

Oiling the wheels of justice on Surrey Hills

14 April 2023



The High Court legal challenge into oil drilling at Dunsfold has been confirmed for June 8. The case will examine planning permission granted for exploratory drilling of £123million of oil near the **Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**.

The **UK Oil and Gas (UKOG)** was originally refused planning permission to search for fossil fuels at Loxley Well in Dunsfold in December 2020 by **Surrey County Council's** planning committee.

UKOG appealed in June 2022 after a public inquiry and was given the green light by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, led by Surrey Heath MP **Michael Gove**.

Almost immediately, **Waverley Borough Council** challenged the appeal decision in the High Court with £13,000 set aside for the legal challenge.

In March this year anti-fracking campaigners celebrated the news that the case would be heard in the High Court after being granted a judicial review.

The June 8 date was pencilled in for the hearing, and this week it was set in stone after some discussion over potentially moving the date.

The case has been picked up by the **Good Law Project** and is being challenged on two fronts. The first, they argue, relates to the "inconsistency in decision-making by the Secretary of State" who approved Dunsfold drilling the same day he refused a comparable site in Ellesmere Port over greenhouse gas emissions. The second argument relates to the drilling site being on the edge of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and national policy requires planning decisions to give great weight to "conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty" in AONBs.

Good Law Project legal manager, **Jennine Walker** said: "Let's be clear: exploiting our natural landscape for fossil fuels should be a thing of the past and is completely at odds with our crucial efforts to reach net-zero. This is why we are delighted to be supporting the next stage of Protect Dunsfold's legal challenge which seeks to overturn the Government's scandalous decision to overrule the local council and give the green light to a gas exploration scheme in the Surrey Hills.

"The High Court recently confirmed Protect Dunsfold's case is arguable and we now look forward to the hearing in June at which we hope the Judge will overturn the Government's scandalous decision".

MP **Jeremy Hunt** said the plans should be "formally shelved" altogether.

A crowdfunding page has also been launched for those looking to support the legal challenge.

Related reports:

[Surrey MPs oppose each other on drills in the hills](#)

[The Hills Are Alive With the Sound of Drilling... ?](#)

[Fractious Court case anticipated](#)

Image: Residents strongly campaigned against an exploratory well (Image: Surrey Advertiser)

You could re-train to reform offenders

14 April 2023



People in **Surrey** are being urged to consider job opportunities in the Probation Service as HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) launches a recruitment drive in the area.

The new roles are open to a wide range of applicants, from those starting out to those with wider life or work experience.

The roles are ideal for those looking for a rewarding career where they can both motivate and inspire others to change for the better, and build safer places to live.

HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is already seeing people moving in to the sector from retail and hospitality with many recent new joiners also quitting office jobs for a more rewarding role in the service. The campaign hopes to inspire others to consider making the switch.

The number of people working in probation in Surrey and across Kent and Sussex has increased in the last twelve months. Currently there are 1,043 people* working in Probation Service roles and in 2022 the region welcomed 213 new joiners. Some have come forward to support the recruitment campaign and encourage other people to consider roles like theirs.

Jordan Hayes-Hussey, aged 25, is a case administrator from Godalming, Surrey. Jordan was working in marketing after completing a communication and media degree when he decided to change career and join the Probation Service. Jordan says:

"I joined the Probation Service because I wanted a role where I could work with people from different backgrounds, make a difference through my work and have opportunities to progress. It can be a fast-paced working environment but every day is different and it's a really rewarding job."

"You'll need good communication skills, determination and an open mind to succeed but you'll get training and support from a wider team as part of the role. If you're interested in building new skills and working in a role that positively contributes to society I'd recommend applying."

Amber Boyle, aged 24 is a probation services officer from Staines, Surrey. Amber completed a law degree and joined the Probation Service after working in the courts. Amber says:

"I decided to join the Probation Service after witnessing the positive impact probation staff had on offenders' lives. I started working as a court case administrator and then applied internally to be a probation services officer. I find the role really rewarding and enjoy being able to give people the tools they need to improve their lives and get back on track."

"The job, like any role, has its challenges and you need to be authentic and able to adapt your communication skills to suit the people you're working with, but it's a really worthwhile endeavour and you'll be given the training and flexibility you need."

Probation Service staff support offenders on their rehabilitation journey, helping them to make better life choices and reducing the chances they will re-offend.

HMPPS is looking to fill a number of roles including probation services officers, case administrators and trainee probation officers. The Probation Service works with over 230,000 people on probation serving community sentences and individuals who are pre or post-release from prison. Roles within the service help to support their rehabilitation and protect the public.

2022 data on the diversity of the Probation Service shows a 1% increase to 17% in the number of Probation Service staff from an ethnically diverse background compared to 16% in 2020. HMPPS is continuing to build on this work to attract a wave of recruits who are even more representative of the community they serve.

All roles are challenging and rewarding, with great training, support and opportunities for progression. Specific roles currently include:

Case administrators play a key role, using their great organisational and communication skills to support their probation colleagues and help offenders turn their lives around. Eligibility requirements for the role include strong communication skills (verbal and written) and good IT and keyboard skills.

Probation services officers undertake the full range of work with offenders before and after sentence, and in the community - including, assessments, sentencing and managing people throughout their probation period. Eligibility requirements for the role include a minimum C-grade GCSEs or equivalent, or relevant work experience including sufficient writing skills

Applications to become a case administrator or probation services officer are open now: <https://probationjobs.co.uk/>

Through the trainee probation officer programme, candidates will gain a level 6 equivalent professional qualification upon completion, along with a competitive salary and generous leave. When you start your training, you'll be a probation services officer, learning whilst earning on the job and studying to gain your fully funded Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP). Eligibility requirements for the role include a Level 5 qualification, or above, such as an honours degree, a foundation degree or a diploma of higher education. Register your interest now: <https://www.traintobeaprobationofficer.com/apply/>

A Valentine unloved for over 125 years, till now

14 April 2023



Another short and tragic life buried in an unmarked grave in Epsom's abandoned Horton Cemetery is brought to life by one of the volunteer team of researchers. The full story can be read on www.hortoncemetery.org

The story of **Valentine Ridley**: At just 6 years old, in 1897, we find Valentine and his sister Elizabeth in the Greenwich Union Poor School. Their father George is "in house", that is, living in the workhouse. There is no mention of Valentine's mother or his younger sisters. Later in October Elizabeth is released 'c/o Father'.

In May 1898 Valentine and all three of his sisters were admitted, along with their father, to the Greenwich Union Work House, their address is given as Snead Street, New Cross which is shown on Booth's Maps as "comfortable" two storey houses, with bay windows, usually shared by two families. Sadly, by August of that year Valentine was in the Brighton Road, School, Sutton. His father is now shown as 'out of house on leave'. In June of this year Valentine's youngest sister, Florence, was transferred to the Work House Infirmary where she died in October 1898, having lived a short sad life, so possibly George's 'leave' was due to this event.

Periods of leave were granted to look for work, deal with family problems or celebrations. Someone like Valentine's father George, became known as an "in and out" as they spent their lives in and out of the workhouse/infirmary.

The 1901 Census, taken on 31st March, shows all three children in the Banstead Road School, Sutton, but on 23rd Dec 1901 Valentine, Elizabeth and Mildred are discharged from the Brighton Rd School and returned to the Workhouse again. These two schools were run by the same authority and seem almost interchangeable.

23	Mildred Ridley	Elizabeth	Greenwich	Masters	6	1	3	1	To the Workhouse
.	"	Valentine	"	"	8	1	1	1	"
.	"	Mildred	"	"	7	1	3	1	"

on 18th November 1909 he is admitted to the Ewell Epileptic Colony where he lived for the next 7 years. According to the 1911 Census he developed Epilepsy when he was 16 years old, just one year prior to being admitted. With no family to care for him we can assume that the Greenwich Union was happy to pass his care to the Epileptic Colony in Ewell.

Valentine died on 21st February 1916 and was buried in the Horton Estate Cemetery on 25th February in plot number 2014a, he was just 23yrs old.

The 'Epsom Colony', part of the Epsom Cluster of five mental hospitals' had been opened in 1903 to care for "the Epileptic insane of the Metropolis". This new approach housed patients in a collection of villas, avoiding the stigma of living in a mental asylum. The treatment consisted of a specially regulated diet and doses of potassium bromide, the first effective treatment for controlling epilepsy. The patients were expected to contribute to their costs by working on the hospital farm or in the kitchens, laundry or bakery, all of which supported the Epsom cluster of hospitals.

Lesley Lee

Copyright: The Friends of Horton Cemetery

Surrey sleep specialists supported

14 April 2023



The **University of Surrey** has been awarded £1.7 million to further research into the sleep and circadian rhythms of people living with dementia.

Disturbed sleep is a common symptom for people living with dementia, but it is not known how and to what extent sleep disturbance exacerbates the disease.

Led by **Professor Derk-Jan Dijk**, the team at Surrey will expand their innovative programme of research that is using new technologies to non-invasively monitor and improve the sleep of dementia sufferers. The research is conducted in close collaboration with **Imperial College London** and the **Surrey and Borders Partnership Trust**, as part of the UK Dementia Research Institute (UK DRI).

Professor Derk-Jan Dijk, Director of **Surrey Sleep Research Centre** (SSRC), said:

“People living with dementia often have issues with sleep and, often, their memory is seemingly worse after a bad night. Good quality sleep is integral to our cognitive health, and now we need to test whether improving the sleep of those living with dementia will slow down the progression of the condition and preserve an individual’s memory for longer. To assist with this, we have the opportunity to use new technologies to both monitor and potentially improve the sleep of dementia sufferers over an extended period, in a way that is non-intrusive and supportive to people living with dementia and their carers.

“This award is invaluable in helping us to continue our work and I am grateful to the UK DRI, the Medical Research Council, Alzheimer’s Research UK and Alzheimer’s Society for making this possible.”

To learn more and ultimately improve the sleep of those living with dementia, researchers are applying digital health technologies that can sense movements and physiological signals of individuals whilst they sleep. This combined with mathematical modelling, machine learning, video analysis of sleep behaviour and molecular biomarker approaches, will yield a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between sleep, circadian rhythms, symptoms and disease progression in people living with dementia.

Professor Dijk added:

“A major advantage of the novel digital technologies we’re working with, many of which are contactless, is that they pose very little burden on the participant and can be used to monitor sleep and circadian rhythms in the home environment for weeks, months and years.”

The Surrey team will also continue to test new interventions to improve sleep. Interventions to be tested include changing brain oscillations through delivery of precisely targeted auditory stimulation during REM sleep (a sleep stage thought to be particularly important for brain function) or improving the light environment to boost circadian rhythms.

Professor Paul Townsend, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences at the University of Surrey, said:

“Congratulations to Professor Dijk and the team of researchers from across the University in securing this fantastic award. This is testament to their hard work and dedication in this field.

“This year marks 20 years of the Surrey Sleep Research Centre which continues to go from strength to strength and cements our position as a global leader of sleep research.”

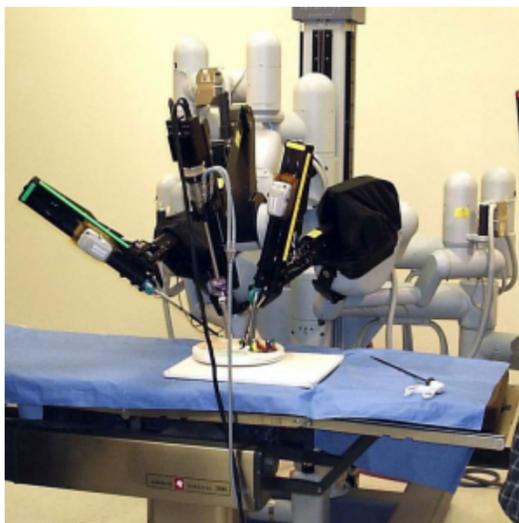
Fiona Carragher, Director of Research and Influencing at Alzheimer’s Society and a Surrey alumni, said:

“As a founding partner and funder of the UK DRI, we are very proud of what the Institute has achieved since its launch in 2017. We congratulate everyone involved in placing it on the map as a global leader in dementia research and for the great impact it has had so far. This has included critical research into developing new diagnostic tools to ensure people living with dementia receive an early and accurate diagnosis, potentially giving them access to one of the disease-modifying treatments we hope to see emerging from the clinical trials pipeline in the coming years.”

Surrey University Press Office

A different kind of cutting in Surrey’s NHS?

14 April 2023



Robots will be performing more operations, including general surgery and gynaecology at a Surrey NHS hospital trust seeking to introduce “significant savings”, a board meeting heard.

The **Surrey and Sussex NHS trust** held its much delayed annual general meeting on Thursday, March 30, where attendees heard from its chairperson, chief executive, and head of finance.

The afternoon meeting, which board members suggested may have led to its lower than usual attendance, was broken into three sections: a review of the year, a run through of its financial health, and questions from the floor.

Chairperson Richard Shaw led off proceedings explaining the AGM should have taken place in autumn last year but was delayed because of the late filing of its 2021/22 audited accounts.

Chief executive **Angela Stevenson** told the meeting that the 2021/22 year was heavily influenced by the “significant impact” of covid with “very tired” staff “having to work under pressure”. This created a backlog the trust was only beginning to get back under control.

She said: “Staff were working with a disease that we didn’t know how to treat. We had high staff absences due to covid or due to family members having covid. Since then we’ve really got to grips with the backlog. We started to work through but at the start of 2022 these numbers were at their peak.”

Post pandemic, she said, there was a huge increase in patients seeking primary care compounded by the increase in “baseline complexity” as cases were left untreated during the pandemic.”

Ms Stevenson praised the trust for **delivering robotic surgery** for the first time and that it would be rolled out further to include general surgery and gynaecology services. They will also be investing in services with a new MRI department on the horizon - including new CT scanners at East Surrey and Crawley hospitals.

The trust also plans to work in partnership with other groups to better manage the health of the population rather than solely focus on its role as an acute hospital.

On finances, the meeting heard how its deficit continues to grow - even not including the covid years. It expects to run at a £26.5m deficit for 2022/23. This will be the first time the trust has run at a deficit since at least 2013/14 as spending pushes towards £400m a year.

Chief finance officer **Paul Simpson** said this could be partly attributed to an increase in staff costs. The hospital expects to take on an extra 130 new nurses. He said: “Now we have to recover the growth in costs that has happened and now we are (looking at) a significant savings plan.”

They were, however, quick to say “there should be no reason why we accept any reductions in quality of (care) for patients and that before any cuts were made there would be full impact assessments on cost improvement plans.”

Image: Nimur at the English-language Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0

Surrey’s leader’s life pledge for brain tumour research

14 April 2023



Surrey County Council’s leader said his focus “for the rest of his life” will be fulfilling a promise made to his daughter before she died to fundraise for brain tumour research.

Emily Oliver was 21 when she died, 18 months after being diagnosed with a diffuse midline glioma, and after seeking medical advice “from across the world”.

Her father, county council leader Councillor **Tim Oliver**, said the fund the family set up for her 21st birthday was now nearing £150,000 but vowed to continue to raise awareness and money.

He told the LDRS: “We promised Emily that we would do all that we could. We promised her that we would fundraise for what she wanted, specific research into her type of high grade glioblastoma. Hers was a very, very rare form.

“That is our focus and that will be our focus for the rest of our lives, to raise as much as we can and to find a research team that will look at predominantly her type [of brain tumour].”

Cllr Oliver said brain tumours didn’t get the level of attention or funding as other types of cancer, because the number of cases was not as high, but said they were the biggest cause of cancer death for under 40s.

He said he and his wife, Debi, hoped to find a specific research project in the near future to give the money to. “It’s really important to us that we continue to keep that alive and deliver on that promise to her,” he added.

The council leader also has his sights set on creating a Surrey-wide bereavement service and has been having conversations about it with the chief executive at Surrey Heartlands and Surrey hospices.

He said “pulling together” the different organisations that offer support for both before and after death would help people

know where to turn.

Cllr Oliver added: “I think that would be a great thing for people to be able to know where to go.” He also praised the work of the **Brain Tumour Charity** and the support they give to families on what their journey may look like and understanding what their diagnosis actually meant.

He will take part in the **Princess Alice Hospice’s** “Talk the Walk” event in April which aims to get men, in particular, to talk about bereavement.

Debi said: “The pain of her loss is with us every minute of every day, but Emily was passionate about fundraising to find a cure for brain tumours, and I absolutely know she would be really pleased that what she had started is being continued.”

Cllr Oliver also called on the government to deliver on its promise of delivering £40million for research into brain tumours.

An inquiry by the **All-Party Parliamentary Group on Brain Tumours** was launched in 2021, and said that as of January 25 2023, just £15 million had been awarded since June 2018.

For advice and support from the Brain Tumour Charity, you can call its Support and Info Line on 0808 800 0004 or go to the website at: <https://www.thebraintumourcharity.org/>

Image Tim Oliver credit Surrey Live

Life savers installed across the Borough

14 April 2023



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council have worked in partnership with national charity **Community Heartbeat Trust** to install 12 new 24/7 defibrillators across the borough. The project was delivered with funding secured via the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Defibrillators are designed to be used by members of the public with no previous experience in the event of someone going into cardiac arrest. They can, and do, save lives. The new defibrillators have been installed in the following locations:

- Market Place, Epsom
- Ebbisham Centre, Epsom Square, Epsom
- Town Hall (Rear entrance)
- Harold Bell Solicitors, 174 Kingston Road, Ewell
- St John’s Parish Centre, Station Approach, Stoneleigh
- Auriol Park Café, Salisbury Road, Worcester Park
- The Parade Dental Practice, 177 Kingston Road, Ewell
- Ruxley Chemist, Ruxley Lane, Ewell Court
- Horton Pharmacy, Pelman Way, Epsom
- Horton Country Park, Horton Lane, Epsom
- Londis Convenience Store, Hollymoor Lane, Epsom
- NISA Convenience Store, Ruxley Lane

Councillor **Barry Nash**, who put forward the CIL bid, said, “After a lot of hard work by all involved, I am so pleased the defibrillator project has now been completed.

“I’d like to thank our partners from the Community Heartbeat Trust who shared their expertise with us, provided and installed all the defibrillators across the borough and will continue to provide a post-rescue counselling service.”

Councillor **John Beckett**, Chair of the Environment and Safe Communities Committee, added, “You never know when a

medical emergency may occur. Time can be extremely limited and having the right equipment on hand will save lives.
“The installation of these 12 new defibrillators will ensure the borough is prepared and our community is safer.”

Image: Evacuationchairs - Own work. CC BY-SA 4.0

We can help your school reunite.

14 April 2023



Follow the example of a 50 year reunion for Ewell County Secondary School reported here. Epsom and Ewell Times can help your school reunion by putting the word out in these pages.

Former pupils of **Ewell County Secondary School** gathered at **The Station** pub in **Stoneleigh** on Saturday to reminisce and celebrate fifty years or more since they left and entered the working world.



The poster for the event borrowed from the **Rolling Stones** back catalogue to stress: “This Could Be The Last Time” and over a hundred schoolmates took heed and presented themselves for register. The reunion was aimed at those pupils that left the old schools then situated in Ruxley Lane and Danetree Road between 1971 and 1976. Organised by Ray and Bob Baxter, Tony Jones, Dave Reynolds, Martin Knight, Kevan McIlroy and Kevin Merchant the event was a huge success with only minimal corporal punishment and detentions administered. Friendships that were interrupted by leaving school and moving away in some cases were resumed after fifty years. Bob Baxter commented: “It was wonderful to lean our walking sticks against the wall, kick our zimmer frames away and boogie to T. Rex, Slade and The Rubettes again.” By popular demand another reunion is being planned for 2025.

This is “offensive”.

14 April 2023



In our letters page today a Ewell resident rightly fulminates against the selfish habit of leaving dog poo bags for others to remove.

“To the person who tied a Dog Poo Bag to the fence between the NESOCOT Playing Fields and the College buildings yesterday (Thursday).

You said you would return to collect it later as you didn’t want to carry it with you. You will have noticed it was not there on your return as I added it to my Litter picking bag.

Image - c. Bill Kasman - under licence illustrates the wider problem.

Had I come along 5 minutes later, when I wouldn’t have heard your explanation, how would I have known you would collect it? How would I have known that the other (very similar) bag dropped 2 metres further on was not yours? Or the black bag on a branch in the hedge round the corner? Or another deposited in a popular dropping spot on the edge of the Rugby Grounds?

Would I have been sure that the 4 people who threw glass beer bottles into the hedge, or the cans along the roadside, or the fast food packaging etc would be collected later to be deposited in the bins on the route, or taken home to be put in their own bins? No.

Your bag probably weighed no more than 100 grams. The bag of rubbish I collected weighed about 8 kilos when I’d finished. Approximately 2,000 items (I didn’t count beyond 250); Fine potential of £200,000.

You’re probably saying “mine’s different”. NO. It’s Litter. It’s Offensive; It’s an Offence.

Jennifer Brzozowska

Ashted Choral Society celebrated Surrey’s Vaughan Williams.

14 April 2023



Andrew Storey conducts the **Ashted Choral Society** with enthusiasm and vigour, presenting them at their best in this delightful programme, showing off a range of music by Ralph Vaughan Williams in the 150th anniversary year of his birth. A review of the concert held on 25th February in Epsom.

Starting the evening with **Vaughan Williams’** Five Mystical songs, the choir began with a warm and harmonious sound, which remained well balanced and well blended throughout the evening. Accompanied solely by **Stephen Ridge** on the piano, the sound filled the wonderful acoustics of **St Martin’s Church in Epsom**. The choir provided excellent support to the baritone soloist, Daniel Tate, who gave an especially commendable performance as a last minute stand-in, and whose tone and clarity propelled the storytelling of RVW’s Mystical Songs. The choir especially shone as the focal point in the 3rd song, demonstrating a beautiful understanding of tonality, and picked up the pace for the 5th song - the well-known ‘Let all the world’ - with an injection of energy to finish off.

The second piece of the evening was The Lark Ascending, played by The Kent Sinfonia with Christian Halstead as lead and violin soloist. As one of Vaughan Williams’ most famous pieces, and an award-winning performance behind Halstead, the audience had a lot to look forward to, and it was as outstanding as we could have imagined!

The orchestra crafted a full-bodied sound and yet took no attention away from the exquisite violin solo, which had the audience mesmerised.

The second half began the titular piece of the evening, Vaughan Williams' Sea Symphony. Demonstrating strong entries all round, the choir and orchestra provided a majestic sound, with especially impressive lone chorus entries standing up to the magnificent sound of the orchestra. We also had our first entry of the soprano soloist **Eleanor Pennell-Briggs**, who gave another sparkling performance. My own conductor often tells me that "Musicians must be actors!", which both soloists and ACS demonstrated beautifully this evening, conveying the power and emotion of the sea.

The symphony continues with some elegant call and response passages, well executed by both choir and orchestra, and it was especially pleasing when the main melody passes around the orchestra sections. The scherzo then starts, feeling energetic and urgent, with the chromatic passages handled with great skill and empathy by the choir. The dynamic contrasts by both parties provide drama, again echoing the feelings of the sea.

The final movement begins cinematic and sweeping, with precision by the chorus when they are left exposed. There is power when the basses sing alone, with a great contrast to the delicate female voices. The orchestra and soloists have a moment to shine on their own, with both soloists again demonstrating exceptional storytelling, before the chorus returns for the start of the finale. The regal fanfare from the horns and the vivid energy from the choir draws to a close to finish up the piece.

Overall both ACS and Kent Sinfonia provided a thoroughly enjoyable evening, showcasing a range of musical talent and shining a spotlight onto Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Lizzie McCaffrey

Public meeting on Local Plan dominated by greenbelters.

14 April 2023



Monday 13th March 243 members of the public attended a packed meeting to debate the draft Local Plan issued by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. 85 more logged in online. Cllr. **Alex Coley** (RA Ruxley Ward) Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee opened proceedings with an explanation of the housing needs in the Borough. He was followed by Cllr **Steven McCormick** (RA Woodcote Ward), Chair of the Licensing Planning and Policy Committee (LPP) of the Council that passed the draft Local Plan to go to public consultation. (The consultation at this stage closes on 19th March.) He stated why the Council is bound by housing targets set by The Government. He urged residents to have their say by responding to the consultation. See HOW TO RESPOND on our pages.

Photo: Cllr McCormick addresses public meeting convened by Epsom and Ewell Times. Credit Ellie Ames.

Tim Murphy, a retired chartered town planner and chair of the South-East Council for the Protection of Rural England was on the speaker panel. He lambasted the central Government's creation of the housing targets but did not demur from their binding effect on local authorities. Chair of Epsom Civic Society and environmental and planning law expert **Margaret Hollins** reminded the audience that the Local Plan is not just about housing. Employment, business and transport are also its concerns. She disagreed with Mr Murphy on the wisdom of a pause to the Local Plan process to see what changes may be made on housing targets and their binding effect. She referred to the Planning Inspectors grant of a housing developer's appeal to build on Langley Vale Farm in part due to the absence of a Local Plan for Epsom and Ewell. Delay in adoption of one will give developers further opportunities.

The debate was open to the floor for comments and questions. The majority of which were clearly resistant to any use of green belt land for housing development. Cllr **Kate Chinn** (Labour Court Ward) appealed for a commitment for more social housing. Cllr **Bernie Muir** (Conservative - Stamford Ward) extolled the virtues of local MP **Chris Grayling's** ideas for housing and other development of the "brown field" sites at Kiln Lane and Longmead.

One upset member of the public asked why there were no proposals for green belt development in Cllr McCormick's own Woodcote Ward. Another pointed out that there was no Councillor present on the occasion of the LPP's vote on the draft Local Plan from the wards of green belt effected areas.

Paul Bartlett from Elmbridge and the London Green Belt Council stated that his Borough Council had removed all green belt housing development from its draft Local Plan after resistance was shown. He also suggested that Epsom's draft's statement that the requirement to build 5400 houses was an exceptional reason to use green belt ran a serious risk of opening the flood-gates of green belt development where the central government's target for the Borough is over 10,000.

Cllr McCormick fielded the majority of the questions and you can read in the next article on Epsom and Ewell Times his personal and considered responses to many of the frequently asked questions.

The meeting was chaired by local solicitor **Lionel Blackman**.

An Extraordinary full Council meeting has now been fixed for March 22 to debate a motion to pause the Plan until new government planning guidelines are confirmed in May, following an intervention by Cllr **Eber Kington** and other councillors.

Meanwhile, green belt protectors have mustered over 10,000 signatures to an online petition at change.org. Epsom and Ewell Times cannot verify the residency of the signatories. Below is a screenshot confirming the numbers at the time of going to press. If all petitioners are different Epsom and Ewell electors the numbers reached by the Epsom Green Belt Group compares well to an estimated turnout of about 20,000 electors at the 2019 Epsom and Ewell Borough Council election.

The screenshot shows the Change.org website interface. At the top, there are navigation links: 'Start a petition', 'My petitions', 'Browse', and 'Subscription'. On the right, there is a search icon and a 'Log in' link. Below the navigation, there are tabs for 'Petition details', 'Comments', and 'Updates'. The main heading of the petition is 'Keep Epsom and Ewell Green Belt!'. To the left of the text is a photograph of a green field with a deer in the foreground and houses in the background. To the right of the photo, there is a progress bar showing '10,095 have signed. Let's get to 15,000!'. Below the progress bar, there is a green checkmark icon and text: 'At 15,000 signatures, this petition becomes one of the top signed on Change.org!'. Below this, there are two user avatars with names and timestamps: 'Ankush Arora signed 56 minutes ago' and 'Sanjay Chhabra signed 60 minutes ago'. At the bottom right, there is a 'Sign this petition' section with input fields for 'First name' and 'Last name'. Below the photo, there is a small icon and text: 'Epsom & Ewell Green Belt Group started this petition to EEBC'.

Related reports:

Mole Valley Local Plan paused: official

Can Epsom and Ewell get more dense?

Possible pause to Plan pondered

Epsom and Ewell last in Local Planning

MP's housing solution for Epsom and Ewell

Dementia Hub serving Epsom and Ewell

14 April 2023



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council have renamed their Dementia Daycare Service the Dementia Hub - and are using the opportunity to remind those living locally about the fantastic service the Hub offers for the community.

The Dementia Hub, situated in Sefton Road in Epsom, offers specialist respite daycare for people living with memory loss and dementia. It offers a safe, friendly environment where clients can enjoy activities, social interaction and develop skills to improve their quality of life. The Dementia Hub is part of the Community & Wellbeing Centre, a support hub which offers

social and recreational activities for over 55s. The Community & Wellbeing Centre also provides services including assisted bathing, a community alarm service, foot clinic, meals at home, a shopping service and transport from home.

The Dementia Hub’s new name and logo will make it easier for people to find information about the facility online, as well as helping create a stronger identity for the service. Councillor Alex Coley, Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee, said: “We’re incredibly proud of the work that the Dementia Hub does to help enrich the lives of people living with memory loss and dementia, and the lives of their carers too.



Cllr Coley RA Ruxley Ward Chair Community and Wellbeing Committee

“The specialist team at the Dementia Hub provide a home-from-home environment where people can take part in memory therapies, gentle exercise, art therapy and more – whilst also making friends. “Caring for a loved one with dementia or memory loss can be challenging at times. The Dementia Hub also enables carers to take precious time to rest and recharge – or simply catch up with essential tasks.”



People who are interested in finding out more about the Dementia Hub or who’d like to book a free assessment can call 01372 727583 or visit: www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/dementia-hub

The Dementia Hub is a service offered by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council at the Community & Wellbeing Centre, on Sefton Road in Epsom. Full and half day sessions are available for people aged 50+ living with memory loss, dementia, confusion due to medical conditions such as a stroke, conditions such as Parkinson’s Disease, and more. For more information on services offered by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, visit: <https://epsom-ewell.gov.uk/residents/communities-health-and-wellbeing>

Epsom and Ewell Times now hot off the press

14 April 2023



Think of friends or relatives or neighbours who would appreciate a printed version. Not everyone has computers or smartphones. Places of work, dentists waiting rooms, libraries and coffee shops etc., all welcome to print and make

available. All the files are pdf and A4 size.

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Epsom Rotarians win Citizen Award.

14 April 2023



Each year the Council formally recognises a member of the Epsom and Ewell community who goes above and beyond in a voluntary and/or campaigning capacity. The **Active Citizen award** is within the incumbent Mayor's gift. The individuals are permanently recorded on a special citation within the Town Hall and receives a medal at the evening reception honouring volunteers from across the borough.

Photo: Anne and Clive Richardson (left) with the Mayor and Mayoress of Epsom and Ewell

So it is with great pleasure we congratulate Epsom Rotarians **Anne and Clive Richardson** being awarded the **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Active Citizens Award** by the Mayor of Epsom & Ewell Cllr **Clive Woodbridge**. The award was made during the evening of 10 March 2023 at the Mayor's Civic reception. Anne and Clive have given much of their time to help with many local charities through Epsom Rotary Club and are active within the Epsom & Ewell Twinning Association.

Photograph Competition Open to Scouting and Guiding Groups

Each year Epsom Rotary hold a club photography Competition open to Scouting and Guiding Groups. This year the theme is the built environment and entries are welcome by the end of March 2023. For details of how to enter, visit the website :

<https://www.rotary-ribi.org/clubs/page.php?PgID=892508&ClubID=874>

Final Call to public meeting on Draft Local Plan

14 April 2023



Monday 13th March at 7pm at Wallace Fields Junior School Dorling Drive, Ewell, Epsom KT17 3BH, Epsom and Ewell Times will chair a public meeting on the Draft Local Plan. The meeting will feature a panel of experts. Tim Murphy CPRE, Margaret Hollings Epsom Civic Society and Chair Licensing Planning and Policy Committee Cllr Steven McCormick (Council officers invited). Questions and view points from the public attending will be allowed. We will confirm if the meeting can be followed online in the next few days.

Registration to attend is not required but it would be helpful to us if you did inform us of your intention to attend. This will help some planning. Also it would help the chair of the meeting if you submitted questions in advance.

You can tell us if you are attending the Epsom and Ewell Times Local Plan Public Meeting and suggest a question by filling in:

Local Plan meeting attendance and question form.

Related reports:

Epsom and Ewell Local Plan meeting times

Mole Valley Local Plan paused: official

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Draft Local Plan.

Green-belters seeing red on Local Plan?

Hook Road Arena plans and links to many other related reports.

Surrey academic wins ‘Woman in Innovation’ award for tackling bias against neurodivergent people

14 April 2023



On International Women’s Day **Surrey University** announce a prize winner among its female academics.

Online technologies to help neurodivergent people successfully enter the workforce are being developed at the University of Surrey, led by **Dr Alison Callwood**, in a project that has seen her win one of Innovate UK’s ‘*Women in Innovation*’ awards.

The *Generating Neurodiverse Inclusion Selection (GENIUS)* project will explore what communication methods and personalisation options could be used to optimise access and performance in online interviews and assessments for those with neurodiverse conditions such as autism, ADHD, and dyslexia.

Dr Alison Callwood, GENUIS project lead and Senior Lecturer in Integrated Care at the University of Surrey, said:

“Approximately 15 to 20 per cent of the UK population is neurodivergent. The unfairness they experience in the recruitment field is unjustified. Tackling this issue will not only improve the working lives of neurodivergent people by unlocking the valuable contribution they can make, but it will also boost the economy by helping address the rising number of unfilled positions in the workforce.

“I am delighted to receive this award which includes a £50,000 grant. The support it offers is invaluable to this project.”

This project will build on previous work by Dr Callwood who has developed the successful interview tool *SAMMI* which reduces bias and provides robust, reliable, and cost-efficient interviews and assessments for employers.

Helping to further the project, the funding awarded to Dr Callwood will give her access to tailored business coaching, mentoring and a wide range of networking and training opportunities designed to help grow this innovative project.

Professor Paul Townsend, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, said:

“Congratulations to Alison on winning this award. Being one of only 50 recipients of this prize, shows the strength of her project and her hard work and dedication in this field. Her skills and the diversity of her career are valued greatly here at Surrey, and I am proud to have her in our team.”

Indro Mukerjee, CEO, Innovate UK, the United Kingdom’s innovation agency,

“We are proud to support this group of trailblazing women who are changing the world through the power of their ideas. Their innovations underpin solutions inspired by societal and environment challenges, as well as their own lived experiences. I hope their stories will encourage and inspire others to follow their lead.”

New hospital programme called “HS2 of hospitals”

14 April 2023



The government's hospitals programme has been called the "HS2 of hospitals" as "quite intense" discussions continue about how to take it forward.

Epsom and St Helier had its plan for a new site agreed by the NHS in 2020, with an original date for opening set at 2025, now pushed back to 2027 "at the earliest". A health liaison panel at **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** heard from **James Blythe**, managing director at the trust, who said adapting the current buildings to modern healthcare standards was becoming "increasingly difficult year on year".

The national programme was announced as delivering 40 hospitals by 2030, with Epsom and St Helier one of eight "pathfinder" hospitals due to be at the top of the list, Mr Blythe told the meeting. But he said there were "quite intense discussions" going on at government level about the programme and how to take it forward.

Mr Blythe said: "What the government, the Treasury and the Department [of Health], are working through is basically how do you go about building 40 hospitals? Clearly what don't you do is say to 40 schemes: 'Go and design something completely different, go out to the construction market and try and procure it.'

"This has sort of now become the HS2 of hospitals. Let's think about how we do this as a single scheme. Let's think about how we do this consistently, how we procure consistently, how we design consistently."

With St Helier hospital "very evidently crumbling" and problems with buildings at the Epsom site too, the trust plans to build a new specialist emergency care hospital on the old Sutton Hospital site, next to the Royal Marsden Hospital. Mr Blythe said: "We know that if we build a modern hospital to modern standards, we can do better for our patients, including local Epsom residents."

But he said with the move from one financial year into the next, there were questions about where future works might sit in relation to other capital projects. He added: "Clearly what the construction market can't take is 40 new hospital schemes trying to do the same thing at the same time."

The meeting also heard that the trust was expecting feedback on its plans "very soon", hoping it would then be able to get on with the planning process. Mr Blythe said: "As you can imagine, planning for a hospital which is going on to the land adjacent to Royal Marsden in Belmont in a mature and developed residential area, that planning process will not be insignificant. So we know that that will take some time"

Epsom and Ewell Borough Councillor **Liz Frost** (Residents' Association, Woodcote Ward) asked about plans for the new multi-storey car park due to be built at the Epsom site, which was granted planning permission on appeal in December. She said she received a lot of complaints about roads surrounding the hospital being clogged up as people queued for spaces.

Cllr Frost said: "I have in the past spent quite a lot of time at Epsom Hospital when car parking has been horrendous and everybody was turning up late for clinics because they couldn't actually get in."

Mr Blythe said work should start in the autumn to build the new car park, and that options being looked at to minimise disruption during the nine-month build included possible park and ride schemes and using town centre car parks.

Saying he would bring back a plan later in the year for how the project would be handled, Mr Blythe also said the "flip side" was parking should be "substantially better once it's built".

He added: "We're hoping that by [building the new car park] we will prevent some of the build-up of traffic from backing up into the town centre, which has sadly been a feature of the hospital for the last few years."

Related reports:

[Pay black hole takes £2.2M Epsom Hospital funds](#)

[Epsom Hospital multi-storey car park rises](#)

[Epsom Hospital's multi storey carpark wrong on many levels?](#)

[Epsom Hospital car park appeal](#)

[Local hospital's building woes](#)

"Imagine this house is in Epsom" says our man in



Ukraine.

14 April 2023



Epsom based **Surrey Stands With Ukraine**'s charity director returned from Ukraine recently. Interviewed yesterday by Epsom and Ewell Times (E&ET).

E&ET: Why did you go?

Lionel Blackman: The fantastic Epsom and Ewell team of volunteers of Surrey Stands With Ukraine has raised over £380,000 from the generous public and sent over £1 million worth of donated supplies to Ukraine over this first year of the War. A charity should know those who distribute aid on its behalf and after one year it was time to meet some of our Ukraine partners in person.

Photo is of a destroyed house in the Ukrainian village of Moschun just north of Kyiv.

E&ET: Who did you meet?

LB: We have supported a variety of groups relieving the civilian victims of the war. I met a team of English women who help refugees at the Polish border railway station of Przemsyl. Groups based in Kyiv who send our supplies to Ukrainians who continue to live near the front-line, who evacuate elderly and children from such areas and who are helping rebuild communities whose homes have been destroyed.

E&ET: Was your visit worthwhile?

LB: In Ukraine I just spent one and a half nights in hotels, half a night in an air raid shelter and one night on a train. It was deliberately a short visit so not to distract our partners from their vital volunteer work and their ordinary paid employment. But still, getting to know them better and being fully satisfied as to their commitment to honest and selfless voluntary charitable service is important for our own charity, our wonderful volunteers and our donors. We can continue with ever more confidence that we are doing the right thing and spending the funds appropriately.

E&ET: What did you see of the war?

LB: There were drone attacks on Kyiv the night I stayed hence half of it spent underground. Hosts told me that the air raid sirens sound every other night. Is Putin trying to wear you all down? I asked. "Never, he will never do that". This is the thing. Putin is uniting a nation he thought he could divide.

I visited Moschun. The defenders of this village held the line and stopped the Russian army getting to nearby Kyiv last year. Most of the homes are destroyed. The Negotiator's Annual Estate Agents Awards organised by our charity's trustee and Epsom resident Grant Leonard, raised funds for 20 generators that we sent to Moschun with the assistance of local Epsom, district, national and Kyiv Rotary.

E&ET: When will the war end?

LB: A charity can't get involved in the politics but personally I am of the opinion that Putin needs to be defeated militarily and the people of Russia have to turn against this war before it will end.

It is the UK Government's role to aid foreign military. A charity can only support civilians whose lives should not be attacked in any war. In this war civilians are being killed and maimed and made homeless in their thousands.

Surrey Stands With Ukraine and the great public of **Epsom and Ewell** and beyond have to help the civilian victims for the long haul *and keep giving*.

Just imagine that once beautiful house in the photo was in Epsom?