

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT 2008/2009 CIVIC YEAR

I am pleased to present this report at the end of my mayoral year, the second of this administration. The Council, which was elected in May 2007, has continued to focus on service delivery, maintaining quality in our financial and support administration, which is critical in the deteriorating economic climate, and trying to ensure at all times that we listen to and serve our community as meaningfully as possible.

Can I begin by thanking the public, who have attended our meetings and shown support in other ways. Attendances have been particularly good when we have had controversial planning applications, or discussions on items that have a wide community interest. This thanks applies equally to the local press. This is a difficult time for local newspapers and locally the merger of the Courier and Observer into a single new title will hopefully provide the economy of scale to ensure the continuance of a local East Grinstead newspaper, based upon East Grinstead values, which I and my colleagues consider is an important contributor to news dissemination, robust but fair comment and healthy democracy.

The Planning Committee considered over 300 planning applications during the civic year, well down on recent years. The Committee continues to make recommendations on all applications submitted within the civil parish and comments also on planning appeals and other consultations. Members visited many of the application sites in their Wards and studied the plans in advance of the meetings. The District Council reported on 313 of their planning decisions. It was noted that some 86% of the Committee's recommendations were upheld at the District Council, broadly similar to last year.

During the year we were informed that the Area Action Plan was now unviable. This was welcome, but unsurprising, news as it was clearly apparent that the scheme for 2,500 homes at Imberhome with a full outer relief road was seriously flawed and was no longer affordable, deliverable or environmentally acceptable. The continued opposition from Surrey and East Sussex County Councils, which was consistent throughout, merely applied the last nails to the coffin. Nonetheless there has been a continuing strong focus on the Core Strategy, a document planning the future of Mid Sussex to 2026. Locally the Town Council has grasped the nettle by forming a Three Tiers Group comprising representatives of all three tiers of council locally, an initiative that has the support of Mid Sussex District Council. Work is well advanced on the Infrastructure deficit and needs report and an independent transport report has been commissioned. It is hoped to complete submissions from the Three Tiers Group by early June but this will be subject to receiving outstanding data from West Sussex County Council, which is essential to support the evidence case. Once the Three Tiers Group and the Town Council have completed their work any submission on acceptable future housing in East Grinstead will be the subject of a Town Meeting.

Last year my predecessor Councillor Dixon wrote "It will be interesting to see the effect that the credit crunch has on planning issues locally. There is already evidence that developers are struggling to sell some of the many flats erected in recent years. If this brings a change to the pattern of development locally with a greater emphasis on small family housing, the Planning Committee would welcome this." Well the credit crunch developed into the biggest recession in all our lifetimes, house sales have reduced spectacularly for all types of housing and house building has virtually ground to a halt. Furthermore we now have a number of abandoned eyesore sights scattered throughout the Town with little likelihood of early completion. The Planning Committee will nonetheless do what it can to urge landowners to tidy their sites where appropriate, working alongside Mid Sussex District Council in this objective

The Public Services Committee has been active in a number of public consultations ensuring effective and considered representations are made in the interests of the local community. In addition to this the Committee has been active in building relationships with a number of external agencies and bodies and to this end we have welcomed presentations at our meetings from a number of such organisations.

The Committee were pleased to welcome speakers at each meeting during the civic year. In June Brian Hughes, Director of West Sussex Primary Care Trust spoke about the North East Review. In September Mary Goode and Heather Bunce of the Queen Victoria Hospital spoke about the hospitals redevelopment plans and regarding development issues generally. In November Anthony Brittain, Vice Chairman of EG Fleet, informed us about community transport issues locally. At the same meeting we received a presentation from Mid Sussex District Council Cabinet Member Garry Wall, and two senior officers Mark Fisher and Sue Rees regarding the new parking machines, parking charges and the parking review. Consequential upon this we have been asked to lead upon a local community consultation response to the comprehensive review which will commence later this year to take effect from April 2010. In January we had a useful presentation from Tim Yair, West Sussex County Council Cycling Officer and in March we were pleased to welcome Sue Chapman Head of Midwifery at Surrey and Sussex Health Care NHS Trust and her colleague Charlotte O'Brien General Manager for Women and Child Health regarding the new midwife led unit at East Surrey Hospital Maternity Services.

A wide range of issues were considered by the Committee during the year. In addition to those already mentioned this has included a regular item on policing issues locally, we contributed to the West Sussex Housing Market Assessment, made a response to the BT programme of proposed public payphone removals, and considered a wide range of issues in relation to Gatwick Airport and particularly items in relation to the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign. Committee also dealt with London Road footway improvements, job centre issues, the use of the paved area in front of Broadleys, responded to the West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service integrated management plan, and gave consideration to a number of public bridleways and footways issues including Rice's Hill. Here the Town Council co-ordinated a formal request under the Wildlife and Countryside Act to have Rice's Hill added to the Definitive Map. Other issues included concessionary fares, public transport matters, and consideration of reports from Council representatives on outside bodies.

In the coming year we are hopefully looking forward to seeing the East Grinstead Railway Station replaced with a more appropriate building, seeing completion of the National Cycle Route between the Worth and Forest Ways by a clearly defined routes through the town centre, seeing progress on a number of health care issues locally including outcome of the North East Review and further progress with regards to improvements on the Queen Victoria Hospital site, and completion of the parking review following full and effective consultation.

The Amenities and Tourism Committee is responsible for all buildings in the ownership of the Town Council. Income remained above budget for our three buildings – Meridian Hall, East Court Mansion and the Old Court House – but towards the end of the year we began to see a reduction in some usage with a marginal adverse impact on income. These trends are being watched carefully. As a consequence we are focussing our efforts on specific targeted hire markets, have reviewed fees and charges and continue with our forward maintenance programme, allied with a particular focus on driving up customer care and standards generally.

The work of the Housekeeping Team has continued with a continuing focus on graffiti removal, agency work for the two principal authorities and supporting planting and clean up initiatives locally. We were pleased that East Grinstead received a Silver Award in the 2008 South and South East in Bloom competition and we applaud the work of the East Grinstead in Bloom Committee under the chairmanship of Councillor Banks, in partnership with the Housekeeping Team and other agencies. We are looking to build on this success in 2009.

The Council is committed to maintaining high standards of maintenance in its land holdings. In respect of Mount Noddy Cemetery the new Memorial Wall opened at the end of April and is a valued additional facility enabling the public to remember their loved ones. Earlier in the civic year a new memorial stone was unveiled at the Cemetery commemorating those who lost their lives in the Whitehall bombing 65 years previously.

Our two allotment sites, at Mount Noddy and Imberhorne, continue to be fully subscribed and we are indebted to the dedicated local Allotment Associations that manage and maintain these within the long-term leases that the Town Council has with them. Long-term we recognise the need for more allotments in East Grinstead to meet demand. We intend this issue to be addressed through the Infrastructure audit.

Gratitude is also expressed to the East Grinstead Tourism initiative and the work of the staff in this area. Their work in conjunction with that of the Business Support Group under the chairmanship of Councillor Mainstone, is of critical importance in these difficult times. Recent progress in relation to the northern extension of the Bluebell Railway and the planning that is going into ensuring the town is well equipped to gain maximum benefit from the Bluebell's arrival bodes well for the future. Similarly the creation of a new enhanced East Grinstead Business Association, incorporating East Grinstead Chamber of Commerce, is very much to be welcomed as has been the success of Spring Sunday, organised by High Street retailers, and other town events.

The Charities Committee, which looks after Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre and the Parish Halls Trusts, is independent of the Town Council but is managed by the Town Council as sole custodian Trustee. All Councillors are currently Trustees of these Charities and the Town Clerk serves as Clerk to the Trustees. Chequer Mead has continued to perform well with a continuing attractive programme of events and activities in the Theatre, in the Gallery and steady usage of the meeting rooms. Our caterer has maintained high standards.

Pleasingly total equity in the Trust again increased during the year, though by less than in previous years. It is imperative that the Town Council, the only core funder and the owner of the building, ensures a sound financial base that recognises future capital spending commitments, not least on the building and its fabric, and a potential decline in consumer spending. The policy to restrict the grant to £80,000 per annum, which in real terms has represented a marginal reduction year on year, is reviewed annually. When the asset base is considered to be sufficient to enable the subsidy to be reviewed downwards such decision will be made, but not before.

As always we are most grateful to the excellent Chief Executive, John Durrant, his hard working and diligent staff, and the many valued volunteers for their commitment and achievements.

The Parish Halls has continued to operate throughout the year notwithstanding the Council and Trustee's best efforts to seek refurbishment, possibly with other parties. Proposals to embrace Age Concern within the building have now been abandoned primarily due to the credit crunch and because costs of development were in excess of those that were affordable and justifiable. The work of the Parish Halls Scrutiny Group under the chairmanship of Councillor Gillbard has been particularly valuable, especially in aspects of due diligence. We are now looking at other options for the site recognising that it is the services provided under the charitable trust deed that are most important.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee has overall responsibility for the Council's resources, its finances and staffing. The Committee has paid particular focus to establishment matters, staff and member training, internal and external audit, risk management and management of performance. A scrutiny group, under the chairmanship of

Councillor Baldwin, has been established to comprehensively review all performance indicators and the way that performance is managed.

The Town Council's financial position remains robust. The Council has no debts, its revenue balances of nearly £400,000 decreased marginally during the year but by less than initially budgeted, and we were able to fund a modest but viable capital programme. In the coming year a Band D council taxpayer will pay £63.89 for their portion of the Town Council's services, an increase of 2.9% on 2008/2009 financial year. The Council has reaffirmed its commitment that future increases for the life of this administration will be less than 5% annually.

The Finance & General Purposes Committee is responsible for community support and for our various partnerships. The Council recognises that it is best able to fulfil its obligations where it works constructively in partnership with others. This creates an enhanced degree of community ownership and real benefits, not least financial. Here I would like to particularly commend the East Grinstead Town Twinning Association, the Christmas Lights Committee, the East Grinstead Christmas Promotions Committee and other similar groups locally, all of who do such sterling work locally. I particularly wish to pay tribute to East Grinstead Community Partnership, which has now closed down. The Partnership undertook much valued work in driving forward the Town Health check and Action plan over a five-year period. Thanks are particularly due to Don Cooper the first Chairman and his successor Bobby Hamilton and to Andrew Bass and later Christine Hardisty who clerked the Partnership during this period. The Town Council will resume delivery ownership of the few outstanding Action items.

There are also many other voluntary groups and organisations working within the town who do excellent work. It has been my pleasure to see them at work this year, and I am delighted that the Town Council is able to support their work with grant aid and/ or assistance in kind. We do thank them all. Equally I do thank our service clubs – Rotary, Lions and the like who perform much valued and selfless public service.

The F&GP Committee has lead responsibility for the Environment and Sustainability Working Group, under the chairmanship of Councillor Mrs Brunsdon. The prime area of focus this year has been in respect of the Greening Campaign. Imberhorne Ward is already progressing with this initiative, which is designed to reduce carbon footprint, and Herontye Ward is about to embark similarly. The 'jute bag' initiative proved particularly popular as besides meeting all necessary green credentials it also promoted the local economy.

In September I was pleased to hold a Civic Service at St Swithun's Church, and I sincerely thank the Rev Canon Clive Everett Allen for agreeing to this.

During the year I was pleased to raise in total £7,500 for my charity, Age Concern East Grinstead. A number of fundraising events were held including a Race Night, a Quiz Night and a Murder Mystery evening coupled with a Dinner Dance, all in the Meridian Hall. I would like to thank everyone who supported these and other events. As a consequence I was able to present a cheque for £2,000 to Age Concern East Grinstead earlier this year, a second cheque for £500 was donated by 'One Night Stand' the performers at my Charity Dinner Dance. I am now able to present a further cheque in an amount of £5,000, which includes a sum of over £1,000 generously donated from drink sales on the night courtesy of Melvin Phillips and Light Bar Services and PLB wines. This is to be ring fenced by Age Concern, East Grinstead, for their future building development or relocation. At this juncture can I also mention the tremendous support I have received from the ATC and NTC this year, assisting me at a number of my Mayoral events. The young people in these organisations are tremendous ambassadors for young people in our town. I will be sending a cheque to the NTC but am delighted to hand over a cheque for £200 to the ATC tonight.

In my year as Town Mayor I have attended 217 events, excluding council and committee meetings. A list of these is attached to this report as Appendix A. I am most grateful to my husband, Neal, who has served as my consort and my rock. I have been enormously grateful for the support and friendship everywhere I have been. Everyone has been tremendously welcoming and this has made my year all the more enjoyable.

In July we were pleased to welcome Councillor Quinn to our ranks, elected to Ashplats Ward, following the sad death of Councillor Lord, this time last year. I should like to thank all Town Councillors for their faith and trust in me this year and for their own diligence and hard work. There have been, during the year, six Council meetings, 42 Committee meetings, five Scrutiny Group meetings, one Annual Town Meeting and four meetings of the Charities Committee. Councillors' attendances at all of these have been good, 78% for Committees and 83% for Council meetings, and Members have fulfilled their responsibilities with distinction. I have been particularly grateful to my Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Marmara, who has supported me at many functions and represented me at others when I was not available, the Leader of the Council and the Committee Chairs.

I also wish to thank the Town Council staff for their support for the Council and its work during the year also. It has been much appreciated. This year we were particularly pleased to welcome as new employees Nigel Foster, Assistant Amenities Manager and Sue Batt as Caretaker/Cleaner. We also congratulate Keith Astley on his promotion to Amenities Manager. We wish them all well.

Finally I wish to thank the public of East Grinstead for the welcome they have given Neal and myself throughout the year. It has been a huge privilege to serve the Town as first citizen. East Grinstead is a lovely place, with lovely people and the memories we take from the year will stay with us forever.

Councillor Ginnie Waddingham,
Town Mayor
2008/2009 civic year.

APPENDIX A

2008

May

- 13 Annual Tourism Forum at Town Museum
- 14 Young Enterprise at Chequer Mead
- 16 Commemoration Service for Revd John Mason Neale at Sackville College
- 17 East Grinstead Big Day Out at Station*
Art Exhibition at Greenstede Gallery, Chequer Mead*
Football Festival at East Grinstead Rugby Club*
- 21 Reception for French students and Fonthill Lodge pupils at East Court
It's a Knockout at the Kings Centre
Guinness Book of Records event at Wetherspoons*
- 23 Cricket Week event at Tunbridge Wells accompanied by the Town Clerk
- 24 Street Collection for Town Museum
Queen Victoria Hospital Concert at Chequer Mead*
- 28 Sports Taster Session for Outset Youth at East Grinstead Cricket & Hockey Club
High Sheriff of West Sussex Garden Party at Heaslands, Haywards Heath*

June

- 1 Hanging Baskets in High Street
Treasure Hunt prize draw at Town Museum
- 3 MS Society Information Day in Meridian Hall
Bluebell Railway Exhibition at Town Museum
- 4 Reception for visitors from Schwaz at East Court
- 11 Environmental Trail Day at St Peter's School with Councillor Mrs Brunsdon
- 18 Furnihelp Mid Sussex AGM at Horsted Keynes
- 19 Fonthill Lodge School production of "Yanomamo" with Mr Iain Waddingham
- 20 Concert in aid of St Catherine's Hospice at Chequer Mead
- 21 Opening of Founder's Fete Day at Sackville College
Credit Union AGM at St Swithun's Parish Hall
East Grinstead Choral Society Concert at Chequer Mead*
- 24 North Area Music Centre Concert at Chequer Mead
- 25 Tourism Forum at Town Museum
- 28 On air with BBC Southern Counties Radio
- 29 Scout Awards at Imberhorne School
- 30 Olympics Event at Imberhorne School

Jul

- 3-7 Town Twinning visit to Bourg-de-Peage*
- 9 Memorial Stone Service at Mount Noddy for Whitehall Bombing victims, with Deputy Town Mayor*
- 12 Lunch at Sackville College
Graduations at School of Oriental Medicine, Green Hedges Avenue*
East Grinstead Soroptimists Garden Party
- 15 EG4Kidz Event at East Grinstead Library, West Street
Visit to Trefoil Montisorri School at Peredur Centre
- 17 Photocall for East Grinstead Farmers Market
- 18 Communion at Sackville College
- 19 Veterans Day at East Court with Deputy Town Mayor*
Mid Summer Market Walkabout with Deputy Town Mayor and Consort
Age Concern Quiz Night with Deputy Town Mayor*
- 22 Waterloo Band Concert at Chequer Mead in aid of Army Benevolent Fund
- 25 Choirpower Concert at Chequer Mead*
- 28 London and Kent Mayor's/Chairmen's event at Eltham Palace*
- 30 Reception for Canadian Girl Guides at East Court and Meridian Line

- Strawberry Tea at St Luke's Church
- Aug
- 6 Scout Camp at Ardingly Showground
- 7 Spray Can Art for Motiv& at Wallis Centre
- 9 First Match of the season for East Grinstead Town Football Club*
- 17 Civic Reception at Arundel given by Chairman of Arun District Council in aid of his charity fund*
- 18 Meeting with Chairman of Queen Victoria Hospital
- 22 Motiv8 barbeque at Wallis Centre
Garden Party for residents of Lingfield Lodge
- 27 Grenestede Talking News AGM at East Court
- 28 Big Speed Read at Imberhorne Upper School with East Grinstead Library
Town Council staff barbeque at East Court
- Sept
- 1 East Grinstead Rotary Club open evening at Chequer Mead
- 3 Launch at East Grinstead Town Museum of print from original dated 1833 by W G Moss
- 4 East Grinstead Meridian Rotary Club charity cheque presentations at Lingfield Golf Course
- 5 Age Concern Annual General Meeting and Tea Dance in Meridian Hall
- 6 Cheese & Wine Charity fundraising for Dartford Town Mayor at Dartford*
- 8 Sunnyside Community Pre-School Open Day at Peredur Centre
- 10 Halsford Park School Anniversary Tree Planting
- 13 Departure from High Street of charity walkers in aid of Aqueduct
Coffee morning at St Luke's Church in aid of Age Concern East Grinstead
Garden Party for Town Museum at Chequer Mead
- 14 Ribbon cutting for refurbished United Reform Church, Moat Road
Town Mayor's "At Home" day at East Court*
- 16 Reception for Imberhorne School students and their visiting students from Germany
- 19 Music & Arts Festival AGM at East Court*
1343 East Grinstead Squadron's Dining In Dinner at Roebuck Hotel, with Deputy Town Mayor*
- 20 Special transport day at Martells, Queens Walk
- 21 Crawley Mayor's Civic Service at St John the Baptist Crawley followed by lunch at Mayor's home*
Presentation of prizes to Ploughing Match champions at Imberhorne Farm*
- 23 EG4Kidz competition presentations at Town Library
- 24 Business Support Group meeting at East Court
- 25 Opening of East Grinstead Children & Family Centre at Blackwell Farm Road
- 26 Guinea Pig buffet lunch at Felbridge Hotel
Reception for young people with disabilities from Twin Towns at East Court
East Grinstead in Bloom Awards presentation at Meridian Hall with Deputy Town Mayor*
- 27 Opening of New Life Church with Leader of Council
Dinner for young people with disabilities from Twin Towns at Hindleap Warren*
- 28 Solemn Vespers for Michaelmas at Worth Abbey*
- Oct
- 2 Gateway Club Party at Wallis Centre*
- 3 AGM for Friends of East Grinstead Museum
- 4 Reception for Town Twinning Mindelheim Choir at East Court
East Grinstead Lions Charter Dinner at Ramada Hotel, Gatwick*
- 7 Day out at Bluewater with Mayor of Dartford accompanied by Cllr Mrs Mainstone
- 8 Outset Youth AGM at Pulborough accompanied by Cllr Baldwin
- 11 Carib Aid Creative Talent Show at Chequer Mead

- 12 Launch of Costume Hire facility at Chequer Mead*
- 17 Brambletye School fund raising exhibition at Greenstede Gallery, Chequer Mead
Concert in aid of Age Concern at Chequer Mead
- 19 Concert at Sackville College
- 20 Access AGM and Burrin Award presentation at East Court
- 21 Funeral Service for ex Councillor John Thompson
- 22 Coffee morning at Swan Mead
Meridian Rotary Speaker's Night at The Chequers, Forest Row*
- 26 Mayor's Civic Service at St Swithun's Church*
Lunch at St Lukes Church in memory of Alan Lord an in aid of Age Concern*
- 27 Shortmat Bowls Presentations in Meridian Hall
- 29 Launch of new store design for Boots the Chemist in London Road
- 31 Company of Friends production of My Fair Lady at Chequer Mead*
- Nov
- 1 Fireworks at East Grinstead Football Club*
- 4 Reception at East Court for Trefoil school children
Bag of Hats fundraising for Chequer Mead Friends at Chequer Mead with Deputy Town Mayor and Cllr James Baldwin*
- 7 Fonthill Lodge School Bicentenary Exhibition at Town Museum
- 9 Remembrance Sunday wreath laying at East Court and High Street
- 14 Race Night in aid of Age Concern in Meridian Hall*
- 17 Meeting with new Town traders at East Court
- 18 Queen Victoria Hospital staff awards at Chequer Mead
- 19 Soroptimists' Caribbean Evening at East Court
- 21 Cowan Architects Anniversary Lunch at Ashdown Park Hotel
Town Twinning AGM at East Court with Deputy Town Mayor
- 22 Wine Tasting with Meridian Rotary Club in Meridian Hall with Deputy Town Mayor and Mayoress*
- 25 Cutting of turf at Imberhorne for Bluebell Railway
- 26 Rotary Club evening at The Chequers Hotel, Forest Row
- 27 Accreditation celebration at East Grinstead Town Museum
Gateway Club Christmas Party at the Wallis Centre accompanied by Deputy Town Mayor
- 30 Beaver Scouts Christingle at Imberhorne Lower School
- Dec
- 3 Guinea Pig Club Dinner at Windlesham Golf Course
- 4 East Grinstead Christmas Shopping Evening*
SAAFA Concert at Chequer Mead*
- 6 Rotary Club Tree of Goodwill lighting in High Street accompanied by Deputy Town Mayor*
- 7 East Grinstead Christmas Shopping Day*
St Catherine's Hospice Tree of Light Service at St Swithun's Church*
- 9 Concert in aid of Lifeboat Institute at Chequer Mead
- 10 Presentation of NVQ certificate at Blonde McIndoe Centre, Queen Victoria Hospital
Recording of Christmas message with Greenstede Talking News
- 12 Red Cross raffle at Pavilion Playgroup at Olympus
Age Concern Christmas Party in Meridian Hall accompanied by Councillor Baldwin
Presentation to Access All Sports at CJs in High Street
Open Evening at Waitrose Supermarket
- 15 Tour of Wards at Queen Victoria Hospital
- 17 Pensioners' Party at St Mary's, Windmill Lane
Imberhorne School Year 13 Presentations at Imberhorne Lane
- 18 Meads Primary School talk to years 5 and 6
Kumon maths presentations at Pavilion Room, Olympus

- 1343 ATC Squadron event at Morton Road Drill Hall*
- 20 Age Concern Saturday Club at Swan Mead
Joined Rotary Club collection round in Garden Wood area*
- 21 Mayor's Carols and Reception at East Court*
- 23 Joined Town Council staff for Christmas Lunch at East Court
- Jan 2009**
- 11 Volunteers' Party at Chequer Mead
- 16 Photocall for parcels to troops abroad
- 17 Opening of Hallmark Travel Exhibition in Meridian Hall*
Formal handing over of 4VEP for Bluebell Railway at East Grinstead Station*
- 20 Monica Cantwell Trust pantomime at Lingfield Community Centre*
- 21 Rotary Club "Youth Speaks" at Chequer Mead*
- 24 Crawley Borough Council Civic Ball at The Hawth*
- 29 Retailers Meeting at East Court for Business Group
- 30 East Grinstead Operatic Society's production of "Stepping Out" at Chequer Mead*
- Feb**
- 4 Exhibition of paintings by John Joseph at Town Museum
- 6 Reception for NYCPE visitors to East Court
Celebration for East Grinstead Hockey Club on becoming Premier League winners (indoor champions)*
- 9 East Grinstead Business Association Dinner at Dunnings Mill
- 10 Meeting at East Court with Dr Adrian Bull, Chief Executive, Queen Victoria Hospital
- 13 Fundraising event at British Heart Foundation Shop in London Road
"Talk Lunch" at Halsford Park School with Year 1 students
- 14 Lions party for Senior Citizens at Sackville School*
- 20 "On with the Show" Exhibition at Town Museum
- 21 Wellbeing Seminar with Council for Voluntary Service at Glen Vue*
Performance by Act One Beginners at Chequer Mead*
- 23 Meeting with Justice & Peace Group at New Evergreen Restaurant*
- 24 Meeting with East Grinstead Business Association (EGBA)
- 25 Meeting with local retailers at CJs Coffee Bar
- 26 Performance of "Neville's Island" with Mayor of Tunbridge Wells at Trinity Theatre*
- 27 Fairtrade event at Sackville School to meet a Palestinian olive producer
- Mar**
- 4 Interview for Grenestede Talking News
Presentation by Rotary Club to St Piers at Lingfield
Welcomed Youth Council to East Court
- 6 Greenstede Gallery Lighting Opening Night at Chequer Mead*
- 7 Lions Sponsored Swim at Olympus*
- 8 Artemis School of Speech & Drama*
- 15 Wedding Fair at East Court*
- 17 Reception for Meads School pupils at East Court
Meeting with retailers regarding Spring Sunday event
- 18 Performance of "The Likes of Us" at Brambletye School*
- 20 Performance of "Old Tyme Music Hall" at Chequer Mead*
- 21 Soroptimists President's Dinner at Roebuck Hotel*
- 23 Multiple Sclerosis AGM at Crawley College
- 24 Reception for Imberhorne School and Tanzanian students at East Court
- 25 Reception for Omlets at East Court
- 26 Mental Health AGM at Glen Vue
Reception for Fonthill Lodge and French students at East Court
- 28 Cheese & Wine Party for East Grinstead Museum in Mayor's Parlour*
- 29 Presentation at East Grinstead Rugby Club*
- 31 Reception for Tuesday Scout Group at East Court

Apr

- 3 U3A Spring Choir Concert at Parish Halls in aid of Age Concern
- 4 Model Railway Exhibition at Sackville School
Judging for "Search for a Star" at Chequer Mead*
- 5 Spring Shopping Day*

- 8 Annual Town Meeting
- 14 Rotary Club lunch at The Star, Lingfield
- 16 Grant presentation at Bluebell Railway accompanied by Deputy Town Mayor
- 17 Mid Sussex District Council's Chairman's Charity Dinner Dance at Claire Hall*
- 18 Balloon Launch for Leukaemia at Wallis Centre
- 19 Target Shooting Club prize giving
- 21 Tea with St Dunstan's Church raffle winner in Mayor's Parlour, East Court
Civic Reception for East Grinstead Hockey Team*
- 24 Bluebell Railway Pullman Lunch at Horsted Keynes*
Opening of Stag Theatre, Sevenoaks*
- 25 Mayor's Charity Dinner Dance and Murder Mystery in Meridian Hall*
- 26 Sunshine Sevens Tournament*
Vintage Bus Day*
Scouts St George's Day Parade at St Swithun's Church
- 28 Duke of Edinburgh Award Event at Meridian Hall*
- 29 Young Enterprise Area Board Award Presentations at Chequer Mead
- 30 Mount Noddy Memorial Wall dedication ceremony

May

- 2 East Grinstead Arts Festival at Chequer Mead
Street Collection for East Grinstead Town Museum
- 4 May Fair in High Street with Deputy Mayor and Mayoress*
- 5 Imberhorne School Graduation event at Effingham Park Hotel
- 6 Young Enterprise event at Chequer Mead
- 8 Charity Evening at St Catherine's Hospice for Crawley Town Mayor's Charity*
- 9 Oxfam Shop, London Road 25th Birthday celebration
East Grinstead Hockey Club Annual Awards*

* *accompanied by Consort*

Deputy Town Mayor

April

- 29 Young Enterprise Area Board Award Presentations at Chequer Mead,
following on from Mayor's earlier attendance in afternoon.

May

- 9 Councillor Barnett and Mrs Pauline Barnett represented Mayor at Tunbridge
Wells Charity Dinner/Dance