

**Minutes of the Meeting of the East Dean Parish Council AGM  
held on 28 April 2025 at 7.00 pm  
at East Dean Village Hall**

**Present:** Neil Georges (Chair)  
Peter West  
Josh Collins  
Chris Tyas  
Jim McDonald

**In attendance:** Jeremy Hunt- West Sussex County Council  
Vicky Mudford, standing in for Parish Clerk – Alexia Ward  
12 Parishioners

Neil Georges noted the sad passing of five parishioners Louie Allen, Timothy Calloway, Maurice Pratt, Jill Mountford and John Fisher.

**Apologies:** Sam Hook

The Chair reported that Sarah Peirson and John Holt had stepped down from the Parish Council. Chris Tyas and Jim McDonald have been co-opted onto the Parish Council.

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15 April 2024**

The Minutes were approved.

**Matters arising**

None.

**Chair's report**

The Chair's report had been circulated to the Parish Council before the meeting and was then read to the meeting by Neil Georges.

**Election of officers**

Chair: Neil Georges (proposed by Josh Collins, seconded by Pete West)

Vice Chair: Chris Tyas (proposed by Jim McDonald, seconded by Neil Georges)

**Financial Statement 2025**

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2024-2025 will be circulated and a meeting arranged for the PC to approve on Alexia's return.

The Parish received a precept of £1,143.00 from CDC for 24-25 and has made payments for grass cutting on Pond Green £96.00, Zurich Insurance £350.41, a payment to CDC for £118.56 to empty the bin on Pond Green, Keith Goacher for £120.00 to cut the grass bank opposite the Old Vicarage, a payment to the Village Hall for a replacement battery for the defibrillator for £285.00 and a service charge to Lloyds bank for £4.25.

The Lloyds bank current account on 31st March 2025 was £3,983.55 and the Helen West Legacy Account on 31st March 2025 was £20,333.70 with interest paid of £224.34.

**Any Other Business**

None

**Date of Next Meeting – April 2026**

## **Chairman's Report – East Dean Parish Council 2024/25**

**Presented by Neil Georges, Chairman**

As we come to the end of another year, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on what has been both a challenging and rewarding time for East Dean. Across the country, and certainly within our own village, businesses continue to face pressures from rising overheads and staffing costs. Local enterprise remains at the heart of community life, and now more than ever, our support is vital to their survival and success.

Infrastructure has also been a persistent challenge this year—with increasing delays in getting potholes and sinkholes repaired. This continues to be a key focus for the Parish Council in our conversations with West Sussex County Council.

Sadly, this year we also said goodbye to four much-loved members of our community: Jill Mountford, John Fisher, Maurice Pratt, and Timothy Calloway. Each brought something truly special to village life. Timothy, in particular, was an active and devoted member of our Parish Council, and lately the subcommittee, dedicating countless hours to keeping our village looking its best. His care for the Village Green always immaculately maintained for all to enjoy was a real labour of love. I'd like to thank Glenn and Martin, who will continue his good work and help carry forward Tim's legacy.

We are pleased to report that the Parish Council has now invested in a new sit-on tractor to assist with grass maintenance, another step in helping keep East Dean beautiful.

I would like to say a profound thanks to both Sarah Peirson and John Holt who have served on the PC for many years, they have decided to step down this year to focus on family and work. They have been a real support to both John and myself over many years, and we thank them for all hard work on the PC.

Reflecting on my report from last year, I once again want to highlight the importance of our Village Hall and Parish Church. Both face growing financial challenges due to increasing costs and reduced income. The tireless efforts of the Village Hall Committee and Church Volunteers do not go unnoticed, and I encourage everyone to support the events and fundraising activities that help keep these vital community assets running.

The village clean-up days continue to be a success, with new faces regularly joining in. It's a joy to see this spirit of participation. I'd urge all residents, when out and about, to lend a hand by picking up any litter they come across—small efforts that make a big difference.

### **Turning to Council matters:**

In 2023/24, we successfully froze the Parish Precept for the 13th consecutive year. However, to maintain financial balance this year, a modest increase was agreed for 2025. The precept has now been set at £1,297 just an increase of £80 for the village. While we've managed to keep rises minimal, future increases may be necessary to sustain services and responsibilities.

Our sincere thanks go to Alexia, our Parish Clerk, for her continued efficiency and diligence. Her attention to detail keeps us running smoothly. Thanks also to Max Davies for organising yet another fantastic fireworks display—undoubtedly one of the highlights of the village calendar. Adrian and I were happy to contribute a few rockets of our own to the show, which was, by all accounts, the envy of our neighbouring villages!

Another success this year was the delivery of sewage infrastructure works by Southern Water, including lining and sealing the drains and private laterals through the village and down to Charlton. While we've had a relatively dry winter and haven't seen the system fully tested, early signs are promising, and we're optimistic the investment will prove effective.

The Parish Council has remained active and engaged in a variety of important matters, including:

- Ongoing engagement with West Sussex County Council Highways regarding pothole repairs on East Dean Hill.
- Continued collaboration with the subcommittee on village maintenance.
- Attendance at neighbouring Parish Council meetings to learn best practices around traffic calming and speeding strategies.
- Advocacy work, including engaging with Southern Water, local media, and our MP to raise awareness of last winter's sewage issues.
- Regular village walks and leaflet drops to stay connected with residents.
- Coordinating both the village clean-up days and the successful return of Bonfire Night.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I want to thank all residents for their ongoing support and community spirit. I also extend my sincere thanks to my fellow councillors for their dedication, time, and hard work over the past year.

As I said in last year's report and it remains just as true now, please give a little time if you can. Even the smallest contribution helps us all enjoy the privilege of living in this wonderful village. We are all custodians of East Dean, and together we ensure its legacy continues for generations to come.

Warm regards,

Neil Georges

Chairman, East Dean Parish Council