



EMERGENCY PLAN

Revised and re-adopted in August 2026 Review 2029 (PERT team revised May 26)

Introduction

1. This Plan has been prepared by the East Dean and Friston Parish Council. It is intended to provide a Parish-led self-help response during any emergency affecting the community when the normal emergency response by the 'blue light' services, Wealden District or East Sussex County Councils, or public utility companies are delayed because of the scope or nature of the emergency. In the absence of the emergency services, the Parish Emergency Response Team (PERT) will lead the community response and act as a central point for information and communication for the community, emergency services, District and County Councils.

Definition of emergency

2. An emergency/major incident is any event or circumstance (happening with or without warning) that causes or threatens death or injury, disruption to the community, or damage to property or to the environment on such a scale that the effect cannot be dealt with by the emergency services, local authorities and other organizations as part of their normal day-to day activities.

Aim and Objectives of the Plan

3. Although there are no statutory responsibilities for communities to plan for, respond to, or recover from emergencies, it is good practice to identify hazards and make simple plans on how they could respond to them. The Parish Council is not an emergency service and therefore response will generally be confined to looking after the welfare of people in the community or helping to maintain the infrastructure.

4. The aim of the Plan is to provide a framework for East Dean and Friston Parish to mobilise local people to help others in the community. At its core is a confidential contact directory and emergency resource pack available to the PERT (Parish Emergency Response Team) to help harness local resources and expertise to assist in an emergency and to complement the response of the emergency services.

5. The Plan aims to increase resilience within the local community by enabling the Parish to support itself when outside assistance from the emergency services or local authority is significantly delayed or overwhelmed to the extent that they cannot deal with

the situation within an acceptable period. The objectives of the Emergency Plan therefore include: -

- ❑ identification of risks to the community and determination of relevant response actions
- ❑ establishment of a local emergency management structure with an overview of roles and responsibilities
- ❑ identification of key community resources – personnel, equipment, and emergency accommodation
- ❑ identification of vulnerable people in the community
- ❑ provision of key contact details for use by the PERT

Types of Emergencies

6. An emergency may arise from any one of a number of factors or a combination of factors, some more likely than others. Types of potential emergencies that may impact East Dean and Friston Parish (in no particular order of significance) are: -

- ❑ extreme weather (e.g. heavy snow, severe flooding, gales)
- ❑ major utility failure (electricity, gas, water, sewage, or telephones)
- ❑ gas leak/explosion or threat thereof (e.g. wartime bomb)
- ❑ major transport accident (road, rail, air)
- ❑ major fire or building collapse
- ❑ landslide or landslide
- ❑ hazardous vapour release or other form of pollution
- ❑ disease (animal or human, including emergency restrictions due to pandemic)
- ❑ terrorism (including cybercrime)

Local Risk Analysis

HAZARD	LOCATION	WHO'S AFFECTED	IMPACTS	MITIGATIONS	POTENTIAL RESPONSE
Burst water main/flooding	Within Parish	Vehicular Access plus access to properties	Flooding of properties and potential to restrict access to School/properties	PC and residents to report potential problems to Water Authority in a timely manner	Evacuate to appropriate reception centre to provide shelter.
Utility issue	Within Parish	People living in the immediate vicinity	Risk of explosion, power cut, loss of drinking water.	PC and residents to report potential problems to Authority in a timely manner	Evacuate to appropriate reception centre to provide shelter.
Heavy snow	Affects entire area	Affects entire area	Isolation, restricts movement	PC to ensure sufficient grit supplies	Coordinate visits to identified

			around community; residents are house bound; getting food and essentials from shops	(supply from ESCC), 24-hour access maintained and appropriate distribution. Ensure personal resilience plans / spare food / grit / snow shovel...	vulnerable people; organise food delivery; liaise with voluntary group; keep community informed...
Fire, explosion	In the parish, other properties affected	People living in the immediate vicinity	Evacuation to safe place	Identify and relocate to community buildings outside of cordon	Follow advice from services Fire and rescue service will identify cordon and Police will co-ordinate the response
Gales / Storms	Affects entire parish	Affects entire area	Death or injury Power cuts	Ensure have personal resilience plans / spare food	Follow advice from services, stay indoors When safe to do so possibly activate machinery owners to clear fallen trees.
Heat wave	Affects entire area	Affects entire area	Important to keep cool and safe indoors and follow advice.	Ensure have personal resilience plans / spare food/ cooling fans/areas to keep cool Check on neighbours	Follow advice from services, government and NHS
Illness (e.g. COVID, Flu)	National	National	Follow Government guidance	Vaccinations	Follow advice from services, government and NHS

7. Any one or a combination of the above emergency hazardous events could lead to the isolation of the Parish for prolonged periods of time requiring a degree of self-help. This Emergency Plan is by its very nature generic, which can be used in any emergency type.

Parish Characteristics

8. The Parish covers the villages of East Dean and Friston, and the Hamlets of Birling Gap and Crowlink. It covers an area of 3.3 square miles and has around 850 homes with a population of some 2,000. The Parish lies about four miles west of Eastbourne on the A259 coast road which has steep gradients within and into and out of the Parish which can be easily impacted by severe weather conditions. Within East Dean there is Asa Care Home, East Dean Grange, a residential rest home.

9. Birling Gap lies on the unclassified road 2 miles south of the A259 junction at East Dean. The area is close to the cliff edge, which suffers from erosion and potential cliff falls. Crowlink lies at the end of a small country lane running for some 2 miles south from Friston Pond on the A259. The small country lane deteriorates into an unmade narrow track, but this is passible in a vehicle.

10. There are a number of open areas capable of receiving helicopter landings; two of which are the recreation ground on Gilberts Drive to the south of the A259, and the Greensward which is a village green (enclosed by houses) to the north of the A259. The "Horsefield" adjacent to the village car park would also be suitable provided there are no sheep present at the time.

The Sussex Community Risk Register can be found here: [Community Risk Register for Sussex: 2026](#)

Parish Emergency Response Team

11. A Parish Emergency Response Team (PERT) has been established for East Dean and Friston and they will co-ordinate the community's response to any emergency situation which may develop. The team consists of the Parish Council Chair (Team Leader), the vice Chair (deputy Team Leader), all Parish Councillors, the Parish Clerk, the Admin Officer and the Chair and vice chair of the Residents' Association (if not also a councillor). The current PERT membership is listed in appendix 1.

12. During an emergency and under the direction of the Team Leader the PERT will undertake: -

- ☐ acting as focal point for the community in response to an emergency
- ☐ acting as the main contact point with the Emergency Services, Wealden DC and East Sussex CC, and ensuring that two-way communication is maintained
- ☐ ensuring that appropriate authorities are notified
- ☐ communicating important messages within the community
- ☐ activating resources as required
- ☐ ensuring that the vulnerable are considered and provided with additional reassurance

- ❑ ensuring that confidentiality is maintained where necessary
- ❑ maintaining an action log with reasons recorded of actions taken (appendix 2)
- ❑ providing local knowledge to the emergency services or other organisations, as and when they are able to respond to the incident
- ❑ authorising emergency expenditure from council funds for food and drink if required.

Activating the Emergency Plan

13. This plan will be activated when an emergency (as defined in 2 above) has occurred AND where: -

- a) it is obvious that the normal response by the emergency services will be overwhelmed, OR
- b) the emergency services are unable to reach the scene within a reasonable time, OR
- c) the emergency services require additional support.

14. The plan may also be activated on the above basis on advice of the emergency services, or other appropriate organisation, of an impending emergency (e.g. severe weather or heavy snow).

15. An emergency may only be declared by the Chair of the Parish Council (or Vice Chair), or other Councillor in their absence, and they will direct and co-ordinate emergency operations from then on, until the emergency services arrive and can assume control. Pending their arrival, the Chair (or vice chair or other councillor) will be responsible for the initial and on-going liaison with the police as primary incident controllers, and with District and County Councils and other services, as necessary.

16. It is anticipated that the Chair of the Parish Council (as PERT Leader) will be alerted to or warned of a pending emergency by the police or other emergency service. If someone other than the Chair is so alerted to an emergency, they should immediately advise any Parish Councillor who will advise the Chair (PERT Leader), or other Councillor in their absence.

17. The Team Leader will then alert other members of the PERT to the situation and arrange a PERT meeting at the Emergency Control Centre to discuss the emergency. The PERT will undertake a detailed assessment of the emergency to establish its extent, and the type of support required. If an Emergency is not to be declared (possibly on the advice of the emergency services) but some level of support is required, the PERT will decide how to provide the required support outside the framework of this Emergency Plan.

18. The PERT will assess if skills such as those of doctors, nurses and first aiders may be relevant to the emergency and contact the appropriate providers from the directory (appendix 4). They will also assess the need for other resources such as four-wheel drive

vehicles, lifting equipment or chainsaws and contact the appropriate providers, as necessary. The PERT will consider the needs of vulnerable individuals and groups and contact appropriate service providers. They will arrange appropriate liaison and ongoing communications with the management of the Asa Care Home, East Dean Grange residential care home.

Emergency Control Centre (ECC)

19. The Emergency Control Centre (ECC) will be established in the small Village Hall in Gilberts Drive. In the event of serious damage or exclusion of access to the Village Hall, the Emergency Control Centre will be at a location decided upon by the PERT Leader (or deputy). An emergency resource pack is located in a safe inside the middle cupboard in the small hall. This safe is accessed by combination, which all PERT members will have been given.

20. Following the declaration of an emergency any individual or group using the ECC will be expected to quickly vacate the property, or otherwise, as directed by the PERT Leader. Financial compensation for loss of booking will initially be reimbursed by the Parish Council.

Incident handling

21. During the emergency, anyone involved in the emergency response should keep an individual log of all requests for assistance and action taken (appendix 2). A supply of log sheets is located in the emergency resource pack, and completed logs should be handed to the PERT leader at the end of the emergency.

Communications

22. Communications are vital before, during and after an emergency in order to ensure that warnings and information are received and passed on, responses co-ordinated with emergency services and actions by volunteers within the community co-ordinated 'on the ground.' A communications officer will be assigned by the PERT Leader and the tools at their disposal include: -

- ☐ mobile phones
- ☐ noticeboards/posters
- ☐ public meetings
- ☐ cascade telephone system
- ☐ email
- ☐ websites (Parish Council and Village)
- ☐ social media
- ☐ radio
- ☐ face-to-face
- ☐ street runners/couriers

23. If mobile phone communications are affected by the emergency, then attempts should be made to communicate using the Village Hall Broadband facility. If landlines are also affected, then communications within the community should be considered using couriers carrying written or oral messages if safe to do so.

24. If it is decided that communications will be carried out via a telephone cascade, then the Village Organisation contacts (in appendix 4) will be called with the request that they make telephone contact with their club/society members. They should be advised of the message to convey and asked to request their members to continue the chain by telephoning other residents generally. It is recognised that a number of residents will be contacted more than once under this method of operation.

Evacuations

25. In the event of an emergency where, in consultation with the emergency services, if possible, the PERT determine that people are required to leave their homes, and/or for people (including casualties) requiring temporary shelter, the PERT Leader will declare a Parish Shelter at the large Village Hall. In the absence of the emergency services, the PERT may recommend evacuation to residents, but this must be a voluntary action by the residents and the emergency services and local authorities must be informed of this action if possible. Should the Village Hall not be available due to damage or exclusion then the PERT will decide on an alternative location for temporary shelter. This could be the Parish Church, Grange Care Home, Tiger Inn or, if these are also within an exclusion zone, the National Trust Visitor Centre at Birling Gap.

26. On declaring a Parish Shelter any individual or group using the large Village Hall will be expected to vacate the property, or otherwise, as directed by the PERT Leader. Financial compensation for loss of booking will initially be reimbursed by the Parish Council.

27. Once the Parish Shelter has been activated the evacuees should be advised to turn off electricity, gas and water supplies at their homes and unplug appliances and lock all doors and windows. They should gather together essential items including: -

- ☐ a list of useful telephone numbers (e.g. doctor and close relatives)
- ☐ home and car keys
- ☐ toiletries, sanitary supplies, and prescribed medication
- ☐ torch with spare batteries
- ☐ mobile phone
- ☐ cash and credit cards
- ☐ appropriate clothing

28. The PERT Leader will assign a responsible officer for the management of the Parish Shelter, and they in turn will consider any catering arrangements including the

organisation of initial and subsequent supplies and volunteers for kitchen duty. The Parish Council has agreed to reimburse the cost of providing emergency food and drink during the initial period of an emergency, up to a limit of £500.

29. The use of the Parish Shelter should only be considered as a short-term remedy. If an emergency situation is believed to be continuing for a considerable time (more than 12 hours) then the PERT team will make efforts to find accommodation for those displaced within the village or elsewhere.

End of Emergency

29. In consultation with the emergency services, the PERT Leader (or deputy) will declare an end to the emergency situation as and when appropriate and arrange for appropriate communications within and outside the community.

Plan Review and Practice

30. At least on an annual basis, the confidential directory (appendix 4) will be checked to confirm that all entries remain current. Apart from this directory, the full Emergency Plan will be reviewed at least every three years to consider if any updates/amendments are appropriate. The next review of the Plan is due in July 2029.

31. The Parish Council will give annual consideration to the need for a suitable desk-top / face-to-face scenario to exercise elements of this Emergency Plan.

Distribution of the Emergency Plan

32. The core of the Emergency Plan is appendix 5 which includes all the contact details available to the Parish Emergency Response Team in the event that an emergency is declared. Much of the information in appendix 5 is private and confidential. Hard copies of the full Plan are therefore only made available to the PERT members (appendix 1) on the understanding that they do not copy any part of the Plan or share or discuss the information in appendix 4 with anyone outside the PERT. On leaving membership of PERT a member must return their copy of the Emergency Plan to the Parish Clerk.

33. Electronic and/or hard copies of the Emergency Plans, but excluding appendix 4, are provided to the organisations listed in appendix 3.

34. An electronic copy of the Plan, excluding appendix 4, is posted on the Parish Council Website.

35. References to the Emergency Plan will be included periodically in the Parish Magazine.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD YOU PUT YOURSELF AT RISK

APPENDIX 1 PARISH EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (PERT)

This team will be the first group to be called if a Parish Emergency is declared. Formal copies of the full Emergency Plan, including the confidential contact directory at Appendix 4, are held by members of the PERT.

Name	Address	Email	Phone
Michael Bustard	Downs House, 1 Mill Close, Friston	cllr.bustard@eastdeanfriston-pc.gov.uk	07747 030160
Mark Gaffney	Appledown, Old Willingdon Rd, Friston BN20 0AS	cllr.gaffney@eastdeanfriston-pc.gov.uk	07446 948000
Gill Morris	1 Friston Close Friston BN20 0EH	cllr.morris@eastdeanfriston-pc.gov.uk	07815 612844
Jonathan Greenway	5 Peakdean Close Friston BN20 0JA	cllr.greenway@eastdeanfriston-pc.gov.uk	01323 422108
Stephen Harvey	Swallows, Old Willingdon Rd, Friston BN20 0AT	cllr.harvey@eastdeanfriston-pc.gov.uk	07836 252885
Grant Fowler	7 Carew Cottages, Village Green Lane, East Dean, BN20 0DR	cllr.fowler@eastdeanfriston-pc.gov.uk	07803 257967 01323 423583
Phill Hill	Linden Mead, Friston, BN20 0BX	cllr.hill@eastdeanfriston-pc.gov.uk	01323 423990 07860 759911
Phil Burgess <i>Parish Clerk</i>	6 Ashampstead Place Upperton Rd Eastbourne BN21 1LZ	clerk@eastdeanfriston-pc.gov.uk	07974 253672
Lesley d'Urso <i>Residents' Association</i>	11 Peakdean Lane, Friston BN20 0JD	edfresidentsassociation@gmail.com	

APPENDIX 2 LOG SHEET

It is important to record all information during an emergency by using this log sheet. It will ensure information is not lost and will help support decisions made or actions taken. Blank forms are available from, and completed forms should be returned to, the PERT Leader.

Date	Time	Information	Spend Approved	Initials

APPENDIX 3 DISTRIBUTION LIST

Formal copies of this Emergency Plan (including the confidential contact directory at Appendix 4) are issued to the PERT members in Appendix 1, and electronic and/or hardcopies copies (excluding the confidential contact directory) are issued to those organisations in the table below.

Organisation	Name and Postal and/or Email Address	Telephone
ESCC	David Wheeler Emergency Planning Officer East Sussex Resilience and Emergencies Partnership Communities, Economy, and Transport David.Wheeler@eastsussex.gov.uk	07749 100 760
WDC	Chris Bone lead for EP at Wealden Chris.Bone@wealden.gov.uk	

Any comments on the Emergency Plan from any of the above organisations should be sent to the Parish Clerk (see cover sheet for details)