East Grinstead Community Bonfire

Visiting Bonfire Societies – Joining Instructions

Saturday 17th October 2026

Thank you for joining us for our annual community bonfire event. We are excited to have you join us in our procession. We wanted to ensure you are aware of how the event will unfold, of expectations and requirements. Please find below the details.

Parking:

There are multiple car parks to choose from around East Grinstead. Bands are encouraged to use the 'Vicarage Car Park' as this is the forming location of the procession. All other visiting groups/ Societies are encouraged to park in the other car parks around East Grinstead listed below (with post codes & map). **Road closures will begin from 18:00.**

- **Vicarage Car Park (Pink) – RH19 3AB (please note ANPR cameras are in use)**
- **King Street (Green) – RH19 3DJ**
- **Christopher Road (Red) – RH19 3SN**
- **Railway Approach (Orange) – RH19 1BS**
- **Queensway (Blue) – RH19 4DW**

Car Parking is chargeable until 18:00

There is strictly no parking available at East Court

Checking in:

All participating societies are to check in with **Adam Armstrong**, our Commander in Chief (look out for a green beard!) for the event, before **17:30** in the 'Vicarage Car Park'.

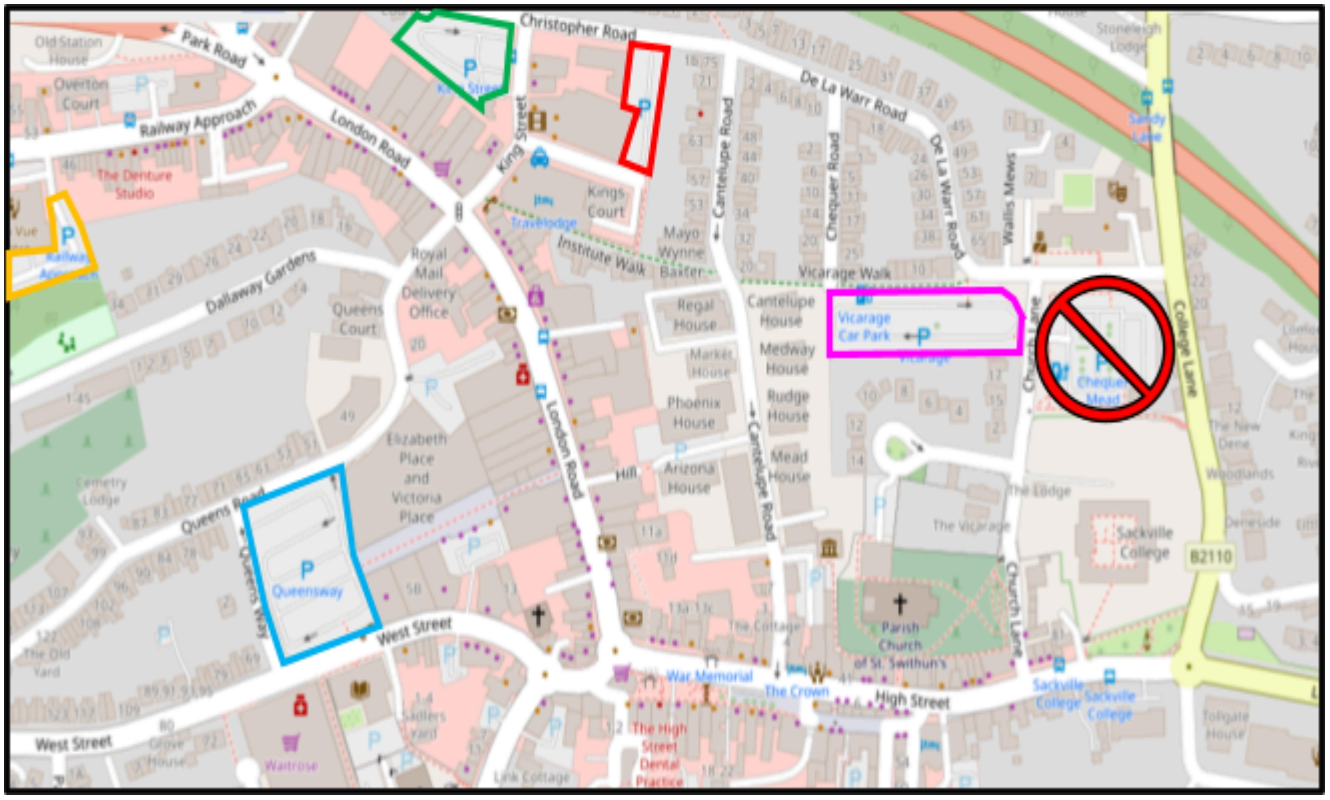
Once checked in, we ask each society to provide two designated parade marshals to walk with your society, support them, educate the public and ensure general safety whilst processing.

Forming up:

After the EGCBonfire's 'Act of Remembrance', the parade will begin to form up in the 'Vicarage Car Park' from 18:45. All Societies will need to form up in the following procession order below:

(Final Order Subject to change)

PA
VIPS and Commander in Chief
East Grinstead Community Bonfire
Fire Carts
Skull Drummery
The Meads Primary School
St Marys Primary School
Scouts
The Rugby Club Juniors
Urban Dance
Borough
Burgess Hill
Edenbridge
Isfield and Little Horsted
Lindfield
Littlehampton
Newick
Samba Band
Music - Torch Collection Trailer
East Grinstead Fire Service (ON CALL)



Health & Safety:

Last year we had fantastic police presence, and again this year we are due to have 4 officers and a sergeant minimum for our event. Additionally, the East Grinstead Fire service wants to join the procession (Pending Call Outs) which we are excited to see. There will be a medical service team for our event, who will provide first aid along the procession and at the bonfire site.

Roads will be closed to ensure safety of all in the procession and will be manned by marshals. This year road closures will be managed by Prime Response, an experienced security company. Marshals and designated bonfire officials will give guidance along the route to ensure safety. The PA will also provide any updated information in the event of changes or emergencies

Responsibility for the youth of visiting bands always remains with their designated supervising adults, until they are safely handed back to parents/ carers. East Grinstead Community Bonfire has a Lost/Missing Child Policy a copy of which can be provided.

The youth groups are at the front of the procession to ensure they are not in contact with lit torches that the remainder of the procession will carry. The break at Railway approach ensures that the clean-up crew have sufficient time to clear the roads of the dropped torches.

In the event of an emergency and a service vehicle (Ambulance, Fire or Police) requires access along the procession route, All procession members will be required to move across to the left hand side of the road to allow the service vehicle a clear route to its destination.

Insurance:

All visiting Bonfire Societies, Groups and bands must have valid public liability insurance. Be sure to send a copy of your insurance certificate to egcbonfire.sec@gmail.com no later than Friday 2nd October 2026.

Fireworks:

All fireworks including rookies or flares are banned from our event and are not allowed (including banger carts). Any offenders will be identified, reported to the authorities, and dealt with at or after the event.

Toilets:

We ask all participants to use the public toilets located in the various towns establishments or spend some money at the 'Crown Pub'. However, we will provide a portaloo in the'Police Station Car Park' (opposite Vicarcage car park, adjacent to Chequer Mead.. East Court toilets will be open until 22:30. Bands will be granted access to use the toilet facilities in the East Court Sports Pavilion.

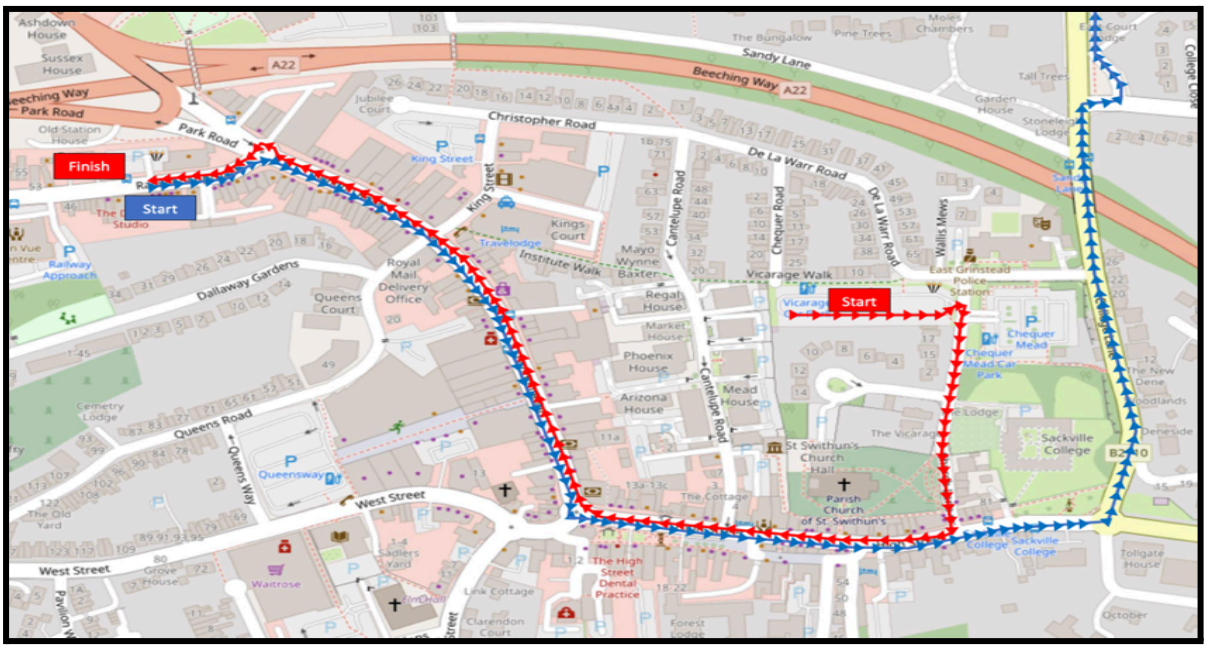
Torches:

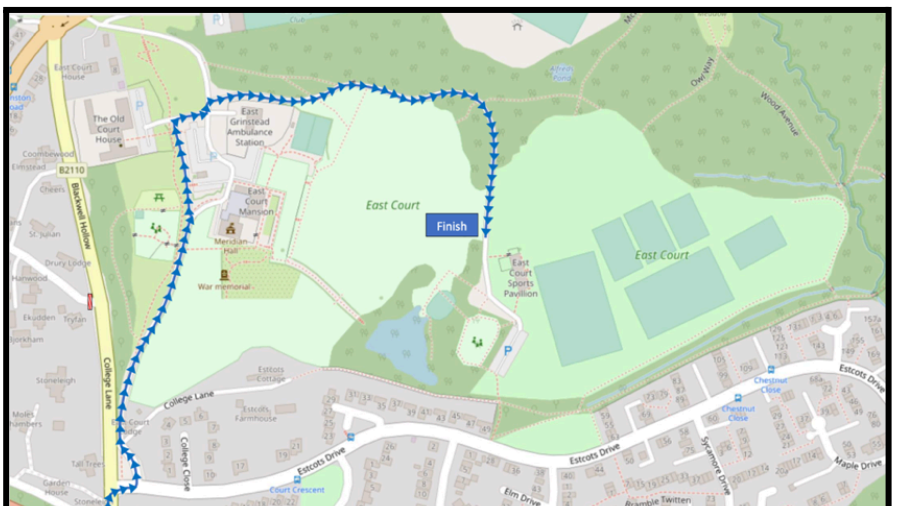
Our torches are made from locally coppiced wood and hessian encased in wire. All societies are responsible for managing and organising their members and promoting safety whilst handling torches. Only Torch captains and/or nominated assistants are to collect torches for their society. During the procession, please place all used torches singularly at either side of the procession. Along the route there may be parked cars, please avoid placing

spent torches near cars and do not allow torches to create mini bonfires. A team will follow the procession to collect used torches from behind.

Processions:

The Main procession will form in the Vicarage Car Park at 18:45 and will process through the town down to The Railway Pub: **Bonfire Societies walk forward after detorching outside the Railway by the Island, not turn left down Railway Approach (this is for youth groups only).** There will then be a 20-minute break until the procession will reform at approx. 20:00, From here the procession will head back up 'London Road', through the length of the 'High Street' to outside 'Sackville College'. They will then turn down 'College Lane' where we will drop down into ranks of 2, as there are roadworks on the bridge, through to the entrance of 'Estcots Drive' where the procession will enter 'East Court' and will head through the estate down towards the road fork outside the play park. All non bonfire societies (groups and bands) will follow the road round to the front of the 'East Court Mansion' where they will be dismissed. All bonfire societies will continue to the bonfire site, following the road down to the old police station, heading through to the bonfire site.



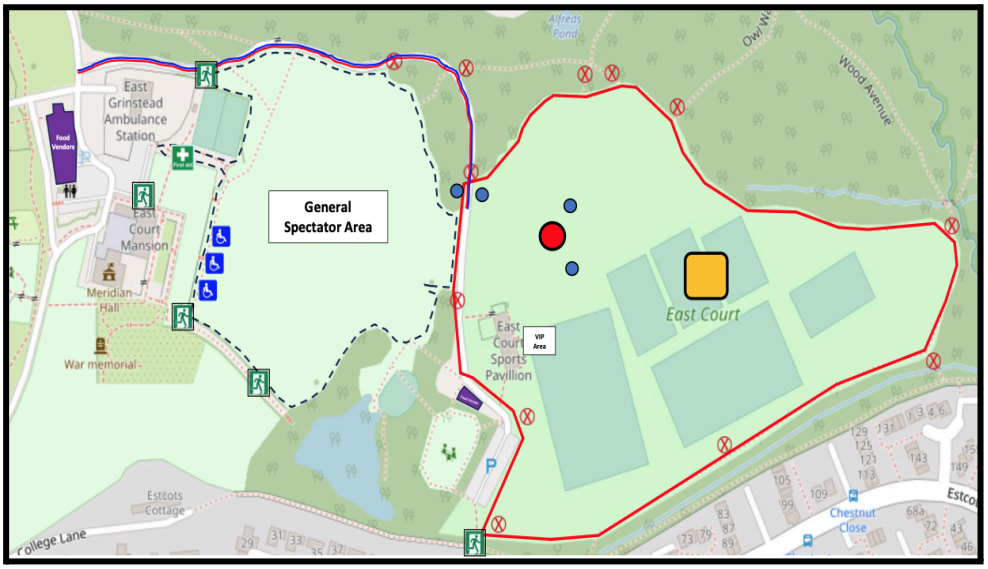


Fire-Site:

The fire site is located at East Court. The upper field will be allocated for public spectators, whilst the lower field will be cordoned off for the bonfire and fireworks. All societies & Bands will be granted access to an exclusive spectator area within the cordon. **The access road must always remain clear for emergency vehicles**. We will have music provided by Mid Sussex Radio, along with food and drink vendors in the Main car park outside the toilets & by the Sports Pavilion Car Park. The East Court toilets in the main car park will remain open until 22:30. The facilities in the Mansion and Meridian Hall will not be available to the public.

Food and drink will be available either in the town or down by the bonfire site. However, all monies spent at the food vendors by the fire site will be shared with EGCBonfire. We have encouraged and sourced local vendors to support our local businesses.

Once at the bonfire all societies are to circle the bonfire (Holding lit torches), where the bonfire prayer will be read out. Once done, firecrackers will be lit on the bonfire, and then all societies will be encouraged to throw their torches on the bonfire to ignite it.



We hope you have a fantastic time at our event! After the event, if you could spend a little bit of time emailing us some feedback that would be much appreciated. If there is anything else you need to know or have clarified then please contact us.

EAST GRINSTEAD COMMUNITY BONFIRE

Guidance for Members of Other Bonfire Societies

Torchlit Procession 2026

This guide is for members of bonfire societies invited by EGCB to take part in the torchlit procession with torches. Please read it alongside your own society's briefing and the muster point briefing given by EGCB on the night.

COLLECTING AND LIGHTING TORCHES

Key risks

- Burns and other injuries from handling and lighting torches.

Your role

- Collect your torch only from the designated collection point.
- Torches are only lit by EGCB competent volunteers — this happens at two points: the main muster start point in the car park, and the Railway pub midway.
- Never attempt to light your own torch or anyone else's.
- Hold your torch as briefed — away from your body, clothing and other people.

CARRYING TORCHES IN THE PROCESSION

Key risks

- Burns and injury to yourself, fellow marchers or the public from a carried torch.

Your role

- Only EGCB members and members of invited bonfire societies may carry torches — never hand a torch to a member of the public, a visiting group, or a mobility scooter user.
- Process in ranks of three, keeping a safe distance from those around you and from EGCB members elsewhere in the procession.
- Maintain a safe distance from members of the public watching the procession.
- If the public encroaches on the procession, do not deal with this yourself — an EGCB marshal will move them back to a safe distance.

NARROW POINTS AND PINCH POINTS

Several sections of the route narrow considerably, including the confined area near the Railway pub.

- Follow the directions of the trained EGCB members and marshals who accompany the procession at pinch points.
- Listen for instructions from the mobile PA system on crowd flow.
- Keep your torch under control and close to your body when the procession slows or bunches up — this is when the risk of contact with others is highest.
- Never push forward to get past a narrow point — wait for the flow to ease.

DE-TORCHING AND DISPOSAL

Key risks

- Burns from handling a lit or smouldering torch during disposal.
- Unsafe disposal creates a fire or trip hazard for others.

Your role

- De-torch only at the point briefed, under the supervision of EGCB volunteers — take particular care in the confined area near the Railway pub.
- Place your torch in a water barrel to extinguish it fully. Kicking a torch out, or any other unsafe method of disposal, is not allowed.
- Water barrels are for spent torches only — never place litter or other objects in them.
- If you see a dropped or smouldering torch on the ground, do not leave it — alert the nearest EGCB marshal.

FIRE BANNERS AND FLAMMABLE MATERIALS

Key risks

- Injury from unplanned ignition near fire banners or other flammable material.
- Burns from burning material carried in fire banners.

Your role

- Fire banners are only ignited by EGCB volunteer staff, after consultation with the Captain of Fire Banners — do not ignite your own.
- Keep torches and other sources of ignition at a safe distance from fire banners at all times.
- If you are a fire banner carrier and need cooling water, ask an EGCB marshal — they will have an adequate supply on hand.

AT THE FIRE SITE

EGCB volunteer marshals will maintain a safety cordon between the public and the bonfire, and will direct you on where unused torches and materials should be placed.

- Do not throw torches onto the bonfire from the front — follow EGCB instructions on where used torches are collected and disposed of.
- Keep clear of the safety cordon maintained by EGCB marshals.

IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG

- Tell the nearest EGCB marshal straight away — they are trained and in radio contact with event control.
- Leave any fire, disturbance or medical issue to EGCB marshals and stewards rather than intervening yourself.

In an emergency, dial 999 first, then tell your nearest marshal or radio the Captain of Marshals. If you are unsure about anything, ask — every EGCB marshal is there to help.

Commander in Chief – Adam Armstrong
Email – chair.egcbonfire@gmail.com
Mobile – 07850 450023