### **Dedicated Epsom tree-man**

Dedication event at Alexandra Recreation Ground honours local hero Mike Ford Epsom & Ewell, 3rd December 2023. In a heart warming event volunteers from Friends of Alexandra Park and the Epsom & Ewell Tree Advisory Board (EETAB), local councillors Steven McCormick, James Laurence and Bernie Muir, the Epsom & Ewell Tree Officer and the Mayor, Councillor Rob Geleit gathered on December 3rd at Alexander Recreation Ground to pay tribute to a beloved local figure, Mike Ford, affectionately known as 'Mr. Tree.'

Mr. Ford has been a cornerstone of our community, dedicating countless hours to the preservation and enhancement of our natural environment. His unwavering commitment to the cause of tree conservation and environmental stewardship has left an indelible mark on Epsom & Ewell.

The dedication event served as a poignant moment to recognize and express gratitude for his exceptional contributions.

The event was opened by Howard Gregory the chair of EETAB with words from Kevin Greening and Simon Alford, EETAB members, before introducing the Mayor of Epsom & Ewell. The Epsom and Ewell Tree Officer then presented Mike with a collection of photographs taken when the original copse was planted.

In his speech Mayor Rob Geleit said "Mike is firmly rooted in his conviction that planting a tree today is an investment for the whole community, combating climate change and helping biodiversity as well as a thing of beauty in itself. His and the Epsom & Ewell Tree Advisory Board's aim is ensure that they pass on to future generations a borough that is at least as leafy as the one we have all inherited."

As well as speeches, the event included a symbolic tree layout for the planned rejuvenation of the Ford copse, and the unveiling of a commemorative plaque to forever mark Mike Ford's contributions at Alexander Recreation Ground.

The event concluded with a sense of community pride and a commitment to carrying forward Mr. Tree's legacy.

For further information about Epsom & Ewell Tree Advisory Board: epsomandewelltab@gmail.com www.eetab.org.uk/

Facebook: @EpsomEwellTreeAdvisoryBoard

### Draft advice may lead to energy savings

**Surrey County Council** has been awarded £745,000 of funding through the Local Energy Advice Demonstrator (LEAD) project, to trial new and innovative approaches to tackle residential energy emissions, help residents save money, conserve energy and make homes more energy efficient.

The LEAD project is funded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and is one of the UK's largest energy-based collaborations between a local authority and community groups. The project will run until March 2025 and consist of in-person energy advice and a One Stop Shop.

In-person energy advice will support around 3,000 residents by using thermal imaging surveys, providing basic remedial measures for obvious problems like draughts and heat loss, and signposting to support to help reduce their energy use and bills. Community groups will provide energy surveys to eligible residents which includes those who live in houses with Energy Performance Certificate ratings of D or worse, do not have gas central heating, or may have obstacles to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

The One Stop Shop is an online platform which will help residents to create an energy efficiency and retrofit plan for their home, based on building type, budget, and potential grants and reductions in cost of technology. This will be delivered by Surrey Climate Commission.

If 5% of the homes receiving in-person energy advice embark on a deep retrofit with the assistance of the One Stop Shop and any available funding, it is estimated to make cumulative savings of around £320,000 every year for Surrey residents. Alongside this the project will deliver carbon reductions of 1,280t  $CO_2$ e every year across the life of the measures installed.

Marisa Heath, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Environment said: "This is a fantastic opportunity to build collaboration between the local authority and Surrey's community groups, working together to upgrade housing stock and reduce

residential emissions. The project is a great example of how implementing a net zero strategy can be hugely beneficial to residents, and actually help them to save money, make their homes healthier and more modern, and simultaneously tackle climate change.

"Approximately 300,000 homes in Surrey have energy performance ratings of D or worse, meaning that thousands of residents live in homes which are poorly insulated, and liable to damp or mould. Residential energy accounts for over 30% of Surrey's carbon emissions, a figure which could be significantly lowered through improved energy performance, and reduced energy use."

For more information about the LEAD project, visit the **Surrey County Council website**. To check eligibility for a free home energy survey, visit the **Zero Carbon Guildford website**.

## Unflagging Bunting clinches victory at the end

Sutton & Epsom RFC 21 Old Colfeians 17 Saturday 2nd December.

Old Colfeians arrived at Rugby Lane as the form team in the league with five victories on the spin. Meanwhile a resurgent Sutton & Epsom had won all their three November fixtures and were equally confident. Both squads were hit by injuries and illness with S&E giving a debut to Matt Symonds on the wing. The last time the Black & Whites played OCs in 2007 the Kent side managed to record the only blemish on James Clark's perfect season. Fixtures between the two clubs go back 50 years and in the league era the matches have always been keenly contested and Saturday was no exception with Sutton winning 21-17.

There was a serious risk that the freezing weather might sabotage the game but a moderately milder morning, temperatures being above zero, meant that the crowd would not be disappointed. Freddy Bunting set the game in motion and the visitors immediately demonstrated their superlative form with the opening score after five minutes. Having spun the ball wide to both flanks the forwards took over in the 22. Phase after phase they remorselessly advanced under the posts until prop Tom Rameaux powered over. Chris Harris added the simple conversion for a 7-0 lead. In the early exchanges the powerful pack of the visitors initially held the upper hand in the set scrum but the host's lineout was more efficient and also disrupted the Colfeians ball. Both sets of backs looked threatening when they had possession and expectations of a closely fought encounter, that had been anticipated before the kick off, were being fully justified.

In the closing moments of the first quarter Sutton had an attacking lineout. Josh Pulvirenti took the ball and the pack advanced. The referee noted an indiscretion by the visitors but he played the advantage and was soon raising his arm to signal Rob Hegarty's try. Freddy Bunting's conversion cleared the uprights but just drifted wide as S&E trailed 5-7. The game was being played at a furious pace with both sides tenaciously contesting the breakdown forcing turnovers and errors. On the half hour S&E had another opportunity with a 5-metre lineout. The ball was safely secured and Matt Whitaker exploded from the pack powering over the line with would be tacklers hanging off him. Normal service resumed as Freddy Bunting added the extras to put his team into a 12-7 lead.

Old Colfeians reply was immediate and the Sutton lead short lived. With commendable adventure they ran a penalty from halfway and advanced to the S&E 22. The jinking Chris Harris took over to score a stylish solo effort. He was unable to add the conversion to his try but the Kent team were level at 12-12. Before the interval the Sutton back division that had already endured three changes before the start had another set back as Steve Munford was forced off through injury to be replaced by the versatile Jack Howes. The momentum had shifted to the visitors and Chris Harris came off his wing to create the overlap and the OCs surged from their 22 but the Sutton cover forced a knock on. The half concluded with the Black & Whites pressing hard but undone by an error in the opposition 22 and there was no further addition to the score and the sides turned around at 12 apiece.

Sutton & Epsom were fast out of the blocks in the second half from a lineout it was a vintage run from Matt Whitaker carrying the ball 40 metres. Sadly, the talismanic eight had outrun his support

as much for the 18-12 lead as for the opportunity to warm their hands.

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but soon had the consolation of a penalty. From a central position near halfway Freddy Bunting thumped the ball between the posts for a 15-12 lead. Once again the visitors responded with an assault on the Sutton 22 with the sidestepping Chris Harris to the fore. Alex Mount conceded a penalty but immediately made amends by winning a turnover from the quickly taken play. S&E replaced Tom Boaden with Callum Gibson, who is a man of considerable 'avoirdupois' whose 140kg frame might turn a deck-chair to match-wood, to add ballast to the front row. In addition their lineout with the catch and drive was becoming a potent weapon.

The weather began to deteriorate as not only did the temperature plummet but also a fog began to descend and gradually envelop proceedings. As Colfeians sought parity they probed the 22 and were awarded a penalty for a Ghumra knock on. Chris Harris went for the three-point option but hooked his kick. In stark contrast a couple of minutes later Sutton were awarded a penalty on the halfway line on the angle with a distance in excess of 50 metres. With a truly magnificent strike Freddy Bunting bisected the posts. The strike was greeted with rapturous applause from the crowd

As had been the case throughout the match the men from Horn Park responded at once in the grand manner. Winning a kickable penalty they opted to kick for the corner. They won the lineout and after sustained pressure the ball was transferred to hooker Daniel Orubo who dismissively broke through the tacklers to score. With the conversion going awry there was now only a solitary point in the game with Sutton & Epsom holding the advantage at 18-17. With the game entering the final quarter and so finely poised the hosts now played their best rugby of the match. With a slender lead the key is to play in the opposition's half and they proceeded to dominate the territorial battle.

The game opened up and Sutton scrum half Chris Ballard became more influential making sniping breaks and playing at a high tempo. From one counter the 9 won a penalty and took the quick tap which instigated multiple attacks from the Rugby Lane XV. Colfeians defensive resolve was impressive as they managed to halt Kyren Ghumra in the corner and the hosts were held up over the line. S&E were then gifted a great chance by a careless knock in the 22. From the scrum Matt Whitaker headed for glory. Once more the Horn Park men stood firm and Sutton were held up over the line. The visibility deteriorated and the distant Clubhouse was shrouded in fog. A shrill blast of Tobias Whitney's whistle indicated another penalty for Sutton. Freddy Bunting stepped up and hammered it home for a 21-17 lead with a couple of minutes of normal time remaining.

Up to this point Sutton had been exemplary on receipt of the restarts but at this vital stage they gave away a penalty. The visitors, conscious of the clock, turned down a shot at goal. Now the anxiety of the crowd as much as the fog descended on Rugby Lane as they knew another Colfeians try would see them take the lead. As they tried to work an overlap on the 22 Kyren Ghumra made a priceless interception. From the subsequent Sutton scrum the hosts failed to find touch and invited more pressure on themselves but forced a knock on with thunderous tackle. S&E conceded a penalty from the scrum and OCs turned the screw by opting for another scrum. Their followed a commendable moment of tactical acumen as the home team replaced their hooker with a prop. The beefed up Black & White pack drove their opponents off the ball and were awarded a penalty which was greeted by the loudest cheer of the day. Bunting kicked to touch, the lineout was secured and the clock was run down before the ball was kicked to the grandstand. Sutton had won this epic encounter 21-17.

The excellence of Freddy Bunting's placekicking had made the vital the difference. The Colfeians powerful forwards with the outstanding Number 8 Conor Gray had an influential afternoon with Chris Harris their creative hub in the backs. However, Sutton & Epsom played with steely determination that bodes well for the rest of the season. Once again they raised their game in the second half with their collective desire epitomised by debutant Matt Symonds' nerveless display. This is the midpoint of the season and the reverse fixtures begin next Saturday with a trip to Balmoral Avenue to take on leaders Beckenham. Back in September on that remarkably hot day the Kent side won 42-41. It will be another stern test for the Black & Whites especially as their hosts will no doubt be smarting from having just lost to bottom of the table Sidcup.

Sutton & Epsom:

Gareth O'Brien, Kyren Ghumra, Steve Munford, Ciaran Mohr, Matt Symonds, Freddy Bunting ©, Chris Ballard, Tom Boaden, Chris Farrell, Alex Mount, Ewan McTaggart, Josh Glanville, George London, Josh Pulvirenti & Rob Hegarty.

Replacements: Callum Gibson, Ben Tame & Jack Howes.

Old Colfeians:

Ryan Napper, Louis Baker, Miles Jones, Victor Spaczil, Chris Harris, Will Smith, Jed Wylie, Tom Rameaux, Daniel Orubo, Lloyd Evans, Andy O'Mailey, Leo Cunningham, Ethan Collins, Jake

Carter & Conor Gray.

Replacements: Bamidele Agorioge, Frank Blythe & Ollie Burkett.

Image courtesy Robin Kennedy

## Salts fail to clear foggy condition

Alton 2-0 Epsom & Ewell FC. Combined Counties League - Premier Division. Saturday 2nd December 2023.

"Sorry you had to see that" said our young Captain Harvey Keogh as a dejected Epsom team came off the pitch after competing against an Alton side who were in all honesty, no better than we were, but found a way to score twice midway through the second half to claim the points on offer.

The irony of his comment was that most of the spectators really didn't see that much of the match, as the foggy conditions made the contest look like a throwback from the old pre-war days when fog was the only reason you would ever get a match postponed for. The conditions were no one's fault of course, but as a result of them, the contest was lacking something in the way of atmosphere and this seemed to project onto the players too, as it must have felt like they were playing a match in an empty ground, even though the attendance was a very respectable 142, despite the bitterly cold winter's afternoon. Ultimately though, our first visit to the redeveloped Anstey Park since May 1977 ended exactly the same way as our last did with a 2-0 defeat.

With Ollie Thompson joining Tommy Williams on the suspended list for this one match, Nick Wilson found himself playing in the back four, just a week after he had taken positions both in midfield and in goal! Ethan Nelson-Roberts moved into the back four in place of Ethan Brazier for whom George Owusu came in further forward. Finally, Jaan Stanley started ahead of Luke Miller who would join the action later.

I have to be honest here and apologise to our opponents. My report, as our regulars will be aware, is compiled from behind our goal so it was really hard to see, let alone describe many of Alton's attacks, although it's fair to say that in the first half there weren't many by either side. Nick Inwugwu was first to try his luck for us as he advanced towards the edge of the area, but after having made good progress with his right foot, he struck well wide with his weaker left foot. In response the home side sent a shot straight at Keogh in the 16th minute and another effort wide from a good position five minutes later. A further strike from a decent position also failed to trouble our keeper and the teams went off at the break with just one shot on target between them to show for their work.

Clearly our Manager Steve Springett had seen enough by the break as just seven minutes into the second half he replaced our entire front three, so Miller came on alongside Sirak Negassi and debut boy Yannick Modeste Monga Ebwa. To be fair though, these three had a similar lack of success against an Alton team that were very well drilled at the back. Negassi sent a shot wide from a half cleared Rory Edwards free kick, but as we reached the hour mark it looked like this match was going to end with the goalless draw it deserved.

But the home team had other ideas and took charge. In the 61st minute they had an attempt headed off the line by an Epsom defender, but we didn't heed the warning and two minutes later, a ball in from the right was converted at close range by Perry Coles. Three minutes later it was game over as a right wing cross was headed low past Keogh from a few yards by Pat Cox.

Very little happened in the final twenty minutes with exception of a Tijani Eshilokun header from a Nelson-Roberts cross and a speculative Wilson attempt from twenty-five yards that went high and wide. We had a glimmer of light six minutes from time when an injury to an Alton player left them down to ten men, as they had used all five of their substitutes, but the player returned after a few minutes on the sidelines and the chance was gone. In fact, the home side were denied from extending their lead by a low injury time save from Keogh.

It is fair to say that whilst conditions were awkward and our opponents difficult to break down, this was one of our weaker performances in recent weeks and I would imagine our boys would probably agree with that assessment. Certainly our Manager

felt that way as evidenced by the triple substitution just after the halfway mark. Additionally, we are now on a run of just one win and one draw in seven matches. However, we have an intriguing and winnable set of fixtures coming up against teams in the lower half apart as we approach Christmas, including the pivotal trip to Colliers Wood United, and we need to start getting a few more points in the near future. Performances, particularly from an attacking standpoint will need to improve, but no one watching this match will be surprised to read that.

Epsom & Ewell: Harvey Keogh (c), Nick Inwugwu, Ethan Nelson-Roberts, Thompson Adeyemi, Reece Tierney, Nick Wilson, George Owusu, Tijani Eshilokun, Tino Carpene, Rory Edwards, Jaan Stanley

Subs: Luke Miller for Owusu (52), Yannick Modeste Monga Ebwa for Carpene (52), Sirak Negassi for Stanley (52)

Report Source: www.eefconline.co.uk

## Surrey women who stood for Parliament 1918

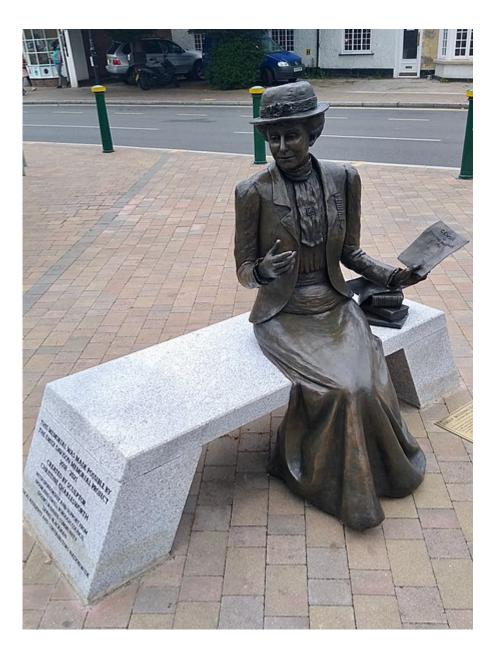
On 14th December 1918 women across the country turned out in their thousands to first vote in a General Election. In some areas they outnumbered men voters by 20 to 1.

The Representation of the People Act 1918 had been passed in February 1918, and widened the parliamentary electorate to women over the age of 30 (but still required a minimum property qualification).

Men over the age of 21, including the millions of soldiers returning from the First World War, were also able to vote for the first time. Due to wartime casualties women outnumbered men in the population as a whole, and under the new provision women would make up around 43% of the electorate. However, imposing a higher age qualification for women ensured that they did not become the majority in the electorate.

Whilst universal franchise for women would take another 10 years, the passing of this Act forever changed the established way that political parties campaigned and canvassed during elections.

Find out how Surrey women responded to their newly won voting rights with our Exploring Surrey's Past web page https://bit.ly/2pqRC3c.



The Emily Davison Memorial Statue in the Market Square Epsom. A suffragette who died in Epsom after a protest at the Derby for women's voting rights.

Top image: All three Surrey women fought for seats in the 1918 General Election but were unsuccessful. Credits: Postcard showing 'Mrs Despard, President, The Women's Freedom League (SHC ref 10065/1) Postcard of Emmeline Pethick Lawrence, 'Joint Editor of "Votes for Women" – Honorary Treasurer National Women's Social and Political Union. 4 Clement's Inn, W.C.' (SHC ref 10065/2; this postcard was originally from an album compiled by Women's Freedom League members, Edith, Florence and Grace Hodgson). Norah Dacre Fox in her youth.

Surrey History Centre

Read more from the Surrey History Centre HERE

## **Local HIV testing proves its worth**

Tens of thousands of patients going to St George's, **Epsom** and St Helier's emergency departments (EDs) have been tested for HIV in the past year, thanks to a pioneering scheme that helps people with the virus start treatment more quickly.

All three hospitals offer the opt-out testing – and carried out nearly 130,000 checks between April 2022 and September 2023. As a result, 33 people were diagnosed with HIV and able to receive effective early treatment and reduce onward transmission, and a further 19 previously diagnosed patients were re-engaged in care.

It also means people were able to access other support they may need, such as appointments with health advisors or psychologists who can help them come to terms with the diagnosis.

The figures have been released to mark World Aids Day, a global movement to unite people in the fight against HIV and AIDS, and comes as St George's, Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals and Health Group sign up to become a founding organisation for the HIV Charter Mark. The charter has been established by the National Aids Trust to address HIV stigma and poor knowledge of HIV within healthcare settings.

Dr Richard Jennings, Group Chief Medical Officer at St George's, Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals and Health Group, said: "HIV is a long-term manageable condition and people living with HIV have full healthy lives, but the earlier someone with HIV is diagnosed the better. An early diagnosis means effective treatment can be started, and effective treatment means a person cannot transmit HIV to other people and can stay well themselves.

"We have put a lot of work into routinely offering HIV testing to people who attend our emergency departments, and we are committed to increasing awareness, reducing stigma and training up our staff. It doesn't stop there, however – we are on hand to deliver results to any patients who test positive and to talk through the developments in HIV care and the improved outcomes with treatment. We also offer free routine care and treatment to people who are living with HIV, and we offer psychological support."

St Helier Hospital has been offering testing since 2019, though it had to pause it at points during the pandemic.

It has one of the highest testing uptakes in South London, with 90% of eligible patients having a blood test that can detect the virus - compared to just 11% in April 2022. In the six months alone between April and September 2023, 11,785 tests were carried out at the hospital.

Dr Olubanke Davies, a GUM/HIV Consultant based at Sutton Health and Care's Rosehill Clinic, which is based at St Helier Hospital, said: "The earlier someone with HIV is diagnosed, the better. An early diagnosis means that they can start treatment and reduce the risk of developing severe illness.

"With the help of our colleagues in the emergency department, we've put a lot of work into routinely testing patients, increasing awareness and training up staff."

To find out more about HIV – including getting tested, the symptoms, and living with the virus – visit: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hiv-and-aids/

St George's, Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals and Health Group

Image cc Unicef

# **Sunak in Surrey**

The **University of Surrey** welcomed Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and **Guildford MP Angela Richardson** to campus on Thursday (30 November).

Epsom and Ewell Times notes the Guildford Parliamentary Constituency is rather marginal. The 2019 General Election result was:

Conservative Angela Richardson 26,317 Liberal Democrats Zöe Franklin 22,980 Labour Anne Rouse 4.515

Independent Anne Milton 4,356 Peace John Morris 483

During their visit, the Prime Minister and Ms Richardson met nursing students and staff from the School of Health Sciences, where they observed practical lessons taking place. They also toured Surrey's world-class facilities, including a unique immersive simulation suite which digitally replicates different healthcare settings. The Prime Minister also took the time to personally speak to Surrey's students to learn more about their journey in becoming nurses and why they chose to pursue the profession.

Professor G Q Max Lu, President and Vice-Chancellor, of the University of Surrey, said:

"I am honoured to welcome the Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak and Angela Richardson MP to the University of Surrey campus. Our reputation for training highly skilled and inspiring health care professionals precedes us. The strength of our excellence in teaching and student support makes Surrey an exceptional place to study. We are delighted to have this opportunity to showcase some of our state-of-the art facilities to our distinguished visitor.

"As part of our commitment to producing the sought-after health professionals for the future, we are pleased to be welcoming our first cohort of medical students in 2024. Combined with the innovative biomedical and healthy living research undertaken at Surrey, we are steadfast in our contribution and support to the NHS and our communities."

The School of Health Sciences, which sits within the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, at the University of Surrey continues to go from strength to strength. The calibre of nursing programmes at the school are both nationally and internationally recognised, being ranked seventh in the QS World University Subject Rankings and eight in the UK (The Times / Sunday Times Good University Guide 2024). This builds on an established history of the school, which recently celebrated 40 years of educating nurses at Surrey.

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

"It is an enormous privilege to have the Prime Minister and our local MP visit us.

"Surrey is not only the home to cutting edge research but is a world leader in educating health professionals of the future. Our team of dedicated teaching staff work hard to ensure that our students have the knowledge and skills needed to care for patients and that they embody the culture and values of the NHS. It is a great honour to be a part of the Surrey family and to witness our students succeed in their studies."

Jackie McBride, Associate Professor, Head of Department: Professional Preparatory Programmes at the School of Health Sciences at the University of Surrey, said:

"I am delighted that the Prime Minister has met some of our future healthcare professionals here at the University of Surrey. I am beyond proud of our students and of everything they have and continue to achieve. Nursing is more than a job, it requires dedication, empathy, knowledge, and skills, and I know the Prime Minister will have seen today all these attributes in our students."

Surrey University Press Office

# Well trained Father Xmas coming to Epsom

Epsom Rotary are pleased to confirm the dates for this year's street collections with Tilly the Train and Father Christmas around Epsom Town and we are excited to confirm we have added new routes this year. Tilly the Train has been a feature of Epsom Rotary Street Collections for a number of years and has brought many smiles on faces over time, along with Father Christmas able to chat to children and bearing a small gift. Christmas is a special time for us all and the monies collected will go to local charities, to include Epsom Pantry and Epsom Girl Guiding, who will also take part in some of the collections. Tilly the train was invented as long ago as 1970 by a group of apprentices from Epsom Coaches and has been the highlight of the Epsom Rotary Christmas Street collections and the approach will be by Christmas music and a band of Christmas elves!

There will be nine street collections this year from Sunday, 09 December to Sunday, 17 December 2023 as well as some collections at the Ashley Centre with carols by various local schools and local choir group.

#### Dates for the Ashley Centre Carols/by the Clock Tower are:

Wed, 06 Dec 2023 - from 10.30am with Stamford Green School and 2.00-3.00pm with Rosebery School - Ashley Centre

Thurs, 07 Dec 2023 – from 20.30am – 12.30pm With Epsom Choral Society, 1,00 -2,200pm with The Vale School and 2.00-3.00pm with Meadow Primary School – Ashley Centre

Wed, 13 Dec 2023 - 1.00-2.00pm with St Martins Junior School - The Clock Tower Epsom

#### Tilly the Train and Father Christmas Street Collections are:

Sun, 10 Dec 2023 - from 4.30pm - Hazon Way and Miles Road and area

Mon, 11 Dec 2023 - from 4.30pm - Parklawn Avenue and area

Tues, 12 Dec 2023 - from 4.30pm - Langley Vale and area

Wed, 13 Dec 2023 - from 4.30pm - Hookfield area

Thurs, 14 Dec 2023 - from 4.30pm - Woodcoote area

Fri, 15 Dec 2023 - from 4.30pm - Mopsey Crescent and area

Sat, 16 Dec 2023 - from 4.30pm - Horton & Manor Park area,

Sunday, 17 Dec 2023 - from 4.30 - College Ward area

We hope to see many wonderful people along the way and thank you for supporting.

Maria Anstiss - Epsom Rotary

Image: Rotarian Elves welcome the arrival of Father Christmas to the Tilly Train garage (early hours 25th December 2022).

# Anchored in reason on local housing need?

The Draft Local Plan lacks a proper negotiating position on future house building numbers in the Borough of Epsom and Ewell. So said an unnamed member of the public who addressed last week's Licensing, Planning and Policy Committee.

Let Epsom and Ewell Times know your view. Is he right or wrong? Here is his speech in full:

"Good evening, everyone. The first thing they teach you about negotiations at business school is the power of anchoring. Government has deployed this tactic very successfully. Government's standard method results in a target of 10,368 new dwellings over the Local Plan period. Let's be clear: this target is government's negotiation anchor. It is not our borough's actual housing need; it is simply designed to pressure you into setting a high housing target.

You might not realize that you are in a negotiation, but you are. Although the draft Local Plan recognizes that government's target is unachievable, it has still succeeded in anchoring council's thinking throughout the Local Plan. First, you note that your 3,700 from brownfield sites only meet 36% of government's anchor. Then you use that fact to declare exceptional circumstances. Afterward, you set your own housing target at just over half of government's anchor. That is the classic response of an inexperienced negotiator.

What the draft Local Plan did not discuss was our actual need for new dwellings. Strategic plans should always be based on the best available information, and yet the draft Local Plan did not even mention our actual need for new housing. It is very important for the council to prominently and clearly explain within the Local Plan why government's anchor of 10,368 is flawed and why our actual housing need is for just 2,664 new dwellings. By doing this, you will demolish government's anchor and replace it with the council's own anchor. It is absolutely critical to anchor everyone's thinking to the real needs of our borough.

The figure of 2,664 new dwellings is obtained by making just two changes to the standard method: firstly, replacing the outdated 2014 household projections with the more up-to-date 2018 data, and secondly, removing the flawed 40% affordability uplift. The theory behind this uplift is that by flooding the market with new homes, you will drive prices down. This theory is flawed for two reasons: firstly, house builders engage in land banking; they hold back most of their consented land and drip-feed new houses onto the market at a rate that matches demand and maintains prices. Secondly, the affordability uplift assumes that Epsom is a separate market for housing—it is not. If the Competition and Markets Authority were to look at this, the first thing they would do would be to define the relevant markets. They would note the existence of an unbroken chain of substitution across the whole

Greater London Commuter Zone and conclude that Epsom just forms a very small part of a very large market. Flooding with new homes will not reduce house prices in the borough due to any supply-demand imbalance. Any reduction in local house prices will be as a result of the borough becoming a less serene and less attractive place to live.

According to paragraph 1.61 of the draft Local Plan, the balance between protecting our environment and enabling development is at the centre of our spatial strategy. At present, the Local Plan is unbalanced. You are planning to build more than twice the number of new dwellings that we actually need by sacrificing some of our best-performing Greenfield Green Belt sites."

Related reports:

Epsom Town Centre Masterplan Unveiled

Housing need or desire?

Can Epsom and Ewell get more dense?

Little plots of Council land for housing?

More affordable housing now. Cllr Kate Chinn

MP's housing solution for Epsom and Ewell

Image credits: Anchor - © Peter Facey licenced under cc-by-sa/2.0. New houses: © David Dixon licenced under cc-by-sa/2.0

### Penalty shoot out in normal time....

Abbey Rangers 2-1 Epsom & Ewell. Combined Counties League - Premier Division. Saturday 25th November 2023.

In a match decided by three penalties and some rather odd officiating, we were extremely unfortunate to fall to a 91st minute defeat in a match where we were the equal of our top four opponents on their own patch at Addlestone Moor.

We made three changes to the starting eleven following our narrow defeat against AFC Croydon Athletic. Manager Steve Springett didn't select himself for this match and Tommy Williams was suspended, so Nick Inwugwu and Ethan Charles-Brazier came in at the back while Nick Wilson came in for his first start since returning to our club and Jaan Stanley moved to the bench.

The opening exchanges were very even. An early bout of head tennis in our penalty area resulted in a header going just wide of the post, while in reply Rory Edwards produced a good run and low finish that was only a yard wide of the post from just outside the penalty area. Reece Tierney put an Edwards free kick over the bar, but in reality the first half hour contained little in the way of goal threat.

That changed in the 32nd minute when a clever little flick through from an Abbey Rangers player reached their number 15 whose close range volley was excellently kept out by Harvey Keogh and he then made another superb close range block a few minutes later from former Salt Daryl Cooper-Smith to keep us on level terms. We would take full advantage of this by earning a couple of corners and from the second of these, the ball fell back towards Ethan Nelson-Roberts who showed quick feet to elude his defender who brought him down in the area. The referee delayed his decision for a while and for a moment I thought it wasn't going to be given, but finally the whistle blew and Wilson tucked away the penalty high to the keeper's left in the 41st minute.

The half time lead was probably a little harsh on our opponents who had given as much as we had in that first half, but for a top four team, they had threatened us only rarely. They are in the top four for a reason though, and in the 50th minute Abbey pressed for an equaliser and got it when Ollie Thompson brought down Cooper-Smith from behind, picking up a yellow card. King put the penalty down the middle, but Keogh had already moved to his left and we were level at 1-1.

Just before the hour we had a fantastic opportunity as Nelson-Roberts, playing further forward this week, delivered a dangerous low ball into the six yard box, but from only a yard out Tijani Eshilokun was unable to get the ball over the line as the Abbey Rangers keeper made a fantastic stop from close range and then gathered the ball.

We then had one of the most bizarre incidents I have seen in a year or two and guess what, yes, the referee was being assessed! Our keeper was actually penalised in the 62nd minute for the crime of holding the ball for too long!! Leaving aside the fact that he hadn't been holding it for that long, insult was then added to injury after he threw the ball away and received a yellow card and after further discussion he was then sent to the sin bin! With no substitute keeper on the bench Wilson went between the posts, not for the first time in Epsom colours as he had been in goal last February at Hailsham Town when Toby McKimm had been harshly dismissed. Fortunately, the ten minutes passed uneventfully enough and Keogh was soon back on the field. Wilson joins a

rare group of people who have scored a goal and played in goal in the same match, the last of which was Nathan Ayling at Frimley Green back in April 2014.

As we approached the closing stages of the match Thompson Adeyemi tried his luck from twenty yards with his left foot, requiring the Abbey keeper to make a good save low to his right. However, Abbey then broke away and in the 89th minute one of their players rounded Keogh and struck at goal. It was blocked on the line by Thompson, but what by? Obviously I was a long way from the incident, but the Assistant, standing some forty yards away and on the far side of the pitch was certain that he had seen something and following consultation with him, the referee issued a straight red card in our man's direction. Murdoch tucked away the penalty low to Keogh's right for what proved to be the winner in the 91st minute, but was it the right decision? According to Thompson as he walked past us just after being sent off, the ball hit him squarely on the forehead. Assuming this to be the case, it is really hard to accept the Assistant's view, particularly as it was from so far away. Thompson will also serve a one match suspension for this alleged offence.

There was time for the Abbey Rangers 7 to be sent to the sin bin after complaining about receiving a yellow card for a foul as we pushed for an equaliser, but we only had a minute left for play and were unable to take advantage of the ten v ten situation before the final whistle blew.

So Abbey Rangers extended their unbeaten run to twelve games and it has to be said that they certainly didn't deserve to see that run end here. However, compared to some of the other teams we have played recently like Farnham Town, Knaphill and AFC Croydon Athletic, Abbey didn't hurt us nearly as much and I felt we were well worth a draw from this match. To lose it in such disappointing circumstances is cruel, but I see some more points being picked up soon if we keep playing this way.

Epsom & Ewell: Harvey Keogh (c), Ethan Charles-Brazier, Nick Inwugwu, Nick Wilson, Reece Tierney, Ollie Thompson, Ethan Nelson-Roberts, Thompson Adeyemi, Tijani Eshilokun, Rory Edwards, Luke Miller

Subs: George Owusu for Miller (79), Jaan Stanley for Nelson-Roberts (81), Tino Carpene for Edwards (84)

Report Source: www.eefconline.co.uk