the sponsorship of Cooper Adams, the society energises the Village Hall and Warren Recreation Ground (weather permitting!) with a vibrant, lively and family-friendly atmosphere. Various competitions spanning fruit, vegetables, cookery, photography, floral art and handicrafts are held, with entertainment provided by Lancing Brass Band and Robbie the Magician. **This year's Summer Flower Show will be held on Saturday 1st August, starting at 2pm.**

Celia Buckley, a key member of the society, spoke to me about the joy of the Summer Flower Show as a major motivator in her role in the hosting and facilitation of the society's events: "I love the atmosphere of the village show and of the fête; in particular the Summer Show. I have been involved with the Flower Shows since I was six years old, although obviously I wasn't helping to run them then!"

With a current membership of 150 households, many are inspired to participate in the competitions held at each of their flower shows. Ahead of the main Summer Flower show in August, the society is actively welcoming new entrants to their competitions, and the opportunity to contribute to the exhibits which remain central to the show. With 10% off trees and shrubs at Arundel Arboretum, 10% off plants at Culberry Nursery and Lansdowne Nursery (excluding bedding plants), members also enjoy great value at local garden centres. In addition, membership includes free admission to the society's talks and Gardeners' Question Time. Upcoming talks include speaker Fliss Lewis of WOOL SHrED, a progressive business which utilises the sustainable properties of wool for gardening, presenting a talk entitled **WOOL SHrED EVOLUTION**, which takes place on **Monday 22nd June at the June Sutherland Chapel.**

The society actively welcomes new members, advertising a £5 annual subscription fee (billed from the 1st of March) which covers a paying member's household, entitling them to their many perks and benefits. Community involvement and volunteering is also highly encouraged by the society, and these contributions are invaluable in helping the organisation and setting up of the society's events and shows throughout the year.

To join or for more information, please contact Celia Buckley on 01903 778921 or email at celia.buckley@tiscali.co.uk.

Schedules for the Flower Shows can be obtained from Dizzy charity shop, and the full programme for the wide range of the society's events can be found at their website: <https://celiabuckley.wixsite.com/epkhs> and on the society membership cards. Updates can also be found on the society's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/EPKHS>.

Right: Pauline McLelland receiving the Spring Cup from Simon Smith.



Warren Rec playground

To address safety concerns for users of the children's playground, the council has decided the playground will be closed during cricket matches.

The council recognises the playground is an important source of enjoyment for young families in the village. However, on up to 12 afternoons this summer, the playground will be closed starting one hour before the beginning of each cricket match and will remain closed for the duration of play.

Neighbourhood Plan update

The revised East Preston Neighbourhood Plan is, at the time of writing, being duly considered by an independent examiner. His job is to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with either the Arun Local Plan or the National Planning Policy Framework.

This follows a period of public consultation during which a number of wider authorities, for example, West Sussex County Council and Southern Water, and members of the public have been able to review the document for themselves and comment. We thank everyone who did so.

Grass verges

The article in the Winter 2026 Newsletter concerning the state of grass verges in the village generated little comment, but hopefully there have been some improvements noted.

A couple of people suggested locations where bollards might help. Almost all of the grass verges in the village are the responsibility of West Sussex County Council which simply does not have the money. The parish council can, occasionally, consider getting a licence from the county council to place bollards, trees or possibly planters at suggested locations. Please understand we too will never be able to afford to meet every request from the village

We thank West Sussex County Council for the trees it has added to the village over the past three autumns.

Hearing impairment group

Thank you to the residents who contacted us after the article in the Winter 2026 Newsletter. The council is moving ahead with some sort of social and support group for residents with hearing impairment, in particular, later life hearing impairment as described by Juliet in the last issue.

Cllr Helen Hill is leading this for the council, with the support of the Community Engagement Committee.

If you missed the article but would like to know more, please contact the Council Office.

Warm Welcome Space 2026

In conjunction with the Royal British Legion, the council ran another successful season of Warm Welcome Space lunches over this winter.

The sessions were weekly, and between the beginning of January and the end of March, over 300 lunches were served to local residents, the intention being to provide them with a warm space and a light lunch and some company on what might otherwise be a wet, cold, dreary day home alone.

The council would like to thank everyone who attended and enjoyed any of the sessions and our friends at the Royal British Legion for their help and friendliness throughout.

New wheelie-bin? Give it a lift.

Now almost all of us have brand new wheelie bins, courtesy of Arun District Council, some of you may want to add a lovely speed-awareness wheelie-bin sticker to yours.

The council first introduced these over ten years ago. At the time, a local resident who worked for West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service said, "I think the speed awareness wheelie bin stickers are great. I've seen them used in Horsham and they definitely work." The stickers proved to be long-lasting too, many still on display around the village.

We are giving East Preston households up to two stickers each – if you would like a couple, please contact the Council Office.



Calendar tips

Last issue, we said we would give you tips on taking better photos for future East Preston calendars. We asked AI for advice, and this is what it said:



Focus on lighting: shoot in natural light, avoid midday sun.



Keep it simple: remove distractions and centre attention on your subject.



Use the rule of thirds: place key elements slightly off-centre for a more balanced shot.



Hold the camera steady: use both hands or a tripod.



Get closer or zoom with your feet: filling the frame often makes photos more engaging.

South Strand Community Toilets celebrate national success

South Strand Community Toilets is delighted to share some wonderful news with our parish community. Last year we applied to be considered for the 2026 Loo of the Year Awards, we are pleased to say that, following an unannounced inspection, our little block achieved the prestigious Platinum Award, recognising the very highest standards in cleanliness, facilities and overall care. This accolade places our toilets among the best maintained public conveniences in the country - a remarkable achievement for a community run service.

Adding to this success, our dedicated cleaning team, Steve & Terry, have been honoured with the Washroom Technician of the Year Award. This recognition celebrates their exceptional commitment and the pride they take in providing a vital public service. Their work often goes unseen, yet it makes an enormous difference to the local community, visitors, and local schools alike. We are incredibly proud of them.

These achievements are not just awards—they are a testament to what a community can accomplish when people come together with purpose and generosity. South Strand Community Toilets exists because of you, our supporters, donors, volunteers, and friends who believe that everyone deserves access to safe, clean, and welcoming facilities.

Your continued support and funding have enabled us to reach the standard we enjoy today. Every contribution large or small has helped us maintain a service that reflects the very best of our community's spirit.

As we celebrate this national recognition, we extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has stood behind the project. With your continued help, we look forward to maintaining a facility our community can be proud of for many years to come.

Village Life

June

- 1st Full Council (19:00)
- 5th East Preston Festival starts
- 6th Come and Meet Your Local Councillors (10:00-12:00)
- 8th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00)
- 9th Putter Madness (16:00-19:00)
- 22nd Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Major Events Committee (19:00)

July

- 6th Full Council (19:00)
- 13th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Audit & Governance Committee (19:00)
- 20th Personnel Committee (18:00)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00)
- 27th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)

August

- 10th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
Amenities Committee (19:00)
- 17th Finance & General Purposes Committee (18:00)
Major Events Committee (19:00)
- 24th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00)
- 29th East Preston Food & Drink Festival (12:00-17:00)

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.

Thanks to...

Everyone who joined in with the KEPT/ EPPC Beach Clean on 29th March. The next is scheduled for 27th September. In the meantime, KEPT meet on the first Sunday of every month, 10:30 in The Great Dane. From there the group sets off for more wombling adventures, tackling litter in the village.



Everyone who enjoyed Funday Sunday on 19th April. It's lovely to see residents up and dancing and enjoying an afternoon tea.



Everyone at St Mary the Virgin Church who is keeping the church up and running for the benefit of the village during the current interregnum.

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: <https://eastpreston-pc.gov.uk/>

Arun District Council (01903) 737500 West Sussex County Council (01243) 777100

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