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

26th November 2026

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Community Asset to be stripped?

6 July 2022



Epsom's **Kingswood House School** faces closure as developers move in.

Sited in **West Hill Epsom** for over 100 years this renowned special educational needs and disability (SEND) school is facing the termination of its lease as developers seek to build a housing estate on the land. 250 pupils enjoy first class facilities and green space at the Council's recently recognised "**Asset of Community Value**". This is a rare accolade, unusual for a school and reflects the high value of the school to the local community. Also, the school has been shortlisted by ***Independent School Parent*** **magazine** for an award in this year's annual Contribution to Social Mobility category.

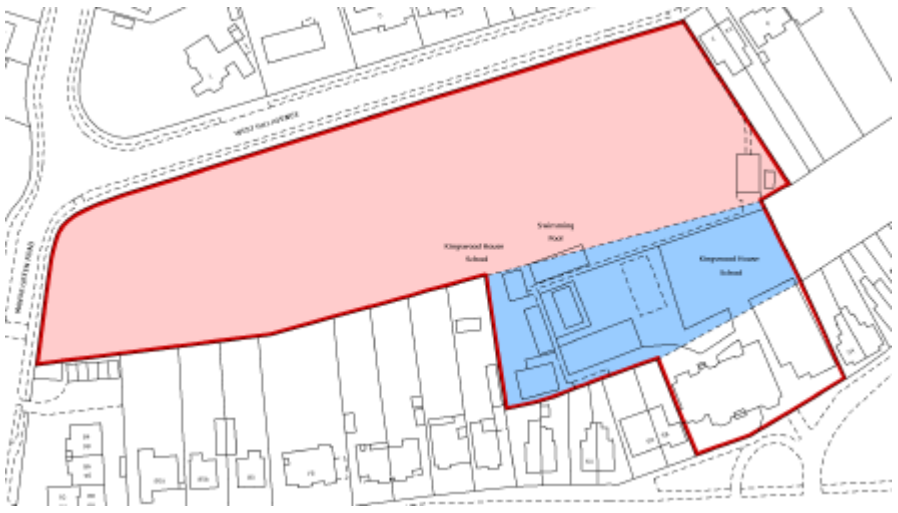
Tomorrow (Thursday 5pm 7th July) at The **Cricketers Pub**, Stamford Green Road, Epsom the freehold owners of the land, (James, Richard and David Aczel) are staging a "public consultation".

Richard Evans, the Chair of the School's governors said "Our school is already a thriving SEND-focused school for 250 boys and girls and the proposed school is on a small part of the site and will only accommodate a fraction of this number."

Headmaster **Duncan Murphy** said "100% of the site should be kept for a school, and no housing should be allowed. Although the landlords will say otherwise, there are other sites for housing which are far more appropriate." The school are urging local residents to attend the meeting at the Cricketers and make their views known.

The freeholders claim "Epsom is far behind its local housing delivery targets and needs a great deal of housing for local people, with a high demand for family housing. The scheme delivers a specialist school for local children that will be funded by the local education authority. The scheme delivers new local housing with 1, 2, 3 & 4 bed homes. All high quality and with parking (incl electric charging) and grounds to provide a high standard of design. This is a local scheme for local people. The scheme is highly sustainable, re-using buildings where possible and creating highly energy efficient new buildings where required."

Below is the registered land (edged red) leased till March 2023 by the Axzels to Kingswood House School Trust and an aerial view of the site. Lastly, the proposed development demonstrating how most if not all the green space available to 250 pupils will be swallowed up by new housing.



Title plan of Kingswood House School's lease (edged red).

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Aerial view of Kingswood House School's site.



New development in grey and proposed reduced school site in colour.

Surrey County raining over local democracy?

6 July 2022



The Conservative-run **Surrey County Council** plans to axe "area committees". Will this reduce local people's voice in Council decisions? "Surrey to reign over us? Happy and glorious?"

"**Local and Joint Committee**s" have been the mainstay of local democracy in Surrey over the last 20 years, providing a forum for county councillors to join with their counterparts In **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** and other local councils in the County, to discuss issues and make decisions on local county council spending. Members of the public participated in the meetings by bringing petitions and asking questions about council services.

These committees have gradually reduced in the frequency of meetings and their remit. Decision-making on highway functions was removed at the Surrey County Council Cabinet meeting in February this year. Various ideas have been floated about replacing them with a new model of partnership working but as yet, no firm proposals or timeline have been

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set.

The abolition of Local and Joint Committees is now set for the 31 October 2022 latest.

Epsom and Ewell *and* Surrey County Councillor **Eber Kington** (Residents Association) said to the Epsom and Ewell Times: "It was a decision taken without consultation with most County Councillors and made without any detailed plans in place to replicate many of the functions of Local Committees. Getting "how will this work" responses has been difficult and met with evasion and delay. However, we now know that petitioners will have their requests for action determined by a Cabinet Member (not from Epsom and Ewell), and residents can only ask in-person questions related to their local community if they travel to Surrey County Council's **Woodhatch HQ in Reigate**, accessible only by car. My ability to promote a highway safety scheme amongst my Epsom and Ewell County Councillor colleagues is gone, and such schemes now have to take their chance in competition with 80 other county councillors across Surrey."



Cllr Eber Kington losing control over highways?

"The outcome of this centralisation of highway spending decisions is self-evident when you see that for highway improvements to reduce road casualties, tackle speeding and make walking and cycling to school easier and safer in 2022/2023, there are 42 schemes listed with a total spend of £2,200,000. Unfortunately, the Epsom and Ewell area has just one scheme listed at a cost of £5000. That is just 0.2% of the budget for 2022/2023 being allocated to Epsom and Ewell."

Epsom and Ewell College Ward Councillor **David Gulland** (LibDem) told Epsom and Ewell Times "This move threatens to undermine local democracy and reduce Epsom and Ewell's voice in County Council decisions. The Conservatives have been looking to abolish Local and Joint Committees for a number of years but have yet to come up with any firm proposals for anything that will work better. My concern is that if they are completely abolished without their replacements up and running, there could be a temporary or even a permanent deficit in local democracy. We want to press the County Council into committing to a future that provides for local participation in local decision-making. My LibDem colleagues on the County Council will move a resolution to preserve Local and Joint Committees."

The Conservative County Councillor was also asked to comment.

Council keep taxpayers in the dark

6 July 2022



The Epsom and Ewell Times has previously reported the surprise resignation / departure (?) of Kathryn Beldon, the Council's Chief Executive Officer. The Strategy and Resources committee decided on Monday night (July 4th) to exclude press and public from its meeting to discuss the recruitment of a new CEO.

The motion to hold the meeting in private was opposed by Cllr. David Gulland (Lib Dem, College Ward) and Cllr. Kate Chinn (Labour, Court Ward), arguing that there was no reason for any of the information that would be discussed to be exempt from public scrutiny.

But the council officer presenting the report responded that, while it was a decision ultimately for councillors to make, it would be difficult to discuss the matter without referring to the financial remuneration of other individuals employed by the council. The committee chairman, Cllr Neil Dallen (Res Ass, Town Ward) suggested to the meeting that this would restrict the discussion needed.

A vote on Cllr. Gulland's motion to keep the meeting open to the public was defeated by 5 votes to 2. The public gallery was therefore cleared and the ensuing discussion in private lasted for about an hour.

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The S&R meeting was immediately followed by a meeting of the Full Council, where Cllrs. Gulland and Chinn again argued that the discussion should be held in the open, but were again defeated by the Residents' Association majority.

The public is still none the wiser in terms of what was discussed or what conclusions were reached.

The **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)** has been contacted and advises:

"In recent years public authorities have published an increasing amount of information on salaries of public sector officials. Government departments and other public bodies now routinely publish the names, job titles and salaries of senior civil servants on www.data.gov.uk, as part of the government's policy on open data and transparency. Salaries are given in bands of £5,000 (eg £120,000 to £124,999). For more junior posts the job title and pay scales are shown.
It is well-established practice that local authorities, fire and police authorities and certain other public bodies in England publish salary-related information in their annual accounts. For example, for each employee who earned over £50,000 in the previous year, they publish actual salaries, allowances, bonuses, compensation and employer's pension contributions. This also includes the names of those staff who earned over £150,000."

The **Epsom and Ewell Times** will apply to Epsom and Ewell Borough Council for full disclosure of all the secret papers of the meetings of 4th July and the minutes. Failing which an appeal will be made to the ICO as Epsom and Ewell Council's secrecy appears to be contrary to the spirit of the age of transparency and accountability.

5th July the Council made a statement through its press office: "These meetings were part of the required democratic process to ensure a robust recruitment of the most senior Chief Officer position of the Council. "

West Ewell hustings test candidates

6 July 2022



Marion Morrison (LibDem), Mark Todd (Labour, leaning on the RA candidate's empty chair), Keiran Persand (Conservative). Monday 4th July 2022, All Saints Church West Ewell hosted the West Ewell Borough Council Ward by-election hustings. Local residents go to the polling stations on Thursday 7th July to elect a new Councillor. Each candidate paid tribute to the late Residents Association Councillor Clive Smitheram for his long and valuable public service. See Epsom and Ewell Times obituary HERE.

Alan Williamson, the Residents Association candidate, did not attend due to a work commitment. He works in the financial services sector. However, you can see all candidates' responses to Epsom and Ewell Times questions HERE.

The hustings candidates were quizzed by voters on tackling anti-social behaviour and improving policing, the urgency of getting approved a Local Plan, improvements to transport and local road congestion. The audience was very pleased to have the opportunity to hear and question candidates but were disappointed that Mr Williamson could not attend. There was unanimous support for the Epsom and Ewell Times plan to hold hustings in every ward in the 2023 Epsom and Ewell Borough Council elections.

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102 year old Epsom veteran wears his medals again!

6 July 2022

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A 102-year-old Surrey war hero who was unable to wear his medals due to the condition of the ribbons can finally pin on his honours again, thanks to a local veterans' project which arranged a repair mission.

George, who served in the British Army during the Second World War and now lives in Epsom, showed the old, frayed ribbons to a trained volunteer who was documenting his life story as part of the Force for Change veterans' project.

On hearing George's predicament, Tracey Morris, the project lead for Epsom and Ewell, contacted **THE SOLDIERS, SAILORS, AIRMEN AND FAMILIES ASSOCIATION** [SSAFA], the Armed Forces charity. Tracey, a communities and prevention coordinator in the county council's adult social care team, worked with Adrian Mundin, SSAFA's divisional secretary, to arrange for the honours to be sent to medal specialists in London.

SSAFA has strong links with the London Medal Company, which was pleased to support George's request. The Taxi Charity for Military Veterans then stepped in to transport the medals to the company's premises in Leicester Square, because of the age of the medals and to ensure their safe delivery and return.

The taxi collected the honours from an event marking the third anniversary of the Epsom and Ewell Veterans Community Hub, where George was showing his medals, still in the cardboard box in which they were delivered to him more than half a century ago. The honours were then conveyed from the hub to the medals company for repair.

Complete with new ribbons and displayed on a rack, the medals were reunited with their owner at the Comrades Club in Epsom, where George was also able to meet and thank Kim Morton, representing SSAFA, Ian Lingham, of the taxi charity, and Tracey.

The local veterans' project brings together former service personnel through friendship groups, events and days out and may involve an opportunity to record their life stories for the archives.

It's a pilot scheme which is initially focused on three areas of Surrey – Epsom and Ewell, Guildford and Surrey Heath. Places are available in all three locations. Former service personnel, whether younger or older, are encouraged to get involved.

The county council is working with armed forces charities and local museums and organisations to deliver the project, which is funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, under its Force for Change programme.

Sinead Mooney, Surrey County Council's Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, said: "Thanks to everyone involved in this heartwarming project and particularly to George for telling his story and highlighting the benefits of the groups and networks for veterans in Surrey. I'd encourage anyone who has served, whether younger or older, to find out more about the opportunities in the county."

Helyn Clack, chairman of Surrey County Council and the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board, said: "It's particularly fitting during Armed Forces Week to be celebrating the repair and return of the medals that George so richly earned. I'd like to pay tribute to him and indeed all those across Surrey who have served, and are currently serving, for their courage and contribution."

For more information about support for veterans across Surrey, visit Surrey Information Point. You can also download the free Forces Connect mobile app which signposts veterans, armed forces personnel and their loved ones to local support and advice. Search "Forces Connect" in Apple's App Store or the Google Play Store.

The Epsom and Ewell Veterans Community Hub is holding an indoor street party on Sunday 26th June to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Any veteran wishing to attend must register in advance (contact tracey.morris@surreycc.gov.uk or call 07790 585352).

Surrey Safe for Diggers

6 July 2022



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New analysis of Digging up Britain 2022 search data reveals that Surrey residents are the fourth safest diggers in the UK, being beaten to top spot by Nottinghamshire, London and Gloucestershire. Devon rounded off the top five.

The study by the UK's leading online safe digging resource, **Line Search Before You Dig**, LSBUD, highlights the country's safest and most dangerous digging hotspots as domestic digging continues to rise, by analysing how many residents are searching before they dig.

The UK's Top Ten Digging Regions

- Nottinghamshire
- London
- Gloucestershire
- Surrey
- Devon
- Kent
- Hampshire
- Cornwall
- Wiltshire
- Oxfordshire

With Brits searching before undertaking 185,000 digging projects over the past 12 months, the scale and volume of at-home activity is clear to see. This is an all-time high and a 25 percent increase on the previous year.

It comes amidst a greater willingness to undertake home improvements post-COVID. According to Rated People, there was a 32 percent increase in demand for home improvements in 2021, with homeowners requiring more space to effectively live and work from the same property. Digging up Britain data mirrors this, with domestic works projects increasing by 83 percent.

The nature of these digging projects range from digging in trampolines, putting in new sheds and fixing fencing, through to drainage work, building conservatories, installing heat pumps and planting trees.

What the Experts Say

Richard Broome, MD at LSBUD, comments: "It is great to see the British public wanting to do more to their homes, and to see so many using the proper precautions to stay safe is heartening. With 84 percent of all digging projects now preceded by an underground search, it is clear that the safe digging message is getting through.

"However, there is still room for improvement. When the British public dig 'blind', with no prior knowledge of what is beneath them, there results can be significant. You are looking at serious injuries, expensive repairs, major disruptions and in the worst cases, fatalities.

"With this in mind, we urge people to always 'search before you dig'. This is the message we want to get across as part of National Safe Digging Week, which starts on Monday 4th July."

To learn more, please visit lsbud.co.uk/national-safe-digging-week, and to see LSBUD's consumer-focused safe digging video, click here.

The UK's Most Dangerous Digging Regions

- Lincolnshire
- Somerset
- Herefordshire
- Berkshire
- Durham

Methodology

Data from LSBUD's search portal, which recorded 3.4 million enquiries in 2021 was analysed. The data not only identifies the people responsible for each search, with 'private individuals' one of the selected groups, but also their location.

Surrey Independent Living Charity

6 July 2022



Surrey Independent Living Council is evolving! Following on from an independent external review the trustees agreed to change the name of the organisation to **Surrey Independent Living Charity**. (SILC)

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They believe that the change in name from Surrey Independent Living Council to Surrey Independent Living Charity better reflects the charitable objectives of the organization and avoids confusion with Surrey County Council.
SILC is a User Led Organisation that has been active in Surrey for almost 25 years and was formed as Surrey Independent Living Council in 1998 by a group of disabled people. SILC's primary purpose was to provide support to disabled people who wanted to use local authority funded Direct Payments to employ Personal Assistants to provide the care and support they needed.
Between 1999 and 2017 SILC continued to provide support services in Surrey and their growth reflected the increasing number of people using Direct Payment in Surrey. During that time, the charity expanded to provide one off Direct Payments to Carers and Personal Health Budget support to individuals funded by the NHS.

Chief Executive, Richard Davy, said to Epsom and Ewell Times: "The change in our name to Surrey Independent Living Charity honours the history of the charity and the work that has been undertaken over the last 25 years, whilst looking ahead to the future and focusing on our charitable objectives and our vision, mission and values."

SILC believes that everyone can live independently with the right support. At the heart of everything they do is the social model of disability and the concept of full human rights. They believe that these give a basis for treating everyone with respect, understanding and fairness. They also believe that disabled adults, children, older people and carers can learn from and support each other.
Surrey Independent Living Charity (SILC) will continue to provide its existing range of services, details of which can be found on www.surreyilc.org.uk.
In addition to this, the charity intends to put a greater focus on its role as a champion and facilitator of independent living for people in Surrey who require support to live in the community. SILC will also be further developing peer and volunteer led information, advice and support for residents who need it.
Chief Executive, Richard Davy, "We at SILC are very proud to have been supporting people in Surrey to live independently for almost 25 years. We're on a mission to extend the awareness of the support we can provide to families and individuals living with disabilities as well as older people with care needs, and to raise additional funding to widen the range of services we can offer to the people of Surrey".
To find out more about SILC and how you can support them or access their services, please visit the SILC website www.surreyilc.org.uk.

Will Council lift the veil of secrecy over CEO's departure?

6 July 2022



As **Epsom and Ewell Time**s reported 27th May 2022, Epsom and Ewell Borough Council announced the departure of its Chief Executive Officer, **Kathryn Beldon**, "following her decision *that this is the time for a new chapter in [my] life.*" Yet, in response to a Freedom of Information Act request submitted by **Epsom and Ewell Times** for disclosure of the former CEO's resignation letter the Council has responded: "We are unable to comply with your request as the Council did not

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receive a letter of resignation from Kathryn Beldon. The reason for her leaving was stated in the previous press release, which can be accessed on the EEBC website using the following link:
Epsom and Ewell Chief Executive | Epsom and Ewell Borough Council (epsom-ewell.gov.uk)“

Tonight 7.30pm onward (Monday 4th July2022) in the Council Chamber, Town Hall The Parade Epsom, the Council is due to debate the recruitment of a new Chief Executive and no doubt the circumstances of the departure of the previous one will be discussed. However, as we reported 28th June 2022 the meetings may be held in private as first the Strategy and Resources Committee (7.30pm) and then the Full Council (@8.30pm) will determine if the press and public should be excluded on either the ground of the privacy of an individual outweighing the public interest in the matter or to keep Council finances secret.

Surrey County Council to be strike free this Summer?

6 July 2022



Surrey County Council’s lowest paid staff are set to receive a pay boost after unions and council officers **agreed** a proportionate pay offer that sees pay increases on a sliding scale.

The offer will give people at the lowest pay grade a 7.85% increase and will exceed the UK Living Wage Foundations National Living Wage with a minimum hourly pay rate of £10.24ph.

The percentage increase drops further up the scales, with those earning the most receiving no increase.

Surrey Pay is subject to local agreement and negotiations between the Council and recognised trade unions (Unison & GMB). Negotiations this year focused on the sharp increases in costs of living, with the final offer reflecting the council’s stated ambition of No One Left Behind – helping those who need us most.

The offer is targeted at lower earners who are inevitably struggling most with the costs of living increases, hence the graduated nature of the pay uplift.

Leader of Surrey County Council Cllr Tim Oliver (Conservative) said: “*I’m pleased that a strong pay offer has been agreed, one that particularly protects our lowest paid staff.*

“We know that the cost of living is proving a challenge for many, but as a council it is our absolute priority to ensure no one is left behind, and that includes our staff. This offer reflects that.

“It is also in recognition of the excellent services staff continued to provide under difficult conditions during the pandemic, which we are all grateful for.”

Blooming Ewell

6 July 2022



Ewell Village has entered Britain in Bloom – a national competition which seeks to use flowers and greenery to transform communities. Judges will visit the village on the morning of Tuesday 5th July 2022.
This competition entry is part of a broader effort to rejuvenate the village. Making Ewell high street and surrounding

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areas more attractive through flowers and planting is just one thing that the community, businesses, groups, organisations and community leaders have been working on to improve our local area.



For Ewell Village in Bloom, volunteers have been working on:

- revitalising the memorial garden outside Sainsbury's
- getting The Grove cleared up and grass re-seeded
- cleaning up the High Street and Bourne Hall park – with monthly volunteers meeting at 10am on the 4th Sunday of every month
- planting in Bourne Hall park
- getting ready for a yarn bomb attack of crochet flowers in the village for judging day!

Everyone in the Ewell are can take part! The big idea is that if everyone did something small to take a bare area of their property frontage to make it more beautiful, then collectively we can make a big difference. This may be as simple as putting a pot on your doorstep, adding a hanging basket or putting a summer wreath on your front door.





Once one person in the road does it, other people copy, and the momentum starts to build. They would love people to send their before and after photos to Ewellvillage@outlook.com. The Mayor of Epsom and Ewell Cllr Clive Woodridge will judge the best road overall.
For more information, please contact **Alison Price** at Ewellvillage@outlook.com.

UK's 2022 Top Jazz Award nominees to play in Epsom

6 July 2022

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Jo Harrop is one of 4 nominees for the prestigious annual Parliamentary jazz award for vocalist of the year 2022.
Epsom's own **Nigel Price**, the UK's foremost guitarist and founder of the UK wide jazz club supporting Grassroots Jazz , has been nominated for the annual award for services to jazz.
The winners will be announced at PizzaExpress Live, Holborn, London on Tuesday 5th July.
Both nominees will play in Epsom on **Thursday 7th July at 7.30pm** at the **Epsom Jazz Club** in The Oaks Room in the Conservative Club, Church Street, Epsom.
You can book your tickets for Epsom Jazz Club 7th July for a great evening of jazz.

Recognise this alleged burglar?

6 July 2022



Surrey Police are appealing for help to identify this man, who they believe may be able to help with their investigation into a residential burglary in Epsom on Sunday, 26 June.

The burglary took place on Linden Place in Epsom at around 12:50am. During the burglary, a coat was stolen.

Surrey Police believe the man seen in these CCTV images may be able to help with their investigation.

If you recognise him, or have any other information that could assist with their enquiries, please contact Surrey Police quoting PR/ 45220067795 via:

• Webchat on https://surrey.police.uk/
• Online https://www.surrey.police.uk/tua/tell-us-about/cor/tell-us-about-existing-case-report/
• Calling 101

If you do not wish to leave your name, please call the independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 11

How Epsom and Ewell Times improves the community....

6 July 2022



Some key findings of the Public Interest News Foundation include:

- Most independent news publishers cover a broad range of news topics within a tightly defined local place. The smaller the area covered, the smaller the revenue.
- The staff at independent publishers are not yet representative of the UK population, with women and ethnic minorities underrepresented. More than half of publishers say they're making efforts to serve diverse audiences.
- Independent publishers make a big difference to the communities they serve – and to democracy. Publishers say they increase civic engagement, increase public debate and inspire more people to be involved in public life, among other things.
- Publishers face significant challenges around revenue, staffing, costs and the social media giants.

Amid rising demand for high quality local news, publishers have high hopes for the future. They see opportunities to build

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trust with communities that feel far from economic or political power.

Click HERE to read the FULL REPORT

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Epsom Choral works 100 years

6 July 2022



Epsom Choral Society (ECS), which is celebrating its Centenary this year, put on a spirited performance at its "**Songs from the Shows**" concert on Saturday 25th June at St Andrews Church in Cheam.



The choir has traditionally concentrated on lighter repertoire for its summer concert and this year it caught the mood with a programme of medleys from famous musicals such as Porgy and Bess, Guys and Dolls and Oklahoma! Les Misérables received particularly enthusiastic applause. The evening was enhanced by two soloists from the Epsom Light Opera Company: Lian Downes, who performed 'Meadowlark' from The Baker's Wife and James Turnbull, who sang 'Empty Chairs at Empty Tables' from Les Misérables. The evening came together under the expert baton of Musical Director Julian Collings with a band which, despite being much reduced by the rail strike, provided all the rhythm and colour needed for a great evening.

The final concert in the choir's Centenary Season will be **Handel's Messiah at Epsom Playhouse** on Saturday 3rd December, and ECS would love to see you there. What better way to celebrate 100 years of singing? Visit their website HERE

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW: Meet Epsom & Ewell’s new Mayor, Clive Woodbridge.May 24, 2022

On a rainy, downcast day, Epsom & Ewell Times’ Tom Luckham has had the pleasure of sitting down with Clive, Epsom and Ewell’s new Mayor. Epsom might not be too

Epsom wears its Royal pride as the Jubilee approachesMay 25, 2022

Epsom is gearing up for a big week. The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee approaches fast, and with the crowning jewel of the events taking place at Epsom Racecourse, it’s hardly surprising … READ MORE

Cllr Gulland: Insulate & Generate – two key aspects to include in the Local Plan for Epsom & Ewell

Joining us for the other side of the coin regarding our articles on heating and insulation, Councillor David Gulland (College Ward – Liberal Democrat) goes over some topics regarding the …

Is this Epsom Couple getting their heating for free?May 18, 2022

As part of our duo of articles regarding insulation and heating, Epsom & Ewell Times met Peter and his wife Elsa. Peter is a brave local resident who …

Steve Cauthen joins ITV Racing for Cazoo Jubilee DerbyMay 18, 2022

Legendary American Jockey Steve Cauthen has announced he will join ITV Racing to cover the Platinum Jubilee Derby in Epsom. Cauthen, born in Kentucky to a … READ MORE

Looking back on the Epsom & Ewell ShowcaseMay 18, 2022

Rotary Club is about community, charity, fun and friendship. They run social events throughout the … READ MORE

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