

FOCUS



Your Community Newsletter from Cllr JULIAN FREEMAN, Cllr JAMES LAWRENCE, Cllr JULIE MORRIS and Lib Dem Parliamentary Candidate HELEN MAGUIRE

LOCAL PLAN UNPAUSED BUT CONSERVATIVE COUNCILLORS DIDN'T AGREE



“Unpausing now should mean we can hit the government’s deadline to complete the Local Plan and save the Green Belt.”

Epsom & Ewell’s Local Plan process has been ‘unpaused’. It was paused just before the local elections in May after local Green Belt protests showed that the RA council could lose thousands of votes.

The Local Plan is an official council document that sets out the vision for future development in the borough. It provides a guide on what can be built where, so is an important document in determining future planning applications.

The Conservative government had imposed unrealistic housing targets on local authorities and it was unclear whether we would have to build on the Green Belt if that was the only way to achieve them.

However, work has now begun again, this time with more focus on greater density in urban environs and retaining Green Belt.

But, amazingly, Conservative councillors did not support unpausing the Local Plan, jeopardising the council’s ability to meet the government’s June 2025 deadline.

Cllr. Julie Morris, Liberal Democrat council group leader, said:

“If the Conservative councillors had been in a majority, the entire process (which is already 10 years behind schedule) would need to be scrapped and a new format adopted ... all of which could take another 6 years before we have local policies that will enable us to refuse inappropriate planning applications!”

“**Thank goodness the Conservatives aren’t in control here**”

Lib Dem parliamentary candidate **Helen Maguire** added “Central government must give local councils the right to make decisions that are best for their area. How can housing minister Michael Gove sit in his Whitehall office and decide what is best for Epsom and Ewell residents?”

2024 Parking Review

The local committee was a useful forum for Borough and County councillors to get together to discuss various issues in our borough, including highway and parking needs.

The Conservative-led Surrey County Council (SCC) has abolished the local committees, making borough councillor input more difficult.

Their 2024 review includes minor changes to parking restrictions in **Dorling Drive, Wallace Fields, Chartwell Place,** and **Church Street.**

One hour curfew parking will be introduced in **Mospsey Crescent.** Significant new parking restrictions are to be introduced in **Links Road** and **Longdown Lane North** and **South.**

Detailed maps of all these proposals can be viewed on the SCC website.

CHALK PIT UPDATE

The Chalk Pit continues to be a pain to residents, preventing those living in the vicinity from enjoying the peace and quiet of their own home. **Cllr. James Lawrence** has continued to work with fellow councillors to ensure that operations at the Chalk Pit obey the rules and do not disturb residents in their homes.

Surrey County Council (SCC) has begun enforcement of the quantity of trucks entering and exiting the site. Furthermore, Epsom & Ewell Council (EEBC) issued a noise abatement notice on the operation of the trommel at the end of October and is now in the process of enforcing it.

We encourage all residents experiencing noise disturbance from the Chalk Pit to email the Environment Agency, SCC Planning Enforcement and EEBC, copying in your councillors, to ensure the authorities remain aware this is an ongoing issue for residents.



James continues to work for local residents to ensure Chalk Pit operations follow the rules.

LOCAL NEWS

MISSED BIN CALLBACK

Missed council bin collections during the summer, mostly of green waste, have (hopefully) been resolved by offering the refuse staff extra hours to return to the missed service that same afternoon. So, if your bin is not collected in the morning, please be sure to leave it out in the afternoon.

BIKES ON PAVEMENTS

Parked bikes on High Street pavements continue to cause inconvenience for pedestrians. It is the county council (as the highway authority) which needs either to provide dedicated parking for these delivery scooters or clamp down on the illegal parking.

PARKING RESTRICTIONS

On a **FOCUS** team walkabout in Wimborne Close and Andrews Close, we received many complaints about the current restrictive parking arrangements. The team will be surveying residents there in the New Year to try to improve the situation for residents.

DOJO REBUILD

The Martial Arts portacabin in Alexandra Rec has been demolished and the new building will be erected during the winter months.

CRICKET IN ALEX

Siting cricket nets in Alexandra Rec has been suggested by a local youngster and once bids for CIL (community infrastructure levy) monies from the council are invited, we shall be putting that idea forward.

WHAT'S A TIME BANK?

Epsom and Ewell Time Bank is a new project to exchange time, skills and knowledge, so returning to the traditional values of living and working together as one community. Membership is free. Go to <https://tol2.timebanking.org/epsomandewell>

TICKET OFFICES SAVED!

Government cancels plans to close Rail Ticket Offices after huge campaign backed by local Lib Dems

Local people are celebrating following the Government's recent u-turn on their plans to close our local Rail Ticket Offices.

Our local ticket offices were facing the axe as part of the Conservative Government's plans to close over 900 ticket offices nationwide.

But a huge public campaign has saved them. Nationwide over 750,000 people responded to the consultation on the plans (with 99% objecting). Here in Epsom & Ewell hundreds of local people opposed the closures.

"This fiasco is entirely the fault of the Conservative Government," said parliamentary candidate **Helen Maguire**. "They put enormous pressure on Rail Companies to make cuts and close ticket offices. But now they have been forced into an embarrassing u-turn."



"This is a victory for local people. We are delighted the huge campaign against the closures has been successful," said **Helen**

UPPER HIGH ST. UPDATE



Lovely artwork on the Upper High Street former toilet block. A Glyn School and council initiative

A splendid art project in association with **Glyn School** was unveiled at the end of September on the site of the former public toilets in Upper High Street (see photo taken during the creation of the artwork). "It really brightens up this area of our town," said **Cllr. Julian Freeman**.

Meanwhile, the planning application from **Aldi** for a store 200 yards up the road sits in the council's planning department awaiting a decision by the Planning Committee early next year.

After residents of **Pikes Hill** contacted **FOCUS** about noise from the adjacent car wash site, we asked for better sound insulation to their compressor and this has now been done. Has this improved things? Please let **Julie Morris** know.

WRITE TO US

Send to: 7, Bridge Road, Epsom, KT17 4AN

Keep me updated about Lib Dem campaigns and activities

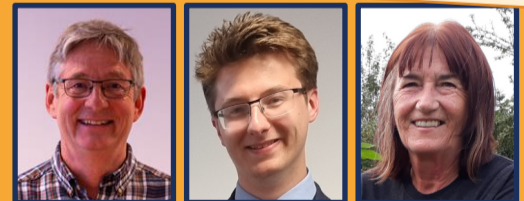
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Only the Liberal Democrats can beat the Tories here.

A General Election is coming.

And not a moment too soon!

This will be our chance to elect a Liberal Democrat MP here.

Let's end decades of being taken for granted by out of touch Conservatives.

A vote for Labour or the Greens only helps the Tories here



General Election forecast for the new Epsom & Ewell constituency, 29 Sept. 2023
source: Stonehaven Election MRP