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

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

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Why vote Liberal Democrat in Epsom and Ewell?

1 May 2023



Exclusive to the Epsom and Ewell Times we are bringing you statements from each Party standing for election to the local council this Thursday 4th May. We continue today with the Liberal Democrat Party.

We welcome this initiative by the Epsom & Ewell Times to set out reasons why residents should support the local Liberal Democrats. We explain our priorities for the Borough, how these arise from our values as LibDems, and why your vote for us is so important.

Our priorities for Epsom & Ewell As active local residents of the Borough our three main priorities are:

1 – Producing a sound Local Plan

Our number one priority is to make sure the eventual Local Plan not just protects the Green Belt but includes stringent conditions around bio-diversity and energy efficiency within its Policies. In addition, we want to see the Council build social housing, not just so-called “affordable housing” which does not meet the real need.

You can read a summary of our response to the Council’s Regulation 18 draft Local Plan at this link which also provides a link to our full response on all 50 questions set out in the consultation. As far as we are aware we are the only local party that submitted such a detailed response.

Our councillors would work hard to get as many of our suggestions as possible included within the next version of the Local Plan.

2 – Getting serious about the climate emergency

The Council has a Climate Change Action Plan but too little is being done to cut our own emissions and to encourage local businesses and residents to take steps to tackle the issue. Our councillors would continue to put pressure on the Council to make sure that the Climate Emergency was embedded in all decision making, and to have quantitative targets to reduce our emissions over the next 4 years.

3 – Increase local democracy and transparency

There have been too many cases in the last four years of decisions being taken behind closed doors and of important information not being shared with all Councillors, let alone residents. Two examples of these issues were a decision taken in private to investigate opening a Pet Crematorium in the borough, and not sharing the critical findings of the Local Government Ombudsman with all Councillors, as should have happened under the Council’s own constitution.

We want residents to be aware of what is happening at the Council, so informed debate can take place. Your LibDem Councillors would work to achieve this.

What is a Liberal Democrat?

All our candidates are members of the Liberal Democrat party. This means they agree with the fundamental aims of our constitution which includes in its preamble: “The Liberal Democrats exist to build and safeguard a fair, free and open society, in which we seek to balance the fundamental values of liberty, equality and community, and in which no-one shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity. We believe that each generation is responsible for the fate of our planet and, by safeguarding the balance of nature and the environment, for the long term continuity of life in all its forms. … We believe that the role of the state is to enable all citizens to attain these ideals, to contribute fully to their communities and to take part in the decisions which affect their lives.”

The full document can be read here https://www.libdems.org.uk/federal-constitution.

It is these fundamental goals that motivate our candidates and influence their decisions as councillors. You can see how the key priorities set out previously derive from these goals and if any new issues emerge for the Borough over the next four years you will know the values and principles that will influence our decisions on those issues.

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David Buxton and Alison Kelly stand in Stamford Ward for the LibDems

Why should you vote LibDem?

In summary, for three reasons:

1 – To hold the lethargic Residents Association (RA) to account. Democracy needs openness and debate, and the RA seems intent on stifling both.

2 – So you know who you are voting for. The RA make a big deal of being local residents. So are we. You also know what our values and principles are. The RA include a mixed bag of individuals and at times they don't seem to be able to agree on what they want to achieve.

3 – To help protect the more vulnerable in our community, and to tackle the Climate Emergency.

You can read more about our priorities and candidates on our Facebook site here

David Gulland – Chair of Epsom & Ewell Liberal Democrats and Julie Morris – Leader of the Liberal Democrats Councillor Group in Epsom & Ewell

Top image: Julie Morris, Julian Freeman and James Lawrence LibDem candidates for College Ward Epsom

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Ed: The Liberal Democrats are fielding candidates in all 14 wards in the Borough

Related reports:

Why vote Green in Epsom and Ewell?

Why vote Labour in Epsom and Ewell?

Epsom and Ewell Times 4th May Local Election coverage

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