## One way to learn collective nouns

Last Monday, 7th August, **Epsom Library** invited **Frances Cohen** to come and read some of the poems from her recently published book: "A **Prickle of Porcupines - Really!!**"

The added attraction was that the poems had been illustrated by five of her 7 grandchildren, three of whom go to local schools in Epsom. Wallace Field Juniors, and Rosebery.

Frances is a 74 year old widow, and during the many COVID lockdowns she decided to use her talent for writing poems and using the different, and sometimes very amusing "collective nouns" she had discovered for animals and birds, which she had taught to her grandchildren over the years.

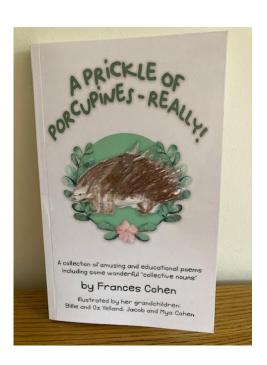
The poems are educational, including some interesting facts about each animal or bird, and really can be enjoyed by children of all ages, and adults alike.

Jellyfish have been around for millions of years,
They are 95% water, and have no brains, bones, or ears,
Even though they have long tentacles, they are not very smart,
They also have no eyes, and not even a heart.
150 million people get stung by them every year,
So they are not very popular when, near your beach, they appear.
So if you see them coming, you better draw back,
And if there are lots of them together, it is called a SMACK



The book is available on Amazon, and some Waterstones Shops

Image: Frances with and left to right: Oz, Billie, Mya and Jacob.



### County divisions - have your say on changes

New boundaries are being proposed for council divisions in Surrey County Council including in **Epsom and Ewell**.

The **Local Government Boundary Commission** wants to hear what residents and local organisations think about the proposals. A ten-week consultation on the proposals will run until 16 October 2023.

The Commission is the independent body that draws these boundaries. It is reviewing Surrey to make sure councillors will represent about the same number of electors, and that division arrangements will help the council work effectively.

The Commission has published proposals for changes to Surrey. It is proposing that there should be 81 single-councillor divisions.

### In respect of Epsom and Ewell the Commission reports:

"Epsom & Ewell has been allocated five councillors, each councillor representing on average 6% more electors than the county average.

We received two proposals for this borough, from the Council, who proposed a minimal level of change from the existing division arrangements, and from the **Epsom & Ewell Constituency Labour Party**. The proposal from the local Labour Party, while offering helpful information about deprivation levels throughout the borough, and proposing 100% coterminosity, offered poor levels of electoral equality for several divisions, including 12% fewer electors than average in Town division, and 21% more electors than average in Epsom Common & Downs.

### **Epsom Town & Downs, Epsom West and West Ewell**

We have adopted the Council's proposals for these divisions. The Labour proposal, which kept entire wards within single divisions throughout the borough, placed Stamford ward within a southern division, proposed to be called Epsom Common & Downs, resulting in very poor electoral inequality for this ward. In contrast, the Council's proposal, while splitting wards, offered good electoral equality, and used the strong boundary of the railway line through the centre of Epsom Town.

The only proposed change from the existing divisions we are making is to unify Horton ward within Epsom West division, placing electors on Oakwood Avenue, McKenzie Way and neighbouring streets in Epsom West division. This was proposed by the Council, and both improves coterminosity, and ensures that these electors are not isolated within West Ewell division as they are at present, and we have adopted it as part of our draft recommendations. The remaining boundaries of West Ewell division,

including the borough wards of Ruxley, West Ewell and the northern section of Court ward, are unchanged from the existing arrangements.

#### **Ewell and Ewell Court, Auriol & Cuddington**

Both proposals received suggested identical boundaries for these divisions, which we have adopted as part of our draft recommendations. There was a disagreement over the name of Ewell division, with the Labour proposal suggesting retaining the existing name, while the Council proposal suggested replicating the names of the constituent borough wards, and naming this division as Stoneleigh, Ewell Village & Nonsuch.

We considered this proposed name change carefully but, while retaining an open mind, have not included it as part of our draft recommendations. While we note that the northernmost division (Ewell Court, Auriol & Cuddington) has a name comprising the three wards constituting the division, we note that we are proposing to retain the existing boundaries for Ewell division, and that it may cause confusion for electors if the name of the division is changed but the boundaries remain unchanged. The Council did not provide significant evidence in favour of its proposed name, and we would welcome further evidence from residents and other interested parties as to whether a different name might better reflect the communities in this area.

Launching the consultation Professor Colin Mellors, Chair of the Commission, said: "We want people in Surrey to help us.

"We have drawn up proposals for new divisions in Surrey. We want to make sure these new electoral arrangements reflect communities. We also want them to be easy to understand and convenient for local people. Residents and local organisations can help us do that. We would like them to let us know whether they agree with our proposals before we take final decisions.

"It's easy to get involved. Go to our website. Or you can e-mail or write to us. Just tell us what you think and give us some details why you think that. It's really simple, so do get involved."

The Commission has a dedicated section on its website where people can see the detail of the proposals and comment on the names of divisions and their boundaries: https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/surrey.

People can also give their views by e-mail at reviews@lgbce.org.uk, and by post:

Review Officer (Surrey) LGBCE, PO Box 133 Blyth NE24 9FE

This consultation relates to arrangements for local government elections. It is separate from the review of parliamentary constituencies that has recently concluded.

An interactive map is available at https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/surrey

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body accountable to Parliament. It recommends fair electoral and boundary arrangements for local authorities in England. In doing so, it aims to:

- Make sure that, within an authority, each councillor represents a similar number of electors
- Create boundaries that are appropriate, and reflect community ties and identities
- Deliver reviews informed by local needs, views and circumstances
- Reflect the request for single-member divisions

## Epsom's child-play hobbled by e-coli

The popular adventure park off Horton Lane in Epsom known as **Hobbledown** has temporarily closed. This follows reports by the UK Health and Security Agency that three children who had visited the park had developed symptoms consistent with STEC (Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli)

Most E. coli strains do not cause disease, naturally living in the gut, but virulent strains can cause gastroenteritis, urinary tract infections, neonatal meningitis and other conditions.

Nick De Candole, the owner, published a statement on the business's website as follows:

"We have been informed by health authorities of a very small number of cases of an E. coli infection in individuals who recently visited the Park. After learning of this we immediately and voluntarily closed the Park as a precaution.

We are in close contact with Epsom & Ewell District Council Environmental Health team and also the UK Health Security Agency and co-operating fully with both on their respective investigations.

I have written to everyone who visited between 11 and 27 July to inform them of the situation and included with this a letter from the UKHSA with further information and guidance.

We are offering those who have booked to visit while we're closed options to reschedule or a full refund, plus 50% off next visit.

I can assure everyone that the wellbeing of visitors to Hobbledown is our absolute priority and we do everything in our power to keep guests safe. We look forward to welcoming everyone back soon."

**Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** advises "The symptoms of STEC, which include diarrhoea and stomach cramps, usually resolve themselves over a few days, but can occasionally lead to more serious outcomes. If you or someone in your family are showing symptoms of STEC, including bloody diarrhoea, and have visited the farm since 12 July, please contact NHS 111."

Personal injury adviser Claire Glasgow of law firm Field Fisher explains why E.coli must be taken seriously. "Several children involved in past claims for damages for negligent exposure to the E.Coli O157 bacteria subsequently developed HUS (haemolytic uraemic syndrome). HUS can lead to very serious complications including high blood pressure, heart failure, kidney failure, diabetes, seizures, neurological damages, coma, and, in severe cases, brain damage.

"An additional concern for the families involved is the uncertainty of the impact of the infection on their children as they grow up. At the very least, they face regular and ongoing hospital tests and live under the stress of potential long-term health problems."

### Greener solution for white goods?

When a housing association tenancy comes to an end what happens to the fridges, washing machines and carpets? Invariably, they are removed before the new tenants move in. Is this not a waste and could they not stay in place, if in good condition, for the benefit of the new tenants moving in? Especially those who are struggling financially?

This was the subject of a question posed to Epsom and Ewell Borough Council by Cllr **Alison Kelly** (LibDem Stamford). In answer Cllr **Clive Woodbridge** (RA Ewell Village Ward and Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee) stated "I have asked that officers write to all our local Housing Associations to ask them not to remove good quality and clean carpets/flooring during the voids process and for these then to be gifted to the incoming tenant. Hopefully, this will help our residents further during what is a very challenging time"

At the Full Council meeting of 25th July Cllr **Julie Morris** (LibDem College) asked Cllr Woodbridge to accept that the reasons for this included "the need to re-use these goods and not be so much of a disposable society". Cllr Woodbridge agreed saying "each case had to be treated on its own". He added "the Council were working much more closely with **Town and Country Housing** that had taken over from Rosebery Housing Association."

# Nonsuch girls solving tomorrow's problems

Samsung Electronics Co. (UK) Ltd has revealed today the winners of its third Solve for Tomorrow: Next Gen Competition, with a refreshed set of resources for 2023 on the theme of inclusivity.

593 secondary schools across the UK and Ireland signed up to receive free online resources including an interactive video tutorial to help inspire the next generation of innovators. Through the lesson, students aged 11-15 learn the basics of Design Thinking and receive insight into creative STEM careers such as design and marketing.

Samsung colleagues also volunteered their time to support with delivering the lesson in schools, judging entries and answering questions about their career. Students then entered their tech-for-good ideas to help design a future where everyone belongs into the Solve for Tomorrow: Next Gen Competition.

Dimanya, Dora and Marina from **Nonsuch High School for Girls**, (located Ewell's borders) were awarded 1st place in the 13-15 category with 'Signify', an app that helps people with hearing impairments by educating the public about sign language and how to communicate considerately with this community.

In the 13-15 age category, the runners-up were Ella, Mischa and Saliha from Nonsuch High School for Girls – awarded 2nd place for their app 'Beaumatch' to help people with darker skin tones find their right match of makeup, haircare, and skincare.

Commenting on the competition, Soohyun Jessie Park, Head of Corporate Social Responsibility at Samsung Electronics UK, said: "The calibre of ideas that our Solve for Tomorrow: Next Gen participants come up with is mind-blowing, proving world-beating innovations really can come from anyone and anywhere. We were thrilled to receive over 1,000 ideas from across the UK and Ireland this year and will continue to find new ways to support our next generation of innovators. Technology is a brilliant enabler of solutions to many of the issues our world faces, and the entries we receive show that young people are maximising their imagination and learning in abundance."

#### About Solve for Tomorrow

Solve for Tomorrow originally launched in the US in 2010 and has since seen more than 2.3 million students take part from over 55 countries, in a quest to use technology as a force for good. Every year, the competition is open to young students from all backgrounds with no experience or qualifications needed, empowering the next generation of creators and innovators to imagine a better world, thinking about ways technology can solve some of society's biggest issues.

### New timetable for ticket office consultation

Train operators are extending the time available to respond to a consultation reviewing "how tickets are sold" at stations by an extra five and a half weeks. It means passengers will now have until 1 September to complete the consultation, which they can do online on their local train company website or by visiting www.transportfocus.org.uk or Londontravelwatch.org.uk Operator information about the consultation will be made available in accessible formats.

In increasing the time available, train operators are "listening to feedback and hope that more people will have the opportunity to have their say in to changes to how tickets are sold at stations".

The **Rail Delivery Group** added: "Together with the extensive and on-going engagement with accessibility groups, as well as the independent passenger watchdogs scrutinising the proposals, the responses will shape final plans so that all passengers are supported as railway retailing is updated for the smartphone era. In addition to these proposals, the rail industry continues to roll out improvements to ticketing such as pay as you go and single leg pricing."

"Although local plans vary, overall the proposals aim to bring staff out from behind ticket office windows to provide more support for customers buying tickets and navigating stations, as they move in to new, multi-skilled 'customer host' roles.

"An estimated 99% of all transactions made at ticket offices last year could be made online or on ticket vending machines (TVMs). Where needed, TVMs across the network will be upgraded to sell a greater range of tickets and in rare cases where customers are unable to buy the ticket they need at a station, they would be able to buy on their journey, at a ticket selling facility en-route or at their end destination. Across the network as a whole, many ticket retailing facilities will remain open at busy interchanges, smoothing the transition.



Rail union, RMT hits back and declared today the consultation extension on the future of rail ticket offices is wholly inadequate and called for the whole "disastrous closure programme to be abandoned".

Following mass campaigns by RMT, disabled and passenger groups, the train operators and their "paymasters in government have been forced to extend ticket office closure consultations until September 1."

According to the RMT over 1,000 ticket offices are due to be closed with the loss of over 2,000 railway station staff.

RMT General Secretary **Mick Lynch** said: "Campaigning by our members on stations across the country alongside tenacious disabled peoples groups and passenger bodies has forced rail bosses and ministers to admit the original consultation was not fit for purpose and must be extended.

- "Although our pressure has forced their hand, it is still a deeply flawed and a wholly inadequate consultation process which we are considering challenging legally in the courts.
- "Our campaign to save ticket offices, protect our members jobs and look out for the best interests of all rail passengers will only intensify in the coming weeks.
- "20,000 rail workers will walk out on 29 July in pursuit of a negotiated settlement on job security pay, conditions and saving ticket offices."

Would you like to see ticket offices at Epsom, Ewell East, Ewell West and Stoneleigh stations closed? Write in your view to Epsom and Ewell Times.

Image: Epsom Railway Station ticket office today.

## Scrap on charges for DIY rubble waste

The **Liberal Democrats** on **Surrey County Council** claim the Conservative administration have ignored their own Government's demand to stop charging local residents for bringing DIY waste to local tips.

In 2018, the Surrey Lib Dems used a motion to call on the County Council to "Listen to the Government and drop the DIY charges" and the Lib Dems are again calling on the Council to do just that.

Five years on from that motion Surrey County Council is continuing to charge householders who bring DIY waste to their local community recycling centre for disposal, even though the practice contravenes government policy.

A statement published by **DEFRA** last month clarified that there should be a distinction made between the waste generated by a householder undertaking minor works to maintain and enhance their property and that emanating from the professional construction of buildings, demolition etc.

Leader of Surrey Lib Dems, Will Forster said:

"I don't normally agree with a Conservative government, but for once it does seem to be on the side of normal residents. The Tory administration in Surrey decided to interpret the rules differently from some other waste authorities and will now have to admit they were wrong. It is quite clear that Surrey residents should not be subject to these charges, and it is unacceptable that the County Council is continuing to make them pay. It is a shame that they didn't listen to us back in 2018"



Epsom recycle centre.

A spokesperson for **Surrey County Council** responded to the **Epsom and Ewell Times**: "On 18th June the Government announced that it was proposing to change the law to require local authorities to accept small amounts of construction waste from 'do it yourself'(DIY) activities, from householders, free of charge. Surrey County Council, like most of our neighbouring authorities currently make a charge for all rubble and plasterboard.

"As part of the announcement, the Government has set out the quantity of construction waste that will have to be accepted free of charge - up to two 50-litre rubble bags or one large item no larger than  $2m \times 0.75m \times 0.7m$  per household at a maximum

frequency of 4 visits over 4 weeks.

"Whilst it is as yet unclear as to when the Government intend to change the law to implement the policy change Surrey County Council's Cabinet had already been reviewing the potential to change our policy around charging for DIY waste with the intention of introducing a free allowance for householders in line with the Government's announcement.

"It is proposed to implement this change at the beginning of September this year."

### Reviving nature by the M25 in Leatherhead

A £2.8million grant has been awarded to a wildlife charity as it aims to fulfil its founder's last wishes. The **Wildlife Aid Foundation**, based in Leatherhead, was founded 40 years ago by **Simon Cowell**.

The money, which **Surrey County Council**'s cabinet approved today (Tuesday 25th July) will be used to build a community hub for hosting school, college and community groups, as well as family sessions and talks. The £2.8m represents just less than a quarter of the project cost, with the remainder being raised by the charity.

The Wildlife SOS star, who was diagnosed with terminal cancer in 2022, launched a Simon's Last Wish appeal to help the charity after his death.

Documents for the cabinet meeting, which made the decision on awarding the funding as part of the Your Fund Surrey money that community projects can bid for, say the project has the "potential to have a long-lasting positive impact on the environment and wildlife in Surrey".

A planned wildlife centre would restore land bordered by the M25 and the River Mole, and give the charity a future rescuing and rehabilitating animals in Surrey.



The Wildlife area between River Mole and clockwise carriageway of M25

Mr Cowell said the charity had got far bigger than he ever thought it would when he founded it 40 years ago and praised the 400 volunteers at the charity.

He told the LDRS earlier in the year: "They just do an amazing job, and without them we would not be here. It's as simple as that."

On his cancer diagnosis, Mr Cowell said he was in "total denial of the whole thing". He said: "We all think we won't get it, and when you do get cancer, you've got two choices. You sit in the corner and sulk, or you just ignore it and get on with it while you can. So I've done that, basically."

**Emily Coady-Stemp LDRS** 

#### Epsom and Ewell Times adds:

After the grant was announced Simon Cowell said: "It's an astonishing fact that a third of Surrey's biodiversity is either locally extinct or heading that way. The power of the Wildlife Aid Centre shows that, by all of us working together, we will be able to change this. We will inspire visitors to carry out regular, small actions which will have significant, positive impact on the environment. And by all of us doing it, our joint strength is enormous.

This amazing funding means we can finish creating the habitats and build a visitor centre that will welcome everyone. I am thrilled that Your Fund Surrey is supporting the Wildlife Aid Centre; together we will create a replicable movement for environmental good that is driven by our communities."

Surrey County Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities and Community Safety Councillor **Denise Turner-Stewart** said: "I would like to congratulate the Wildlife Aid Foundation who have been successful in their application to Your Fund Surrey's Community Project Fund.

"This is fantastic news for the Wildlife Aid Foundation and indeed for Surrey's residents. This is a truly ambitious and inspiring community legacy project. The new centre aligns with our ambition to promote a greener future in Surrey, to help restore and protect the future of the county's natural environment and encourage nature and wildlife to thrive. It will also offer huge benefit, opening the doors for people of all ages and backgrounds to learn more about wildlife conservation."

A £2.9m award given to Guildford's Yvonne Arnaud Theatre in June saw the total amount of money given out from the pot reach £10m since its launch in November 2020.



The Wildlife Aid Foundation is a charity dedicated to the rescue, care and rehabilitation of sick, injured and orphaned animals. Based in Leatherhead, Surrey, UK, the centre operates Surrey County's only wildlife hospital (one of the

three largest such hospitals in the UK) and maintains a referral service for wildlife hospitals throughout Europe. The organisation also carries out environmental activist and educational roles. Wildlife Aid has attracted media attention for its rescues of photogenic wild animals like young foxes and baby badgers; Animal Planet's TV program Wildlife SOS chronicles the activities of Wildlife Aid volunteers as they rescue imperiled animals

## To Catch a Bike Thief - not easy in Surrey

Epsom and Ewell Liberal Democrat parliamentary candidate and former Royal Military Police officer **Helen Maguire** has revealed that 991 bike theft cases in Surrey were closed in 2022 without a suspect being identified – 91.9% of total reported cases.



Meanwhile, only nine bike thefts reported in Surrey last year resulted in a suspect being charged or summonsed – just 0.8% of the total 1098 cases recorded.

Mrs Maguire claimed these figures showed the Government was effectively 'decriminalising' bike theft. She went on to say "This is letting criminals off the hook for the robbery of thousands of pounds worth of property".

She is calling for a return to proper community policing, where officers are visible and trusted and given time to focus on tackling local crime. She said, "The number of PCSOs has fallen in Surrey to just 69 by the end of March – down from 136 PCSOs just over a year ago in February 2022. It's worse in Epsom and Ewell where we should have eight and now have half of that number.

"Theft is such a personal and terrible crime. To see so many go unsolved in Surrey is a poor reflection on this government's record of reducing crime. We need to see a return to proper community policing, making our streets safer and ending this free-for-all for criminals."

In response a spokesperson for Surrey Police stated: "We appreciate how distressing it is to be a victim of any theft and our efforts remain ongoing to tackle bicycle theft as robustly as we can. We are also continuing to raise awareness of steps which can be taken to prevent these thefts from occurring in the first place by ensuring effective prevention measures are in place. More advice on protecting your bicycle can be found on our web site https://www.surrey.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/keeping-vehicles-safe/how-safe-is-your-bike/

"In some cases, there may not be enough intelligence or positive lines of enquiry for police to act on. This does not mean that a crime is closed indefinitely or that intelligence or information is ignored. This information will be collated and monitored to identify emerging crime hotspots and any trends or patterns.

"The public can also help in the pursuit of offenders by reporting suspicious activity, and also by reporting to the police those selling stolen property or those involved in burglary offences via 101, by webchat on our website https://surrey.police.uk/ online https://www.surrey.police.uk/tua/tell-us-about/cor/tell-us-about-existing-case-report or anonymously via the independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Residents are also able to upload video footage and images in relation to any suspicious activity through the use of a public CCTV submission portal here: https://surrey.police.uk/suspiciousactivityportal"

In response to Ms Maguire's statements about PCSOs Surrey Police stated: "We know how important a visible police team with local knowledge is to residents in each of our boroughs. A trusted, knowledgeable, and proactive local policing presence is just as important to us, and PCSOs are a valued and integral part of that. We are currently actively recruiting to increase our PCSO establishment level. If you wish to apply to join Surrey Police as a PCSO, you can apply here:

https://www.surrey.police.uk/police-forces/surrey-police/areas/careers/careers/pcso/

"There are currently three full-time PCSOs and one part-time PCSO in Epsom and Ewell. The borough also has one rural PCSO who deals with rural matters."

Related reports:

Ex MPC, now Epsom PPC, tackles Surrey PCs

Police maintain order at Epsom Derby Festival

Image: cycles in Waterloo Road Epsom CC http://www.epsomcyclists.org.uk/parking/

# Little plots of Council land for housing?

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's Strategy and Resources Committee decided Thursday 13th July to submit two Council owned sites for housing. The Draft Local Plan sets out the framework for local development including meeting housing targets. Proposals to release green belt land for development were met with strong local opposition and a brake on the Plan's adoption.

Council officers were tasked with seeking additional brownfield sites suitable for housing, including land owned by the Council itself.

The Council owns 37% of the Longmead and 35% of the Kiln Lane industrial estates. However, the grant of long leases to various businesses means that none of its land can be made available in the Local Plan timescale within 2040.

Consideration was given to the Council owned Cox Lane Community building and car park but a doctor's surgery and nursery need medium term certainty for their future with the surgery's lease expiring just before the plan period ending 2040..

Two small plots of Council owned land were stated to be suitable to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, (the Council itself) for consideration for inclusion in the Local Plan. They are a small 0.08 ha site (a former Scout's Hut) on Wesley Close / Scotts Farm Road and Richard's Field Car Park accessed off Chessington Road, offering approximately 35 parking spaces of which about 14 are reserved as resident permit spaces.

Cllr Graham Jones MBE (RA Cuddington Ward) noted the Wesley Close site had not been submitted before as it was too small. "What had changed?" An officer explained the proposal was "directly on the back of members request to find more brownfield sites to meet housing targets. The site had been looked at again and it could achieve 5 dwellings which is the threshold for a call for sites".

Cllr Jones asked the same question in relation to the Richards Field car park and Cllr Dallen suggested that there maybe a way of building residences while keeping parking provision.

The meeting agreed to the submission of the two sites for consideration to be included in a revised draft Local Plan.

In a lengthy explanation officers reported that the legal and cost obstacles to pursuing compulsory purchase orders to acquire land for housing development are too high. Thus, exercising such powers was not recommended.

Related Reports:

Motion to pause Local Plan process

Public meeting on Local Plan dominated by greenbelters.

Planning or pantomime? Councillors press pause on Plan.