

EAST GRINSTEAD MEMORIAL ESTATE – August 2025 Newsletter

The extremes of seasonal weather changes have been there for us all to see in recent months with that prolonged wet spell during the winter and then more recently successive heat waves during the Spring and Summer months – all of which inevitably plays havoc with the Estate and constrains development of a proportion of the natural flora and fauna. Still, there is so much to enjoy and plenty of opportunities for enhancement in the future.

As part of the annual cycle of activity, this is the time of year when we have our own AGM and a six-monthly steering group meeting with both the Town and District Councils – I'll report on both below which will give some indication of our aspirations going forward.

AGM 08.07.25

There was a good attendance for our first AGM to be held in recent times in the Council Chamber at East Court Mansion (sadly leaving Chequer Mead because of the imposition of a new car parking tariff).

Some of the drier financial details first – our assets grew over the 2024 calendar year by £24k to £1.051m and in the first half of 2025 have grown by a further £45k reflecting the relative buoyancy of equity markets. Our investment strategy is still prudent with a moderate risk appetite.

We made grants to local voluntary groups of some £17k during the year, reverting to pre-covid levels - Members may recall we raided our capital base to fund increased grant levels during the pandemic and its aftermath but have consciously sought to repair our asset base since.

The introduction of our first 'Unsung Hero Award' presented at the Mayor's annual reception in September to Richard Tramontin of the Town Football Club was a well-received initiative and we are in course of seeking nominations from Councillors, EG Sports Council and of course ourselves for this year's award. If you would like to recommend someone for consideration, please go to our website at www.egmel.co.uk for details. Nominations close at the end of August.

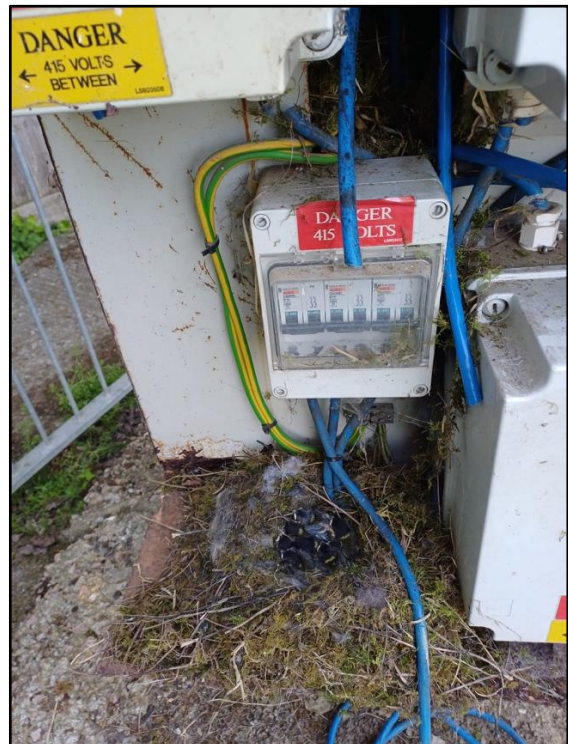
Tenants

There has again been the regular round of tree safety inspections with consequent necessary tree surgery by all three tenants. The most notable of this has been the ash die-back work members will have witnessed. The phased risk-management based approach adopted by Glendale, the contractors for MSDC, has been about as sympathetic as we could have expected avoiding vast areas of wasteland seen in other parts of the County. Tidying up afterwards has been a tension between order and the natural environment but in the main we feel they are getting the balance about right.

Whilst on the subject of trees, there has been additional annual housekeeping work undertaken by the Football and Target Shooting Clubs, and ourselves, in the area around the access road to the Football Club.

Improvements

Whilst I have reported on the Ghyll Steps previously (which generally seems to be a well-received improvement), the Football Club have, with a contribution from ourselves, recently completed a project to raise the quality of their pitch lighting to meet FA standards (better pitch light and less light pollution). The installation was not without delays whilst the contractors had to wait days for these little fella's to fledge!



We also support plans to improve disabled access at the Shooting Club by a hoped-for installation of an appropriate lift in the near future.

Users

Overall, the year has been a mixed experience for our users. The football pitches at East Court were in active and regular use during the early part of the 24/25 season but as the elements took their toll, games were diverted elsewhere – sadly this was pretty much common to all of our ‘municipal’ playing fields across Mid Sussex.

Initiatives such as the Saturday Parkrun have gone from strength to strength but there have been consequential wear and tear implications causing difficulties for other regular users. We have been working with Parkrun and MSDC to identify opportunities for route variation to moderate the wear risks, particularly during the winter months. Similarly, the annual bonfire event has grown in popularity and we have supported the Society in their request to locate a storage container on site to house their equipment (we anticipate this will be in position adjacent to the Ashplats Conservation Group container in the coming weeks).

Steering Committee Meetings – 20/1/25 and 21/7/25

Steering meetings serve a combination of purposes but primarily they review progress and set the improvement agenda going forward.

A key element of the forward-looking aspect is the production of annual and long-term plans – the latter, a ten year plan is due for completion this summer and will need to respond to the gaps in achievement against the current expiring 10 year plan issued in 2015. The annual plans formulated by Glendale account for much of the regular maintenance schemes of work but notably don't incorporate activities that arise over longer periods say for example five-yearly clearance of path gulleys, or maybe seven-year coppicing of chestnut trees. So, it's important we maintain attention on those longer cycle activities to ensure they are undertaken. Given the forthcoming changes to local government organisation in Sussex over the next three years, having all activity correctly calendarised through plans will be even more critical as a reference point to ensure the ball isn't dropped by new municipal management teams.

Initiatives

We have prepared a suite of mapping tools which have recently been shared with MSDC to identify and locate improvement works around the Estate – particular thanks go to Steve Metcalfe for developing this solution. Key elements are signage gaps/replacement/ improvements; grading proposals for the path network to enable prioritisation of work supporting the major traffic flow routes; vegetation control. In the fullness of time, should cycle pathways be approved (there are plans for a County wide path network which may include a route across the estate to connect its east and west sides), then identifying where cycles could be / should not be allowed will be necessary.

Further work has been promised to improve the resilience of the pitches but our expectations have been set that this will be a gradual process over several years – we watch with interest.

The Glendale brief offers the promise of a community engagement programme which will encourage a greater degree of volunteering to support the estate. Work is being undertaken elsewhere in MSDC and we look forward to its impacts here in East Grinstead. It also includes regular site visits with stakeholders – these have been taking place this year with mixed success but theoretically should better enable us to highlight routine maintenance snags for them to address.

Our current focus is on improving the pathways – hence the works to the Ghyll steps which are an integral part of the SANG walking route. But in addition to that, we have seen deterioration in the external condition of the Pavillion which has been raised with MSDC who have undertaken to remedy using their building contractor.

Given the recent experience of fish dying in the Moat Pond at the Kings Centre, we have once again taken the opportunity to remind the Council of their responsibilities towards effective management of the pond life across our land – a point well taken.

One blow for freedom was the removal last week by MSDC of the shed that had found its way into the stream that runs around the bottom corner of the playing fields (you may recall me sharing photos of this previously); hopefully this will now ease the damn that has built up in this area.

Now you see it.....



.....now you don't!!



Now for a bit of fun. Many of you will have heard about artificial intelligence (AI) and one of the early platforms available for free public use is ChatGPT. I inserted the headings of this newsletter into ChatGPT to see what it would make of them – I take no responsibility for the following content ([on the pages below](#)) but thought you might be interested to see what it wrote – it's very convincing, if you didn't know better!

Until December when we next write to you, do enjoy the summer and the delights of season change as we go into Autumn. Best wishes to you all.

Lloyd Richards
Chair, East Grinstead Memorial Estate Ltd

1 August 2025

Welcome to the Latest Edition!

Dear Residents, Tenants, and Community Members,

As we approach the summer months, we're excited to share several important updates from East Grinstead Memorial Estate Ltd. This newsletter covers key events, upcoming meetings, and improvements that are shaping the future of our estate. Thank you for being part of our vibrant community. Let's dive in!

1. Annual General Meeting (AGM) - July 8, 2025

We're looking forward to seeing you at the upcoming AGM on July 8, 2025. This important meeting will be an opportunity for all members of the Estate to hear about our achievements over the last year, financial updates, and discuss the future direction of the estate. The AGM will also allow for a Q&A session where we encourage you to voice any questions or concerns.

- Date: 8th July 2025
- Time: 7:00 PM
- Location: Estate Hall (or virtually via Zoom for remote attendees)

We look forward to your participation and to working together to continue improving the estate!

2. Tenants Update

Our tenants continue to be an integral part of the Estate's growth. We are thrilled to see new faces moving in and are proud of the relationships we've built with current tenants. The Estate team remains committed to providing support for our tenants, from resolving maintenance issues promptly to ensuring a peaceful environment for all.

We also encourage all tenants to stay in touch with the management team for any concerns or requests. Your feedback is invaluable in helping us maintain a high standard of service.

3. Key Improvements: Ongoing & Upcoming

Over the past few months, we've been making significant strides in improving the Estate. Some key updates include:

- **Refurbishment of Community Spaces:** We're delighted to announce that the community meeting areas will be getting a facelift in the coming months. Expect fresh decor, new furniture, and more accessible facilities.
 - **Landscaping and Green Spaces:** Work has begun on enhancing our green spaces. We're planting new flowers, updating the walking paths, and adding more seating areas to make outdoor areas more inviting and functional.
 - **Technology Upgrades:** New lighting systems and improved security features will be installed in the coming weeks to ensure a safer, more energy-efficient environment.
-

4. Steering Committee Meetings - Key Dates

The Steering Committee has been working diligently to ensure that the Estate continues to evolve and serve the community's needs. We encourage all residents and tenants to engage with the committee during the following meetings:

- **January 20, 2025:** A meeting to discuss the progress of current projects, tenant feedback, and upcoming initiatives.
- **July 21, 2025:** The second meeting of the year will focus on finalizing plans for new estate-wide initiatives and evaluating the impact of the year's improvements.

Both meetings will be open to members of the community, and we highly encourage attendance to stay informed about the Estate's plans.

5. Initiatives & Future Plans

We're excited to announce some exciting new initiatives that will be rolled out over the coming months. These include:

- **Sustainability Program:** In line with our ongoing commitment to the environment, we're launching a new sustainability program focused on reducing waste, increasing recycling efforts, and promoting eco-friendly practices across the Estate.
 - **Community Engagement:** We will be hosting a series of workshops and social events designed to bring the community together. These gatherings will cover a wide range of topics, from DIY home improvement tips to stress-relief techniques. Stay tuned for the full schedule!
 - **Expanded Services for Residents:** Aiming to enhance the quality of life for our residents, we'll be introducing additional services such as cleaning services, a community newsletter board, and more!
-

Stay Involved!

We believe that keeping the lines of communication open is essential for fostering a thriving community. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions, suggestions, or would like to become more involved in the Estate's activities.

Looking forward to a productive few months ahead and seeing you at the AGM!

Contact Us:

East Grinstead Memorial Estate Ltd

Email: info@eastgrinsteadmemorial.co.uk

Phone: 01234 567890

Website: www.eastgrinsteadmemorial.co.uk

We hope you enjoyed this update and look forward to your involvement in the months to come. Together, we continue to make our Estate a great place to live, work, and grow.

Warm regards,

The East Grinstead Memorial Estate Ltd ChatGPT Team