



**STOP PRESS:** TOWN Council consultants have met residents, councillors and other interested groups to help formulate ideas for the **Neighbourhood Plan**. It is due to be presented in draft form to the Council on 7 January and will then embark on an open consultation for 6 weeks. From 8 January, the draft can be accessed at [eastgrinsteadplan.org.uk](http://eastgrinsteadplan.org.uk). Hard copies will be at East Court and the Library, or can be ordered by phone from East Court. After the consultation period ends, the final Plan will be presented to the Council meeting on 8 April, and if agreed, will go to Mid Sussex District Council for examination and referendum. Residents will be able to vote for or against the Plan later in 2013.

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# The Line

News from East Grinstead Town Council – where East meets West on the Meridian Line



## Bluebell Railway on track to arrive this Spring

It has taken almost 30 years and cost millions of pounds, but thanks to the faith and enthusiasm of countless steam train enthusiasts the Bluebell Railway's northern extension into East Grinstead mainline station will finally be finished this Spring.

The multi-million pound project means that for the first time ever, visitors from London will be able to connect directly to the Bluebell Line.

Welcoming the "unprecedented delivery of one of the south east's major tourist attractions direct to our doorstep" Town Promotions Officer Simon Kerr said: "It certainly is very much of a game-changer for the town's tourism prospects, and we will have a busy year putting plans into action and working with the Bluebell Railway to plan for the longer term. We are already preparing a special *Welcome to the Bluebell* edition of our annual tourism leaflet which is distributed throughout the South East, and we anticipate integrating more and more town events for the new visitor stream which will be arriving in the town. This is a marvellous opportunity which I hope East Grinstead will seize with both hands."

Stuart Scholes of the East Grinstead Business Association agreed. "Independent research indicates that a substantial percentage of Bluebell visitors will also venture into East Grinstead to visit cafes, restaurants and shops so we need to be ready to welcome them and to show that we are a destination in our own right."

Council Leader Norman Webster also welcomed the long-awaited arrival of the Bluebell into the station. "This historic opportunity will inject much-needed growth into the town economy during a long downturn across the nation, and must be welcomed wholeheartedly by the business community and by everyone who cares about the future of East Grinstead."





## Chequer Mead marks 15 years and 1 million customers



THE one-millionth visitor to Chequer Mead since it opened 15 years ago was greeted with cheers as she was presented with flowers and champagne to mark the theatre's landmark anniversary. Mrs Judy Ross arrived ahead of friends for a production of *Calendar Girls* only to be met by the Town Mayor Liz Bennett and theatre manager Nick Byrne. "I go to Chequer Mead as often as I can and I always enjoy it," said Judy. "It is a fantastic theatre and they put on some wonderful productions."

## Street Pastors keep town centre safe

TEAMS of Street Pastors will be patrolling the town centre on Friday and Saturday evenings alongside the police from the end of February.

The Pastors, who are all volunteers from *Churches Together in East Grinstead*, will work in pairs from 6pm until the early hours each night, as a Christian presence on the streets to help anyone who may be in need of assistance.

The scheme was pioneered in London by the Rev Les Isaac as a response to urban problems including late night drunkenness and violence, and has seen remarkable results including a drop in crime in areas where teams are deployed.

Volunteers, who are CRB checked and have references from their local parish churches, are trained by the Ascension Trust of which Rev Isaacs is the chairman. They are organised by a local coordinator, with support from the police, the Town Council and other agencies.

TIME and talent to spare? Then why not offer your services to the Community Volunteer Service? Opportunities include clerical work, gardening, management, theatre and museum stewards, drivers, catering, befriending, handyperson, charity shops and more. For more details see the website at [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk), or ring Loral Bennett on 01342 328080.

## East Court Circular

THE East Court Estate now issues a new monthly list of the events and clubs held on its premises. Called the East Court Circular, copies are available from the Tourist Desk in the library and the Town Council's East Court offices.

Alternatively it can be viewed on the Town Council website.

\* For further information please contact the tourist desk on 01342 410121 or email [d.spalding@eastgrinstead.gov.uk](mailto:d.spalding@eastgrinstead.gov.uk)

## Pop-up surgery in the High Street

TOWN councillors are making themselves more accessible to East Grinstead residents by taking to the streets once a month with a new mobile "surgery" where they can meet people and give advice on public services. They will be on the High Street on the first Saturday of each month between 10 – 11.30am, and will also be available from time to time to deal with specific issues of concern to the public. County, district and town councillors will also continue to attend some surgeries at the town library in West Street (ask for the rota at the library).

Contact details for all the town's councillors are on the back of The Line.

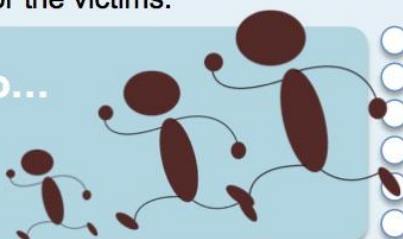




## Town tragedy remembered

PLANS are afoot to remember all those townspeople killed during WWII. This year marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Whitehall cinema bombing which took place on 9 July, 1943, in which 108 people died and 235 were seriously injured, the largest loss of life in any air raid in Sussex. Plans for the anniversary include planting white flowers in the beds around the High Street war memorial and a service of remembrance for the victims.

## Ready, get set, go... for the Sussex Living Marathon



**THE Sussex Living Marathon Weekend will be back in May.**

Three different races will take place at East Grinstead, Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill over a combined distance equalling the classic 26.2 miles Marathon challenge. Races can be entered individually or as a three-race series, and participants completing all three races will receive a medal.

**The three races are at:**

East Grinstead: 10 miles on Saturday 4 May

Haywards Heath: 10 miles on Sunday 5 May

Burgess Hill: 10k on Monday 6 May

All three races are staged using roads, pathways, trails and footpaths around beautiful Mid Sussex countryside. Routes are largely traffic-free, and will suit runners of all standards, but not wheelchair athletes.

There will also be a team relay option with three people running approximately 3.3 miles each, and children's races.

For more details contact the Sussex Living Marathon Weekend Office on 01797 230009. Or enter online at [www.runbritain.com](http://www.runbritain.com)

**\* Sponsorship packages are available.**

**For details contact Dawn Spalding who is based at the Visitor Information desk at the town library.**



**CHEQUER Mead** has launched a £60,000 appeal to refurbish its auditorium in a two-stage programme over the coming months. "We've seen an awful lot of bottoms on a great many seats over the past 15 years," laughed manager Nick Byrne, "so the time has come to look at replacing them and the worn carpet." Nick hopes patrons who enjoy the huge range of activities on offer at the theatre will give generously to the appeal. Anyone who donates the £100 cost of replacing a single seat will be honoured on a wall-mounted plaque.

THE town's Jubilee celebrations raised £2,400.25 which has been given to local charities including Meridian Radio, the Lions Club, the Museum and the Rotary Club.



**FOLLOWING** its highly successful scheme to offer residents cut-price alarms for sheds and other outbuildings, Mid Sussex District Council has come up with a new 'handbag' alarm to improve personal safety. **\* Alarms are available at a greatly reduced price from East Court and the town library.**

TOWN Clerk Julie Holden has appealed for witnesses to town centre accidents to report drivers' details to the police. Protective railings outside Lloyds Bank in the London Road have been repeatedly damaged in recent years by articulated lorries, and the cost of replacing them may in future fall on the Town Council unless it can be reclaimed from the drivers' own insurance, said Julie.



## Contact your Councillor

### Ashplats

Jacqueline Beckford (LD): 7 Woodlands Road, RH19 3EH. 01342 317864

Liz Bennett (Con): 39 Copse Close, RH19 3EF. 01342 301007

Danny Favor (Con): 7 Barn Field Place, RH19 3FD. 01342 410244

Tony Scott (Con): Flat 2, 26 Railway Approach, RH19 1BP. 01342 325045

### Baldwins

Margaret Belsey (Con): Gotwick Farm, Holtye Road, RH19 3PP. 01342 321574

Nick Hodges (Con): Wellbourne, 75 Lingfield Road, RH19 2EP. 01342 300113

Norman Webster (Con): 7 Newlands Crescent, RH19 1LF. 01342 317806

### Imberhorne

Heidi Brunsdon (Con): 83 Blount Avenue, RH19 1JN. 07889 837362

Bob Mainstone (LD): Mallaig, Windmill Lane, RH19 2DY. 01342 326454

Frank Osborne (Con): Wisborough, Furze Lane, RH19 2BQ. 01342 322646

Rex Whittaker (Con): 11 The Stennings, RH19 1PF. 01342 302515

### Town

Ben Burns (Con): 3 The Close, RH19 1DQ. 07740 075331

Nicola Burns (Con): 3 The Close, RH19 1DQ. 01342 315848

Peter Wyan (Con): 7 Clays Close, RH19 4DJ. 01342 313985

### Herontye

John OBrien (Con): 5 The Dell, RH19 3XP. 01342 321883

John Saul (Con): Little Beeches, Woods Hill Lane, RH19 3RF. 01342 822712

Dick Sweatman (Con): 81 Estcots Drive, RH19 3YW. 01342 322743

### Worsted

Garry Sillitoe (Con): 3 Farm Close, RH19 3QQ. 07771 892113

<b>East Grinstead Town Council</b>	<b>01342 323636</b>
<b>West Sussex CC Area Highways</b>	<b>01243 642105</b>
<b>East Grinstead Learning Centre</b>	<b>01342 321874</b>
<b>Citizens Advice Bureau</b>	<b>01342 321638</b>
<b>West Street Library</b>	<b>01342 410050</b>
<b>Library Help Point</b>	<b>01342 300780</b>
<b>Queen Victoria Hospital</b>	<b>01342 414000</b>
<b>Affinity Sutton</b>	<b>0845 6887717</b>
<b>King's Centre Centre</b>	<b>01342 328616</b>
<b>Police Station, East Court</b>	<b>0845 6070999</b>
<b>Mid Sussex District Council</b>	<b>01444 458166</b>
<b>East Grinstead Visitor Desk</b>	<b>01342 410121</b>
<b>Samaritans</b>	<b>0845 7909090</b>
<b>Chequer Mead</b>	<b>01342 302000</b>
<b>Museum</b>	<b>01342 302233</b>
<b>EG CVS &amp; Volunteer Centre</b>	<b>01342 328080</b>

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

The Help Point is open Monday 9.30am – 7pm, Tuesday to Thursday 9.30am – 6pm, Friday/Saturday 9.30am – 5pm.

## Meetings

7 January	(M)	Council
8 January	(T)	Planning
28 January	(M)	Planning
4 February	(M)	Council (Precept)
18 February	(M)	Planning
7 March	(Th)	Public Services
11 March	(M)	Planning
14 March	(Th)	Amenities and Tourism
14 March	(Th)	Charities
21 March	(Th)	F & GP
2 April	(T)	Planning
8 April	(M)	Council

Meetings in the East Court Council Chamber are open to the public and start at 7pm with a maximum of 30 minutes for public questions before Council meetings, and 15 minutes before Committee meetings.

**Email your councillor at:**  
**[initial.surname@eastgrinstead.gov.uk](mailto:initial.surname@eastgrinstead.gov.uk)**

## Upcoming events

\* THE Farmers Market is in the High Street every Thursday for local produce including baked goods, meat, fish, plants and vegetables.

\* THE Annual Town Meeting will take place at East Court on 23 April.

\* Seussical the Musical comes to Chequer Mead on 16 February with favourite characters including The Grinch, Horton the Elephant and the Cat in the Hat.

\* Songwriter Gerard Kenny will perform some of his legendary hits including *New York, New York* at Chequer Mead on 2 March, on the grand piano bought with the proceeds of his earlier concerts.

**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](http://www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk)**