



Meet Epsom & Ewell's new Mayor, Robert Geleit.

Epsom and Ewell Times welcomes the new Mayor. Labour Councillor for Court Ward, **Robert Geleit**.

EET: The main thing I wanted to discuss was charities, I see that you are championing three charities in your Mayoral year, could you expand upon why you chose those particular charities?

Robert Geleit: I chose to champion these three charities because I want to help make sure each one of them receives sufficient funds to be able to carry on what they are doing so they can continue positively impacting our community.

Age Concern Epsom and Ewell was an easy choice because of the essential services they offer our pensioners: practical support, help in accessing services and opportunities to increase quality of life.

Citizens Advice Epsom and Ewell have faithfully continued to offer desperately needed advice services in the Borough. I have seen personally the impact it has had in Court Ward as volunteers advise people how to access benefits they qualify for, how to best seek employment, how to deal with money and credit issues, their consumer rights, immigration issues and how best to tackle relational issues with neighbours or family (or anyone else). Often people don't know where to start when it comes to tackling these things and CAEE is a wonderful resource.

Last, how could I not support **Love Me Love My Mind**? They are a small local charity offering support to those in our community with mental health difficulties, including providing information, offering depression support groups and a drop-in group that offers a weekly meal and all sorts of social and educational opportunities. I have suffered with mental health problems myself, so mental health support is near and dear to my heart.

EET: Next question I wanted to ask was what are your priorities for your year in office?

Robert Geleit: I so enjoyed my year as Deputy Mayor and I'm enjoying being Mayor even more. I want to work hard serving the borough and have fun! I intend to be promoting the ward I represent as Councillor, Court Ward, since it has a lot to offer. And I really want to offer young people in Epsom something to do that builds and grows positive community. Watch this space!

EET: What do you think could be improved about the Borough?

Robert Geleit: Youth provision. When I was growing up on the Longmead Estate in the eighties there were all number of offerings for us. I remember the Ace Disco in particular. Now there is so little offered for our youth. This needs to change. There must be more we can do.

EET: What are you most looking forward to in your new role?

Robert Geleit: I'm really looking forward to Armistice day. Last year I had the privilege of laying a wreath at St Martins and found it really moving. This year, to have the opportunity as Mayor to lay a wreath at St Mary's in Ewell is going to be a once in a lifetime opportunity.

EET: If you were just named Fulham's manager, who is the first player you would sign?

Robert Geleit: I really don't follow sport. But, like my father who was a lifelong Fulham supporter, I do go to Craven Cottage on the odd occasion. If I had to sign a player I think I'd sign up my mate Dodgy to play in goal for Chelsea just before they played Fulham - then he could be Fulham's secret weapon as he let in loads of goals!

EET: What hobbies of yours might suffer during your busy Mayoral year?

Robert Geleit: So much of my spare time has been spent on being a good Councillor (or Mayor!) that I don't have much time for hobbies. However, in the past I tended to flip between working on hardware and software projects. Sometimes I still manage to find the time for the odd bit of soldering. My main passion is working with old fashioned valves to create sublime sound systems - I could actually make a living out of it but I'm saving that for if I ever lose my seat ☹

EET: Thank you very much Mr Mayor. We hope you enjoy your year in office.

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Image: Robert Geleit at the Epsom Derby Races June 2023.