

Members' Update – East Sussex County Council – May 2025

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

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

LOCAL ISSUES:

VE-80:

Various Events were held across all parishes, and from feedback received all were well attended and appreciated by residents and veterans. As the Armed Forces Champion for the County I thank you all for your sterling efforts.

Children's Services

Mockingbird boosts foster carer support

Fostering families across East Sussex are now able to join Mockingbird, a scheme offering an additional layer of practical and emotional support.

East Sussex County Council has launched The Mockingbird Family Model, a programme that creates a familiar network around an experienced fostering household, known as a Hub Home.

Known as a Constellation, the six to ten families come together like an extended family. The Constellation operates like a family and could help alleviate the sense of isolation that carers can sometimes feel. Through the scheme they can access immediate practical and emotional support, in the same way that others in a non-fostering family might be supported by friends and a wider family network.

Each Constellation will have a liaison worker from the county council appointed to provide support and act as a link between the foster households involved and the fostering service.

East Sussex County Council received a 12-month grant from the Department for Education to set up the Mockingbird Family Model project which was launched with the support of The Fostering Network.

More information is available [here](#).

Communities, Economy and Transport

Board aims to boost revenue from tourism by £2.5bn

Tourism officials across Sussex are coming together to try and boost revenue in the sector by £2.5bn a year over the next decade.

The East Sussex, Brighton and Hove and West Sussex Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) has appointed an advisory board to support the growth of the region's visitor economy. The tourism sector contributes £5bn annually to the region and supports more than 74,000 local jobs - which is 14% of all employment.

More information is available [here](#)

Governance Services

Consultation on future of local government launches

Residents are being invited to take part in a consultation regarding Local Government Reorganisation in East Sussex and how services will be delivered in the future.

Government is inviting proposals for councils in East Sussex to form one unitary council which will deliver all services which would replace the county council and district and borough councils.

East Sussex County Council and the district and borough councils are therefore seeking residents' views.

The consultation is available to complete online at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/EastSussexLGR/ until 23 June.

The interim plan proposed by the 6 councils sets out their intentions for a unitary council including;

- Improving outcomes for residents and communities
- Making best use of resources now and for the future
- Enhancing local democracy, local identity, transparency, accessibility, local decision making and accountability
- Supporting and driving decision making and public service reform at both Sussex and local level
- Providing a stronger and unified voice to help attract investment and tackle priorities

More information is available [here](#).

80th Anniversary of VE Day

The 80th anniversary of VE Day on 8 May 2025 was an opportunity for communities to come together to celebrate the end of the Second World War in Europe. It provided a chance to commemorate those who fought and made sacrifices during World War Two.

Events were held across East Sussex over the anniversary week including community street parties in Eastbourne, Hailsham, Seaford, Peacehaven, Bexhill and Hooe.

More information is available [here](#)

Highways Update:

A RECORD number of East Sussex roads will be given a new lease of life with this year's programme of pothole-preventing work. More than 40 miles of roads have been included in East Sussex Highways' surface dressing programme which begins in June, more than double previous years.

It follows a significant investment in the county's road patching last year to ensure those most in need of repair were ready for surface dressing.

The process, which sees roads coated with a thin layer of tar and stone chippings, protects the carriageway from water and frost which can lead to potholes forming. Cllr Claire Dowling, the county council's lead member for transport, said: *"In recent years, councils across the country have seen an increase in the number of potholes forming which cause frustration to residents and motorists. "Carrying out surface dressing on roads most at risk of wear and tear is a relatively straightforward and cost-effective way to help prevent potholes from forming in the first place and extend the life of treated roads by up to 10 years. "She added: "This year's programme will see more roads than ever undergoing surface dressing work, making them smoother and safer for motorists."*

"A great deal of work has gone into preparing for this year's programme and we doubled investment in road patching last year to ensure its success."

The East Sussex Highways scheme, which runs from **Monday June 16, 2025**, includes roads in Bexhill, Hastings, Eastbourne, Seaford, Uckfield, Ringmer and Forest Row. After surface dressing, the road is reopened to traffic which helps the chippings to bed in. The road is then swept after 24 hours and seven days, before road markings are reapplied.

This year, an additional surface seal will be applied to 25 sites in residential and high traffic areas. This will help the dressing bed in and will help to prevent loose chippings. Roads will be closed while the work is carried out with signed diversion routes in place. A temporary speed limit on 20mph will be in place following works for the safety of motorists.

Full details can be found on the East Sussex Highways website at [Surface Dressing Programme | Surface Dressing Programme 2025 | live.eastsussexhighways.com](https://www.eastsussexhighways.com/surface-dressing-programme-2025)

Did you know that a total of 421,413 metres squared of road has been included in the 2025/26 surface dressing programme, compared to 246,583 in 2023/24 and 256,346 in 2022/23?

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

ESCC 3 x Weekly DCS/ADCS Briefings
ESCC Member Briefing – Early Help & Childrens Social Care
Warbleton PC Annual Assembly
Wartling PC
VE-80 National Celebration – London
Heathfield PC SLR
ESCC Member Briefing – Equality
Visit to St Mary's House – Eastbourne
Horam PC
ESCC Full Council
ESCC Cabinet Briefing
Meeting with Senior Social Workers
Visit to Childrens Home – St Leonards
Hooe PC
Warbleton PC Annual Meeting
Herstmonceux PC



3/6/25