

# **P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

## **EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL**



### **Council reopens “Sunnyside Barn” to the Public**

The East Grinstead Town Council purchased the old St Barnabas church on Dunnings Road in July 2023 with the intention of opening it as a community use building. After months of work to insulate, renovate and fit out the building it is now ready to welcome its first users from 5th February.

Those who remember the building in decades passed will know that the original building on site was known as “The Barn” before the purchase and rebuilding by the diocese of Chichester who gave it the ecumenical name of St Barnabas (still keeping the link with the former name). The Town Council, looking to rename the building to reflect that it is now in public ownership, sought suggestions and hoping to retain “the barn” in the name. As the area is the “Sunnyside” area of the town, the Town Council chose Sunnyside Barn, as the new name.

It is hoped the space will also be used for homeworkers to have a pop-up office to reduce isolation, be a home for community groups, a venue for children’s birthday parties and other gatherings.

Groups who are already looking to use the building include:

Sea Cadets

Mums and babies yoga

Cardiac rehab group

Adult yoga

Art classes

Chair of the Amenities and Tourism Committee Cllr John Belsey said “News that the Church intended to sell came to the Council via a resident and it became clear how much having a community building in Sunnyside means to those living in this part of town. The Town Council moved fast to

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secure the building at a good price to ensure that it stays in public use and worked hard to get the building ready for reopening. It's been an exciting project to improve the building for such a potential range of different activities for residents and to strengthen our community."

Bookings and enquiries can be made to the community and tourism team at the library, where the calendar events and groups will be displayed or via email to: [Sunnysidebookings@eastgrinstead.gov.uk](mailto:Sunnysidebookings@eastgrinstead.gov.uk) The bookings for community groups will also be available on the Town Council and Visit East Grinstead Websites.

A drop in morning on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February to formally open The Sunnyside Barn, is open to all between 9.30 – 10.30am



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