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

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Anyone for tennis?

20 July 2024



Continuing the enthusiasm for tennis following Wimbledon, **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council** will be offering bookable free tennis sessions from Tuesday 23 July to Monday 26 August, between 8am and 12pm.

Courts can be booked by visiting Epsom & Ewell Parks Tennis / Home (lta.org.uk).

The free summer sessions follow the council's move earlier this year to introduce a new 'pay as you play' scheme across all tennis courts. The scheme seeks to make the borough's tennis courts more self-sufficient, with all income raised being reinvested into the courts.

The council has also implemented free coaching opportunities at Court Recreation Ground and free booking slots on Saturdays to enable those of all ages, experience, and socio-economic background to participate.

Councillor **Liz Frost**, (RA Woodcote and Langley) Chair of the Environment Committee, said: "The decision to extend free, bookable morning sessions at our tennis courts during the summer holidays gives residents, particularly our younger ones, a greater opportunity to keep active and have fun during the break."

"We hope that this this will encourage those who have otherwise not considered playing tennis the incentive to give it a go and if they enjoy it, join as members in the future."

- Maintenance work will be carried out at Gibraltar Recreation Ground and Poole Road courts on Friday 26 July to redraw the line markings. The courts will be closed at these locations on that day.
- Players who have already signed up for annual membership under the scheme will receive one month's extension to their membership.
- The council currently offers two free, bookable sessions between 9-10am and 10-11am on Saturday mornings on all our tennis courts, except Court Rec.
- In Court Rec – the council currently offers one free session on a Saturday between 10-11am and we will soon be offering a further free Coach Activated group session at this location.
- Outside of the free, bookable slots, the pricing is as follows:

Ad-hoc Cost Per Hour All Courts	£6.00
Additional Cost Per Hour for Floodlights	£6.00
Annual Household Subscription	£40.00
Annual Household Subscription for those in receipt of low-income benefits	£20.00

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Call to landlords to help Council help housing need

20 July 2024



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Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is looking for landlords of three-, four- and five-bedroom houses to sign up to their Private Sector Leasing Scheme.

The Private Sector Leasing Scheme allows the council to assist local families in housing need, while reducing the risks and hassle of renting for landlords.

The council will lease and manage properties for a period of three to five years. Landlords will be guaranteed rent, with six months being paid in advance. During the tenancy, the council will carry out any minor repairs up to the value of £500 per year and ensure the property is returned to landlords in the same condition as when the agreement started.

Landlords who lease their properties to the council will enjoy the following benefits:

- no inventory or inspection costs
- no letting agent or management fees
- no need to register deposits with a *tenancy deposit* scheme
- a single point of contact within the council
- Right to Rent checks carried out by the council
- an option for routine and major repairs to be dealt with on the landlords' behalf for a fee.

Councillor **Clive Woodbridge**, (RA Ewell Village) Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee, said,

"We are all aware of the housing crisis that is affecting cities and towns across the country, and Epsom & Ewell is no different. It is a priority for the Council that we can provide good quality temporary housing for families in the local area.

"If landlords sign up to our Private Sector Leasing Scheme, it enables us to house local families within the community and minimises the disruption to their home life, work and school at what can be an already stressful time.

"The scheme is also good value for landlords and is relatively low risk when compared with letting the property on the open market."

Landlord **Lee Wiffen** said, "I cannot praise the Epsom & Ewell Private Sector Leasing Scheme enough. In my six years letting my property through the scheme, the professionalism of the team in the housing department is first class.

"The security of having great tenants and regular on-time rent payments, means I would not look any further, as a landlord, when looking to rent a property than the Epsom & Ewell Private Sector Leasing Scheme"

Full details of the scheme can be found in our **PSL landlord information pack** and **PSL landlord application form.**

Image Albert Bridge licence

Mutual easing of access benefits Epsom development

20 July 2024



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has agreed to enter into a mutual deed of **easement** with the developer of the SGN Gas Works site in Hook Road, Epsom. This site is situated next to the council-owned Hook Road car park, and the deed of easement grants reciprocal access rights over each site's roads.

This agreement is an important step in the council's long-standing ambition to promote the redevelopment of this combined site, in order to provide an improved, attractive, better connected and rejuvenated area that would attract new residents and businesses to Epsom Town Centre.

The combined site has previously been included in the November 2023 consultation of the Epsom Town Centre Masterplan, and the Reg 18 March 2023 consultation of the Draft Local Plan.

The deed of easement will enable the Gas Works site developer to design a scheme that could use the council's Rainbow Leisure Centre access road as the main entrance off East Street. In return, the council would have access across the Gas Work developer's estate road infrastructure from the current Hook Road car park entrance. By removing the need for separate, duplicated road infrastructure, the Gas Works site can be designed to maximise open space and connectivity across the wider combined site.

The deed of easement is conditional, which means it will not be completed or take effect until such time that the

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developer of the Gas Works Site is granted planning permission for development. This will ensure the council can maintain its two separate, independent capacities as landowner and as Local Planning Authority.

Cllr **Hannah Dalton**, (RA Stoneleigh) Vice Chair of the Strategy & Resources Committee, said: "Members unanimously voted for the mutual deed of easement at a special Strategy and Resources Committee held on Wednesday 19 June. This is an excellent example of the council working in partnership with other landowners and we hope that, as a result of this decision, we can deliver wider benefits for the community through appropriate high-quality redevelopment and regeneration of the SGN Gas Works site."

Image aerial view East Street Epsom – Google.

King awards Epsom's refugee resettler

20 July 2024



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council are very pleased to share that their Community Development Manager **Rachel Kundasamy** has been recognised in the King's birthday honours this year. Rachel has been awarded a Medal of the British Empire (BEM) for her services to Refugee Resettlement.

Rachel said, "It was lovely to discover I'd been nominated, and I genuinely never expected to receive the award.

"Working to support the refugee community is incredibly rewarding. I've been really privileged in meeting and working with some of the refugee community, and their resilience shown in the face of such adversity is nothing short of inspiring.

"It's a great thing to receive a BEM for a body of work that I feel immensely proud of – and it goes without saying that I wouldn't have won anything had it not been for the incredible support of the community development team and the housing team at the council. I also want to extend a huge thank you to Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network (EERN), with whom the council has built an incredible partnership over the years. I'm truly grateful to everyone at EERN for the support they have shown the council in helping provide services to those refugees who have settled in Epsom and Ewell."

Chief Executive **Jackie King** has said "We are all very proud of Rachel for achieving this great honour, which is due to her tireless work in the area of Refugee Resettlement. Rachel designs and delivers innovative projects and strategies that provide the help and support local refugees need to adjust, settle and be able to live fulfilling lives in our borough. I know Rachel is supported by a brilliant team in this work and we are very grateful to them, too.

Our purpose as a council is to make a positive difference to the lives of those in our borough. Through her dedication, passion and partnership working, Rachel has made a huge difference to the lives of many people who are going through extreme hardship and challenge, and this award is testament to that."

D-Day celebration on Epsom Downs

20 July 2024



A special event to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the D-Day Landings is taking place on Epsom Downs on Thursday 6 June, 7–9.30pm. The event is being jointly run by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Go Epsom and Epsom Downs Racecourse.

The D-Day Landings are recognised as the largest naval, air and land operation in history, with more than 150,000 troops landing on five beaches in Normandy and bringing about the liberation of north-west Europe from Nazi occupation. Commemorative events are taking place nationally to remember those who gave their lives during the D-Day Landings.

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The public are invited to come down to the Racecourse from 7pm, when the grandstand will open. Refreshments and fish and chips will be on sale, and there will be a range of entertainment on offer. The event is free to attend.

At 9pm, a ceremony will take place at the beacon on Epsom Downs, including a lone piper playing, and at 9.15pm the beacon will be lit. The beacon lighting is part of a national chain of beacons being lit across the country, and along the Normandy coast of France, and is designed to represent the 'light of peace' that emerged out of the darkness of war.

Cllr **Clive Woodbridge**, Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee at the council, said:

"The beacon lighting event is an opportunity for the community to come together to honour the thousands of people involved in the D-Day landings. Their brave actions enable us all to enjoy the peace and freedom we have today.

"We look forward to welcoming residents and visitors to this special and important event."

Karen Pengelly, BID Manager at Go Epsom, said:

"Epsom's beacon was erected two years ago to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen. It is an absolute honour to be involved in the D-Day 80th commemoration. Epsom, just like many other places, played an active part in World War 2; this is our chance to remember the sacrifices made by so many."

Tom Sammes, General Manager at Epsom Downs Racecourse, said:

"We are honoured and delighted to be a part of the D-Day 80th commemoration. The racecourse was a key part of Epsom's World War 2 response and we look forward to welcoming the community to remember the brave personnel who risked their lives for freedom and peace."

Background image credit Expert Infantry CC BY 2.0 DEED

Community fund open for bids

20 July 2024



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is inviting community groups and organisations to bid for neighbourhood funds raised by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), to deliver projects that will support new development and benefit Epsom & Ewell residents across the borough. Bidding opens on 7 May for six weeks, closing on 18 June.

The CIL raises funds from developers in recognition that new development creates pressure on local infrastructure. It is spent on the provision, improvement, replacement, operation, or maintenance of local infrastructure. Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has invested more than £210,000 from the 2022/23 Neighbourhood CIL Fund in community infrastructure projects including:

- Replacing playground equipment in Rosebery Park and Alexandra Recreation Ground
- Repairing pathways in Nonsuch Park to ensure they are safe and accessible
- Upcoming works to support biodiversity and improve visitor experience, including an additional new bench, at Stamford Green Pond.

Councillor **Steven McCormick**, (RA Woodcote and Langley) Chair of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee, said "I strongly urge local community groups and organisations to take this opportunity to bid for funds for community projects and initiatives that can improve quality of life for residents in Epsom & Ewell.

The Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy Fund offers us the chance to deliver projects that have a real impact on our communities, for example enhancing access to the countryside, improving accessibility and facilities in our parks and open spaces, improving health and safety for example by installing public water fountains, and more."

The bidding process is designed to be as clear as possible. Information on the process can be found in section 6 of the CIL Spending Protocol.

Bids will be shortlisted using the criteria set out in section 7 of the CIL Spending Protocol. Shortlisted bids will be presented to the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee for approval and, for any spend over £50,000, then to the Strategy and Resources Committee.

Image: Rosebery Park – children's recreation area. Google

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Should Nonsuch Park go to the dogs?

20 July 2024



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will launch a six-week consultation on commercial dog walking in Nonsuch Park from Monday 29 April.

The consultation was commissioned by Nonsuch Park Joint Management Committee following concerns raised by visitors about the increase in dog walkers with multiple dogs in the park.

Ahead of implementing any measures to control commercial dog walking, the Committee is keen to consult with the public and stakeholders about this issue to help inform any future decisions.

Officers from Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will also be at Nonsuch Park on the following dates and times to answer any questions the public may have:

- 29/04/2024 – Cheam Gate, 8:30am-10:30am
- 15/05/2024 – London Road Gate, 10:30am-12:30pm
- 22/05/2024 – Sparrow Farm Road Gate, 12:30pm-2:30pm.

Councillor **Julian Freeman**, (Lib Dem College) Chair of the Nonsuch Park Joint Management Committee, said: “We are aware that Nonsuch Park is hugely popular with dog walkers and while most dog walkers are responsible, concerns have been raised about the growth of commercial walkers with multiple dogs.

“It is important that as many people as possible engage with the consultation, so the Committee can understand park visitors’ thoughts, concerns and suggestions about dog control and commercial dog walking. Their input will help us make informed decisions that balance the needs of both dog walkers and the broader park community.”

The consultation survey is available on the Epsom & Ewell consultations webpage – Consultations | Epsom and Ewell Borough Council (epsom-ewell.gov.uk).

The survey will close on 3 June 2023.

Nonsuch Park is managed and maintained by a Joint Management Committee, comprising an equal number of Councillors from Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and the London Borough of Sutton. The committee Chair rotates between the two councils annually. The two councils fund, on an equal basis, the running of the park, after taking income into account. The committee is covered by the political balance arrangements.

Boxing champions young people in Epsom & Ewell

20 July 2024



A new local boxing programme, led by **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council** and delivered by **Epsom Boxing Academy**, saw its first cohort graduate in March. 14 students, referred by local schools, were enrolled on the course. Graduating students were awarded an England Boxing Bronze Award which was complimented with an AQA Empire Fighting Chance Award in nutrition and health.

The structured boxing programme aimed to help young people build confidence, self-discipline, and resilience as well as improving self-esteem and supporting positive mental health.

Councillor **Clive Woodbridge**, (RA Ewell Village) Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee, said; “I was honoured to attend the graduation of the Epsom & Ewell Community Boxing Scheme.

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"Boxing is a fantastic way to keep fit, but it has also been shown to aid in the development of life skills including self-discipline, mental strength and control, and personal responsibility; as well as helping manage feelings of aggression. Boxing also provides invaluable opportunities for students to connect with positive mentors.

"We know that community schemes like this one are a fantastic way to tackle inclusion in sport whilst promoting positive outcomes for young people in our borough. I look forward to Epsom & Ewell Borough Council spearheading more initiatives like this one in the future."

Joe Harding, Boxing Coach and founder of Epsom Boxing Academy, added; "The scheme was a great chance to create and deliver a programme specifically for our community in Epsom & Ewell.

We saw an unbelievable change in the students over the weeks as they developed and demonstrated boxing techniques, learnt about the human body, and about food labels and nutrition.

Life coaching and mentoring helped students' progress in terms of their self-confidence, personal discipline, and punctuality. We were able to provide a safe space and an environment for the young people to express themselves. The results were outstanding. We were extremely proud to be part of such a great project."

The Community Boxing Scheme is part of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's wider strategy to improve the wellbeing of residents through activity; and reduce barriers to sports and leisure participation for those who may not otherwise have access to facilities. It follows on from a successful swimming programme, delivered in partnership with leisure operator and social enterprise GLL and made possible by an award from Sport England funded by the National Lottery.

Image courtesy EEBC

Fast track your planning application at a premium

20 July 2024



From 1 April 2024, applicants submitting certain planning applications in Epsom & Ewell will be able to choose to 'fast track' their application.

Developed to meet customer demands, the new optional service will be helpful to applicants who have a builder waiting to start work, or who need building work to start or finish by a certain date. Applicants will be able to pay to have their planning applications determined more quickly than the statutory eight-week period.

The types of applications that can be fast-tracked are:

- Householder Applications – for instance, those required for extending homes e.g. building a single storey rear extension, or front porch.
- Certificate of Lawful Development Proposed (Householder) – an application to show that the work you are proposing to do to a house is a 'permitted development' and therefore doesn't need a formal application. Sometimes you will need a certificate of this nature when you sell a house.

The fast-track fee is £350 for a Householder Application and £150 for a Lawful Development Certificate and is paid to the council, in addition to the usual cost of submitting a planning application.

Councillor **Steve McCormick**, (RA Woodcote and Langley) Chair of the Licensing and Planning Committee, said,

"We are incredibly proud of our Planning department who in the last year, have overcome significant challenges to go from being one of 10 UK council teams performing below an expected threshold of 70% for minor/other applications, to well exceeding national targets. It is brilliant that Epsom & Ewell Borough Council can now facilitate a service which will meet an obvious need for many residents wishing to progress building projects within the borough.

"I hope that this will ease stress for many people working to tight timelines for their builds."

Applicants can learn more about the service and apply by visiting the council's dedicated webpage: Fast Track Service | Epsom and Ewell Borough Council (epsom-ewell.gov.uk)

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Should we be going to.....?

20 July 2024



The Specsavers Surrey Youth Games is back. Following on from the success of the games last year, a wide range of activities are available in **Epsom & Ewell** again, including tennis, judo, swimming and more. The Games are the largest multi-sport youth programme of their kind in the South East, offering **free** local training for 7-16 year olds across Surrey, leading to a final celebratory event for the whole family.

The Games are ideal for beginners who may not get the opportunity to attend clubs or are put off by the thought of competing against others. Supportive coaches will help participants join in, have fun, learn new skills, and boost their confidence.

Registration is now open for the free training sessions which start after Easter and are aimed at those who live or go to school in the borough. Following the training, teams can unite for a family-friendly event at the Surrey Sports Park in Guildford on Saturday 15 June.

Councillor **Clive Woodbridge**, (RA Ewell Village) Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee, said "I'm so pleased that we are running the Specsavers Surrey Youth Games in Epsom & Ewell again this year. The initiative provides a fantastic opportunity for young people who are still building their confidence in sport to access training free of charge.

"I hope that everyone in our borough will take a look at what's on offer and even tell friends and family about the initiative, so that we can ensure that as many children as possible can access the training."

You can find out what's on offer in the Epsom & Ewell borough and register for a place by visiting www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/syg

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A helping hand from the Council

20 July 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 a range of valuable services for those who are elderly or vulnerable. They are run by staff who provide a personal and caring service, and council subsidies mean that costs are kept to a minimum. Services include:

• The Dementia Hub: respite care for people living with memory loss and dementia.

• Meals at Home: tasty, healthy meals delivered to homes in and around Epsom & Ewell, catering for any dietary requirement. The team can even drop off shopping, too.

• Transport from Home: DBS checked drivers help people in Epsom & Ewell, who are unable to use public transport, with door-to-door travel.

• Community Alarm: easy-to-use devices that raise an alarm in an emergency and can even help find a loved one who has become lost whilst away from home.

• The Community & Wellbeing Centre: support hub for the over 55s; a place to relax, make friends, join activities, and feel at home.

Residents will notice information about the services across the borough on council social media accounts including Facebook, Instagram and X, in the council email newsletter, and in local advertising.

Councillor Clive Woodbridge, Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee, said: "As we become older, or for people with additional needs, living independently can feel challenging. We also know that many of our residents are carers for

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loved ones who would really benefit from our services.

Our trained teams offer care and support for people who need it most, allowing them to stay independent for longer. We hope this campaign will reach residents who could use a helping hand and encourage them to talk to us to find out how we can help."

If you or someone you know could use any of these services, please talk to Epsom & Ewell Borough Council today. Call 01372 732000 or visit the website: www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/communitysupport

The Dementia Hub, meals at home and shopping service are also available for people who live outside of the borough of Epsom & Ewell.

Epsom and Ewell Council goes East

20 July 2024



Councillors at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council voted last night to undertake the relocation of the council's Town Hall accommodation. Staff currently located at the Town Hall will move to 70 East Street, a modern purpose-built office building in central Epsom.

The move will bring about a number of significant benefits:

· Financial benefits: Remaining in the Town Hall building would require it to have extensive, costly refurbishment over the coming years to comply with energy efficiency and fire regulations, along with general maintenance of existing building structures which are reaching end of life, which would cost more than twice as much as the cost of relocating. In addition, the move will create significant operating cost savings into the long term, with annual operating costs expected to reduce by over 50%. These future costs savings will help sustain key service delivery.

· Environmental benefits: The new building will be more energy efficient and sustainable with a smaller carbon footprint, enabling the council to deliver on its ambitions to be a greener council and to become carbon neutral by 2035.

- Service benefits: The move will provide a modern and fit-for-the-future workplace that will best serve the Borough.

The East Street building is already owned by the Council. It is a five-minute walk to the High Street and bus stops are located directly outside the building, providing easily accessible public transport. The building also provides its own parking, serving visitors and those with mobility issues.

It is intended that 70 East Street will not accommodate the Council Chamber, and instead a separate proposal is being developed to locate this in Bourne Hall, Ewell.

Cllr **Neil Dallen**, Chair of the Strategy & Resources Committee, said:

"Our focus must always be on what is best for our residents, and the significant financial and environmental benefits of this move are clear. The current Town Hall building is expensive to run and contains a significant amount of unused space. The new building is smaller and will be far more cost-efficient. The costs involved with the move are far outweighed by the savings that we will make through avoiding the Town Hall refurbishment and through significantly reduced running costs into the long-term.

"Just as importantly, the move will allow us to progress towards our target to become a carbon-neutral council by 2035. We believe the relocation will provide multiple benefits to the borough."

Jackie King, Chief Executive of the council, said:

"Relocating council staff to a smaller, modern and fit-for-purpose building aligns strongly with our ongoing determination to be a modern, forward-looking organisation that can best meet the needs of our residents. We are excited to progress with this move and improve value for money for our taxpayers as well as continue to provide the best services possible to the community."

Work continues to look at options for the existing Town Hall site and this will form the subject of a separate report to the council's Strategy and Resources Committee in due course.

The image is the creation of Epsom and Ewell Times not Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

Related reports:

A new Town Hall for Epsom and Ewell?

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