Not quite a "veni, vidi, vici" victory for Romans

Tadley Calleva 1-0 Epsom & Ewell FC. Combined Counties League - Premier Division. Saturday 30th September 2023.

Ultimately our latest match was decided by a clinical Kieran Rodgers finish from an errant and arguably unnecessary Ollie Thompson pass in the 40th minute. However, this doesn't tell the full story here as a resolute Epsom side more than held their own in this match and were most definitely worth a point against a Tadley side that had scored twelve goals in the last week.

In fact the **Romans**, so named because of the old Roman settlement of Silchester just down the road, probably thought this would be a fairly easy day at the office after their heavy FA Vase win on Saturday followed by a five goal romp against Sheerwater, who of course, we failed to beat two weeks ago. However that would not prove to be the case here as our boys ensured this would become a tight and competitive encounter between two evenly matched sides.

Many of our regulars were missing once again, although Zach Powell did return after a few games unavailable. He probably thought he would be eased in after being named on the bench, but an injury to Reece Tierney in the warm up forced our Manager's hand and left us with only four other substitutes for the match. Additionally, Marlon Pinder and Sirak Negassi were absent and so Tino Carpene and Ade Batula came back into the starting line up, as did Ethan Nelson-Roberts at the expense of Jabari Ofosu-Hernandez with Ayran Kugathas moving from the left to his more regular position out on the right.

We started brightly and took the game to our hosts in the opening stages. George Owusu had a near post cross cut out from a dangerous position and then in the sixth minute Carpene set up Ade Batula for a low shot from the edge off the penalty area that took a slight deflection on its way and made the save by Tadley keeper Craig Atkinson even more special as he stuck out a right glove to keep it out when it threatened to creep under him. Atkinson has played against us on numerous occasions previously for Cove and Hartley Wintney amongst others and always performs well against us.

We forced another couple of half-chances as we continued to display the attacking threat from Tuesday's League Cup match, but the home side gradually began to find a way around us and created a couple of opportunities of their own. Harvey Keogh dealt with the first of these fairly comfortably, although with the second, a weak punch nearly cost us as the ball fell for a Tadley striker whose shot was on target but blocked by Thompson Adeyemi amid futile shouts for handball.

We attacked again and Thompson's far post header was on target but claimed easily by Atkinson, but we then had to defend for a few minutes after Powell cut his knee and was forced to leave the pitch for treatment and if we had conceded from one ball across the area, it would have been hard to swallow as I couldn't see why the referee wasn't allowing our man back on. Neal tried his luck from thirty yards as the home team seemed to be running out of ideas, but our set pieces weren't any better with many deliveries either not getting past the first man, or way beyond all our players. We did have a good chance just after the half hour when a Nick Inwugwu ball towards the far post resulted in two defenders going for the same ball, which then fell kindly for Carpene, but his shot lacked real power and was easily claimed by Atkinson.

Next to try his luck was Nelson-Roberts whose corner was returned back to him out on the right, from where he cut in and struck at goal, but he missed the target with better options waiting in the centre.

It was beginning to look like a frustrating day for both teams when out of nowhere we conceded. Thompson out on the left played the ball square to where he thought Powell would be, only to give the ball straight to Rodgers who ran in on goal and gave Keogh no chance in the 41st minute. It nearly became two in first half injury time with a smart shot on the turn from Fragata, but Keogh was down well to turn the ball away as it was creeping inside his left hand post otherwise. Half time came with no one on either team particularly happy with the situation.

We made a change at the half with Jaan Stanley coming on in his favoured number ten position for Inwugwu as we reverted to a 4-3-3 which looked more like a 4-2-1-3 personally, and we had a good chance in the 48th minute when a ball across from Kugathas found Batula at the far post, but it was on his weaker left foot and he barely made contact; the ball dribbling through to Atkinson from six yards out. Then we were back on the defensive as Rodgers got through on their left but Keogh stood up well and made a good save from the close range strike. The game swung from end to end and Carpene and Stanley saw shots blocked in quick succession and then Kiyo Brown came on for Carpene and Stanley was moved from the "ten" to the centre-forward role after just twenty minutes.

Ofosu-Hernandez came on for Kugathas with fifteen minutes remaining and it was interesting to note that both he and Nelson-Roberts advanced more in this match when we were playing four at the back than they had in recent games where they had been wing backs! Still, we only really created half chances, the best of which came when Ofosu-Hernandez sent a deep cross over and Owusu jumped high to claim the header but couldn't keep it on target.

In the 92nd minute Keogh stood tall again as he made a fine save, but we were unable to breach the opposition's defences and

had to accept our sixth straight League defeat. There have been signs of improvement in the last couple of games, but it is a little concerning that, Pinder apart, we haven't seen any other new signings yet, as all of our other players have been at the club since the start of the season. We now enter a potentially pivotal three game stretch against teams at our end of the table as Balham and Colliers Wood United come to us before we go to Sandhurst Town a week later. On the evidence of the last two performances we should still have hope, but the fixtures get noticeably more difficult on paper after those, so it's now time for us to start picking up points or we will have a mountain to climb otherwise.

Epsom & Ewell: Harvey Keogh, Ayran Kugathas, Ethan Nelson-Roberts, Ollie Thompson ©, Zach Powell, Nick Inwugwu, George Owusu, Rory Edwards, Tino Carpene, Thompson Adeyemi, Ade Batula

Subs: Jaan Stanley for Inwugwu (HT), Kiyo Brown for Carpene (66), Jabari Ofosu-Hernandez (74)

Report Source: www.eefconline.co.uk

"Veni, vidi, vici" means "I came, I saw, I conquered" - attributed to Julius Caesar and refers to a swift and conclusive victory.

Our Star shines on Epsom Playhouse

This month **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council** has installed 90 solar panels on the roof of **Epsom Playhouse**. The panels will generate over 32,000 kWh of electricity annually, covering a third of the Playhouse's current electricity usage and saving more than 6.9 tonnes of carbon each year. The project is part of the council's **Climate Change Action Plan** which sets an ambitious target for council operations to be carbon neutral by 2035.

The council has already installed solar panels at its Operational Depot which have saved more than 35 tonnes of carbon to-date and currently provide 20% of the site's energy. Further solar panel installations are in the pipeline, following feasibility studies. Additional carbon-saving measures include installing energy efficient lights in all council buildings, and purchasing energy from a green tariff that guarantees energy is supplied from renewable sources. There are also plans to replace streetlighting throughout the borough with energy efficient LED lights. This will be done in phases, with phase 1 completed by 31st March 2024.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's operational carbon footprint has reduced by 13% since 2019 when the council first began to measure it.

Councillor **John Beckett**, Chair of the Environment Committee, said "We're absolutely committed to tackling climate change at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.

"Climate change is not a standalone single issue for the council or the borough; it runs through a broad range of our activities and behaviours. We're passionate about working with partners and our residents to lead the way to a more sustainable borough, and the installation of solar panels at Epsom Playhouse is one of a range of initiatives that contributes to this."

More details about the Council's Climate Change Action Plan can be found on the council website: https://epsom-ewell.gov.uk/residents/climate-change

Image Copyright Epsom and Ewell Times

Guildford centre of the cosmos for a day

Budding astronauts and space engineers are set to be wowed and inspired on Saturday 7 October, when space researchers at the University of Surrey take over Guildford town centre.

The University and its event partners, the Institute of Physics, will offer activities for children and adults to try in the Tunsgate Centre and on the High Street.

Thanks to the UK Space Agency, there will be space suits to try on, Winchester Science Centre will host a pop-up planetarium, and there'll be a working model of a mini Mars rover.

Experts from Surrey Space Centre will be in the Tunsgate Centre.

Laura Cox from the University of Surrey's Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences explained what people can see. She said:

"Come along to see inside a small satellite and have a go at steering it. You can also help spot illegal fishing boats on satellite images, a crime which costs over \$15bn annually.

"At the mobile ground station, visitors can see signals from satellites in real-time and the decoded data they are sending from space. And you can learn about different types of space rocks and handle 3D-printed models of real asteroids, comets, and planetary moons."

Astrophysicists from the School of Mathematics and Physics will be answering astronomy questions, running a constellation activity, offering an escape room-style activity and more.

Local employers in the space sector will also participate, including Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd (SSTL), who will show off models of spacecraft and components of the satellites they make, including a propulsion tank, circuit boards and samples of the exterior panels we see in photos.

Dr Nicola Baresi, an astrodynamicist who plans efficient routes for spacecraft to travel in space, including to the Moon and to other planets in our solar system, says:

"It's going to be a fun day for people of all ages with lots of space-related activities and experiments to try. Space is a hugely exciting sector and is a thriving industry across Surrey and Hampshire. There are plenty of opportunities for rewarding careers in this area, yet significant skills shortages, something we help tackle at the University of Surrey with our research activities and educational programmes. We're keen to inspire people and help them realise that they could get a job in the space industry."

Glyn students brighten the Borough

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and **Glyn School** have come together to transform an unused building on the site of the Upper High Street car park with a community mural funded through the Government's Safer Streets initiative.

Ten local secondary school students recently worked in collaboration with the council and international graffiti artists from **Positive Arts** to create a large scale mural celebrating the biodiversity within our borough. The artwork has dramatically improved the aesthetics of the building, which previously looked tired and in need of renovating.

Giving support to the project, Councillor **Clive Woodbridge**, Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Committee at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, said: "It is a goal of the council to ensure that our natural environment is both celebrated and accessible to all. This project showcases how culture and creative practices can help to elevate the natural landscape of our borough in new and colourful ways.

"This type of project sits within the emerging Cultural Strategy for the council, which seeks to nurture and champion the creative talents within our community while increasing access to creativity for all to enjoy and engage with. The students' teamwork has also been extremely impressive and is something to be proud of".

Julian Phethean from Positive Arts said, "The young people were really determined to produce something they could be proud of and that's exactly what they achieved!

"All of the students worked well in a team, made a positive social impact, and displayed a high level of creativity, focus and drive."

A spokesperson for Glyn School said: "The students involved thoroughly enjoyed this unique experience to give back to the community in a very different way."

ULEZ compliant taxis for Epsom and Ewell

Taxis in **Epsom and Ewell** will need to be ULEZ-compliant in order to get a licence despite concerns raised from drivers. All licences will be given, providing cabs meet the standards, on July 1st, 2026.

However, from January, 1st 2025, licences will not normally be renewed for diesel vehicles that do not meet Euro 5 standards.

The ULEZ criteria was put to drivers in a consultation by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, with some saying their business

would be affected, and one driver saying people may stop going out because of increased taxi fares. The response said: "If you want a ghost of Christmas future take a look at Sutton. Sutton once had small and large nightclubs, a cinema and a range of both independent and chain pubs and restaurants. Epsom isn't booming, but it is starting to recover and is a great place to go out. It won't take much to ruin that."

As a result of the consultation, an additional six months was added to the original timeline, with diesel car licensing planned to change from July 2024, to help drivers "already struggling with the cost of living".

A meeting of the council's licensing and planning policy committee on Tuesday (September 26) agreed the changes, and heard from officers that some drivers were already replacing their cars, having held out to see if the ULEZ expansion would actually come in.

The zone was expanded in August, and now comes up to the border with five districts and boroughs in Surrey, of which one is Epsom and Ewell.

Councillor **Clive Woodbridge** (Residents' Association, Ewell Village) said he welcomed that more time had been given for vehicles to be replaced, and cited supply chain issues after Brexit and the coronavirus pandemic.

He said having spoken to Uber drivers, he understood they had been told their vehicles would have to be electric in the future in order for them to continue to be on the app. He said the biggest change to emissions quality would be moving away from diesel and petrol to electric vehicles. The council would need to provide more electric charging points to achieve these aims, he added.

Cllr Woodbridge said: "I would support this council in doing what it can to accelerate the move towards electric."

One respondent warned about the impact on Epsom's "reasonable" nightlife if the cost of new vehicles was passed on to passengers and that people would "go out less or not at all".

While another responded with concerns about his limousine business, saying their Chrysler limousine was ULEZ compliant, while their Lincoln car was not. They said: "I'm a small business and heavily rely on being able to trade to pay my mortgage, childcare fees and every other bill I have which is quite substantial. If the policy excluded me from trading it would have a detrimental impact on me and my family's life.

"We are a service in high demand, so it would also have an impact on the public who want to use our service for their special occasions."

An officers' report into the policy said they had not been able to find any special exemption for limousines in Transport for London guidelines. They said there wasn't justification for a blanket exemption for such cars and recommended they be looked at on a case-by-case basis when making a licensing decision.

On the timeline for the changes, officers said: "If the new standards are implemented too quickly it could result in significant hardship for the licensed trade, and if substantial numbers of licence holders leave the trade as a result of too fast an implementation, then this could affect service provisions, ultimately creating a risk to public safety."

From January 1, 2025 the council will not renew licences for diesel vehicles not meeting or exceeding Euro 5 emission standards, and from From July 1, 2026 licences, including renewals, will only be granted to vehicles which meet the Petrol Euro 4 and Diesel Euro 6 standards, with some exceptions.

Specially adapted vehicles for wheelchairs users will be exempt, and those being used for home to school transport with a county council contract will get a one-year extension to both phases.

The policy was unanimously agreed by the committee, and will go to full council for agreement.

Related reports:

Stretching Epsom taxi ULEZ exemption

Emissions a taxing issue for Council

Image Google street view Epsom Station taxis

Drafting of Epsom and Ewell Local Plan "unpausing"?

Tuesday 26th September Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's Licensing and Planning Policy Committee met to decide whether to recommend to the Full Council to restart work on the submission of a new Local Plan for the Borough. The motion to do so was carried after a lengthy debate.

Chairing the committee Councillor **Steven McCormick** (RA Woodcote and Langley) stated that following the Full Council decision of 22nd March to pause the work on the Local Plan if "unpaused" its submission for approval by the Government could be expected in May 2025.

A member of the public, who was not identified, opened the debate with the following detailed appraisal: "I am pleased to see from the 15th of June meeting of this committee's agenda.... that you have now calculated the actual need for new dwellings. When you replace the out-of-date 2014 household projections with the more recent 2018 projections and exclude the flawed affordability uplift, this results in a much more realistic figure of 2664 new dwellings over the plan period.

"To comply with the current version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), you still need to begin with the standard method number of 10,368. However, it can be easily demonstrated that this number is unachievable in light of local constraints. The point where that version of the Local Plan went so horribly wrong was in selecting an arbitrary target of 5,400 new dwellings and rushing into sacrificing Greenfield and Greenbelt sites to bridge the gap between the identified 3,700 Brownfield sites and the council's arbitrary target.

"If the council were to set a new dwelling target of 3,700 plus this 150 (West Park site), then that would result in a target that is 45% above the actual need for new dwellings over the plan period.

"If the council agrees to a target of 3,850 new dwellings with no development on Greenfield or Greenbelt sites, then I am confident that it will be possible to develop a Local Plan that is acceptable to local residents. Furthermore, the council would have a compelling rationale for why a target of 10,368 is not achievable given local constraints and that its proposed target is 45% more than the actual local need.

"If the planning inspector subsequently insists on developing some Greenfield or Greenbelt sites, then he or central government will be blamed by local residents rather than Epsom and Ewell Borough Council."

Cllr **Muir** (Conservative Horton) a non-member of the committee was given three minutes to make a statement and said: "It is critical when deciding whether or not to unpause the local plan drafting process ... that council has clarity over the objectives for the next draft and the key changes required to achieve those objectives. So, what do we need to decide before unpausing?

"The most controversial of the recommendations put forward in ...draft local plan was the proposal to build on the borough's protected Greenbelt Land. Using the council's figures, 84% of those who used the questionnaire to reply to the consultation were opposed to building on our protected Green Belt. ...The large majority [of] elected councillors, stood in May's local elections on a platform of protecting the green belt. We are morally obliged to protect this land and the environment for future generations.

"How many houses do we need to build in Epsom? Epsom is already the most densely populated borough in the county. There has been discussion about the need to meet the government target calculated using the standard method. This is not a mandatory target. The published local plan proposals do not attempt to meet the target of 10,478 dwellings over the plan period. For context, this is more than three times the target in the Epsom annual 2007 plan and more than four times the need indicated using the government's 2018 household growth projections. The plan instead included a target of 5,875 dwellings, although no calculation was provided to support this.

"NPPF paragraph 11 states, "Following strategic policy should provide the objectively assessed needs for housing unless the application of policies in this framework that protect land designated as Greenbelt, local Green Space, and areas at risk of flooding. These provide a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type, and distribution of development." We in Epsom have exactly those strong reasons listed and should use them to protect the borough. The plan identified Brownfield sites that could accommodate 3,800 dwellings without any use of Greenfield Greenbelt sites. Importantly, using this figure as the housing target complies with the existing NPPF paragraph 11 and exceeds the housing need derived from the latest government data.

"In conclusion, I support the unpausing of the local plan if and only if we commit to the objectives of protecting our environment and green spaces through excluding development of the Greenfield Greenbelt sites and including realistic housing targets. And that this Council commits to speaking to large-scale developers to learn what can be done to address the alleged barriers put forward by this Council to pursuing the Kiln Lane and Longmead proposal."

Cllr James Lawrence (LibDem College) also spoke as a non-member of the committee and said:

"I very much do want to see houses built. We have a definitive lack of affordable housing, i.e., first-time buyer housing,, which our draft plan is not adequately addressing. Urban density on our Brownfield site should be increased with an aim for gentle urban density around six stories max. These units should be mainly single and double-bedroom apartments located within 20 minutes' walk or cycle of existing infrastructure.

On these grounds, I would like to see the local plan unpaused with a recommendation to be enacted to increase urban density and remove the inappropriate Green Belt developments."

Earlier **Cllr Julie Morris** (LibDem - College) suggested that if the motion was passed the next Full Council being scheduled for 12th December, she may make moves to convene an extraordinary Council to consider the proposal to "unpause" the Local Plan process on an earlier date, to avoid delay.

Six members of the eight strong committee voted in favour of the motion to recommend to the Full Council the unpausing of the drafting of the Local Plan.

The Epsom and Ewell Times can confirm that Chairman of the Committee Steve McCormick has secured support from the requisite number of Councillors to convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council. Date to be confirmed but likely to be 24th October.

Related Reports:

Motion to pause Local Plan process

Cllr McCormick's own answers on Local Plan

Public meeting on Local Plan dominated by greenbelters.

Housing need or desire?

Can Epsom and Ewell get more dense?

From "Princess" to Pauper's grave in Epsom

9000 patients of Epsom's cluster of now closed psychiatric hospitals were buried between 1899 and 1955 in a now abandoned Cemetery. The Friends of Horton Cemetery are writing their life stories and seeking to reclaim the five neglected acres from a property speculator.

The Horton Cemetery is located between Horton Lane and Hook Road, Epsom.

On **10th October 2023** from 1.00pm The **Mayor Cllr Robert Geleit** (Labour Court Ward) and Mayoress of **Epsom and Ewell** will lead councillors, Aldermen of the Borough and the public in commemorating the lives of the 9000. The commemoration will begin beside the Horton Cemetery. Parking is open in the Hook Road Arena. Ceremonies will start at 1.00pm so the public is advised to park no later than 12.45 to allow time for the walk.

If you intend to attend the event you are requested to complete this simple online RSVP form.

If you are attending you should read the advice of The Friends of Horton Cemetery on the ground conditions and lengths of walks involved. Click HERE.

Here is a taster of just one of the hundreds of life stories written by the volunteer team of the Friends of Horton Cemetery charity. **Steve Johnson**, one of the research team leaders, delved into the extraordinary story of a Polish aristocrat who's family's lives were upturned in the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Felicja Staszewicz, daughter of Aleksander Skirmunt and Teofila Skirmunt (née Lubańska) was born c1873 – the seventh of nine children – at the family country estate of Porzecza, Piński (now Belarus), the family having retained its Polish heritage despite the partition of Poland in 1795.

At the outbreak of the Russian Revolution in 1917, Felicja and Piotr, together with their family, moved to Vilnius where they

remained until the end of WW1. Tragically, Marta-Karolina committed suicide at the outbreak of the revolution.

It is unclear where Felicja and Piotr moved to after WW1, but Piotr died in 1929, and by 1939 we find Felicja living in Teklinopol (her country estate near Vilnius which she had inherited from her mother) with her youngest daughter, Matylda, who had moved there in 1923 after her marriage to Jan Myślinski (also from a notable family that traces back to 1670).

On the 17th September 1939 the Russian army crossed the border and Felicja and Matylda, together with her two young daughters, Janina and Jolanta, were forced out of their home and moved to the nearby village of Wilejka.

On the 13th April 1940, in the middle of the night, the family were arrested and, together with thousands of others, taken by cattle train into Russia as slave labour. Two of Felicja's sons, Aleksander and Jan Leon were taken by the Russians and were amongst the mass murder of thousands massacred in the forests of Katyń.

Read the full story HERE on www.hortoncemetery.org

Epsom and Ewell's 3 - 1 lead lost in 12 minutes

Epsom & Ewell 3-4 AFC Croydon Athletic. Combined Counties League Cup - First Round Tuesday 26th September 2023.

A devastating three goal swing in just twelve minutes enabled AFC Croydon Athletic to pinch a 4-3 win in this First Round League Cup tie at the Madgwick after we had led 3-1 and been very good value for that lead for 75 minutes.

And it's such a shame because that first 75 minutes of the match was most definitely our most aggressive and threatening of the entire season as we shrugged off the fact that a number of regulars were missing from this match and took the game to our visitors from the start.

The unavailable list contained Callum Wilson, Zach Powell, Chester Clothier, Ash Snadden, Tommy Williams, Kiyo Brown and Ethan Nelson-Roberts, but this opened the door for a number of players who hadn't had the chance to stake a claim for a place recently and Sirak Negassi and George Owusu both made strong claims for a starting place on Saturday with energetic performances. Ollie Thompson became our fourth Captain of the season and Nick Inwugwu came in alongside him and Reece Tierney, while Jabari Owusu-Hernandez and Ayran Kugathas both came in at the wing back positions.

Only 47 spectators were present to witness a match which would prove to be very good entertainment for a neutral and within a minute we had attacked with Ofosu-Hernandez sending an early strike over the bar from 20 yards. Then Thompson Adeyemi nearly got through with a clever piece of skill, only to be robbed at the last second. This didn't deter us and a ball over to the left found Negassi whose shot back across goal was well saved at full stretch by Oshane Brown's left leg. Brown had played for us twice back in 2014 when we needed emergency cover for a pair of FA Cup ties against Croydon, although when he was reminded about this, he couldn't remember. I suppose it was a few years back!

We continued to attack and Negassi saw his shot half blocked across the field to Owusu, but his side footed strike skipped just beyond the far post from around 15 yards, and in all honesty he probably should have at least hit the target. In response to this point, the visitors had just one strike over the bar from distance by Kamara. Then in the 20th minute Negassi was bundled over by McCarthy who picked up a yellow card for the challenge. Rory Edwards took the free kick and struck the ball at the wall, where it hit an arm and the referee awarded a penalty. Marlon Pinder stepped up to send Brown the wrong way in the 22nd minute and we were ahead.

Things got better in the 32nd minute as a great crossfield ball found Negassi who ran in and simply slotted the ball past the advancing Brown to put us two goals up. There was a suspicion of offside about the goal and there was certainly some protest by the visitors, but the goal stood. However, what next? Well, regrettably just as we needed to see out the half, Inwugwu brought the ball out of defence, but was robbed by Mal Thomas who simply ran in from thirty yards and drew Harvey Keogh out before then clipping the ball past him from close range to reduce the arrears in the 40th minute.

In a sign of things to come later in the match we got a little twitchy in the final few minutes of the half, as if we didn't know whether to go back on the attack, or try to hold on to what we had. However, we survived and went in at the break 2-1 up. Then with just 56 ticks of the second half played we restored the two goal advantage again with a pass to Negassi on the left and his left-footed cross was perfect for Owusu to head back across Brown and into the corner of the net from six yards. Moments later Owusu was inches wide with another shot, but it didn't seem to matter as we were well on top at this point.

Negassi sent another ball across goal that had both Pinder and Owusu stretching to reach it unsuccessfully, before Tierney suffered an injury and he was replaced by Jude Aikins-Hawkson at the back, making his debut for the club. Pinder made way soon

after as Tino Carpene came on and then in the 74th minute Negassi was substituted. His replacement Jaan Stanley was flagged offside just as he produced a good finish from an angle with almost his first touch but we were still in charge.

Until the 76th minute, that is. It was hard to see exactly what happened, but a visiting player went down in our penalty area and a spot kick was awarded. Haile Richardson struck the ball away confidently and within seconds he was denied another by a superb close range save by Keogh. However, with the score at 3-2 and despite our dominance to this point, we suddenly seemed to go into our shell and the Rams took full advantage of this with a sweeping move from left to right that was finished off with a low shot under Keogh from Oriogun in the 84th minute. Brown asked us behind the goal if we would go straight to penalties at the 90 minute mark; which would have been the case, but we didn't manage to hold out that long, as a break on the left with just two minutes of normal time to play resulted in Keogh coming out of his goal but failing to gather and the ball across goal was then forced in from close range at the second attempt by Phillips for what would prove to be the winning goal.

We put on a couple more substitutes but the damage was done and despite the five minutes of extra time we fashioned just one more chance, earning a free kick right on the edge that Adeyemi sent high out of the ground. Our Cup hopes went with it and the whistle blew a minute later.

I am absolutely certain that we would have won this match had our recent form been better, but it almost seemed as if we froze within sight of a winning line we hadn't seen for a while, and having defended so well for such long periods in recent games, it was bit of a shock to fall apart as we did near the end. However, this level of football is relentless and unforgiving and we now have to dust ourselves down rapidly for the trip to Tadley on Saturday. This was, in my opinion, a vast improvement on anything we had seen all season from an attacking point of view and I actually saw glimmers of hope in this match, but we are going to have to be more clinical when holding the ascendency in a match, or those glimmers won't count for many points.

Epsom & Ewell: Harvey Keogh, Jabari Ofosu-Hernandez, Ayran Kugathas, Nick Inwugwu, Ollie Thompson (c), Reece Tierney, George Owusu, Rory Edwards, Marlon Pinder, Thompson Adeyemi, Sirak Negassi

Subs: Jude Aikins-Hawkson for Tierney (57), Tino Carpene for Pinder (65), Jaan Stanley for Negassi (74), Ade Batula for Owusu (89), Ben Bauchop for Edwards (89)

Report Source: www.eefconline.co.uk

Thames Water rebate

Thames Water has been ordered to pay back more than £100million to its customers by regulators.

Water watchdog Ofwat ordered the under-performing company to return the money following a string of failings, it announced today, September 26.

The rebate follows its assessment of Thames Water's performance with customers seeing the results on their bills next year. Ofwat's decision was published in its annual Water Company Performance Report, which rates companies based on pollution incidents, customer service and leakage.

Targets are set to incentivise water companies to deliver more for customers and the environment, Ofwat's report read. It added: "Where they fall short, we reduce the amount of money companies can collect from customers." On Thames Water customers receiving £100 million back next year, it said: "While that may be welcome to billpayers, it is very disappointing news for all who want to see the water sector do better."

David Black, Ofwat chief executive said: "The targets we set for companies were designed to be stretching – to drive improvements for customers and the environment. However, our latest report shows they are falling short." He added: "It is not going to be easy for companies to regain public trust, but they have to start with better service for customers and the environment. We will continue to use all our powers to ensure the sector delivers better value."

It is yet more bad news for the firm following the report in July that found Thames Water among worst in country due to standout levels of pollution and poor monitoring left if joint last among the country's "very disappointing" water and sewerage companies.

Thames Water is the largest water company in the country and serves 15 million people including many in Surrey and Kent. It is owned by a consortium of pension groups and sovereign wealth funds and, in 2023 reported an annual loss of £30.1 million.

Environment Secretary Therese Coffey has now written to Thames Water informing it to expect a meeting in order to scrutinise its improvement plans.

A spokesperson for Thames Water said "Our customers expect a great service from us every time, and we're sorry when we fail to

deliver at the first opportunity. In 2022-2023, we met 55 per cent of our annual performance commitments.

"While it is our job to deliver our services whatever the weather, our performance last year was severely affected by the summer drought and December freeze/thaw event. In March this year our shareholders injected £500million of new equity into Thames Water to help fund improved operational performance. Our shareholders are willing to provide a further £750million of equity funding before 2025, subject to certain conditions.

"They also acknowledge that additional equity funding, indicatively of £2.5billion, will be required during the next regulatory period, 2025-2030, to further improve operational performance and financial resilience. This is the largest equity support package ever seen in the UK water sector and underscores our shareholders' commitment in delivering Thames Water's turnaround and life's essential service for the benefit of our customers, communities, and the environment.

"Our turnaround is already delivering performance improvements. Our complaints fell by 28 per cent, the second consecutive significant year-on-year reduction and we have seen improvements in several key performance commitments including a reduction in sewage discharges, internal sewer flooding, and sewer blockages.

"We're making progress and we'll continue to engage and work with Ofwat as we implement our plan. We're determined to do better for our customers and the environment."

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Image: Hogsmill river in Ewell where there were sewage leaks

Another Surrey Local Plan Pauses

The towns, villages, and open spaces that will take the brunt of **Surrey Heath Borough Council's** 6,000 new homes will be kept under wraps a little longer after the local authority kicked its housing plan into touch.

It is the second time this year the council has paused its local plan after announcing in February it would hold off until after housing secretary **Michael Gove**'s long-rumoured but never seen planning changes take effect.

Now the council is blaming the "economic climate" and the need to develop a strategy for Camberley town centre – which has been hit by the £79 million loss in value of the Camberley Square and House of Fraser sites.

It has said it will now "review the timetable for the remaining stages of the Local Plan process, known as the Local Development Scheme".

Surrey Heath Portfolio Holder for sustainable transport and planning, Councillor Alan Ashbery said: "The council is committed to delivering the best local plan for our residents, while giving maximum protection to our highly valued green belt and special protection areas.

"Given the current economic climate, more time is required to review key policies and undertake further work to support the development in Camberley town centre. Once these important pieces of work have been completed, a new local development scheme will be published. This will set out dates for the remaining stages of the process, including publication details prior to submission to the Secretary of State."

The original draft in February was to deliver 6,213 homes up to the year 2038 - with more than 1,000 lined up for green belt sites. That left 2,700 homes, once those that had already been granted planning permission but had yet to be built were discounted.

The council's draft outlined were housing could be built - this includes employment, commercial, recreation and green spaces and was drawn up following consultation with residents and businesses in 2022.

After the February delay, it was due to submit a final draft for consideration in November 2023 but this has now been delayed again, the council said, to allow further work to be carried out.

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