



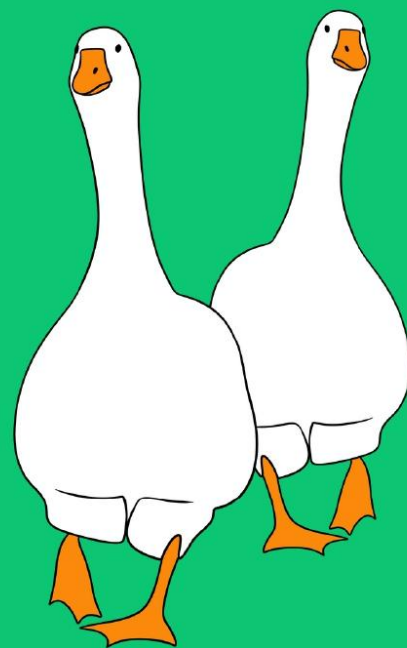
Annual Report and Directory 2025

Mid Summer tea on the Green

Join the geese and your neighbours
for a delicious, free cream tea
on Sedlescombe green

Sunday 21st June 2025
2-4pm

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welcome



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Parish Council Chair's Introduction



Jonathan Vine-Hall

Cllr.vine-hall@sedlescombeparishcouncil.gov.uk

As the Annual Directory goes to press we will be welcoming a new landlord at the Queens Head. We wish them the best and that our village pub continues to flourish. Our village shop is also doing well under its current management following uncertain times a few years ago. Both sit at the heart of our community.

I reflect back on the development of our neighbourhood plan, which commenced in 2013 and was finally adopted in April 2018. There was great concern at the time about development in the village. As you will have seen after 7 years no houses have been built. One site at the end of Gregory Walk has permission but the site has been put up for sale with no buyers coming forward. The sites at the Village Hall end of the village have applications in process but are also a long way from progressing. The controversial site which we as a Parish Council and community fought hard against at Street Farm was finally given permission in June 2023. It was a great sadness that the government's desire for house building nearly at any cost allowed this site. However, there is an upside. Rother District Council have told us they will be transferring the rest of the field, which amounts to about 6 acres, to the Parish Council who will keep it as a green space for the community in perpetuity. The next update on the neighbourhood plan will be a light touch. Despite the governments push on housing it appears developers have limited interest in Sedlescombe!

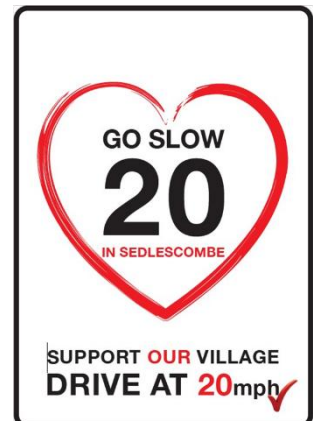
Thanks to our decarbonisation of the sports pavilion our electricity, heating and hot water costs are now plummeting which is a real saving for residents. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Rother District Council for awarding a grant of £16,573 toward this valuable project.

An update on the traffic calming is detailed later on in this directory. Suffice to say we are very near to the finish line have passed the traffic audit with only minor revisions required. We have already established a 50% grant funding against this project which given the traffic on the B2244 is needed more than ever.

Please join us on the village green on the 21st of June for tea and cakes. More details later in the directory.

On a final word a warm welcome to all our new residents in the village.

March 2025



The 2025 Sedlescombe Annual Parish Assembly will take place

Wednesday 14th May at 7pm in Sedlescombe Village Hall.

I hereby give notice that the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Wednesday 14th May 2025 at Sedlescombe Village Hall ,7pm. Local Government Act 1972 c 70 Sch 12-part III.

Agenda

1. Chairman's welcome and to receive any apologies for absence.
2. Approval of Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 25th April 2024
3. Reports from the groups and organisations of Sedlescombe.
4. Electors' question and answer session with County & District Cllr. Carl Maynard, District Cllr Beverly Coupar & Parish Council Chairman Cllr. Jonathan Vine-Hall

Signed

Jonathan Vine-Hall

Chairman of Sedlescombe Parish Council

At the end of the business part of the meeting you are invited to circulate around the hall to meet Parish Councillors, District and County Councillors and local organisations and businesses.

The Annual Parish Meeting is a meeting of all the local government electors for the Parish which the public can participate in. It is NOT a Meeting of the Parish Council.

Anyone may attend but only registered electors of the Parish may speak.

The purpose of the meeting is so that the Parish Council can explain what it has been doing over the last year and it enables the electors to have their say on anything they consider is important to the people of the Parish.

Doors open at 6.30pm

You will have an opportunity to view tables displayed by local businesses and organisations.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BOOK A DISPLAY TABLE, PLEASE CONTACT THE CLERK ON 07531 065 469 or clerk@sedlescombeparishcouncil.gov.uk

**There will be a free prize draw for those attending
and for Parish Council volunteers.**



Sedlescombe Traffic Advisory Group



Traffic Calming Project update at the Annual Assembly

Come to the Annual Assembly and find out the latest, there will be a chance to ask questions.

The traffic project continues to progress behind the scenes while the council goes through all the processes required.

A critical Road Safety Audit has been done to assess the project and see whether any major changes are required.

We were delighted (but not surprised) that the report confirmed that there were no major issues. East Sussex County Council are assessing all the information they now have.

There will be an update at the Annual Assembly and time for residents to ask any questions they may have.



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Minutes of the

Sedlescombe Annual Parish Assembly

held on Thursday 25th April 2024 at 19:00 in Sedlescombe Village Hall 7pm – 9pm

Item	Agenda Item
	<p>PRESENT:</p> <p>Cllr. Jonathan Vine-Hall Chair of the Meeting, Chair of Sedlescombe Parish Council. Parish Councillors: Pauline Glew; Roy Chapman, David Caney, Jackie Saull-Hunt, Greta Anderson. Parish and District Cllr Beverly Coupar. District and County Cllr Carl Maynard. Proper Officer/ RFO of Sedlescombe Parish Council Jackie Scarff. 118 residents were present at the meeting.</p>
1	<p>Chairman's welcome and to receive any apologies for absence.</p> <p>The Chair of the Parish Council introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the meeting. For Health and Safety purposes he pointed out the emergency exits in the village hall plus the mustering points outside. The audience was advised that it was proposed that the meeting was to be recorded. No objections were indicated.</p> <p>Apologies Received - There were no apologies.</p>
2	<p>Approval of Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 17th May 2023.</p> <p>It was proposed by D Caney and all agreed to approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 17th May 2023</p>
3	<p>Introduction to the evening's proceedings.</p> <p>The chair asked the parish councillors to introduce themselves and went on to explain that there would be an update about the public conveniences and carpark, the traffic calming project along with some interesting speakers - Bernard Hibbs from the Bruderhof Community, Jeff Pyrah from Rother District Council who will give an update on the Local Plan. Before all this Winnie Coupar, a member of the village school is going to come up on stage and read us a poem that she has written.</p> <p><i>'Sedlescombe is a village full of beautiful trees, flowers and blossom and lots of bees. There's a school for children to learn and play and a playground to go to on a sunny day. We raise lots of money from all the school fairs, the help of volunteers that show that they care. The village used to have eight white geese that were living their lives in the village and peace. But now we're down to only three. That's why we say to drive at 20. You may see the speed watch out on patrol, so slow down and look out for those pesky potholes. I hope that tonight you have a good time, so sit back relax and have a good time.'</i></p> <p>The chair invited Honey Lampard to join Winnie on stage. The chair explained that Winnie has been coming to the Annual Assembly for a number of years to read a poem, a story or talk about something else and is a credit to the community. The chair presented Winnie with a prize.</p> <p>The chair introduced Honey who does litter picking with her mum and is the youngest litter picker in the village. The chair presented Honey with a prize as a thank you for all the litter picking she had done.</p> <p>The chair introduced Bernard Hibbs. Bernard explained that he had lived in Robertsbridge most of his life and didn't know much about Sedlescombe before buying the property at Oaklands. He thanked the residents of Sedlescombe for making the Bruderhof community feel really welcome, explaining that they have bought properties all over the world and have never received such a warm welcome. He also explained that he had let the whole community know about the special Sedlescombe geese and how important it is to drive carefully through the village. Bernard went on to explain that the Bruderhof is a Christian community who practice communal living, sharing their possessions and living as an extended family. Bernard explained the Germanic history of the Bruderhof community from 1920, their move to North America and then establishing a community in England. He explained about the plans for the Pestalozzi village and extended an open invitation to visit the Robertsbridge site which is home to about</p>

300 people. The Bruderhof community offer education up to the age of 18 running an American curriculum. The site in Sedlescombe has been officially named Oakland Bruderhof and will be the home of the secondary school (ages 14 – 18) for approximately 40 students. Bernard explained that the teaching is very rigorous for academics and sport, but also other life skills like agriculture and welding, gardening, engine repair, culinary arts, chess, robotics, all sorts of things. The community really wants to integrate into the village to be very much part of the school right from the beginning, there may possibly be some employment opportunities. They have their own teachers, but may also employ local teachers, as well as possibly needing to employ people to cook or to help maintain the grounds, to teach cooking skills, or sewing or some of these wonderful crafts that we don't want to die out. So, it'll be very good to have that link to the village. Once the weather improves the community would like to invite residents to join them at Oaklands Bruderhof for a barbeque. Bernard reassured the residents there were no plans for big development on site and invited them ask questions later in the evening.

The chair thanked Bernard for taking the time to come to the Annual Assembly, particularly as it was his wedding anniversary, he explained that he felt that the Sedlescombe community had welcomed the Bruderhof community to Sedlescombe and many have visited.

The chair introduced Jeff Pryah from Rother District Council who is the policy manager and responsible for the local plan. Most people think of the local plan as housing but it's much more than housing. The residents received a short presentation explaining the local plan and that there would be a public consultation. Mr Pryah explained that the local plan, once adopted, would be used to make planning decisions. There is a plan in place, but it needs to be updated, it's a long-term plan that will last to 2040. The consultation will be online with hard copies of the documents available at the Town Hall and in libraries and there will be a series of exhibitions during May and June. Mr Pryah explained that there are lots of opportunities for residents to help influence the final plan as the consultation is on the first draft version.

Q – as the Local plan is 2020 – 2040 why has it taken four years to get to this stage? The resident also commented that the 'new link road' had taken a long time to come to fruition and that the housing and workspace associated with the development was way behind.

A – It does take time to build all the evidence required and consult on proposals to create a local plan. This will be ongoing in order to ensure that it is fit for the future.

The new road was put in around Bexhill, as the most sustainable area within Rother, to help new development come forward to provide new housing and employment for Rother. It is happening but slowly. The planning application for 1000 new homes and a new school was approved in 2016 and so far approximately 150 houses have been built.

Q – The infrastructure implications will be the responsibility of the county council, what have they had to say about the plan?

A- This is an important point as the plan has to go through examination to show that it is achievable and that the infrastructure will be provided. Rother have a duty to co-operate with all the infrastructure partners like education, highways, Southern and Southeast Water, and we do. They need to provide their advice and if they object then Rother have to respond to that. There will be a number of documents on the website setting out what Rother understand to be the infrastructure requirements.

Q- Please explain how the Sedlescombe Neighbourhood plan will relate to the new Local Plan.

A – It still has weight and is relevant to the village, but over time it will need to be reviewed and align with the Rother new plan so it still has weight in the future, taking into account new required housing numbers and new policies.

Q- what happens if Sedlescombe doesn't want to work with Rother.

A- It depends whether the village wants a new neighbourhood plan or not. Some villages do and some don't, it's a community choice.

The chair explained that Mr Pryah has worked very hard on the local plan, it does take a long time because it's a laborious process collecting, and analysis lots of data assessing over 1000 sites. The chair thanked Mr Pryah for coming along and making his presentation.

The chair introduced David Caney who will explain how the traffic calming project is progressing. David explained all the plans that were displayed on the wall. He explained that the plans would have to be consulted on further. David encouraged everyone to have a look at the plans if they haven't so far as the whole village will be impacted.

Q- when people come across the bridge will they be able to see what's coming towards them because of the build out. Will the one by the village pump affect the coaches that stop to pick up the children.

A-Ensuring visibility will be a key factor in getting the plan passed. There will be plenty of room to park the coaches. The intention of the traffic calming is to stop people using the village as a bypass.

There was a discussion about traffic calming in Stream Lane.

The chair explained that the highways department had been down to Stream Lane several times and will not support traffic calming measures. Carl Maynard commented that he had met with residents and the county council but confirmed that they would not support traffic calming. The chair confirmed that there would be more conversations with the county council on the subject. David commented that the county council had granted the request from the parish council to add a sign on the A21 saying no HGV's for Stream Lane.

Q- Does the scheme still require match funding.

A-David confirmed that match funding would be required to release the grant money. The chair explained which sites in the village will unlock the required CIL money.

Q- The resident commended the traffic calming measures which will help lots of residents and the geese and asked why there were no traffic calming measures in other roads that would see an increase in traffic as a consequence. The resident confirmed support for the scheme presented in the village but asked that there could be some measures in Stream Lane to protect the residents.

A-The parish council have consulted several time with East Sussex Highways, and tried different methods and schemes but are happy to go back to the county council and discuss the matter further and see what else can be done in Stream Lane.

There was a conversation about The Green and whether it could be made one way. The chair explained that during a previous consultation half of the residents support one direction and half the other direction. The reason that it can't be one way is the access to the shop for delivery trucks.

There was a discussion about the parking a disruption at school run times. David confirmed that the traffic calming measures were not able to help with this. He confirmed that it was frequently raised with the school.

The chair confirmed that to drive from the north of the village to the bridge at the south it is less that a minute longer at 20 miles an hour versus 30mph. It's a very small amount of time, but a dramatic improvement in safety. Parking around the school, the best solution is for us to try and get the PCSO to come just the presence helps. The chair thanked David for the presentation

Last person speak tonight is the new rector of the church, John Hawkins.

John Hawkins introduced himself as Rector of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sedlescombe with Whatlington.

As many of you will know, I was appointed Rector of the parish last December. It has been a busy time and it was slightly odd finding that the church was some 15 minutes' walk from the village green. Its location is historic. Christianity probably came to Sedlescombe in the time of the Romans and there was a small wooden church mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1087. The Normans rebuilt it in stone in what was then the centre of the parish which included areas known as Footlands, Hurst and Street. The church has been altered and extended repeatedly over the centuries and is now in desperate need of repair.

The parish had been in vacancy for some time until I came out of retirement and was appointed to look after both St John's and St Mary Magdalene in Whatlington. Over the year we have been busy and there have been 3 baptisms, 5 weddings, 6 funerals, 4 burials of ashes and 1 memorial service. So the churches are kept busy serving the people of the parish. It was especially good to see some hundred children come

	<p>for their school end of term service at Easter. They provided a superb retelling of the Easter story and we are very fortunate to have such a good school in the parish.</p> <p>I would also like to say thank you to those who responded to a plea last year for help with keeping the churchyard tidy. A number did come and help and it is a task that always needs to be done.</p> <p>Of great concern for the future of the church building, there was a 5 yearly survey of the building just before I was appointed. The inspecting architect has listed a large number of necessary repairs, some of which are urgent. The architect has estimated the cost of the immediate work needed to be some £60,000. Which is a seriously challenging amount for what is essentially a small and aging congregation.</p> <p>Of immediate concern, the organ needs urgent repair at a cost of £6,000 plus vat. Many enjoy the music that our organist, Andrew McGregor, provides and he is hoping that the repairs will be completed to allow him to give a recital on 21 June. We will be seeking grants to help towards these costs, but that does not look very promising at the moment. Any help that can be given by the Parish would be gratefully received.</p> <p>The Chair thanked The Rector and wished him a very warm welcome to the village.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Volunteer Prize Draw</p> <p>The Chair explained that there were many volunteers in the village who did lots of different things, the prize draw is for residents who help the parish council. The chair asked Roy Chapman, who does a lot of volunteering and jobs around the village himself to come up and draw the volunteer prize. Thanks go to the Blackbrooks for donating the prize of a £50 voucher. Blackbrooks are one of the businesses in the village who support the parish council regularly.</p> <p>Congratulations expressed to the winner and explained that being a volunteer in the village is extremely helpful to us all. We will be asking for more volunteers towards the end of the meeting.</p> <p>The chair took the opportunity to thank Pumphouse Designs for their continued support which included printing out the posters advertising the annual assembly.</p> <p>The chair invites Pauline Glew to come to the stage and draw the door prize which was dinner for 2 at the Brickwall Hotel. The chair thanked the Brickwall for their support each year.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>The Chair opened the floor for any general questions.</p> <p>There were no more questions.</p> <p>The chair invited everyone to Tea on the Green 23rd June where there would be free afternoon tea for residents. Posters will go up with all the information nearer the time.</p>
	<p>The chair asked if there were any specific questions for the county or district councillors.</p> <p>Q- would there be work on the grass on the green by the Brickwall after roadworks and the verges by the new houses built behind the Brickwall as the verges were looking terrible after the road works and the building work.</p> <p>A-the chair said that the Green had been dug up for gasworks without the consent of the parish council, some work had been done but we were in conversation with them to make some improvements. The parish council would make enquiries about the verges to see what could be done.</p> <p>Q- what about Red Barn nature park where there has been damage from construction vehicles.</p> <p>A-the parish council gave permission for a back garden to be accessed. Unfortunately, the work was done when the ground was very soft. The area has been rectified and new seed to match the plants that are naturally growing there was sourced and spread.</p>
	<p>Final thank you's</p> <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for coming to the evening, all the presenters and all those who've put their display tables up, members of the Parish Council who've worked consistently hard during this time and our clerk Jackie who does an enormous amount of work behind the scenes.</p> <p>On that note, thank you very much and good night.</p>



The weekly newsheet *Sedlescombe News* is now in its 18th year. We are a team of 4 volunteer editors who produce the weekly newsheet on a rota with only one week off per year, at Christmas. We aim to print news from the village with a particular focus on events that are coming up.

An annual subscription is £10, or a hard copy is available in the village shop for 20p. All this money goes to a charity of the editors' choosing. Sedlescombe News relies on contributions from our readership, so do send in your news, advance warning of events that are coming up, and even news of births, marriages, and deaths. We will publish whatever we have room for.

We are conscious that our readership is currently small, and we are keen to expand more. Let us have your feedback on Sedlescombe News via sedlescombenews@outlook.com We would be keen to know: Which clubs or groups in the village are not currently featuring in the news, and why? How can we encourage our younger neighbours to post news and to read the news sheet? What would you like to read more of?

The Sedlescombe News is usually available on Friday each week, by email to our annual subscribers or from the village shop.



Sedlescombe Village Hall

We are fortunate to have a modern village, large enough to accommodate over 100 people, which is warm and well-maintained thanks to the foresight of those who lived in the village 25 years ago and to the continued efforts of a team of trustees.

Over the last year, we have transitioned to a Community Instituted Organisation or C.I.O., a form of charitable trust which has at its heart a commitment to ensure that the Hall and land immediately surrounding it are owned in trust forever and for the benefit of the people of the village.

The advantages of a C.I.O. over any other form of charity are that:

- It is an incorporated organisation which means it can own the hall in the name of the Sedlescombe Village Hall CIO, rather than under the name of individual trustees (as was previously the case)
- A CIO can enter into contracts in its own name, for example a contract to repair part of the building
- It limits the liability of individual Trustees
- Its activities are regulated solely by the Charity Commission which means we submit reports and accounts just to them rather than also sending them to Companies House

The CIO owns the hall freehold and leases the hall car park from the Parish Council. The Parish Council does have the right to nominate one Trustee; this is currently Keith Saunders.

We have undertaken a number of improvements since March 2024 including installation of new solar panels which are already making a difference to our running costs. We are currently considering other changes such as whether we still need a payphone, a new Broadband contract and the (expensive) replacement of equipment in our sewerage system.

We are grateful to the currently eleven trustees who volunteer their time generously to keep the hall as a going concern. Some trustees bring particular expertise for example practical skills or of budgeting. Others bring their common sense and willingness to assist with good ideas or helping on working parties. We are always keen to expand our Trustee group so if you are interested, please do contact us via chairman@sedlescombevillagehall.org.uk . We would be delighted to have an informal conversation with you without obligation. You can read more about the CIO, our constitution and details of how to book the hall online at www.sedlescombevillagehall.co.uk

Keith Saunders – Chair of Trustees.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2023-24, DRAFT 2024-25 & BUDGET 2025-26.

All amounts are GBP rounded to near £		Final 2023-24	Draft 2024-25*	Budget 2025-26
INCOME	Precept on District Council	59,800	67,650	70,000
	Interest and investment income	94	300	250
	Grant Income	230	18,073	0
	Hire Fees	4,650	4,990	7,500
	CIL	0		0
	Other Income	3,803	11,641	860
	Total Income	68,577	102,355	78,610
EXPENDITURE	Subscriptions & Memberships	844	630	650
	Administration	29,001	33,474	35,894
	Amenities	3,583	6,830	7,970
	Sports Pavilion	8,707	54,912	15,964
	Red Barn Field	151	0	800
	East View Terrace	465	0	1,000
	Sedlescombe Traffic Advisory Group	6,349	7,065	
	Brede Lane Toilets & Carpark* EMR			9,300
	Riverside Playground	210	244	3,600
	VAT	3,307	8,045	
	Total Expenditure	51,772	110,610	74,528
Earmarked Reserves (EMR)				
All amounts are GBP rounded to near £		Final 2023-24	Draft 2024-25*	
RESERVES	Maintenance of Assets	9,000	10,075	
	Riverside MUGA	11,000	12,500	
	Red Barn Field	6,550	6,550	
	Red Barn Field Grant Income	1,309	1,309	
	Riverside Playground	2,500	2,500	
	Traffic Calming	3,694	0	
	Speedwatch	2,000	2,000	
	Street Farm	11,000	11,000	
	CIL	11,700	11,700	
	Brede Lane Carpark	1,800	2,100	
	Legal Fees	3,300	3,300	
	Bus Shelter	5,100	6,100	
	Sportsfield Carpark	400	800	
	EVT MUGA Area.	2,500	2,500	
	Trees	4,000	5,000	
	Sports Pavilion	24,500	0	
	Recreation	10,000	10,000	
	Neighbourhood Plan Development	9,000	9,000	
	Brede Lane Toilets	0	7,650	
Reserved Balances at 31st March 2024 v 2025	119,353	104,084		

*NB. These are Draft figures are to the end of March 2025 and may change during the year end.

Responsible Financial Officer's (RFO) report.....

Sedlescombe Parish Council employs the Parish Clerk as its Responsible Financial Officer in accordance with The Local Government Act 1972 s151.

The Council follows the requirements for adequate financial governance as defined in the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioner's Guide and its own Financial Regulations. The financial year is from 1st April to 31st March.

The budget is set by Councillors at the December or January meeting for the following financial year and is the basis for submission of the precept request to Rother District Council. It is at this time that Councillors consider financing future and ongoing projects. The annual accounts were agreed at the parish council meeting held on 21st May 2024 after having been reviewed by an independent internal auditor, they were sent to the External Auditor PKF Littlejohn and received back in September unqualified (the auditor is completely satisfied with the truth and fairness of the financial statements of the accounts). You will find a copy on our website.

The council has overseen a spend of £110,610 to the end of March 2025, this is significantly more than the previous year predominantly due having to replace the decking around the pavilion which had come to the end of its life. The parish council have also invested in decarbonising the sports pavilion. This project was made possible with a grant from Rother District Council of £16, 573 and the parish council ensuring that they budget effectively by setting aside some money every year for repairs and maintenance, projects and things like tree maintenance (future spending needs) so that the precept isn't susceptible to large spikes. Ear Marked reserves are reviewed regularly as projects progress and priorities change.

Having the solar panels is already starting to make a difference to the large utility bills, with solar panels on both sides of the roof the system is fuelled by the sunshine all day.

Overall, the net effect of expenditure & income this year has been to decrease the ear marked reserves by £20,732 and the expected use of the reserves is outlined in the Earmarked Reserves table above. The council has a risk management policy and register and in conjunction with its financial regulations ensures that all payments are made by Standing order, direct debit or BACS, financial reports are included with the monthly meeting information and available on the council's website.

The Local Government Transparency Code 2015 (the code) came into effect on 1 April 2015. The code is issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in exercise of powers under section 2 of the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980, and replaces any previous codes issued in relation to authorities in England under those powers.

The code does not replace or supersede the existing framework for access to and re-use of public sector information provided by the:

- Freedom of Information Act 2000 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005
- Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community regulations 2009
- Sections 25 and 26 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 which provides rights for persons to inspect a local authority's accounting records and supporting documentation, and to make copies of them.

The code requires local authorities in England covered by the code to publish the following information to ensure local people can see and access data covering how money is spent, use of assets, decision making and issues important to local people. Sedlescombe Parish Council does not meet the definition of a local authority covered by the code but recognises that to do so is best practice and therefore publishes the relevant information. More information can be found on the council's website www.sedlescombe.org.uk

If you would like any further information, please contact The Parish Clerk/RFO
clerk@sedlescombeparishcouncil.org.uk

Meet Your Councillors

Jonathan Vine-Hall - Chair of the Parish Council.

Contact: ☎: 07973 129505 Hurst House, Hurst Lane, Sedlescombe TN33 OPE



Jonathan joined the Parish Council in August 2010, has been its Chairman since May 2012. Jonathan is an ex-officio member of every committee and is actively involved in all aspects of the Parish Council's work representing the Council on a number of related bodies. Jonathan has lived in Sedlescombe since 2003 and farms Hurst Estate between Brede Lane and Cripps Corner. He has 1 rescue dogs, 1 rescue horses and 1 rescue cat. Having been a trustee for Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare for 10 years and chairman for 4 years he was appointed vice president in December 2022.

Pauline Glew - Vice-Chair of Parish Council,

Chairman of Finance Committee and Chair of Red Barn Working Group

Contact: ☎: 01424 870258 Kagiso, 36 Park Shaw, Sedlescombe TN33 OPP



Pauline joined the Parish Council in 2003 and is Vice Chair of the Council and Chair of the Finance Committee. She is the Parish Council's representative on RALC and runs the Sedlescombe Lift Scheme and is chair of the Red Barn Field working Group and is Treasurer of the Friendship Club. Her leisure time is taken up working voluntary for the National Trust for 26 years and trying to keep pace with 4 daughters, 13 grandchildren aged between 25 and 36 and 5 great grandchildren.

Roy Chapman - Councillor

Contact: ☎: 01424 870520 Ashdown Cottage, Cottage Lane, Sedlescombe TN33 ORR



Roy was elected to the Parish Council in May 2011. He is a member of the Planning committee and Red Barn Working Group. Roy co ordinates all the village volunteers and ensures that the village is well maintained and has become the village tree warden. Roy has lived in and been associated with Sedlescombe and its surrounding areas for more than 40 years and ran his own building business here. He is a member of Battle Writers Group. His interests include photography, the arts and conservation.

Beverley Coupar - Parish Councillor

Contact: ☎: 07938 384467 Voles, Moat Lane, Sedlescombe TN33 ORZ



Beverley was co-opted to the Parish Council in December 2019. She moved to Sedlescombe with her husband and 2 young children in 2016. She is Chair of the Public Playing Field and Recreation Ground Charity Trust and deputy chair of Sedlescombe Traffic Advisory Group and The Sports Field Committee. Her interests include gardening and cooking.

David Caney- Parish Councillor

Contact: ☎: 07831 663321 Summer Cottage The Street, Sedlescombe TN33 0QQ



David joined the Parish Council in September 2018. He has lived in Sedlescombe since 2016 having moved from Robertsbridge where he served as a governor at Saleshurst Primary school. He is chair of the Traffic Advisory Committee (STAG), Vice Chair of the Planning Committee and Chair of the Sporsfield and Pavilion Committee .

Keith Saunders - Councillor

Contact: ☎: 07714 268801 Old Orchard, Chapel Hill Sedlescombe TN33 0QX



Keith moved to the village in 2020 two weeks before the first lockdown. He became a trustee of Sedlescombe Village Hall and is now Chair of the Trust working to ensure the future of the village hall as a community resource. He is passionate about the beauty of the village and local countryside in which we are privileged to live, and is keen to ensure that our heritage is preserved through sustainable and manageable change for the future. He was co-opted to the council in May 2023 and is on the planning and finance committees. In his spare time Keith enjoys gardening, playing with his two young grandchildren and playing his violin.

Greta Anderson - Councillor

Contact: ☎: 07591 612043 117 Eastview Terrace, Sedlescombe, TN33 0PY



Greta was co-opted to the Parish Council in May 2024 and has been happily settled in Sedlescombe for 9 years. A librarian by profession, Greta now has a career in Local Government in the voluntary sector. Greta is passionate about social action in creating healthy and vibrant communities, the environment, and nature conservation. In her spare time she enjoys reading, being out in nature and gardening.

Jackie Saull-Hunt - Councillor

Contact: ☎: 07765 710337 Hurst Cottage, Hurst Lane, Sedlescombe, TN33 0PE



Jackie was co-opted on to the Parish Council in June 2020. She has lived in Sedlescombe for almost 20 years and has been an active part of village life including mother and toddler groups, the preschool as well as the local primary school. Her main interests include running around the local footpaths especially with various kids in tow, and swimming in the local rivers as well as a lifelong interest in plants.

Jackie Scarff - Parish Clerk / Financial Officer

Contact: ☎: 07531 065 469 The Red House, Lower Street Ninfield TN33 9ED.



Jackie joined as Parish Clerk/RFO to Sedlescombe PC in October 2018. She is currently employed by the Parish Council for 18 hours per week as the RFO and Proper Officer. She is a qualified clerk. Jackie lives in Ninfield with her husband and 3 children and outside of work enjoys sailing and gardening.

Beverley Coupar - Independent District Councillor

Contact: ☎: 07938 384467 Voles, Moat Lane, Sedlescombe TN33 0RZ



Beverley was elected as an Independent District Councillor in May 2023. As part of her District Councillor role Beverley is Vice Chair of the Board of Directors of Rother Housing Company and is on the board of Hastings and Rother Furniture Service.

Carl Maynard - Rother District and East Sussex County Councillor

Contact: ☎: 07500 224869 Dines Wood, 22 Baldsdown, Westfield, TN37 7NH



Carl was elected councillor for Brede Valley and Marsham in 2005, has been a ward councillor on Rother District Council since 1999. Carl is also a county councillor. His current Committee Membership is: Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health, Cabinet, East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board, ESBT Strategic Commissioning Board and Full Council.

Garage Services



BAVARIAN MOTORSPORT

Bridge Garage Workshops
The Street, Sedlescombe,
East Sussex.
TN33 0QB

Tel: 01424 870202

Local MOT Test Centre

AUTHOR

Mrs Julia Chapman

Ashdown Cottage, Cottage Lane, Sedlescombe
01424 870520

Author of the following books about Sedlescombe.....

'LIFE THROUGH THE LENS'

A Pictorial history of the village

'HOP-SCOTCH & SPINNING TOPS'

The history of the old Primary School

'THE TIMES OF OUR LIVES'

Memories of local people

'One Last Chance' also 'One Last Chance' part II My Continuing Journey by Roy Chapman also available.

Books can be purchased at the local shop or contact Julia at the above address

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Stream Farm, Stream Lane, Sedlescombe

News and contacts.

The Village Voice is a column published in the local Battle Observer which comes out every Friday. It provides information on Sedlescombe, local events, groups and organisations. There is no charge for this promotion. If you have an event coming up in the local area or would like to have a small piece outlining your club or organisation aims, activities, membership etc., then please drop your information into Asselton House, The Green or send via e-mail ✉: judy@asselton.co.uk or call ☎ 01424 870344

The Parish Council notice board is outside the village shop items for the notice board may be sent by email to the Parish Clerk.
Email ✉: clerk@sedlescombeparishcouncil.gov.uk

Sedlescombe Parish Council website www.sedlescombe.org.uk is as useful source of information. The website is updated with the work of Sedlescombe Parish Council and is compatible with most media devices. Sometimes it is useful to use the search facility to find the information you are looking for, but please feel free to contact the clerk if you can't find what you need.

The Sedlescombe Jobs Network has been active since 2014 and has publicised many job opportunities. The network also offers a platform for organisations who are seeking volunteers. Village news and events are also being promoted. Contact: Michelle Brister ☎: 01424 870589 ✉: michelle.brister@btinternet.com Facebook users search for 'Sedlescombe Jobs Network' page and 'Like' to receive information and post updates.

Litter Picking The Parish Council provide litter pickers for volunteers to borrow. Contact Pauline Glew for more details. ☎: 01424 870258

The Lift Scheme is to help Sedlescombe residents who find it difficult to attend hospital/surgery appointments because of lack of transport. Contact Pauline Glew ☎: 01424 870258 for the details including if you would like to become a lift scheme driver.

Battle Area Community Transport (BACT) was founded in 1999 in response to the need for regular transport serving the inhabitants of rural areas of East Sussex. Bus services serving Sedlescombe can be found online or for further details. Contact ☎ 01424 870955 (Mon-Fri 9-12) ✉: bactoffice@bact-online.co.uk
🌐: www.bact-online.co.uk

Stagecoach Bus Service 349: 2-hourly daytime service details
Contact ☎ 08702 433711 / General 0345 6080194
🌐: www.stagecoachbus.com

Policing Matters: Sedlescombe, Ewhurst, Staplecross, Cripps Corner and Bodiam neighbourhood area' comes under the **Rother district**.

The nearest Police Station is in North Trade Road, Battle. TN33 0EX. ☎: 101 or 01273 470 101.

✉: 101@sussex.police.uk To report a crime or incident call Sussex Police ☎101 or report online <https://www.sussex.police.uk/contact-us/report-online/>

For your local team please call or email.


✉: rother@sussex.police.uk ☎: 01273 404934 🌐: www.sussex.police.uk

Crimestoppers is an independent charity helping law enforcement to locate criminals and help solve crimes. They have an anonymous 24/7 phone number, **0800 555 111** to pass on information about crime.


For more information visit their website at 🌐: www.crimestoppers-uk.org

News and contacts cont.

Parish Council Clerk – Jackie Scarff. Sign up on our website to receive important information via email.




 www.sedlescombe.org.uk we send 3 newsletters a year plus important information like road closures etc

: clerk@sedlescombeparishcouncil.gov.uk


: 07531 065469

: The Red House, Lower Street, Ninfield, Battle, TN33 9ED


Rother District Council can provide help on a range of issues such as Benefits, Planning, Bus Passes, Council Tax, Data Protection, Dead Animals, Elections, Food Hygiene, Freedom of Information, Grants, Housing, Jobs, Land Charges, Licensing, Parking, Pest/Dog Control, Planning, Pollution/Noise, Road/Pavements and Waste/Recycling.

: 01424 787000 ; : 01424 787686 (out of hours). : www.rother.gov.uk


: customerservices@rother.gov.uk;

: Rother District Council. Town Hall, Bexhill on Sea, TN39 3JX

East Sussex Highways maintain over 2,000 miles of highway in East Sussex and look after roads, pavements, streetlights, grass and winter maintenance.

Problems from Potholes to Overhanging Trees can be reported via: : www.eastsussexhighways.com

Customer contact centre : customer@eastsussexhighways.com

: 0345 608 0193

The Member of Parliament for Bexhill and Battle **MP** Dr Kieran Mullan

Constituency Office:

contact: 29-31 Sea Road, Bexhill on Sea, E. Sussex, TN40 1EE

: 01424 736861 : kieran.mullan.mp@parliament.uk

House of Commons contact: House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA


: 0207 219 5260 : kieran.mullan.mp@parliament.uk

Battle Library at 7 Market Square, Battle offers Books, audio books and DVDs.

Free computers with Internet access. Opening times are different daily so check their website.

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/libraries/local/locations/battle>

Free Wi-Fi. Local history material. Photocopier. Bus pass forms for older people. Bus travel discounts for young people. Disabled access. Display facilities. Computer help from volunteers Wednesday 10.30am to 12 noon. Thursdays 12 noon to 2pm – available in library or book in advance.

Contact: : 0345 60 80 196

Dog walking in Sedlescombe.

Sedlescombe has three dog bins provided and maintained by the Parish Council.

1. at the entrance to the Sportsfield next to the bridge;
2. in the Brede Lane Car Park;
3. in the Riverside Playing Field.

The emptying is arranged by Rother District Council on a weekly basis and paid for by the Parish Council.

Rother District Council have advised that you can also dispose of dog waste in the litter bins around the village and it will be sorted by the waste collection company.

Dogs must be kept on leads at Sedlescombe Sportsfield.

Dogs are prohibited from the following areas all year round.

The two fenced off children's play areas Riverside Recreation Ground (including the tennis courts) and at East View Terrace, (the East View Kickabout Area), Red Barn Field Nature Park.



**We have buyers urgently seeking
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Clubs and Societies.

Sedlescombe Garden Society

Where: Events held at Sedlescombe Village Hall

Contact: Secretary sdgs.secretary@hotmail.com Website: www.sedlescombegardensociety.org.uk

The Sedlescombe and District Garden Society aims to promote interest in all aspects of gardening and the gardening environment, seeks to maintain the rich diversity of garden plants and increase and widen the general appeal of gardening and plant culture within the local community through shows, competitions, meetings, visits and more.

The Chapel on the Hill

Where: Chapel Hill Sedlescombe TN33 0QX

Contact: email thechapelonthehill2020@outlook.com for details on Marriages, Baptism, Funerals, and other bookings.

Sunday Service 3pm, doors open at 2.30pm with refreshments available after the service.

Contact Andrea -01424 861 625 or Sampson -07578 102689 if you need transport.

The Chapel is open for prayer Tuesday and Thursday mornings 06:30 -07:30

Lunch club - Why not join us on the SECOND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH for refreshments and/or lunch from 11.00 until 2.30. Lunch is served from 12.30.

On the **fourth Tuesday** of the month, we open the Chapel at 10am until midday for coffee and homemade cake. Come and meet up with friends or make some new friends.

Craft Club Thursdays from 10.00 until midday. If you like sewing, making craft items, patchwork or quilting this is for you. Bring your own projects to work on or learn a new project, even pick up new tips! Refreshments will be available. Everyone is welcome.

Sedlescombe Dance Club

Where : Northiam Village Hall

When: Most Fridays throughout the year Time: 7.30-10.00pm

Contact: Les Gordon ☎: 01424 424763

New members from the experienced to the novice, are given warm welcome & established members are always happy to help newcomers to settle in.

Sedlescombe Friendship Club was established in 2007, the club was founded with the aim to advance the welfare of the older people and to endeavour to counteract loneliness and isolation. Several events will be planned each year including visits to interesting places often with lunch. Dates and times of these and other events will be published in the Sedlescombe News and elsewhere that is appropriate.

Committee: Valerie Wright, Shirley Coleman, Maureen Hayes, Pauline Glew, Fay Rose, Andrea Hogwood, Jennifer Mitchell or Julia Cameron.

St John The Baptist Church

Rector Revd John Hawkins Contact ☎: 07974 028275 Email: sedlescombeparishchurch@gmail.com

The church is open after Sunday service and each Wednesday from 10am for private prayer or quiet contemplation until 4pm.

Sedlescombe Church Bellringers

The bellringers ring on special days and practice at St John The Baptist Church every Wednesday at 7.30pm.

For more information Contact Email rector.sandw@btinternet.com

Friends of Sedlescombe Parish Church Heritage Trust: (Reg Charity no 1027001):

The Friends raise funds to assist in the care and maintenance of the Church and Churchyard. For more information email sedlescombeparishchurch@gmail.com

Allotments Private allotments at rear of Bulmer Lodge, The Green.

For more information contact Linda Skinner – Tel: 07504 356569



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day sit back & relax in our beer garden, while the
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Clubs and societies cont.

Sedlescombe Rangers Football Club

Contacts: Chairman Chas Tibbutt
Secretary Matt Noonan
Phone: ☎: 0330 001 0993
Email: ✉: info@sedlescomberangersfc.co.uk
Website: 🌐: www.sedlescomberangersfc.co.uk

FA affiliated England Football Accredited Club. Based at Oaklands Park, Sedlescombe, East Sussex. Established in 1981, the club has grown from a single youth team to become a large community football club. Today's club is proud of its thriving youth and senior football setup, which offers a 'football for life' approach, starting with our pre-match playing age children (under 6 years old), progressing through the youth age and onto our fully integrated Open Age (adult) football section.

Our teams play across a number of leagues and operate in line with FA and Sussex FA rules and codes of conduct. Matches are played at Oaklands Park, Staplecross Playing Field and Bexhill Road Playing Field in St Leonards.

The Rother Seniors' Forum (RSF) was established 2006 as an independent organisation giving a collective voice to the over fifties of Rother District. RSF is strictly no part-political and will work with all bodies to the benefit of all Rother Seniors.

Contact: Email ✉: info@rotherseniorsforum.org.uk

Sedlescombe Short Mat Bowls Club

Where: Sedlescombe Village Hall (3 bowling mats)

When: Meets each Thursday. Time: 1.30-4.00pm
Contacts: Chairman Trevor Palmer ☎: 01424 870830
Vice-Chairman Bea Morris ☎: 01424 777048
Secretary Chris Escott ☎: 07753 252449

Contact any of the above for further information.

The Breakaways

Where: In the homes of the members.

When: Every 3rd Thursday in the month Time: 10.00 until 12.00

We are a new group of ladies from the village who meet once a month and we will be having demonstrations and talks by local villagers as well as other speakers.

Refreshments will also be available and new members/visitors will always be welcomed.

For further information please contact Mrs. Rosemary Farley ☎ 0142 870533.

Thursday Club

Where: Committee Room, Sedlescombe Village Hall

When: 1st Thursday in every month except August. Time: 10:00 to 12:00

Contacts: Ken Weston ☎: 01424 870824. Brenda Page ☎: 01424 870455

Speakers on a variety of interesting topics. Meetings are open to all and refreshments are available.

Sedlescombe Village Hall

The Venue for your events, party, fundraiser, celebration, class, group or gathering.

Group and individual hire, one-off or regular booking, Main Hall * Fully equipped stage * Excellent kitchen facilities * Meeting room * Car Parking * Wi-Fi Tables * chairs * crockery * cutlery * glassware to cater for up to 100 at tables, 150 seated in rows.

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Website: www.Sedlescombevillagehall.org.uk on Facebook @sedlescombevillagehall

Community Cinema at Sedlescombe Village Hall. A film every month on a Thursday evening. See some all-time favourite films on our big screen. Doors open at 7pm for 7.30pm, licenced bar, snacks and drinks, free parking.

www.sedlescombevillagehall.org.uk

The Patient Participation Group is a small group of volunteers who meet every 6 weeks to talk about key issues regarding the Practice. There is a virtual group through which members can keep in touch. If you would like to know more about the Patient Involvement Group or are interested in joining

Email: ✉: sedwest.ppg@nhs.net ; website www.sedlescombeandwestfieldsurgeries.co.uk/patient-group/

Sedlescombe and Westfield GP Surgeries are part of the Rural Rother Primary Care Network Sedlescombe Surgery is a partnership of GPs working from two sites, in the villages of Sedlescombe and Westfield in rural East Sussex. Our aim is to provide a friendly, welcoming and safe environment for all our patients whilst also providing high levels of up-to-date clinical care across a wide range of services. The Surgery has an open list and welcomes requests for registration from patients living in or moving to the practice area. On registration patients are given a named GP but you are free to consult whoever you feel can help you best at the time. Contact ☎: **01424 870225**

Tennis Coaching Nick Montague provides Adult and Junior Tennis Coaching for Sedlescombe and the surrounding areas. Group and individual sessions available at the MUGA, Riverside Recreation Ground..

Contact: ☎: 07824 799632

✉: montaguenick075@gmail.com

Sedlescombe Pre School


Where Sedlescombe Village Hall- TN33 0QW

When Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays

Time 9.00am-3.00pm, 38 weeks a year (Early start also available from 8.30am).

Contacts ☎: 07577 644179

✉: sedlescombepreschool@yahoo.co.uk

 [sedlescombepre--School](https://www.facebook.com/sedlescombepre--School)

We offer a full range of exciting activities for children aged 2-5 years that encourage their early years development. We accept 2-, 3- & 4-year-old funding. Contact us to arrange a visit to this wonderful pre-school or pop by to collect a welcome pack.



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on the Green**

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on Sedlescombe green

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welcome

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Sedlescombe Wine Club We are a very friendly group of wine lovers who meet once a month for great wine tastings and talks mostly in the village hall. Become a member, annual subscription is £35 per person. Major event and outside visits extra. All events at 7.30pm on a Friday of each month, unless otherwise stated.

Contact: Tina Mitchell ☎: 07788 544889 Email: ✉: tinasixtytwo@btinternet.com

Sedlescombe Players

Contact: Email ✉: sedlescombeplayers@hotmail.co.uk Website: www.sedlescombeplayers.co.uk

The Players are a friendly, welcoming group, with a strong membership of all ages and a core production crew. More information can be found on our website.

Sedlescombe CE Primary School.

Where: Gammons Way, Sedlescombe, Battle, East Sussex. TN33 0RQ

Contact: Mrs. Caroline Harvey – Head Teacher ☎: 01424 870585

Email: ✉: office@sedlescombecep.e-sussex.sch.uk

Website: 🌐: www.sedlescombecep.e-sussex.sch.uk

Welcome from the Head Teacher – Mrs. Caroline Harvey

A very warm welcome to Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School. The school was originally founded in 1723 but has been on the existing site since September 1980.

At the heart of our school is each and every child. As a small school we are able to know each child as an individual and can build on their strengths and nurture and support their weaknesses. Our children are taught by dedicated, hard working staff who make learning fun and exciting whilst ensuring that we provide a high quality education so that every child realises his or her potential.

The School has an active Parent Teacher Association providing fun activities for the children while fundraising for the school. The PTA provides essential support in providing resources, treats for the children and equipment for the school.

Our Amazing Volunteers.

Sedlescombe Parish Council is grateful to every-one of our fantastic volunteers. Your valuable support over the year has helped in so many ways and we would like to share with our community some of those tasks:

Tackling minor repair jobs around the village.

- . checking trees to make sure they are good shape and not a danger to the public.
- . keeping play equipment and MUGA in good repair.
- . repairing of finger post along Brede Lane after it was vandalised.
- . Various gardening type jobs
- . repair storm damaged notice board and refix in Red Barn Field.

We also have a group of volunteers who deliver this annual report and directory and also other Parish Council reports during the year to every household in the Parish.

We could always do with more volunteers there are always little jobs to be done no matter how much time you have to offer.

Please contact the clerk, Roy Chapman or Pauline Glew

Sedlescombe Lift Scheme.

LIFT SCHEME. An informal scheme is arranged by the Parish Council to help Sedlescombe residents without transport to attend hospital or surgery appointments. It has been running successfully for 17 years and relies on people willing to be drivers.

Residents who are unable to get to medical appointments can telephone people on a list who are willing to help. We, in Sedlescombe, have 7 drivers on the list at the moment, we would like to have 12. Obviously if their chosen driver cannot help, the Resident telephones others on the list. A small fee for this service is charged, money going to the driver for running costs. We cover the Conquest, Bexhill and Eastbourne Hospitals and the Sedlescombe surgery.

A list of drivers who are willing to provide lifts are available from Cllr Glew. Those wanting lifts simply make a phone call to any one on the list and pay the driver. Cllr Pauline Glew 01424 870258 or The Parish Clerk 07531 065469 will be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to become a Lift Scheme driver.

WOULD YOU LIKE A LITTER FREE VILLAGE?



Cllr. Pauline Glew has the tools to keep Sedlescombe looking 'CLEAN AND TIDY.'

We already have some people in the village that keep their area free of litter and thanks to you all from the Parish Council. It would be good if we could interest some more villagers to take on this worthwhile job. Please come and join the Litter Pickers. Contact cllr. Pauline Glew on 01424 870 258.

email cllr.glew@sedlescombeparishcouncil.gov.uk

Annual report 2024/25

Summary of County Council achievements 2024/25

This summary sets out some of the key achievements of East Sussex County Council (ESCC) in 2024/25 (up to February 2025) under the four strategic priorities of the Council:

www.eastsussex.gov.uk/your-council/about/key-documents/council-plans

Driving sustainable economic growth

To help protect roads from future damage, investment in the county's road patching programme was doubled in July 2024, with a £1million (m) boost to the budget. Over the first three-quarters of the year, nearly 400 patching works and 88 **road improvement schemes** were completed. In addition, over 15,000 potholes were repaired and over 600 drainage schemes were completed. Work also began to complete the **Queensway Gateway** project to link the final section of the road to the A21, to reduce congestion and open up land for employment space.

As part of the Council's **Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)**, £18.5m was allocated to new bus priority measures in Eastbourne, Newhaven and Peacehaven with consultations on the schemes undertaken. Work was completed on a major upgrade of public transport facilities in Uckfield and the Flexibus services became more accessible with the creation of a single travel zone. ESCC was also awarded an additional £9.9m for new BSIP programmes. The fourth **East Sussex Local Transport Plan 2024 – 2050** was adopted at Full Council in October 2024. The plan sets out how ESCC and partners will plan and provide transport for residents, businesses and visitors.

ESCC took on the responsibilities of the Local Enterprise Partnerships in April 2024 and worked with partners to produce a new East Sussex **Economic Prosperity Strategy**. A range of **business support programmes**, creating new jobs have also been delivered. The Newhaven Business Grants programme created 29.5 Full Time Equivalent jobs in the first three-quarters of the year and we expect the Rural Business Grants programme to create over 60 jobs with 11 businesses having received over £200,000 of grants. With the district and borough authorities in Lewes, Eastbourne, Rother and Wealden we also secured nearly £450,000 of funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, to deliver support and training to local businesses through the Ready To Grow and Big Ambitions schemes.

Promoting **employability and skills**, over 800 pupils attended Open Doors workplace visits over the first three quarters of the year, to gain experience of a real workplace. ESCC was also successful in gaining funding for a range of programmes to support young people to move into successful careers, including support for 315 year 10 students to develop personal and career development goals through the Steps to Success programme, funding for the East Sussex Digital Futures Accelerator programme offering activities to schools and employers to increase the number of students pursuing careers in the digital and technology sector, and a pilot programme in Hastings to inspire the next generation of engineers. In addition, 11 projects to support training and boost employability across Hastings and Rother were successful in securing £1m of funding from the Skills Capital Fund and nearly 1,000 people enrolled on Family Learning Programmes at East Sussex Libraries over the first three-quarters of the year.

In September 2024, the Council launched the **Excellence for All** vision, co-produced with representatives from the education sector, to look ahead to 2030, setting out our ambitions for an **education system** that delivers for all children and young people.

Keeping vulnerable people safe

In July 2024, Local Authority Fostering South East was launched; a new virtual **fostering** hub bringing together the expertise of 20 councils from across the region. ESCC joined other councils from across the South East to create the country's largest local authority fostering partnership, to increase the number of foster carers across the region

The East Sussex **Youth Justice Service** was rated good in an inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation. The report, published in September 2024, said the service was well-led, highlighted partnership working as a strength and rated nine of the 13 areas inspected 'good' or 'outstanding' including leadership of the service, the dedication and commitment of staff, and the range of high-quality services in place to personalise support. It also noted that data from the past 18 months showed a reduction in the overall rate of re-

offending among those children that had worked with the service. In February 2025, the findings of an inspection into services for **children and young people with special education needs and disabilities** were published, giving the East Sussex Local Area Partnership the middle rating for the delivery, planning and commissioning of SEND services.

East Sussex became the first county in the country to offer an **online service to support people at risk of contracting HIV**. In August 2024, ESCC in partnership with Preventx, The Love Tank CIC and LloydsPharmacy Online Doctor, launched England's first online HIV Pre Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) service.

16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence began with White Ribbon Day in November 2024, including events, White Ribbon Champion and Ambassador drop-in sessions, a social media campaign and engagement with local sports clubs. A **Domestic Abuse** Small Grants Fund awarded funds to 6 local projects in November 2024, including support for victims/survivors from ethnic minority backgrounds, older people and those in temporary accommodation.

As of 31 December 2024, 1,965 guests had arrived in East Sussex under the **Homes for Ukraine** scheme, hosted by 882 sponsors. Over 800 people have subsequently moved into private sector accommodation.

Trading Standards was involved in over 230 active interventions over the first three-quarters of 2024/25 to protect vulnerable people, including installing call blockers to try to prevent people from falling victim to telephone scams.

The Council works closely with our partner Care for the Carers, who we commission to provide a wide range of services. In 2023/24 Care for the Carers provided information, advice, and support to 10,860 **carers** - up 12% from the previous year.

Helping people help themselves

Developments at 3 new **Youth Hubs** are progressing well; a topping out ceremony took place in Heathfield in December 2024, as the final section of roof panel was installed and the new extension and internal remodelling at the Joff Youth Hub in Peacehaven is progressing. Planning permission for the development of the Hollington Youth Hub was also granted in December 2024.

A new app designed to help residents lead a **full and healthy life in older age**, was launched in April 2024. The Life Transitions app supports residents to prepare for their future including events such as retirement, moving home, changes in health and mobility, finding new purpose, becoming a carer, or experiencing bereavement.

Reablement services are provided to help people to regain mobility and daily living skills, especially after a hospital stay. Between April and December 2024 93.8% of people who received short-term services did not request further support and between April and September 2024, 93.2% of older people discharged from hospital to reablement or rehabilitation services were at home 91 days after discharge.

Work continued on the **integration of health and social care** in 2024/25 with the development of 5 Integrated Community Teams, across the health and care system, aligning with borough and district boundaries. These teams will address local priorities and focus on multi-disciplinary team working with proactive care for the most complex and vulnerable patients. The five-year Shared Delivery Plan was refreshed for year 2 to continue delivery of the Sussex Integrated Care Strategy and the East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy.

19 **road safety** schemes were completed during the first three-quarters of 2024/25 to improve road safety infrastructure. ESCC was also awarded £875,000 from the Government's Safer Roads Fund to implement safety improvements on a section of the A2101 in Hastings. In addition, work began on measures on 16 priority roads to reduce driver speeds, including reductions in speed limits, Vehicle Activated Signs, road surface treatments, and new signage and lining. Over 3,600 people have also benefitted from 'Bikeability' courses.

The Council's External Funding team responded to over 180 enquiries over the first three-quarters of the year from the **voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE)**. The team has helped organisations secure £3.124m in funding over the same period.

Making the best use of our resources

The Council's **budget and Council Plan** for 2025/26 were approved at the meeting of Full Council on 11 February 2025. Councillors approved a budget spending £579.6m on services in 2025/26 which due to the increased demands for services and the increased costs of delivering them, is £55m more than the previous year. To meet these costs and demands, the budget includes use of over £11m of reserves, alongside savings of £13.5m and increasing Council Tax by 4.99%.

Following an expression of interest from the leaders of Brighton & Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council and West Sussex County Council, in February 2025, the Government approved proposals to create a mayoral strategic authority for Sussex as part of the **Devolution Priority Programme**. As well as unlocking new powers and investment for the region, it will give the people of Sussex a stronger voice in how national decisions affect them and enable more decisions to be taken locally.

The Council has continued to work with partners to deliver carbon reduction and our climate change plan. The Council has received 90% of the £4.441m allocated from the Government’s Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund to support the delivery of on street electric vehicle charge points. Seventeen **energy efficiency** projects were completed on Council buildings during the first three-quarters of the year, including LED lighting projects, heat decarbonization and 5 solar PV energy generation schemes. Carbon emissions for quarter 2 of 2024/25 were 6% lower on the same period last year and down 39% on the baseline year 2019/20.

The Council spent £412m with 891 **local suppliers** over 2024, equating to 62% of total contract spend. In addition, during the first three-quarters of the year, 8 contracts were awarded which were in-scope of the Social Value Measurement Charter. These contracts had a total value of over £57m with over £11m of **social value** commitments secured, including apprenticeships, work experience, creation of local jobs, and support to environmental initiatives.

To reduce costs, the Council has consolidated **office accommodation** with moves into one Eastbourne office hub and one Hastings office hub completed in 2024. Options for the County Hall campus were considered by the Lead Member in October 2024; it was agreed that the Council will remain at the site until alternative Council-owned accommodation at Sackville House becomes available in 2030, at which point re-location will be considered. In the short-term two blocks of County Hall are being vacated to reduce costs and to free up space for lettings.

Contact: Alice Pippard: alice.pippard@eastsussex.gov.uk 01273 481816 February 2025.

Plumbing	Hotel
	

**Rother District Councillor
Beverly Coupar**

Highlights and Key Issues 2024/25

2024 was a busy year for Rother, as we continued to operate in an extremely challenging economic environment while experiencing increased demand on our services. That said, we achieved so much in the past 12 months thanks to the support of our colleagues and partners across all tiers of local government.

In January we held our first conference with a focus on promoting new development projects in Rother, bringing together local partners and key parties. In February we launched an online campaign that has seen 462 households sign up to our electronic Council Tax bills. During March, April and May Council approved the 24-25 budget, with more than £15 million to be spent on services across our district. £19 million was awarded to Rother to fund exciting projects that aim to address inequalities and support the local economy. Cabinet agreed an extra £12 million of budget to invest in Temporary Accommodation. Our Planning team ran a series of workshops as part of the consultation on our new draft Local Plan, which went on to receive 3,708 comments! April was our 50th birthday. In April 2022 Rother launched its Lottery since then over £60,000 has been distributed to local charities, not for profit community organisations, and voluntary groups. New accessible play equipment was installed in Fair Salts, Rye, and the renovated tennis courts in Egerton Park were opened. Members supported the allocation of funding for a new Community Hub, to be delivered by Rother Voluntary Action.

In July we processed 47,938 ballot papers and at 4.30am on Friday 5 July, Dr Kieran Mullan was declared the new MP for the Bexhill and Battle constituency. This month we also received Bronze Carbon Literacy status in recognition of our training to help reduce carbon emissions. The Council supported a new option for the development of affordable homes at Blackfriars, Battle to provide quality housing for residents in need.

During the last four months of 2024 Cabinet approved proposals to lease the Sidley football pitch and new Community Hub to the Heart of Sidley Community Association, enabling the community benefits of Levelling Up funding to be fully realised. Residents were asked for their views on the budget for 25/26, which outlines proposals to address the financial challenges we face. We invited reps from Rother's 34 parishes to our annual Parish Conference, where we updated on our budget and Planning.

As we look ahead to 2025, we recognise that the Government's White Paper proposals will hugely impact the way in which we work. Although it's too early to say how Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation will affect Rother, we are committed to working with town and parish councils to ensure our voice is heard. We held our annual staff event and raised £150 for Bexhill & Battle Foodbank, thanks to the generosity of our colleagues. Finally in December Residents were asked for their views on the budget for 25/26, which outlines proposals to address the financial challenges we face. Council agreed the adoption of a new Council Plan, which sets our strategic direction for the next 4 years, as well as our new Digital and Customer Services Strategy. The Council Leader welcomed an announcement that plans to use the former Northeye site in Bexhill to house asylum seekers will not be progressed.

Financial challenges will also continue to affect our work. To address these issues, and to support a culture of openness, we will monitor and report key information through our committees, including updates on risks, performance data, and our financial position. We have exciting milestones to mark in the coming year, as we hope to develop and adopt new strategies that will shape our work across Housing Development, Economic Development, and Homelessness & Rough Sleeping. We are also progressing our key projects across the district, including development at Blackfriars, Battle and the new Welcome Centre at Camber. In this period of change and uncertainty, our focus is on delivering a brighter and more resilient future for Rother. We look forward to sharing updates with you as they unfold over the next 12 months



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