



8th 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](#)



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](#)



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](#)



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

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 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?

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.

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

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 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/>



Fight fires in Surrey from home

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 January 1993 as the services first female firefighter, and after 30 years she's hanging up her helmet.

Since joining the service as a firefighter at Chertsey Fire Station, Paula went on to become a Leading Firefighter, followed by a Watch Commander in fire stations as well as fire safety and prevention departments. She then became a Station Commander at Woking Fire Station. After a short time within the Operations Assurance Team followed by Community Intelligence, Paula returned to Woking to finish her career.

Paula spoke of her career, she said: "I have enjoyed being part of the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service team - helping the communities which we serve and every day trying to make a difference.

"It has been both challenging and rewarding, I have learned many skills over the years and have great memories. I have loved my career immensely and hope that many more women take on the role.

Since joining the service, Paula has also welcomed three daughters with her other half Tony.

Dan Quin, Chief Fire Officer, said: "What a fantastic legacy Paula leaves behind here in Surrey - our first female firefighter paving the way for many more females after her, showing fire and rescue as being a successful career option. I am privileged to have worked with Paula for over 20 years and I know she will be greatly missed. Thank you, Paula."

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is currently recruiting on-call firefighters and Joint Fire Control operators. On-call firefighters respond via pager from their home or work. Joint Fire Control operators take emergency calls and mobilising for Surrey, West and East Sussex - the first person residents speak to in an emergency. Join a life-saving service and find out more by visiting www.surreycc.gov.uk/firecareers.

Surrey County Council News

Any more trees please?

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 the spring delivery closes.

Applications for spring, for delivery in March 2023, are currently open, but only until 11 January.

The last round of the ever-popular free tree-packs scheme was the Woodland Trust's biggest-ever single send-out, with 4,625 organisations across the UK taking advantage of the scheme.

A total of 643 schools and community groups in London, Greater London, Kent, Surrey and Sussex took delivery of their trees from the end of October to 11 November.

In the south east of England, 88,155 trees were sent out to 643 organisations:

- 16,380 Trees to 168 organisations in London
- 9,690 trees to 87 organisations in Greater London
- 26,535 trees to 157 organisations Kent
- 14,070 trees to 101 organisations in Surrey
- 21,480 trees to 130 organisations in Sussex

The figures for the south east of England were part of a bumper autumn delivery which saw 740,970 saplings finding homes the length and breadth of the UK, bringing the annual total to a record-breaking 1.3m trees for 2022.

Woodland Trust senior project lead Vicki Baddeley said there is no time like the present to sign up and take advantage of the scheme.

"With Christmas looming and National Tree Week upon us, now really is a good time to get those applications in and ensure you



don't miss out," she added.

"We still have lots of trees available but with schools breaking up before you know it, and the hectic holiday period around the corner, it makes sense to get organised nice and early and avoid a last-minute rush in early January.

"Planting trees is such a simple action, but the collective impact can make a huge difference. It's a great way for schoolchildren and community groups to learn about nature and the environment and, at the same time, embrace a "Green Christmas".

"Planting trees has so many benefits, from combatting the effects of climate change, helping support wildlife, to greening up local spaces and boosting well-being.

"The desire to plant trees is growing all the time and I fully expect demand to reflect that in the coming weeks, so I would advise any interested groups to apply sooner rather than later.

"The application process to secure your saplings is quite straightforward, just visit <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/> to get started."

The Trust's tree packs have been generously funded by lead partners: Sainsbury's, Lloyds Bank, OVO Energy, Bank of Scotland and Sofology.

Baddeley added: "As ever, the support and generosity of our funders is invaluable and we simply couldn't do this without them.

"The help each and every one of them provides is hugely appreciated and helps to ensure we can provide and deliver our saplings in such huge numbers."

The Woodland Trust's autumn delivery:

- England: 615,720 trees to 3,982 schools and community groups
- Scotland: 77,940 trees to 428 schools and community groups
- Wales: 47,310 trees to 215 schools and community groups

NOTES TO EDITORS:

For more information please contact the Woodland Trust press office on 01476 602993, Owen Phillips on 07958 066 766, or email media@woodlandtrust.org.uk or owenphillips@woodlandtrust.org.uk

The Woodland Trust

The Woodland Trust is the largest woodland conservation charity in the UK with more than 500,000 supporters. It wants to see a UK rich in native woods and trees for people and wildlife.

The Trust has three key aims:

1. protect ancient woodland, which is rare, unique and irreplaceable
2. restoration of damaged ancient woodland, bringing precious pieces of our natural history back to life
3. establish native trees and woods with the aim of creating resilient landscapes for people and wildlife

Established in 1972, the Woodland Trust now has over 1,000 sites in its care covering approximately 29,000 hectares. Access to its woods is free so everyone can benefit from woods and trees.

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

Free trees for schools and communities

The Woodland Trust is giving away hundreds of thousands of trees to schools and communities to make sure everybody in the UK has the chance to plant a tree. To apply, or see terms and conditions, visit: www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/freetrees

National Tree Week

National Tree Week takes place from 26 November to December 2022. It is the UK's largest annual tree celebration. Each year, the country's conservation sector, volunteer groups and tree-lovers come together to plant thousands of trees to mark the start of the annual tree planting season.

Courtesy: The Woodland Trust

Images: **The Woodland Trust | Flickr & People Planting | Flickr**

1st December 2022



CHRIS GRAYLING PLANNING WESTMINSTER

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](#)



HELEN MAGUIRE WESTMINSTER

Hard-hitting critique from new LibDem PPC

November 28, 2022

On 17th November, we saw the Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, give his Autumn Statement. We waited with bated breath to see how it might help us and our families as we ... [READ MORE](#)



COMMUNITY FOODBANK VOLUNTEERS

Will Epsom's Foodbank ever end?

November 28, 2022

A Gala fundraising dinner was held recently to recognise 10 years of Epsom & Ewell Foodbank, with guests encouraged to sign up to the new 'End Poverty Pledge'. Nearly 200 ... [READ MORE](#)



GINA MILLER WESTMINSTER

True and Fair View?

November 28, 2022

Gina Miller, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Epsom and Ewell, Leader of the True & Fair Party, writes for the Epsom and Ewell Times: The typical property price in Epsom and Ewell ... [READ MORE](#)



FOOTBALL SPORTS

Top teams level at the end

November 28, 2022

Epsom & Ewell 1-1 Shoreham Southern Combination League - Division One Saturday 26th November 2022. Two very late goals after 85 minutes of attritional combat ensured that the best two ... [READ MORE](#)



RUGBY SPORTS

Mighty Maids Run Riot

November 28, 2022

MAIDENHEAD 61 - SUTTON & EPSOM 24 - Saturday 26th November. Maidenhead started this season with four extremely impressive wins as they surged to the top of the table by ... [READ MORE](#)



COUNCIL PLANNING

Epsom and Ewell last in Local Planning

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](#)



COUNCIL TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

Will Epsom think on the same lines?

November 25, 2022

Trams into Surrey have been raised as one "very possible solution" to improving public transport with the expansion of the capital's Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ). The zone's expansion was ... [READ MORE](#)



EDUCATION NEWS PLANNING



Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes..?*

November 25, 2022

Battle for school gets classical with fears of a Trojan Horse. Kingswood House School in Epsom is asking local people to join hundreds of residents in opposing plans to evict the ... [READ MORE](#)

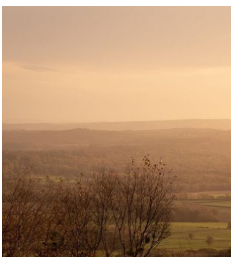


CRIME

Dogs against knife crime

November 25, 2022

Officers have visited 14 schools and colleges across Surrey over the past week to raise awareness and tackle the grass-root causes of knife crime as part of national police campaign, ... [READ MORE](#)



NATURE

Winter walks in the Surrey wilds

November 25, 2022

The darker mornings have closed in, and the clocks have gone back, so it's fair to say summer is officially over, and the cold season has begun. While the cosy ... [READ MORE](#)



ARTS

Epsom Playhouse hosts a little horror.

November 24, 2022

Leatherhead Operatic Society left the audience laughing and cheering with its production of Little Shop of Horrors at Epsom Playhouse, a musical comedy directed by John Harries, choreographed by Louise ... [READ MORE](#)



BUSINESS COMMUNITY HEALTH

Cycling for Motor Neurone Disease

November 24, 2022

Greg Culshaw of Toyota's Epsom Head Office (GB), has completed a gruelling 24-hour static bike ride, putting him on course to raise more than £40,000 for the Motor Neurone Disease ... [READ MORE](#)

Hard-hitting critique from new LibDem PPC

On 17th November, we saw the Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, give his Autumn Statement. We waited with bated breath to see how it might help us and our families as we try to work out how we're going to pay the bills. The catastrophic verdict was plain to see in newspaper headlines the following day: 'Carnage' - the Mirror; 'Years of tax pain ahead' - The Times; 'From Bad to Worse' - the Guardian. Even the usual Tory safe haven, the Mail, couldn't hold back their view: 'Tories Soak the Strivers'. It was never going to be an easy statement to make after Liz Truss dug a £30 billion hole in the public finances after her disastrous mini budget, but now the Treasury puts the fiscal hole at an eye-watering £60 billion!

This blistering verdict confirms the British public's worst fears. We are being made to suffer increases in tax, bills, and mortgage payments because of this Conservative government's mistakes. Living standards are falling off a cliff and public services are suffocating under the weight of this Conservative chaos and incompetence.

What is the cost to you, the hard-working residents of Epsom and Ewell? Two million more people will move into the 40% tax bracket, families paying the price for Tory incompetence. Struggling families who have worked hard for years have had their security stolen. Hunt's Statement confirmed the Bank Surcharge cut from 8% to 3% from April 2023, while increasing taxes on millions of struggling families by extending the freeze in the Income Tax personal allowance and higher-rate threshold. While non-doms and big banks got off lightly, the already squeezed middle are being pushed to the brink, having to choose between food or heating, mortgage payments or fuel for their car.

The squeezed middle will continue to work as hard as before, but their efforts will be worth significantly less as disposable income shrinks. Every single Conservative MP should be ashamed of this cost of chaos budget, which will leave a legacy of economic turmoil and tax misery as mortgage rates spiral.

OBR Budget documents forecast that mortgage interest payments will double over the next year, rising by 100.5% in the year to September 2023. Lib Dem analysis shows that a typical household with an outstanding mortgage of £236,000 will see their interest payments double to £5,689, or an increase of £2,851 a year. We're calling for a Mortgage Protection Fund for homeowners seeing payments skyrocket now!

In addition, reform of adult social care has once again been kicked into the long grass. Bedding blockages will continue in the unresolved chaos of the understaffed, under-resourced NHS. Boris Johnson came to power on a mandate to reform social care. Where is it? The dementia tax is back!

Other horrors you may not have seen in the budget are:

1. Police cuts: Home Office spending is set to be slashed by £100m in real terms by 2024-25.
2. Crumbling schools: There will be a £1 billion (14%) real terms cut in capital spending on education in 2024-25.



3. Social Housing: New stealth tax on social housing providers will mean lower investment in existing and new social housing.

Hunt is hoping economic growth will save his bacon but the shortage of workers, trading challenges because of Brexit and the lack of investment in renewable energy may not make this a reality. Hunt talks now about investment in green infrastructure and education and skills yet where has this been for 12 years? Schools are on their knees; parents are having to pay for books and children are going hungry.

We have now entered a recession, a spiralling cost-of-living crisis, the biggest decline in living standards in history. The gulf between rich and poor is growing, foodbanks have more demand than supply for the first time ever, nurses have voted to strike, barristers have been on strike, we have the highest rates of taxation in 70 years and a longer recession than we will likely have ever seen.

Since September, we have had three Prime Ministers, and four Chancellors. The Conservatives say they provide stability and continuity. The people are calling for CHANGE! Stability and continuity from this government has delivered a broken economy and made us poorer. Our crumbling hospitals and run-down classrooms are facing savage cuts because the Conservative party crashed the economy to fund tax cuts for the richest companies. The country will never forgive them for this.

This government is putting off tough decisions with a general election around the corner. This isn't leadership! We are reaping the costs of a long-term failure to grow the economy and a lack of long-term strategy. We all just got a lot poorer and we're in for a long and unpleasant journey on the way back to a sound and stable economy.

Helen Maguire- Liberal Democrat Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Epsom and Ewell

Will Epsom's Foodbank ever end?

A Gala fundraising dinner was held recently to recognise 10 years of Epsom & Ewell Foodbank, with guests encouraged to sign up to the new '**End Poverty Pledge**'. Nearly 200 people attended the Gala dinner to mark a decade since the doors first opened in October 2012, offering emergency food parcels to those in need.

Image: Jonathan Lees speaks at the 10 year Gala in the Queen Elizabeth II Stand Epsom Downs

Now ten years on, the food bank has five centres in Surrey and is incorporated into Good Company (Surrey) charity, which includes Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network, support services as well as Epsom Pantry which opened this year.

Good Company's mission is to create a community free from poverty and the newly launched End Poverty Pledge aims to build a movement of people and organisations committed to doing what they can locally to reduce poverty.

One of the food bank founders - **Jonathan Lees**, said Epsom & Ewell Foodbank was started after he was told of a similar initiative in Kingston and heard of a family struggling to feed themselves in Epsom. It opened with one centre in Epsom and one in Ewell, adding Leatherhead and Tadworth in 2013 and Banstead in 2014.

Jonathan Lees said: "I remember putting the first tins on our first bit of racking in one of our little rooms in the office with founding volunteer Jackie McKee. I think we counted 10 tins of baked beans. Now we have more than 10 crates of baked beans in the store. Never did we think that 10 years down the line we would still be here. We still have the mission to close the food bank and end poverty in our community, but that is not going to happen this year.

"So, while we are still here, we will challenge what is happening and support local people to rebuild their lives and have hope for the future. To recognise the impact of what we have done we held the fundraising event and this saw the launch of the **End Poverty Pledge**, as we believe everyone in our community can do something to improve the lives of those experiencing financial hardship.

"It is definitely not a celebration but a mark of appreciation of all that has happened, all we do and the invaluable support of so many people in our community who donate food, resources and funds, especially our group of amazing volunteers who are our lifeline and keep it all going."

Good Company (Surrey) is a Registered Charity no. 1197494

Good Company Hub Ruxley Lane Epsom KT18 0JG



Since they opened, the Epsom & Ewell Foodbank have helped feed more than 50,000 people. As the foodbank grew, so came the realisation that emergency food aid was not a long-term answer to poverty so in 2019, the **East Surrey Poverty Truth Commission** was launched to raise awareness of the drivers of poverty and ensure that those affected by poverty are central to decisions about how to tackle it. Phase 2 of the ESPTC will start in 2023.

Jonathan Lees said: "As we look ahead after 10 years, our vision is now focused on tackling the root causes of poverty and the hope of a future without the need for food banks."

For more information and to take the End Poverty Pledge please visit

<https://goodcompany.org.uk/end-poverty-surrey/>

Courtesy Epsom and Ewell Foodbank.

True and Fair View?

Gina Miller, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Epsom and Ewell, Leader of the True & Fair Party, writes for the Epsom and Ewell Times:

The typical property price in Epsom and Ewell is more than £625,000, nearly 50% higher than the national average, according to GetAgent.co.uk. This is happening at a time when interest rates are on the march, rising from 0.1% to 3% in less than a year as the Bank of England struggles to control spiralling inflation.

Little wonder a survey commissioned by the True & Fair Party last month found that rising mortgage and rental costs are the main housing concerns among nearly half – 46% – of Epsom and Ewell residents. This research, carried out by Find Out Now, also found that 21% of residents are worried by the lack of housing supply in the area.

That's one of the simple truths behind the housing crisis – the UK does not have enough homes. Epsom and Ewell residents clearly understand this. That's what makes it even more shocking that Chris Grayling backed a Conservative backbench amendment to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill that will scrap mandatory local housing targets, making them advisory only. This will further restrict supply and increase prices.

Seemingly unwilling to recognise the extent of the crisis before them, around four dozen Tory MPs signed this parliamentary amendment to scrap mandatory local housing targets for councils. Homebuilding experts everywhere were horrified. Robert Colville, director of the Centre for Policy Studies, renamed this the 'Destroy the Planning System and Make the Recession Worse Amendment', arguing it could reduce already low levels of homebuilding by up to 40%. If passed into law, it will certainly worsen the already unfair inter-generational economic and social housing gap.

Carol Lewis, property editor at The Times, was excellent in skewering the self-serving political rationale behind the rebellion. "Those that support the amendment talk of handing control to local people who are uniformly perceived as anti-development," she wrote. "However, the reason isn't because nimbys are blocking development. Planning permission has been given for more than 300,000 homes each year since the target was set in 2016. The problem is they [homes] simply aren't being built."

In other words, Westminster politicians should be looking at other issues, such as understaffed planning departments and greedy developers sitting on sites. While aiming to address the issue of inappropriate developments, the rebels have thrown the baby out with the bath water in thinking that abandoning all housing targets will fix the issue worrying their constituents. It will not and their plans will only make a dire situation worse for those they represent. Lewis pointed to the dictum of the great management theorist Peter Drucker, who said: "What gets measured gets managed." Very true and, if we end up scrapping targets, it is inevitable we will see a sharp reduction in the number of affordable homes. Yet another generation will be condemned to a lifetime of high rents and no home to call truly their own.

The root cause of this political miscalculation is a failure to understand people's concerns. It is not nimbyism to be concerned about playing fields or historic areas being demolished for housing development. Nor is it nimbyism to understand that the greenbelt is a vital environmental buffer between towns and the countryside. As a group of small business owners told me at a meeting off Epsom High Street last week, they are opposed to urban sprawl, not more homes.

What most of us want is for housing to be properly planned, built with sustainably sourced materials, revitalising our communities and providing affordable homes that will be within reach for our children and grandchildren. Preventing people from taking their first steps on the housing ladder or sending their mortgages skyrocketing is



not an answer to Epsom and Ewell's housing needs.

That's the simple truth.

Establishing targets focuses the minds of planners, developers and local politicians. Setting clear guidance for where housing can and cannot be built forces them to think how best to meet those targets, rather than just lazily vacuum up land around the edges of urban areas.

Sadly, Rishi Sunak looks set to cave in to the ill-conceived and damaging amendment, having already pulled a vote on the Bill for fear of upsetting his backbenchers. The misjudgement of the local MP and the weakness of our Prime Minister can only hurt Epsom & Ewell and other constituencies.

Gina Miller PPC for Epsom and Ewell for the True and Fair View Party