

Council’s last minute opposition to ULEZ extension.

31 July 2022



With just one day to go before the end of the consultation period, **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** agreed on 28th July a response to Transport for London’s (TFL’s) proposed plan to extend the **Ultra Low Emissions Zone** (ULEZ) to all London boroughs, including neighbouring Kingston and Sutton. See Epsom and Ewell Times report 17th June on ULEZ extension.

ULEZ is a charge, currently £12.50 a day, imposed on the most polluting vehicles that enter the zone. Most petrol cars manufactured after January 2006, most diesel cars manufactured after September 2016 and all electric cars are exempt from the ULEZ charge.

In a special motion to the Council meeting on 28th July, Councillor **Phil Neale** (RA, Cuddington Ward) proposed a response to the consultation arguing for a significant increase in the number of exempt routes and an extension of any scrappage scheme to include Epsom and Ewell. The motion also called for an extension of the consultation period to allow more careful analysis of the cause and effect to the welfare and economy of the boroughs neighbouring London. “We support the move to reduce the high level of air pollution caused by congestion and high-emission vehicles,” he said. “However, in this time of economic pressure, the scheme needs to consider the economic, social and mental health needs of all communities affected by the scheme, not just London boroughs. It is going to hit lower income families more. I’m not asking for ULEZ to be dropped, I’m asking for TFL to consider what will happen in the boroughs surrounding London.”

“There seems to be no thought by TFL whatsoever of the impact this will have on the borough and our residents” said **Cllr. John Beckett** (RA, Auriol Ward, Chair of the Environment and Safe Communities Committee). “I welcome the travel corridors that have been put in, but I do have to question why I can drive 98% of the way to the new hospital site, but the road I need to use to get into the hospital site is in the proposed ULEZ.”

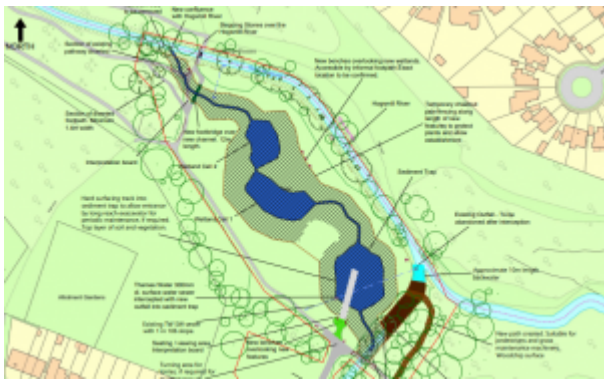
“If we get public transport sorted, that would be the time to get people moving out of their cars” said **Cllr. Neil Dallen** (RA, Town Ward, Chair of the Strategy and Resource Committee).

Cllr Kate Chinn (Labour, Court Ward) provided the solitary voice opposing the motion. “It is only the oldest and most polluting vehicles that apply – these need to be taken off the roads...let’s give people help to do that and let’s look after this world for ourselves and the people who come after us.”

The motion was passed by a considerable majority. Exact voting figures were not announced by the Mayor who chaired the meeting.

“Garden of Eden” coming to West Ewell as Wetlands Plan is approved. Will this stop pollution?

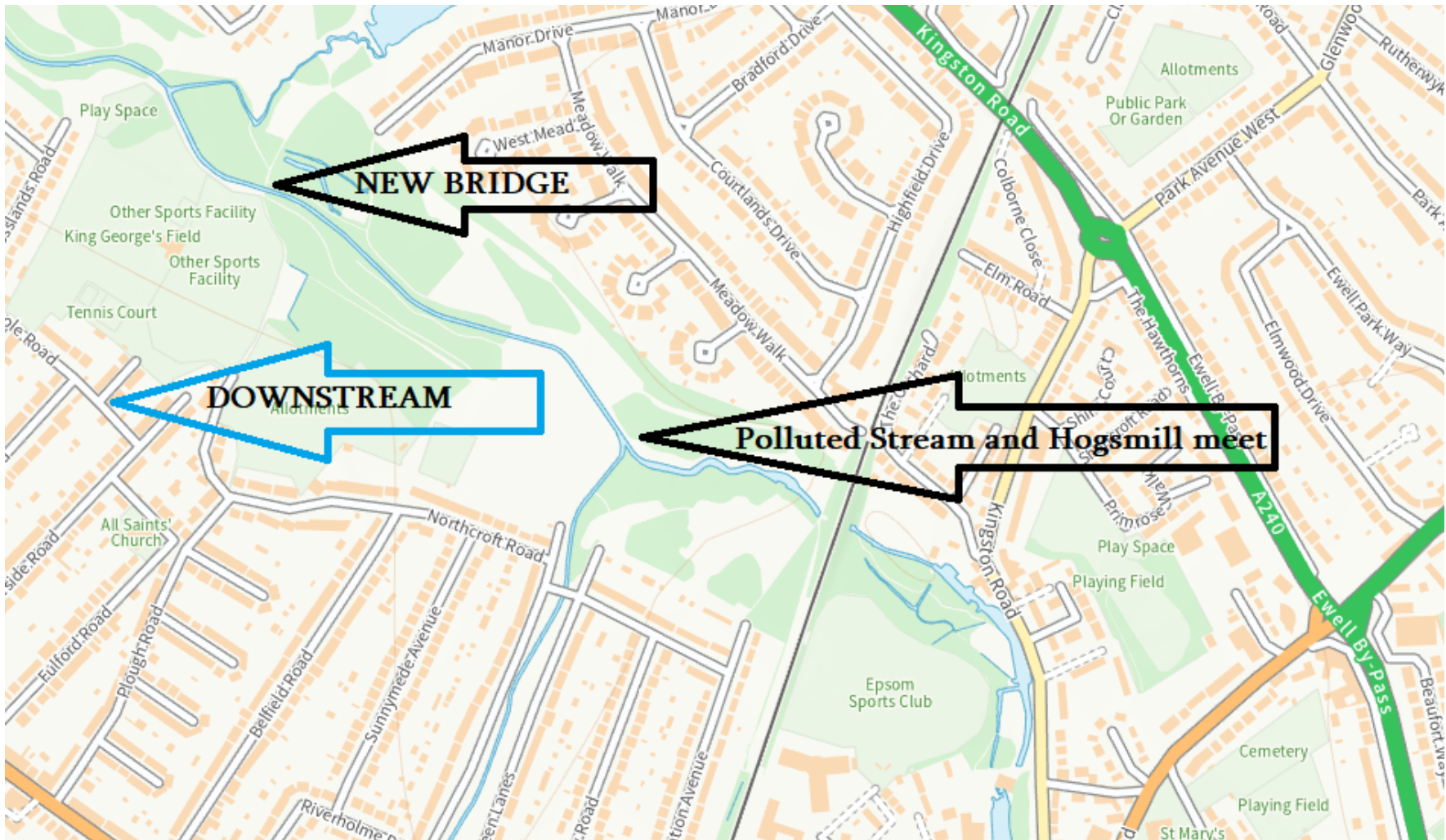
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A plan to mitigate some of the environmental impacts of sewage on the **Hogsmill River, in West Ewell**, was finally approved by **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** Thursday 21st July.

The scheme submitted by local charity **South East Rivers Trust** in May 2021, was granted by councillors after a 30-minute meeting of the **Planning Committee**, chaired by Cllr. **Humphrey Reynolds** (RA Ewell Ward). Cllr. **Steven McCormick** (RA Woodcote Ward) abstained from the vote.

The project will divert the **Green Lanes Stream** approximately 50m upstream from its current confluence with the Hogsmill River . The Stream will flow along a new winding channel through **Chamber Mead meadow** within the **Hogsmill Local Nature Reserve**, passing through a constructed sediment trap and wetlands, before entering back into the Hogsmill River approximately 200 metres further downstream from its original confluence. Up to 1,000 m2 of wetlands habitat will be created and the flow of the new channel will attenuate the sewage brought to the watercourse from road runoff, misconnections, and overflows from Epsom Storm Tanks.



Map view of area where wetland will be developed

"I hope it will become like the Garden of Eden," said Cllr. **David Gulland** (Liberal Democrat College Ward) during the meeting.

According to the application, sediment and contaminants would be trapped, and a level of treatment would be provided to the polluted water in three different forms. A biological treatment would naturally occur with the uptake of aquatic plants and metabolism; a chemical treatment would act on pollutants with the employment of dissolved nutrients, such as nitrate and phosphate; and a final treatment would be carried out physically, harnessing the decrease of flow velocities caused by the sediment trap, to settle sediments and pollutants via gravity.



View toward Chamber Mead open space from the end of Green Lane

In addition to the creation of the new channel, a 12-metre bridge was proposed to let pedestrians, including wheelchair users and cyclists, reach the stepping stones from the south of Chamber Mead.

"It's a very welcome improvement to reducing and mitigating the impact of pollutants entering the chalk stream river and the discharges of sewage," said Cllr. **Kate Chinn** (Labour Court Ward).

Pollution has long been a scourge for a river that is internationally recognised as one of the only 200 chalk streams on Earth, and its chemical concentrations even led the **Environment Agency** to issue a 'fail' status in 2017. Warning signs have been put up advising people not to attend the area.

After the application was submitted, 527 letters of notification were sent to neighbouring properties to advertise the plan. As of July 2022, more than 35 letters of support have been received. Nevertheless, one of the recipients manifested their objection, as pollution "should be addressed at source."

Despite the worthy purposes of the plan and the actual benefits this could achieve, failures at Epsom and Manor Drive Storm Tanks, Hogsmill A Wastewater and Cso At St. James's Road sewer storms - all managed by the private utility company **Thames Water** - appear to be the real problem.

In 2021, a total of 159 hours of untreated sewage contaminated the river across 47 incidents, according to data published by The Rivers Trust.

"We support the scheme to reduce the impact of some of the pollution, however it will only do this on a fraction of the pollution coming into the channel," said **Mark Todd**, local entrepreneur and member of Epsom and Ewell Labour Party, whose petition asking the company to stop the pollution has recently topped a thousand signatures. "Thames Water must, must, must stop overflowing so much sewage deliberately into the streams for wildlife to survive and for the streams to be safe for kids."

In a letter sent to the company and reviewed by Epsom and Ewell Times, the signatories of the petition demand that Thames Water upgrade their "inadequate

infrastructure,” as “local residents and community groups are very concerned about what is going on and are very disappointed.”

Along with coliforms, raw sewage discharge from the sewage network is seen as one of the two “major issues to tackle,” according to a joint opinion piece from Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer for England, Jonson Cox, Ofwat chair, and Emma Howard Boyd, Environment Agency chair, released in June 2022. “The principal public health responsibility for ensuring human faeces and viable human faecal bacteria do not get into waterways people might use recreationally, rest squarely with the water companies and their directors.”

A spokesperson from Thames Water, although acknowledging the risks of pollution, seemed to disagree. “We certainly can’t do it on our own,” they said.

Mind the Epsom Town Centre Masterplan!

31 July 2022



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will be opening a public consultation on Monday 25 July to give residents, workers, business owners and visitors the chance to help shape the future of Epsom town centre. Epsom and Ewell Times reported on the cost of this planning endeavour [HERE](#) on 13th June 2022.

The consultation is looking to find out:

- How respondents feel about the town centre today
- How respondents would like the town centre to change in the future
- What respondents think should happen in the key opportunity areas that have been identified.

The public’s opinions will inform a new **Epsom Town Centre Masterplan**, which will be a key part of the evidence base for Epsom & Ewell’s borough-wide Local Plan, guiding decisions about planning, development and investment in the future.

Councillor **Steven McCormick**, Chair of the Licensing & Planning Policy Committee, said, “We want to hear as many local voices and opinions as possible about our Town Centre. To do this we need a range of people who both visit and use Epsom to go online and take part. There will be an exhibition within the **Ashley Centre** (opposite Costa Coffee) from the 8th August, with an opportunity to meet the project team on the 11th and 13th of August”

Respondents will be able to give their views via an online questionnaire at <https://epsom-ewell.gov.uk/residents/planning-policy/consultations-and-examination> which has been made possible with the support of the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC) “Prop Tech” 2 engagement fund.

A Greener Future in Partial Sight As Verges To Be Left Unmown

31 July 2022



Roadside verges in Surrey will be cut less frequently to foster biodiversity, according to Highway Authority, Surrey County Council. In a move to ease the pressure on native nature from human activity, around 700 species of wildflower will be left unmown, and plants and wildlife in the area restored. “It’s time to redefine our ideas about what well-managed public spaces look like,” said **Andrew Jamieson**, Projects Director at **Surrey Wildlife Trust**. “It’s an essential part of our joint plan to restore and support Surrey’s plants and wildlife and take a first step towards a greener future for the neighbourhood.”

Feature photo: *credit Jon Hawkins – Surrey Hills Photography*

The decision builds on the **Climate Change Delivery Plan** published in 2020 to respond to Surrey County Council’s climate emergency declaration and set a target for Surrey to be net zero by the half of the century. Supporting and increasing biodiversity will contribute to become a carbon free county by 2050, said **Matt Furniss**, Conservative Cabinet Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Economy, in the press release. “Vegetation has fantastic benefits for both Surrey’s wildflowers and wildlife.”

According to research, over 97 per cent of UK wildflower meadows, equal to 3 million hectares (7.5 million acres), have been lost since the 1930s and replaced with monocultures with a lower ability to store carbon. Emissions relating to the consumption of goods and services by Surrey residents and businesses are estimated to be more than twice greater than those measured as part of the net zero targets.

According to the Climate Change Delivery Plan, land can naturally reduce the county’s carbon emissions by 3%. Not surprisingly, the strategy includes the **Growing Back Greener programme**, through the facilitation of planting, the reduction of flooding and the support to native biodiversity, as one of the main goals to achieve. Surrey itself aims at growing 1.2 million trees over the next decade.

Although nature and its safeguard are known to lead to multiple accomplishments, mixed concerns among residents were stirred after the measure was announced. “Many people fear a tick population explosion because of ‘wild’ grassland: where you have wild mammals, you have ticks,” said **Kim Spickett** of **Epsom and Ewell** based **Surrey Wildflowering Project**, a community-led initiative to promote and celebrate the borough’s diverse environments. “But ticks frequent parks and gardens too, not just countryside. Our nature reserves have safe paths that you can use to walk safely with dogs and children.”



Roadside verges, that tend to thrive on the sides of highways, might also cause safety issues if left untended as sightlines might be affected. “A sightline for traffic can be cut and the rest left to bloom,” said Spickett. “That said, wiping out or “scalping” makes no sense. Mowing blades can have the height adjusted to “top” the grass and leave shorter flowers intact.” Echoing Spickett, SCC acknowledged the risk to sightlines and promised to ensure safety while pushing to keep the verges intact. “Highway safety remains paramount, and sightlines will be kept clear,” said Furniss. “Any issues with vegetation impairing visibility can be reported via our website.”

Advice on ticks and tick bites can be found on the NHS website.

Water restraint urged as dry weather continues

31 July 2022

UK HEATWAVE: THAMES WATER URGES HOUSEHOLDS TO CONTROL THEIR WATER USAGE.

- *Thames Water is urging residents to control their water usage and limit consumption around the home.*
- *Households are being advised to take shorter showers and limit use of the garden hose in a bid to reduce water usage.*

With temperatures set to rise to record levels this week, Thames Water is urging residents to control their water usage and limit consumption around the home where possible.

Prolonged spells of hot weather increase the demand for water, putting a strain on the network and accelerating the draw on rivers, underground aquifers, and water stored in reservoirs.

Thames Water is offering advice to households on how to limit their water usage and help to prevent any future shortages. This includes simple routine changes such as taking shorter showers, reducing use of the garden hose and turning taps off when brushing your teeth.

Research released today by Thames Water and YouGov reveals that rising temperatures and its effect on the supply of water is an issue causing concern among adults in England. Over three quarters (76%) think it’s possible parts of England will experience water shortages in the next 20 to 30 years.

It’s changing the way they think about water too; more than a third (38%) say they would be motivated to use less water to protect rivers and the environment, while almost as many would cut back to make sure there’s enough water available for future generations (35%) or to help avoid a drought (31%).

Andrew Tucker, Water Demand Reduction Manager at Thames Water, said: “During spells of hot weather, water usage can often rocket, with hoses and sprinklers watering gardens and paddling pools filled. That makes it even more important to be mindful of water usage to ensure there’s enough to go around for everyone.”

“While we’re not currently expecting to introduce restrictions on water use this summer, it’s important that households remain responsible with their usage and help us to limit the pressure on our resources.”

- **Take shorter showers.** On average, a shower uses around 10 litres of water a minute. That means a 10-minute shower can use 100 litres of water. If a family of four reduced their shower time by just one minute, they could save up to £45 on metered water bills and a further £52 on energy bills every year.
- **Swap your hose for a watering can.** You can keep your plants happy and still save water by swapping the garden hose or sprinkler for a watering can. A sprinkler can use as much water in half an hour as the average family of four uses in a whole day. Using a watering can in your garden could save up to 4,050 litres a year, that’s equivalent to more than 50 full bathtubs.
- **Don’t water when the sun’s out.** Avoid watering plants when the sun’s out and temperatures are high to help minimise the amount of water evaporating. Water early in the morning if you can as evening watering encourages the slugs and snails to come out at night.
- **Turn off the taps while you brush your teeth.** A running tap uses on average 6-8 litres of water a minute. That’s over 14 pints straight down the drain – so an easy change to make a big difference is turning off the taps while brushing.
- **Fix leaky loos and dripping taps.** Leaky loos are usually caused by a faulty flush valve or fill valve inside your cistern tank. A leaky loo can waste an average of around 400 litres of water a day. That’s equal to five full bathtubs or around £350 a year.
- **Go the full load.** Wait until you have a full load before running the dishwasher or washing machine. This will not only save on the amount of water you use, but it’ll lower your energy use – helping you reduce your bills.

Households can also find a free water saving calculator on the Thames Water website where they can work out how much water and energy they are using and receive tailored advice on how to save.

Ambitious new plan sets out the future for travelling around Surrey.

31 July 2022



Surrey’s ten-year Transport plan which includes measures for reducing the 41% of carbon emissions currently generated by transport, was approved by Surrey County Councillors at their Full Council meeting on 12 July 2022.

The plan prioritises measures to support people to get around Surrey easily and sustainably including increasing the number of walking and cycling routes, providing more charging points and parking for electric vehicles, charging for transport use and introducing car clubs, as well as improving internet connections for home-working and redesigning neighbourhoods to enable easier access to local services, lessening the need to travel by car.

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Economy said, *“Our new transport plan sets out our roadmap for a transport network in Surrey that meets the needs of the future. Crucially this includes proposals to help tackle the climate emergency and become a carbon free county by 2050.*

“With such a high proportion of harmful emissions coming from transport and their significant impact on our environment, we all need to act. Residents can play their part by relying less on their cars for some journeys.

“We know this will be a challenge and we do not expect to eliminate car use. We have recently invested over £39m in buses, £6m to improve cycle routes and footpaths and a further £6m to improve road safety around schools to help make other methods of travel more appealing and accessible for certain journeys, whilst also improving the health and wellbeing of our residents.”

All local authorities are required to produce and consult on, a local transport plan to set out how it will maintain and improve the local transport system.

The full plan will be available at www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport from Wednesday 13 July.

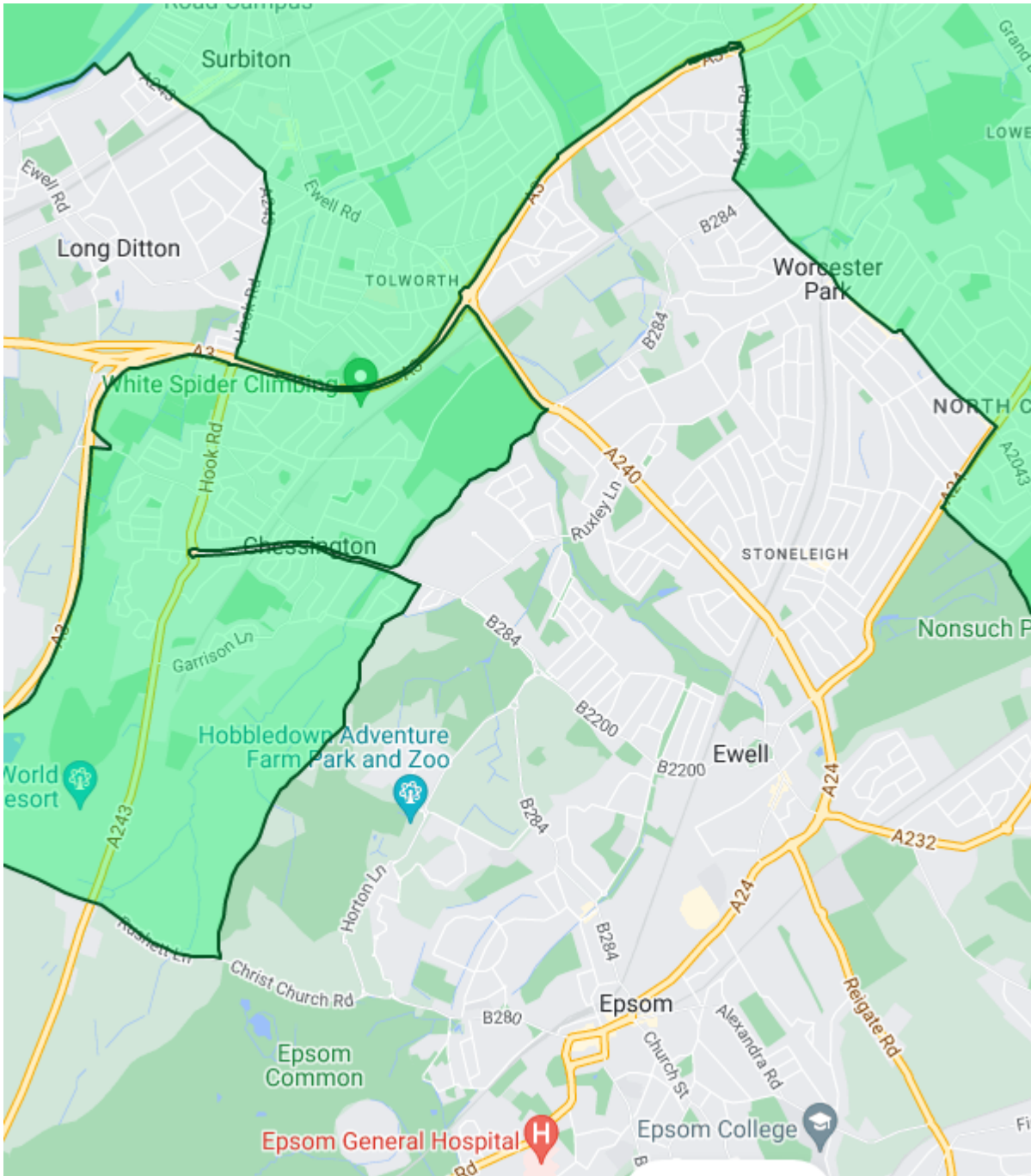
Driving to Sutton or Kingston in an old car could cost you £12.50 next year!

31 July 2022



The Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) that charges old diesel and some old petrol cars £12.50 a day 24/7 for travel in inner London might be expanded to Epsom and Ewell’s borders from August 2023.

You can examine exactly where the proposed ULEZ will be located near the Borough’s borders via this detailed online map [CLICK HERE](#)



The Mayor of London’s case for the expansion of ULEZ is summarised in the consultation document: Health crisis, climate crisis and road congestion.

“London’s air quality is a public health crisis. In 2019, it’s estimated that more than 4,000 Londoners died prematurely because of filthy air, with the greatest number of deaths attributable to air pollution in outer London boroughs. The London boroughs with the highest number of air pollution related deaths in 2019 were Bromley, Barnet, Croydon and Havering, proving that poor air quality is not just an inner London problem. More than 500,000 Londoners suffer from asthma, making them vulnerable to toxic air pollution. If we do not act now, it is estimated that more than 500,000 Londoners will develop diseases attributable to toxic air pollution in the next 30 years.

We face a climate crisis. Last year the COP 26 conference concluded that without urgent action, there will be catastrophic temperature increases and extreme weather events. London is already suffering these, such as flash flooding of some stations, schools and hospitals in 2021.

Road congestion is still a big problem. Congestion cost the capital £5.1bn last year alone. This heavily impacts businesses, bus customers and other essential services. Longer journey times affect us all. Traffic can negatively impact our health and wellbeing, and increases road danger. This makes our city a less pleasant place to live, work, visit and do business.”

Epsom and Ewell Times asked all the Councillors representing Wards in the Borough with London area borders:

The irrepressible **Jan Mason** (Residents Association) for Ruxley Ward was first off. “My Ward is on the Boundary of Chessington and would be greatly affected by these proposals. Plus of course the thousand of vehicles which use the Chessington Road to go to work or to go to the Merritt Doctors’ Surgery and the shops and schools and to join the M25 etc. In other words the proposal is ridiculous. Yet again an ill thought out proposal”.

E&ET: [Note that in fact by using Ruxley Lane, the Ewell-By-Pass and A3 you will be able to get to the M25 without crossing into the proposed expanded ULEZ.]

Next we have a response from **John Beckett** (RA) Auriol Ward: “I oppose the plans as they stand but, if they do go ahead, there need to be more ULEZ free travel corridors that enable Epsom and Ewell (E&E) residents to access locations such as Worcester Park shopping area, Tolworth shopping area, Malden Rushett access to the A3 along the A243 Hook Road, Chessington without having to be penalised for supporting London businesses by paying the charge.

Many residents in West Ewell, Ruxley, Auriol, Stoneleigh, Ewell Court and Nonsuch have their doctors’ surgeries, medical facilities, local shops, leisure facilities, open spaces (Nonsuch Park), friends and family and schools etc just across the border. Many hundreds of residents in Nonsuch Ward live so close to the border that their postal addresses fall under Sutton and not Epsom and Ewell. The new hospital for Epsom & St. Helier Trust will be located next to the Royal Marsden Hospital in the London Borough Of Sutton. This would mean that Surrey residents would have to pay to go to their local hospital. Epsom’s Maternity Unit will be transferring to this new hospital site which means that our expectant mothers will have to pay to have scans, check-ups and to give birth!”

Epsom and Ewell Times notes from the map of the proposed ULEZ that Malden Road, where the Worcester Park shops are, is not in the zone.

Chris Grayling MP states:

“Those who live at the north end of Epsom and Ewell and in Nork are probably particularly aware of the Mayor of London’s plans to extend the Ultra Low Emission zone to the London boundary. This would mean that older vehicles would have to pay a daily charge to drive across the boundary.

Clearly this has major implications for many people living locally, and while I understand the intent behind the policy, it is in my view damaging and unworkable for the areas immediately adjoining the boundary. Transport for London has yet to give clear details about how it would work on the border – for example what do they plan to do with cases like that of Sparrow Farm Road in Stoneleigh? This road is in Surrey on one side and in London on the other. But it would mean a charge for many Surrey residents doing local journeys or driving from one place in Surrey to another if the route crossed the boundary.

I have lodged an objection to the scheme because of this, and would encourage residents here to make their views known to TfL.”

The consultation ends on 29th July 2022. You can have your say via this link

<https://haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/cleanair>

Read our editorial.