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

26th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

Epsom’s Local Plan: Councillor claims public kept in the dark

26 November 2026



Dear Editor,

Your article ‘Another Local Plan? Epsom Councillors vote to begin again’ reveals a game of musical chairs where Local Plans meet Local Govt Reorganisation.

The farce deepens because a consultation on Main Modifications to the Plan (which is currently underway) has not included crucial information: What the Inspector told the Council it needed to do to make the Plan sound. This begs the question – how do consultees assess the efficacy of the Council’s response in the schedule of Main Modifications without knowing the Inspector’s thoughts?

The existence of extensive correspondence between the Inspector and the Council was revealed, but not shared, in a report to the Licensing & Planning Policy Committee on September 22nd. Unlike previous exchanges. On October 1st, in my capacity as a member of the Council and the relevant policy committee, I asked for all Local Plan correspondence between the Inspector and the Council following examination hearings on July 2nd.

Bizarrely these were treated as a form of FOI request, specifically an Environmental Information Request (EIR). I was then told the statutory deadline for a response would be extended and I finally received the information on November 3rd. This was a week after the October 26th Extraordinary Council Meeting at which the Mayor’s casting vote sent the Main Modifications to a public consultation.

The disclosure reveals dozens of items, many redacted, pointing to yet further documents which have still not been shared. A reasonable person might think that after an examination hearing the Inspector would give clear, published instructions on what needs to be done to make the Local Plan sound. However, private correspondence reveals lengthy negotiations over two months on what the Inspector would eventually agree. Negotiations which were not made public and did not involve councillors.

Consequently on November 24th, Opposition Group Leaders have written to the Inspector with our concerns. Furthermore, eight councillors acting together have requested an Extraordinary Council Meeting to table a motion which refers to the Gunning Principles that govern public consultations. The motion asks that the Council extends the consultation and ‘provide sufficient information which is available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response.’

We await a reply.

Yours faithfully,

Cllr **Alex Coley** (Independent Ruxley)

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Related report:

Another Local Plan? Epsom Councillors vote to begin again

Letter to the Inspector

Could you be Epsom and Ewell’s next citizen journalist?

26 November 2026

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Epsom & Ewell Times is inviting applications from local people interested in becoming volunteer citizen journalists, with a specially designed training course offering an introduction to reporting local news.

Do you take an interest in what happens in your neighbourhood? Are you curious about decisions made by local councils? Do you enjoy writing, meeting people or discovering stories that deserve a wider audience?

If so, Epsom & Ewell Times (EET) would like to hear from you.

The independent, not-for-profit local newspaper is looking to develop a team of volunteer citizen journalists who can help extend its coverage of the people, organisations, events and issues affecting Epsom, Ewell and surrounding communities.

No previous journalism experience is necessary. Enthusiasm, curiosity, fairness, reliability and an interest in local affairs matter more.

Learning the skills of local journalism

Successful applicants will be invited to attend a 90-minute introductory workshop designed specifically for EET. 3pm Monday 14th December in Epsom.

The course will introduce the principles of responsible journalism, including accuracy, impartiality, fairness, the importance of seeking comment from those affected by a story, and the ethical standards expected of a publisher regulated by IMPRESS, the independent press regulator.

Participants will also learn practical techniques for finding and researching local stories, interviewing contributors and preparing articles for publication.

The workshop will demonstrate how modern technology can make local journalism more accessible, including:

- Finding stories in council agendas, reports and public meetings.
- Extracting audio from recorded council meetings and producing transcripts.
- Analysing lengthy council documents, identify newsworthy issues and prepare draft reports.
- Checking facts, quotations and sources before publication.
- Finding photographs and illustrations that can lawfully be published without infringing copyright.
- Using AI-generated illustrations responsibly.
- Preparing articles, headlines and images for EET’s website.

The course will include short practical exercises and examples drawn from local news reporting.

Helping local stories get told

Citizen journalism offers opportunities to report on subjects that might otherwise receive little attention.

These might include planning applications, environmental concerns, local businesses, voluntary organisations, schools, cultural events, sporting achievements, community campaigns or decisions by local authorities.

There is also a role for those interested in investigating matters of public concern and holding public bodies to account.

Volunteers will be able to suggest their own stories and develop particular interests, while receiving editorial guidance and support.

EET will retain editorial responsibility for all material published on its website.

Who should apply?

Applications are welcome from adults of all backgrounds, including students, retired people, those considering a career in journalism and anyone who would simply like to make a worthwhile contribution to their community.

Applicants do not need professional writing qualifications or specialist technical knowledge, although competence with computers and the internet is necessary.

Volunteering need not involve a substantial weekly commitment. Contributors may be able to undertake occasional assignments according to their availability and interests.

The opportunity is voluntary and unpaid.

How to apply

Places on the introductory course will be limited, and EET will operate a selection process to identify applicants who demonstrate a genuine interest in local journalism and the potential to contribute to the newspaper.

Applicants will be asked to complete a short online form explaining their interests, experience, availability and the kinds of stories they would particularly like to cover.

APPLICATION FORM LINK

Details of the course date, time and venue will be confirmed to successful applicants.

EET hopes that the initiative will help develop a new generation of community reporters and strengthen independent local

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journalism at a time when informed, trustworthy reporting of local affairs is more important than ever.

Could you help tell the stories of Epsom and Ewell? We would like to hear from you.

Epsom Choral Society delivers an evening of choral masterpieces

26 November 2026



Epsom Choral Society ranks among the top cultural highlights of the town. The choir performs at a number of venues in the area; on this occasion, however, the concert was held in St Martin's Parish Church.

On a chilly autumn evening, a large audience assembled in the church to hear three choral masterpieces, one very new and the others established repertoire, all expertly played by the English Sinfonietta and sung with huge enthusiasm by Epsom Choral Society (ECS). The conductor was ECS's Musical Director, Julian Collings.

The evening's concert came about as a result of a generous legacy from the late Vivian Brown (1926–2023), who had been a keen member of ECS for many years.

ECS was joined by five soloists. They had plenty to do, either as individuals, in pairs and even trios. Their names were Lisa Swayne (soprano), Ana Beard Fernandez (soprano), Henry Capper-Allen (counter-tenor), James Beddoe (tenor) and Mark Nathan (baritone).

Bach's Mass in G Minor

It is probably anachronistic to claim it, but Bach recycled a lot of his music – after all, why let a good idea go to waste? The B Minor Mass is a famous example of this 'recycling of music'.

Admittedly not on the same scale as the B Minor, Bach also wrote some Lutheran Masses during his Leipzig years. The Mass in G Minor, BWV 235, opened the concert. It is a *Missa Brevis* in so many words: just two movements, Kyrie eleison followed by the Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Both movements display all the typical Bachian characteristics: expressive solo numbers ranging from the delicate to the rumbustious; masterly instrumentation; and effortless counterpoint, i.e. the skill of combining two or more 'themes' or tunes in such a way that there is no clash.

In the Gloria, the choir alternates with the three soloists, culminating in Cum Sancto Spiritu Amen – 'with the Holy Ghost, Amen'.

Clive Osgood's Magnificat

The Magnificat by Clive Osgood followed. Clive is Director of Music and Organist at St Bartholomew's Church, Haslemere.

The Magnificat dates from 2024 and was written as a companion piece to Bach's Magnificat, which we heard later. Osgood retains Bach's framework of choir intertwined with solo numbers, but his musical language is far more modern.

Inter alia, I heard allusions to Chilcott's 'Little Jazz Mass' and echoes of 'Oedipus Rex'; but the spine-chilling opening is surely Osgood's own. The audience sat on tenterhooks of expectation throughout.

Bach's Magnificat brings the evening to a close

After the interval, it was the turn of Bach's own Magnificat, and this famous work brought the evening to a resounding conclusion.

Here, the effect was as a glass of clear water after the harmonic and orchestral riches of the Osgood.

The listener detects how Bach – recently appointed as Kantor at the prestigious Thomaskirche in Leipzig – wanted to impress his employers. Hence the five-part choir, five soloists and orchestra including trumpets.

All very succinct, as Bach shortens the work by dropping long arias in favour of dramatic momentum.

Timothy Tomkins

Photo credit – Clive Richardson

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19th November 2026

26 November 2026

Council News Obituary

Popular Epsom and Ewell Councillor Jan Mason dies



17 November 2026

A veteran councillor who “tirelessly” represented her community for more than three decades has sadly died, it has been announced. Residents Association Councillor Jan Mason, who served on both Surrey … Read More

Council Council constitution

Cllr Dallen’s “arrogance” complaint continues to consume Epsom and Ewell Council time



17 November 2026

Questions have been raised about the impartiality of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council’s handling of complaints against councillors after it emerged that a committee chairman who withdrew from a controversial … Read More

Business Environment

Rising Energy Bills, Power Cuts and a VAT Deadline: Is It Time to Rethink Your Home’s Energy?



16 November 2026

SPONSORED ARTICLE | Provided by Glow Homes For homeowners in Epsom, Ewell and across Surrey, energy is back in the headlines. Conflict in the Middle East has unsettled wholesale energy … Read More

Council Housing Planning

From paddock to housing at edge in Epsom?



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16 November 2026

More than 60 new homes could soon be built under proposals to develop a paddock on the edge of a Surrey town. Wates Developments Limited is seeking outline planning permission … Read More

Council Nature

Stoneleigh library giving away trees



16 November 2026

Surrey County Council is set to give 450 free trees to residents, at three Surrey library giveaway events. The giveaway is part of the county council's tree strategy which launched … Read More

Crime News Policing

Gold scammer sentenced after Surrey Police investigation



16 November 2026

'All that glitters is not gold', fine words by non-other than William Shakespeare and in this case very apt, as the scammer that we're about to unmask tried to steal … Read More

Rugby Sports

Again Sutton and Epsom Find a Way Away

16 November 2026

Old Elthamians 17 – Sutton & Epsom 20 14th November. Regional 2 South East returned to action after a Saturday of recuperation, international rugby and the usual plethora of social … Read More

Council Housing Planning

Epsom Green Belt Housing Battle Now in Inspector's Hands



16 November 2026

A Government-appointed Planning Inspector will now decide whether 110 homes can be built on Green Belt farmland beside Langley Vale, Epsom. The decision follows a six-day public inquiry at Epsom … Read More

Football Sports

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Ten-man Fleet Town hold Epsom & Ewell to a draw



15 November 2026

Epsom & Ewell 1–1 Fleet Town Epsom & Ewell shared the points with Fleet Town in a dramatic 1-1 draw at Chalky Lane, Chessington, on Saturday 14th November 2026 in … Read More

Community News Volunteers

King’s Award for Age Concern Epsom & Ewell volunteers

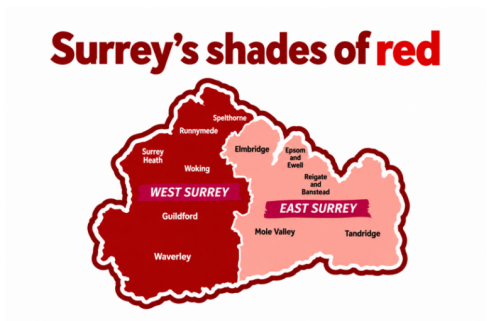


14 November 2026

A former borough mayor who has made more than 3,000 trips as a volunteer driver is among the people whose work has earned Age Concern Epsom & Ewell the King’s … Read More

Council Finances

West Surrey’s financial mess



14 November 2026

West Surrey “will operate in a very challenging financial environment, with significant budgetary pressures and limited financial resources” after its constituent councils reported a £4.92million annual shortfall in their accounts. … Read More

Council News

Surrey County Council celebrates 138 years – but is this the time for a farewell party?



13 November 2026

Surrey County Council is preparing to celebrate its 138-year history with a programme of exhibitions, events and archive displays, just as it enters the final 138 days of its existence. … Read More

Crime News Policing

Epsom shops targeted in Surrey crackdown on illegal goods

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13 November 2026

Shops in Epsom were among premises targeted in a county-wide crackdown on illegal trading and suspected money laundering which resulted in the seizure of goods valued at £55,500. The October … Read More

Football Sports

4 goal victory brings smiles to Epsom and Ewell FC



12 November 2026

Knaphill 0–4 Epsom & Ewell FC. Tuesday 10th November 2026. Redding Way, Knaphill. Combined Counties Premier League South. Epsom & Ewell produced a superb all-round display to dismantle league leaders … Read More

Council Elections

East Surrey by-election before it assumes power



12 November 2026

History has been made after the first ever by-election for the newly created East Surrey Council was called – five months before it officially takes over services. On April 1, … Read More

Council Council constitution News

Surrey Mayor? Not so fast, says East Surrey leader



12 November 2026

The incoming East Surrey council’s leader has said there is still “a lot of detail” to iron out before Surrey gets its own elected mayor. Councillor Steve Wotton (Liberal Democrats: … Read More

Education Local History

Polish precursor to Turing’s code cracking gets Surrey plaque

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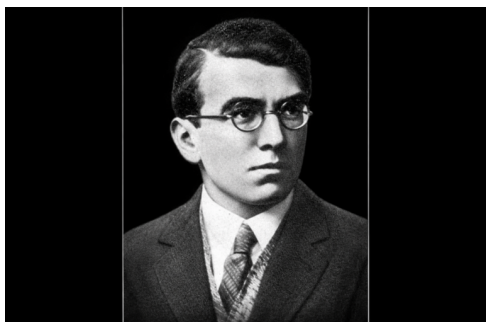

12 November 2026

Henryk Zygalski (1908–1978), a Polish mathematician who helped break the Enigma cipher before the Second World War, laying the foundations for Alan Turing’s work at Bletchley Park, has been honoured … Read More

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Rising Energy Bills, Power Cuts and a VAT Deadline: Is It Time to Rethink Your Home’s Energy?

26 November 2026



SPONSORED ARTICLE | Provided by Glow Homes

For homeowners in Epsom, Ewell and across Surrey, energy is back in the headlines.

Conflict in the Middle East has unsettled wholesale energy markets. Household bills have risen, with further increases forecast. The Government has also highlighted power outages as a risk worth preparing for.

Meanwhile, a significant change to the VAT treatment of home energy installations is approaching.

Against this backdrop, solar panels and battery storage are becoming about more than reducing electricity bills. They’re about giving homeowners greater control over how their properties generate, store and use energy.

More control over rising energy costs

The energy price cap increased in October 2026, and further rises are forecast for January.

Solar panels allow a household to generate some of its own electricity, reducing the amount purchased from the grid. A battery can store surplus generation for use later, including during expensive evening periods.

The financial benefit depends on the home’s electricity use, system design, tariffs and installation costs. It’s a long-term investment, not a guaranteed return.

Could your home keep the lights on during a power cut?

Government resilience planning has brought renewed attention to electricity disruption, although widespread blackouts remain unlikely.

Solar panels and batteries can contribute to household resilience, but there’s an important distinction: most conventional installations automatically disconnect during a power cut.

To maintain electricity to selected household circuits during an outage, a system needs specific backup capability and appropriate electrical design.

For homeowners concerned about keeping essential equipment running, that’s a question worth asking before installation.

Glow Homes

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12th November 2026

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Community Education Local History

Glyn School’s ‘forgotten’ servicemen commemorated 80 years after war



11 November 2026

Six former pupils of Glyn School in Ewell who lost their lives in the Second World War are to have their names added to the school’s war memorial more than … Read More

Council Council constitution

Will Middlesex get in Surrey West’s title after all?



10 November 2026

West Surrey should just “crack on” with changing its name to include South Middlesex, the secretary of state for devolution has said. The new authority is set to take over … Read More

Arts Culture

Epsom Chamber Choir’s stirring debut under new conductor



10 November 2026

Concert review by Lynfa Landauer – 9th November 2026 The stirring opening chords of Epsom Chamber Choir’s concert at St Martin’s, Epsom, set the bar firmly for a wonderful evening … Read More

Council News Transport

Ignorance of ULEZ is no bliss for Surrey drivers



9 November 2026

Surrey County Council has stood by its decision not to allow ULEZ signs in the county, despite data showing tens of thousands of Surrey motorists have been hit with fines … Read More

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Football Sports

Good shots beat Badshot



8 November 2026

Saturday 7 November 2026 · Chalky Lane, Chessington · Combined Counties Premier League South · Full time: Epsom & Ewell 3–1 Badshot Lea · Attendance: 116 Before kick-off, players, officials … Read More

Health News

Epsom and St Helier hospital workers bring pay and pension claims



8 November 2026

Around 250 cleaners, porters and catering workers at Epsom and St Helier hospitals are pursuing employment tribunal claims over the pay and pension arrangements they were given after becoming NHS … Read More

Council Housing

Bourne Hall in Ewell to lodge social housing



7 November 2026

A historic Surrey building is set to return to use as social housing after “sensitive” renovation works were given the green light. Planning permission and listed building consent have been … Read More

Community Foodbank Volunteers

Epsom foodbank charity aims to raise £11,300 in Christmas appeal



7 November 2026

Fourteen years after local churches and community groups opened the first Epsom & Ewell Foodbank centres, the Surrey charity that grew out of their work is asking residents to help … Read More

Community Council Local History

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How three Epsom and Ewell wedding venues came into public hands



7 November 2026

On Wednesday 29 September 1937 the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey presented Epsom and Ewell with its Charter of Incorporation, from a platform put up for the day in Epsom High … Read More

Community Council

Guildford seeks Sanctuary status



7 November 2026

A Surrey borough council leader has warned of an “increase in propaganda” from people seeking to “spread hatred” in the community. Guildford Borough Council’s leader Julia McShane (Liberal Democrats: Westborough) … Read More

Business Environment Nature

SES Water revives Surrey farm grants as leakage rises



7 November 2026

SES Water has reopened a grant fund to help Surrey farmers protect rivers and groundwater from agricultural pollution. The relaunch comes as Environment Agency figures show that leakage from the … Read More

Community Volunteers

78 year old Epsom runner’s 100th marathon to support Ukraine this winter



5 November 2026

An Epsom charity is asking residents to help families facing winter without powe

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Glyn School’s ‘forgotten’ servicemen commemorated 80 years after war

26 November 2026



Six former pupils of Glyn School in Ewell who lost their lives in the Second World War are to have their names added to the school’s war memorial more than 80 years after their deaths.

The names were discovered through research undertaken by history teacher Alex Summers for a book marking the school’s centenary. The six men had been omitted from the original memorial, either because they had moved away after leaving school or because their parents had lost contact with the school.

A special ceremony will be held at Glyn School at 10am on Friday 13th November to commemorate the six former pupils and add their names to the roll of honour.

The service will be attended by Headteacher Jo Garrod, Helen Maguire MP for Epsom and Ewell, a former Captain in the Royal Military Police, Mayor of Epsom and Ewell Councillor Lucie McIntyre, Reverend Sue Ayling from St Mary’s Church in Ewell, staff, pupils and relatives of those commemorated.

The six former pupils

Michael Daniell was killed in action on 22nd February 1941, aged 23, when his aircraft crashed while on patrol over the Atlantic. His family lived on Epsom High Street, where they worked as newsagents.

Henry Whitticks was killed in action on 24th November 1943, aged 29, while returning from a bombing raid on Berlin. His father was a police officer, and Henry also joined the police after leaving school. He had been an editor of the school’s first newsletter.

James Sherriff was killed in action following an aircraft crash on 18th June 1942, aged 24. He is buried in Epsom Cemetery. He came second in his form in 1928, and his family lived on Worple Road, Epsom.

Bernard Preece died as a prisoner of war in Japan on 12th December 1942, aged 25. He attended Glyn for two years. His father worked as a musical instrument manufacturer.

John Bury was killed in action in Greece on 26th April 1941. He attended Glyn for four years, and his family lived on Ferndale Road, Banstead.

Peter Poulten was killed in action in Italy on 11th December 1943, aged 22, while serving with the Parachute Regiment. He attended Glyn for eighteen months. His mother contributed towards silver trophies for House Cross Country and Cricket.

Remembering Glyn’s wartime generation

In all, 38 former Glyn pupils lost their lives during the Second World War. Around one in five pupils who started at the school between 1931 and 1933 died in the conflict.

More than 200 former pupils and staff served in the armed forces during the Second World War, while at least three members of staff also fought in the First World War.

Former pupils, staff, parents and the wider school community have contributed donations to fund the new memorial.

George Howard, history and politics teacher at Glyn School, said:

“Over 200 former students and staff served in the military in the Second World War and at least three members of staff fought in the First World War as well. The school’s war memorial is a permanent reminder of their courage and sacrifice and, thanks to the dedicated research into the school’s one hundred-year history, the names of another six former pupils will be forever remembered as we add them to that roll of honour with a sense of deep pride.”

Helen Maguire MP, Member of Parliament for Epsom and Ewell, said:

“As someone who has served their country, I understand what it means to put on the uniform knowing what it may cost. These six young men from our community made the ultimate sacrifice, and they deserve to be remembered alongside their schoolmates. I am very glad that Glyn School is making sure their names are never lost again.”

The addition of the six names will ensure that their sacrifice is recognised alongside that of their fellow pupils, correcting an omission that has endured for more than eight decades.

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Epsom Chamber Choir’s stirring debut under new conductor

26 November 2026



Concert review by Lynfa Landauer – 9th November 2026

The stirring opening chords of Epsom Chamber Choir’s concert at St Martin’s, Epsom, set the bar firmly for a wonderful evening under new conductor Patrick Allies. The a cappella programme, *My Heart’s Desire*, was based on the theme of love, with sacred pieces taking their inspiration from poetry of love and longing, including the Old Testament’s Song of Solomon.

Taverner’s Mass *The Western Wynde*, based on a 16th-century song, was the central work, its movements interspersed with music across the centuries, from Taverner’s near contemporaries Tallis, Victoria and Clemens non Papa through to living composers, including the choir’s own published composer, Helen Williams.

Allies commented that he had programmed *The Western Wynde* for his first concert because it was his favourite setting of the Mass, but added that it was also possibly the most difficult setting (a few wry smiles amongst the choir seemed to confirm this). I wondered whether he had chosen it partly to test his new choir, but if so, they passed with flying colours. The full choir, quartet, octet and soloists seamlessly negotiated any technical difficulties to give us an assured performance of this intriguing work.

A full and impressive sound

The choir has an impressive, full sound which we heard to great effect, most especially in the later anthems. Bairstow’s well-loved *I Sat Down Under His Shadow*, Kerensa Briggs’ *Ubi Caritas*, Howard Skempton’s *Rise Up My Love*, and settings of *Set Me As a Seal Upon Thine Heart* by both William Walton and Eleanor Daley were all performed with great warmth and commitment. Helen Williams’ composition *Beloved*, a setting of *Rise Up and Come Away* from the Song of Solomon, enthralled both the audience and choir.

Perhaps my favourite part of the concert, though, was, ironically, the closing piece, Clemens non Papa’s *Ego Flos Campi* (I Am the Flower of the Field). With the choir gathered more closely together around the conductor, they gave a wonderfully ethereal performance.

The musical programme was nicely punctuated with a couple of poetry readings on the theme of love, also reaching across the centuries. Sir Philip Sidney’s *My True Love Hath My Heart*, written in 1593, was accompanied by the less familiar *Not Love Perhaps* by A. S. J. Tessimond (1902–1962).

Looking ahead to Christmas and spring

We can look forward to more inspiring concerts from the choir, with its Christmas concert, *Peace on Earth*, on Saturday 12th December, and its spring concert on 13th March, both at St Martin’s Church, Epsom. I, for one, will be keeping an eye on their website for more details!

Lynfa Landauer

Photograph (credit Ralph Baylis)

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How three Epsom and Ewell wedding venues came

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into public hands

26 November 2026



On Wednesday 29 September 1937 the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey presented Epsom and Ewell with its Charter of Incorporation, from a platform put up for the day in Epsom High Street. The same day, Nonsuch Park had its official opening.

The mansion in that park is one of six places in the borough licensed for civil ceremonies. Three of the six are at Epsom Downs Racecourse, Epsom College and the Royal Automobile Club's Woodcote Park.

The other three, Nonsuch Mansion, Ewell Court House and Bourne Hall, are in public hands, and each got there by a different route.

Bought by four councils

Nonsuch is named after the palace Henry VIII began there in 1538. It was mostly pulled down in the 1680s.

The house in the park today took its shape between 1802 and 1806, when Jeffry Wyatt, later Sir Jeffry Wyatville, enlarged an older house for Samuel Farmer, MP for Huntingdon. Historic England's listing calls it an early commission in the Tudor Gothic style that Wyatt later took to Windsor Castle. He modelled its entrance front on pictures of the lost palace.

Beside the front door is a terracotta tablet inscribed with the date 1543 and Henry VIII's name in Latin, which the listing describes as a fragment of the palace.

The Farmers held the estate for more than a century. Between the wars new houses went up along its southern edge, and work began on an arterial road through the park.

Four councils bought the mansion and 263 acres of the Little Park as public open space: London County Council, Surrey County Council, Sutton and Cheam Borough Council, and Epsom and Ewell, then still an urban district.

The road was abandoned, though its embankment can still be traced. A joint committee has managed the park ever since.

Couples now marry in the mansion's Orchid Room, which has stained glass and large bay windows.

Saved by its neighbours

Ewell Court House on Lakehurst Road was rebuilt for a marriage.

It began as Avenue House, named for the elms that lined its approach from Kingston Road. It was one of the gentlemen's houses built after the fame of Epsom's spa drew London merchants here in the late 1600s.

The house passed to the Bridges family, whose money came from gunpowder mills on the Hogsmill. The mills closed in 1875 because they could not meet new safety laws.

Four years later John Henry Bridges married Edith Tritton and set about making a new home for them both. J. Alick Thomas, a local architect then new to practice, rebuilt the house in the Old English style, keeping its old core, and the millpond became an ornamental lake.

Stonework and panelling were marked with a B and an anchor, for the family motto, "Heaven My Haven".

The Stoddarts, who followed the Bridges, sold the house to the council in 1935.

In the autumn of 2003, the Epsom and Ewell History Explorer records, the council resolved to dispose of it for residential development. Local residents formed the Ewell Court House Organisation, ECHO, whose business plan for a mix of commercial and community uses persuaded the council to reverse its decision.

Ceremonies are held today in the Social Suite, with its polished maple floors and high moulded ceilings, which opens onto a terrace overlooking the lake. The grounds still have their cascades, rock pools and grotto.

Listed for its space-age flair

Bourne Hall in Spring Street takes its name from an older house. Garbrand Hall, a country house of about 1770, was praised in the gardening press of the 1870s for its chrysanthemums and orchids. It was renamed Bourne Hall when it was bought for a school in 1926.

The council later bought the estate on condition that the grounds were preserved. The old house, in poor repair, was demolished in 1962.

In its place A.G. Sheppard Fidler and Associates designed a round building under a copper dome, with twenty precast concrete ribs rising out of it and a glass-fibre rooflight at the centre. It opened in 1970.

Historic England, which listed it at Grade II on 30 April 2015, says the result resembles a flying saucer and was designed to sit low in the mature grounds. The café inside is the Flying Saucer Café.

The listing also cites its generous, top-lit interior and a ramp and lift that built in disabled access from the start. It notes a

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stainless steel plaque in the foyer recording the official opening by the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey.

Bourne Hall holds weddings and civil ceremonies, and some of Garbrand Hall's trees can still be seen in its grounds, above the springs where the Hogsmill rises.

All six are on Surrey County Council's list of approved venues. The Wedding Venue List, which covers every licensed wedding venue in England and Wales, has them on one page at weddingvenuelist.co.uk/venues-in/epsom-and-ewell.

5th November 2026

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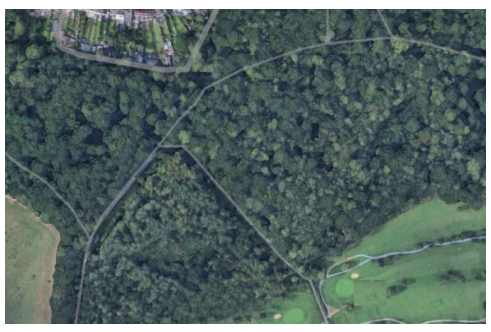

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New BBC analysis shows Surrey is home to some of the densest concentrations of ancient woodland in England, as conservation groups warn that the drive to build 1.5 million homes … Read More

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Council Council constitution

A Surrey Mayor is on the horizon



2 November 2026

Surrey is on the verge of getting its own elected mayor like those in Greater Manchester and the West Midlands, according to plans announced in the Budget today. Chancellor John … Read More

Council Transport

Oxshott weighs in with traffic control camera



2 November 2026

A Surrey village is set to get a new traffic camera to protect its streets from heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) following a residents’ petition – although many believe this measure … Read More

Community Council

Christmas Magic is Bourne Again



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Dorah May Hancock prepares to retire after eleven years supporting Epsom and Ewell's older residents



31 October 2026

A face you never fail to see at all Epsom and Ewell community and charity events. Dorah May Hancock is preparing to retire after more than eleven years as Chief … Read More

Business Community Health

Free Local Activity Club Heralds New Epsom & Banstead Home Care Service



30 October 2026

Three friends are launching a free local activity club in November, followed by the launch of a new home care service in Epsom and Banstead. Emmanuel Perez, his wife Lelane, … Read More

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East Surrey's open cabinet: a new culture or a honeymoon? There is something refreshing about a council cabinet meeting at which the outcome does not appear to have been settled … Read More

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East Surrey Cabinet member will not be moved, but school will be



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A leading East Surrey councillor has defended his dissent over a major school move decision after the opposition leader suggested he should “consider his position” in cabinet. The shadow authority’s … Read More

Arts Culture Education

Epsom’s Laine Academy opens new studios



29 October 2026

Young performers in Epsom have a new place to dance, sing and take to the stage following the opening of Laine Academy’s studios at Parkside House. The academy, which offers … Read More

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Payroll Essentials for Independent Businesses in Epsom and Ewell

26 November 2026



From the independent shops lining Epsom’s high street to small firms around Ewell Village, local businesses require a reliable payroll process to ensure employees are paid correctly and on time. However, without the right tools, payroll can be a huge administrative burden, even with a small team.

So, with that in mind, here are the main payroll considerations for independent businesses in Epsom and Ewell and how employers can keep on top of their responsibilities without spending hours on paperwork and manual calculations.

Important Payroll Considerations

Holiday Pay

Calculating holiday pay is fairly straightforward for full time staff with fixed hours. However, when it comes to part-time employees or those who work irregular hours, it can be a little more complicated.

For part time workers with fixed hours, holiday entitlement works on a pro-rata basis, whereas workers with irregular hours build up their entitlement at a rate of 12.07%. Because of these differences, classifying workers accurately and documenting calculations correctly is essential for staying compliant.

Workplace Pensions

Employees aged 22 and over who earn more than £10,000 a year must be automatically enrolled into a qualifying workplace pension. They are allowed to opt-out, but they must always be auto-enrolled if they meet the eligibility criteria.

Employers must then contribute the correct amount (at least 5%) and deduct the right amount from the employee’s pay (at least 3%).

HMRC Deadlines

HMRC requires employers to submit accurate reports. This includes:

- An FPS (Full Payment Submission) on or before payday
- An EPS (Employer Payment Summary) by the 19th of the tax month
- Year-end FPS by 5 April

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New starters or leavers must also be declared, and if any of the information submitted is incorrect, it must be rectified as soon as possible.

How Employers Can Simplify the Payroll Process

It's not uncommon for small and independent businesses to handle payroll manually. However, particularly if part time or seasonal employees are involved, this can lead to huge amounts of admin. And any errors can lead to further complications, fines, and even legal disputes.

To ensure businesses aren't spending hours upon hours calculating wages, holiday entitlement, deductions, and contributions, and aren't worrying about creating accurate reports and submitting them on time, do follow managed payroll services.

By outsourcing payroll, employees consistently receive the right amount of pay, and businesses remain compliant without having to spend a considerable amount of time and money in the process.

Balancing Compliance and Admin is Essential

Maintaining payroll compliance is critical, but it's important that businesses aren't bogged down by admin in the process. By outsourcing payroll instead, employers can have confidence that their employees will be paid correctly and on time and reports will be submitted to HMRC accurately and before their deadline.

[Sponsored article]

Christmas Magic is Bourne Again

26 November 2026



Bourne Hall will launch its Christmas celebrations on Saturday 28 November with a day of family entertainment culminating in the switching on of its festive lights.

Santa's Grotto will open at 10am, with children able to meet Santa and receive a small treat for £3. No advance booking will be required for visits on the day, and the grotto will remain open until 5.30pm.

The main Christmas Lights Switch-On event begins at 3pm, when visitors will be able to browse a Local Makers Market offering handmade gifts, crafts and other festive products.

Fairground attractions, including teacup rides and trampolines, will also be available during the afternoon.

Music and entertainment will be provided on the main stage by the I Play Music Collective, with local singers and musicians performing a programme of seasonal numbers.

The cast of this year's Bourne Hall pantomime, Snow White, is also due to make an appearance before the main countdown.

At 6pm, the Mayor of Epsom & Ewell will switch on Bourne Hall's Christmas lights following a short address to those gathered.

Cllr Clive Woodbridge, Chair of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's Community and Wellbeing Committee, said the annual event was "one of the highlights of our community calendar".

"It is wonderful to see residents, families, local groups and businesses coming together to celebrate the start of the festive season," he said.

Christmas activities at Bourne Hall will continue through December. Families will be able to visit the grotto on weekdays free of charge to write letters to Santa, while Saturday visits to meet Santa on 5, 12 and 19 December must be booked in advance.

Bourne Hall's museum, library, café and surrounding grounds will also remain available to visitors during the festive period.

Bourne Hall Christmas Lights Switch-On

Saturday 28 November, Bourne Hall, Ewell.

Santa's Grotto: 10am–5.30pm, £3 per child, payable on the door. No prebooking required on 28 November.

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Christmas Lights Switch-On event: from 3pm.

Lights switched on: 6pm.

Advance booking is required for Santa visits on Saturdays 5, 12 and 19 December.

5th Dec – Meet Santa at Bourne Halls Christmas grotto | Sessami

12th Dec – Meet Santa at Bourne Halls Christmas grotto | Sessami

19th Dec – Meet Santa at Bourne Halls Christmas grotto | Sessami

Image: Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.

Free Local Activity Club Heralds New Epsom & Banstead Home Care Service

26 November 2026



Three friends are launching a free local activity club in November, followed by the launch of a new home care service in Epsom and Banstead.

Emmanuel Perez, his wife Lelane, and Andras Sziredzsuk are combining their business and care skills to set up the Walfinch Epsom and Banstead home care service. First, though, Lelane says: “We are so keen to start improving physical and mental health in the local community that we are launching a Walfinch Thrive Club, offering everyone free activity to improve health and wellbeing.”

Free local activities

The club will launch on Thursday 5 November 2026, from 10.30am to 12.30pm, at Banstead Community Centre, Bolters Lane, The Horseshoe, Banstead SM7 2BQ, and take place every first and third Thursday each month.

Lelane says: “Anyone is welcome to come along, with no need to book. As well as accessible exercises which can be done seated or standing, led by a local professional physiotherapist, there will be refreshments and time to chat and make new friends. Physical activity and socialisation are proven to benefit physical and mental health, and can combat loneliness.”

The sessions will also offer a chance to question the physiotherapist about how to stay healthy and to avoid falls, and to ask care specialists about care services.

Why home care?

All of three founders have personal experience of care and business. Emmanuel grew up in the Philippines with a mother who had undergone a kidney transplant, and while establishing his new life in the UK, worked in a care home. He says: “It showed me the difference that thoughtful, person-centred care can make.” During his career in engineering, the idea of building a care business never left him.

Andras, a law graduate with high-end customer service skills gained as a regional manager in a luxury auto-services company, also has direct experience of caregiving, having spent time in his twenties looking after his mother, who eventually died of cancer.

Meanwhile Lelane, who is the Registered Manager for Walfinch Epsom and Banstead, is a nurse, who previously managed a local 24-patient rehabilitation unit and led a team of 54 staff.

Lelane says: “When we decided to set up a business together, we identified the home care sector as offering steady and sustainable demand. We felt a franchise was a safer way to start.”

Why it’s Walfinch

They shopped around care franchises, but ultimately chose Walfinch after attending a Round Table event held by Walfinch Founder and CEO Amrit Dhaliwal, where they met other franchisees and registered managers.

“We are looking forward to starting our Thrive Club, so we can get to know people and local health care professionals, and plan to initially offer care to people over 65 and then to adults with learning disabilities,” Lelane says.

- For franchise opportunities with Walfinch visit walfinchfranchising.com
- For home care services visit www.walfinch.com

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Plus ça change …… will this openness last?

26 November 2026

East Surrey’s open cabinet: a new culture or a honeymoon?

There is something refreshing about a council cabinet meeting at which the outcome does not appear to have been settled before the public arrives.

East Surrey’s debate over the relocation of Reigate Priory Junior School offered residents something worth watching: cabinet members expressing different views, arguments being challenged and a decision reached by a divided vote.

Cllr Ashley Tilling (LibDem Walton South & Oatlands), the shadow authority’s lead for children and youth services, opposed the move. Seven colleagues supported it. He lost the argument and the vote.

Should that cost him his position? Apparently so, according to Conservative opposition leader Cllr David Lewis (Conservative Cobham & Oxshott South), who suggested that he should “consider his position”.

But what, precisely, was the offence? Expressing a judgement openly? Failing to agree with the majority? Allowing the public to discover that a difficult decision had produced disagreement among those responsible for making it?

Cllr Tilling described the proceedings as a “healthy debate”. On the evidence of the report, that seems a reasonable description.

A contrast with Epsom and Ewell

For residents accustomed to Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, the contrast is striking.

The ruling Residents’ Association group’s practice of meeting privately to settle its position before public council meetings has left an obvious question hanging over proceedings: how much opportunity remains for public debate to change the outcome?

Private political meetings are legitimate. Councillors need opportunities to discuss proposals, test arguments and organise their work. Every political group will sometimes want to talk behind closed doors.

But there is a democratic cost when those discussions effectively determine decisions that are subsequently presented to the public for formal approval. Residents can watch the speeches and count the votes while remaining unable to see where the decisive arguments were made, whose objections were overcome or what persuaded anyone to change their mind.

A meeting can satisfy the requirements of public access while revealing remarkably little about how power is exercised.

The Residents’ Associations’ claim to stand apart from conventional party politics makes this particularly relevant. Independence is less convincing when the public sees a settled group position but cannot follow the discussion that produced it.

Disagreement is useful information

East Surrey has, on this occasion, shown another possibility.

Residents know that the school relocation divided the cabinet. They can examine the objections, assess the majority’s response and hold individual councillors accountable for their votes.

That is useful democratic information. Public unanimity would have told them less.

Nor should opposition councillors discourage this openness. They are entitled to challenge a cabinet member’s judgement, expose inconsistencies and question whether a policy is workable. But suggesting that losing a cabinet vote makes someone’s position untenable risks encouraging the very discipline that turns public meetings into rehearsed performances.

There is a distinction between opposing a proposal before the decision and obstructing its implementation afterwards. The report establishes the former. It provides no basis for assuming the latter.

The harder test lies ahead

Nevertheless, one divided vote does not establish a lasting culture.

East Surrey is a new authority, still enjoying some of the freedom that comes with a fresh start. Is this the beginning of a more open approach, a honeymoon, or an experiment that experienced political operators will eventually dismiss as

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naive?

The real test will come when disagreement becomes electorally inconvenient.

Will cabinet members remain free to dissent when budgets tighten, services disappoint and opposition campaigners turn their words into leaflets? Will the leadership defend open debate when headlines describe it as division? Will councillors tolerate public uncertainty when the next election approaches?

Or will they retreat into the familiar safety of private group meetings, settle the difficult questions there and emerge with an agreed position for public consumption?

The answer will depend partly on how dissent is treated now. Demand resignation whenever a cabinet member loses a vote and the incentive to resolve every disagreement behind closed doors becomes stronger.

East Surrey deserves credit for allowing residents to witness a real difference of opinion. As Epsom and Ewell's borough council approaches its end, that offers a welcome contrast with the RA's closed approach to settling its position.

The challenge is to make openness a habit that survives political pressure. Residents should remember this meeting—and expect the same candour when governing becomes harder.

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Related report:

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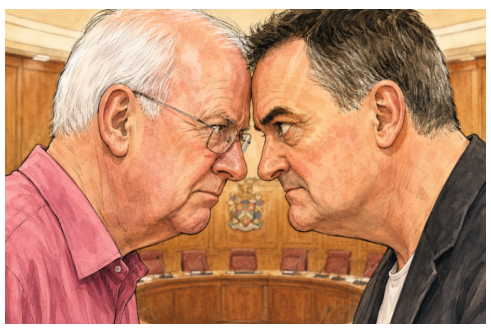

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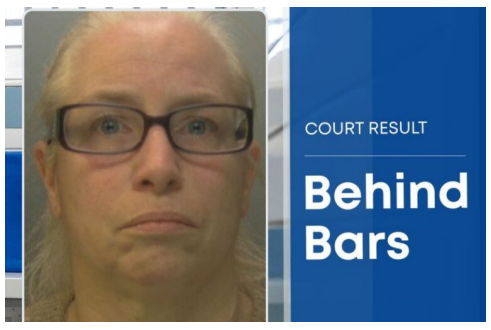

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Sutton & Epsom triumph over the elements



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Arts Culture News

Epsom artist’s peaches win Surrey readers’ choice award



27 October 2026

An Epsom artist has won a readers’ choice award in the Surrey Artist of the Year 2026 competition with a painting of peaches. Artan Jahaj’s Peaches on Navy was voted … Read More

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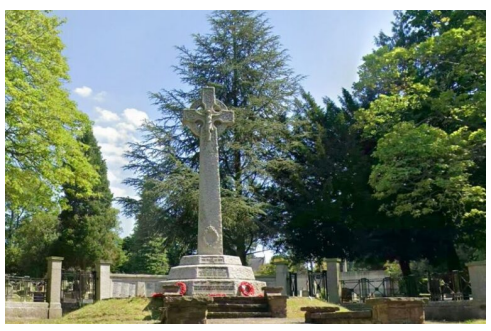
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Remembrance and Armistice Day activities



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