

## Dutch scouts go English in Epsom & Ewell

16 May 2023



For over 35 years a close friendship has existed between the **1st Cuddington Sea Scouts in Epsom & Ewell District** and the Karel Doorman Zeeverkeners Groep of Bergen Op Zoom in the southern Netherlands. The roots of the relationship go back to the 2nd World War, Arnhem, disrupted schooling and a Royal Navy Admiral.

The relationship centres around reciprocal visits on a 3 or 4 yearly basis; and 2019 saw the last pre-pandemic visit. The Groups kept in touch over lockdown (and they had a brief joint paddle-boarding session with a motorcycling leader in 2020), but there was incredible excitement when at the end of April 2023, 74 Dutch Sea Scouts and leaders arrived in a double decker coach for their 12th visit.

Their journey had taken them via a day trip to Canterbury and they arrived to meet the **1st Cuddington** team who were cooking dinner. Over the course of the week they had a week with joint boating at the Warspite Water Activity Centre on the Thames; a hike down (and up) Box Hill with Warspite Scouts and Explorers, London Zoo, a day of boating at the Dockland Scout Project in central London, kipping on a ship in the West India Dock, exploring London, swimming in Guildford, widegames with Explorers, joint discos and much more.

Neighbours at 2nd Cuddington provided accommodation for the girls whilst the Dockland Scout Project supplied both accommodation and a day of boating in the shadow of Canary Wharf; there was also support from Scout partners at Ajax Sea Scouts

### About Scouts

- Scouts, the world's largest youth movement, was founded on 1 August 1907.
- In the UK, Scouts is supported by The Scout Association, enabling 7,000 Scout Groups across the country to provide opportunities to over 475,000 young people aged 6-25.
- There are now more than 638,000 individuals actively involved in Scouts in the UK.
- All genders, races and backgrounds are welcome at Scouts. Every week, it gives almost half a million people aged 4-25 the skills they need for school, college, university, the job interview, the important speech, the tricky challenge and the big dreams: the skills they need for life.
- Scouts helps members gain these skills by encouraging them to ask the big questions and listen with wide open minds. It helps them to take a deep breath and speak up, think on their feet, ignore the butterflies and go for it. With Scouts, young people don't give up – they get back up and try again, often with the support of the friends they've made there.
- Over 200 activities are offered by Scouts around the UK, from canoeing and caving to coding and community projects, made possible by the efforts of over 163,000 adult volunteers.
- Worldwide, Scouts has over 50 million members, both male and female, and operates in nearly every country in the world.
- UK Scouts has over 250 Scout Activity Challenge badges. These require participants to achieve a level of understanding and skill realistic and appropriate to their age range.

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## The Times to award film festival passes has come

16 May 2023



Epsom and Ewell's own international film festival is coming. The **Satisfied Eye International Film Festival**, now in its fourth season and consistently rated in the top film festivals in the world, is already acknowledged for its high quality programme. This year, due to Co-Vid delays, the Festival has two year's worth of submissions from over 50 countries; so the organisers could cherry pick even more for an extra high quality programme.

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The Festival takes place at Ewell's **Bourne Hall** in Spring Street between **Friday 26th and Sunday 28th May**.

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There will be more Oscar nominees than ever before, with European and UK premieres and some of the best up and coming directors, producers and other talent from around the world.

The People's Choice screening this year (Friday 27th ... films chosen from the programme by local filmgoers) is probably the strongest they have ever had, with an Oscar nominee, an Oscar winner and a real battle to see who picks up the People's Choice award.

The Festival is part of the sci-fi rebranding of Bourne Hall this year so there will be some extra fun treats in store for film and TV fans.

Anyone who likes a good photo op can come and have their picture taken in the Game of Thrones' Iron Throne, get a selfie with the Back to the Future DeLorean and a whole lot more during the festival.

And there's scheduled to be a live performance after the screening of **Finding Her Beat**. The film is a joyous, uplifting documentary that follows the struggles to launch the first concert for women taiko drummers ... something reserved normally only for men.

There will be free screenings for children throughout the weekend at Bourne Hall, Spring Street.

This year sees the first ever **Emily Davison Award** for Best Female Director. The association with Epsom and Ewell being obvious with the statue to the famous suffragette in Epsom's Market Square.

## Surrey asbestos pay-out to Epsom caretaker's family

16 May 2023



The family of a former Epsom school caretaker has paid tribute to an 'amazing' husband and dad after lawyers recently secured them a settlement in connection with his asbestos-related cancer death.

Colin Bradley, was diagnosed with mesothelioma, a cancer of the lining of the lung associated with exposure to asbestos, often decades previously.

Following his diagnosis, Colin, from Epsom, instructed asbestos-related disease specialists at Irwin Mitchell to investigate his illness and help him access the specialist treatment and care he required. However, he died aged 75 before he could see his case concluded.

The case was continued by Colin's son Darren Bradley, 53, in his dad's memory. His legal team has now secured a significant settlement from Surrey County Council in connection with Colin's mesothelioma.

Colin was employed by the local authority as a caretaker at Cuddington County First School from 1976 to 2003. The school is now Cuddington Primary School, run by the Howard Partnership Trust, who were not involved in the case against Surrey County Council - the defendant in the claim.

Surrey County Council admitted that the exposure Colin had to asbestos dust should not have happened, and conceded liability in his claim.

For this year's Workers' Memorial Day of 28 April, Darren joined the legal team to warn people of the ongoing danger posed by asbestos and to pay tribute to an 'amazing' dad who was taken from his family due to exposure to the hazardous substance.

Paul Ramsay, the asbestos-related disease specialist supporting Darren and his family, said: "The past few years have been incredibly difficult for Darren and his family. To face the distress of Colin's diagnosis and declining health due to mesothelioma has taken its toll on all of them.

"Colin was determined to get at the truth of his asbestos exposure and while nothing can bring Colin back to his family, the conclusion of the case and settlement gives them some closure and the answers they were looking for.

"However, Colin's death is also a stark reminder of the dangers still posed by asbestos, including in public buildings. While many people associate the use of asbestos with heavy industry its use was much more widespread, including in schools, hospitals, leisure centres and offices.

"Our own research shows that the presence of asbestos in public buildings, including schools continues to be a real concern throughout the country. In speaking out, Colin's family hope to make others aware of the risks of this material. This year's Workers' Memorial Day is an opportunity to remember workers like Colin and pause to reflect and remember all those who have been lost."

Before his death Colin believed he had been exposed to asbestos in the boiler room and various service areas whilst working at the school.

Colin had always been in good health and did not drink alcohol or smoke but began to feel unwell in August 2020, with a loss of energy and appetite.

After consulting his GP and being sent for tests, mesothelioma was diagnosed in December 2020. Colin began chemotherapy on 13 January, 2021, but his condition continued to deteriorate. He died six months after his diagnosis, on 22 June 2021.

Colin was married to Lorraine Bradley, 65, who is step-mum to Colin's sons, Darren, Mark and Simon Bradley.

Darren said: "All of our lives changed the day of dad's diagnosis. As he'd always led such an active and healthy lifestyle, it was hard to accept anything so serious could be wrong. The speed his illness progressed shocked us all.

"Dad was the central figure in our family, always there encouraging, supporting and looking after us all, even long into our own adult lives. His loss has left a huge void - and it is especially upsetting to see Lorraine left widowed and alone when they still had so much to look forward to in their retirement - but I take some comfort knowing that he would have been proud that we secured an admission of liability from his former employer.

"It's hard to imagine you could come across such a dangerous substance in a school environment and it's shocking to think it could still be there in other schools, posing a risk to others.

"I hope that by speaking about my amazing dad, we can reflect on how much we miss him every day, but also warn others of the dangers that still exist by coming into contact with asbestos. If we can help keep another family together or help make the argument for asbestos removal, dad's death won't have been in vain."

Workers' Memorial Day on 28 April remembers those who have died as a result of their employment, and campaigns to improve health and safety standards in the workplace and increase protection for employees.

Research undertaken by Irwin Mitchell suggests more than 4,500 public buildings across 20 of the UK's largest local authorities still contain asbestos, averaging at 225 buildings per authority.

## A special Epsom school's future secured.

16 May 2023



The future of Kingswood House School on West Hill in Epsom has been secured after the planning brought by local developer Steve Curwen, was refused by Surrey County Council on 21 st March. The School's landlords have also confirmed in court proceedings pending with the School that they have



no objection to the grant of a new lease to the School.

Kingswood House School has existed on its site for over 100 years and has within its 250 pupils, 172 with registered special educational needs (SEND) the highest number of any school in Surrey. The School has been awarded the status of “Asset of Community Value” in recognition of its contribution to the local community and has recently been graded “excellent” in an inspection undertaken by the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

The proposed planning application would have seen the 100 year old school replaced with a much smaller school of only 60 pupils for extreme special needs. The application was met with a very high level of local opposition culminating in 440 objections and a petition of 150 due in large part to a fear that it was a precursor to an application to build houses on the school playing field and indeed, across the whole site in the event that the proposed school did not proceed.

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## The Cost of Surrey’s Crime Commissioner: “It’s criminal”?

16 May 2023



The Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey Police was elected in May 2021 on a turnout of Surrey voters of 38%. That was 5% higher than the national average but the election coincided with Surrey County Council’s election in all the County’s 81 single-member seats.

The Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner is Conservative **Lisa Townsend**. Her office explains her role: “Your Commissioner is responsible for overseeing the work of Surrey Police, holding the Chief Constable to account on your behalf, and funding key services that strengthen community safety and support victims.”

The Liberal Democrats are calling for the abolition of this post after uncovering the cost of running the office. They state the post has cost £3.2 million since 2019. And claim: “Since 2021, the Surrey Commissioner, Lisa Townsend, has had three staff members to run her office social media feeds. The Commissioner has increased the office costs since being elected by £180,000 – the equivalent to seven community police officers. Since the Commissioner was elected, Surrey has also seen a fall in community officer numbers (39).”

This compares with an annual budget for Surrey Police of about £250 million and its employment of approximately 2153 officers.

**Julie Morris** Leader of the Liberal Democrat group on **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council** told The Times:

“I have never understood the purpose of Police Commissioners. Political appointees have no place in solving crime. My experience is that many crimes considered small and personal are unworthy of being given Police attention. These can cause a great deal of emotional distress and are simply neither followed up nor are they treated seriously. Putting resources back into those categories of crime will help grow confidence in the Police.”

Top Image is a **mock up** by Epsom and Ewell Times of Surrey’s Police and Crime Commissioner Lisa Townsend holding two mobile phones.

**Lisa Townsend** responded to the **Epsom and Ewell Times** and said: “Surrey Police now has more frontline officers than ever before. It will be officially announced this week that the Force has not only met but exceeded its target for extra officers under the government’s programme to increase numbers by 20,000 across the country. That means more than 300 extra police officers will have joined the ranks since 2019. This is great news for residents and I believe the new recruits will help to make the Force the strongest it has been in a generation.

“Last year, Surrey Police made an operational decision to temporarily halt the recruitment of Police Community Support Officers which was identified as one way of helping the Force meet its savings target. There were no ‘drastic cuts’ – these posts were replaced with new warranted officers and there were no redundancies or loss of numbers to Surrey Police’s frontline teams. We expect PCSOs to be back to the current numbers within the next three years and I am pleased to say that recruitment for this important role has been reopened and the Force are actively seeking applications right now.

“As far as my office budget is concerned, it is important to stress that it accounts for just 0.5% of the total policing budget for which I am responsible.

“When I was elected as Commissioner in 2021, there were only three PCC teams in the entire country that were smaller than we had in Surrey. I would be failing in my elected duty if I did not make sure it is properly equipped to effectively carry out all the responsibilities and growing demands of the PCC role.

“There was a small increase in my budget last year that added posts where we were at our weakest or least resilient which included one extra post in our communications team. I do not employ three people to ‘run our office social media feeds’ – the communications team fulfil a number of crucial roles on our wider engagement with the Surrey public across the county.

“My office is also responsible for commissioning vital services across our county that provide life-changing support for a variety of people across Surrey including survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence. In addition to our existing funding streams, over the last two years our commissioning team have worked tirelessly in managing to secure more than £4m in government funding for a range of projects in Surrey. This money will help provide key services helping some of the most vulnerable in our society as well as local projects, such as the Safer Streets initiative, that are making a real difference to our communities.”

**Alex Coley** – who has been chairing Epsom and Ewell Borough Council’s Community and Wellbeing Committee and was re-elected on 4th May for the RA in Ruxley Ward responded: “I attended the Police and Crime Panel on 18th April and was surprised to learn that the Surrey Police Group is showing both a capital underspend and a revenue underspend for this financial year. Several million pounds of surplus funds. In February the PCC decided to increase the share of Council Tax by 5.07%. This is a percentage increase greater than all 11 districts and boroughs in Surrey, even greater than the increase from the county council. I have to wonder why, given the multi-million pound surplus. How will this money be used?

Perhaps funds are not being effectively committed to policing priorities? The PCC is now half way through a four year plan in which the flagship policy is the prevention of violence against women and girls. A crucial policy for policing nationwide. However, it was revealed in February that Surrey Police have the worst rape charge rate in England and Wales. Furthermore, the PEEL report in June last year, by HMICFRS the policing inspectorate, showed a grading of Requires Improvement for suspect and offender management, with specific issues discovered in the management of sex offenders.”

“It’s criminal” is a well known expression denoting waste and has not been used here to suggest any criminal act.

## Epsom & Ewell local election results

16 May 2023



All the results are in and the Residents' Associations, as expected, retain control of the Borough Council. The Liberal Democrats gained two seats by winning all three seats in College Ward. With the retirement of LibDem **David Gulland** the Party's group leader **Julie Morris** is joined by new LibDem Councillors **James Lawrence** and **Julian Freeman**. The third slot gained at the expense of the sitting Councillor **Nigel Collin** of the RA. The other LibDem gain was top of the poll in Stamford, **Alison Kelly**.

**Bernie Muir** of the Conservatives had represented Stamford Ward but chanced her arm in the newly created ward of Horton and topped the poll. She and her Conservative colleague **Kieran Persand** beat long-serving and senior RA Councillor and former Mayor **Eber Kington** and new RA arrival **Henal Ladwa**.

Mr Kington had surrendered a safe seat in Ewell Court Ward to contest the new Horton Ward, where he lives. This defeat was despite Mr Kington recently leading a popular motion to pause the progress of the Draft Local Plan, to see what the Government is up to exactly with central housing targets.

The Residents' Associations won 26 seats. Liberal Democrats 4. Labour 3 and Conservatives 2.

However, the share of the total Borough vote shows the Conservatives (20%) having a greater share than the Liberal Democrats (17%) and Labour (15%). The Greens, who fought a few wards, failed to cross the line and have no Councillors.

The turnout of 19867 votes compares favourably with the 2019 turnout of 19051 and perhaps shows that fears of a downturn in turnout because of the new requirement for photo ID being presented at polling stations has not been made out.

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Why vote for the Residents' Associations in Epsom and Ewell?

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## Ultra-sound school kids

16 May 2023



Youngsters at **Ewell Grove Primary and Nursery School** have done it again. Back in the testing times of Covid during 2021, classes decided to organise their own entertainment programme to raise money for **Epsom Medical Equipment Fund** (EMEF), the charity launched in 1979 to help **Epsom General Hospital**.

This was the start needed to launch an appeal for the GE Ultrasound Scanner required by the Labour Ward theatre in Maternity at Epsom. With their parents backing them, they succeeded in raising nearly £1,000.

Last year they decided to repeat the feat - this time they brought a magnificent £1,132 which started the appeal off with a flying start.

This week the school was invited to present the GE Ultrasound scanner to **Dr. Dickson Osagie**. The school set the children a project to decide who would represent the school. There were eight lucky winners who visited the hospital with headteacher **Mrs Kate Keane**. "They were excited to learn the function of the Ultrasound scanner and how it works," said Mrs Keane.

Dr Osagie added “We were very lucky to have an ultrasound donated to us by EMEF. It is a £27,500 piece of equipment. The Labour Ward theatre did not have its own dedicated ultrasound for the anaesthetic team to use. Donating this machine has gone a long way in improving the care we give to pregnant women in the hospital as it will help us to be able to put in difficult cannulas, also when epidural for pain relief is difficult to perform, the ultrasound helps make this easier.”

## Grayling’s fishy business

16 May 2023



Earlier today Epsom and Ewell MP Chris Grayling called upon the Government to ban industrial fishing boats from “scalping our sea beds and hoovering up marine life regardless of what gets trapped in their nets, especially in the UK’s marine protected areas”. Secondly, he called for the creation of “‘Highly Protected Marine areas’ around our shores, as recommended by the Benyon Review. Where no extractive activity is permitted. Where nature can be left to its own devices.”

Thirdly, he has asked the Government to “provide both regulatory and financial support to those looking to restore sea grass beds.”

Photo: Chris Grayling MP argues his points in Tuesday’s Marine Protection Areas Debate in Westminster. Parliament TV.

Rounding off his contribution in a special debate on the marine environment Mr Grayling referred to all the worldwide illegal fishing that goes on with impunity. He suggested the Government works on international accords that will “require every fishing vessel around the world to have proper satellite monitoring devices on board.”

He also called for improved sustainable fishing food labelling.

Mr Grayling addressed the meeting in Westminster on Tuesday 2nd May in the afternoon.

## Excellence on ageing

16 May 2023



Between the two censuses of 2011 and 2021 the over 65 population of Epsom and Ewell increased by 16.1% to a total of about 14,670. About 18% of the total Borough population of about 81,000. As of 2021, Epsom and Ewell is the 12th most densely populated of the South East’s 64 local authority areas, with around 17 people living on each football pitch-sized area of land. Surrey University is doing something about ageism.

Combatting ageism and promoting the interests of older people through scientific research is crucial, particularly as a response to the discriminatory treatment they faced during the pandemic, according to the Director of the University of Surrey’s new Centre of Excellence on Ageing.

The University of Surrey’s new centre is in partnership with the Global Initiative on Ageing (GIA), which operates under the auspices of the United Nations. The Centre was formally launched on 26 April 2023, with the University hosting a formal dinner that brings together notable scholars and stakeholders focused on ageing. This was followed by a one-day showcase on 27 April, celebrating Surrey’s work in areas such as ageing and work, artificial intelligence and ageing, sleep patterns, nutrition, and generational shifts in ageing.

Professor **Max Lu**, President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Surrey, said:

“The Surrey community is deeply passionate about improving the standard of wellbeing for our elderly population – this is evidenced in our internationally-recognised research activities in areas such as improving the quality of sleep of individuals living with dementia, improving inclusion of the elderly population in the tourism and hospitality sector, and investigating the mechanisms underlying osteoarthritis and finding ways to treat it.

“The new Centre of Excellence for Ageing will serve to amplify these efforts, allowing us to understand more and provide genuine solutions that help to enrich the lives of our elderly relatives, friends, and fellow citizens while safeguarding their rights.”

More than 1.1 billion people worldwide are over 65 years of age; by 2050, the global population will be more than 2.1 billion.

GIA’s mission is to support the goals laid out within the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by improving the overall standard of living, participation and inclusion of the world’s ageing population. One of GIA’s key implementing partners is the UN’s Institute for Training and Research, UNITAR, which is dedicated to training and capacity building on a whole range of policy-based areas.

Professor **Paul A. Townsend**, the inaugural Director of the Centre of Excellence on Ageing and Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences at the University of Surrey, said:

“I am incredibly proud to be part of our new Centre of Excellence on Ageing, which is a critical part of a global movement that recognises the need for a better understanding of the life course and ageing. We will focus on processes ranging from preconception through to appreciating the treatment of our elderly population. The pandemic disproportionately affected our seniors, leaving them to face discrimination and a lack of sympathy, with many left in care homes unable to see their families. This new Centre is dedicated to helping older people to benefit from the latest research and greatest advances in science today. They should receive the respect, care and quality of life that they deserve.”

**Silvia Neira**, Vice President of GIA, said:

“We are thrilled to announce the launch of the Centre of Excellence on Ageing at the University of Surrey. This new initiative will build on the incredible work of the GIA Foundation, expanding our capacity to research and engage with the many intersections of ageing and longevity.”



# The cost of planning

16 May 2023



Green Belt campaigners have obtained a breakdown of over half-a-million pounds spent so far by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council on the draft Local Plan and the Town Centre MasterPlan. The Epsom and Ewell Times provides the figures below.

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council’s response to a Freedom of Information Act request:

“The figures below are broken down into two time periods:

- The first covering the April 2016 to December 2021.
- The second period covers January 2022 until 15<sup>th</sup> April 2023 – this is to reflect that from January 2022 additional evidence was commissioned to support the preparation of the Draft Local Plan 2022-2040.

**April 2016 - December 2021 Local Plan consultancy**

Service	Consultant	Cost
Spatial Economic Development Strategy	Economic Growth Management Ltd	£13,725
Post Covid – Spatial Economic Development Strategy	Economic Growth Management Ltd	£7,787.50
Sports Facilities Assessment and Playing Pitch Strategy	Ploszajski Lynch Consulting Ltd	£24,113

Green Belt Studies	Atkins Ltd	£36,471.61
Housing Needs Assessment Update	Cobweb Consulting	£14,497.55
Background paper on the horseracing industry	Matthews Associates (UK) Ltd	£2,970
Local Plan Viability Assessment (2019)	HDH Planning & Development Ltd	£16,063
Habitats Regulation Assessment	Lepus Consulting	£7,244.33
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Jacobs UK Ltd	£9,838
Graphic Design services	Soapbox Design Limited	£5,940
Local Plan Consultation Support	Luther Pendragon	£16,557.30
Mapping services	Pindar Creative	£2,624
Retail Study	Urban Shape	£26,654
Retail Study – update	Urban Shape	£6,050
Master planning	Allies and Morrison	£71,984
<b>Total</b>		<b>£262,519.29</b>

**January 2022 onwards to support Draft Local Plan 2022-2040**

Service	Consultant Appointed	Cost
Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)	GL Hearne	£47,890.49
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)	Opinion Research Services Ltd	£6,850
Local Plan Viability Study (2022)	HDH Planning & Development Ltd	£16,000
Interim Sustainability Appraisal of Draft Local Plan 2022-2040 (Reg 18)	AECOM	£23,807.50
Habitats Regulations Assessment of Draft Local Plan 2022-2040 (Reg 18)	Lepus Consulting	£3,410
Climate Change Study (Part 1)	Wood Plc	£17,512
Graphic Design services	Urban Graphics	£23,000
Emerging Town Centre Masterplan	David Lock Associates	£99,768.10*
Independent Review of Draft Local Plan (Reg 18)	Carewold Associates Ltd	£750
Social Media promotion of Draft Local Plan consultation	Quick Fox Labs	£4,786.45
Printing of consultation materials	EEBC print room and Blue Dot display	£6,291
<b>Total</b>		<b>£250,695.54</b>

\* note no net cost to EEBC as funded by the Local Enterprise Partnership The total spend on external services from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 until the 15 April 2023 was **£513,214.83**. However as noted above £99,768.10 of this was for the Emerging Epsom Town Centre Masterplan was funded by the Capital to Coast Local Enterprise Partnership.”

**Mark Todd**, Chair, Epsom and Ewell Labour Party and a candidate in Horton Ward for the upcoming local election, responded to our request to all parties for comment: “Yet more evidence of terrible waste and mismanagement by the Residents’ Association running Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. No wonder our council tax is so high and our services so poor. It’s time for change at the local elections on May 4. The local Labour party will clean up the council and make sure money is spent wisely again.”

**Julie Morris**, College Ward Councillor and Liberal Democrat told us: “The need for a new Local Plan is known years in advance and steps should have been taken to make sure our borough had robust local planning policies in place, rather than procrastinate over what was exactly the right time to create a new Local Plan.

Much of the evidence base has needed to be updated and has therefore required the work of professional organisations to do this, resulting in a much greater spend than was originally forecast. There was no alternative but for council to agree to this expenditure. Had Residents Association councillors given the matter greater priority, expenditure would undoubtedly have been less. It’s important to bear in mind too, that the process is far from complete.”

The Residents Association, Conservative Party and Green Party have not responded.

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