



New Council - New Offices

There were ten candidates for the thirteen councillor vacancies at the May election: Judith Akhurst, Victor Bowthorpe, Rob Ellis, Anne Harberson, Mervyn Howdle, Glyn Mathias, John Melser, David Quick, Nick Stevens and Peter Vincent. All were therefore elected unopposed. At our first council meeting John Melser and Mervyn Howdle were elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively. On 4th July, Peter Dallimore, Carol Ellis (no relation to Rob Ellis) and Clive Maltby were co-opted on to the council. This mix of councillors brings with it a wide range of experience, and with Cllr Bowthorpe having just turned 19, possibly the youngest East Preston Parish Councillor ever.

To those councillors who chose not to stand for election this year, we send a big vote of thanks for all your efforts over the past years.

On the 26th April, we completed the purchase of 122 and 124 Sea Road as the new Council Office with a one-bedroom flat above. The Council Office is comprised of two separate offices, a meeting room, a kitchenette and a wc. The purchase price of £270,000 was funded partly from reserves with the balance coming from a £125,000 Public Works Loan Board loan. This is repayable over ten years, and the first six-monthly payment has already been made.



New Council Office, 122 Sea Road, East Preston

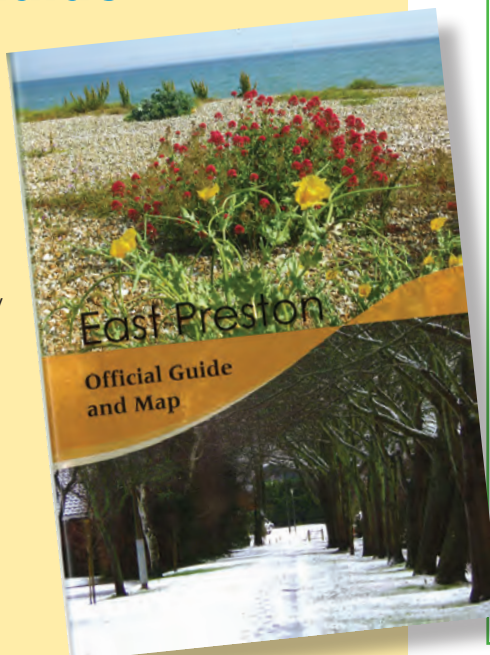
The Council Office is open 10am to 12 noon, Monday to Thursday. Drop-in callers are welcome although if you can make an appointment in advance it is appreciated. Appointments outside these hours can be arranged.

Official Guide

The council has published a new official guide. A copy should be delivered to every household. If you do not think that you have received a copy please contact the office.

Tel: 01903 770050

**E-mail:
[eparishcouncil@
btconnect.com](mailto:eparishcouncil@btconnect.com)**



Lamp posts

Starting in 2012 most of our lamp posts will be replaced with a more energy-efficient design which provides a brighter light output.

This is part of a twenty-five year agreement between West Sussex County Council and SSE Contracting and will include maintenance.

The new lamp posts will not necessarily replace existing ones on a one-for-one basis, since the new ones give a brighter light, less are needed.

More information can be found at www.lightsoninwestsussex.co.uk, we will also have paper copies at the Council Office in due course.

Chairman's Annual Report for Year 2010-2011

Former Chairman, Chris Roberts reports: The municipal year, begun in April 2010, started with the anticipation of concluding 3 years of preparatory work with the completion of a "Big Society" project to enhance the Village Hall and children's recreation ground facilities and to provide a centrally located Council office. Regrettably this did not come to fruition.

Full Council met for its monthly meetings on twelve occasions with a further five special meetings being convened to discuss project matters.

The Amenities Committee convened on seven occasions, continuing its good work in enhancing village facilities, notably the children's playground, Two Acres, the Village Green, hanging baskets, planters and borders throughout the village and the Christmas Lights and Christmas event. Unfortunately the Christmas Lights were greatly reduced this year due to the street lighting contractor, at very short notice, not permitting motifs to be attached to untested concrete lamp posts. The committee undertook a major review and rationalisation of groundwork maintenance contracts and negotiated new three-year contracts for Grass Cutting on the Village Green, flower planting, borders, planters and hanging baskets and general grounds maintenance.

The Planning Committee met on some eighteen occasions to consider over 100 Planning Applications and referring their opinions, based on local knowledge, to Arun District Council Planning Department.

The Finance & General Purposes Committee which has convened on some six occasions. This committee manages the Parish Council budget and precept overseen by Arun District Council. From these funds the Council has funded the North Lane School Crossing patrol. The Council also discharged its statutory obligation to provide for the "Closed Churchyard" of St Mary's Parish Church. It has also supported the East Preston Festival, contributed to the Cricket Club for grass cutting on the Warren Recreation Ground and given grant aid to support Youth Cricket, Youth Football coaching, 4-Sight, Viking Explorers (Scouts), 1st East Preston Scouts, Sofas & Stuff and the February half-term children's play-scheme.

Thanks to the efforts of the **Road Safety Working Group** a "Safer Routes to School" scheme has almost been completed at Lashmar Road;

preparatory works on pavements and revised fencing will be installed at the Roundstone Crossing in the summer of 2011. These will be followed by widening the level crossing in the Summer of 2012. WSSC has promised that there will be a "School Safety Zone" at Lashmar Road with 20 mph speed limit and cautionary amber lights.

The Council also maintains the public toilets in Sea Road and South Strand and as Custodian and Managing Trustee of the Warren Recreation Ground undertakes the running maintenance of the recreation ground and children's playground.

Village Hall & Parish Council Office project:

Last year's report concluded with the expectation that this 3 year project was nearing completion with building works expected to commence in June and the hope that the new extension would be ready for use by the end of the year. A Parish Poll was held on 25th August at which 1,138 of the electorate (a 23% turnout) voted. 891 voted against the project (78.2%) and 247 for the project (21.8%), a majority of 644 (78%) voted against the project. In recognition of the Poll result the Council at its meeting of 6th September agreed not to pursue the current project to provide additional Village Hall storage space, a Parish Council office and a Community meeting room on the site of the current Warren Recreation Ground playground. Two Councillors resigned in September, followed by a further resignation in December, whilst two new Councillors were elected at a by-election in November.

At the 6th December meeting, Council resolved to proceed with the purchase of freehold office accommodation at 122 Sea Road, which includes a tenanted 1st Floor flat.

The Council staff, Simon Cross (Clerk), Tracy Khoo (Assistant Clerk), Dennis Watts (Village Orderly) and Ed Gleason (Reserve Village Orderly) are to be highly commended for their untiring work, in difficult circumstances, in conducting the business of the Council.'



A reminder of East Preston's Rural District Council history

Localism - What's that got to do with us?

Big Society? Localism? What does it mean for East Preston?

Parliament believes it should be local organisations, town and parish councils that should take the lead in providing local services. Provide what we want, not what central government says we should or should not have. The 'but' in this approach is 'but it is going to cost', either cost in pounds or in volunteer time or both.

The intention is that 'Localism' should give you the local services you want, services you are prepared to pay for and more importantly allow you to participate in providing these services. Look how many times the word **you** appears? This is because **you** have the opportunity to decide what local services should be provided and what you pay towards those services.

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) has decided East Preston, together with Littlehampton, Angmering, Rustington, Climping, Yapton and Ford town/parish councils, should consider being responsible for providing Youth, Library and Highways Services. We have already seen the Youth Service funding reduced. East Preston Library is potentially under threat of closure. You can argue the rights and wrongs of these actions but decisions which are important to us are being pushed through by people we don't know and more importantly don't know us and don't know what we value.

This is a unique opportunity for the Parish Council to take the lead. We could take over services that West Sussex cannot afford to run. We could organise volunteers to help, we could provide funding. But(!) are you as an East Preston resident prepared to volunteer your time and expertise to help run these services? Are you prepared to see the East Preston portion of your council tax rise to fund this work? Do you want the Parish Council to be involved? This is partly why we have formed the Community Engagement Committee.

The Community Engagement Committee will probably be the starting point for responses to Localism issues. Based on your opinion it will be this committee that will propose activities to the full Parish Council. Before we can do this we have two main tasks: improving two-way communication between residents and council and setting a 'Vision' of how involved the council should be in providing local services. Improved communications will take on many different forms, and to be successful will rely on the openness of residents.

This is your opportunity to help shape East Preston's future. Please become involved, attend our meetings and tell us what you think the Parish Council should be doing. What is your vision for East Preston?

Here are eight questions to start you thinking. Your response will help shape our future.

(Please continue on a separate sheet if required)

1. What is your vision for East Preston?
2. Do you support the idea of the Parish Council becoming responsible for providing more local services?
3. Would you be prepared to volunteer to help run some of these local services?
4. With what activities should the Parish Council NOT be involved?
5. How much extra council tax a year would you be prepared to pay if that extra money was spent on providing local services?
6. Should we consult with the parish before increasing our proportion of the council tax above say 5%? If so, how?
7. Where do you think the Parish Council could save money?
8. Do you have any other comments?

Name and address (optional):

Please provide your postcode:



Please return this form to the Council Office.

Roundstone Level Crossing

Network Rail should be starting the first phase of widening Roundstone level crossing during October (Old Worthing Road and Roundstone Lane side) and continuing in December (Worthing Road and North Lane side). Work will include clearing vegetation and moving fences around the crossing. These works will entail temporary parking restrictions and a change in traffic route layout but these will be sign posted.

The final phase, due in Spring 2012, will involve the installation of new crossing gates to accommodate wider road lanes to allow buses to cross more safely plus improved pedestrian and cycle paths. It is hoped that the crossing work will go some way to improve the well-known problems experienced daily by drivers and pedestrians. As before, great care will have to be taken when using this crossing.

Council meetings

Full Council meetings are held on the first Monday of every month, except August, and begin at 7pm in East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road.

All residents are very welcome to attend, and time is set aside at the beginning of the meeting for residents to comment upon any item on that meeting's Agenda.

Various committee meetings take place throughout the year. These are advertised in the council's noticeboards and on the website (see separate article).

The council has recently installed an extra noticeboard on the south-eastern corner of Lashmar Recreation Ground in Lashmar Road. This is in addition to the two noticeboards in the two shopping areas and also the one in the Village Hall car park.

Vandalism

Do you know where your children are when they go out? Do you know what they are doing or whom they are with?

There has been a recent increase in vandalism around the village, caused by a small group of young people who probably should know better.

Recently, a group has been drinking in the children's playground leaving broken glass, bottles and general rubbish. This careless silliness means that infants and toddlers could not use the playground. (Thank you to the resident who borrowed a dustpan and brush to clear up.)

With ever more stringent cutbacks coming along, there is only so much help that Sussex Police can give in this and other matters. A reminder to your children that leaving broken glass across a playground that is undoubtedly loved by younger children that they know, could go a long way to helping.

Thank you

East Preston & Kingston Village Hall

There will be a resolution at the September meeting of the Parish Council which will see an end to the financial disagreement with the Village Hall Foundation.

This follows a meeting between leading representatives of the Foundation and several councillors. The council is pleased that an amicable end to this dispute has been found.

Website

Following the updating of the Arun District Council website's software, the East Preston Parish Council website will shortly follow in updating to the same new software. This will mean a new look for the website. In the meantime, the council apologises for the fact that during this transition period the website may not be as up to date as the council would like.

Minutes and Agendas for meetings are always available from the Council Office.



Contact point: Parish Clerk - Simon Cross, Assistant Clerk - Tracy Khoo
Council Office, 122 Sea Road, East Preston BN16 1NN

Telephone: 01903 770050 E-mail: eparishcouncil@btconnect.com

Website: www.arun.gov.uk/eastpreston

Arun District Council 01903 737500 West Sussex County Council 01243 777100

Designed and printed by PrintPlus, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton