

Cllr C Lees (Chair), Cllr P Seeley (PC Chair)
 Cllr P Hill, Cllr M Keller (EDFPC)
 Cllr S Shing (ESCC)
 Ian Johnson – Traffic and Safety Manager (ESCC)
 Thomas Lee (Highway Steward) (ESCC)
 Corinne Black, Cathy Hacker, Claire Eastiss (ESCC Customer Services)
 Katrina Larkin - Parish Clerk
 Debbie Picknell – Admin Officer



STRENGTHENING LOCAL RELATIONSHIPS

**East Dean & Friston Parish Council Liaison Meeting
 14 October 2021 at 10.00 am in East Dean Village Hall
 Minutes**

1	Apologies: - Ruby Brittle (ESCC Customer Services); David Lockyer (East Dean (Downlands) Roads Company)	
2	The Minutes of the meeting held on 02 March 2021 were approved.	
3	<p>Matters arising:</p> <p>a) Debris at Upper Street/Friston Hill – there was still a need to contour the road around the gullies at this junction as currently all the debris-laden run-off from Friston Hill missed the drains and ran down the hill, including onto a kerbless stretch of pavement. This should be reported to the Highway Steward <u>ACTION: TL. CB</u> reported that a recent inspection had also found one drain full of tree roots, which was now on the maintenance schedule for the drainage team. Finally councillors requested street sweeping, once a year, but this was under the remit of Wealden District Council. <u>ACTION: KL to notify Cllr Lunn</u></p> <p>b) Request bus stop at Downsview Lane – the missing stop sign could in theory be reinstated in a new and safer location east of Downs View Lane, but the Passenger Transport team had not got the funding to install a stop compliant with all the new regulations. Councillors objected that another missing stop sign had been reinstated informally and that this was preferable to the loss of the stop. Councillors asked whether this could be done if the parish council paid for it. <u>ACTION: SS to make enquiries.</u></p> <p>c) Speedwatch signs – PS reported that this project was only awaiting installation of the signs by county highways, and requested a date. <u>ACTION: CB to make enquiries.</u> PS would visit those households adjacent to the proposed sites as a courtesy prior to installation.</p> <p>d) Trees on Friston Hill – there were still some diseased elms in private gardens on Friston Hill. Councillors queried the lack of enforced felling, and whether this was because of a change of</p>	

	<p>focus to ash die-back. SS stated that the county council still promoted the felling of diseased elms on private property and offered a small subsidy (supplemented by the parish council to a total of 50% of the cost), but that residents could not be obliged to act.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) Classifying the Downlands Estate roads as private access only – all those present confirmed again that this could not be done. f) Traffic lights at Exceat – the parish council thanked ESCC for making these lights permanent until the work on the new bridge could be completed. However, there was serious concern that work was not proceeding. Planning permission had not yet been granted, and the SDNPA would require the county council to meet certain requirements first. This appeared to be a sticking point. g) Drainage onto Downs View Lane – remedial work had been carried out by Highways, and no further problems had been reported. h) Cleaning road signs – the Highway Steward reported that there was no regular schedule but that the local need had been reported and the road signs would be cleaned all the way through the village before the end of November. i) Collection of speed data – councillors thanked ESCC for this part-funded exercise which had yielded valuable information. 	
<p>4</p>	<p>Rights of Way:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Footpath 26a/27 – CB reported that the Rights of Way team had been attempting to contact the relevant landowners but without success. Councillors stated that both Birling Manor and the tenanted farm adjacent to it were owned by the Gilbert Estate which could be contacted through their office on the Village Green. The established right of way onto the downs from this point still ran along the driveway of Birling Manor but its continuation was now obstructed by a hedge. This was unlawful. The unofficial replacement path to the same point had no proper surface and received all the rain water from a gutter on an adjacent barn roof, and was frequently impassable. The replacement path should be made sound and made official, or the right of way could fall into disuse through obstruction. b) Footpath signage – councillors raised the possibility of installing small new concrete signs on the Downlands Estate to mark those rights of way which were currently unmarked, in the hope that these might be an acceptable alternative to the signposts which some householders objected to having on their verges. CB reported that the Rights of Way team would be happy to install these where 	

	<p>appropriate, and could provide a photo of a suitable design for consultation purposes. The parish council would need to draw up a list of locations and obtain homeowner permissions <u>ACTION: CL/KL.</u> It was noted that whilst most homeowners were willing to maintain their hedges etc. to keep paths unobstructed, some were routinely unwilling to do so. ESCC could supply a pro-forma letter with their logo on it for use in cases requiring enforcement backup. <u>ACTION: KL to contact Rights of Way.</u></p> <p>c) Paths in Friston Forest – extensive proposals had been submitted to ESCC Rights of Way from former District Councillor Charles Peck. These included the need for repair of the steps on Footpath 5, and improved signage to assist the greatly increased numbers of walkers. CB stated that the Rights of Way team had noted and logged the area for inspection. <u>ACTION: CB to request an update.</u></p>	
5	<p>Repair of Jevington Road – parish councillors complained about the very poor state of the Jevington Road, which had been the subject of a petition in March 2021 sponsored by Cllr Shing. CB stated that Highways were waiting for gas pipework to be completed along the whole length of the road in 2022. It was suggested that ESCC could in fact make it a precondition that the utility company should reinstate 50% of the roadway, leaving Highways to do only 50% and thus saving money. <u>ACTION: CB to check.</u> Poor quality patching had been done but did not last, and there could be safety issues. <u>ACTION: TL to inspect.</u></p>	
6	<p>Roadside litter – parish councilors also complained of the quantity of roadside litter. SS advised that this was a matter for Wealden District Council, who would assess applications for cleaning prior to agreeing any work. <u>ACTION: Cllr Lunn</u></p>	
7	<p>Electric car charging points – the parish council at their October meeting had resolved to register their interest in this project with the County Council, and to investigate the possibility of independent action, using council owned land in the Downlands shopping precinct. It was noted that Wealden District council who owned the main village car park, were looking to negotiate a deal with other councils, and an update was requested <u>ACTION: Cllr Lunn</u></p>	
8	<p>Improved signage for Cophall Lane – councilors reported that drivers approaching from the east and using satnav to get to Birling Gap were liable to access Cophall Lane by mistake, as no ‘No Through Road’ was visible</p>	

	<p>from that direction. IJ advised that the sign on the other side was a Wealden street sign, and Wealden District Council should be asked to provide a pair to it. <u>ACTION: Cllr Lunn.</u> IJ also advised that the sign would have to be carefully placed so as not to obstruct vehicles turning left onto the A259.</p>	
9	<p>20 mph speed limit in Old Willingdon Road – a resident of OWR had written to request this due to the speed of cars and delivery vans along the road. IJ advised that this road was classified as ‘adopted’. A request to Highways for a reduced speed limit would not be a priority. Data would need to be collected, and the likelihood was that speeds would generally be low. Residents were unlikely to welcome additional road signs in this cul-de-sac.</p>	
10	<p>Parking at Crowlink – councilors reported that residents of Crowlink were experiencing severe problems due to visitors parking in larger numbers since the lockdown, and in inconsiderate locations, even blocking the new slip road. Fresh signage was requested on both sides of the road, and perhaps ‘Keep Clear’ painted on the tarmac. IJ advised that this could not be done formally, as ‘Keep Clear’ was reserved for junctions, and the only other option was yellow lines, which ESCC would not install whilst they could not be enforced. The parish should use informal signage (some had already been installed), and vehicles causing an obstruction could be reported to Crackdown. <u>ACTION: this option to be advertised locally (MK/KL)</u></p>	
11	<p>Traffic Management – councilors reported that a collision happened on the Birling Gap Road on Friday 1st October, at the Barns surrounding Birling Manor. A young man crashed his car and went through one of the barn walls shortly after 13.00. The incident had been reported to the police. It was the third within the last year. IJ requested to have the information in an email with photos <u>ACTION: KL to supply these.</u> The bend might need e.g. a line of marker posts.</p>	
12	<p>Drain clearance on A259 – councilors reported that the drains on the south side of the A.259 (one by the bus stop and one by Gore Cottage) were both full to the brim with debris and with the recent heavy rains the water had been right out in the road. A resident had reported having difficulty walking and finding the gravel debris very slippery. TL reported that he had inspected the site and raised a request for the Gore cottage drain to be cleared. The drain by the bus stop was scheduled for clearance next month. It was noted that this problem was related to the problem of debris flowing down Friston Hill.</p>	
13	<p>AOB</p>	

	<p>a) 30 mph roundels in Gilberts Drive – IJ confirmed that an order had been placed and the roundels would be installed towards the end of January 2022, weather permitting</p> <p>b) Highways Update - CB reported that in future an update would be provided at each SLR meeting on the number and type of enquiries being dealt with in the parish since the last meeting. In EDF 65 Cases had been dealt with as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 34 drainage • 26 hedges • 5 signs <p>And 28 Reactive works comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 carriageway/footway • 2 vegetation • 6 street lighting <p>Councillors thanked ESCC for this input</p> <p>c) Safety for pedestrians on Birling Gap Road – PS reported it had been agreed in principle that from Easter 2022 onwards it should be possible to rope off part of the western verge of the road to create a safe space for walkers. <u>ACTION: CB to get an update</u></p>	
14	<p>Next meeting – Thursday 28th April 2022 at 2.00pm in East Dean Village Hall, or on the Zoom platform (to be confirmed)</p>	