EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

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Could you be Epsom and Ewell's next citizen journalist?

23 November 2026

Epsom & Ewell Times is inviting applications from local people interested in becoming volunteer citizen journalists, with a specially designed training course offering an introduction to reporting local news.

Do you take an interest in what happens in your neighbourhood? Are you curious about decisions made by local councils? Do you enjoy writing, meeting people or discovering stories that deserve a wider audience?

If so, Epsom & Ewell Times (EET) would like to hear from you.

The independent, not-for-profit local newspaper is looking to develop a team of volunteer citizen journalists who can help extend its coverage of the people, organisations, events and issues affecting Epsom, Ewell and surrounding communities.

No previous journalism experience is necessary. Enthusiasm, curiosity, fairness, reliability and an interest in local affairs matter more.

Learning the skills of local journalism

Successful applicants will be invited to attend a 90-minute introductory workshop designed specifically for EET. 3pm Monday 14th December in Epsom.

The course will introduce the principles of responsible journalism, including accuracy, impartiality, fairness, the importance of seeking comment from those affected by a story, and the ethical standards expected of a publisher regulated by IMPRESS, the independent press regulator.

Participants will also learn practical techniques for finding and researching local stories, interviewing contributors and preparing articles for publication.

The workshop will demonstrate how modern technology can make local journalism more accessible, including:

- Finding stories in council agendas, reports and public meetings.
- Extracting audio from recorded council meetings and producing transcripts.
- Analysing lengthy council documents, identify newsworthy issues and prepare draft reports.
- Checking facts, quotations and sources before publication.
- Finding photographs and illustrations that can lawfully be published without infringing copyright.
- Using AI-generated illustrations responsibly.
- Preparing articles, headlines and images for EET's website.

The course will include short practical exercises and examples drawn from local news reporting.

Helping local stories get told

Citizen journalism offers opportunities to report on subjects that might otherwise receive little attention.

These might include planning applications, environmental concerns, local businesses, voluntary organisations, schools, cultural events, sporting achievements, community campaigns or decisions by local authorities.

There is also a role for those interested in investigating matters of public concern and holding public bodies to account.

Volunteers will be able to suggest their own stories and develop particular interests, while receiving editorial guidance and support.

EET will retain editorial responsibility for all material published on its website.

Who should apply?

Applications are welcome from adults of all backgrounds, including students, retired people, those considering a career in journalism and anyone who would simply like to make a worthwhile contribution to their community.

Applicants do not need professional writing qualifications or specialist technical knowledge, although competence with

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computers and the internet is necessary.

Volunteering need not involve a substantial weekly commitment. Contributors may be able to undertake occasional assignments according to their availability and interests.

The opportunity is voluntary and unpaid.

How to apply

Places on the introductory course will be limited, and EET will operate a selection process to identify applicants who demonstrate a genuine interest in local journalism and the potential to contribute to the newspaper.

Applicants will be asked to complete a short online form explaining their interests, experience, availability and the kinds of stories they would particularly like to cover.

APPLICATION FORM LINK

Details of the course date, time and venue will be confirmed to successful applicants.

EET hopes that the initiative will help develop a new generation of community reporters and strengthen independent local journalism at a time when informed, trustworthy reporting of local affairs is more important than ever.

Could you help tell the stories of Epsom and Ewell? We would like to hear from you.

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