

Walk, cycle, scoot - don’t drive!



Surrey County Council will launch a new campaign on **World Car Free Day**, 22 September, to encourage residents to change the way they travel to stay healthy, save money and help the environment by reducing their carbon footprint.

In Surrey, 41% of carbon emissions come from transport, with around half of that coming from private vehicles. For shorter journeys such as the school run, the commute to work or a trip to the shops, residents are being encouraged to consider leaving the car at home and walking or cycling instead

The County Council has teamed up with BetterPoints to reward anyone in Surrey who opts to travel by foot, bike or public transport, instead of using a car. Each car-free journey earns residents points which can be redeemed for high street vouchers to spend at shops, local coffee shops or can be donated to charity.

Surrey County Council is developing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) across the county to help determine where best to prioritise improvements to continue to enable residents to walk and cycle more often. Residents can use an interactive map to ‘pin’ locations and comment on how walking and cycling could be made easier there.

Matt Furniss, Surrey County Council’s Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth, said: “We know it’s not always possible for everyone to walk or cycle everywhere, but for shorter journeys we could all think about making a small change which on mass would make a big difference.

“We’re continuously looking at ways to improve our infrastructure to make walking and cycling easier for the people of Surrey and would really encourage feedback on our interactive map.”

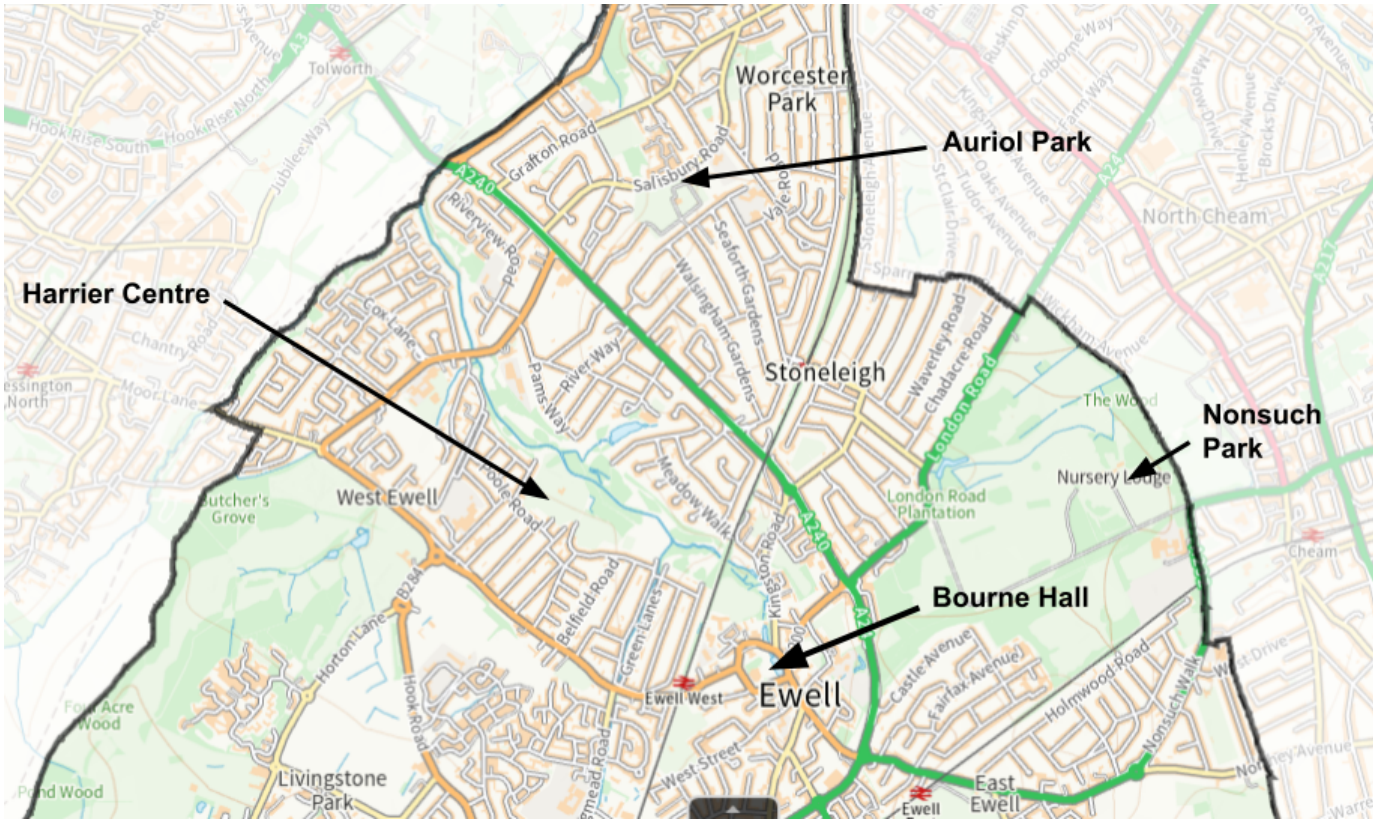
The council has a target to be a net zero carbon council by 2030 and a net zero county by 2050, in line with government targets. Information about making active journeys can be found on the Surrey County Council website.

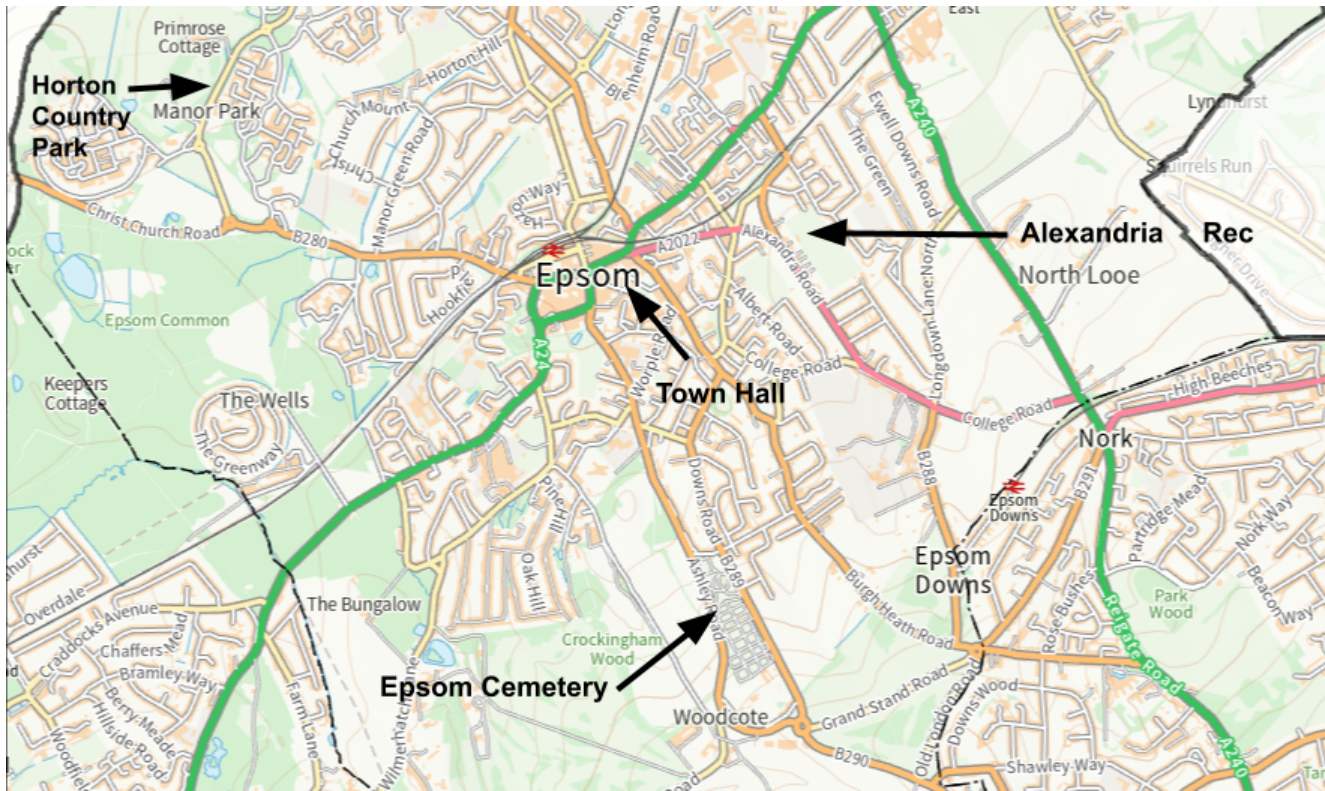
The Cost of Spending a Penny



Following the demise of the public toilets on the B290 up on Epsom Downs, The Epsom and Ewell Times reports on the current Council provision of conveniences for the public:

- Nonsuch Park - open during park opening hours which are usually 6am to ½ hour before sunset.
- Horton Country Park - open during park opening hours as above
- Alexandria Recreational Ground Pavilion - operated by the café during café opening hours
- Auriol Recreation Ground, Stoneleigh - operated by the café during café opening hours
- Epsom Cemetery - open during cemetery opening hours
- Bourne Hall, Ewell - open during centre hours
- Epsom Town Hall - open during operating hours
- Harrier Centre, Poole Road, West Ewell - open during operating hours





In answer to The Epsom and Ewell Times, The Epsom and Ewell Borough Council provided the following information on the costs of spending a penny of those public toilets that are NOT part of a building used for other purposes (e.g., The Town Hall and Bourne Hall etc). To be clear – they are free to use! It won’t cost you a penny except through your Council tax.

Annual Expenditure 2021 to 2022 up to end of March 2022.

Nonsuch public toilets – Cleaning: £14,716.56

We cannot break down the costs for Mechanical &Electrical (M&E) as it comes within the expenditure for the whole of the Mansion House.

Cemetery – Cleaning £6161.04 and M&E £993.68

Horton Country Park – Cleaning £5555.40 and M&E £741.36

The utility costs are also not broken down for just the toilets and therefore we cannot provide separate costs.

Contrary to myth a person not patronising a pub does not have a right to use its toilet. London promotes a “Community Toilet Scheme” that encourages businesses to allow non-customers to use their toilets. London’s Railways stations take part. In the Borough of Epsom and Ewell the Ashley Centre would be hard pressed to prevent a member of the public having no intention to spend a penny in its shops from spending a penny in its toilets.

Should Epsom and Ewell have a Community Toilet Scheme? Write to us.

Containing the Problem. A lesson in enforcement.



Keeping with our current focus on planning matters. Woking Borough Council contain the container problem of a posh hotel. Read Local Democracy Reporter Emily Coady-Stemp’s report [here](#).

A Surrey mansion hotel has been given three months to remove from its land two shipping containers being used for storage. Gorse Hill Hotel, near Woking, applied for a lawful development certificate for the containers in January but the application was refused.

Image: Gorse Hill Hotel. Credit: Darren Pepe

The containers, which according to council documents are being used to store tables, chairs and other hotel equipment, have been in place for more than three years.



The shipping containers Gorse Hill Hotel faces enforcement action over not removing. Credit: LDRS

A meeting of Woking Borough Council’s planning committee on Tuesday (September 6) voted to issue an enforcement notice saying the containers must be removed.

The hotel and conference centre, in Hook Heath Road, is described on its website as “an elegant mansion house hotel [in a] peaceful location, surrounded by expansive manicured gardens”. The Grade II listed building, which was once private house, was built in 1910 and has since been extended. Bed and breakfast at the hotel starts at £124 per night.

The borough council first received a complaint about the two containers in December 2021. Both the neighbour complaining and the hotel’s own subsequent

application for the containers said they have been in place since May 2019. Each of the two storage containers measures 6m long x 2.4m wide x 2.5m tall.

According to council documents, in its application for the containers in January, the hotel said they did not amount to development, because they were “ancillary to the site’s use”, did not comprise a “building” operation or constitute a material change in use of the land.

The application was rejected by the council because the “degree of permanence” of the containers, along with their size and each being fixed to the ground through their own weight, meant they counted as buildings according to planning legislation, and therefore planning permission was required.

The council’s senior planning enforcement officer visited the hotel on May 16, when the containers were still being used and had not been moved.

Gorse Hill Hotel has not responded to a request for comment at the time of publication.

Full agenda:

The Edge of development for Elmbridge



Epsom and Ewell Times has reported recently on planning dilemmas for our Borough. We are not alone in facing pressure on Green Belt land. 2 miles away from the edge of the Borough, Elmbridge Borough Council decided on a Green Belt development. Emily Coady-Stemp reports:

Studios for business start-ups and three new homes have been given the green light at the “gateway to Elmbridge” despite fears for the future of a golf club.

Image: Waffrons proposed development of studios area. From design and access statement.

One councillor claimed others “aren’t concerned” about the borough’s local welfare or green belt as the application was approved.

The application, submitted by the family who have lived at The Waffrons, in Chessington South, for 30 years, will see the current stables on the land demolished.

Surbiton Golf Club objected to the plans due to fears that potential additional traffic to the site, which is accessed through the course, would affect play on its first, fifth and eighth holes.

Elmbridge Borough Council’s planning committee voted for the plans on Tuesday (September 6), having rejected a motion to refuse them that was put forward by Councillor Janet Turner (Hinchley Wood Residents’ Association, Hinchley Wood and Weston Green). She was talked into putting forward the motion to refuse the plans by Claygate Councillor Alex Coomes (Liberal Democrats) who said she should do it “for completeness and for democratic reasons”. Cllr Turner had previously said that listening to the debate she thought there was “very little point” in her putting forward reasons for refusal for a vote. She added: “It’s fairly obvious to me that people aren’t concerned about our local welfare or our green belt, so that disturbs me quite a lot.”

Her reasons included it being inappropriate development in the green belt, as well as traffic concerns along the single track lane. Cllr Turner described the site as “very important” because it was the “gateway to Elmbridge from Greater London” and a corridor of green land from Claygate and Hinchley Wood to Long Ditton.

Officers at the meeting said the bar was very high for assessing “harm” in green belt land that was previously developed, as this had been. The three planned houses on the site would all be detached bungalows, with an applicant’s representative stating one of the homes was for the daughter of the family currently living there.

The 11 studios would be from 10 to 19 square metres each, with a communal area around a courtyard. The current use of the land for horses would stop, with commercial livery being replaced by it only being used for the private enjoyment of the new homes. BabyBarn, a shop for baby equipment currently on the site, would stay, with part of the stables being redeveloped for storage.

Keith Blake, chairman of Surbiton Golf Club, spoke at the meeting to object to the plans, which he called the “biggest threat to the future of the club and course”. The club, which has been in existence since 1895, has around 700 members and membership fees of £1,900. Mr Blake said the club did not object to some development of homes on the site, but saw the commercial element as “perhaps a step too far” and that traffic needed to be reduced or limited. He added: “Otherwise, I see the members walking and joining other clubs. “If we lose 20 per cent of our membership, the club will not be in existence for the community in the future.”

An officer’s report into the application said the plans were not “considered to adversely impact upon Surbiton Golf Club to warrant a refusal reason”. Conditions had been put on traffic entering the site both during the construction phases and once in use.

Many councillors were in favour of the small business units, saying they were in demand in Elmbridge and would be even more so when 60 offices in Weybridge were lost as part of a Regus site redevelopment.

Councillor Bruce McDonald (Liberal Democrat, Claygate) said he had “great sympathy” with the golf club and concerns around traffic on the road but like others saw no information to conclude there would be more traffic than currently on the site. He added: “I would have artisan studios everywhere, I think it’s what we need. I think it’d be great for Elmbridge.”

Councillor Rachael Lake (Conservative, Walton North) asked councillors to raise their hands if they had ever heard of a golf course going out of business or bankrupt, because she had not. She added: “I sympathise because it’s all perception. “It’s the fear of going to the dentist, when you get there, it’s nowhere near as bad as you think.”

Full agenda

BBC misreports Epsom and Ewell planning?



On Friday 2nd September **Mark Easton**, the **BBC**’s top home affairs reporter, swooped down on **Epsom and Ewell**. Our Borough suffers from nimbyism and we could easily meet our housing targets, was his report’s message. The **Epsom and Ewell Times** takes his two minute report to task.

First – he opens his report while standing on **Epsom Common** off **Woodcote Side**. The implication being that this area could in part be developed for housing. Did he not check it was a **Local Nature Reserve** and **Site of Special Scientific Interest**?



Secondly, he travelled to **Station Approach Stoneleigh** and suggests the rejection of a plan to build a four storey block of flats was mistaken. The plan was rejected in February 2022. The developer **Woolbro Homes** (a part of **St James Group Ltd** which is a wholly owned subsidiary of the multi-million **Berkeley Group Holdings Plc**) did not exercise its right of appeal to a Planning Inspector.



Image of original 6 storey block

Perhaps they accepted the grounds for refusal which included overdevelopment, overbearing and incongruity. Moreover, the applicants had failed to sign a commitment to affordable housing.



Thirdly, the report of the BBC showed **Cllr Liz Frost** objecting to a 22 room residence for students near Epsom's **University for the Creative Arts** in Ashley Road, Epsom. The reportage gave the impression that housing needed to meet ordinary housing targets was being denied. UCA indicated in connection with the case that it is attracting mainly foreign students to its new business courses. See Epsom and Ewell Times report on the meeting [HERE](#)

Lastly, Mr Easton claimed no Councillor was available for comment. The **Epsom and Ewell Times** know of at least two Councillors who attended the Planning Committee meeting who were NOT asked. Mark Easton is not available for comment as his direct contacts cannot be found. **Grace Manning-Marsh** of **LandTech**, was interviewed by Mr Easton, she was critical of Epsom and Ewell's failure to authorise developments on **Green Belt**. She did not ring back when asked to talk to us.

Councillors agonise over student accommodation plan.



Council postpone a controversial planning application for their own site visit. **Mr Colin Preston**'s plan to knock down a neglected house called **Green Gables** in Ashley Road, Epsom was deferred. A **22 student bedroom** development is proposed to take the place of the neglected Green Gables house. The development provides no more than 8 square metres per bedroom with two shared kitchens and two shared living spaces. **Thursday 1st September, Epsom and Ewell** Borough Council's **Planning Committee** discussed a number of objections matching the number of bedrooms. 22 in all, concerning loss of privacy, overdevelopment, impact on the nearby Worples Road conservation area and many other grounds.



As Proposed Street Scene



As Existing Street Scene

Proposed linked two building student accommodation above and current scene below.

The **Woodcote (Epsom) Residents’ Society** submitted “...excessive scale would be visually obtrusive, over-shadow the rear gardens and result in significant light spillage from the glazed stairwell and lobby area at night. The amenity area would give rise to unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance and the narrow footpath between the proposed buildings and the boundary with Ladbroke Road properties being a potential area for antisocial behaviour and security concerns...”

The **Strategic Housing Market Assessment** (SHMA) of Epsom and Ewell BC dated September 2019 concludes that “there does not seem to be a great demand for additional Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) at the moment”. Mr Preston, the developer, contacted the **University of the Creative Arts** (UCA) situated just yards away in Ashley Road. UCA responded with the following: “We can confirm that UCA is broadly supportive of an increase in provision of student accommodation in and around Epsom and Farnham, both in Surrey. We have opened a dialogue with the local authorities in both towns, with a view to enlisting their support in addressing what is an increasing need for suitable accommodation for our students.



For the current year 2021/2022, UCA has approximately 1,800 students enrolled on our Epsom campus, of which 321 first years were housed in university provided accommodation. The others rely on the local private rental sector, or commute further away. Recently UCA also commenced a February intake into our Business School for the Creative Industries which is proving quite attractive to students, especially those from abroad.”

Following a 90 minute debate the application was not decided on pending a site visit voted for by a majority of the Councillors.

Epsom and Ewell Times understands that UCA is heavily oversubscribed for the coming academic year. More student accommodation appears to be required by the Borough for its growing University population.

At the meeting **Cllr Liz Frost**, not a member of the Planning Committee, (Residents Association – Woodcote Ward) spoke against the proposal. She described the proposal as “Overdevelopment, far too close to neighbouring properties and overbearing. Rear of properties will be flooded by lighting from the development. Inevitably there will be disturbing noise effecting enjoyment of neighbouring gardens. Conditions suggested to deal with noise are unenforceable without a warden on site. The 32 square feet of outside amenity space wholly inadequate.”

Local Ladbroke Road resident **Paul Ring** described the development as “a cramped student house in multiple occupation (HMO) and there would be disturbance from the movement of students in a narrow space”.

Spencer Copping, the agent for the applicant, defended the application and asked the Committee to support the recommendation of the Council officers to approve the plan.

The **Council Officer** argued that there would be a requirement for a “management strategy” to deal with anti-social behaviour and that would mitigate risk of disturbance of neighbours.

Cllr Steve McCormick (RA Woodcote) expressed concern about the lack of amenity space for the students. The Officer explained that as a student accommodation the development was not subject to amenity space requirements and the nearby Rosebery Park mitigated this. The Councillor proposed refusal of the application. Cllr **Previn Jagutpal** (RA Stamford) also spoke against on grounds of the density and lack of amenity space.

Cllr Alex Coley (RA Ruxley) asked for the matter to be put off to allow a Councillors’ inspection and despite the Chairman **Cllr Humphrey Reynolds** describing site inspections as a “waste of time”, a majority voted to inspect. If a decision had been reached approval would have been voted for by **Cllr Kate Chinn** (Labour Court Ward) who recognised the need for more student accommodation in the Borough. **Cllr David Gulland** (LibDem College Ward) reluctantly accepted there were no legal grounds to refuse that would withstand an appeal to an inspector and would vote in favour.

Cllr Jan Mason (RA Ruxley Ward) could not accept that 22 students should live together without a responsible supervisor living there. They would play hip-hop music and make noise. She thought the rear of the development looks “like a prison”. She asked “Why white brick? That would not fit the area.”



Green Gables next to white rendered houses in Ashley Road



Houses opposite Green Gables

Green Gables' registered proprietor is one **Bernard Wells** who has owned it since at latest 1994 and the property is subject to a **Swindon County Court** charge in 2008 in favour of **Thames Water Utilities Ltd.** The **Land Registry** entries can be out of date due to months' long backlogs in data entry.

Surrey Councils at local plan loggerheads?



Spelthorne councillors are “not behind” the authority’s plans for 9,000 homes in the borough, according to a neighbouring council.

An Elmbridge Borough Council response to Spelthorne’s draft local plan also raised concerns surrounding the wording of the plan, which was introduced as making Spelthorne “a less attractive place to live”.

At an individual cabinet member decision making – planning and environmental health meeting on Thursday (September 1), portfolio holder Councillor Karen Randolph agreed the wording of a letter to be sent to Spelthorne Borough Council regarding its local plan, which is currently going through public consultation.

The neighbouring councils have a duty to co-operate on each other’s plans for homes, with Elmbridge focussing its response on the areas of the plan which could have cross-boundary implications for the borough.

Cllr Randolph’s letter said that Elmbridge appreciated there was a “balance to be struck” when preparing a local plan, and that, like Elmbridge’s the Spelthorne plan “centred around place-making and responding to the climate change emergency”.

She added: “However, it would appear that Spelthorne councillors are not behind the draft local plan and have been led by a continued over-emphasis on the perceived requirement that its housing need must be met in full.”

The letter went on to quote Spelthorne’s local plan, for 9,270 new homes in the borough, which said: “Whilst it is appealing to consider producing a plan that does not meet our need in full, this will not be a sound strategy and would be rejected by the Planning Inspector.”

Elmbridge’s local plan went through its regulation 19 representation stage up until the end of July, and will now be sent to the planning inspector for feedback.

A spokesperson for Spelthorne said since June 2020, a ‘collective team’ of officers and councillors from every ward had spent more than 100 hours in task group meetings, and debated the plan at cabinet and environment and sustainability committee meetings.

They said this was to ensure the draft local plan and draft Staines development framework were “the best, most robust and most defensible they can be”.

The letter from Elmbridge said the authority would query how Spelthorne’s approach to meeting its housing requirement was consistent with central government policy, and how, overall, it had been “positively prepared”.

The letter said the plan outlined that development within the town centres would consist of “sterile, high-rise blocks”, something, according to the letter, “that no Councillor wants to support”.

Catriona Riddell was brought in last September by the then leadership at Spelthorne to do three workshops with councillors on developing a shared vision around not just the local plan but working with local communities.

The document she had worked on with councillors was not voted through for inclusion in local plan documents at a full council meeting on December 9, 2021.

Speaking before this week’s Elmbridge meeting, she said in terms of a council’s local plan being “positively prepared”, this would include community responses to consultations, the plan’s approach to growth and its “overall vision for a place”.

She added: “It’s very much about when a local council gets to an examination, they’re sitting there saying: ‘This is the plan we want, this is our plan.

“This is going to make a difference to the local area in a positive way. And it’s ours.”

The plan releases around 0.7 per cent of the borough’s green belt for development.

The Elmbridge response said none of these were on the boundary of the two authorities, and highlighted Spelthorne considered this to allow the building of family homes with gardens, and lower building heights in Staines.

The response also questioned the release of green belt in Land to the west of Long Lane and South of Blackburn Trading Estate for the building of 200 homes, over sites such as Land to the South and West of Stratton Road, Sunbury and Land off Worple Road, Staines.

The other sites could take 260 and 256 homes respectively, according to the response, which queried that they had been discounted because they may “not aid distribution of development across the borough” and because of negative feedback at a previous preferred options stage.

Cllr Randolph’s letter said: “The approach taken appears inconsistent and that these sites have been discounted on the basis of the reception of the community.”

The Spelthorne spokesperson said: “Between them, the [draft local plan and draft Staines development framework] have been considered by councillors at either cabinet or committee on six different occasions to ensure that members were comfortable with the direction of travel and the progress being made at every stage.

On May 19, 25 of the 33 councillors at the authority’s full council meeting voted to send the plan to public consultation.

The council spokesperson added: “The local plan strategy proposed seeks to meet Spelthorne’s housing needs in full and is considered to be a measured approach that takes into account the views of stakeholders and the evidence developed through the local plan process.”

Public consultation on the plan has been extended up to September 19.

Spelthorne local plan:

Elmbridge meeting agenda:

Spelthorne December meeting: <https://democracy.spelthorne.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&Mid=3470>

What an erudite lot we are.



Surrey libraries are the second most visited in the country according to the latest UK Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) data, with the figures showing the libraries attracted over 550,000 visits last year.

CIPFA surveyed residents as part of the findings, with questions ranging from the overall customer experience, satisfaction with the quality of book stock, and the role libraries play in combating loneliness and isolation.

97% of respondents said they received good or very good standard of care when visiting Surrey’s libraries, whilst 83% felt the choice of books on offer was either good or very good (with a further 93% happy with the physical condition of the books).

The results also reinforced the important role libraries play in their communities, with 62% of those surveyed who felt lonely saying libraries help to reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation.



The findings from the CIPFA survey reflect the broadening appeal of Surrey’s libraries and emphasise that modern libraries provide more to residents than just books. They have become a place for performances, workshops and exhibition spaces and offer a myriad of services including free digital access for those without access to a computer.

Below are some examples of what libraries have been providing over and above their core service offerings:

- A year-long partnership with Farnham Maltings has resulted in libraries being a space for some exciting creative events to be staged, exhibited and performed, extending the reach and accessibility of cultural experiences.
- Ensuring that no one is left behind libraries have been the backbone of delivering Surrey’s Period Dignity campaign with period products available to be collected for free or donated at all 52 libraries.
- Libraries are there for all people in the community and have been welcoming families from the Ukraine ensuring books in Ukrainian and Russian are available on their shelves. Young Ukrainians have been able to take part in this year’s Summer Reading Challenge thanks to translated materials provided in Ukrainian and Russian.
- This summer during the Jubilee weekend there were 85 Jubilee events and 46 Big Lunches hosted in Surrey libraries as an opportunity for communities to come together and celebrate – to ensure everyone had an opportunity join up and join in with their community.

Sue Wills MBE Assistant Director Art, Culture, Heritage and Libraries said “This is just the tip of the iceberg! We’ve come a long way in terms of the diversity of services that libraries can offer. This is an exciting period of transformation for our much-loved Surrey Libraries where spaces are re-imagined to deliver a place where social, educational, economic, and cultural activities can be made accessible to all in the community, often free of charge. It’s not the physical building that changes it’s what’s happening inside at the heart of the building that changes.”

To find out about all the different events taking place in Surrey Libraries follow on Twitter and Facebook or visit the Surrey Libraries web pages. Libraries – Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)

Results are from the Surrey County Council CIPFA plus survey, 2022

The Borough’s libraries are:

Epsom Library

6 Epsom Square, Epsom · 03456009009

Ewell Court Library

Ewell Court House Lakehurst Road, Epsom · 03002001001

Stoneleigh Community Library

1 Stoneleigh Broadway, Epsom · 03002001001

Bourne Hall Library

Spring Street, Ewell 020 8393 9571

Wasting water?



As drought is declared in Surrey during the driest UK summer in 50 years, councils and services across the county have been taking measures to save water. The temperatures are forecast to remain high over the weekend, and measures such as hosepipe bans could be on the cards from water companies.

From watering plants only from tanks which collect rainwater, suspending boat journeys on part of the Basingstoke Canal and no charity car washes for the **Surrey Fire and Rescue Service**, measures are being taken across the county to save water.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council said it would follow guidance from the water companies in regard to watering plant, trees and bowling greens. A spokesperson said water fountains were still available, advised the public to take reusable water bottles to parks and open spaces.

The council's general advice to the public was guided by **Thames Water's** tips, including: swapping a garden hose for a watering can, taking shorter showers and fixing leaky loos and dripping taps among others.

A **Surrey County Council** spokesperson said all the authority's services were reviewing their water usage and monitoring the restrictions coming into force in the county.

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, covered by the county council, had temporarily stopped hosting charity car washes and advised crews to be mindful where possible, such as performing dry drills.

The spokesperson said: "As a big user of water, we're going to be taking reasonable steps to play our part in this, without affecting operations."

The watering of new trees planted last autumn and plants at the county council's main offices was being reviewed, as were low water levels on the Basingstoke Canal.

The spokesperson said: "We have suspended boat navigation between Aldershot and Brookwood to help address [low water levels].

"Canoeing and paddlesports are continuing but may need to be restricted if levels continue to fall.

"We're also working with the **Angling Association** and **Environment Agency** to monitor fish welfare."

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council has two 20,000 litre tanks which collect rain water, which is used to water the plants and flowers in much of the borough during the summer months, and the authority using mains water for this only where necessary.

Morag Williams, head of neighbourhood operations at the borough council, said the authority would follow all advice from the water companies.

She added: "We are always looking for ways to be more sustainable and our Greenspaces team is investigating options for more drought resistant planting for future planting schemes, in addition to those we already have in place.

"We would advise residents to follow the advice of the water and fire authorities and we are helping to share their information through our channels."

She said residents and businesses could find advice on reducing water consumption generally on the council's website, and staff were also given advice on what they could do to help, including in their own homes.

Elmbridge Borough Council

An Elmbridge Borough Council spokesperson said they were waiting for details of restrictions from the three water companies covering the area: Thames Water, Affinity and SES.

They said the borough's paddling pools, which were in "high demand at the moment to help children cool off in the heat" dated back to the 1950s and were not efficient in terms of water and energy use.

A public consultation is due to be launched into the Oatlands paddling pool, which takes 4 hours to fill, and Churchfields, which takes 5 hours.

The spokesperson said: "Our residents are aware that we will be talking to them in the weeks ahead about the future of the paddling pools and how Elmbridge can be best served with play equipment as we look to improve play facilities in the borough."

They added that Centres for the Community were supporting our older and more vulnerable residents, making sure they know to hydrate and how to keep cool in their homes and that advice on heatwave and water saving could be found on the council's website.

Mole Valley District Council

Mole Valley District Council had been in discussions with its grounds and maintenance contractors, Idverde, regarding not carrying out any extra watering if a hosepipe ban came into effect.

Councillor David Draper, cabinet member for leisure and tourism, said the authority would continue watering summer beds and newly-planted trees.

He said this used a "very limited" amount of water, around 4,000 litres per week, is equivalent to 20 bath tubs' worth over the whole of Mole Valley.

Cllr Draper added: "We must continue to maintain the health and growth of flowers and trees during these periods of sustained hot weather, particularly the new trees, otherwise they risk perishing."

Guildford Borough Council

Guildford Borough Council's lead councillor for environment and regulation, Cllr James Steel, said the authority was "doing all it could" to reduce water usage without affecting service delivery.

He said: "If the dry period continues, we will re-evaluate what we are doing.

"We may have to limit our water usage further, if water companies struggle to supply water to homes within the borough."

Cllr Steel said fresh treated water would be added to the council's pools and sports pitches were watered to maintain a safe playing surface where appropriate.

He said shared community facilities, such as the recently resurfaced paddling pool could help to reduce domestic use, and that the parks department recycled water where possible.

He added: "When it comes to community services our main priority is to keep our most vulnerable residents healthy and safe.

"We encourage all residents to follow heat health messages in this hot weather."

A Tandridge District Council

A Tandridge District Council spokesperson said the authority was careful with water usage year round and not just during a water shortage.

They said: “We will continue to water plants until the flowers are past their best and trees when watering is required.

“Our bowls green and croquet lawns will be watered in the early hours of the morning several times a week either using a pop up sprinkler system or a hose sprinkler.”

Council Pride in Not Uncommon Green Flag



Epsom and Ewell Borough Council is pleased to have received a Green Flag Award for Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve, one of 2208 UK winners. The award is the international quality mark for parks and green spaces.

This is the 16th year that **Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve** has received this award.

Over the last few years, borough parks and nature reserves have been vital places for people to relax, exercise and meet friends and family safely.

Councillor John Beckett of the Environment and Safe Communities Committee said: “We have some fantastic parks and green spaces in the borough. The news that Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve has achieved the Green Flag Award for the 16th year in a row is a testament to our teams and volunteers whose hard work all year-round ensures it is well maintained. We are also reminding everyone to be fire aware and not to light any BBQs in our green spaces as there is currently such a high risk of fires spreading in this dry spell.”

Commenting on the news Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve has met the Green Flag Award standard, **Keep Britain Tidy’s Accreditation Manager Paul Todd** said: “I would like to congratulate everyone involved in making Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve worthy of a Green Flag Award.

“Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve is a vital green space for the local community. This award is testament to all the hard work of staff and volunteers, who do so much to ensure that it maintains the high standards demanded by the Green Flag Award.”

The Green Flag Award scheme, managed by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy under licence from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, recognises and rewards well-managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of green spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.

A full list of Green Flag Award-winning parks and green spaces is available at <https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/sites/default/files/2022%20GFA%20UK%20winners%20list.pdf>.

The Green Flag Award Scheme (<http://greenflagaward.org/>) is run by the environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, under licence from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, in partnership with Keep Scotland Beautiful, Keep Wales Tidy and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

Keep Britain Tidy is a leading environmental charity. It sets the standard for the management of parks and beaches, inspires people to be litter-free, to waste less and live more sustainably. It runs campaigns and programmes including the Great British Spring Clean, Eco-Schools, Love Parks, Eco-Schools, the Green Flag Award for parks and green spaces and the Blue Flag/ Seaside Awards for beaches. To find out more about Keep Britain Tidy, its campaigns and programmes visit www.keepbritaintidy.org.

Any green space that is freely accessible to the public is eligible to enter for a Green Flag Award. Awards are given on an annual basis and winners must apply each year to renew their Green Flag Award status. A Green Flag Community Award recognises quality sites managed by voluntary and community groups. Green Heritage Site Accreditation is judged on the treatment of the site’s historic features and the standard of conservation.

See yesterday’s report on **Epsom Common Association**

Flagging Up Epsom Common