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

26th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

Giraffes adapt from Serengeti to Surrey vegetation

16 December 2022



Surrey County Council has partnered with Chessington World of Adventures Resort to help provide additional food for the Giraffes over the winter months. Surrey's countryside estates team regularly coppice the council's woodlands as part of essential habitat management on Surrey's countryside sites. Chessington have been working with them to coppice hazel, chestnut and other local tree species within Norbury Park near Dorking to feed their herd of Giraffes.

During the autumn and early winter, the hoofstock team at Chessington made regular visits to Norbury Park where they cut back browse (leaves, shoots and branches). The team transport the browse back to the Zoo where they chop into smaller pieces and store in airtight containers which are then placed in freezer storage. This enables an ongoing stock of fresh food to feed the giraffes throughout the winter months.

The 1,340-acre Norbury Park is part of a European Special Area of Conservation (SAC) within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and forms part of Surrey County Council's countryside estate which comprises over 10,000 acres open for public access.

Marisa Heath, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for the Environment comments: "We are delighted to partner with Chessington to benefit not only the endangered Giraffes, but also the wildlife in Surrey. Coppicing areas of land on Norbury Park helps to improve the health and biodiversity of the woodland by opening it up to the sunlight, which allows a wider range of plants to flourish. We hope to extend this partnership with Chessington to benefit other parts of Surrey's countryside estate."

Rebecca Apperley-Gawn, Senior Hoofstock Keeper comments: "It's been great to partner up with the countryside estates team at Surrey County Council. Norbury Park is closely located to our Zoo so it's great to keep food miles down and the browse fresh for our herd. The Giraffe spend up to 75% of their day eating and it is vital for their diet that we include fresh food particularly during the long winter months. We look forward to continuing with this partnership over the coming years".

As well as providing feed for the Giraffes, the Chessington team also took back to the Zoo the stems of coppiced material to make additions to animal enclosures and entertain the Rhinos who love to push them around their enclosures!

For information on Surrey County Council's countryside sites, visit the website.

Let's not forget Surrey successes!

16 December 2022



Teams and individuals who do outstanding work on behalf of the people of Surrey have been celebrated at the first Stars in Surrey award ceremony. In part sponsored by Epsom based firm **Atkins**

The event – funded through sponsorship – saw standing ovations, laughter and some tears last week.

Winners included County Council staff who look after young people in care, help elderly people live at home for longer, keep Surrey's libraries thriving and encourage more people to access the countryside.

There was also special recognition for people doing extraordinary things at partner organisations like Ukraine UK Unity Woking.

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Founder of Ukraine UK Unity and winner of 'The Make It Happen Community Hero Award (Empowering Communities)', Irina Garmash Creeger, said: "It was an emotional and very inspirational night. It felt like I was sharing a room with superheroes & each nominee had special superpower.

"I was pleasantly surprised, overwhelmed & honoured to receive the Award. Although the award was given to me as an individual, I wanted to share it with the incredible multicultural strong team of volunteers at Ukraine UK Unity.

"Our efforts have been stellar, our commitment is unquestionable, and our goals for the future will always involve spreading kindness, compassion and hope, and sharing in all that we have and know with people in need."

Leader of the Council Tim Oliver, who presented an award, said: "Stars in Surrey really was a wonderful way to pay tribute to some incredible people and teams who work in many different ways to benefit Surrey.

"Everything we do as a council is driven by our ambition that no one is left behind here, and the stories from the Stars in Surrey Awards are all a great reflection of that work.

"I'd like to say a big thanks to the sponsors of the event too that made it possible, and for everyone who nominated their Surrey heroes."

The final award presented on the night was the People's Choice Award, that received 1,200 votes, and was won by Christy Niven, a Specialist Speech & Language Therapist in the Children, Families and Lifelong Learning directorate.

The event was sponsored by Atkins, Pick Everard, Concerto, Vail Williams, Tile Hill and Impower.

Here is the full list of winners:

- Award for Outstanding Customer Service – **Claire Hodgson**, Trading Standards Specialist, Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards
- Team Award for Innovative Working – **South-West Asylum Care Leavers' Team**, Children, Families and Lifelong Learning
- Championing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Award – **Funke Adelekun**, Principal Project Manager, IMP Major Projects
- Greener Future Champion Award (Enabling a Greener Future) – **Sharon Newton**, Resource Manager, Children, Families and Lifelong Learning
- Young employee of the Year Award – **Durante Cartwright**, Weekend Library Assistant at Camberley Library, Customer and Communities
- Frontline Worker of the Year Award (No One Left Behind) – **Jo Ellis**, Occupational Therapist Assistant, Elmbridge Locality Team, Adult Social Care and Integrated Commissioning

Nominated by Amy Watts: "Jo is the hardest working person that I know and her dedication to her role and supporting vulnerable adults and children is something to be admired… One (urgent welfare visit) that sticks into my mind where the gentleman was really, really vulnerable, due to Jo's willingness to go the extra ten miles they managed to keep him home and safe… I couldn't think of anyone better to receive Frontline Worker of the Year."

- Entrepreneurial Person or Team of the Year Award (creating a sustainable economy) – **Caroline Price**, and **Helen Delatouche**, Countryside Team, Environment, Transport and Infrastructure
- The Make It Happen Community Hero Award (Empowering Communities) – **Irina Garmash-Creeger**, Ukraine UK Unity Woking

Nominated by David Meller: "On the fourteenth of March this year the UK opened its borders to Ukrainian refugees through the Homes for UK scheme… Irina stepped in to really make it happen for our community. She matched hosts with refugees, she set up the hub where refugees could get support on administration matters when they arrived… I think she is really one of Surrey's brightest stars."

- The Jacqueline Foglietta unsung hero Award – **Andy Baldwin**, Support Worker, Leaving Care Teams, Children, Families and Lifelong Learning
- People's Choice Award – **Christy Niven**, Specialist Speech & Language Therapist, Children, Families and Lifelong Learning

Surrey County News.

15th December 2022

16 December 2022



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NEWS TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

Tunnel vision for Surrey’s A3?

15 December 2022

Guildford’s MP says it is time to tunnel the A3 under Guildford to help with traffic. Angela Richardson said “short-term sticking plasters” were not enough to help with the pollution … READ MORE



COUNCIL PLANNING

Gove gives pause for thought on Local Plans?

15 December 2022

A Surrey council has paused its plan for 6,000 homes after central government changes which could mean lower housing targets. Mole Valley District Council has paused its local plan saying … READ MORE



COUNCIL EDUCATION

1000 Surrey children wait for special needs plans

14 December 2022

A senior Surrey councillor admits it is “not good enough” that nearly 1,000 children with special educational needs in Surrey are waiting for an education plan. Nearly a third of … READ MORE



CULTURE POEMS POET’S CORNER

An Epsom Christmas poem

13 December 2022

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COUNCIL HOUSING

Do good intentions square with homeless savings?

13 December 2022

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has launched its Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, setting out how it intends to meet the needs of residents who are homeless or at risk … READ MORE

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CRIME NEWS

Body found in Ewell house fire

12 December 2022

An investigation is underway following the discovery of a body at an address in Thorndon Gardens, Ewell, in the early hours today (12 December). Police were called to the address … READ MORE



COUNCIL

Senior local Councillor slams Surrey’s budget consultation

12 December 2022

Cllr Eber Kington, long serving Residents Association Borough Councillor and former Epsom and Ewell Mayor has served as a County Councillor since 2009. He has long campaigned against waste on … READ MORE



NEWS TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

Local sewage uploaded

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Epsom and Ewell’s Hogsmill River and Green Lanes Stream feature in the latest sewage report. The Rivers Trust undertake a review of the health of the nations rivers. Recent publication … READ MORE



NATURE

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Dog ownership in Epsom and Ewell saw a big rise during the pandemic, especially among young families. Poodle mixtures being evidently the most popular varieties purchased. And sometimes for £1000 … READ MORE

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CULTURE

Surrey inspiration for writing and photography

10 December 2022

Fanny Burney (1752-1840) lived and wrote in Surrey and was inspired by the area's beautiful countryside and gardens in the Mole Valley area, particularly around Bookham, Mickleham and Box Hill. … READ MORE



CULTURE

Coining it in Surrey

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Over the last 20 years the British Museum's Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) has allowed finds made by metal detectorists in Surrey to be added both to the national database and the county's Historic … READ MORE

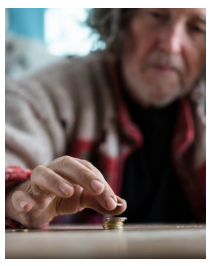


COUNCIL HEALTH

2030 vision for the elderly in Surrey

10 December 2022

Surrey County Council sets out its vision for the care and living of the older generation by 2030. In 2021/2022 Adult Social Care in Surrey spent £506 million to support … READ MORE



COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS

Council help for cost of living

9 December 2022

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) is raising awareness of the range of support available to residents struggling with the cost of living crisis. The Council have created a dedicated … READ MORE



GUEST COLUMN OPINION PLANNING

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Local Plan Battle: early skirmishes on Downs Farm

8 December 2022

As Epsom and Ewell Borough Council is expected to publish a draft Local Plan in February 2023 Epsom and Ewell Times carries below an opinion piece authored by the Keep … READ MORE

An Epsom Christmas poem

16 December 2022



Christmas comes early in the month of December
But preparations start as early as September
Toys appear in the shop and the store
And children’s expectations start to soar

Adverts appear in the News and TV
Of miraculous games for all to see
Visions of food and decorations so high
Make us all wish that the time was nigh

But leaves have not fallen from the trees
And flowers are still buzzing with the bees
Why are we tempted in this way?
When the Christ child’s birthday is still far away

Have they forgotten that the presents we bring
Are only reminders of the presents for Him
Of frankincense and myrrh and gold
Foretelling the scriptures story of old

And when finally the great day is here
Let us remember, amidst our good cheer
As we celebrate around the table,
The baby Christ child, born in a stable

Michael Barber (first published in 2012)



Michael moved to the Wells Estate in 1966 for his first family home. He continues to live there to this day. He has lived in the Borough for all of his 87 years as his parents lived in Stoneleigh. His connections with Epsom have been as President of the Epsom Cycling Club from 1981 to 1991, and he joined the Epsom Male Voice Choir in 2010 and continues to be a keen and popular member of the choir. He started writing poetry seriously when he became treasurer of the Headley Poetry Group. This group meets monthly to read and share poetry – Michael has had poetry published in the Epsom United Reformed Church Newsletter, the Mickleham Parish Magazine and the Brooklands Museum Volunteers

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Newsletter.

Notes authored by Audrey Ardern-Jones

Epsom Clock Tower image source: Clive Darra – https://www.flickr.com/photos/osde-info/4252252710/

Do good intentions square with homeless savings?

16 December 2022



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has launched its **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy**, setting out how it intends to meet the needs of residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness over the next five years.

The Strategy details the Council's strategic vision and key objectives to address homelessness within the borough. It focuses on a commitment to preventing homelessness at an earlier stage, and the importance of working with partners across all sectors to develop an integrated approach to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping.

A detailed review of homelessness in Epsom & Ewell was undertaken to inform the strategy, which helped to establish the extent of homelessness in the area, identify future trends and any gaps in the service currently being provided.

The Strategy identifies six key objectives which emphasise the importance of early intervention and prevention, as well as the development of new affordable housing in helping to meet the need of homeless people:

1. The early identification, intervention & prevention of homelessness
2. Reduce Rough Sleeping
3. Increase accommodation options including social rented, private rented, supported and move on accommodation and in-borough temporary accommodation
4. Improve the Health & Wellbeing of homeless people
5. Ensuring sufficient support is available for homeless people
6. Partnership working



Cllr Coley

Cllr **Alex Coley**, (Residents Association – Ruxley Ward) Chair of the **Community and Wellbeing Committee**, said: "The impact of homelessness cannot be underestimated. A home keeps you warm and safe, but it is so much more than just a roof. Homelessness leads to a significant reduction in emotional wellbeing, self-identity, social inclusion and life opportunities. Reducing homelessness in Epsom & Ewell will benefit everyone who lives in the borough.

"Over the past year we have expanded the Private Sector Leasing scheme, acquired an additional 14 emergency accommodation placements, and secured additional funding to enhance the East Surrey Outreach Service, who work with rough sleepers, but there is much more to be done. This Strategy will allow us to build on this progress to fully address the challenges local homeless people are facing, and ensure better outcomes for all."

Commenting on the strategy **Cllr Julie Morris** (LibDem College Ward) said "We are particularly concerned with the increase in single people with mental health issues who require homes, so the integrated approach is really key here. There's a shortage of homes for families with children and private landlords can help here. There are some incredibly dedicated council officers who are charged with implementing this strategy and councillors will support them as much as they can."

- The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on every local authority to develop and publish a Homelessness

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Strategy, setting out how the local authority intends to tackle and prevent homelessness in their area.

- The strategy must be based on a review of all forms of homelessness within that local authority's area and should be reviewed at least every five years. The Council carried out six weeks consultation between 12 July and 23 August 2022 with a range of stakeholders, service users, staff and residents.
- Central to reducing homelessness within the borough is increasing the amount of affordable housing available. The Council is currently developing a Draft Local Plan which is due to go out for public consultation on 1 February 2023, and proposals for affordable housing in the borough will form part of the Plan.
- In Epsom & Ewell and nationally the 3 main causes of homelessness are:
    - Asked to leave by family and friends
    - Termination of Assured Shorthold tenancies
    - Domestic Abuse
- The full strategy can be found here:

https://epsom-ewell.gov.uk/residents/housing/homelessness

Information provided by Epsom and Ewell Council. Cllr Morris quote obtained by Epsom and Ewell Times. Other parties were invited to comment.

Related reports:

Council targeting the homeless

Simone Pellegrino 31 July 2022

In a vote dominated by abstentionism, a service-specific savings target of £243k to offset this year's potential overspending for homelessness, was approved by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council last Tuesday. … READ MORE

Body found in Ewell house fire

16 December 2022



An investigation is underway following the discovery of a body at an address in Thorndon Gardens, Ewell, in the early hours today (12 December).

Police were called to the address around 1.50am following reports of a fire at the address.
A 44-year-old man has been arrested in connection with the incident and remains in custody.
A search of the property is underway and the investigation remains ongoing.
Epsom and Ewell Borough Commander Inspector Jon Vale, said: "A number of people called emergency services to report the fire and we would like to thank them for their prompt action. We realise that this incident would have caused a great deal of distress and concern in the local community and we would like to reassure you that an investigation is underway to establish exactly what happened.
Anyone with any information is asked to contact Surrey Police quoting PR/45220134346.

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Dogs in frost and snow

16 December 2022



Dog ownership in Epsom and Ewell saw a big rise during the pandemic, especially among young families. Poodle mixtures being evidently the most popular varieties purchased. And sometimes for £1000 or more. The Epsom and Ewell Times invites you to submit photos of your dog in any of the open spaces we and our canine friends enjoy in the Borough. Please send in new photos taken outdoors during the cold spell.

Image: Freddie, a 9 year old male Labradoodle on Epsom Common on Sunday 11th December.

Send your photo with your name (let us know if you want anonymity or not), name, type, age and sex of dog and where and when the photo was taken.

Email to

admin@epsomandewelltimes.com

We will publish a gallery in the early New Year.

Thank you.

Surrey inspiration for writing and photography

16 December 2022



Fanny Burney (1752-1840) lived and wrote in Surrey and was inspired by the area's beautiful countryside and gardens in the Mole Valley area, particularly around Bookham, Mickleham and Box Hill. To celebrate Fanny Burney and the area she loved, Surrey Libraries and Surrey Heritage are pleased to announce our Photography Competition 'Frances Burney's Surrey'.

SHC would love to receive your photographs of places or buildings around Surrey, especially in the Mole Valley area, which were associated with Fanny Burney, or which inspire you today.

The competition is open from now until Sunday 22 January 2023. Submissions should be made online and emailed to leatherhead.library@surreycc.gov.uk and should have been taken during the competition period only.

We would also be pleased to receive printed entries, together with your contact information, at Leatherhead Library.

The winning entry will be announced in February 2023. The winner will receive an Amazon voucher for £50. Two runners-up will each receive an Amazon voucher for £25.

A selection of entries will be on display in Leatherhead Library from December 2022 onwards.

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For full details please go to the Surrey History Centre's December newsletter HERE

Text courtesy of the Surrey History Centre

Coining it in Surrey

16 December 2022



Over the last 20 years the British Museum's Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) has allowed finds made by metal detectorists in Surrey to be added both to the national database and the county's Historic Environment Record (HER). Any groups of coins, groups of prehistoric metal objects or individual precious metal objects over 300 years old have also been required to be reported to the Coroner under the 1996 Treasure Act. This reporting process is undertaken by the county's Finds Liaison Officer (FLO). The purpose of the Treasure Act is to provide museums with the chance to save important finds before they are lost to commercial auctions and to preserve them for local communities and public collections. Finders and landowners receive full financial reward for everything acquired as part of this process.

One recent discovery from Surrey which has been reported under this law, is a hoard of 28 silver Roman coins (denarii), found dispersed across a small area of equestrian pasture in the Elstead area (recorded as SUR-EA4D41 and SUR-0E4DC2). The coins were most likely originally buried in a bag or box which has long decayed and released its contents to be scattered by ploughing. These coins represent an unusual and significant find for the county and after being declared Treasure at Coroner's Inquest were acquired by Godalming Museum, with financial assistance from Surrey Archaeological Society, Council for British Archaeology South-East and the V&A Purchase Grant Fund

For full details please go to the Surrey History Centre's December newsletter HERE

Images and text courtesy of the Surrey History Centre

Council help for cost of living

16 December 2022



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) is raising awareness of the range of support available to residents struggling with the cost of living crisis. The Council have created a dedicated page on the EEBC website, which pulls together information on what the Council and other local and national organisations can do to help in one place at www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/cost-of-living .

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Residents will find advice in a wide range of areas, including energy and housing payments, health costs, food, applying for benefits, employment support and local places to go to keep warm. There are also specific areas for families with children and older residents.

The Council will also be sharing information and money-saving tips through social media and other material out in the Borough to reach as many people as possible with the help available.



Councillor **Alex Coley**, (Residents Association- Ruxley Ward) Chair of the **Community and Wellbeing Committee**, "We are aware of the significant effects rising costs in all areas are having on people's everyday lives in the Borough. We want to ensure that those who need help are aware of what support is available and are able to access it."

"This campaign is an opportunity for the residents, charities, the Council and Councillors to work together to help each other through the current crisis. If you are affected by the cost of living crisis, please visit the Council's webpage, look out for and engage with the advice on its social media and across the Borough or contact your ward Councillor to share your concerns. We're all here to help."

Ward councillors' details can be found here – https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx

The webpage covers the following:

- What we're doing in Epsom & Ewell
- Applying for benefits and paying your council tax
- Difficulty paying your rent or mortgage
- Employments, skills and training support
- Help for families with children
- Help with food
- Help with health costs
- Help for older residents
- Help with your broadband and phone packages
- Independent advice
- Paying for your gas, electricity and water
- Warm Hubs

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Communications.

Local Plan Battle: early skirmishes on Downs Farm

16 December 2022



As **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** is expected to publish a draft **Local Plan** in February 2023 **Epsom and Ewell Times** carries below an opinion piece authored by the **Keep Epsom & Ewell Green Belt Group**. We cannot confirm these campaigners' contentions but we are happy to stimulate public discussion and interest through our pages. The Local Plan will shape for several years to come the decisions on new housing development locations in the Borough.

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Opinion Piece:

Alarmed by well-sourced leaks, residents have decided to come out fighting early against joint landowner and developer discussions with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) to build hundreds of homes on the 110-acre Downs Farm, destroying forever one of the closest Green Belt sites to London.

Other Green Belt sites near Epsom's Hook Arena and Horton Farm are also believed to be earmarked housing in the Local Plan process, and it is even feared that other areas within Epsom's 42% of Green Belt land could also have been offered up and included.

Residents in Surrey's already highest populated borough are so concerned that they are not waiting for what they say could be a flawed consultation process, expected in February.

Under Government pressure to deliver nearly 700 homes for each of the next 20 years, planning officers and councillors should instead be prioritising developer partnerships for an imaginative alternative "brownfield" core scheme, claims the residents' campaign group.

However, following much-publicized Government climbdown guidelines announced this week by Secretary of State, Michael Gove, that top-down housing targets were to be "advisory only" and could be challenged by local authorities if the character of their area would be irrevocably changed, EEBC should be in no doubt, say residents, that Green Belt sites should be now removed from its Draft Local Plan.

By redeveloping the Kiln Lane/Longmead area closer to town centre facilities, "more starter and lower cost young family homes could be built – and bring much needed rejuvenation and job opportunity benefits. Yet there is little sign that the planners are engaging with developers on this opportunity, preferring the easier, but devastating, option of

building higher end housing on Green Belt fields."

The borough-wide residents' campaign, *"Keep Epsom and Ewell Green Belt" involves* social media, mass leaflet drops, a new petition (https://www.change.org/EpsomGreenBelt) and its own website(https://epsomgreenbelt.org/). Some residents may well stand as independent Green Belt candidates in the May elections.

'Our advice is that once a site has been publicly designated as suitable by the Council in the Local Plan, public consultations rarely change what are perceived as "done deals" – and we are not simply prepared to stand by and let that happen. In 2019, EEBC listed Downs Farm as a Green Belt site not suitable for development, yet it now appears to conveniently ignore this just because the site has been offered up to them' said Yufan Si, campaigner of Keep Epsom and Ewell Green Belt.

Downs Farm is a rare chalk grassland habitat for protected species such as skylarks and bats, with regular sightings of deer, redkite and pheasant.

"Destroying forever high quality Green Belt sites will result in mainly luxury houses. We are deeply disappointed that the Residents Association controlled EEBC appear set to prefer Green Belt desecration over redeveloping a core brownfield scheme in central Epsom. Properly phased, this could be promoted as a creative industries hub, focussed on the town's University of Creative Arts centre for excellence. As well as a much better mix of around 5,000 affordable starter and rented homes for young families, this would provide job opportunities in a much-needed Epsom rejuvenation."

The campaign group also points out keeping Green Belt spaces also helps sustainability and the UK commitment to net zero by 2030.

The Elmbridge Council Local Plan is cited as an example where the council and residents challenged unrealistic top-down government housing targets. It proposes redeveloped brownfield sites without any Green Belt destruction – despite having a greater proportion of Green Belt land (57%) than Epsom.

The residents' campaign urges EEBC planners to quickly engage with brownfield developers using a £75,000 grant recently announced by the Government. Given its overriding remit to only prefer Green Belt development in "exceptional circumstances", *and the recent Government policy rethink on housing*, this should be done before the draft Epsom Local Plan is issued in February, say residents.

"Keep Epsom and Ewell Green Belt" Campaign Group – for further information contact epsomgreenbelt@gmail.com

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MP's housing solution for Epsom and Ewell

November 30, 2022

Epsom and Ewell and indeed the whole country has a real shortage of homes. We cannot go on with a generation of young people who aspire to home ownership but … READ MORE

Epsom and Ewell last in Local Planning

Ellie Ames November 26, 2022

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) has approved a delayed timeframe for the development of its new Local Plan, putting it behind both government targets and other Surrey councils, amid … READ MORE

Local Planning Matters

Tim Murphy November 4, 2022

Tim Murphy's opinion piece on Epsom and Ewell's Local Plan. An up-to-date Local Plan is a necessity. It indicates to those

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proposing new developments or conversions to properties just what … READ MORE

The Local Plan to plan The Local Plan

Special Correspondent June 7, 2022

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's Licensing and Planning Policy Committee (LLPC) met on the 26th of May 2022 to agree on a timetable for consultation on drafting "The Local Plan". … READ MORE

8th December 2022

16 December 2022



COUNCIL TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

Council elastic on plastic?

December 8, 2022

In March 2019 Epsom and Ewell Council agreed to phase out its use of single-use plastics. How is it getting along? Judge for yourself from the reply of Councillor John … READ MORE



COUNCIL HOUSING

Labour Councillor moves on housing

December 7, 2022

An affordable housing commitment was put off at yesterday's meeting of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. A motion proposed by Labour's Court Ward Councillor Kate Chinn read: "We as the … READ MORE

CRIME NEWS

Alcohol reading on duty very non-PC

December 7, 2022

A former Surrey Police Constable has been barred from the profession after turning up to work still smelling of alcohol from the night before. The force's chief constable found that … READ MORE



COUNCIL HOUSING PLANNING

Auriol school field for golden years?

December 6, 2022

Auriol School sports field in Cuddington is earmarked by Surrey County Council for 50 elderly care housing units. According to SCC: "The Cuddington site is ideally situated for Extra Care … READ MORE



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

26th November 2026

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COMMUNITY SPORTS

Tennis at 95 is the norm.

December 6, 2022

Epsom's own Norman Healey celebrates his 95th birthday on December 11th . He is a member of The Epsom Lawn Tennis Club where he is admired and respected. His serve … READ MORE

RUGBY SPORTS

Kinsella Hat trick The Highlight

December 6, 2022

Sutton & Epsom RFC Women 39 – Medway Women 7 – Saturday 3rd December – The Sutton & Epsom Women's XV have enjoyed much success in recent years. The impressive … READ MORE

RUGBY SPORTS

Sutton and Epsom RFC denied at the death

December 6, 2022

BANBURY 12 SUTTON & EPSOM RFC 12 – Saturday 3rd December – saw the start of the reverse fixtures and for both clubs, who are struggling at the bottom of the … READ MORE



COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

Are you listening?

December 6, 2022

Epsom & Ewell Talking Newspaper, established in 1974, give three cheers for long-serving Volunteers! 'In recognition of long service and invaluable contribution to volunteering for the Epsom & Ewell Talking … READ MORE



NATURE TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

Mole Patrol captures pollution

December 6, 2022

River Wey and River Mole fail to meet acceptable criteria for four out of five pollutants monitored in new report. In one of the largest national people-powered scientific studies of … READ MORE

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FOOTBALL SPORTS

World Cup injury time knocks Epsom and Ewell out of local cup

December 4, 2022

Dorking Wanderers B 2-1 Epsom & Ewell FC – Southern Combination League Division One Cup – Second Round – Saturday 3rd December 2022. A controversial 97th minute winner from Ben … READ MORE



NEWS

Fight fires in Surrey from home

December 3, 2022

Marking the retirement of Surrey's first female firefighter the Fire and Rescue Service is recruiting firefighters who can respond from home. Paula Hartwell joined Surrey Fire and Rescue Service in … READ MORE



COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Low turnouts see political changes in Surrey

December 3, 2022

The Liberal Democrats have taken two seats off the Conservatives in Surrey County Council by-elections. Winning by just 15 votes, a vote in the Sunbury Common and Ashford Common division … READ MORE



COUNCIL EDUCATION

Surrey schools energy hikes

December 3, 2022

Surrey schools are being advised to plan for increases in gas prices of more than 129 per cent.Along with this, council finance teams are telling schools to plan for a … READ MORE



COUNCIL FOOD

Twisting out a little more for Xmas?

December 3, 2022

Surrey children on free school meals will receive food vouchers over Christmas in what one councillor described as "an absolute lifeline" for some families.The scheme, which will give families a … READ MORE



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COUNCIL

Great expectations on Surrey’s tax?

December 3, 2022

Surrey County Council’s leader says he has “no expectation at all” that council tax will be put up by the full amount allowed despite a £14.4million budget gap at the … READ MORE



COMMUNITY EDUCATION NATURE

Any more trees please?

November 30, 2022

The Woodland Trust is urging schools and community groups across the south east of England to get their free tree-pack applications in quickly with just over a month left until … READ MORE

More affordable housing now. Cllr Kate Chinn

16 December 2022

The Local Plan of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council should specify a minimum requirement of 40% of affordable housing in each new housing development of 10 or more units (Use Class C3) of which at least 25% will be reserved for social rent and comply with the vacant building credit.

Labour are asking that the Local Plan specifies a minimum amount of both affordable housing and social housing for rent. Our targets are quite low with many councils providing more however, other councils don’t have such a low bar as their starting point. Epsom and Ewell have the lowest percentage of social housing in the county.

In the last 3 years the affordable homes built in the borough were: –

2019-2020 15%

2020-2021 3%

2021-2022 6%

If Covid was a factor in this its even more important for even more homes to be rapidly built in the borough to catch up and, it’s very clear indeed, many more affordable homes must be built to make the strategy deliverable.

I think that the Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy, for those who don’t have much homelessness in their ward, clearly explains the cost of homelessness for an individual, a family and society. There’s also the financial cost to the borough of just under £2m and to society as the health and well being impact of homelessness increases the demand for health and social care resources.

I hear of individuals living in overcrowded accommodation. I have families who live separately during the week, often with grandparents, so the children can attend schools which meet their need. Many people are living out of borough losing contact with their known and trusted support networks.

Building affordable homes – I recall just two units, as part of a development, coming to planning recently and they were not of a good standard space or amenity wise and affordable housing should not be substandard housing so on the advice of the officers it was rightly refused.

I constantly hear that providing affordable homes as part of a development is unviable. Well, why not tell developers to open their books as they must do in Brighton and the council can check their calculations.

I see application after application being refused or deferred and Epsom needs to be building homes of a good standard that residents can afford to live in, settle in and raise their families.

The Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy recognises that residents are unable to access affordable homes, and this is a main causal factor for homelessness in the borough.

At the briefing on the Homeless and Rough sleeping Strategy some of us attended a graph showed a clear dip in homeless numbers which was when the Hollymoor Lane development became occupied. A development of affordable and social housing, environmentally friendly, with solar panels and EV points, and built to a good standard.

The borough needs more developments like this

The Labour group welcomes the action plan to increase availability of affordable accommodation and welcomes the action to build homes and identify appropriate council owned sites.

However with soaring rents, S21 evictions happening again coupled with the lack of social housing we do fear numbers of

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homeless people will increase.

Epsom and Ewell council needs to ensure and facilitate building affordable homes. Currently it is changing from a NIMBY borough to a BANANA borough. Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anyone.

It needs to change. The council should identify appropriate sites and continue to engage with Housing Association and responsible developers to get homes built.

Affordable Homes for residents need to be built and they need to be built now.

Councillor Kate Chinn – Labour Court Ward

Are you listening?

16 December 2022



Epsom & Ewell Talking Newspaper, established in 1974, give three cheers for long-serving Volunteers! 'In recognition of long service and invaluable contribution to volunteering for the Epsom & Ewell Talking Newspaper and the visually impaired community within the Borough of Epsom & Ewell.'

Time flies when you are enjoying what you do in life and it has certainly flown, say many of the wonderful people who have volunteered their services to help produce the Epsom & Ewell Talking Newspaper for a decade or more –some of them for up to an incredible 25 years!

On Thursday 1st December EETN's Chairman **Judy** was delighted to welcome the Mayor of Epsom & Ewell, Councillor **Clive Woodbridge** and the Mayoress, Mrs. Mary Woodbridge, to Bradbury Lodge in the grounds of **Swail House**, for a very special Long Service Award Presentation, organised by Volunteers including News Editors **Tricia** and **Julie** and EETN Office Manager Heather. "We are giving long overdue recognition to the fifteen volunteers who have been committed to this special charity for ten years or more," Judy began. "Two of those wonderful people, Gabrielle and Heather, have been with us for over 21 years and Penny has given 25 years of service."

Judy raised much laughter when she explained that in the early days of EETN, which started in 1974, cassette recordings were made in a corridor outside a kitchen in Epsom's Swail House. One of the long- serving Volunteers, she said, still remembered the smell of cabbage as she was recording. " The recording 'venues' changed several times over the years, but in 1997 our current bespoke studio here at Swail House was opened –and here we are 2341 issues of EETN later," she said.

In a brief resume of how the Talking Newspaper operates, Judy explained that many skill sets were required to deliver a quality service to the Listeners. These, she said, included Sound Recordists, News, Magazine and Supplement Editors, Readers with clear voices, the all-important Backroom Team- and our essential Social Media Manager who spreads the word so effectively about our fantastic service. "Without the whole team of Volunteers, EETN would not exist. Everyone plays an integral role in delivering this Free service to visually impaired people."

Among the invited guests and volunteers were **Robert Lahai**, Swail House Manager, who organised the room for the presentation, **Eamonn McNamee**, Manager for Central Surrey Voluntary Action, who kindly read the citations and **Serena Powis**, from EEBC Community and Voluntary Sector Liaison Officer.

The Mayor, Councillor Clive Woodbridge welcomed hearing the background history of EETN, saying "The fact that the 15 volunteers we have honoured today have amassed a staggering total of over 200 years of volunteering is truly humbling. I am tremendously honoured to be the President of the organisation, continuing a tradition going back to 1991."

After listening to the citations, which gave a brief insight into the role each volunteer had played over the years, the Mayor expressed his thanks, saying 'We are truly blessed to have so many selfless, good people who give up their time freely in the community.'

Photos with the Mayor marked the occasion as certificates were presented, but the wonderful group shot perfectly captured the warmth and sincerity of the team with their Chairman Judy, herself visually impaired, and husband Amer. Amer's vital contribution to EETN was also warmly recognised for the invaluable support he has given Judy in her role as Chairman for the last 11 years.

With formalities successfully completed, Judy then invited all the guests and Volunteers to enjoy some light refreshments while having a catch-up with each other and a jolly get-together.

The Epsom & Ewell Talking Newspaper is a free, regular audio service presenting local news, magazine articles and general features which are recorded and distributed on a memory stick to local residents who are blind, visually impaired or have difficulty reading smaller text.

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For more information about this free service visit: https://eetn.org.uk

To contact EETN about becoming a Listener or a Volunteer email admin@eetn.org.uk

Or call: 01372 721519 and leave a message with your name and phone number.

Jan Collier

Ed: In accordance with “For the community, by the community”, Epsom and Ewell Times shares its content for free with EETN.

Mole Patrol captures pollution

16 December 2022



River Wey and River Mole fail to meet acceptable criteria for four out of five pollutants monitored in new report.

In one of the largest national people-powered scientific studies of its kind six different pollutants – nitrate, nitrite, phosphate, total coliform, pH, heavy metals – have been monitored across 48 sites in England and Scotland. At a national level, **all sites but one (98%) failed to meet acceptable criteria for at least one of five pollutants monitored, while over half, 52%, of sites failed on three or more parameters**, according to Planet Patrol’s *What Lies Beneath Report* 2022.

Image: River Mole near Box Hill Dorking. Credit: Johan J.Ingles-Le Nobel

River Wey near Sutton Green and River Mole near Dorking were amongst the worst for water quality, both failing to meet acceptable levels of nitrate, phosphate, total coliform and pH levels. River Dart in Devon is the only site tested to pass across five parameters.

The report highlights the devastating outlook of the state of UK waterways and urgently warns the Government and polluting industries to take transformative action to reverse the destruction of our freshwater environments.

The *What Lies Beneath Report 2022* is one of the biggest datasets yet, with 57 citizen volunteers having conducted 1,229 water quality readings and 1,178 metal concentration readings.

Additional insights from the report include:

- Nearly half, 46%, of sites showed unacceptable levels of nitrates
- 69% of sites failed to meet acceptable concentration of phosphate
- Over 90% of sites tested positive for total coliform bacteria
- **Over a quarter, 26%, of sites failed to meet recommended PH range due to high levels of acidity.**

The causes of these pollutants are many and go beyond sewage contamination. From growing urban development to farming practices, increased diversity of chemicals and pharmaceuticals used by society, and pollution pressure from transport, addressing the UK’s invisible water quality crisis needs a whole systems approach.

The launch of this report follows the latest data from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), which shows that no progress has been made on a key water pollution pledge made four years ago to ensure that 75% of rivers and other bodies of water achieve a “good” ecological status by 2027. The figure remained at 16% in 2021, unchanged since 2017. In response to the Environment Agency’s plans to ‘amend’ this target, Planet Patrol has launched a petition calling on the Rt Hon Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Thérèse Coffey, to reject plans to weaken the legislation.

Lizzie Carr MBE, founder of Planet Patrol, says: “Through our growing community of citizen scientists we’ve started to uncover what lies beneath to highlight a stark reality: the widespread, poor condition of our freshwater environments. The results have been disturbing and distressing but only by building evidence to illustrate the true scale and extent of a problem, can it be accurately understood, communicated and acted upon.

“We urge the Government to honour its pledge to ensure that 75% of rivers and other bodies of water achieve a good ecological status by 2027. This target is both a major driver of public and private investment into cleaning up our waterways and a vital tool to hold industries with permits to pollute – which include much more than just water companies – to account over water pollution.”

As well as rejecting plans to amend this pledge, Planet Patrol, the environmental non-profit, is highlighting four other key policy recommendations:

- DEFRA to bring forward the enforcement date for the increase in Variable Monetary Penalties for polluting water

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companies to 1st February 2023

- DEFRA to strengthen the effectiveness of the Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan (SODRP) – specifically, reduce the maximum achievement date on all SODRP targets to 2035 versus 2050, and prohibit water companies from increasing water bills to fund the critical infrastructure investment required
- The Environmental Agency to accelerate the speed at which citizen science is integrated into formal data collection activities for developing evidenced-based policies
- Use funds raised from the increase in Variable Monetary Penalties for polluting water companies to increase the criminal prosecution rates of those who damage water quality.

Dr Thomas Stanton, a freshwater scientist from Loughborough University who analysed the data, says: "UK waterways are vulnerable to a number of societal pressures, including pollution, water abstraction, and modifications to river courses. But they are also compromised by weak policy and legislation. Despite its political greenwashing, the environment continues to be an issue that the UK government does not take seriously. Nature is in crisis, but current efforts to fully understand the extent of this are shackled by politicians whose short-sighted priorities lie elsewhere, and who fail to recognise the significance of environmental action today for the lives of those who will outlive their political tenure."

Read the full report here: https://planetpatrol.co/water-quality-report/

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