EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

19th November 2026

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# 8th February 2024

8 February 2024

EDUCATION LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

## Ada of Surrey inspires big AI project



7 February 2024

Drawing inspiration from Ada Lovelace, who resided in Surrey, a computing pioneer and translator who overcame societal barriers in the 19th century, the “ADA network” based at Surrey University aims to … READ MORE

COUNCIL SPORTS

## LibDems call “Love All” for local tennis



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## Dementia nurses coming closer to Epsom




7 February 2024

Dementia UK, the specialist dementia nursing charity, in partnership with Leeds Building Society, is launching free face-to-face ‘Closer to Home’ clinics to provide life-changing support to families living with dementia … READ MORE

NEWS WESTMINSTER

## Surrey’s Tory MPs exiting the County




6 February 2024

Kwasi Kwarteng the Conservative MP for Spelthorne has just joined four other of his Party’s Surrey colleagues in announcing he will not stand at the upcoming General Election. Surrey has … READ MORE

COUNCIL HEALTH

## Surrey boost for mental health includes Epsom

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6 February 2024

Surrey County Council has announced a significant investment of £3.6 million from the Mental Health Investment Fund (MHIF) into 13 innovative, community-focused projects. This allocation follows a previous grant of … READ MORE

RUGBY SPORTS

## Epsom dig deep to beat Gravesend

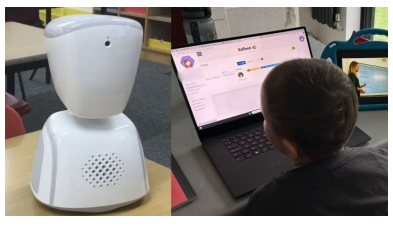


5 February 2024

Sutton & Epsom RFC 21 Gravesend 19. Saturday 3rd February. It has reached the business end of the campaign and for all clubs a studious look at the table andthe … READ MORE

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## Robot puts study at home pupil in the classroom

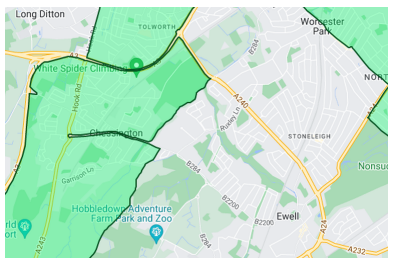


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One pupil at a Surrey primary school has been utilising virtual technology to help her keep-up with learning by sending a robot into class. The robot is controlled by the … READ MORE

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## M25 diversion cost me £12.50 ULEZ charge




5 February 2024

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5 February 2024

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FOOTBALL SPORTS

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# Twice led, thrice beaten….

5 February 2024

Sheerwater 4-3 Epsom & Ewell FC. Combined Counties League – Premier Division. Saturday 3rd February. One of the most concerning afternoons in recent club history took place on Saturday as … READ MORE

COUNCIL HOUSING PLANNING

# Red, blue and orange go Green in belt protest




4 February 2024

Epsom High Street Saturday 3rd February witnessed political parties unite against housing development on the Borough's Green Belt. The Labour Party, Conservative Party, Liberal Democrat Party, Gina Miller's True and … READ MORE

COUNCIL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

# "Audit and Scrutiny" under scrutiny



4 February 2024

Every day the Epsom and Ewell Times brings you a fresh chess puzzle to solve. Harder to solve than any chess puzzle run so far is what, if anything, at … READ MORE

COMMUNITY LOCAL HISTORY

# Petition to reclaim Horton Cemetery from property speculator



3 February 2024

The trustees of the Epsom charity The Friends of Horton Cemetery have appealed to the public to sign an online petition on change.org that calls for Europe's largest asylum cemetery … READ MORE

BUSINESS NEWS

# Thames Water's reputation going down the drain



3 February 2024

Thames Water's spending on infrastructure is "woefully inadequate", its behaviour a "disgrace", and direct lines of communications to MPs "unhelpful" – a meeting into the "largest ever" water outages in … READ MORE

EDUCATION NEWS

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# NESCOT Saturday academies for the young




2 February 2024

Got a young person passionate about animals, cookery, e-sports, film making or another hands-on potential career? Our next Saturday Academy starts 24 Feb 2024 – book now!The next set of Saturday academies … READ MORE

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# Dementia nurses coming closer to Epsom

8 February 2024




Dementia UK, the specialist dementia nursing charity, in partnership with Leeds Building Society, is launching free face-to-face ‘Closer to Home’ clinics to provide life-changing support to families living with dementia in **Epsom**.

The clinics will be held in the **Epsom branch** of Leeds Building Society, bringing emotional and practical support closer to families with dementia through the charity’s specialist dementia nurses, known as Admiral Nurses. Dementia UK’s Closer to Home clinics will run on 28th and 29th of February and the 5th, 6th and 7th of March 2024.

The face-to-face clinic will offer a safe, comfortable, and private space for families to discuss any aspect of dementia and receive the specialist support of Admiral Nurses. Between June 2021 and December 2023, over 4,000 families have been helped through Dementia UK’s ‘Closer to Home’ clinics, and the charity has partnered with Leeds Building Society to offer in-person support across the United Kingdom since 2022.

Nationwide research conducted by Dementia UK into the impact of dementia revealed that nearly half (47%) of people in the South East of England have been affected by dementia, and 51% of people in the region are worried about how a diagnosis would affect their relationships with family and friends. Only 16% of people in the South East have heard of Dementia UK’s specialist Admiral Nurses.

In April 2020, Dementia UK and Leeds Building Society announced a four-year partnership to raise £700,000 to help over 2,500 families with dementia across the UK. As part of this partnership, the innovative ‘Closer to Home’ project was also launched in June 2021, to improve access to dementia care and support.

The partnership’s initial target of £500,000 has now been exceeded. Thanks to this, Dementia UK has been able to develop and deliver virtual appointments with specialist dementia nurses for an even larger number of families and individuals.

**Hannah Gardner, Admiral Nurse at Dementia UK, said:**

*“We’re proud to bring our Closer to Home project to Epsom to offer specialist face-to-face clinics in the area. We know the difficulties that families in Epsom and the surrounding area often experience. We know that dementia doesn’t just affect the person with the diagnosis: families, friends, and carers are also impacted.*

*“Dementia is a huge and growing health crisis – someone in the UK develops dementia every three minutes. This means it’s more important than ever for us to reach families and offer one on one support from our dementia specialist Admiral Nurses. From worries about memory problems to understanding a dementia diagnosis and how the condition progresses, we will be providing practical and emotional advice on caring for someone who lives with this progressive condition, along with giving advice on financial and legal issues.”*

**Richard Fearon, CEO of Leeds Building Society, said:**

*“Dementia UK was voted as our charity partner by our members and colleagues, and we are thrilled to have raised over £700,000 for them, exceeding the £500,000 fundraising target we set ourselves at the start of this partnership.“*

Dementia UK’s Closer to Home clinics will take place in Epsom on the 28th and 29th of February and the 5th, 6th and 7th of March 2024.

To book a confidential and in-person appointment with an Admiral Nurse, visit dementiauk.org/closer-to-home

dementiauk.org

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# Robot puts study at home pupil in the classroom

8 February 2024



One pupil at a Surrey primary school has been utilising virtual technology to help her keep-up with learning by sending a robot into class.

The robot is controlled by the pupil, and gives her the opportunity to be with her friends and classmates even though she cannot be in school physically.

**Cuddington Croft Primary** enlisted some cutting-edge technology when a Year 5 pupil was forced to take several months off school due to serious illness.

To enable Alexia to continue her studies remotely, the school arranged for an AV1 robot to attend lessons in her place, allowing the youngster to join her classmates virtually.

“The robot was on a table at school, and when Alexia was on, it would ‘come to life’, and its head could rotate to see the classroom,” said **Mike Skelton**, Head Teacher at Cuddington Croft, part of the GLF Schools Multi Academies Trust.

“The aim of the AV1 was to help the pupil to attend lessons while they were unable to be there in person,” explained Alexia’s teacher, April Riley. “It’s been brilliant at making that connection between the pupil and the class. It’s mainly for them to join in, listen to the lessons, and still feel part of the class.

“The first few times the pupil came online it was very exciting, and the other children were interested to see how it moved and when the eyes changed et cetera. However, it didn’t take much time before it started to feel normal.”

“What’s great is that they can log on and show off their learning and their work,” she continued. “That made them feel like they had done their part, and I think that sense of achievement was really important.

“We had a great example of this in our last English unit where everyone had to read a speech. The pupil came online and read their speech through the AV1, and everyone cheered afterwards.”

The portable robot was provided with the help of the **Surrey County Council** Access to Education Team.

“I really love my robot, as I can join in with the lessons in class with my friends and my teacher, and interact with them,” said Alexia, who is currently making a phased return to school. “It also makes me feel like I am in the classroom with everyone and lets me see everyone without being seen, as sometimes I don’t feel well.

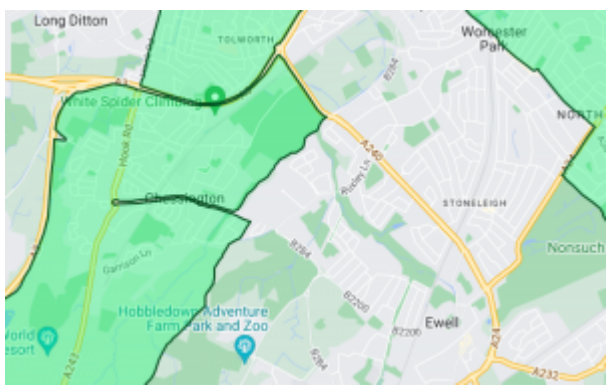
“It allows me to answer questions and to change the colour if I don’t feel well but still want to listen into the lesson. Then my teacher knows I am there but might not ‘put up my hand’ to answer questions.

“I prefer to be in class, but sometimes that’s not possible because I am not well, but it still helps me to feel included in the class.”

“This technology allowed a child to feel included within her class during the toughest period of her and her family’s lives,” added Mr Skelton. “It added a sense of normality and togetherness that could not have been achieved through sending work home.”

# M25 diversion cost me £12.50 ULEZ charge

8 February 2024




Driven to despair and a £12.50 charge, Dorset pensioner complains to Transport for London for inadequate signs before the ULEZ charging A243 at the Hook Junction with the A3. She thanks Epsom and Ewell Times for a better explanation of the zone than provided by TfL.

In fact the TfL explanation has some clarity:

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"Rushett Lane is outside the ULEZ. At the junction with the A243, the A243 going north is inside the zone, while going south it is outside the zone. Fairoak Lane is outside the zone."

Moreover, Surrey County Council, as an Highway Authority, has indicated an unwillingness to cooperate with the warning signage.

Here is her story of woe:

Dear Editor,

I found clearer information from your on-line newspaper than I could from the TfL website.

It's probably a waste of breath on my part but if there is a local battle in the Epsom area to have this phallic extension of the Ulez zone sticking out into Surrey, then count me in. I presume it's to clobber all the tourists going to Chessington Zoo!

On Saturday February 3rd I paid the Ulez congestion charge because I believe my husband and I accidentally drove into the Ulez zone at Hook Junction on the A3 in Surrey without realising it. We had driven up from Dorset on Friday to East Molesey which is outside the Ulez Zone. Then on Saturday morning I took the train from Hampton Court to Vauxhall to pick up my younger son's dog. However there was chaos on the railway in that area due to trespassers on the line and after several hours of delays I finally got a train back to Esher (instead of Hampton Court) where my husband picked me up. We don't normally travel into East Molesey via Esher but was assured by my son that it was outside the Ulez Zone. At the Scilly Isles Roundabout we became confused by signs telling us to follow M25 diversion and joined the Kingston By Pass for a short distance which swept us into the Hook Junction interchange. We did not see any Ulez signs en route so just followed the M25 diversion signs which led us down the A243 past Chessington Zoo and eventually to the M25. We later discovered this was to help motorists avoid extreme traffic congestion at Junction 10 on the M25/A3.

When we got home I checked the Ulez map on my computer because we had heard about an extension of the Ulez zone into Surrey from the Surbiton area and while the online maps lack detail it seemed to me that a short length of the A243 Hook Road running south i.e. away from London has been placed inside the Ulez zone, and by following the diversion signs we had accidentally entered the zone for a mile or so.

I have had no choice but to pay the congestion charge or risk being fined, but I do think it is unfair to place M25 diversion signs on major roundabouts without warning that the diversion can take you through a section of the Ulez zone that isn't even in Greater London.

Out of London visiting pensioners like ourselves, still driving government recommended diesel cars, rely on clear road signs, not trying to read an almost illegible Ulez on-line map on an iPhone.

Yours.

Mrs Geraldine Osment

Related reports:

Signs of Surrey resistance to ULEZ continue

London Mayor confirms drive of ULEZ to Epsom border. ULEZ explainer.

High Court gives ULEZ the green light to Epsom's borders

ULEZ court challenge begins

# Epsom youth show a taste for cooking

8 February 2024




On Saturday, 3rd February, three candidates from Epsom participated in the District Young Chef Competition held at Merton College for Rotary Young Chef, along with approximately 14 others from areas including Kingston, Redhill, and Morden.

While negative messages about the state of young people, crime, and issues are often heard, witnessing what took place gives us hope that there are many young, decent individuals who will grow up to become assets to our community. Let's sing their praises!

The participants in the competition had two hours to prepare a healthy two-course meal. The quality of the food by all the young people was amazing, ambitious, tasty, and demonstrated a passion for food.

The day was made even more special by Emma from Rosebery School, who also took part in the local competition recently

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and was awarded first place for her outstanding salmon dish.

Emma will now move on to the regional round in Hampshire to cook once more. We, of course, congratulate Emma on her outstanding achievement and wish her the best of luck in the next competition.

Thanks also go to Joe from Epsom Rotary, who organized the local competition and is supporting our candidate through to the next round.

Epsom Rotary.

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# Three January match reports for Epsom and Ewell FC

8 February 2024

Between 16th and 30th January **Nathan Lambert** took up the Epsom and Ewell FC match reporting responsibilities of his father Richard. Here are his three reports for your pleasure and the archives. Well done Nathan. Good job.

---

**Epsom & Ewell 2-4 Virginia Water**. Southern Combination Cup – Second Round. Tuesday 16th January 2024. Report Source: www.eefconline.co.uk. Reporter: Nathan Lambert

**Salts frozen out by Water**

On a cold evening at the Reg Madgwick stadium in Cobham, Virginia Water visited us for a Southern Combination Cup tie. The match started off well with a few good chances for both teams as in the sixth minute, Lewis Pearch was set free down the left wing and his ball into the box was headed narrowly wide by Jaan Stanley. From the resulting goal kick, Water went down the other end and put a shot from 15 yards high and wide to the right.

A few minutes later, Thompson Adeyemi ran through the opposition defence and squared a ball across for the shot to be lashed narrowly over the bar from just outside the box. Once again Virginia Water went up the other end and put a ball across the face of the goal from the left-hand side that no one could capitalize on.

After 20 minutes, both sides had decent chances and both could have scored, but it was us that took the lead in the 25th minute when a deep ball from defence found Luke Miller who got in behind the defence through the use of a nice one-two with Tijani Eshilokun. Miller finished this chance off with a great finish at the near post.

It was all downhill from here unfortunately with not much happening between this point and half time, apart from us conceding in the 44th minute with Brandon Jackson who scored for the visitors with a clinical finish into the bottom right corner.

At half time we seemed to be worth the draw but that would not stay the same into the second half as in the 52nd minute, a ball across from the left was poked into the net by Casey Boccaro from about 12 yards out. A few minutes later we made a double substitution to try and switch things up. We brought Carl Oblitey and Sirak Negassi on for Jaan Stanley and Lewis Pearch.

Debutant Oblitey, with an almost instant impact, was put through on goal by Rory Edwards after he ran through a couple of defenders and put his shot just over the bar. However soon after this we went out of the match entirely, conceding soon after from a free kick which was originally saved, but the rebound was tapped in from close range in the 72nd minute.

Ten minutes later a great back-post ball from the right wing was finished back across the goal into the far bottom corner and the visitors did not let off the pressure having two more goals ruled out for offside where balls in behind were slightly mistimed. This was not the end of the action however as substitute Sirak Negassi found himself in possession of the ball after a sliced defensive clearance to curl the ball over the keeper into the top right corner in the 90th minute.

In conclusion this was a fairly poor performance all round, as we were too open at the back, not holding the ball in midfield and we weren’t creative enough in the final third but, at the end of the day it was a cup match and our main focus has to be staying up in the league this year.

Epsom & Ewell: Harvey Keogh (c), Ethan Brazier, Tommy Williams, Rory Edwards, Reece Tierney, Nick Wilson, Luke Miller, Thompson Adeyemi, Tijani Eshilokun, Jaan Stanley, Lewis Pearch

Subs: Carl Oblitey for Pearch (63), Sirak Negassi for Stanley (63), Jerry Antwi for Williams (80)

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**Epsom & Ewell 1-2 Cobham**. Combined Counties League – Premier Division. Friday 26th January 2024

**Landlords leave it late on Friday night**

Subsequent to this disappointing injury-time loss to Cobham, the threat of relegation looms large as we are six points beneath Guildford and only three ahead of Sheerwater and four ahead of Colliers Wood United. I certainly think that we need to have an improvement in form soon or we may well be headed back into step Six and possibly back to Sussex, which would be unfortunate after the work we put in to get promoted last season.

Toby Colwell came in for a rare match between the posts as Harvey Keogh was away for a few days and we started off strongly in the 4th minute where a ball in found its way to the back post where it was poked over the line following a goal-

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mouth scramble. Unfortunately, it was disallowed for a foul against the Cobham goalkeeper which was probably fair. Two minutes later we had another good chance after Nick Wilson found himself in some space on the edge of the box, but he drilled his shot wide.

The next piece of action at either end came in the 14th minute as Luke Miller received the ball just outside the box and put us ahead with a low, curling shot that was reached by the keeper, but not kept out. At this point I was thinking back to the last match we had played against Virginia Water, where we had gone 1-0 up fairly early with a Miller goal but had let it slip by conceding four from that point. However, this looked different as there was limited action for much of the remainder of the first half with a few saves at each end, most notably in the 34th, with a great low save by Toby Colwell that went out for a corner that led to nothing.

Three minutes later our new signing (as of last week) Carl Oblitey had a shot from roughly 20 yards that went slightly over the bar. It seemed like we were playing the better football as we were approaching half time with one Cobham chance in the 44th minute that flew over the bar from 15 yards.

At the half we probably deserved the lead. In the 51st minute, Cobham got a player through onto a one on one with our keeper that was well saved by Colwell with the follow up being blocked as well. Soon after we had a free kick that was crossed to the back post and headed narrowly wide.

Nothing much else happened for 15 minutes except for Cobham seeming to be more in control of possession. This however, would count for nothing if they couldn't create chances whilst they had most of the momentum. Unfortunately for us, they did take advantage of this period of good play with a goal in the 75th minute where a shot from Reis Stanislaus found its way across goal to Ryan Marklew who bundled it in.

At this point I could tell that it would be a matter of "when" rather than "if" as we were losing focus, losing control and we couldn't string many passes together. We tried to make a couple of substitutions to change our fortune, but Cobham piled on the pressure after a few quick restarts and got chance after chance.

A brilliant opportunity opened up for Ryan Holt in the 92nd minute as our defence didn't close him down and he was able to get his shot off to swerve which led to a corner. The corner was only half cleared and this would cost us as the ball was returned to the back post where Marklew got himself his and Cobham's second when they needed it most – three minutes over the normal time

Although there were another eight minutes after the goal for us to score in, it seemed that we were trying to punt the ball long and win the header to score but it didn't work and the game finished 2-1. I felt we were unlucky to lose but it still leaves us in a bad position, particularly if results elsewhere go badly.

Epsom & Ewell: Toby Colwell, Tommy Williams, Ethan Nelson-Roberts, Nick Inwugwu, Reece Tierney, Nick Wilson (c), Luke Miller, Thompson Adeyemi, Carl Oblitey, Tijani Eshilokun, Lewis Pearch

Subs: Jaan Stanley for Oblitey (65), Sirak Negassi for Eshilokun (80), Ethan Brazier for Williams (87)

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**Epsom & Ewell 1-2 Jersey Bulls**. Combined Counties League – Premier Division. Tuesday 30th January 2024

**A late loss, again**

Our fifth home match in a row provided us with a fourth consecutive loss on Tuesday as we lost in the final minutes against Jersey Bulls. Although it was a narrow loss and late in the match it still leaves us without a point for 2024 so far; form that can't continue if we want to stay up this season.

Our opponents came straight out of the gates at kick-off, putting us under some early pressure which we couldn't escape from. It took them just nine minutes to score with a fantastic ball into the box from near the touchline that was poked in from close range by Lorne Bickley. This was not the end of their pressure however as for the next 15 minutes we didn't get many chances at all whereas they kept on putting good balls into the box which were either missed, saved or blocked.

At this point in the half we were lucky not to be further behind, but the price of weathering the storm was just the one goal. We were starting to get a couple of chances at goal and in the 30th minute, Carl Oblitey headed a long ball down to Tijani Eshilokun who returned it to him for a shot towards goal. This shot looped up in the air, over the keeper and back into the box off the frame of the goal where Oblitey finished it back across goal at the second attempt, low to the keeper's left to make it 1-1.

It was only a few minutes later when Jersey had another chance. Their forward got through on goal but the ball bobbled away from him and he landed on the ground apparently due to a shirt pull from a defender, but the referee didn't give a pen for it.

The first half finished with two chances from Jersey, one was put over into the stand at that end and the second chance was a cross that went across the face of goal that no one could get to. At the half, we were lucky not to be behind after Jersey's early pressure, but the score was one apiece at the half.

Early into the second half, we showed a bit of bright attacking play where Luke Miller got down the right wing and put a ball across but no one was far enough upfield to capitalise and give us the lead. There was very little attacking threat from Jersey for the next 15 and even less from us as the game quietened down. However Jersey then found a second wind and was pushing forward from about the 70th minute onwards.

I was surprised that we hadn't made any substitutions by this point as we weren't looking great up top, but we waited until the 86th minute to make replacements as Jaan Stanley and Sirak Negassi came on for Lewis Pearch and Eshilokun to try and create new ideas in attack. However, three minutes later, a penalty was awarded to Jersey for an apparent handball that our defenders were certain did not hit an arm. Nevertheless, the penalty was clinically converted by Bickley into Colwell's top left corner to make it 2-1 to the visitors.

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Three minutes into added time we had the final chance of the match with a free kick from about 20 yards out. Nick Wilson lined up to take it but it was parried by the keeper and the rebound was gathered. It is probably worth noting that the wall did not look like it was six yards back, let alone ten but it is not the reason we ultimately lost this match. We should have created a few more chances ourselves. At the end of the day, we could have lost the match far before that point and it still leaves us with four losses out of four for January.

Epsom & Ewell: Toby Colwell, Ethan Brazier, Ethan Nelson-Roberts, Nick Inwugwu, Reece Tierney, Nick Wilson (c), Luke Miller, Thompson Adeyemi, Carl Oblitey, Tijani Eshilokun, Lewis Pearch

Subs: Jaan Stanley for Pearch (86), Sirak Negassi for Eshilokun (86)

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# NESCOT Saturday academies for the young

8 February 2024




Got a young person passionate about animals, cookery, e-sports, film making or another hands-on potential career? Our next Saturday Academy starts 24 Feb 2024 – book now!
The next set of Saturday academies for young people starts soon and places are filling fast. The academies are a popular set of 4-week Saturday courses which offer: Practical, enjoyable, hands-on learning. A taste of a subject for possible a career or further study. A chance to develop a leisure interest. Places in all subjects cost £95 for four three-hour sessions **Click here to book**

**Academy Subjects**
We have Academies in Media Make-Up (SFX), Film-making, Music Production, Animation, Travel & Tourism, Animal Management, Cooking, Carpentry, Beauty and Babysitting & Childcare.
NEW for 2024:
– E-sports
– Anatomy for Sport

**Academy Format and Pricing**
We hold Saturday Academies for young people at Nescot in Ewell, near Epsom. The Academies are fun and instructive Saturday courses that last four weeks. They start at 10am and finish at 1pm on consecutive Saturdays. The Academies will all start on Saturday 24th Feb 2024. **The total cost for all four Saturdays in any Academy is £95. Click on the link below for full details.**

CLICK HERE FOR FULL DETAILS AND BOOKING

NESCOT, Reigate Road, Ewell, Epsom, KT17 3DS
www.nescot.ac.uk

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# 1st February 2024

8 February 2024

COUNCIL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION PLANNING

## When a meeting is not a meeting, in brief.



1 February 2024

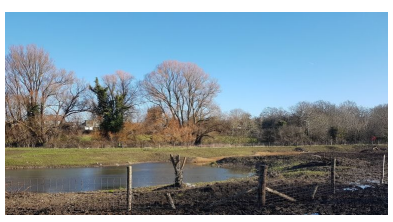
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The vexed issue of whether a “members’ briefing” is a “meeting” or not has received some attention of late. Anxiety was aroused by fears that a “confidential” meeting of Epsom … READ MORE

NATURE NEWS

# Chalking up a victory for the Hogsmill



31 January 2024

The South East Rivers Trust (SERT) has completed the construction of a 2,000m 2 pollution filter which will bring major benefits to Epsom and Ewell’s Hogsmill chalk stream. When planting … READ MORE

COUNCIL HOUSING PLANNING

# Minister gets heavy on a Local Plan delay

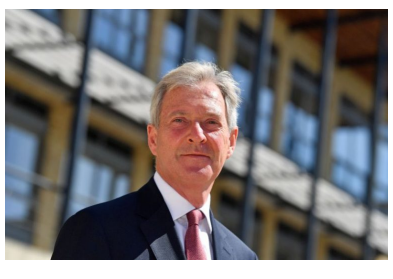


31 January 2024

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# Top stuff for Cuddington Croft



30 January 2024

Staff and students at Cuddington Croft Primary had reason to celebrate when the latest SAT results revealed that the school ranked within the Top 10 in the county. The Department … READ MORE

COUNCIL HEALTH

# A helping hand from the Council




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30 January 2024

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has launched a local campaign to tell residents about community support services that offer them, and their loved ones, a helping hand. The council offers … READ MORE

RUGBY SPORTS

# The Battle of Medway lost

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Medway 37 Sutton & Epsom RFC 26. Saturday 27th January. Sutton & Epsom returned to a most happy hunting ground on Saturday as their only previous trip to Priestfields saw … READ MORE

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# A question of pay for Epsom and Ewell Borough Council




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Epsom and Ewell Borough Council’s annual allowances paid to its elected Councillors has long been lower than all other 10 Surrey Boroughs. Currently standing at the basic allowance of £4031.70 … READ MORE

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COMMUNITY FAITH VOLUNTEERS

# Longmead gets a Godly clean-up

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27 January 2024

On Sunday, January 21, joined by the Mayor of Epsom and Ewell, Councillor Rob Geleit (Labour Court Ward), 40 volunteers from ASEZ (Save the Earth from A to Z), the … READ MORE

COUNCIL NEWS TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

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# Chalking up a victory for the Hogsmill

8 February 2024



The **South East Rivers Trust** (SERT) has completed the construction of a 2,000m 2 pollution filter which will bring major benefits to Epsom and Ewell's **Hogsmill** chalk stream.

When planting takes place in the spring, the newly constructed Chamber Mead wetland will protect and improve 5km of river downstream, filtering pollutants and becoming a haven for wildlife.

The project has been carried out in partnership with **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council**, which owns and manages the **Hogsmill Local Nature Reserve**, a popular greenspace which will now benefit from this new community asset.

The wetland is a crucial project for the Hogsmill, which suffers adversely from pollution such as urban road runoff, raw sewage discharges and misconnected plumbing that sends drain water directly into the river. Water from the Green Lanes Stream has been diverted through a sediment trap and two wetlands, with filtered, cleaner water reconnected to the Hogsmill downstream of the famous Stepping Stones.

News about the wetland's completion comes in the week of **World Wetlands Day**, on Friday 2nd February. Dr **Bella Davies**, Co-CEO of SERT, said: "We are delighted that the construction phase of this important wetlands project has now been completed. It is destined to become a jewel in the crown of the Hogsmill Local Nature Reserve. The public has shown great enthusiasm for this project, and we will soon be calling on volunteers and community groups to add the plants that will really make the wetlands flourish as a magnet for wildlife. The water quality improvements that will result from the wetlands are designed to help the river become a healthier place for all, especially wildlife that thrive in a chalk stream, such as brown trout."

Councillor **John Beckett**, (RA Auriol) Chair of the Environment Committee at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, said: "The council is committed to protecting and enhancing biodiversity in our borough, as per our Biodiversity Action Plan 2020-30. This partnership project with the South East Rivers Trust will help to ensure that the Hogsmill Local Nature Reserve is a place where nature can thrive; from woodpeckers, hedgehogs and bats – to species whose numbers have dwindled such as water voles, fish and eels. We know our residents cherish this Local Nature Reserve and I hope that many can join the community planting days, which are a unique opportunity to be part of this fantastic project."

SERT is now preparing a series of community planting days, to take place in the Spring. These will give residents the chance to plant the vegetation to help the wetlands counter pollutants.

Schools, community groups and residents will be given opportunities to install plants that have been specifically selected to filter pollution, trap sediments and attract a variety of wildlife. Plants selected include yellow flag iris, ragged robin, purple loosestrife and brooklime.

In time, SERT will also offer guided walks and outdoor education sessions for school children. A nature trail is planned for families to interact with the wetlands as they develop, alongside information boards which will detail the reasons why the wetlands were needed and the types of wildlife that should be attracted.

Supported by the Hogsmill Catchment Partnership, the project has received funding from The Coca-Cola Foundation, Natural England (through the Species Recovery Programme), the Environment Agency, Surrey County Council, the Rivers Trust, the Zoological Society of London, Garfield Weston Foundation and Thames Water, with in-kind support from the landowner Epsom & Ewell Borough Council. The new wetlands are part of the wider Replenish programme in partnership with the Coca-Cola Foundation and the Rivers Trust. The aim of Replenish is to restore millions of litres of water in this and other local catchments, in turn improving biodiversity.

The construction of the wetland is expected to cost £1 million. We are proud to have a good mix of funding for this project, including private funding from Coca Cola, Thames Water and charitable grants, as well as public funding from the Environment Agency, Natural England and Surrey County Council.

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It is estimated there are 200 chalk streams across the world, with about 160 of them in England, mostly in the south.

Related reports:

Voles let loose on the Hogsmill

Two petition river pollution correction

Local sewage uploaded

“Garden of Eden” coming to West Ewell as Wetlands Plan is approved. Will this stop pollution?

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# Top stuff for Cuddington Croft

8 February 2024



Staff and students at Cuddington Croft Primary had reason to celebrate when the latest SAT results revealed that the school ranked within the Top 10 in the county.

The Department for Education Performance Table for Key Stage 2 2023 SAT results showed that the school – which is part of the GLF Schools Multi-Academies Trust – was among the 10 highest performers out of 476 Surrey schools, according to the combined percentage of children attaining the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths.

“This is a really impressive achievement, considering the size of county and number of schools in Surrey,” said Mike Skelton, who is Head Teacher at the school. “If there was a table for combined greater depth scores, Cuddington would have been in the top three.”

“Cuddington is proud to be a consistently high achieving school,” he continued. “Post-covid, this is the first results published, so we are proud they continue to be this high, despite the disrupted learning caused by the pandemic.

“It shows the hard work of the staff from Nursery to Year 6 to enable the children to be successful and achieve their highest potential.”

Staff and parents alike at the school were delighted with the results.

“The staff were extremely proud of the hard work and dedication to support the children to achieve the results they did,” added Mr Skelton.

“A parent of a child in that cohort said: ‘It really is amazing. It makes us so proud of our child and the school. It has given our daughter the best possible start to secondary school.’

“Well done to all the children and all the staff for their hard work.”

Cuddington Croft PR.

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# 25th January 2024

8 February 2024




COUNCIL NEWS TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

# “Heat and Dust” epic in Epsom

25 January 2024

You don’t need to read or watch the historical romantic drama set in the British Raj epoch in India by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala. The Chalk Pit off College Road Epsom … READ MORE

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HEALTH NEWS

# Local A&Es stretched in the cold snap

24 January 2024

More than a thousand people visited one of St George's, Epsom and St Helier's emergency departments (EDs) on Monday, as demand for care soars.  It was the busiest day this winter, placing … READ MORE

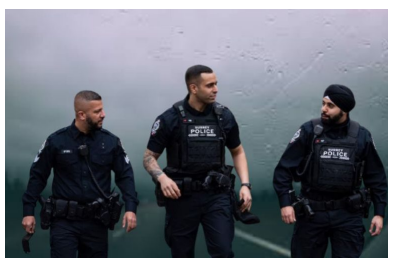



COUNCIL CRIME HEALTH

# Different ways to tackle foul-deeds

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Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's approach to dog-fouling in its public parks may seem rather tame compared with the nearby Surrey Borough of Spelthorne. Spelthorne has adopted powers in the … READ MORE



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ARTS COUNCIL LOCAL HISTORY

# A blast celebrates 40 years past of Epsom Playhouse

22 January 2024

On Friday 19th January, the Band of the Coldstream Guards joined residents of Epsom to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the Epsom Playhouse. Led by Director of music Lieutenant Colonel … READ MORE




COUNCIL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

# Should we have a petition about petitions?

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COMMUNITY COUNCIL CRIME

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# Council’s contribution to our safety

19 January 2024

Epsom and Ewell’s Crime and Disorder Committee met Wednesday 17th January to endorse an updated Community Safety Action Plan for 2024-25. This followed a period of consultation in which Chris Grayling … READ MORE



COUNCIL HEALTH

# Council wants to prevent suicides

19 January 2024

Tuesday 16th January Epsom and Ewell Borough Council’s Community and Well-Being Committee considered local suicides. In 2019, the Borough Council launched its Health & Wellbeing Strategy (HWBS), recognizing a concerning … READ MORE



COUNCIL FINANCES VOLUNTEERS

# Local Co-Vid volunteers rewarded with Council support

19 January 2024

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council’s financial support for five key local voluntary organisations came up for review 16th January at the meeting of the Environment and Well-Being Committee. Age Concern … READ MORE

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# Local A&Es stretched in the cold snap

8 February 2024



More than a thousand people visited one of St George’s, Epsom and St Helier’s emergency departments (EDs) on Monday, as demand for care soars.

It was the busiest day this winter, placing extreme pressure on services – which only continue to rise.

Demand typically rockets when temperatures plummet – often in the days following a cold snap – and this week has been no exception. More than 100 extra people visited one of the EDs compared to a normal Monday.

There has also been a spike in the number of very poorly people arriving at hospital in recent months, meaning a rise in those requiring specialist and complex care.

Dr Luci Etheridge, Chief Medical Officer for St George’s, said: “Our hospitals are stretched, and we are under extraordinary pressure.

“Our priority is to ensure our sickest and most seriously ill patients – of which there are many – receive the care they need. And while we are doing everything we can to provide that care against a backdrop of pressures, the public can also play a significant part in helping us by using NHS 111 online if they need urgent health advice.”

Dr Beccy Suckling, Chief Medical Officer for Epsom and St Helier, said: “It’s a common misconception that going to an emergency department when it’s not an emergency means you’ll be seen more quickly. You will, in fact, be waiting longer, and could even be redirected for care.

“When it’s not an emergency, NHS 111 online can signpost you to the best place for care. But prevention is just as

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important – and one of the best ways you can protect yourself and others is by getting vaccinated this winter. It's not too late to get your flu and Covid jabs, and if your child hasn't had their MMR vaccine to protect against measles then I'd strongly urge you to look at that, too."

If you need urgent medical help, NHS 111 online should be the first port of call. This is a 24/7 service that can direct people where to go for care. Pharmacies, meanwhile, provide advice on minor illnesses such as colds, coughs, and earache.

It's important that people continue to call 999 or go to an emergency department when it is life-threatening.

Vaccines help stop the spread of winter illnesses, as does washing hands regularly with soap and water.

Measles cases continue to rise across the country, and parents are being urged to book their children – including teenagers and young adults – in for their missed measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine at a GP. Measles is a serious illness, with one in five children who get the disease admitted the hospital for treatment.

St Georges, St Helier and Epsom NHS Trust.

Image Wellcome Images CC licence Scene of the catastrophe, at the gate, Chelsea Hospital 1852

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# A blast celebrates 40 years past of Epsom Playhouse

8 February 2024



On Friday 19th January, the Band of the **Coldstream Guards** joined residents of Epsom to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the **Epsom Playhouse**.

Led by Director of music Lieutenant Colonel **Stewart Halliday**, the band performed an eclectic mix of music ranging from classic marches to hits from the West End.

As expected the band played with military precision, and there were some virtuous solos from all sections including a stunning performance of 'Victors Tale' from the film 'The Terminal' by principal clarinettist Lance Sergeant **Natalie White**.

The audience was delighted to see the concert organiser and former Senior Director of Music, Household Division, Cllr Dr **Graham Jones** MBE (RA Cuddington) pick up his baton once again to conduct the band, and encouraged the audience to participate in the encore in the 'Radetzky March' by Johann Strauss.

This concert has raised awareness and funds for the Epsom & Ewell Royal British Legion and the Epsom & Ewell Mayor's Charities. With all programme sales being match funded by Barclays Bank.

We hope this will be the start of more world class bands coming to perform at Epsom Playhouse.

The Epsom and Ewell Times is proud to have supported the concert.

Claudia Jones – Reporter

Image courtesy Steven McCormick Photography

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Lionel Blackman, who was in the original staff team of the Playhouse when it opened 40 years ago, writes:

40 years have passed since the Epsom Playhouse first opened its doors to professional and amateur performers alike. The Council head-hunted **Graham Stansfield**, a great professional, to kick-start the programme and establish the venue. The first management was in the hands of a then young and dynamic **Robin Hodgkinson**. The theatre came with the development of the **Ashley Centre** by the **Bechtel Corporation**. Originally the main hall's retractable seating allowed the venue to host balls and exhibitions. Today it has fixed and comfortable seating for 406 and a smaller flexible hall space, The Myers, with a seating capacity of 80.

From those early years onward Epsom Playhouse attracted many high-class acts: The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the bands of Humphrey Lyttleton, Kenny Ball and James Last. The Pasadena Roof Orchestra and the Instant Sunshine entertainers came regularly. The world famous Stepan Grappelli once cast his magic violin over a sell-out audience and many many more through to today. Many of the UK's top comedians will spend an evening in Epsom when on tour: Jack Dee, Count Arthur Strong, Harry Hill and many others. It remains the venue for the annual and very popular Christmas Pantomime.

The venue is the permanent home of local amateur talent the Epsom Symphony Orchestra and The Epsom Players among others.

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The **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** and all local residents who support the venue can be proud of The Epsom Playhouse and its 40 year roll-call of talent, opportunity and entertainment.

Why not give up an evening of Netflix or YouTube and see some live entertainment at your local venue? Visit www.epsomplayhouse.co.uk

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# 18th January 2024

8 February 2024



COUNCIL FINANCES

## Relative relief about Epsom and Ewell’s debt?

18 January 2024

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council‘s debt is about average with all 381 United Kingdom local authorities. UK councils owe a combined £97.8bn to lenders, equivalent to £1,455 per resident, as … READ MORE



NEWS WESTMINSTER

## Conservatives adopt new contender for Parliament

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Epsom & Ewell Conservative Association has announced that Mhairi Fraser has been selected as the Conservative Parliamentary Candidate for Epsom & Ewell to fight the upcoming General Election, with current … READ MORE




COUNCIL EDUCATION

## Surrey’s £1/4 m fines for failing children

17 January 2024

The failings of Surrey County Council’s children services has meant the under-fire authority paid more than £250,000 in fines, compensation, and redress payments to families it let down last year. … READ MORE



COUNCIL HEALTH

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A former aircraft engineer has spoken out about how his alcohol addiction threatened to wreck his life. Steve Saunders, 66, from Pyrford, Woking says that what started as social drinking … READ MORE

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LOCAL HISTORY NATURE

# Grate find in Epsom’s Millennium Green

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The Woodcote Millennium Green is unique in Surrey.  It comprises of an area of 7 acres, bounded by Woodcote Green Road to the north and the Woodcote Estate to the … READ MORE



COUNCIL HOUSING PLANNING

# Councillors belted-up on Green Belt?

15 January 2024

In a recent closed-door meeting held at the Town Hall, local councillors in the Borough of Epsom and Ewell,  convened to apparently deliberate on potential areas for housing development, with a particular … READ MORE



COMMUNITY EDUCATION

# In the footsteps of the great man?

14 January 2024

The great orator Sir Winston Churchill was born in Blenheim Palace in 1874. 150 years later Epsom‘s own Blenheim High School became a nursery for the next generation of orators. … READ MORE



RUGBY SPORTS

# Local rugby team not blinded by Old Alley

14 January 2024

Sutton & Epsom RFC 15 – Old Alleynians 19. Saturday 13th January. On Dulwich Common at the start of the league campaign the Old Alleynians won anexhilarating encounter 29-25 with … READ MORE



COUNCIL NATURE

# Improving Surrey’s rights of way

14 January 2024

Surrey County Council is seeking the views of residents on the county’s Rights of Way to help drive improvements. The

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county council is responsible for around 2,164 miles (3,482 km) … READ MORE



COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

# Dancing for the Wells

14 January 2024

A sponsored “dancathon” took place on Saturday 6 January to help raise the funds needed to re-openthe community centre. Cllr Bernie Muir (Conservative – Horton Ward) danced for 5 hours, … READ MORE

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# Conservatives adopt new contender for Parliament

8 February 2024



Epsom & Ewell Conservative Association has announced that **Mhairi Fraser** has been selected as the Conservative Parliamentary Candidate for Epsom & Ewell to fight the upcoming General Election, with current MP, **Chris Grayling** standing down.

Mhairi is an anti-corruption lawyer at an international law firm in the City, specialising in bribery, fraud, money laundering and sanctions, and also undertakes a range of pro-bono work, including representing a Nobel Peace Prize winner facing persecution from a foreign government. Prior to starting her legal career, she spent several years working in Parliament for the Conservatives, and stood as the Conservative candidate in Epsom West in the Surrey County Council elections in 2013. She has previously lived and worked in various other countries, including Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, and Sweden.



Local Conservatives celebrate adoption of Mhairi Fraser as their Epsom and Ewell Parliamentary candidate

Mhairi has been local to Epsom and Ewell since 2007, with her three siblings attending Glyn and Epsom College. While at university, she worked part-time at Leatherhead Food Research and the Marquis of Granby, and has also volunteered for the radio station at Epsom Hospital.

Mhairi is passionate about tackling the mental health crisis and has undertaken various physical challenges – including an 80km non-stop walk across the North and South Downs – to raise money for mental health charities.

On the selection of Mhairi, Chris Grayling MP added “I’m really pleased that my successor has got such local connections and is committed to the area that I have proudly represented for the last 23 years. Mhairi is a very impressive and determined woman and I think if elected, will make an excellent constituency MP”.

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# In the footsteps of the great man?

8 February 2024



The great orator **Sir Winston Churchill** was born in **Blenheim Palace** in 1874. 150 years later **Epsom**'s own **Blenheim High School** became a nursery for the next generation of orators. Twenty-one students from four local schools took part in **Youth Speaks**: A Debate Competition on Thursday 11th January 2024 evening at the Longmead Road school. Many adults run shy of public speaking, so to see and hear students speaking with such confidence and assurance was wonderful.

This local heat of the national competition was once again organised jointly by the Rotary Clubs of Banstead, Epsom and Sutton Nonsuch. Teams from The Beacon School, St Philomena's and Wilsons School took part in the Intermediate section (11 – 13 years old) with teams from Blenheim High School and Wilsons in the Senior (14 to 17) section. Each team consists of a Chairperson, a Proposer and an Opposer.

The team from The Beacon School got the Intermediate competition underway debating that 'footballers' income should be taxed at a higher rate'. St Philomena's discussed whether 'social media makes us less social', an important topic that affects many of us today. The team from Wilsons gave us a lively discussion on 'climate change being the most pressing issue facing us'. In her summary, chair of judges Ros Rokison said that the team were outstanding and they were adjudged the winners of the Intermediate competition.

In the senior section both teams provided the large audience, which included Epsom and Ewell Mayor Cllr **Robert Geleit** (Labour Court Ward), with lively debates. The proposal that 'the extra-curriculum is more important than the standard curriculum' was debated by an excellent team from Blenheim High School. The proposer of this motion was particularly persuasive.

Then the proposal 'this house believes extremism is inevitable' was debated by a team from Wilsons. Although they exceeded the time limit of fifteen minutes, all three students were outstanding for content and delivery and they won the senior competition.

The three Rotary clubs thanked the excellent judges Ros Rokison and Ken Rokison. Ros gave each of the twenty-one students useful constructive feedback.

Public speaking is a hard skill to master, but such a useful skill to acquire and Rotary is proud to have given these young people this opportunity.

John Chamberlain.

# Dancing for the Wells

8 February 2024



A sponsored "dancathon" took place on Saturday 6 January to help raise the funds needed to re-open the community centre.

Cllr **Bernie Muir** (Conservative – Horton Ward) danced for 5 hours, and **Neva Novaky** and **James Baird** danced for 10 hours on Saturday 6 January to help raise funds for the centre. It is still possible to make donations online – CLICK HERE

Speaking at the event, **Chris Grayling** MP said "I would like to congratulate the team who organised this successful event and on the valuable contribution they are making to this community hub. This community centre was rightly saved from being knocked down and it is great to see events like this that raise its profile."

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Cllr Bernie Muir said “Community centres play a crucial role as hubs for opportunities to socialise, learn and access key services. They nurture the community spirit, help tackle loneliness and give the youth a positive outlet. Let’s get The Wells community centre up and running again!”

Initially closed down by the Borough Council, the community centre was saved after local residents and Cllr Bernie Muir fought to save it. The **Epsom Wells Community Association** now have a long-term lease and are trying to raise the funds needed to help re-furnish it and have it fully functioning again.

A day of dance classes followed by a dance party in the evening, Dancing for the Wells saw classes of ballroom Latin, morris dancing, Jive and salsa. James who was previously a competitive ballroom and Latin dancer and danced with celebrities such as Jennifer Lopez, taught ballroom and Latin with Neva.

Morris dancing was taught by Thames Valley Morris, Jive by Surrey Jive and salsa was taught by Somos Caribe Academy.

“When I saw the two-floor community centre building with its own parking, I could understand why the community had fought so hard to save it and wanted to help re-open it. I would like to thank all those who have generously sponsored us and all those who supported the event on the day.” said Neva.

The fundraiser was led by **Neva Novaky** and Cllr Bernie Muir and the team organising it included James Baird, Stuart Carroll, Ben White, Tanya Solomon and Richard Robinson in collaboration with the Epsom Wells Community Association led by Vanessa Merchant. Sponsor’s included Lucy Demery, Tina Mountain, Ask Italia and Pari’s Beauty Salon.

Related reports:

Epsom’s Wells Plan has a hole in it

Wells Centre’s Appeal

All’s well that ends well for the Wells Centre

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