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

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Epsom and Ewell FC win 2, lose 1 in pre-season friendlies.

13 July 2022

Reports courtesy of Richard Lambert of www.eefconline.co.uk

Farnham Town 3-2 Epsom & Ewell Pre-season Friendly Saturday 2nd July 2022.

The artificial surface at Kings College in Guildford was the place to be to witness the opening match of the Anthony Jupp and Liam Giles era.
Farnham are a Step Five team and they held the balance of the play in the first half, although only broke through in the third minute of injury time when a near post right wing cross was converted with a sidefooted volley past our keeper.
The half time whistle blew immediately after the restart, and both teams changed a number of personnel and in our case, the formation too. This bore fruit within 35 seconds as a smart strike from the left about fifteen yards out put us back on level terms. We then hit the face of the bar with a shot from the left before another shot took a slight deflection and came back off the Farnham post.
Unfortunately a foul just inside the penalty area gave our opponents a spot kick which was converted in the 73rd minute and then two minutes after we had hit the post once again in the 87th minute, Farnham scored a third goal with a fine finish into the top corner from just inside the box.
This third goal was a little harsh on our team, but in the 91st minute we did get a second of our own when our earlier scorer latched on to a fine pass, held off his man and steered the ball under the keeper from an angle about ten yards out for his second of the match. It was the least we deserved, having also hit their woodwork on three occasions during that period!
As always at this stage of the season the performance is more important than the result, but with so many players absent it is hard to say much more than the scoreline was about fair, largely due to Farnham holding a greater balance of play in the first half. Suffice to say our new Management seemed happy enough with the way things went and that's all that really matters at this point. We move on to meet another Step Five team when we visit Hassocks next Saturday.

Hassocks 0-1 Epsom & Ewell Pre-season Friendly Saturday 9th July 2022.

It is generally accepted that the most pretty ground in the area is Arundel's; sitting in the shadow of its imposing castle. However, Hassocks home ground of The Beacon would certainly fit in the tier just below that, and on a gorgeous day that was probably too hot for football an impressive crowd around the 130 mark were present to witness our victory, although once again the support from an Epsom point of view was really low. This was a pity as the performance showed a clear upgrade from the previous week, despite the heat, although admittedly both teams were almost entirely changed at half time, so most players only played one half of the match.

This was an incredibly unusual result. In my forty years as a regular supporter I can only recall a couple of previous occasions where the only goal of a match occurred in the opening minute, but that's exactly what happened in this contest. There were more new faces on show at Hassocks, including another former Epsom player from 15 years ago, although the only goal after just 18 seconds, came from a familiar face as Athan Smith-Joseph collected the ball some thirty yards out and strolled unchallenged to the edge of the penalty area before casually striking the ball into the corner of the net. It's possible that our opponents hadn't realised we were playing three at the back to start the match and lost track of the extra man we had further forward, but either way we caught the hosts cold with this strike.

From that point, the home team had as much of the match as we did and had a couple of really good chances to equalise; firstly in the 38th minute when a deep ball to the left was volleyed across goal only for the Hassocks 10 to strike over the bar from close range, and then in the 79th minute when a free kick to the far post was headed against our crosssbar and as the ball bounced down and then up again, it wouldn't come down in time for the incoming striker who headed the loose ball over. Our (currently) unnamed keeper, who was different to last week's, also had a good game and made a couple of solid saves, but the match was largely devoid of real goalmouth action and this was a fairly attritional contest at times, which isn't always a bad thing when you are leading.

Did we deserve the win? Maybe a draw would have been fairer over the 90 minutes, but I also felt we were worth a draw at Farnham Town last week and we didn't get it! Whilst the actual result isn't that important at this time of the season, I felt we saw the match out well and this bodes well for the future when some of our other new names will be appearing to strengthen the competition for a place. All in all though; sunny day, lovely ground and my team won. Why would you want to be anywhere else if you truly are a genuine and loyal Epsom supporter?

AFC Uckfield Town 0-2 Epsom & Ewell Pre-season Friendly Tuesday 12th July 2022

In my last report I referred to the clean sheet secured at Hassocks being our first in a long time and we have now added a second just three days later with a good 2-0 win at Step Five AFC Uckfield Town at the Oaks.

We had visited this ground before, back in 2009 for an F.A. Cup tie when one half of the merged Uckfield club were previously known as Wealden FC, and it remains as picturesque as it was back then. Around 65 people attended on a warm and sticky evening to watch the home team hold the upper hand in early proceedings, but without really looking like they would break through.

However, the pattern of the match changed in our favour in the 21st minute. I wouldn't normally advise the name of an unsigned scorer, but seeing as he did it himself on social media, I can advise that Jahobi Maher collected the ball just over 45 yards out and launched a strike at goal. The keeper stumbled, at which point you knew instantly that it was going in for a spectacular opener.

Confidence grew from that point and we should have made it 2-0 with a great move, but Ricardo Fernandes blazed over

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from the edge of the penalty area. In response the home side flicked a shot at goal but our keeper was able to deal with it comfortably and we extended our lead in the 42nd minute when new signing Nick Wilson met a long throw with a glancing header across and beyond their keeper from around eight yards out, and only a great save from the home keeper stopped a spectacular third goal after a good move concluded with a superb volley from the edge of the area, but the ball was tipped over the bar.

There were less changes than usual at the break with only three players coming on, bringing the total of subs up to four at that point after one of our players had limped off ten minutes from half time. One of these was our keeper from last year, Kane Charles and he would prove to be very busy in the opening quarter of an hour, making a couple of spectacular saves, although he needed some help in the 49th minute when a defensive header back into our penalty area enabled a home striker to shoot at goal, but Louis Chin was perfectly positioned to head the ball off the line via the crossbar and out to safety!

We made four more changes after an hour and the contest, which had been a bit niggly throughout to this point then flared up again after one of our players crashed into the hoardings near the dugouts which required his replacement, but the home side seemed to run out of ideas a little and the game ended in a fairly comfortable 2-0 win in the end.

Phil Walker’s final pass….

13 July 2022

Richard Lambert pays homage to the late great footballer who played for Epsom and Ewell FC.

[Photo: ***Phil Walker pictured running the line at West Street on 24th October 1976 in a Charity Match as a Dennis Waterman XI defeated an Epsom XI 11-10 with the recently deceased Waterman scoring a hat-trick. Over 2,000 were present along with many other famous names like Alan Mullery, Dave Sexton, Tony Gubba and Trevor Lee.***]

Photo: Gemini Reynolds

On Friday 8th July 2022 our club lost one of its most famous names when the death was announced of Philip Leonardus Walker at the tragically young age of 67.

Phil was born in Parsons Green on 29th August 1954 and went to Battersea County School in Culvert Road, Battersea where he met another youngster, Trevor Lee. Their stories would of course become inextricably linked, although had Phil been born three days later, he would have been in a different school year and their paths may not have even crossed!

Both of course connected well at a time when it must have been extremely difficult growing up as a young black man in South London, but the pair would become footballing pioneers in arguably the most hostile of environments, the Den; home of Millwall FC.

Although both were very good at football, they went in opposite directions at first. Phil was working in a factory in Acton and got talking to a workmate who was at Wingate F.C. so he went and played with them, scored in his first match and stayed a while.

However, in 1973 he teamed up with Trevor again at Cobham alongside another player in Steve Jones. All three would then sign for Epsom and Ewell in the summer of 1974.

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Saturday 08/02/75 v Hornchurch F.A.Vase – Won 1-0.

Back Row: Steve Jones, Ted Yorke, Chris Page, Johnny Eales, Dave Worby, Trevor Lee, Willie Bennett, Dave Ritman

Front Row: Tommy Tuite, Trevor Wales, Phil Walker, Pat O'Connell, Alan Webb

Our club were of course just picking themselves up after years in the doldrums and had just finished as runners-up in the Surrey Senior League, but Manager Pat O'Connell; a former professional himself at Fulham, wanted our club to achieve much more.

Phil joined our club a month after Trevor, due to a holiday in America, and made his debut on Saturday 7th September 1974 when we defeated Chobham 3-0 in a Surrey Senior League Cup tie at West Street, but it was a slow start for the new lad who only made four first team appearances by the December. However, he forced his way into the team as the season progressed and by the end of May we had won the League and Charity Cup double with Phil firmly entrenched in the number 10 shirt.

Phil scores our only goal in the F.A. Vase win over Hornchurch on 8th February 1975

Johnny Eales is the other Epsom player in the photograph and to my knowledge is the only other member of the 12 man squad to have passed away as I write this.

Of course most supporters will remember that 1974/75 season for our run to Wembley Stadium in the very first FA Vase

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competition, where Phil was a focal part of the run. He scored the only goal in our Quarter-Final victory over Hornchurch and the winner against Stamford in the first leg of the Semi-Final, which was won 2-1 and essentially earned the trip to Wembley, following our goalless draw in the second leg.

Trevor Lee and Phil Walker share a moment at the F.A. Vase Final post-match get together at the Cavalier in Wallington on 19th April 1975 with Manager Pat O'Connell and his Assistant Arthur Evans

Our boys celebrate with the Surrey Senior League Trophy at West Street on 22nd May 1975

Although the day at Wembley ended with a 2-1 defeat, our club was on the football map again and in the early part of 1975/76 Millwall Manager Gordon Jago came calling. The new man in charge already knew of our club and ground, having played against us in the early fifties as Captain of Maidstone United in the Corinthian League. Jago actually took four of our players for trials at Cold Blow Lane. Willie Bennett, one of our finest defenders in club history, and Tommy Tuite, who would become our greatest ever goal scorer were also asked to attend along with Trevor and Phil, but ultimately injury hurt Bennett's chances, while Tuite was considered too small at five feet eight, ironically the same height as Kevin Keegan! Both played matches for Millwall in the Football Combination, before returning to leafy Ewell Village.

However, Trevor and Phil were successful and Phil made the last of his 41 appearances for us against Southall and Ealing Borough (who had another non-league success playing in their team by the name of Alan Devonshire) in an F.A. Cup replay. Phil scored 19 goals in that time. Trevor would return for five appearances in 1985/86, but Phil would never wear our colours again.

Both players were due to sign for Millwall on 13th November 1975 live on the main regional news show of day, The Today show; a programme that would become infamous just over a year later for an interview featuring the Sex Pistols, but back then it was very popular. However, only Trevor made the show as Phil had to have x-rays but he would soon sign a two year contract in December 1975. Both made an instant impact on their debut, with Trevor setting up Phil to score the only goal against Mansfield Town at the Cold Blow Lane end at the old Den, and Phil made 35 appearances that season as promotion to Division Three was achieved.

Despite the obvious fact that they were the only black players in the Lions team at a sad time in our distant past when the National Front were regularly acknowledged on television as the fourth main political party, and even before the implementation of the Race Relations Act in 1976 (which expanded on the previous Acts from 1965 and 1968 and properly started to give some real teeth to the subject of discrimination) they became extremely popular at a ground where the word "hostile" was a tag that many of their supporters embellished as a badge of honour. They remain so to this day.

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Promotional photo from Millwall showing Gordon Jago after capturing both Phil and Trevor from Epsom and Ewell FC

Both players became pioneers for their club, although Phil didn't stay that long. He made 167 appearances for them, with 22 goals before moving on. Whilst there he was honoured for his contributions to sport by the Muhammad Ali Scheme in Brixton, along with Olympic Champion Daley Thompson and World Champion Boxer John Conteh.

To give full details of Phil's professional career and achievements, it is much better to refer you to the clubs for whom he played from this point, as they will all have written their own tributes. Suffice to say though, he signed for Charlton Athletic for £120,000 in the summer of 1979 before having a loan spell at Gillingham.

He then made an unusual career move in those days by going abroad in 1983 when he moved to Hong Kong to play for Eastern AA before moving again, this time to Portugal where he joined Leixoes, Boavista and FC Maia before retiring at the age of 41. He also told me that the best ground he ever played at (excluding Epsom's appearance at Wembley Stadium) was Benfica's old Stadium of Light.

He also did some coaching at Maia in the early 2000s and this was put to good use in recent years when he started to run his own soccer school at Wandle Recreation Centre in Mapleton Road, Wandsworth which continues to this day.

Most people will not know that Phil was actually a member of a very talented family and had a couple of brothers; Dennis who also played regularly for Epsom and Ewell, making 102 appearances and scoring 12 goals, and Larrington (Larry) who was a very well-known actor with roles in Minder, The Bill, Inspector Morse and The Chinese Detective amongst others, yet was versatile enough to also be a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company and was a good friend of comedian Lenny Henry. Also, his nephew Kyle Walker-Peters is of course currently a professional footballer with Southampton.

I was extremely fortunate to meet both Phil and Trevor in 2015 when I noticed that Phil had started following our club on Twitter and dropped him a line to see if he would like to have a chat and he was more than happy to meet up and would bring Trevor along too.

When we met that evening I found two extremely modest people who knew they were breaking down barriers and raising the public's perception at a time when it desperately needed to be, but you got the impression that they saw themselves as simply footballers. I didn't feel the need to ask them the same questions they must have heard hundreds of times about their race, and in all honesty, I'd have probably been able to find out those answers from many other previous interviews. I wanted to concentrate on their time at Epsom and Ewell and I think it must have been quite refreshing for them to answer some different questions. In more recent years the Achtung Millwall podcast interviewed Phil and whilst it obviously concentrates more on his time there, it is well worth a listen too.

I said my goodbyes that evening and they said they would try to get along to an Epsom game one day. Regrettably now Phil will never make that journey, but he will never be forgotten at this club while I am here to pass the baton and remind people of our former greats, of which Phil was certainly one!

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Trevor Lee and Phil Walker in the summer of 2015

More coverage of our great Epsom and Ewell Football Club on their website http://www.eefconline.co.uk/

Top line Jazz soothes the heart of Epsom

13 July 2022

Sandwiched between weekend Festival performances to sizeable crowds in Harrogate and Swanage, **Jo Harrop** delighted Epsom Jazz Club's modest audience on 7th July by taking to the stage for a sublime midweek concert.

Wonderfully accompanied by local jazz guitarist Nigel Price, Dave Chamberlain on double bass, and Matt Home on drums, Jo effortlessly commanded the room with songs from Cole Porter, Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, and more.

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Image – Terry Tomlinson

After moving to London from her home city of Durham, Jo quickly established herself as one of the most unmistakable voices in British jazz, performing everywhere from Ronnie Scott's to the Royal Albert Hall. Epsom Jazz Club is still in its infancy having only been launched in 2022, and was elated to welcome Jo in the midst of her busy touring schedule.

Epsom Jazz Club rests in August and will announce its Autumn programme soon.

More at EpsomJazzClub.com

@EpsomJazzClub on Twitter/Instagram/Facebook

RA romp home in by-election

13 July 2022

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council announced the results of the by-election held yesterday, Thursday 7 July 2022, for the West Ewell Ward.

New Councillor Alan Williamson photograph above.

Mr Williamson gained the most votes with **549 electors** supporting him. The remaining results were:

MARK TODD (Labour) 395 votes

KIERAN PERSAND (Conservative) 205 votes

MARION MORRISON (LibDem) 117 votes

Turnout for the election was 26.79%

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West Ewell Ward, has three seats on the Council, at present all three are held by the **Residents Association**.

The by-election was called following the death of popular and long-serving Residents Association Councillor **Clive Smitheram** in May this year.

Grayling stood up by developers….

13 July 2022

The Developers promoting the development of the site of Kingswood House School bizarrely failed to show up at their own public consultation on Thursday night (7th July). The event which had been organized by Steve Curwen of Stonegate Homes Ltd on behalf of the freeholders of the site (the Aczel brothers) was scheduled to take place at The Cricketers Inn on Stamford Green between 5pm and 7pm on Thursday 7th July.

Had Mr Curwen or the Aczels attended, they would have been greeted by between 70 and 80 local residents who despite having been given barely 72 hours notice of the event by the developers, turned up in force to show their support for the School and their objection to the development proposals.

Cllr Bernie Muir (Con) (centre and top photo) and residents not impressed by developers' no show.

It was standing room only in the small room which the developers had organized for the meeting and in their absence and that of the freeholders, it was left to the School to thank residents for showing up and for indicating their strong opposition to the plans. Headmaster Duncan Murphy noted the valuable role the School plays, providing education for 250 boys and girls, very many of whom are SEND pupils (Special Education Needs and Disabilities).

Chris Grayling MP also attended and voiced his strong support for the School and objection to the plans and was supported by councilors Bernie Muir and Steve Bridger. Bernie Muir encouraged all attendees to sign a register noting their attendance.

Steve Bridger (Councillor for Stamford Ward) told Epsom and Ewell Times "I support and will continue to support Kingswood House in every aspect against this planning application, being a local school providing first class education. It is a great asset to the Borough and the students that attend."

Sited in West Hill Epsom for over 100 years Kingswood House is a renowned special educational

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needs and disability (SEND) school and is facing the termination of its lease as developers seek to build a housing estate on the land. The valuable role the School plays has been recognized by Council's recently awarding the School the status of an: "Asset of Community Value". This is a rare accolade, unusual for a school and reflects the high value of the school to the local community. Also, the school has been shortlisted by Independent School Parent magazine for an award in this year's annual Contribution to Social Mobility category. See Epsom and Ewell Times exclusive breaking the story.

Community Asset to be stripped?

13 July 2022

Epsom's **Kingswood House School** faces closure as developers move in.

Sited in **West Hill Epsom** for over 100 years this renowned special educational needs and disability (SEND) school is facing the termination of its lease as developers seek to build a housing estate on the land. 250 pupils enjoy first class facilities and green space at the Council's recently recognised "**Asset of Community Value**". This is a rare accolade, unusual for a school and reflects the high value of the school to the local community. Also, the school has been shortlisted by ***Independent School Parent*** **magazine** for an award in this year's annual Contribution to Social Mobility category.

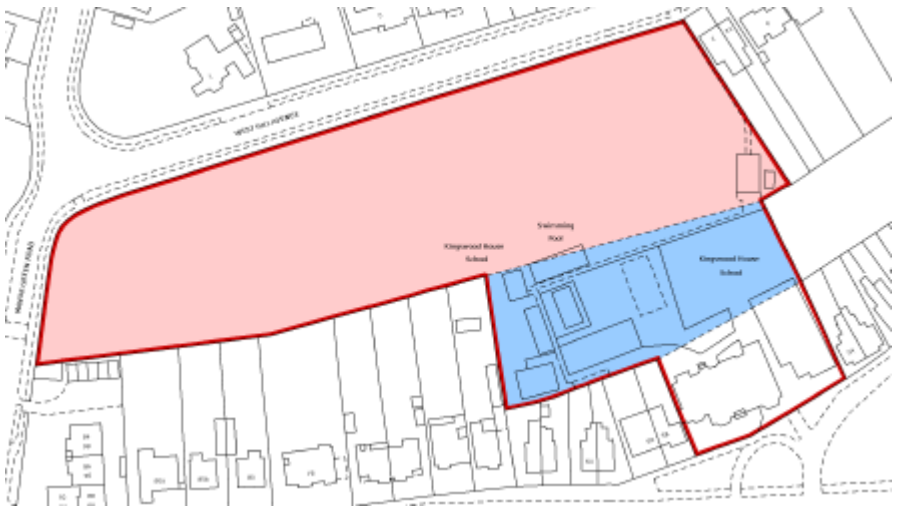
Tomorrow (Thursday 5pm 7th July) at The **Cricketers Pub**, Stamford Green Road, Epsom the freehold owners of the land, (James, Richard and David Aczel) are staging a "public consultation".

Richard Evans, the Chair of the School's governors said "Our school is already a thriving SEND-focused school for 250 boys and girls and the proposed school is on a small part of the site and will only accommodate a fraction of this number."

Headmaster **Duncan Murphy** said "100% of the site should be kept for a school, and no housing should be allowed. Although the landlords will say otherwise, there are other sites for housing which are far more appropriate." The school are urging local residents to attend the meeting at the Cricketers and make their views known.

The freeholders claim "Epsom is far behind its local housing delivery targets and needs a great deal of housing for local people, with a high demand for family housing. The scheme delivers a specialist school for local children that will be funded by the local education authority. The scheme delivers new local housing with 1, 2, 3 & 4 bed homes. All high quality and with parking (incl electric charging) and grounds to provide a high standard of design. This is a local scheme for local people. The scheme is highly sustainable, re-using buildings where possible and creating highly energy efficient new buildings where required."

Below is the registered land (edged red) leased till March 2023 by the Axzels to Kingswood House School Trust and an aerial view of the site. Lastly, the proposed development demonstrating how most if not all the green space available to 250 pupils will be swallowed up by new housing.



Title plan of Kingswood House School's lease (edged red).

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Aerial view of Kingswood House School's site.

New development in grey and proposed reduced school site in colour.

Surrey County raining over local democracy?

13 July 2022

The Conservative-run **Surrey County Council** plans to axe "area committees". Will this reduce local people's voice in Council decisions? "Surrey to reign over us? Happy and glorious?"

"**Local and Joint Committee**s" have been the mainstay of local democracy in Surrey over the last 20 years, providing a forum for county councillors to join with their counterparts In **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** and other local councils in the County, to discuss issues and make decisions on local county council spending. Members of the public participated in the meetings by bringing petitions and asking questions about council services.

These committees have gradually reduced in the frequency of meetings and their remit. Decision-making on highway functions was removed at the Surrey County Council Cabinet meeting in February this year. Various ideas have been floated about replacing them with a new model of partnership working but as yet, no firm proposals or timeline have been

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set.

The abolition of Local and Joint Committees is now set for the 31 October 2022 latest.

Epsom and Ewell *and* Surrey County Councillor **Eber Kington** (Residents Association) said to the Epsom and Ewell Times: "It was a decision taken without consultation with most County Councillors and made without any detailed plans in place to replicate many of the functions of Local Committees. Getting "how will this work" responses has been difficult and met with evasion and delay. However, we now know that petitioners will have their requests for action determined by a Cabinet Member (not from Epsom and Ewell), and residents can only ask in-person questions related to their local community if they travel to Surrey County Council's **Woodhatch HQ in Reigate**, accessible only by car. My ability to promote a highway safety scheme amongst my Epsom and Ewell County Councillor colleagues is gone, and such schemes now have to take their chance in competition with 80 other county councillors across Surrey."

Cllr Eber Kington losing control over highways?

"The outcome of this centralisation of highway spending decisions is self-evident when you see that for highway improvements to reduce road casualties, tackle speeding and make walking and cycling to school easier and safer in 2022/2023, there are 42 schemes listed with a total spend of £2,200,000. Unfortunately, the Epsom and Ewell area has just one scheme listed at a cost of £5000. That is just 0.2% of the budget for 2022/2023 being allocated to Epsom and Ewell."

Epsom and Ewell College Ward Councillor **David Gulland** (LibDem) told Epsom and Ewell Times "This move threatens to undermine local democracy and reduce Epsom and Ewell's voice in County Council decisions. The Conservatives have been looking to abolish Local and Joint Committees for a number of years but have yet to come up with any firm proposals for anything that will work better. My concern is that if they are completely abolished without their replacements up and running, there could be a temporary or even a permanent deficit in local democracy. We want to press the County Council into committing to a future that provides for local participation in local decision-making. My LibDem colleagues on the County Council will move a resolution to preserve Local and Joint Committees."

The Conservative County Councillor was also asked to comment.

Council keep taxpayers in the dark

13 July 2022

The Epsom and Ewell Times has previously reported the surprise resignation / departure (?) of Kathryn Beldon, the Council's Chief Executive Officer. The Strategy and Resources committee decided on Monday night (July 4th) to exclude press and public from its meeting to discuss the recruitment of a new CEO.

The motion to hold the meeting in private was opposed by Cllr. David Gulland (Lib Dem, College Ward) and Cllr. Kate Chinn (Labour, Court Ward), arguing that there was no reason for any of the information that would be discussed to be exempt from public scrutiny.

But the council officer presenting the report responded that, while it was a decision ultimately for councillors to make, it would be difficult to discuss the matter without referring to the financial remuneration of other individuals employed by the council. The committee chairman, Cllr Neil Dallen (Res Ass, Town Ward) suggested to the meeting that this would restrict the discussion needed.

A vote on Cllr. Gulland's motion to keep the meeting open to the public was defeated by 5 votes to 2. The public gallery was therefore cleared and the ensuing discussion in private lasted for about an hour.

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The S&R meeting was immediately followed by a meeting of the Full Council, where Cllrs. Gulland and Chinn again argued that the discussion should be held in the open, but were again defeated by the Residents' Association majority.

The public is still none the wiser in terms of what was discussed or what conclusions were reached.

The **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)** has been contacted and advises:

"In recent years public authorities have published an increasing amount of information on salaries of public sector officials. Government departments and other public bodies now routinely publish the names, job titles and salaries of senior civil servants on www.data.gov.uk, as part of the government's policy on open data and transparency. Salaries are given in bands of £5,000 (eg £120,000 to £124,999). For more junior posts the job title and pay scales are shown.
It is well-established practice that local authorities, fire and police authorities and certain other public bodies in England publish salary-related information in their annual accounts. For example, for each employee who earned over £50,000 in the previous year, they publish actual salaries, allowances, bonuses, compensation and employer's pension contributions. This also includes the names of those staff who earned over £150,000."

The **Epsom and Ewell Times** will apply to Epsom and Ewell Borough Council for full disclosure of all the secret papers of the meetings of 4th July and the minutes. Failing which an appeal will be made to the ICO as Epsom and Ewell Council's secrecy appears to be contrary to the spirit of the age of transparency and accountability.

5th July the Council made a statement through its press office: "These meetings were part of the required democratic process to ensure a robust recruitment of the most senior Chief Officer position of the Council. "

West Ewell hustings test candidates

13 July 2022

Marion Morrison (LibDem), Mark Todd (Labour, leaning on the RA candidate's empty chair), Keiran Persand (Conservative). Monday 4th July 2022, All Saints Church West Ewell hosted the West Ewell Borough Council Ward by-election hustings. Local residents go to the polling stations on Thursday 7th July to elect a new Councillor. Each candidate paid tribute to the late Residents Association Councillor Clive Smitheram for his long and valuable public service. See Epsom and Ewell Times obituary HERE.

Alan Williamson, the Residents Association candidate, did not attend due to a work commitment. He works in the financial services sector. However, you can see all candidates' responses to Epsom and Ewell Times questions HERE.

The hustings candidates were quizzed by voters on tackling anti-social behaviour and improving policing, the urgency of getting approved a Local Plan, improvements to transport and local road congestion. The audience was very pleased to have the opportunity to hear and question candidates but were disappointed that Mr Williamson could not attend. There was unanimous support for the Epsom and Ewell Times plan to hold hustings in every ward in the 2023 Epsom and Ewell Borough Council elections.

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102 year old Epsom veteran wears his medals again!

13 July 2022

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A 102-year-old Surrey war hero who was unable to wear his medals due to the condition of the ribbons can finally pin on his honours again, thanks to a local veterans' project which arranged a repair mission.

George, who served in the British Army during the Second World War and now lives in Epsom, showed the old, frayed ribbons to a trained volunteer who was documenting his life story as part of the Force for Change veterans' project.

On hearing George's predicament, Tracey Morris, the project lead for Epsom and Ewell, contacted **THE SOLDIERS, SAILORS, AIRMEN AND FAMILIES ASSOCIATION** [SSAFA], the Armed Forces charity. Tracey, a communities and prevention coordinator in the county council's adult social care team, worked with Adrian Mundin, SSAFA's divisional secretary, to arrange for the honours to be sent to medal specialists in London.

SSAFA has strong links with the London Medal Company, which was pleased to support George's request. The Taxi Charity for Military Veterans then stepped in to transport the medals to the company's premises in Leicester Square, because of the age of the medals and to ensure their safe delivery and return.

The taxi collected the honours from an event marking the third anniversary of the Epsom and Ewell Veterans Community Hub, where George was showing his medals, still in the cardboard box in which they were delivered to him more than half a century ago. The honours were then conveyed from the hub to the medals company for repair.

Complete with new ribbons and displayed on a rack, the medals were reunited with their owner at the Comrades Club in Epsom, where George was also able to meet and thank Kim Morton, representing SSAFA, Ian Lingham, of the taxi charity, and Tracey.

The local veterans' project brings together former service personnel through friendship groups, events and days out and may involve an opportunity to record their life stories for the archives.

It's a pilot scheme which is initially focused on three areas of Surrey – Epsom and Ewell, Guildford and Surrey Heath. Places are available in all three locations. Former service personnel, whether younger or older, are encouraged to get involved.

The county council is working with armed forces charities and local museums and organisations to deliver the project, which is funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, under its Force for Change programme.

Sinead Mooney, Surrey County Council's Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, said: "Thanks to everyone involved in this heartwarming project and particularly to George for telling his story and highlighting the benefits of the groups and networks for veterans in Surrey. I'd encourage anyone who has served, whether younger or older, to find out more about the opportunities in the county."

Helyn Clack, chairman of Surrey County Council and the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board, said: "It's particularly fitting during Armed Forces Week to be celebrating the repair and return of the medals that George so richly earned. I'd like to pay tribute to him and indeed all those across Surrey who have served, and are currently serving, for their courage and contribution."

For more information about support for veterans across Surrey, visit Surrey Information Point. You can also download the free Forces Connect mobile app which signposts veterans, armed forces personnel and their loved ones to local support and advice. Search "Forces Connect" in Apple's App Store or the Google Play Store.

The Epsom and Ewell Veterans Community Hub is holding an indoor street party on Sunday 26th June to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Any veteran wishing to attend must register in advance (contact tracey.morris@surreycc.gov.uk or call 07790 585352).

Surrey Safe for Diggers

13 July 2022

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New analysis of Digging up Britain 2022 search data reveals that Surrey residents are the fourth safest diggers in the UK, being beaten to top spot by Nottinghamshire, London and Gloucestershire. Devon rounded off the top five.

The study by the UK's leading online safe digging resource, **Line Search Before You Dig**, LSBUD, highlights the country's safest and most dangerous digging hotspots as domestic digging continues to rise, by analysing how many residents are searching before they dig.

The UK's Top Ten Digging Regions

- Nottinghamshire
- London
- Gloucestershire
- Surrey
- Devon
- Kent
- Hampshire
- Cornwall
- Wiltshire
- Oxfordshire

With Brits searching before undertaking 185,000 digging projects over the past 12 months, the scale and volume of at-home activity is clear to see. This is an all-time high and a 25 percent increase on the previous year.

It comes amidst a greater willingness to undertake home improvements post-COVID. According to Rated People, there was a 32 percent increase in demand for home improvements in 2021, with homeowners requiring more space to effectively live and work from the same property. Digging up Britain data mirrors this, with domestic works projects increasing by 83 percent.

The nature of these digging projects range from digging in trampolines, putting in new sheds and fixing fencing, through to drainage work, building conservatories, installing heat pumps and planting trees.

What the Experts Say

Richard Broome, MD at LSBUD, comments: "It is great to see the British public wanting to do more to their homes, and to see so many using the proper precautions to stay safe is heartening. With 84 percent of all digging projects now preceded by an underground search, it is clear that the safe digging message is getting through.

"However, there is still room for improvement. When the British public dig 'blind', with no prior knowledge of what is beneath them, there results can be significant. You are looking at serious injuries, expensive repairs, major disruptions and in the worst cases, fatalities.

"With this in mind, we urge people to always 'search before you dig'. This is the message we want to get across as part of National Safe Digging Week, which starts on Monday 4th July."

To learn more, please visit lsbud.co.uk/national-safe-digging-week, and to see LSBUD's consumer-focused safe digging video, click here.

The UK's Most Dangerous Digging Regions

- Lincolnshire
- Somerset
- Herefordshire
- Berkshire
- Durham

Methodology

Data from LSBUD's search portal, which recorded 3.4 million enquiries in 2021 was analysed. The data not only identifies the people responsible for each search, with 'private individuals' one of the selected groups, but also their location.

Surrey Independent Living Charity

13 July 2022

Surrey Independent Living Council is evolving! Following on from an independent external review the trustees agreed to change the name of the organisation to **Surrey Independent Living Charity**. (SILC)

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They believe that the change in name from Surrey Independent Living Council to Surrey Independent Living Charity better reflects the charitable objectives of the organization and avoids confusion with Surrey County Council.
SILC is a User Led Organisation that has been active in Surrey for almost 25 years and was formed as Surrey Independent Living Council in 1998 by a group of disabled people. SILC's primary purpose was to provide support to disabled people who wanted to use local authority funded Direct Payments to employ Personal Assistants to provide the care and support they needed.
Between 1999 and 2017 SILC continued to provide support services in Surrey and their growth reflected the increasing number of people using Direct Payment in Surrey. During that time, the charity expanded to provide one off Direct Payments to Carers and Personal Health Budget support to individuals funded by the NHS.

Chief Executive, Richard Davy, said to Epsom and Ewell Times: "The change in our name to Surrey Independent Living Charity honours the history of the charity and the work that has been undertaken over the last 25 years, whilst looking ahead to the future and focusing on our charitable objectives and our vision, mission and values."

SILC believes that everyone can live independently with the right support. At the heart of everything they do is the social model of disability and the concept of full human rights. They believe that these give a basis for treating everyone with respect, understanding and fairness. They also believe that disabled adults, children, older people and carers can learn from and support each other.
Surrey Independent Living Charity (SILC) will continue to provide its existing range of services, details of which can be found on www.surreyilc.org.uk.
In addition to this, the charity intends to put a greater focus on its role as a champion and facilitator of independent living for people in Surrey who require support to live in the community. SILC will also be further developing peer and volunteer led information, advice and support for residents who need it.
Chief Executive, Richard Davy, "We at SILC are very proud to have been supporting people in Surrey to live independently for almost 25 years. We're on a mission to extend the awareness of the support we can provide to families and individuals living with disabilities as well as older people with care needs, and to raise additional funding to widen the range of services we can offer to the people of Surrey".
To find out more about SILC and how you can support them or access their services, please visit the SILC website www.surreyilc.org.uk.

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