ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

www.alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL
Julia Shelley
Tel: 07936 904743
E-mail: clerk@alfristonparishcouncil.org.uk

Alfriston War Memorial Hall
Old School House
The Tye, Alfriston, BN26 5TL
24th Oct 2026

Minutes of a meeting of Alfriston Parish Council (APC), held in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall on Monday 19th October 2026 at 7.15pm

---

Present:

Cllr D Monteath-Wilson (Chair)
Cllr J Spring
Cllr A Harris
Cllr S Rabagliati
Cllr N Parkinson
Cllr R Embry

In attendance:

Julia Shelley – Locum Parish Clerk & RFO
There were approximately 10 members of the public present.

118 . Chair's Welcome

Cllr Monteath-Wilson welcomed everyone.

119. Public Questions

There were several residents present who attended due to their concerns about the surface treatment placed on King's Ride, South Downs National Park. The concerns raised by residents echo the concerns of the Councillors;

- lack of consultation process for the work,
- the visual impact on the surroundings,
- danger to walkers and riders from cycles able to travel at a faster speed on the surface,
- a sense of disappointment that an organisation which exists to protect the Downs carried out the work.

Public Questions closed at 19.27.

120. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr J Watkins (Vice Chair).

121. Vanessa Rowlands, Chair of the South Downs National Park Authority

Vanessa Rowlands attended to provide a response to the concerns raised above regarding. She explained the process whereby the work was approved and undertaken. Many of the questions asked require further investigation by Vanessa and she was willing to take all other questions by email after the meeting.
Action Point 1: Locum Clerk to collate questions. (included as Appendix A)

122. Report from MP – James MacCleary

James MacCleary's report was noted and is attached to the minutes. (Appendix B)

123. Update from Cllr Stephen Shing – East Sussex Council

Cllr Shing shared highlights of his report, a full copy is attached to the minutes. (Appendix C).

124. Update from Cllr David Greaves - Wealden District Council

Cllr Greaves shared highlights of his report, a full copy is attached to the minutes. (Appendix D).

125. Declaration of interest
None.

126. Minutes
Cllr Harris proposed and Cllr Rabagliati seconded a motion that the unadopted minutes of the APC monthly meeting held on 21st of September 2026, were a true and accurate record. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Chair duly sign the minutes as an accurate record.

127. Finance
To approve the Statement of Finances for October 2026 as attached to the Agenda. Cllr Harris proposed & Cllr Rabagliati seconded a motion these be approved. This was unanimously **RESOLVED**.
To approve request from Cuckmere Flood Forum for a grant of £110.00. This was unanimously **RESOLVED**.
Action Point 2: Locum Clerk to request bank details from the Cuckmere Flood Forum.

128. PCSO's Monthly Report
No report received this month.
Action Point 3: Locum Clerk to request a report from the PCSO for the November meeting.

129. Coffeehouse Conversation – The White Bridge
The Coffeehouse was well attended (20 people). In discussion, it was agreed that a Village Working Party should be set up, not for volunteers to wield paintbrushes, but to deal with all the formalities for undertaking a work of this nature – including, of course, fundraising. So far, three people have agreed to serve on the committee – ideally there should be at least three more, and so I would ask anyone willing to join the committee to contact Cllr Harris in the first instance.

It was agreed that the Coffeehouse Conversations would continue next year cycling through the council portfolios.

130. To discuss Recruitment and Hours of replacement Clerk & RFO
Cllr D Monteath-Wilson reported that Rebecca Grantham has accepted the post with a tentative start date of December 1st. Rebecca will attend the November meeting.

131. To discuss request from Mr Gifford to fly his drone in the area around the Cricket Pavilion
Parish Council agree that there should be a no drone launch policy from the recreation ground itself. This treats drones in the same category as model aircraft.
Action Point 4: Clerk to notify resident of decision.

132. Report on Highways & Twittens – Cllr Embry Report on: CityFibre; Beachy Head Marathon; East Sussex Highways; The Dene Car Park; Verge Damage on the Furlongs; Exceat Bridge
Cllr Embry had supplied a report for the meeting, highlights were read out at the meeting by Cllr Embry. The full report is attached to the minutes. (Appendix E)
Verge damage the Furlongs - It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council should no longer pursue the option of bollards on grounds of cost and concerns with over-urbanisation.

Cllr Embry will follow up on the idea of moving the existing 20mph sign from the Rec onto this verge by writing to the Road Safety & Traffic Team (ESCC Highways).
Action Point 5: Clerk to write to owner of 4 Deans Road regarding overgrown hedge.

Action Point 6: Clerk to draft Article for Cuckmere News to discouraging parking on The Furlongs, (could also extend to thoughtful parking on the Tye).

132.1 Additional Bollard at Number 3 Waterloo Square.
Outcome of correspondence included in Appendix E.

132.2 Highway work along C120

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to support Cuckmere Valley PC's request to ESCC to maintain C120 well during bridge works. At the request of Alfriston parish Council C39 will be included.

133. Report on Allotments & Recreation Ground – Cllr Rabagliati

To consider quotation for chain link fencing between gate into allotments and park, also included some strimming of unused plots. Quotation received £1421.00 (including VAT). Cllr Rabagliati will seek clarification on skip cost.
Action Point 7: Locum Clerk to check spend against budget to see funds available for works.

134. Report on Public Transport & Environment – Cllr Harris

Cllr Harris had supplied a report for the meeting, highlights were read out at the meeting by Cllr Harris. (Appendix F)

135. Report on Strategic Planning – Cllr Parkinson

Cllr Parkinson will have the revisions to the Emergency Plan available for the November meeting. He has been in discussion with Wealden County Council about the best approach for some elements. He will also contact the new owners of the village shop regarding the shop being a location for Emergency Food Distribution.

136. Report on The Tye - Cllr Spring

136.1 Damaged bench and injury of member of public (email circulated pre-meeting). The claim was noted. It has highlighted a weakness in the data held about the number and location of the Parish Council's memorial benches.
Action Point 8: Permanent Clerk to review records, undertake audit of benches and create policy/procedure to manage bench maintenance going forward.
Action Point 9: Anyone with knowledge of the Sindon Family to contact the Council as their bench has had to be removed.

136.2 Parking issues (email circulated pre-meeting).
There was a useful conversation regarding the history of parking on The Tye and what, if any, options there are to improve parking. The decision was made previously to not mark the ground by the disabled parking as it is too easily removed and because of the urban visual impression it gives. Metal signs are in place to indicate the parking spaces. Earlier informal surveys indicate that the disabled parking is adequate with a space a one end or another usually available. It was **agreed** that new Disabled Parking Signs would be purchased.

Whilst appreciating the frustrations of residents and adjacent shop owners the councillors were unsure what actions would approve the situation. It was **agreed** to consider additional signage at the entrance to The Tye to encourage appropriate use. The article on Furlongs parking could also cover the use of the Tye.
Action Point 10: Permanent clerk to source new Disabled Parking Signs
Action Point 11: Cllr Spring to draft sign wording for November meeting.

136.3 Tree pruning request from Village Hall. Quotation received.
Approved.

137. Reports from Outside Bodies

137.1 Heartstart – Nothing to report.

137.2 Alfriston Emergency Group - Nothing to report.

137.3 Flood Forum - The next meeting will be held on the 9th November.

137.4 Twinning Association - An update was read out by the Clerk; a copy is attached to the minutes. (Appendix G.)

137.5 St Andrew's Church – Evensong will be held at 3pm on the 1st of November.

137.6 Clergy House - Nothing to report.

137.7 Alfriston War Memorial Hall – It was reported that the kitchenette and WC at the rear of the Hall will be refreshed.

137.8 Speedwatch – Due to holiday conflicts there have been no sessions, but they will re-start shortly. Additional volunteers always welcome. Please contact the Clerk in the first instances.

137.9 Events – It was noted that the Nativity has been cancelled this year.

137. Correspondence to The Clerk – Asking for permission from the council.

APC ratified the decision to agree to a poster in Market Square A board for a MacMillian Coffee Morning.

Request for Nativity Performance – TBC. The Parish Council agreed in principle to the event pending finalisation of the date.

138. Public Questions

The Chair closed the meeting at pm and opened to public questions. Meeting was then re-opened at pm.

139. Date of next meeting – The next meeting will be held on 17th November in the AWMH.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.15pm

The Chair opened the floor for questions.
A resident reported that the yellow lines at Star Lane are not the appropriate heritage yellow.
Action Point 12: Cllr Embry to report.

Please see Appendices attached below and\or on the website

Appendix A – Questions for SNDP regarding King's Ride surfacing work

Bridleway works on South Downs Way at Alfriston.

Alfriston Parish Council Questions.

1. Given that the project was initiated in 2024, please explain why Alfriston Parish Council was not consulted in the subsequent two years and was only advised of the intended works after the SDNPA had approved procurement in March 2026.
   The minutes of the SDNPA meeting on 20 March 2026, Item 14 .179 show that it was questioned whether the local parish council had been consulted, and in Item14.180 confirmation is recorded that the local parish council had been consulted. This was clearly not the case.

   (NOTE: The first communication received by APC was sent by Ben Bessant was sent at 17:14 on 20th March 2026, AFTER the SDNPA meeting at 10:30 of the same day.)

2. Please detail what consultation with adjacent landowners and residents took place.

3. Please supply copies of any consultation documents and communications which were issued.

4. How did SDNPA determine that the communications with adjacent landowners and residents were received? It transpires one land owner had not been notified as SDNPA had been contacting the old owner who failed to pass any communications on.

5. What was the statutory/planning basis on which the works were authorised? Specifically did SDNPA regard them as non-development under s.55(2)(b), permitted development under Schedule 2 Part 9 Class A of the GPDO, or something else? Why was it not deemed necessary for planning permission to be sought for this development?

6. Please can we have copies of the proposal that was sent to DEFRA for their approval.

7. Please can SDNPA provide detail as to the process that is followed for projects such as this. We ask this as it would appear that only one officer had ownership of this (Ben Bessant) and the details of this proposal were not checked by anyone else at SDNPA i.e. when it was presented at a committee meeting in March, there is no evidence that the committee drilled down into the detail of the proposal which would have highlighted the use of tarmac.

8. We note, from the project tender document (Agenda Item 14 Report NPA25/26-30 Appendix 2), that a vehicle and pedestrian gate is specified at the lower end, adjoining The Broadway. When will this part of the plan be completed?

9. From the same document, we note that Treated Timber Edgings are specified yet suburban concrete kerbstones have been used. Why?

10. The specification refers to annual maintenance to include a mechanical sweep and power wash, and a 10-year refresh of aggregate layers, with a cost contribution from local residents. What arrangements have been made for this and with which residents?

11. Where did the finance for the work come from?

12. To whose benefit was this extensive work carried out?

13. Please can Alfriston Parish Council receive data on the complaints received about the issue of gravel / water runoff? This is important as these complaints are being used as a major justification for the works.

14. The proposed signage shows that motor bikes and scooters are not permitted - can that be extended to include cars as well. Preferably a sign on the lines of 'Access for authorised vehicles only' should be provided. Please note that that this wording exists in a faded format on the current wooden fingerpost.

15. The impression given by SDNPA is that the work required joint support from SDNP and ESCC. What involvement did ESCC have in the decision and design process? Please could you provide the contact/s of the ESCC Rights of Way staff that were involved in the process and copies of any documents they received as part of the process.

16. Where was the conservation and visual amenity discussion in the decision process?

17. How does the use of tarmac, and the resulting appearance of the bridleway as a new suburban road, reconcile with SDNPA's core statutory purpose under the Environment Act 1995 to 'Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage of the area'?

18. How will unintended consequences of the change be addressed by the SDNP;
    a. Increased speed of cycles
    b. Increases access by vehicles to the route
    c. Potential for fly tipping, parking and overnight stops
    d. Increased vulnerability to rural crime in area

19. Alfriston parish Council look to SDNPA for assurance be given that the change from rural bridleway to a suburban road of tarmac will not lead to further development on this part of the South Downs Way?

Appendix B - Report from James MacCleary MP

MP Parish Report – October 2026

Party Conference Recess

Parliament returned, albeit briefly, before the party conference recess and, luckily for me, that meant only a short journey down the road to Brighton for the Autumn Conference 2026. The conference covered a wide range of issues, from healthcare and economic growth to environmental protection, food security, defence and democratic reform, with members debating how we can build more resilient communities and a stronger economy in the years ahead.

One discussion that I found particularly relevant to our largely rural constituency focused on food security and resilience. Conference backed proposals aimed at strengthening domestic food production, improving supply chain resilience and ensuring that food security is given greater consideration in national policy making. At a time of geopolitical uncertainty, changing weather patterns and rising costs for producers, there was broad recognition that supporting British farmers and rural businesses is essential to both our economy and our national resilience. I also spoke on the importance of rural schools using Firle Primary as a particular example of both their importance and the difficulty of sustaining them.

The conference also adopted policies aimed at improving maternity and primary healthcare, supporting business growth and innovation, reforming the water sector and strengthening democratic institutions. It was also interesting to reflect on the Prime Minister's conference speech a week later. It was a thoughtful and, in parts, genuinely moving address that touched on many themes that Liberal Democrats have championed for many years: the importance of strong public services, thriving local communities, international cooperation and investing for the long term. While political differences remain, it is encouraging to see ideas that place opportunity, fairness and community at the heart of public policy receiving broader support across the political spectrum.

Lewes District Council Local Plan

I cautiously welcome Lewes District Council's decision to pause work on the Local Plan while it reviews the implications of changes to national planning policy and the uncertainty surrounding local government reorganisation. It is important that any Local Plan is based on the most up-to-date evidence and is robust enough to withstand scrutiny at examination.

However, I do have concerns about what a prolonged pause could mean for our area. Without an adopted and up-to-date Local Plan, there is a risk that Lewes District becomes more

vulnerable to speculative development, with developers seeking to bring forward sites that may not align with the wishes of local communities or the long-term vision for sustainable growth, as we have seen in the Wealden District part of my constituency.

I will continue pressing for clarity from government on LGR and for progress to resume as soon as practicable, so that local residents retain confidence that future development is being planned in a way that protects the character of our communities while delivering the homes and infrastructure we need.

Lewes Bus Station

This month I joined Lewes District Councillors Edwina Livesey, Janet Baah and Kevin West in writing to Councillor Bella Sankey, Chair of the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority, urging the Authority to explore the purchase of the Lewes bus station and former bus garage site. Following years of uncertainty and a determined local campaign to safeguard the site for public use, there is now a genuine opportunity to secure its future. With the site currently on the market, I believe it is important that all options for public ownership are properly considered before this strategic asset is lost to other uses.

While the site sits in the heart of Lewes, its importance extends far beyond the town itself. The bus station serves as a key transport interchange linking Brighton & Hove with communities across East Sussex and neighbouring Kent, providing vital connections for work, education, healthcare and leisure. This is particularly important for many of our rural villages, where access to reliable public transport can be the difference between opportunity and isolation.

Public ownership could help protect this important transport hub for future generations, while also creating an opportunity to deliver much-needed affordable and social housing on the former bus garage site. With the Strategic Authority taking on responsibility for strategic transport as Sussex moves towards devolution and a directly elected mayor, I believe there is a strong case for acting now to secure infrastructure that will remain important to our communities for decades to come.

Primary care services

I was pleased to be able to join the Leader of Lewes District Council and others to open the new health hub in Newhaven recently. Many residents have concerns about accessing GP services locally and the new facility in Newhaven is now home to both Quayside Medical Practice and Newhaven Medical Practice (formerly known as Chapel Street).

Work has also started on a new health hub in Willingdon and I have been very pleased to work with both Wealden District Council and NHS Sussex to move this project forward after much delay. It is still in its very early stages but when complete it will be a valuable new facility serving Willingdon and Polegate.

I have also been meeting regularly with NHS Sussex to discuss the situations in Seaford and Lewes. I have been able to get the NHS to focus on redeveloping the existing Dane Road site in Seaford after years of broken promises over a new health hub for the town. I am now working with partners to put together the funding to move the project forward. In Lewes things are being delayed by hold ups to the North Street Quarter development which was to include a new health hub. I am exploring alternative options in the meantime with the local authorities and the NHS to address the accommodation issues facing Foundry Healthcare in the town.

Local rail services

I have met with Network Rail to raise ongoing rail disruption since the derailment at Lewes. They accept that the service has got worse since the accident and attribute this to heightened awareness from passengers and drivers of uneven track conditions in the local network. I highlighted the stretch of line between Lewes and Polegate as one of particular concern with a number of speed restrictions being imposed recently.

I have also met with Southern Rail to press them on the reinstatement of the direct Seaford to London services and the timings of the new Eastbourne to London Bridge services which return at an inconvenient time for commuters and only run during term time. I will be meeting with them again for an update soon.

Village meetings

I have now completed my 2026 tour of our local villages. Every year I try to get to every village in my constituency and this year we completed about 22 meetings in total. There were many issues raised but consistent themes included housebuilding, speeding and road safety, water supply and sewage disposal, public transport services and access to GPs and dentists. I have taken away actions for my team and extend my thanks to those Parish Councils who supported these meetings.

Remembrance and Christmas Services

As with previous years, I do try to attend Remembrance and Christmas events held around the constituency. If your parish or town is planning an event and would like me to attend, please contact helen.spearman@parliament.uk with details and I will endeavour to attend or provide a representative in my place.

Appendix C - Report from Cllr Shing ESCC

East Sussex County Councillor Shing
Report to Alfriston Parish Council
Parish Meeting October 2026



Fencing Update

Following a site visit in Willingdon with Karl Taylor, Assistant Director, and the Lead Member for Transport and Environment, the Lead Member expressed surprise that I had not received any updates regarding the fencing issue.

I raised my concerns about the lack of communication and reiterated the importance of keeping local councillors and the parish council informed of progress on matters affecting residents.

Parking on County-Owned Grass Verges

I have received concerns from parish councillors and residents about vehicles parking on county-owned grass verges. This remains an ongoing issue, causing damage to the verges and raising concerns about potential damage to water pipes.

I will continue to investigate the issue, raise these concerns with the relevant highways officers, and seek practical solutions to prevent further damage.

Motions Considered at East Sussex County Council

At the Full Council meeting held on 13 October, four Notices of Motion were debated:

- Safeguarding the Uckfield to Lewes Railway Corridor
- Village Speed Limits: A Consistent Maximum 30mph Default Across East Sussex
- Local Government Reorganisation: Cost to Local Taxpayers and Government Reimbursement
- Declaring East Sussex a County of Harm Reduction

1 Safeguarding the Uckfield to Lewes Railway Corridor

I believe that safeguarding the former railway corridor is primarily a matter for district councils through their Local Plans.

Both Wealden and Lewes District Councils already have planning policies in place to protect the route from development that could prevent its future reinstatement. East Sussex County Council also continues to support the railway as a strategic transport priority.

Given the existing protections and the responsibilities of the relevant authorities, I considered abstaining on this motion to be the most appropriate course of action.

2 A Consistent Approach to Speed Limits Across East Sussex

I voted in favour of both the Green Party and Liberal Democrat amendments, as well as the original motion concerning speed limits across East Sussex.

The amendments sought to introduce stronger and more comprehensive measures, including:

- A default 30mph speed limit on appropriate roads in villages, rural roads and lanes.
- 20mph limits around schools and within town and city centres.
- Greater opportunities for communities to request 20mph limits in residential areas.
- Improved enforcement informed by evidence gathered by Community Speedwatch groups and local residents.

Unfortunately, the amendments were not carried, and these additional measures were therefore not adopted.

I also supported the original motion, which called on the Place Scrutiny Committee to examine the potential benefits, feasibility, costs and legal implications of introducing a more consistent approach to speed limits across the county.

I believe that improving road safety must remain a priority, while ensuring that local communities have a stronger voice in decisions affecting their areas.

3 Local Government Reorganisation: Residents Should Not Pay the Bill

I supported the Notice of Motion calling on the Government to reimburse councils for the costs associated with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

As of 31 August, a total of £322,979 had been spent across the six East Sussex councils, while only £201,349 had been received through Government grant funding. This left a net cost of £121,630, excluding the substantial amount of officer time dedicated to the process.

The Government has since paused the LGR process and launched a national review.

I believe it is only fair that local taxpayers should not be expected to bear the costs of a process initiated by the Government and subsequently placed on hold.

The motion called for:

- Full publication of all costs incurred.
- Reimbursement by the Government.
- A clear timetable setting out the next steps.

Most importantly, decisions about the future structure of local government should be locally led, democratically accountable and focused on the interests of residents and communities.

4 Declaring East Sussex a County of Harm Reduction

I fully recognise the importance of reducing drug- and alcohol-related harm within our communities. However, much of the work proposed in the motion is already being delivered by East Sussex County Council.

Existing work includes the implementation of the *From Harm to Hope* strategy, partnership working with key agencies, the delivery of treatment and recovery services, and the active involvement of people with lived experience.

The Council's briefing confirmed that the majority of the proposed measures were already aligned with existing policies and programmes.

For this reason, I considered that the objectives of the motion were largely being addressed through work already underway.

Appendix D - WDC David Greaves Report

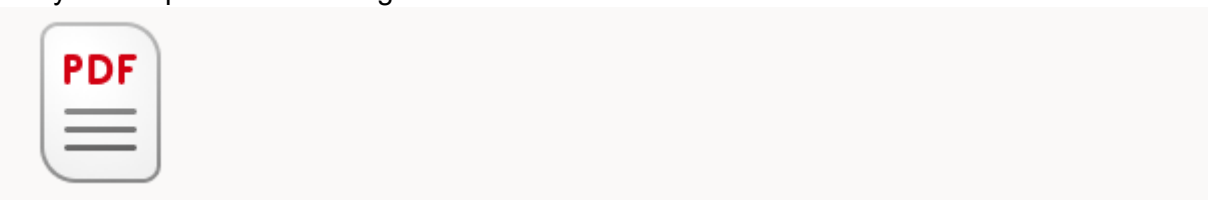
Report – Alfriston PC - Monday 19th October 2026

1. Living Well magazine

Please find below a link to a digital version of the first edition of Living Well, a new free magazine designed to support people to stay healthy, independent and connected within their communities, produced by East Sussex County Council.

Packed with inspiring case studies, practical activities, wellbeing information and health advice, Living Well celebrates the many ways people can enhance their physical, mental and social wellbeing. The magazine also highlights local opportunities, community resources and real-life examples of individuals who are living well and achieving positive outcomes.

Please do help to distribute this first edition. Free copies are available to order for customer service areas, waiting rooms, community clinics, GP practices and other public settings. If you would like to order printed copies, please contact Editor.Livingwell@eastsussex.gov.uk with the number required and delivery information. They will be pleased to arrange distribution at no cost.



Compressed-Living-Well

2. Sustainable Farming Incentive 2026 fund opens

A £233 million government fund for farms opened today (22 September), part of the government's pledge to support farmers and land managers to produce food sustainably. The second application window of the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) 2026 includes an extra £50 million announced by the Prime Minister in August, to help farmers hit by low yields and rising costs access a reliable income stream, in return for action to improve the environment. It also includes £3 million not allocated in the first application window.
The package supports more drought-resilient, sustainable farming practices and forms part of a wider drive to give farming businesses breathing space on costs and grow the rural economy.
Councils are encouraged to share this information as appropriate.

3. Correspondence from S E Water:

Your region is now in Severe Drought
We recently contacted you to let you know that our updated hosepipe restrictions are now legally enforceable, and that we have applied for a Non-Essential Use Ban (NEUB), which we may use as a precautionary measure if approved.

Today, we're letting you know about the wider situation across the Sussex region. **The Environment Agency has now declared the areas of Sussex where we supply your water, as being in Severe Drought.** Below we explain what this means, share the ongoing work we're doing to protect your water supply and how you can also continue to help protect water supplies.

What does Severe Drought mean and why has it been declared?
Severe Drought is the third out of four drought stages. This change in status is a formal recognition of the prolonged dry weather and its severe impact on the local environment. While we have seen some rain recently, it has been a very dry autumn so far, following dry conditions earlier this year. Between March and September, Sussex has received just 54 per cent of the rainfall we expect.
As a result, Ardingly Reservoir currently is less than 20 per cent full (**19.4 per cent as of 11 October)**, which is noticeably lower than it was at this time last year.

What we're doing
This Severe Drought declaration highlights exactly why we are stepping up our response. Protecting your daily water supply is our absolute priority, which is why we're dedicating maximum resources to moving water more efficiently across our network and fixing leaks faster.
To reduce water stress, we're actively:

- **Optimising water pressure across Sussex**: balancing pressure provides a more consistent, reliable supply, minimises burst pipes and reduces water loss from leaks.
- **Increased the number of teams tackling leaks**: we've more than doubled the dedicated leakage teams operating in the region to 16, up from seven.
- **Nearly halved the number of leaks**: with this extra workforce, the number of leaks in the area has dropped from 181 to 97 leaks. In the last two weeks alone, we've repaired 170 leaks locally, adding to the 1,317 leaks we have fixed in the affected area since 1st April.
- **Reduced overall leakage**: in the area, we've also reduced the total amount of water lost to leaks by 4 million litres since August.
- **Connecting county networks**: having fast-tracked the construction of a new pipeline connecting treated water from Bewl in Kent to the East Sussex network, this system is now moving water between the counties providing greater resilience and flexibility, and reduces the amount of water being drawn out of Ardingly Reservoir.

How you can help

While our teams are working hard on the ground, overcoming a drought of this scale is a team effort. The water you save at home directly supports our work and helps slow the rate of water resources declining. By continuing to follow the further hosepipe restrictions, and making small, mindful changes, you're helping to ensure there's enough water for everyone's essential needs.

Here's a few ways you can help at home:

- **Capture the rain**: when the rain does come, catch and store it for future use. We can help you **get your hands on a water butt here**. Alternatively, you can use empty buckets or large pots to collect rainwater but use this stored water frequently to keep it fresh. **Please be mindful of curious wildlife** - keep your container covered when it's not raining to stop wildlife from falling in, or place a stick inside your container to act as a ladder to help any trapped wildlife to escape.
- **Keep running water for showers short**: try turning off the shower when you're lathering up, and only have the water running when you actually need it.
- **Wash smarter**: always use the 'eco-mode' on your appliances, and make sure your dishwasher is fully loaded before turning it on. If you don't have a dishwasher, wash your dishes in a washing-up bowl rather than under a running tap.
- **Reuse where possible**: look for opportunities to reuse water, such as using leftover water from cooking or washing up to water your indoor plants.

Current hosepipe restrictions in Sussex

We are very grateful for your continued efforts and support as we navigate through this period of severe drought.

Katy Ringsdore (Corporate Affairs Director)

4. Emergency Planning

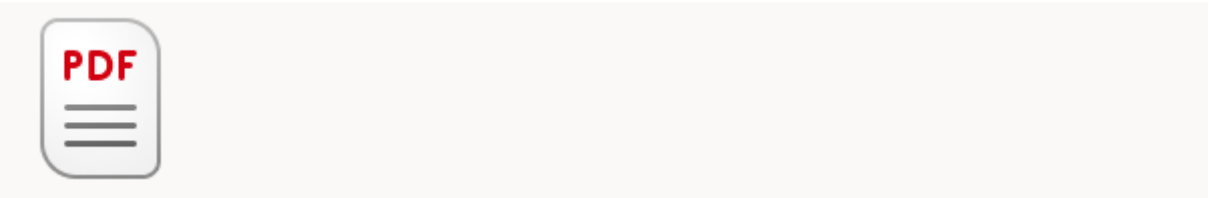
It has been a busy week (week commencing 12th October) for the WDC Emergency Planning team, with officers attending a Sussex Resilience Forum workshop on managing recovery following a major incident. This is particularly important for Wealden, as the recovery phase is typically led by local authorities. Next week, officers will be running a live Rest Centre exercise to test our emergency response arrangements and ensure we are prepared to support residents should the need arise.

5. Human Resources

WDC's Human Resources team has been shortlisted for HR Team of the Year at the National HR Awards. They are the only public sector organisation shortlisted in any award category, highlighting the strength of the team's work and the recognition they have received at a national level.
Congratulations to the HR team on this fantastic achievement.

6. Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority newsletter

Please find a link below to the October edition of the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority newsletter. You can sign up to receive the newsletter by sending an email to enquiries@sussexandbrighton-cca.gov.uk
You can also check out the website here: https://www.sussexandbrighton-cca.gov.uk/



SBSA_Corporate-Communications_Newsletter_Oct-2026

7. Flood Action - preparing for flooding (UK Government)

Information on:

- Get free flood warnings
- Make a plan for flooding

Other ways to get this information
Floodline
Telephone: 0345 988 1188
Typetalk: 0345 602 6340
24 hour service

https://floodaction.campaign.gov.uk/

8. Wealden District Council has been recognised as one of England's best performing council landlords after receiving the highest grade, C1, from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH).

Wealden is the only council landlord across Sussex and Brighton to hold a C1 grade, placing it among the top 20% of councils in England to achieve the top rating. The award follows a detailed 5-month long inspection by the RSH who found that the council delivers strongly against all four consumer standards.

Inspectors praised the Council's understanding of its homes and tenants and how it uses tenant feedback to shape services. Repairs were highlighted as a particular strength, alongside good health and safety performance, meaningful tenant involvement and effective learning from complaints. The Council also identifies issues and puts plans in place to address them, with tenants treated fairly and with respect.

Other strengths included improvements to anti-social behaviour services, strong partnership working and effective support to help tenants stay in their homes, backed by a five-year programme of improvements to council homes.

A spokesman said: "This is a tremendous achievement for Wealden. The top grading recognises the dedication of our housing team, who work hard every day to provide high-quality services, as well as the valuable contribution of tenants who share their views and help us improve.

We are helping to keep homes safe, shape better services and ensure tenants are treated fairly and with respect. We are continuing to provide energy efficiency upgrades to hundreds of our tenants' homes, lowering their energy bills and making them warmer as we enter colder months. We are also delivering much-needed council homes, supporting more people to have a safe, affordable place to call home.
We are very proud of achieving this grading and remain committed to working with tenants, learning from their experiences and continuing to improve in the years ahead."

9. Councillors' Ward Budget scheme

Alfriston Cricket Club have been allocated £2,500 from this budget to assist with Club improvements.

David Greaves **19th October 2026**

Appendix E - Cllr Embry Highways Report

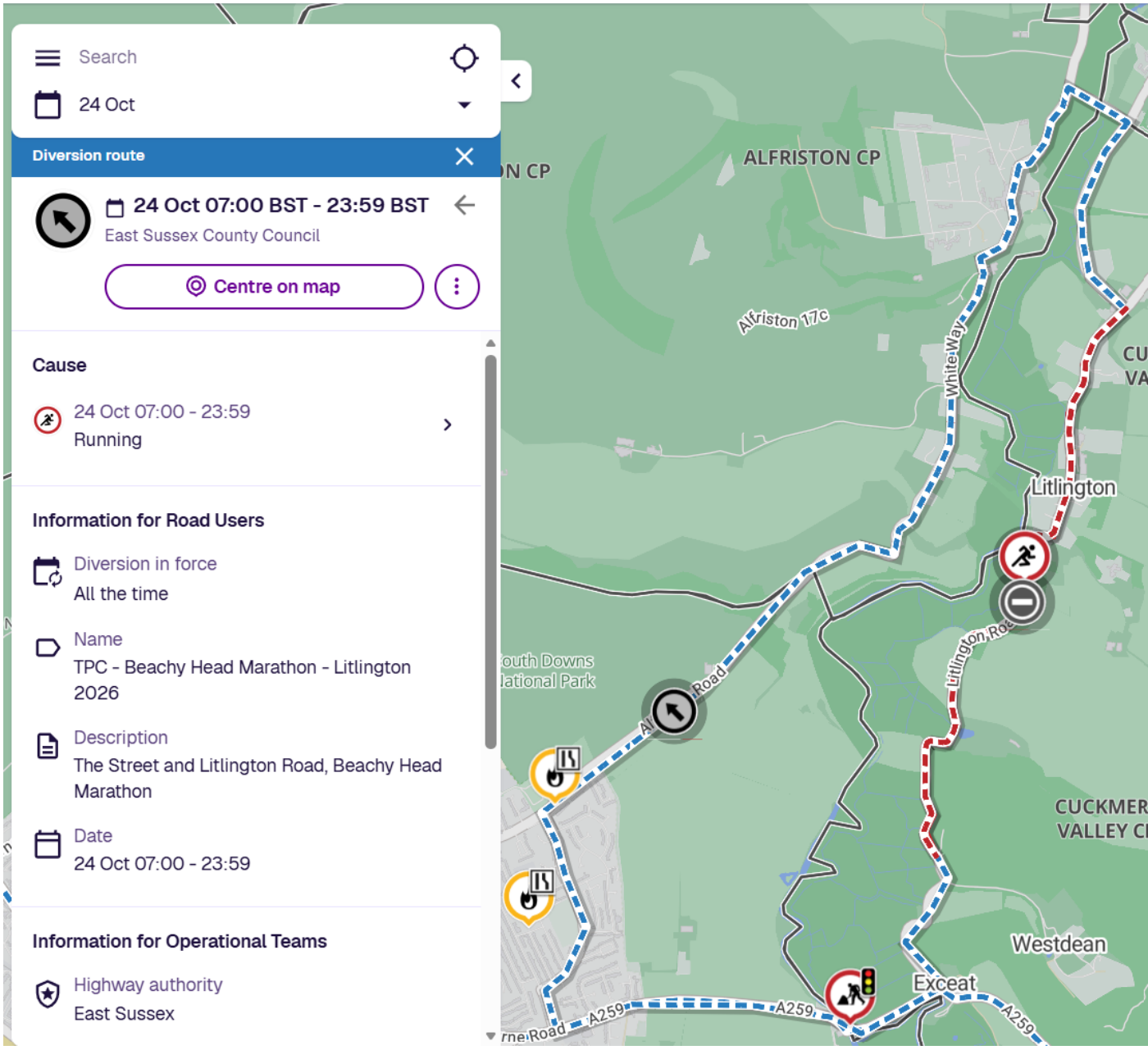
132. APC – Highways Report 19th October

CityFibre

I continue to chase CF regarding dates for the remaining works due to take place along Whiteway, Rope Walk and River Lane.

Beachy Head Marathon

As previously advised, this year's marathon is due to take place on Saturday 24th October 2026. The Street and Litlington Road will be closed from 07:00 until 23:59, with a diversion route in place through Alfriston. A communication on this was shared last night. You'll see that advanced warning signs have already been deployed, and there will be an appointed traffic management company on hand to manage the flow of traffic on the day.



I have spoken with Peter Martin, Head of Events & Seafront for Eastbourne Council, who has advised that 'the peak time for runners to come through Alfriston is between 09:00-12:00, with some faster / slower runners either side of this.' Please bear this in mind when making any plans, to minimise disruption to your day.

Having conveyed to Peter that we expect runners and traffic Marshalls to be respectful of residents, drivers, and pedestrians when coming through the village, I hope that we will have a more positive experience than in previous years. However, if there are any instances of poor behaviour then please report these to myself and I will address this with Peter accordingly.

East Sussex Highways

- HGV Infringements & Coach Signs

I have requested that additional signage for HGVs (which should include width restrictions as well as weight) is added for consideration in the next Highways programme of works (2027-2028). This is in addition to our request for road resurfacing to be considered within the same programme.

Please can residents and traders continue to report any infractions to the police using Operation Crackdown (https://operationcrackdown.org).

- Walk-Round with Riley (Part 2)

We had a follow up site meeting of the village with our Highways Steward Riley Grevatt on Thursday 8th October. Again, in great detail, all issues were captured and raised by our steward, including:

- Various road markings to be reinstated
- All potholes to be addressed and poor road conditions captured
- All blocked gullies to be cleared / jetted
- Pavement deficiencies (including loose paviors and dislodged cobbles) to be addressed
- Damaged bollard outside Fern to be repaired

Other updates include:

- The extent of the overgrown vegetation on the high path north of the village, requires several different teams to tackle this (including a tree surgeon), which is why there has been such a delay in this being addressed. Riley is chasing for a start date.
- The bollard outside number 5 Waterloo Square is to be reset.
- Power Network used the incorrect paint colour when reinstating the double yellow lines along Weavers Lane. I have asked Riley to raise this with the permit inspector, requesting that Power Network repaints the lines using the correct 'heritage primrose yellow' paint.
- There is an empty sign post on The Furlongs, which used to hold a 30mph sign. I have asked that this is either removed, or has a 20mph sign added to it (in line with the updated speed limit in the village).

Overgrown vegetation on private property

Please can the Clerk write to the owner of number 4 Dean's Road to politely request that the large hedge running alongside the pavement is cut back to allow full access to the path.

The Dene Car Park

I have been chasing Tina Ford at Wealden DC regarding the poor condition of the road at the East entrance to the car park, and the removal of the old 'no entry' post with no sign on it (that remains as a legacy from the old road layout). She has assured me that she is aware of these issues and will be providing an update in due course.

Verge Damage on the Furlongs: Parking Deterrents to Prevent Further Damage to The Furlongs / Cuckmere Court Grass Verge

Following a change of staff in the Licencing & Enforcement team, I arranged a site meeting for Thursday 15th October with Sam Barnard, one of the experienced officers who works in the department, with Cllr Rabagliati also in attendance.

Following the recent tarmac laid on the South Downs Way, we were keen to look at all options available to us, in the hopes that something more environmentally beneficial could be used such as

trees or shrubs. Sam was very helpful and thorough, but advised that the only option available to us would be the installation of bollards. A licence would not be granted for trees, and a cultivation licence would almost certainly not be approved due to issues with line of sight for vehicles turning in and out of Cuckmere Court.

Whilst we had previously hoped that a small number of bollards could be used in order to ensure this solution did not look overly urbanised, Sam advised that in order for the installation of bollards to be fully effective, we would need to use the maximum spacing guidance of 1.5m resulting in 11 bollards. We would also need an additional 2 bollards at the top of the verge to prevent vehicles mounting from the Cuckmere Court side of the road. Whilst we can have fewer to act as a deterrent, if cars can still physically park on this area and choose to do so, this will have been a waste of village money and effort.

Using the Manchester Bollard chosen at the September meeting, licencing and installation fees, we would be looking at a cost of between £6k and £9.5k. There may be an additional cost of regular verge cutting, as the installation of bollards may result in the responsibility of this transferring to the PC. I have asked Sam to get confirmation of this.

Cllr Rabagliati and I are concerned that the large number of bollards on this verge would result in yet more urbanisation of our historic village, and would not be aesthetically in keeping.

Sam has advised that wood effect bollards are available, however, having spoken to the Council's preferred supplier Glasdon, they do not offer this option in a design that is compliant with the required safety standard BS EN 12767. I haven't been able to source wooden effect bollards that meet this standard from any other sources, and have asked Sam to provide us with some options if they are available.

I feel that the financial cost of rectifying this problem is too great for our limited resources. Whilst I have asked Cllr Shing if there are any ESCC grants available that we could apply for to assist in funding these bollards, considering the visual implications and concerns with over urbanisation, I would like the PC to decide if we still want to pursue the installation of bollards, before Cllr Shing spends any time on this.

I do not think that we should pursue this. I do think that we should take a more proactive approach in writing to the drivers who continue to park on this verge, which causes damage to the grass, has broken a utilities box, and prevents the PC from accessing the water meter for the allotments.

Exceat Bridge

I attended the September stakeholder meeting on Tuesday 29th September, and reiterated our concerns regarding unsuitable vehicles using the village as a cut-through. The slides of the presentation will be shared with the minutes when these are sent out.

The key information to share with you regarding the traffic management update is as follows:

- There will continue to be delays around the site when traffic lights are adjusted to 'facilitate movement of construction vehicles'. Please bear this in mind and allow additional time if travelling along this route.
- The dates and duration of the long road closures scheduled for late summer 2027 will not be confirmed until the 'reinforced concrete works, bridge beam installation and deck construction works are completed or near completion'. We have been assured that plenty of notice will be given so that we are able to give advance warning to residents and traders in the village

132.1 Additional Bollard at Number 3 Waterloo Square

Just as a reminder, the resident of number 3 Waterloo Square asked the Parish Council to raise a request with ESCC to have an additional bollard installed along this section of the pavement. Cllrs discussed and voted that they were happy for me to contact the Road Traffic and Safety Team at ESCC Highways, who would investigate, assess, and decide if this is the appropriate action to be taken.

On 8th October we received a lengthy response from Nick Skelton, Assistant Director of Communities, Economy & Transport at ESCC explaining why they are unable to grant this request. (Appendix E)

I have advised the resident accordingly, and reiterated that any incidents where he is physically struck by a passing vehicle should be reported to the police using Operation Crackdown (https://operationcrackdown.org).

132.2 Highway work along C120

Cuckmere Valley Parish Council has asked Alfriston PC to give support to a letter they want to submit to the Exceat Bridge Project team and ESCC Highways requesting additional maintenance is spent on the C120 to ensure that the road is in 'optimum condition', which is 'essential for managing the diverted traffic safely.' (Appendix F)

I would be happy to give our support, but would ask that the letter is expanded to request that the same maintenance is carried out for the C39 (i.e. the Alfriston Road from Drusillas to Seaford). Other than additional signage, ESH has no way of preventing these roads from being used as unofficial diversion routes, and therefore ensuring that all potholes and blocked gullies have been addressed before the Exceat Road closure should be their priority.

Appendix F - Cllr Harris Transport Report

154.The White Bridge

A Coffee House conversation was held in the OCC on 26th December to discuss matters relating to the condition of the White Bridge. My thanks to all who attended, and particularly those who helped with coffee and cakes – and the inevitable setting out and clearing chairs.

I gave a short presentation which included the following main points:-

1. The White Bridge is wholly owned by the East Sussex County Council

2. They have inspected the bridge, found it to be structurally sound.

3. Any works of repainting would therefore be 'cosmetic', the cost of which they are not prepared to bear.

4. Any works carried out by anyone else would have to be approved by East Sussex and, as it spans the Cuckmere, the Environment Agency.

5. 'Vigilante' works could definitely not be supported.

6. This would be a 'Village' project, rather than a Parish Council one. The Parish Council simply does not have the financial resources – or manpower – to deal with the project.

In discussion, it was agreed that a Village Working Party should be set up, not for volunteers to wield paintbrushes, but to deal with all the formalities for undertaking a work of this nature – including, of course, fundraising.

So far, three people have agreed to serve on the committee – ideally there should be at least three more, and so I would ask anyone willing to join the committee to contact me in the first instance.

Public Transport.

The 50th Anniversary Dinner of Cuckmere Buses is being held this Friday in the Alfriston Hotel. Unfortunately I am unable to attend, but Councillor Embry has nobly agreed to shoulder the burden and represent the APC.

Rights of Way.

I have reported various matters to East Sussex County Council, relating either to trees blocking footpaths, or dilapidated styles, particularly on the west bank of the Cuckmere between the White Bridge and the Long Bridge.

Flooding. !

Appendix G – Twinning Association Report

Alfriston and Cuckmere Valley Twinning Association

September's stroll took us inland from Seven Sisters Country Park to gently explore West Dean, a pleasant reminder to take time to enjoy the lovely villages around us. It almost goes without saying that this little leg-stretch was followed by a reviving café visit.

Events involving food at Robert & Angela's house are always a success – they are wonderful cooks and bakers- and October's "Coffee, Croissants and Chat" was no exception, as members gathered to…. well, the answer is in the name of the event!

Dates for your diary over the winter:-

We start 2027 with delicious traditional Epiphany gateaux made by our skilled bakers :-

Fête des Rois

Sunday 10th January 2027, 4 – 5:45pm

Old Chapel Centre, Alfriston

Teas, cash donations always welcome.

Followed by:-

Barn Dance

Saturday 6th March 2027,

Alfriston Village Hall

All welcome, non-members included

No experience needed, just join us for an evening of fun and laughter with good musicians and an excellent caller. Ticket details to follow.

Annual General Meeting

Followed by teas and chat

Sunday 21st March 2027 4 – 5:45pm

Old Chapel Centre, Alfriston

We have members in the Cuckmere Valley, Alfriston and Seaford. New members are always welcome, and there is no need to speak French, or to have a huge house- just come along and say hello!

For all enquiries, including contacting our membership secretary Robert Morrison, please use our email address acvtainfo@gmail.com