

East Grinstead Town Council

Civic news



February 2011

Edition 51

New shops signal growth in 2011

NEW businesses in East Grinstead have reduced town centre vacancies to below half the national average.

A survey in October by Cllr Bob Mainstone, chairman of the Council's Business Support Group, showed 8% of town shops were standing empty, compared with a UK average of 13%. But figures for January show a welcome downward trend to 6.8%, despite a national rise to 14%.

"East Grinstead seems to be better placed than many similar sized towns," said Bob.

"Most encouraging is that the new shops prove traders have confidence in the future of our town. Opening a business is a brave and costly decision to make, but the Council is delighted to welcome new traders, and if East Grinstead continues to adapt quickly to meet consumers' needs, the town will thrive."

Bill Rolfe, owner of the newly-opened Market Square, agreed. "I believe that if you provide excellent service and high quality merchandise, customers will vote with their feet. I hope to see more independent retailers open in the town to help make us the best place in Sussex to shop."



Network Rail unveils plan for town's new gateway

NETWORK Rail has submitted an artist's impression of its latest plan for the town's new railway station which has recently received approval from Mid Sussex District Council.

The design is the result of a two-year discussion with town councillors for a building which would adequately reflect the station's role as a centre for increased tourism and a gateway to East Grinstead.

Cllr Paul Johnson, who led the Town Council's campaign, said he and his colleagues were "very pleased" with the results of their negotiations after an earlier proposal by Network Rail was labelled "drab and unprepossessing".

Work on the new station, which will include ticketing facilities for the Bluebell Railway when its northern extension into East Grinstead is complete, is scheduled to begin later this year.

Are you fit for Life Show?

THE East Grinstead Life Show will take place at the Jubilee Community Centre in Charlwoods Road from 10am until 1pm on Saturday 2 April.

The event, which is open to local people of all ages, will be attended by the town's GPs who will carry out simple health checks and give advice, and by voluntary, statutory and private organisations with an interest in matters related to health and well-being.

Entertainment will be provided by local bands, dance troupes and choirs, and there will be demonstrations by local fitness and health groups. Free refreshments will be provided.

*** For more details call Jakki Jackson at East Grinstead CVS on 01342 328080 or email her at jakki@egcvs.co.uk**



Town Council's tax element to remain frozen

THE Town Council has resolved a nil increase in Council Tax in the 2011/2012 financial year. This is the second successive year for which the Town Council's element of the tax burden will remain unchanged. The Council's net expenditure in the financial year will be £718,708 of which £691,600 will be achieved from Council Tax with the residual element coming from revenue balances.

Rooms for hire

CHEQUER Mead community arts centre has rooms for hire for meetings, conferences and rehearsals from £15 an hour. Spaces can be hired from early morning until late at night, from Monday to Sunday.

The original school building, which dates from 1865, is fully renovated and events can be catered by arrangement with the in-house Cuisine Studio. The onsite bar and cafe are open during the day and most evenings, and regular hirers are promoted free in the theatre's What's On guide which is distributed to 20,000 local residents. **For more information phone 01342 302000.**

Diary dates

THE Annual Town Meeting has been moved to Tuesday 5 April at 6.30 pm.

Model Railway exhibition will be at Sackville school on 9/10 April. Vintage Bus Day will take place on Sunday 17 April.

Free training sessions for Council candidates

TOWN Council elections for the next four-year period are to be held on Thursday 5 May, 2011. Anyone interested in standing for election is invited to attend one of the two dedicated information seminars to be held at East Court Mansion on Wednesday 9 March from 7 pm – 9pm, and on Saturday 12 March 2011 from 10am to noon, to find out more about the role and what it entails.

Just turn up on the day as there is no need to pre-book.

Being a Town Councillor can be a very rewarding way of contributing to the community and, in particular, making a difference in the way things get done locally.

Whilst the local Council cannot run everything, it does play a vital role in overseeing, guiding and directing community activity by other groups: and unlike others it has a legal status, the power to raise money through Council Tax, is subject to a code of conduct and is both financially and democratically accountable to the electorate.

*** For more information contact Chris Rolley, Town Clerk, on 01342 323636 or email townclerk@eastgrinstead.gov.uk**

Art school comes to East Court

EAST Court is now home to a new art school run by the South East School of Art which offers a wide range of classes for students of all ages and abilities.

Professional artists and experienced teachers help small groups of pupils develop their skills in drawing, painting, printmaking, lettering, calligraphy and sculpture.

There are also classes for A level students, workshops for 11 to 14-year-olds and an after-school drawing class for 7 to 11-year-olds.

To find out more visit the school's website at www.sesart.co.uk, phone 01342 316315 or email info@sesart.co.uk.

Retired professional? Contact Probus

RETIRED professionals who want to maintain social contacts with like-minded business people can now join the town's new Meridian Probus Club.

East Grinstead's first Probus Club, now 30 years old, is one of the biggest and most active in the country but its popularity has reached the point where a second Club is necessary to meet the growing demand.

The Meridian Club meets on the first Wednesday morning of every month. To find out more, contact Ken Jordan on 01342 325823 or email him at jordakfina@hotmail.com



Julie to be new Town Clerk

JULIE Holden, who was appointed as East Grinstead’s new Town Clerk at a Council meeting in December, will take up her role from 1 May when Chris Rolley retires after 25 years in the post.

Council Leader James Baldwin said Julie, who is currently Head of Revenues and Benefits with Tandridge District Council, had shown she would be a “worthy and effective ambassador” for East Grinstead.

Julie thanked councillors, saying she was “deeply grateful” for the confidence they were placing in her. “This role will be a formidable opportunity and a challenge, but one which I will relish and to which I will commit much hard work,” she said.

“I am confident Julie will prove a worthy successor,” said James. “There will be a comprehensive hand-over which will allow Julie to get to know the town, and just as important, allow the town to get to know her.”

Outdoor team’s true grit

THE Council’s outdoor staff have been praised for keeping the town open during this winter’s heavy snowfalls. The responsibility for clearing roads belongs to West Sussex County Council: Mid Sussex District Council is charged with clearing car parks.

But East Grinstead’s outdoor team supported the two councils’ efforts in the face of almost overwhelming odds by scattering 15 tons of grit around the town centre, and ensuring access to doctors’ surgeries and the emergency services was maintained.

The Town Council also spent £2,250 on a new motorised snow broom for use on town centre pavements.

Tools and Trades

THE town museum is hosting an exhibition of old work implements, mounted by the Tools and Trades History Society, until 22 May.

The Society preserves the hand tools used in historic trades which are often the only remaining evidence of what were once everyday activities.

To find out more, email TATHS at treasurer@taths.org.uk

SEE the Council website at www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk for news, minutes and agendas, the town diary, councillors’ email addresses and longer versions of stories in this Civic News.

Councils do deal on public toilets

A pioneering deal between the Town Council and Mid Sussex District Council could see the temporary public toilets in King Street car park replaced by the end of this year.

Town councillors have repeatedly complained that the temporary facilities opposite the cinema are inadequate and reflect poorly on the town with visitors.

But negotiations now concluded between the two councils will see the District Council paying the £200,000 cost of building a permanent replacement, while the Town Council has agreed to take on the cost of cleaning and maintaining the new facilities.

The new brick-built block will include toilets for men and women, facilities for the disabled and a baby-changing area. Cllr Ginie Waddingham praised the two councils’ cooperative approach to the scheme saying it was “essential” to offer first class facilities to the influx of tourists expected to visit once the Bluebell Railway extension reaches East Grinstead.

Neighbourhood Watch

NEIGHBOURHOOD Watch relies on communities working with their local police force to prevent and detect crime.

Chief Inspector Edward De La Rue has appealed for more volunteers to assist the police in keeping East Grinstead safe from criminal and antisocial behaviour.

*To find out more contact eastgrinstead.npt@sussex.pnn.police.uk.

Neighbourhood Watch needs



Your town, your future, your say...

THE Town Council is to ask local groups and organisations for their views on how East Grinstead should develop over the next 15 years.

Members are currently working on a draft vision to give the public a real say in the future of the town. This will help to establish principles which will ultimately form the basis of a Neighbourhood Plan, to be drawn up in accordance with the coalition Government’s localism agenda.

Council Diary

10 March	(Th)	Public Services
14 March	(M)	Planning
17 March	(Th)	Amenities & Tourism
17 March	(Th)	Charities
24 March	(Th)	Finance & General Purposes
4 April	(M)	Council
5 April	(T - 6.30pm)	Annual Town Meeting
5 April	(T)	Planning
26 April	(T)	Planning
16 May	(M)	Annual Town Council
17 May	(T)	Planning
6 June	(M)	Planning
9 June	(Th)	Public Services
16 June	(Th)	Amenities & Tourism
16 June	(Th)	Charities
23 June	(Th)	Finance & General Purposes
23 June	(Th)	Special Council
27 June	(M)	Planning
4 July	(M)	Council
18 July	(M)	Planning
8 August	(M)	Planning
5 September	(M)	Planning
8 September	(Th)	Public Services
15 September	(Th)	Amenities & Tourism
15 September	(Th)	Charities
22 September	(Th)	Finance & General Purposes

All full Committee and Council meetings are held in the Council Chamber at East Court Mansion and are open to the public. Meetings start at 7.45pm except those of the Charities Committee which start after the Amenities & Tourism Committee. Council meetings allow 30 minutes for public questions commencing at 7.45 pm. Committee meetings allow 15 minutes for public questions commencing at 7.45 p.m.

Useful telephone numbers

East Grinstead Town Council	01342 323636
West Sussex County Council Area Highways	
	01243 642105
East Grinstead Learning Centre	01342 321874
Citizens' Advice Bureau	01342 321638
Library, West Street	01342 410050
Help Point at the Library	01342 300780
Queen Victoria Hospital	01342 414000
Downland Housing Association	0845 6887717
Olympos Leisure Centre	01342 328616
Police Station, East Court	0845 6070999
Mid Sussex District Council	01444 458166
East Grinstead Visitor Information	01342 410121
Samaritans	0845 7909090
Chequer Mead	01342 302000
Museum	01342 302233
EG CVS & Volunteer Centre	01342 328080

Contact the Town Council at:

**East Court Mansion, College Lane,
East Grinstead, RH19 3LT. 01342 323636**

Or visit our website at

www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk

email: towncouncil@eastgrinstead.gov.uk

Need help with Council services?

FIND help with services provided by West Sussex County Council, Mid Sussex District Council or East Grinstead Town Council at the Help Point in East Grinstead Library, West St.

Monday 9.30am - 7pm
Tuesday to Thursday 9.30am - 6pm
Friday/Saturday 9.30am - 5pm
Phone 01342 300780. Fax 01342 410262

email: east.grinstead.help.point@westsussex.gov.uk

Contact your Councillor

Herontye

Stephen Barnett: 10 Woods Hill Close 326001
[LD] PI, PS, A&T, F&GP Ashurst Wood RH19 3RJ

Ian Dixon Chevalhurst, Dunnings Road 317213
[LD] PS, A&T East Grinstead RH19 4AD

Rob Musk Scandia, Hurst Farm Road 313310
[LD] PI, A&T* F&GP East Grinstead, RH19 4BL

Town

James Baldwin Scarletts, Sandy Lane 321347
[LD] A&T, F&GP* East Grinstead RH19 3LP

Jim Joyce-Nelson 1 Dexter Drive 314727
[LD] PI, PS, F&GP East Grinstead RH19 4SU

Virginia Waddingham 11 Beckett Way 326627
[LD] PI, PS, F&GP# East Grinstead RH19 4SF

Worsted

Margaret Collins, DL Bodinnick, Lewes Road 324296
[LD] PS#, F&GP East Grinstead RH19 3UD

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Barry Starmer Kimberley, Pine Grove 300534
[LD] PI #, A&T East Grinstead RH19 2BB

F&GP - Finance & General Purposes, A&T - Amenities & Tourism,
PI - Planning, PS - Public Services,*Chairman, # Vice Chairman.

All phone numbers are 01342 and are Councillors' private numbers. C - Conservative. LD - Liberal Democrat

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For further information please contact East Grinstead Town Council on 01342 323636

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