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

22nd October 2026

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Introducing the Daily Chess Puzzle!

22 April 2022

From today, Epsom & Ewell Times will be hosting a daily chess puzzle for readers to solve. Chess is a wonderful game and a daily puzzle is a great brain trainer!

The puzzle is kindly provided by chess.com

Check it out here!

Council passes “Stand with Ukraine” motion, Labour amendment rejected.

22 April 2022

On Tuesday night 19th April 2022, at a meeting of the Full Council of Epsom and Ewell Borough, the Council debated and passed a motion titled “Stand Together with Ukraine”. It was a motion setting out to:

a) Note the Commitments already made by the Government to house displaced Ukrainian families.

b) Utilise the support funding provided by the Government to meet the welfare and care needs of Ukrainian families arriving in the borough via the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

c) Signpost those residents who house people displaced by this act of aggression to the information and support they are seeking.

Councillor Alex Coley (Residents Association – Ruxlet Ward) authored the “Stand with Ukraine” motion

Cllr Alex Coley (Residents Association – Ruxley Ward), proposing the motion, stated: *“In these worst of times for the Ukrainian people, we have seen the best of people in our Borough, who’ve responded with an outpouring of kindness and generosity.”* The motion was unanimously passed by the Chamber, with one amendment (rejected) being submitted by Labour Party Councillors, Kate Chinn and Debbie Monksfield of Court Ward.

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ISSN 2753-2771

Councillor Kate Chinn (Labour Part – Court Ward) authored the amendment

The amendment called on the Government to take in more Ukrainian refugees, to step up its humanitarian obligations and provide more support to European countries, who are taking the majority of refugees. Councillor Chinn said, *"The government has been dragging its feet on the biggest refugee crisis in a decade."* The reception was frosty, with members describing it as "Confusing" and "Political point-scoring". Cllr Liz Frost (Residents Association – Woodcote Ward) stated her uneasiness, telling the Council more leniency in refugee policy could lead to *"terrorists"* finding easier pathways into the UK. Cllr Coley responded by stating that the aims of the amendment were better addressed to the Home Affairs House of Commons Select committee who could *"look into some of the things that are happening that perhaps should be done in a fairer and more effective way",* concluding that as a Borough Council, it isn't their place to scrutinise Government policy.

The motion is an important message to Ukrainian citizens, some of whom will be relocating to Epsom under the Government's Homes for Ukraine scheme, and an important reassurance of solidarity for Ukrainians already living in Epsom and Ewell, and beyond.

If you're local to Epsom, and you'd like to help during the Ukraine Crisis, please get in contact with Surrey Stands with Ukraine and the Epsom Refugee Network, two fantastic community charities that are doing excellent work for disenfranchised people.

Have any thoughts on this motion? Let us know via email: admin@epsomandewelltimes.com, or through the contact form, found HERE.

Potential Strike could affect Epsom: Train company crossing the lines?

22 April 2022

General Secretary Michael Lynch of the Rail and Maritime Union 8th April has alerted rail workers to the prospect of a strike ballot affecting the Epsom and Ewell Borough's Waterloo line services (Epsom, Ewell West and Stoneleigh stations). Strike action is threatened following an internal rail company inquiry that found a railman guilty of a series of sexual harassment accusations made by female workers, afterwhich, SWR allowed him to return to the same workplace without advising the complainants.

At the time of this report, the matter is being referred to an urgent "avoidance of dispute" negotiation between the Union and the management of SWR. Michael Lynch has told members: *"The Union's National Executive Committee has considered this matter and is appalled at the insensitive way SWR is handling multiple cases of serious harassment that will have a detrimental impact on female members working for the company. It is incomprehensible that the individual has been found guilty but remains employed at the same location and is expected to work with the victims of his actions. Ultimately, the company has failed their employees and have failed even by ACAS standards in dealing with this case."*

In response to Epsom and Ewell Times, a spokesperson for SWR said: "This matter has not been concluded and remains part of an ongoing process. It would be inappropriate for us to comment further on any specific details. However, we want

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to make clear that South Western Railway takes a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of any kind. We take any reports of abuse extremely seriously and will investigate complaints fully."

Our request to SWR to clarify the "ongoing process" remains unanswered.

We'd love to hear from you via email at admin@epsomandewelltimes.com Let us know your views here at Epsom and Ewell Times.

Not in my back-garden centre!

22 April 2022

John Dipre of the Dipre family-run Marsden Nurseries Ltd, owners of the Epsom bordering Ashtead Park Garden Centre in Pleasure Pit Road, has applied to Mole Valley District Council to demolish this popular garden centre and restaurant and build on the site 26 two to four-bedroom houses.

Neighbours are up in arms and objections are mounting before the consultation deadline of 25th April passes. Objectors point out that recently the Council had removed the site from an area for potential development. It is said to occupy a sensitive area of the Green Belt as it separates Epsom from Ashtead. The roads around are narrow and bendy and already hazardous. Public transport is threadbare. The Langley Vale E5 bus every two to three hours that crosses Epsom is the only one apart from a weekday daily school service.

The Applicant, John Dipre, has been involved as Director of no less than 120 registered companies, most of which have been in homes, investments and property. He claims that the proposed development will be an improvement for nature as presently most of the land is tarmac and his plans will see trees, hedges and grassy areas grow.

No affordable housing is planned for the development.

The full plans can be seen via molevalley.gov.uk/planningsearch and enter MO/2022/0474

Issues relating to development, housing, planning, brownfield sites and affordable housing are addressed in an opinion piece exclusively for the Epsom and Ewell Times by Tim Murphy you can read HERE.

If you are affected by a significant planning application email us or use the contact form and we will consider reporting on it.

Want more from us? Read more Council News here.

The Northman Review: Robert Egger's Viking Epic does not disappoint.

22 April 2022

There are SPOILERS for The Northman in this review. Film watched at ODEON Epsom.

Robert Eggers' latest feature may find itself being remembered as the most accessible of his filmography so far, with a simple enough, easy to follow plot (it's Viking Hamlet, not rocket science) and immense popcorn-munching fight scenes, including a climactic lava-lit battle at the mouth of a volcano, where it wouldn't have been too much of a visual stretch to give the characters lightsabers instead of shortswords. The main character, Amleth, is a Viking Prince and heir to his father's (played by Ethan Hawke) Kingdom, who witnesses his Father betrayed and murdered by Amleth's uncle Fjölnir, who also steals his kingdom and kidnaps his mother. So begins his quest for revenge, he speaks it aloud to himself while he's escaping the Irish coast: Avenge father, rescue mother, kill uncle. This admirable conflict is well established, the sides are drawn clearly and the brutality of the ordeal young Amleth has to go through gets the audience rooting for him instantly.

The next time we see Amleth he's a grown man, a Viking berserker who raids villages along the Slavic coast. It's on one of these raids that we're truly reintroduced to Amleth, as he cuts and slashes his way across a village in a sequence so truly brutal and raw, that you completely believe that this is a man who had his world taken away from him. The story wastes no time and after a brief magical encounter with Bjork (not kidding, wish I was), Amelth is on his way to confront his

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uncle. Alexander Skarsgard throws himself into the role completely, delivering earth-shattering Viking-berserker wolf-howls and vengeful promises of retribution, while also carrying the more dramatic parts of the film, like the chemistry-oozing scenes featuring Anya Taylor-Joy's Olga. The cast is certainly star-studded, Ethan Hawke's King Aurvandill commands a powerful presence for his brief screentime, Hawke is a wonderful actor, who puts 100% into every role he plays, opposite him, Nicole Kidman plays Queen Gudrún, a multi-layered and complex character that she plays effortlessly. Willem Dafoe makes an appearance as court jester/he-witch Heimir the Fool, a role he absolutely knocks out of the park.

The Northman, like all Eggers films, is shot magnificently, Jarin Blaschke (who also collaborated with Eggers on his 2019 film The Lighthouse, as well as his directorial debut The Witch) does an incredible job at making you feel like you're in the middle of a village being raided, you can practically feel the bite of the cold in the wide-shots of the Icelandic landscape, simply put, the camera work is exhilarating and visceral. The visuals are a treat from start to finish, the epic shots of a smoky volcano, the incredible establishing shots of settlements and villages, and the trippy dream-sequence vision quests that occur more than once, are all delightful to spectate. Blaschke uses everything at his disposal to his advantage, colour, light and phenomenal framing bless our screens with pure movie magic.

Eggers manages to build a very gritty, realistic depiction of the dark ages, the production and sound design come together to transport the audience to a violent, cold, but very real 895AD, whose magnificent scope simply must be seen to be believed. The film is markedly an Egger's picture, with mysticism and surreal elements scattered throughout, but if anything, he's reined in some of his more Lovecraftian and horror-based inspirations, with The Northman being much more accessible to the everyday filmgoer than the surreal psychological cosmic-horror that was The Lighthouse. It's a bit of a shame, to me, the film absolutely thrives in these surreal scenes and is at its best in these scenes, and honestly, I wish he lent into them a little more.

The Northman is very well-paced and rarely dull, even its calmer scenes are stacked full of well-written character interactions and powerful performances, Claes Bang puts in an excellent shift as the villainous Fjölnir, as does Gustav Lindh, who plays his son Thorir. One of the things I really liked about The Northman was how it portrayed a character who was almost completely selfish in his motivations, not driven to stop his Uncle because his Uncle was an evil man but driven entirely by his own revenge and personal grudges. The film explores this throughout, introducing elements that make Amleth and the audience question the moral absolutism of his quest. While this complexity is appreciated, it falls a tad flat by the film's conclusion.

Eggers has cemented himself as a visionary with his first two films, a master of substance and style, and The Northman deserves to stand amongst his stunning filmography. Overall though, it's in the third act of his Viking Epic that this substance begins to wear little thin, certain contrivances in the plot begin to arise and it feels like the film is plodding along to the next beat until we reach the (admittedly thrilling) climax. However, that is a small gripe compared to the pure majesty of the film, a visual marvel and an absolutely exhilarating ride, I'll be shocked it if doesn't adorn top ten lists at the end of the year.

Watch out! Tanks about!

22 April 2022

In 1939, following the declaration of the Second World War, thought was given to the real possibility of a German invasion of our shores. When The Channel Islands were invaded on 30th June 1940, thoughts were swiftly turned into actions. Mt Hitler wasn't kidding!

The German Luftwaffe had begun its bombardment of our cities, softening us up for a land invasion. This caused our boffins at the MOD to come up with some radical defensive ideas. Altering the landscape was one such thought; so that aerial navigators were unable to find points of reference. So, things like the partially filling in, or splitting into two, lakes were intended to sow confusion. Also, particularly on our East Coast, fake villages were hastily erected, a mile or two away from the originals. However, a lot of thought was also given to inland defences, things that would disrupt and delay any concerted attempts of the enemy to take over the country once a landing had been made. Suddenly, in 1940, all across the UK and still recognisable to this day in many places, Pill Boxes were built of varying designs and sizes.

Another form of defence was also devised, one that was designed to slow down and hopefully stop a mechanised land force from racing across the landscape. These came in the form of 'Tank Traps', slabs of cast concrete of varying sizes, from quite small to rather large and weighing several tons, being randomly placed in what were deemed strategic locations and routes.

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Tank Traps in Epsom

Epsom, it seems, had these 'Tank Traps' in several locations and, in a fairly close proximity to each other. It would appear that two 'large' 'Tank Traps' were built between two houses on West Hill, also, nearby at the start of Hookfield, over twenty were strewn across a front lawn it would seem. Just over West Hill itself, at Stamford Green, there were deep and wide 'Tank Traps' dug between Stamford Green pond and the Scout Hut in the grounds of the church. These landmarks have long been removed or covered over, leaving no signs of what was 'the last resort for our defence'.

However, the tale isn't quite done just yet as, for when I was out exploring on my bicycle, I came across, what I found out to be, the old cricket pitch on the grounds of what was The Manor Hospital, part of the Epsom Cluster. The perimeter of what was the oval is still very obvious and, there is something of a path following it around and it has a couple of benches in one corner. In this corner, I alighted on what I believe to be, the only remaining 'Tank Traps' in the Borough. Though when I first came across them they were covered by brambles which, have now been removed, showing them off in their aged glory but, still intact. With four large ones, six feet tall in a line and, set out behind them, around fifteen to twenty much smaller ones they look like a gaggle of goslings following four parents, quite comical, though humour was never the intention. I was astonished when I first found them as, at that time I hadn't heard of 'Tank Traps' being set up in the Borough at all and, people that I spoke to of them, lifelong E&E residents, had about as much idea as I did, to their existence. They are there if you wish to view them and may they stay among us, but hopefully never need to be used for their original intention.

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Housing: What can be done, nationally and locally, to address the affordability crisis?

22 April 2022

We hear much about the housing crisis in this country. This is often synonymous with the assertion that we have too few homes. In fact, overall, there is no shortage of homes in the UK – the total number of residences is approximately the same as the number of households who want a home, even taking into account those 'hidden households' where, for example, young people want to move out of the family home but cannot afford to do so. However, there are significant issues regarding the cost of housing in some parts of the country, and there are issues with the way that housing is distributed, particularly between the generations.

Housing in places such as Epsom and Ewell is unaffordable for many, particularly the young and key workers in sectors such as health and care. House prices are driven upwards because of the relatively high salaries and other wealth of many in the region and also by the historically low-interest rates that currently prevail. For many, a home is an investment as well as somewhere to live. Residential accommodation in this country is particularly poorly distributed by comparison, say, with many of the countries of continental Europe. It is not in the interests of housebuilders to put sufficient housing on the market that prices will drop – they prefer to hoard land to maintain their share price.

What can be done, nationally and locally, to address the affordability crisis? Much more genuinely affordable housing needs to be provided, including social housing for subsidised rent. A relatively recent study by Herriot-Watt University suggests that we need around 150,000 additional genuinely affordable homes per annum for the next ten years. Not all of these, of course, need to be 'new build' – some could come from our existing housing stock, acquired by local authorities and housing associations to meet genuine housing needs.

Second homes and properties left unoccupied for more than a few months should be highly taxed to encourage higher occupancy rates. Fiscal incentives should be available to encourage downsizing, especially given our ageing population, and more housing should be designed for the active and not so active elderly. Authorities such as Epsom and Ewell need to encourage the release of as many brownfield sites as feasible. For example, the potential for mixed uses, including residential, on large car parks and current commercial estates, such as Kiln Lane and Longmead, needs to be investigated. Authorities need to require house building at considerably higher densities than has been achieved in the past, employing high standards of design.

What is not needed is the very high and indeed unrealistic housing targets imposed on local authorities like Epsom and Ewell by the central government. There is no requirement, unfortunately, that most of these homes should be genuinely affordable. Epsom and Ewell have only very limited potential to build new homes on previously developed brownfield sites. Consequently, there is a danger that councillors will see no alternative to losing some of our much valued Green Belt and other countrysides. Be clear, significant areas of Green Belt and other open space in Epsom and Ewell – around Horton and Stamford Green, near Langley Vale, on and close to Priest Hill, and close to The Downs and the College – could be lost forever.

Hailsham Town 0-3 Epsom & Ewell, Southern Combination League Divison One Cup Semi-Final

22 April 2022

Report Source: www.eefconline.co.uk

Reporter: Richard Lambert, Photos by Gemma Jarman

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Salts cruise into Cup Final

In my forty years as a supporter, this was the seventeenth Semi-Final I have witnessed. Some have been tense, nail-biting and really nervy, but our complete control of this match ensured a completely drama-free evening for our boys as we eased past the Hailsham Town challenge and won by three goals to nil to enter the Division One Cup Final, where we will meet Midhurst & Easebourne.

After an eighteen daybreak, it was to be hoped that many of our injured players would have had time to heal and it was good to see Jamie Byatt able to return to the field of play after a few months of struggling with an injury and he was joined by Steve Springett who had limped out of the Roffey match and started in place of the late-running Tommy Smith who would join later from the bench. However, Gideon Acheampong and Kane Charles were not yet ready to go and Mo Cisse and Josh Uzun were also absent.

Still, we had plenty of talent on the pitch and started well, controlling proceedings in the early stages and took the lead in the tenth minute. Tyreke Leslie had already found himself in dangerous positions but had been unable to convert. However, in the tenth minute, a ball into the left-hand channel from Luke Miller was struck across goal left-footed by Leslie and into the far corner to open the scoring.

Brad Peters headed a free-kick just over the bar before we had our only real scare of the night in the fifteenth minute when a Hailsham defender fell to the ground while battling with Jerry Antwi. The appeal for a penalty was made by quite a few opposition players, but the referee was not interested and the game progressed. Little did Hailsham realise that this would be about as close as they would get all night.

Next to strike at goal was Miller, only to see his low drive palmed away by Jack Lovick and we had another couple of efforts from Miller and Byatt flying wide before the halftime break.

In truth, we had eased off a bit towards the half, although words were had in the dressing room and the players came out in a more determined mood, and as with the first half, we scored ten minutes in when a clever low ball in from the left by Mike Hill was met by Byatt who showed he had lost none of his poacher's instinct to dispatch the ball past Lovick from close range for our second goal.

Athan Smith-Joseph then took Byatt's place after an hour and the attacks continued with Hill pulling the strings in midfield again. His strike on goal from twenty yards was turned wide by Lovick as we searched for a third goal. At the other end, Sheikh Ceesay had to venture to the edge of his box to head away a through ball, but he had very little to do on the night and we were soon back on the attack with Leslie flicking a header onto Hill who was just wide with another twenty yarder.

Hailsham couldn't deal with Hill at all and Harrison Burley picked up a yellow card after dragging him to the floor. Although the opponents struck at goal in the 80th minute, it was well wide and high of the mark and we sealed the match with a third goal in the 81st minute when a ball towards the edge of the box left Lovick and a defender in two minds about whose job it was to clear the danger and Leslie nipped in between them to knock the ball into an empty net. Or so I thought, as before he did this, he chose to hold the ball up first as a defender tried to block on the line before then stroking the ball in from close range.

For those who like a stat, this was our fourth clean sheet in a row and the last time we achieved this was back in 1988 when our keeper was Jason Hopper! Bearing in mind that most of the plaudits this season have been directed at our league-leading scorers, this is quite an achievement. In reality, this was one of the most comfortable matches we have had in a while, and as we reach the business end of the season it is good to report that on this form we look capable of securing the points we need to ensure us of at least a third-place finish and a great chance of success in the playoffs. And now we have a Cup Final to look forward to as well.

Epsom & Ewell: Sheikh Ceesay, Louis Chin, Jerry Antwi, Brad Peters (c), Steve Springett, Tre Towers, Luke Miller, Ricardo Fernandes, Jamie Byatt, Mike Hill, Tyreke Leslie

Subs: Athan Smith-Joseph for Byatt (60), Tommy Smith for Springett (70), Dale Hanson-Byatt for Miller (86)

Council Report: Funding available for local projects

22 April 2022

Image: CIL funded water fountain in Alexandra Recreation Ground.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is inviting bids from the community for funding for public infrastructure projects which will benefit the borough.

Over the last four years, the Council has allocated £1 million to a variety of community-driven infrastructure projects in

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Epsom, Ewell and Stoneleigh. The projects, championed by residents, have included additional street lighting, restoration of public footpaths, new play and gym equipment in parks and a new bus shelter. Sustainability projects such as water fountains in borough parks have also been enabled by this funding.

Applications for the 2022/23 scheme are now open until 31 May 2022.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allows the Council to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in the borough and is used to support new physical and social infrastructure and also to improve existing facilities. Under current legislation, 80% of total CIL collected must be allocated towards borough-wide infrastructure and up to 5% towards administration.

In addition, at least 15% of levy receipts must be spent on priorities that have to be agreed with the local community. This 15% is often referred to as the 'neighbourhood portion' of the levy and ensures the community are fully engaged.

In Epsom and Ewell, residents and local community groups are invited to bid for these funds from the neighbourhood portion of the levy for projects within the borough, with successful bids selected by a committee of councillors.

Full details on how to apply for funding can be found on the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council website; www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/CIL15

Want more from us? Read more Council News here.

Witness appeal after burglary in Epsom

22 April 2022

Surrey Police are appealing for help to find and speak with a man in connection with a burglary of a residence that took place in Epsom on April 9th (Saturday).

The burglary took place on Chessington Road at around 12:15 PM. It's believed that two suspects made their way into the property through the front door, after which they stole the victims car.

The police believe that the man seen in the image may be able to help identify the suspects and aid their investigation.

Dressed in a dark jacket with a baseball cap on, the man appears to be caucasian and clean-shaven. If this is you, or someone you know/recognise, please get in contact with Surrey Police as soon as possible through

- Live webchat on their website: https://www.surrey.police.uk/
- Their online reporting tool: https://www.surrey.police.uk/tua/tell-us-about/cor/tell-us-about-existing-case-report/
- Calling 101

Epsom Hospital Radio – A New Future Online

22 April 2022

Epsom's hidden radio gem, Epsom Hospital Radio, is looking forward to a new future online. EHR was founded in October 1978 by two mobile DJs who raised funds to equip a second hand 10 feet by 6 feet garden shed with some crude broadcasting equipment. The studio was placed in an exposed area on the roof of the then Epsom General Hospital. In the depths of winter, it was a hostile working environment with presenters regularly broadcasting in heavy coats, hats, scarves and gloves on colder days.

Life President Presenter Trevor Leonard is EHR's longest-serving presenter. Starting in 1981, Trevor became the Programme Controller in 1983, overseeing EHR's first awards for the standard and variety of its programming. An ardent

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Elvis fan, in August 2021 Trevor celebrated 40 years of continuous service by hosting a breakfast for current presenters at The Haywain pub, Epsom.

The Early Days; Trevor Leonard: 40 Years Presenting

Today the station broadcasts 24 hours a day, every day of the year, staffed by a team of volunteer presenters, from two studios opposite the X-Ray Department. Says station manager, Ian Daggett: "We are here to keep you amused, entertained and informed during your stay. You can find us on the radio section of your Hospedia terminal – **and all our services are completely free!**

Ian *Daggett, Station Manager*

Our programmes carry regular information about the wide variety of services available to you during your stay in Epsom Hospital. We also provide the latest local, national and international news, plus sports coverage and a wide variety of music styles and genres.

We play familiar songs and favourite artists across six decades from the 50s to the 2000s – and in addition, we have regular specialist programmes covering classical, jazz, drama, comedy, interviews with hospital staff and local community groups and personalities, and more."

Epsom-based designer Stuart Lythgoe recently asked the station to read out a birthday message to his father Viv: *"This is a massive 'Happy Birthday!' thank you for being a wonderful Dad and Grandpa – from Jo, Stu, Oscar and Poppy. We love you loads xxx".* Stuart asked for the 1967 single Miss Pinkerton by guitar player Viv's band Cuppa T to be played as a birthday song.

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Dr Abhay Bajpai, Clinical Lead for Arrhythmia Services at Epsom Hospital

Dr Abhay Bajpai, clinical lead for Arrhythmia Services and Kathy Maskens, community matron for the Alexandra Frailty Unit, regularly feature on the station. Dr Bajpai visited EHR's studios pre-Covid and was featured in an EHR Test Match Special in an interview recorded at local pub The Jolly Cooper's where Abhay waxed lyrical on his love of the red ball game.

Kathy Maskens is the inspiration behind The A team, a Friday afternoon 2-4pm patients and staff requests show on EHR. Ed Sheeran's The A Team and theme from 80s US TV show The A team double as musical themes for the show. Kathy has featured in an EHR 8GR8 Songs episode with an interview about her career as a nurse and some of her favourite music.

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Kathy Maskens, Community Matron at The Alexandra Frailty Unit

Marie Measures, head of Nursing for Medicine at Epsom and St Helier University Hospital NHS Trust, used the station to send a message of thanks for the resilience of her nursing team during Covid. *"Thank you to all of Medicine's matrons and to their teams for continuous hard work and dedication in very challenging times."* Marie appropriately asked for Billy Ocean's When the Going Gets Tough, the Tough Get Going to be played on the station as a musical tribute to her team.

Having weathered the impact of Covid on the station – halting in studio broadcasting for over a year, ward visits to gather requests still on hold, the loss of a number of presenters coupled with the financial impact on a shoestring budget – the station is now looking to a new online future.

EHR is looking for a new crop of talented presenters to add to its roster of live in studio broadcasters. The station is also fundraising to assemble the equipment and licenses needed to reach a broader audience in Epsom and Ewell, and beyond, outside the walls of the hospital.

Says Ian Daggett: *"In our 40 years of broadcasting there has never been a greater need for a dynamic local hospital radio station. Going online will help us to bring light relief and a sense of community to the hard-pressed staff at Epsom Hospital and to the people of Epsom and Ewell when they, or their loved ones and family or friends, are in hospital."*

You can donate to the station's Going Online Fund, or generally support EHR's activities via: www.epsomhospitalradio.org.uk/donate.

Happy returns for Epsom's talking newspaper

22 April 2022

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Photo above is Judy Sarssam, Chair of EETN.

A happy group of Volunteers has returned to their recording Studio at Swail House after an absence of two years, while the virus held its sway, to continue recording the Epsom and Ewell Talking Newspaper (EETN), a free local news and magazine service for Visually Impaired residents of the borough.

Since the end of the first lockdown, a local team of dedicated Volunteers have been producing the EETN from their homes. The complicated procedure required careful management and organised deadlines, to enable the free service and free postal distribution to continue.
Every two weeks, Visually Impaired People (VIP) receive a wallet containing the Talking Newspaper on a memory stick, for which the charity can also provide an easy to use audio player.
People with a visual loss especially those who live alone, frequently feel and are, isolated as loss of vision results in loss of confidence to navigate the world outside their familiar home surroundings. The Pandemic has, of course, increased the isolation of everyone who lives alone and the restrictions have filled some elderly people with macular degeneration with so much anxiety that even now they remain imprisoned through fear of catching Covid.

Hence the good, kind efforts of the EETN Volunteers to bring the outside in by providing local news, magazine articles and Podcasts to entertain and absorb our many Listeners.
The team are hugely proud of the independent, volunteer-run, completely free service which has been available for nearly fifty years. Wallets are still sent to Listeners who have left the area but continue to take an interest in where they once lived and of course, they continue to enjoy the information and entertainment on offer.

Judy Sarssam, Chair of EETN and herself visually impaired said: “Being unable to read any longer is a huge loss and happily audiobooks are available but unless the VIP is computer literate the whole world of print is not accessible. The EETN reflects the different interests of those who choose the articles and thus there is always something of interest for every Listener. The youngsters so engrossed in the digital world cannot appreciate that even provided with a screen reader, one has to have not only skills, which many of the older population do not have, but a good amount of residual vision and time, to navigate that world. For the present elderly visually impaired VIPs it is wonderful to have instant access to such a rich pageant of material which the EETN offers.”
One Listener said “It is like welcoming old friends into their home regularly as the familiar voices are heard once again.”

If you have a family member, friend or neighbour whom you could tell about the EETN free service, please do so. Recipients of the EETN do not need to be officially registered as Blind or Partially sighted, they just need to have reached the point of sight deterioration when reading is no longer possible to do with ease. Bear in mind that they will not be able to read these words as you can.

If you know of anyone who would like to receive Epsom & Ewell Talking Newspaper please call 01372 721519 and leave a message and your call will be returned.
To learn more, visit https://eetn.org.uk

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