

Members' Update – East Sussex County Council – April 2025

Cllr Bob Bowdler - Wealden East Division - *"The Heart of Wealden"*

(Heathfield, Horam, Hooe, Herstmonceux, Ninfield, Warbleton & Wartling parishes)

LOCAL ISSUES:

Heathfield, Rushlake Green & Punnetts Town: Water Main Update:

The utility road works are now passed Three Cups, but pending several sporadic diversions planned around the Rushlake Green area.

Fly Tipping:

There has been a spate of fly tipping across the area, cantering on Chiddingly, Laughton, Cross in Hand, Rushlake Green and Punnetts Town. Wealden have been quick to respond, however one area in Upper Greenwoods Lane, Punnetts Town is proving difficult due to the rotting condition of the waste material. PLEASE REPORT ANY SUSPICIOUS VEHICLES, particularly HGVs in remote areas. **THIS REMAINS ONGOING!**

Email: Street.scene@wealden.gov.uk or call 01323 443322 and ask for Street Scene.

VE-80:

Various Events planned in and around Heathfield, and on Rushlake Green on the 8 May. Also similar events taking place in my other parishes (listed above), which are widely advertised locally.

Adult Social Care

Website showcases health and social care jobs

Health and social care jobs have been thrown into the spotlight in a bid to inspire people to consider a career in one of the county's biggest sectors. Working with NHS and adult social care colleagues, East Sussex County Council's employability and skills team is raising the profile of specific job roles within the sector.

The 'local industries' section on the Careers East Sussex website showcases roles that people may not be aware of, alongside jobs where there are known vacancies such as support worker, healthcare assistant, A&E nurse, general nurse, care assistant, social worker, podiatrist and physiotherapist.

The site offers information about the key skills and tasks needed to work in these roles, the training or qualifications that might be needed, what these jobs could lead onto and a film of people working in each of these roles about their work and their motivation for doing it.

As well as sharing the short films on social media, posters with QR codes linking to the website have been sent to every school, college and job centre in the county to encourage people to visit the site and find out more.

More information is available [here](#).

Launch of action plan marks Autism Acceptance Month

East Sussex County Council is marking Autism Acceptance Month with the launch of an action plan designed to improve the lives of autistic people living in the county.

The all-age action plan has been developed based on the lived experiences of people with autism, their carers and their families, with input from the NHS and wellbeing, education and employment providers.

The plan focusses on improving three areas;

- health and wellbeing
- access to education and supporting positive transitions to adulthood
- supporting autistic people into employment and helping them sustain employment

The three-year plan includes 26 actions across the three priority areas including piloting tailored health and wellbeing support, developing a tool for schools to help understand individual needs and how they can be met, and developing support services that can act as an advocate to support employed autistic people to navigate the work environment.

More information is available [here](#).

Adult numeracy programme ends on a high

More than 3,000 people have taken part in free classes run through the government funded Multiply programme which aimed to help those who did not already have GCSE Maths at grade C (or equivalent) to upskill their maths knowledge.

A range of innovative courses, embedding maths in subjects ranging from animal care and household budgeting, to forestry and digital skills enabled people to build their confidence with numbers.

The Multiply programme was delivered by the county council and a range of partners, including further education colleges and training providers, charitable and voluntary groups, and employers. The commitment and hard work of the 16 delivery partners was acknowledged at an event in Eastbourne last month.

The initiative has also helped local employment sectors to boost their workforce's skills which can help businesses boost productivity, increase profits, and improve employee retention.

More information is available [here](#).

Communities, Economy and Transport

New scheme aims to reduce roadwork disruption

Contractors and utility companies will be charged more to work on East Sussex's busiest roads in a bid to reduce disruption across the county. East Sussex County Council is among the first local authorities to implement a Lane Rental Scheme, which introduce an increased charge for companies carrying out work on the busiest 5.9 per cent of the county's road network during peak times.

The aim of the scheme is to encourage work to be carried out outside of peak hours and for those working on the roads to explore more efficient ways of working, such as using new technology or working in collaboration with others.

The scheme will operate in addition to the East Sussex Permit Scheme but will only apply to selected roads. A maximum charge of £2,500 a day will be applied to those working during peak hours. Normal permit charges will continue to apply outside of the set hours. Surplus funds raised by the scheme will be available for highway improvements, innovation and measures to improve disruption and congestion caused by projects across the county.

The roads included in the Lane Rental Scheme will be reviewed annually to ensure that it addresses disruption on the busiest roads.

Emergency work that must be carried out during peak times will not be charged under the Lane Rental Scheme for the first 48 hours of work.

More information is available [here](#).

VE Day garden project for veterans' charity

A charity providing gardening therapy to improve mental health among ex-military personnel has created a garden and pathway in one day to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day. The fully wheelchair-accessible project was jointly created by Veterans' Growth charity, based in East Sussex, and the National Lottery.

A workforce made up of veterans using the charity, serving police officers and a team of lottery winners gathered at the charity's headquarters, near the village of Westfield to build the space. The path and garden was created by volunteers in one day

The garden was formally opened by local Royal British Legion veterans who were impressed with the project and commented on the relaxing feel of the garden.

Veterans' Growth said it was important to make the space as accessible to all their veterans as possible, including those with mobility issues. The area was designed to provide a place of peace and reflection. Designed by veterans, it incorporates plants that are symbolic of peace and remembrance, including remembrance roses and forget-me-nots.

More information is available [here](#).

For your info: **Meetings I attended in March as your County Councillor:**

ESCC 3 x Weekly DCS/ADCS Briefings
ESCC Cabinet Briefing
Warbleton Parish Council
Corporate Parenting Panel
Gatwick GATCOM Steering Group
Heathfield Parish Council Annual Assembly
Warbleton PC SLR
Visit to Hailsham Childrens Home
Multiple private meetings at County Hall
ESCC Cabinet
St Georges Day - Chichester Cathedral
Gatwick GATCOM Main
Warbleton Parish Council
Lead Member SEND
Herstmonceux Parish Council
Hooe Parish Council



1/5/25