Epsom replay rise from the ashes hoped for

Epsom & Ewell 0-0 Phoenix Sports. Emirates F.A. Cup Extra-Preliminary Round. Saturday 3rd August 2024.

Our first competitive match at the ninth official "home" ground in club history took place as we took the field at Corinthian-Casuals' King George's Field against Isthmian League Phoenix Sports in the opening round of the F.A. Cup and the contest ended in a largely uneventful goalless draw, with both teams appearing content to hold out for a replay as time ticked down in front of a fairly healthy crowd of 148.

As befits any new match of the season, there were a number of players making their debut, although less than in recent years as Manager Warren Burton chose to retain quite a few from last season. Grabbing all the headlines though was Sutton United Hall of Fame member Craig Dundas, who made his competitive bow in Epsom colours at the age of 43. A few years ago we had 40 year old Jamie Byatt making his debut for the club and I wrote at the time that he would probably be the last player to play for this club who was born before I started watching Epsom and Ewell in 1981. However, since that day we have seen Paul Springett, Reggie Savage and now Dundas who fit into that category with surely the former Sutton man becoming the last. For those who like their stats, our former Manager Ray Purvis holds the record as the oldest player to represent the club at the age of 47 years and 29 days when he took the field at Clapton on 30th April 2005.

Anyway, back to the match! Four players took the field for the first time in defender Toby Young, Dundas, Carlos Polo-Infante and Kenny Antony, with Fabian Nunes joining the action later in the day. Chances were few and far between, although we had an early concern when our keeper Faebian Witter had to come out of his area to clear and conceded a free kick just outside. Fortunately the strike deflected off our wall and away for a fruitless corner. The opening fifteen minutes were slightly more in our opponents favour as they attacked mainly down the left and Young picked up a fairly early yellow card for a foul, although he was then clattered into a few minutes later, earning the Phoenix number 3 a yellow of his own.

The game became more even after this, although not a lot was happening in either penalty area. Our best opportunity of the half came with a cross from Ethan Nelson-Roberts that was a little off target and required a catch on the line from the Phoenix keeper or we might have had a fortuitous opener. Back came the visitors though and a shot from the left was well blocked by a defender before Witter had to get down well to make a good save with his left hand. Nelson-Roberts then picked up a card on the advices of the referee's assistant and we went in at the break as we had started.

The second half continued in a similar pattern and Phoenix nearly scored with a volley in the 55th minute after a free kick was only headed out as far as the waiting player. Fortunately for us, the well-struck effort from just inside the penalty area cleared our bar, but only just. Luke Miller then created something out of nothing as he controlled a deep ball across the field, just keeping it in play, before running at a defender and crossing into the danger area, although his low ball in was a little too close to the keeper who claimed the ball.

Moments later we had our best chance of the match after a wayward keeper clearance left us with an opportunity. Will Kendall closed the keeper down and the loose ball fell to Polo-Infante, but with a fairly vacant net ahead of him from eighteen yards, he couldn't keep his shot down. Nunes replaced him shortly after this. Then Miller went down in the area between two defenders, but there was never enough there to award a penalty and the game continued to meander. Kendall was tripped on an attack and everyone appeared to stop, expecting a free kick which wasn't given and the opposition broke away at goal. However, Young got over well to make the saving challenge.

As the time started to run out Young was just over the bar with a looping header from Adam Green's corner, while Miller was off target with two tries, although not by that much in either case, particularly the latter effort which almost shaved the far post from an angled shot. Both teams seemed happy enough to take a replay by the end of the match and as a result we will make our first ever appearance at Mayplace Lane, near Dartford on Tuesday evening, which means that our League game at Alton will be moved back. It would have been moved anyway though as Alton also drew in their cup tie.

Looking back at this match, there were quite a few similarities with our goalless cup draw twelve months ago against Met Police. Both they and Phoenix finished in sixteenth position in their respective Isthmian divisions last season and of course, we went on to win that away replay by two goals to nil. I wonder if we can repeat that feat on Tuesday evening!

Epsom & Ewell: Faebian Witter, Toby Young, Ethan Nelson-Roberts, Adam Green ©, Callum Wilson, Craig Dundas, Luke Miller, Thompson Adeyemi, Will Kendall, Carlos Polo-Infante, Kenny Antony

Subs: Fabian Nunes for Polo-Infante (65), Sirak Negassi for Antony (76)

Report Source: www.eefconline.co.uk

James Redfarn adds:

Epsom and Ewell FC new signing Article

The Epsom and Ewell Football club have pulled off an exciting new signing for the 24/25 season, acquiring the skills and talents of the football veteran Craig Dundas. This player is well known for his immensely impressive tenure at Sutton United, having played over 500 games and scored over 100 goals; Dundas has rightly earned the moniker of Sutton united legend.

At the impressive age of 40, Dundas became one of the oldest players to make a debut in the English Football League. EFL statisticians have proclaimed Dundas to be the oldest debutant since World War Two.

Now at the age of 43, his signature to the Salts is a coup for Epsom and Ewell, adding a wealth of experience and leadership to Warren Burton's squad. Dundas is expected to deliver not only in terms of skill and composure on the field but also by offering his invaluable experience and guidance to younger teammates.

In addition to his role as a player, Dundas will serve as a player-coach, a dual role that promises to have a significant impact both on and off the pitch. His presence is anticipated to bolster the team's performance, offering strategic insights and enhancing team dynamics.

There could be exciting times ahead for Epsom and Ewell FC, and the Dundas effect will hopefully be in full force for the rapidly approaching season.

Surrey roads get better marks

Nearly £2m will be spent this year on improving road markings across the county, with over 48 miles of line painting already completed.

Surrey County Council has substantially increased its funding for this and coming years to make the county's roads safer and improve their visual appearance. This is in addition to the largest ever surface dressing programme which will see over 100 roads improved across Surrey to help prevent potholes.

The programme of works will see white and yellow road markings refreshed on roads across the county, with busy roads and those most in need of refreshing prioritised. This will also include major motorway junctions including the M25 J6 (Godstone), J8 (Reigate), J9 (Leatherhead) and M3 J1 (Sunbury Cross).

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth, said: "We're very aware that well-maintained and presentable roads are highly important to our residents. This is why here in Surrey, we're investing nearly £300m in repairing and improving Surrey's roads and pavements by 2028.

"Our increased investment in line painting will improve the safety and appearance of many roads across our highway network, along with our surface dressing programme which will significantly strengthen 85 miles of the county's busiest roads, preventing deterioration in years to come.

"Our highways teams are also continuing to trial new products which can complete these works in half the time, whilst also using more sustainable equipment."

Residents can keep up to date with works in their local area by signing up to our weekly highways newsletter here: **Your Highways Update landing page (surreycc.info)**.

East Street development not off the Hook

On Tuesday, 16th of July, the Environment Committee at Epsom and Ewell Council sat down to discuss the possibility that there might be considerable environmental issues at the Hook Road Multi-Story Car Park.

It was decided in principle to release the Hook Road Car Park to facilitate wider redevelopment of the gas holder site. Hesitation

is largely due to the lack of information on the severity of the level of contamination in the area.

In the report provided by council officer Mark Shepard, it was stressed that the issues of contamination are based on what is underneath the car park, that there is no present risk to people's health, and it is safe to use for its intended purpose.

The Hook Road Car Park sits on top of a water aquifer and operates directly adjacent to a former gas works that has been in operation since circa 1870 (which can be seen on the historical land use map). Given the lack of environmental research into the soil and water of the gas holder site, it's not known to what extent the Hook Road Car Park is dealing with a ticking time bomb of contaminants. Gas sites are generally considered some of the most contaminated sites across the United Kingdom, especially ones that have been in operation from the 19th to 20th century, when there were next to no regulations for the disposal of industrial waste

The byproducts of coal gasification include tar and pitch, which contain toxic and potentially carcinogenic polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). Ammonia, another byproduct, can contaminate soil and groundwater. Other harmful substances, such as toxic phenolic compounds, spent oxides, and sulphur compounds, also pose contamination risks to soil and water. Additionally, the process involves toxic chemicals that contribute to heavy metal pollution, including lead, arsenic, mercury, and chromium. These byproducts pose significant environmental and health risks due to their persistence and toxicity. As for the gas holder site at Hook Road, council officer Mark Shepard stated in the committee meeting that "we don't yet know the level of contamination."

There is the additional factor of Thames Water's Epsom Water Works, located a short distance away. The East Street drinking water boreholes are in close proximity (less than 200m) to the former gas works site. This means that if there are any attempts for a clean-up at the former gas works site, it would necessitate thorough monitoring by the Environment Agency on account of its potential risk for contamination. In the meantime, the council's decision remains provisional as they await more detailed environmental assessments to determine the appropriate course of action.

Image: Hook Road Car Park and gasworks - Google

Paving the way to better regulation?

The Epsom and Ewell Borough Council has voted to dispense its current pavement licence policy, rather than it being updated to copy the .GOV guidance. This change comes as part of a broader review conducted during an Environment Committee Meeting held on July 16th. Instead, Officers of the council will continue to determine applications under delegated authority, with the Council's website linking to the .GOV guidance.

[This post corrects an earlier post that incorrectly inferred that applications would no longer be processed by EEBC.]

The original pavement licence policy, introduced under the Government's Business and Planning Act of 2020, was a temporary measure designed to assist the hospitality sector amid the economic turmoil caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. It allowed cafes and similar businesses to place removable tables and chairs on adjacent council-owned highways for a capped fee of £100, a significant reduction compared to the more cumbersome procedures under the 1980's Highways Act.

As part of the 2024 Levelling Up agenda, this temporary policy was transformed into a permanent measure. However, the cost cap was raised, allowing councils to charge up to £500 for new licences and £350 for renewals. This shift aimed to provide local authorities with greater financial flexibility.

The decision has sparked a range of reactions. Some view the licence fee as an additional financial burden on small, independent cafes striving to thrive in a challenging economic environment. However, proponents argue that the policy plays a crucial role in ensuring pedestrian safety and accessibility, preventing removable furniture from obstructing pathways and ensuring compliance with accessibility standards.

During the committee meeting, concerns over the cost of the licence fees were voiced. Councillor Robert Leach criticised the high fees, particularly the notion of paying £555 to process a form and issue a licence, suggesting it seemed "ridiculous" and speculating that the figure was derived using a "different unit of currency." However, it was clarified that the actual cost of processing a new application exceeded the fees charged, necessitating the higher rate to break even, though this remains capped by the government.

However, doubts were also raised regarding the renewal fee of £350, with some committee members questioning the justification for this amount, given that most of the necessary work is completed during the initial application process

Image: Cafe tables outside Zig Zag Epsom High Street - Google

Epsom Racing tips for Thursday

Racing returns to Epsom on Thursday, with six races on the card for what is expected to be an exciting evening of racing.

Timed perfectly to pick up punters following the day's racing at Glorious Goodwood, the action begins at 6pm, with the final race taking place at 8:35pm. The going on the Downs is good to firm, but with another day where the temperatures are set to top 30 degrees, the ground could be firm by the time racing gets underway.

Read below to find out the latest horse racing odds and tips from Thursday's Epsom card.

18:00 - Peter Bromwich Apprentice Handicap

The opener is a 1m2f handicap, with four-year-olds and above contesting this Class 5 contest. Having finished second over a shorter trip at Epsom earlier this month, **Chips And Rice** will run off an unchanged mark and could push the fancied Big Bear Hug.

18:30 - Pick And Place Your Stakes Challenge EBF Restricted Novice Stakes

Next up, a race for Novice two-year-olds, with a 7f trip to negotiate in this Class 4 contest. Parole D'Oro's second placed start at Ascot makes for an appealing option, however, debutant **Noble Phoenix** is an exciting newcomer and could upset the odds.

19:00 - Outdoor Advertising Is The Best British EBF Fillies' Handicap

Another Class 4 race is up next, with a 1m1/2f trip for a top prize of £7,731 on offer for the winner. **Dreamrocker** is the favourite, with a career-best win at Ascot 20 days ago representing excellent form and this should be enough to push through a 4lb rise in weights.

19:30 - Iron Maiden Red Wine Handicap

Up next, a Class 6 handicap for three-year-olds which will be run at just over seven furlongs. Having finished a strong fourth at Doncaster 21 days ago, **Moakadd** for Roger Varian is the likely frontrunner, down 1lb.

20:05 - Miles Commercial Handicap

The penultimate race of the card is a Class 5 contest, run over 1m4f and open to 4yo+ horses. Having shown a marked improvement in form so far this year, **Rogue Tornado** is expected to continue this good form as the front-runner in this race.

20:35 - Trooper 'Time People Please!' Handicap

Finally, this 6f handicap sees just five expected runners for what is a close Class 5 contest to call. With a first time visor fitted and good form this season, **Macanudo** will be expected to perform well especially when considering a drop back in grade for this race

Selections - odds courtesy of BoyleSports

18:00: Chips And Rice - 11/4

18:30: Noble Phoenix - 6/1

19:00: Dreamrocker - 11/4

19:30: Moakadd - 3/1

20:05: Rogue Tornado – 4/1

20:35: Macanudo - 15/8

Image: Credit Paul. CC BY 2.0

A lesson in Green Belt development?

A controversial plan to build 446 homes on Green Belt land near Horley, Surrey, has been approved on appeal, overturning the local council's initial rejection.

The development, proposed by Rydon Homes, will include up to 446 homes – including 201 affordable homes (45 per cent), and four Traveller pitches on land west of Reigate Road in Hookwood. Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) confirmed there is a significant unmet need for this type of specific housing within the local area.

Despite concerns about its impact on the Green Belt, the planning inspector ruled that the "very substantial public benefits" of the housing outweighed the harm to the protected area. This decision comes amid what the inspector called "an acute need for affordable housing" in the district.

MVDC rejected the outline planning application, claiming it could appear "cramped" and "incongruous" with the surrounding area. MVDC's initial decision report from November 2023 said the development will have a "detrimental transport impact".

However since then, the authority changed the site from being a 'protected area' in the Local Plan to a 'potential development site' – so they could not defence their original decision. The developer launched an appeal.

The scheme was allowed after the developer Rydon Homes attended the inquiry with a team of 16 headed by a KC. At the start of the hearing MVDC & Charlwood Parish Council withdrew their objections to the planning application.

The inspector noted the opportunities for transport, employment and other facilities due to its proximity to Hookwood, Horley and Gatwick Airport. He also found transport options were satisfactory and in agreement with Surrey County Council.

Concerns were raised by locals that the increase of around a thousand new residents would put pressure on GPs and schools. Rough plans put forward by the developer suggests it will create new community facilities like early education, but details are not yet apparent.

Although the inspectorate agreed there was a degree of harm to the character and appearance of the neighbourhood, he concluded there was "very special circumstances" to build on the Green Belt.

Image: View of development land west from Hookwood, Horley. (Credit: Google Street View)

Green Flag Awards Honour Epsom and Ashtead Commons

Local communities are celebrating as both Epsom Common and Ashtead Common have been awarded the prestigious Green Flag Award, recognizing them as two of the best-managed green spaces in the UK. This esteemed award, administered by the environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, sets the benchmark for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the UK and internationally.

Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve (LNR) has achieved this accolade for the 18th consecutive year, underscoring its continued excellence in environmental stewardship. The site, managed by **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council**, is a haven for biodiversity, featuring oak woods, pasture woodlands, and wetlands that are home to rare species like cotton spotted orchids and purple emperor butterflies. It is also designated as a Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to its significance as a breeding bird habitat.

Councillor **Liz Frost**, (RA Woodcote and Langley) Chair of the Environment Committee, expressed pride in the achievement, attributing the success to the hard work of volunteers and partners, including the Epsom Common Association, the Lower Mole Partnership, and Natural England. "This award is a testament to the dedication of our volunteers and staff who work tirelessly to maintain this beautiful and biodiverse space," she said.

In Ashtead, the Ashtead Common has also been honored with the Green Flag Award, further enhanced by receiving Green Heritage Site Accreditation. This recognition highlights the site's exceptional conservation efforts and its status as a National Nature Reserve since 1995. Managed by the **City of London Corporation**, Ashtead Common is renowned for its ancient oak pollards and diverse habitats, including those supporting rare invertebrates and breeding birds.

Ben Murphy, Chairman of the City Corporation's Epping Forest and Commons Committee, noted the significance of the award, stating, "These awards demonstrate the effectiveness of our management plans in preserving open spaces like Ashtead Common for future generations. It also reflects the positive impact of the City of London Corporation's investments in local communities."

Both sites were evaluated on several criteria, including accessibility, safety, cleanliness, community engagement, and efforts to combat climate change. The awards celebrate the commitment of the staff and volunteers who ensure these spaces remain welcoming and well-maintained for the public. The Green Flag Award scheme highlights the importance of well-managed green spaces in fostering community well-being and promoting sustainable living.

The achievements of Epsom and Ashtead Commons underscore the value of preserving natural habitats and providing safe, accessible green spaces for all. As community members and nature enthusiasts enjoy these areas, the Green Flag Award serves as a reminder of the critical role that well-maintained parks and reserves play in our social and environmental health.

Image: Great Pasture at Epsom Common. EEBC

Bikes that blight the blind

Dear Editor.

I would like to bring a serious problem to the attention of Epsom residents, that is if they are not already aware of it but do not want to do anything about it. For at least the last year I have been battling and campaigning against motorbike delivery riders who insist on illegally parking in Epsom Square (formerly Derby Square) off Epsom High Street and all along that stretch of the High Street.

Continually all through the day these motorbike riders park their motorbikes and I do mean the whole of the motorbike, on the pavement. They ride their motorbikes on to the pavement and park up. At times their has been as many as 21 motorbikes parked on the pavement outside shops like McDonalds. It is a serious safety issue as well as being an illegal parking matter.

I have reported this issue to Surrey County Council Parking Enforcement Team dozens of times and all that happens is that they send an Enforcement Officer out, who simply moves the motorbike riders on and what always happens is the riders return later on. The Parking Enforcement Team should be fining them and then they might start to listen.

I have contacted my local new MP a couple of times about this issue but I have yet to receive an acknowledgement about the matter. I am sure my local MP is very busy as she is newly elected but

this is a local issue and that should be the focus of any MP, to deal with their local issues. I am a blind person living in Epsom and their are a higher than average of blind people in Epson as there is a residential housing building in Epsom for blind people.

Surrey Parking Enforcement Team need to get a grip of this situation before there are some serious accidents.

Regards

Russell Bailey

Swail House Association for the Visually Impaired

Image: Delivery moped on pavement in Epsom - Google

The lime light a foot in Epsom

Aydin Mustafa, a lifelong performer and dedicated advocate for the arts, has taken on a new role as the Owner and Director of **Footlights Epsom**, the first Footlights franchise in London. Aydin's passion for the performing arts began at a young age, starting in the industry at the tender age of 4. Reflecting on his early beginnings, Aydin shares, "My mum introduced me to the world of performing arts not with the aim of fame, but to instil confidence, nurture development, and foster social connections. It was a love that ignited in me instantly and continued to burn bright throughout my teenage years."



After studying performing arts at GCSE and A-level at Woodcote High School in Coulsdon, Surrey, Aydin pursued a career in the corporate world but found himself yearning for something more fulfilling. Inspired by his deep-rooted passion for the arts and his desire to make a positive impact on the community, Aydin sought guidance from Jo Fisher, the visionary founder of Footlights, founded in 2005.

Aydin recalls, "Jo Fisher's journey from leaving school at the age of 14 to crafting Footlights into the illustrious, multi-award-winning performing arts franchise it is today has been a constant source of inspiration for me. Her commitment to empowering young talent and creating avenues for personal growth resonates profoundly with my own beliefs and values."

With a vision to establish a sanctuary of excellence, diversity, and inclusivity for children and teenagers aged 3-18, Aydin envisions Footlights Epsom as a nurturing environment where individuals can freely express themselves and cultivate lifelong skills "In a world that can often feel overwhelming and chaotic".

Aydin poignantly expresses, "Our mission is to nurture the generation of tomorrow today, equipping them with the tools, confidence, and resilience needed to navigate the complexities of the modern world."

Aydin's unwavering dedication to fostering young talent and nurturing personal growth is deeply rooted in his love for his 2-year-old daughter, Ayla, who serves as his greatest inspiration. "Every step I take with Footlights Epsom is guided by the hope of creating a world where my daughter can flourish, learn, and boldly express her true self. A performing arts school isn't just about creating the next star; it's about empowering young individuals, fostering their creativity, and equipping them with essential skills for life," said Aydin Mustafa, Owner and Director of Footlights Epsom.

The grand opening of Footlights Epsom is set to take place on Saturday 14th September, at Epsom and Ewell High School from 9:30am to 1pm. Individuals aged 3-18 years old, regardless of background or experience, are invited to join in the celebration. The Mayor of Epsom and Ewell, Steve Bridger, will be in attendance to mark this exciting new chapter in the performing arts scene in Surrey.

Aydin lastly adds "Join us at Epsom and Ewell High School on Saturday 14th September for a day filled with fun, creativity, and the magic of Performing Arts. We look forward to welcoming the Epsom and Ewell community and neighbouring towns to our grand opening event."

For more information about Footlights Epsom, including updates on workshops and events, follow them on Instagram and Facebook @footlightsepsom. To learn more about the school and register for the open day, visit www.footlightstheatre.co.uk/location/footlights-epsom/ or contact Aydin Mustafa via email at epsom@footlightstheatre.co.uk

Text provided by Footlights.

Epsom Town as a Safe Place to Live? Is it our future or our past?

Epsom and Ewell Times is putting the spotlight on crime and anti-social behaviour blighting residents and businesses in the centre of the town of Epsom. In a series of reports over the coming weeks journalist and local Town Ward resident Romana Sustar will bring facts, opinions and responses from those effected and those responsible for solving the problems.

Epsom, a market town in Surrey, England, is often celebrated for its charming high street, historical significance, and the famous Epsom Downs Racecourse but it would appear that a combination of reduced police presence, a lack of resources, and a far too tolerant attitude to anti-social behaviour has resulted in a perceived decline in the safety of residents at night in Town Ward.

Is the image above our past or our future? No one is certain, so all we can say for sure, is that for the residents of the Town Ward, this is our present. The picture was taken on 28 July 2024, the scales are for drugs, the alcohol is brought for purpose, not sold from any local club or bar, and the graffiti is more than a week old and unchallenged.

What the picture does not show, is that everyone in authority has been aware of the rat infestation and general filth for some time, and that they are specifically aware of this illegal activity after hours in this location, but are yet to engage with residents or respond to the increased criminality in any meaningful way.

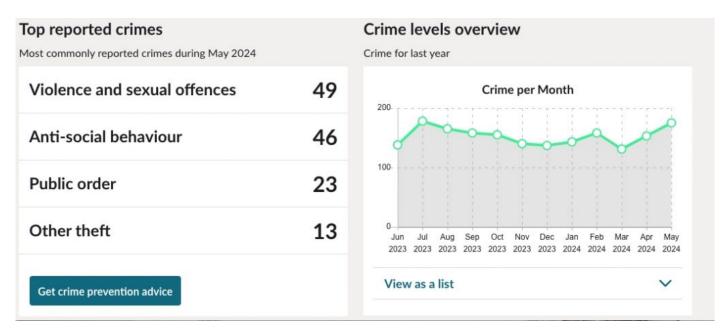
To be clear the photo is genuine, entirely unstaged and fails to show the true extent of the decline in standards and the acceptance of criminality and anti-social behaviour within 300 metres in all directions. And so it is genuinely perplexing why our community fails to confront activities such as those shown, when it is apparent that they are bad for the community, bad for business, bad for residents and indeed bad for the drug users, as the spike in knife crime proves.

That being said, let's also be careful when we talk of failures, let's not talk in space or point any fingers. When communities fail they fail together and they live with the consequences together.

So let's start with an open mind and state that for now all we know is that the drug dealers, criminals, thugs and the lazy litterers are to blame. Today let's just simply ask ourselves why we put up with it, why we let it happen and what we can do to reverse the trend.

In April 2016 after the sale of the local police station Inspector Elkins said "If anything, the public will see more police presence with more officers patrolling the area." (Craig Richard Surrey Comet) but we are yet to find a single Town Ward resident who actually believes this is true, so let's also be careful with our own statements.

We really don't know what role such comments, the lack of local charging and detaining facilities, and the general cuts to the police have actually played in damaging the reputation of the local Police. What we do know is criminals feel confident enough to have drug parties in open areas in Town Ward, and gangs in the same area will carry knives then chase down and stab their enemies without a care.



What we need is data so perhaps the reported crime figures will give an insight. Here they are for May 2024, which is well before the Friday 21 June 2024 multiple stabbing that the straight line rise to May was obviously heralding. And who has not seen open and likely unreported shoplifting recently?

It does look fair that residents who live centrally might be questioning what has gone wrong, what has changed and what can be done to restore order?

"I have lived in this block for 18 odd years and have seen and felt a rapid decline in general of this once vibrant, friendly and safe area of the town." (long time Epsom Town resident).

Finger pointing and headline grabbing clickbait articles will ultimately achieve nothing, but resentment and distraction from the real issues, so what can we actually do to assist change?

In a series of articles, we will investigate the true position in 2024 and will ask the questions others appear too frightened, or too disconnected to ask. We will report the real statistics and engage with any and all local initiatives in order to advise residents how to access accurate information, and how to engage the elected and taxpayer funded bodies that exist to ensure the common good.

We will focus on the area from the end of Station Approach on West Street to the end of Upper High St including Derby Square and once we have the June figures we will move to focus on any efforts residents and local business owners are undertaking, to improve their environment, rid themselves of pests, and reclaim their common areas from the drugs and crime that seems to have moved in.

Whilst Epsom is not New York, the problems it faces today would appear to be similar to those of 1980s New York, with graffiti, fly-tipping, vermin, and a general disregard for law and enforcement, which then leads to open drug dealing and finally street violence. As the Mayor of New York at the time said: "Obviously murder and graffiti are two vastly different crimes. But they are part of the same continuum, and a climate that tolerates one is more likely to tolerate the other."

So the real question becomes can local residents and businesses introduce practical, appropriate and effective solutions to enable and assist our local politicians and enforcement officers in carrying out their duties to us, or is our future already mortgaged to decline, filth and ever increasing criminality and anti-social behaviour?

See letter about the nuisance of delivery mopeds in the Town Centre.