

## NEWSLETTER No - 169 – WINTER 2021/2022

### CHAIR'S COMMENTARY

Dear Members,

#### Green Spaces and the Green Belt

We all cherish our local parks and green spaces. No-one in the Borough is more than 10 minutes' walk from a green space according to the Green Space Index from Fields in Trust: <https://www.fieldsintrust.org/green-space-index>.

During lockdowns and while the pandemic persists, many of us have continued to enjoy these places and the surrounding countryside which we are so fortunate to have on our doorstep. The health and wellbeing value aggregated across the UK by frequent use of parks and green spaces is an

estimated £34.2 billion worth of benefits per year, according to the Fields in Trust Report, 'Revaluing Parks and Green Spaces' (2018). Parks and green spaces are estimated to save the NHS around £111 million per year based solely on a reduction in GP visits. A summary of the report is accessible here: <https://www.fieldsintrust.org/Upload/file/research/Revaluing-Parks-and-Green-Spaces-Summary.pdf> and the full report is at this link: <https://www.fieldsintrust.org/Upload/file/research/Revaluing-Parks-and-Green-Spaces-Report.pdf>

*“The Green Belt is the most familiar and least understood plank of England’s planning policy.”*

*Zack Simons, planning barrister,  
Financial Times 5 December 2020*

Are all green spaces and green fields part of the Green Belt? The answer is no. Given recent indications from central government that there will be no need to build on the Green Belt to deliver the new homes required, we need to know what the Green Belt is, how much we have locally, where exactly it is, how it operates in the planning system and what this could mean for our Borough as a whole.

**The fundamental purpose of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.** Contrary to what the name implies, the Green Belt is not there to protect landscape, biodiversity, or ecosystems; nor is it there to promote health and wellbeing.

The Green Belt serves five purposes:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021) Chapter 13: Protecting Green Belt Land has more information at paragraphs 137-151:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1005759/NPPF\\_July\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf)

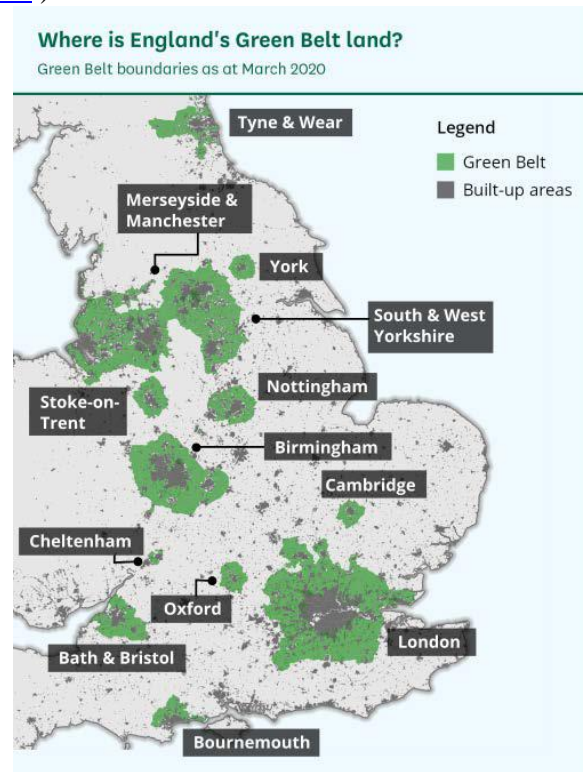
Green Belt policy has been successful in preventing urban sprawl, but it has also had unintended consequences. It has been argued that the Green Belt's function is more 'belt' than 'green', that the belt (if that's the right description) is too tight and that the policy, essentially unchanged since the mid-1950s and described as "effective but blunt", needs reform (LSE, (2016) A 21st Century Metropolitan Green Belt, accessible at [http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/68012/1/Gordon\\_Green\\_Belt\\_author.pdf](http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/68012/1/Gordon_Green_Belt_author.pdf) and overview on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cAa6oB0-PFI> ).

Proponents of reform say the Green Belt restricts housing access (pushing up accommodation costs) and extends commuting distances because people looking for cheaper homes 'leapfrog' the Green Belt and commute back across it. The policy does not, therefore, stop redevelopment of greenfield sites *beyond* the Green Belt and it encourages the development of satellite towns further away from existing urban centres more suited to accommodate development. National policy allows development in the Green Belt only where there are 'very special circumstances' (NPPF paragraph 147). An argument for increasing flexibility in the policy is that not all Green Belt land is green or especially attractive: some of it, for example on the urban fringes, may be quite unattractive and would in consequence benefit from contextually appropriate and sensitive development nearer to where people already live and work.

Green Belt supporters see any interference as encouraging urban sprawl and impacting adversely on quality of life.

***"Today, more than 12 per cent of England is in the Green Belt. The Metropolitan Green Belt around London is itself three times bigger than Greater London, bigger than Trinidad and Tobago and twice the size of Luxembourg."***

***Zack Simons***



*Map showing the Green Belt footprint across England. (Source: House of Commons Library Green Belt Briefing Paper 29 October 2021)*

To date, reform has been strongly resisted.

Within the Metropolitan Green Belt for London, 1,560 hectares out of Epsom & Ewell Borough's total area of 3,410 hectares is designated as Green Belt, representing 45.7% of the total land area: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-green-belt-statistics-for-england-2020-to-2021/local-authority-green-belt-statistics-for-england-2020-21-statistical-release>

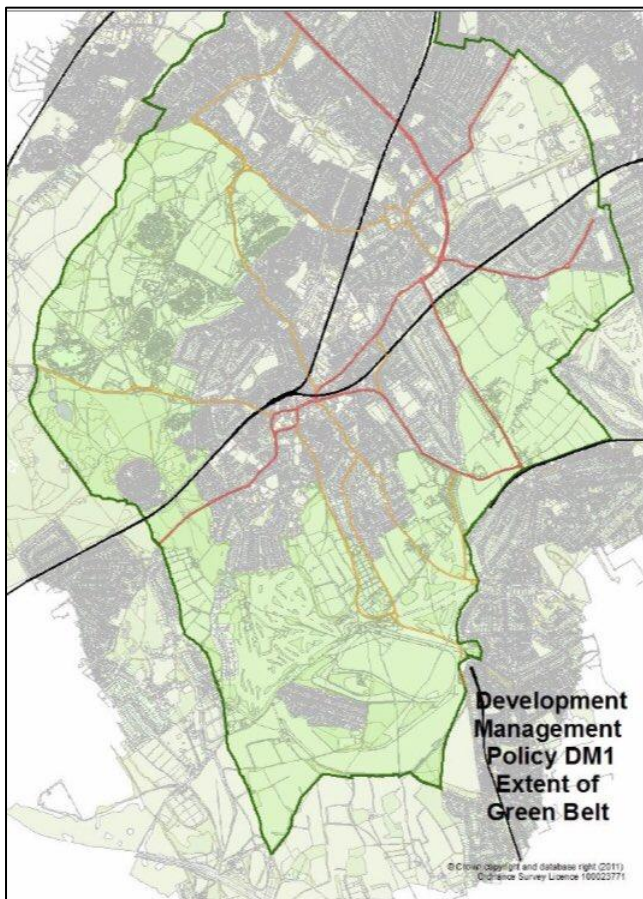
In terms of available land for new development, the designation locally is a major constraint.

Protecting the Green Belt from development at all costs has, in consequence, significant implications for the character and heritage of Epsom town and Ewell village, not least in terms of increasing building heights and density of new development and putting greater pressure on the urban green spaces to which the public has access. Not all Green Belt land



*The Metropolitan Green Belt has expanded over time. Protecting it from development has significant implications for the character and heritage of Epsom. (Source: LSE Report 'A 21st Century Metropolitan Green Belt')*

affords access to the public. Much of it is farmland or otherwise privately owned.



*1,560 hectares out of Epsom & Ewell Borough's total area of 3,410 hectares is designated as Green Belt ( 45.7%). The EEBC's Development Management Policies document (Sept. 2015) details its Green Belt policy.*

The Society supports careful strategic planning, sensitive to context for the Green Belt to avoid unsustainable choices about how and where land is developed. Those of us living, working, and socialising here have a shared interest in finding workable solutions that enable the Borough to deliver reasonable numbers of well-designed new homes, protect heritage assets and local character, and improve health, wellbeing and quality of life overall with well-planned places. The challenge for the new Local Plan is to contain well-written policies that will deliver on all fronts.

While we await progress on the direction of central government planning policy once Secretary of State Michael Gove has settled in to his new role in the newly named Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities following September's re-shuffle, the local 'known unknowns' highlighted previously

in the Society's Summer 2021 newsletter remain, namely, "how and to what extent a constraint such as the Green Belt will be factored in to policies in the draft Local Plan and consequently impact upon

annual housing numbers; and secondly the consequent *impact on the townscape including 21 Conservation Areas if housing development is 'off limits' in the Green Belt.*"

Of the six agreed principles that will shape the new Local Plan, Principle 2 provides that the ‘urban edge of Green Belt’ is one of the locations identified for new housing development <https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/news/committee-agree-six-principles-shape-local-plan>

**Once the draft Local Plan is out for consultation, sites allocated for new housing (and other) development and changes to Green Belt boundaries are key items to look out for and give your views on.** According to the Local Plan timeline, the consultation is set for November 2021 - January 2022 but at the time of writing, no start date is available. If you are interested in finding out more detailed information on the Borough’s Green Belt, check out the **Council’s Green Belt Study** in the Local Plan evidence base: <https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/planning-and-supplementary-planning-documents/evidence-base#Green%20Belt>

For an up-to-date briefing on the Green Belt nationally (England) the latest Commons Library Research Paper (October 2021) is at this link [https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn00934/?utm\\_source=twitter&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=cl-topical\\_general-031121](https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn00934/?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=cl-topical_general-031121)

Thanks to everyone, staff and volunteers who have worked so hard throughout a difficult year to enable four of our green spaces and parks (Epsom Common, Alexandra Recreation Ground, Ewell Court Park and Rosebery Park) to retain their Green Flag status with awards this year. More information on the Council’s website: <https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/news/hoisting-green-flag>

I look forward to meeting some of you on our outing to the Mill at Sonning for dinner and theatre on 19 December. Meanwhile I wish everyone a very happy Christmas and New Year with family and friends and look forward to a more sociable 2022 for the Society and all its members.

**Margaret Hollins**

## Local Heritage List Project



*Nominations are in for listing distinctive properties and places throughout the Borough.*

We first reported on Surrey councils’ successful joint bid for central government funding to develop new or update their existing local heritage lists in our Spring 2021 newsletter (No 166). This 12-month project runs from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 and involves Surrey County Council working with six Surrey boroughs and districts, including Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, to produce a new



or updated local heritage asset list for their area. Local lists can include any building, monument, site, place, area or landscape which has heritage significance but is not recognised by another designation. The Society has submitted a list of 34 nominations to Surrey County Council for the Local Heritage List Project. Our nominations include shops in the Upper High Street,

24-28 West Street (the Furniss building), and a selection of distinctive properties and places. We have also supported a range of nominations from Cuddington Ward which has enriched our list, and have been delighted to work with Wendy Leveridge, Chair of Cuddington Residents' Association. Selection criteria for nomination are: rarity, group value, architectural or artistic value, archaeological value, historic association, landmark status, social and cultural value. Each asset nominated must satisfy at least two. More information about the project is available at this link: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/land-planning-and-development/historical-planning/listproject>

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Given the ongoing national discussion around climate change and sustainability I thought a recent comment from Will Hurst, Editor of Architects Journal, might be apt:

*"We are going down a very dangerous route if we continue to pull down buildings that could be adapted or re-used and build new ones in their place. Construction accounts for 10% of our emissions and it's far more sustainable to upgrade buildings rather than to trash them."*

The ECS committee is giving thought to this point and not just in Conservation Areas.

With regard to ongoing planning applications, please see the latest updates below. For reference, and following on from our Autumn newsletter, there is no change for **113 Longdown Lane South (20/00545/CLP)** and **Madan Cottage, Avenue Road (21/00528/FLH)**. Both are awaiting decisions.

**9 Corner House Parade Ewell Village (21/00784/FUL):** This application concerns the construction by a shopowner of an exterior raised decking and boundary area in front of the shop last year without approval within the Ewell Village CA. The Society responded to the subsequent planning application noting that the construction and design was crude and inappropriate in terms of design and quality of materials for this Conservation Area. This view was supported by the planning officer and the application was refused.

**20 Burghfield (21/00870/FLH):** This application relates to building a large extension to the detached house. The Society and a number of local residents considered the proposal inappropriate, especially given the proposal for such a considerable enlargement to the house follows an earlier very similar application. The application has now been withdrawn.

**Holland House Mospey Crescent (21/00110/FLH):** We reported in our last newsletter that an appeal had been lodged against the decision to refuse the application to erect 1.8m high steel fencing and sliding gates to the front and sides of this corner property. The planning inspectorate supported the Council and refused the appeal stating that the proposal would be 'harsh' and inappropriate to the open feel of the design of this estate.

**The Lodge West Street Ewell (19/01604/FUL):** This application to develop three flats and two houses on part of the whole former park keeper's house and garden is due to be reconsidered before the Planning Committee in January 2022 following the fiasco of events when the committee's decision to refuse was followed up by issuing an approval notice! That was then quashed by a High Court order.

**107-111 East Street (21/01708/FUL):** Following Planning Committee refusal in July of the proposal to build a four storey block of 23 flats on the Ewell side of the Kiln Lane junction with East Street, Epsom, a new application for 21 flats was lodged. The Society wrote twice opposing the application - initially and also to the amendments. Interestingly, the officers' recommendation to the Planning Committee was to permit. The Committee overturned this decision on the following grounds: 1. The proposed rear access road is unsatisfactory for the width for vehicles and pedestrians; 2. Insufficient car parking; 3. The bulk,

mass, and density would adversely impact and harm the character and appearance of the visual amenity of the surrounding area; and 4. A lack of affordable housing provision.

This new application states that it addresses the reasons for the refusal. There has also been an appeal lodged against that refusal. With regard to the new application, the amendments addressing the objections on the grounds of points 1. and 2. above are an improvement but points 3. and 4. have not been properly addressed. The bulk has only been marginally reduced by the omission of two small flats. The character and style of East Street (and continuing further along Epsom Road towards Ewell) changes at Kiln Lane leaving behind the larger office and residential buildings more typical of the town centre. The new proposal does not reflect this. The application still retains development of a building that we consider too large and bulky, simply cramming too much in to the site space. Regarding point 4. there is no provision for affordable housing which is a requirement for developments of 10 units and upwards. Landowners and developers must recognise this in valuations and sums for the development.



*The new application to 'upgrade' the Ashley Centre entrance includes false cladding in man-made materials and coloured 'themed' illuminations. The Society recommends a full public debate.*

***Ashley Centre Entrance (21/00327/FUL):***

This application to 'upgrade' the eastern entrance remains undecided. The Society wrote an objection to part of the proposals, particularly the covering of the existing red facing brickwork in sheet cladding material with changing colours of illuminated lighting.

Following planning officer comments to the applicant a modification has now been submitted with the brickwork of the 'flat' part of the walls either side and above the entrance remaining with new windows of Georgian type glazing bars. This is an improvement. However the projecting bay walls are shown with slab panels of material

described as 'White colour finish Lightweight GRC backing to replicate smooth natural stone or travertine, split face and hammered effects also to feature faux windows'. We have written objecting to these revisions on the grounds that the carefully thought through 1970s application with its public consultation produced an excellent High Street design against the Clock Tower backdrop and continues to work well without the need for change. Why change it? Is not 'cladding' a sensitive word currently? Not so much as a fire hazard but we must question the method of affixing and securing large slabs of material to vertical walls projecting above the High Street pavement. Coupled with all this is changing coloured illumination to suit 'the event theme'? We have asked that this application, if officers are minded to recommend approval, is taken to the public planning committee for a full debate.

***29/31 Waterloo Road (21/00903/OUT - Popularly known as 'Suddies'):*** This outline application for demolition of the existing building and construction of a 3-storey building housing 9 flats has been refused. We support the reasons principally; poor architectural design especially at pedestrian level to the front and side; contrary to local character; low quality urban design; and failing to satisfy the objective within the NPPF of 'Achieving well designed places'. Also quoted were the excessive footprint, cramped space and poor internal living arrangements, with some flats with restricted windows close to a high boundary wall. Whilst new houses are needed, respect must be shown for the lifestyle of future occupiers. Also, we believe there is a case for retaining secondary shopping areas and employment land.

**Michael Arthur**

## CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

The main feature for the oncoming winter period has been the extent of planning appeals and delayed planning application consents. The decision on the Guild Living Project at the rear of Epsom Hospital was overturned on appeal in September. This has undoubtedly led to other 'refused' projects to be forwarded for appeal. Maybe some developers consider that our council is 'on the ropes' and lacking the enthusiasm or resources to challenge these appeals? One of our major concerns is that the planning department has offered early pre-application advice to developers that has encouraged higher and more dense as well as in some cases some outlandish designs. Schemes are then rejected by the Planning Committee but the 'Pre-App' advice then features as a major item within any appeal.

Climate change and the recent COP 26 conference have dominated our national news over the last few months. The Society regards this as a key element of all planning applications and encourages the Council to implement policies to safeguard our future. Our objection letters always consider aspects of climate change and suggest that future developments must include climate change-related issues for sustainable and environmentally-friendly construction.

The main planning applications include the following:

***The Multi Storey Car Park at Epsom Hospital (20/00249/FUL):*** Refused at the Planning Committee meeting in May 2021. We now anticipate a revised scheme or possible appeal.

***6 The Grove (20/01855/FUL):*** This latest proposal for 9 flats was refused in July 2021. An appeal (21/00032/REF) has been issued and we await the planning inspectorate's decision. We are aware that planning discharge applications are being validated for the previously approved 2018 conversion scheme.

***24-28 West Street (19/01021/FUL):*** This planning application is for the demolition of the existing buildings and the construction of a 7/8 storey residential block (25 flats). Meanwhile an application (21/00986/FUL) has been submitted for the demolition works. Both applications are still under review and are due to be discussed at the December Planning Committee meeting.

***Clayhill Lodge & Allonby in West Hill (20/00031/FUL + 21/00167/FUL):*** We wrote in previous newsletters describing the main application for 14 flats and 9 houses. The site is in the Stamford Green Conservation Area and adjacent to Clayhill Green. Whilst the original application is still under consideration, another has been validated for five houses at the northern part of the site. The Society continues to object and support neighbours as both applications affect the local heritage in this CA. Both schemes are due to be reviewed at either the December or January Planning Committee meetings.



***The proposal to build 14 flats (four-storey block) and 9 houses including three-storey terraced dwellings on this site plus the felling of over 20 trees has already met with hundreds of objections.***

***81 College Road (21/01287/FUL):*** The Society has objected to this scheme for the construction of a new dwelling in the rear garden of 81 College Road which fronts onto Copse Edge Avenue. The design is alien to all the other houses in Copse Edge Avenue and minimal allowance has been made for access arrangements onto this private road.

**128 Rosebery Road – Backland Development:** The Society anticipates the application for a single dwelling in the rear garden of 128 Rosebery Road, immediately adjacent to Epsom Downs. We are concerned that such developments are not sustainable and cause a loss of our ecology and landscape. We await the design proposals and will support the neighbours and others who will be directly affected by the development.



*An application to extend the listed Hollycroft house on Epsom Road and adjacent land, including construction of a second dwelling in the grounds, has been submitted. (Photo: The Old Buildings of Ewell Village)*

**Hollycroft, Epsom Road, Ewell (21/01254/FLH and 21/01167/FUL):** The Society has objected to the proposal to build a new dwelling in the rear garden of Hollycroft (21/01254/FLH) and the separate application for conversion works to the Grade 2 listed Hollycroft house which dates back to around 1840. We believe that the applications should be reviewed as a single site.

No consideration has been given to the heritage aspects of the property nor to the requirements of the Ewell Village Conservation Area.

**Langley Bottom Farm (20/00475/FUL):** The planning application for the demolition of the existing farm buildings and the construction of 20 residential dwellings on Green Belt land was refused. The Society has visited the farm and confirms that there is much of the property still in agricultural use. The applicant led the Council Planners to believe that farming stopped in this location several years ago. By coincidence, roadworks are now being carried out by SCC at the junction of the farm approach track and Langley Vale Road. This was a major ‘sticking point’ in the refusal of this application.



*While the proposal to demolish Langley Bottom Farm and build 20 houses was refused, roadworks have started by the farm approach track. Access to the farm and its use by cyclists, walkers, horseriders and vehicles was a ‘sticking point’ in the refusal.*

## **ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE FOR OUR MEMBERS**

We receive many queries from members and other parties on how to obtain enforcement assistance from our Council. The Council does encourage residents to contact them if there are concerns about a development of a property which has not been authorised or given planning permission or if there have been material changes of the use of land or buildings. More details and a complaint form you can fill in at the link here: <https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-enforcement>

The Council's approach has recently changed following the departure of the Enforcement Officer and a complete review of the process is under way. This review includes assessment of the type of enforcement challenges and timing of the Council's response. The latest Council proposal is that the Planning Officer remains involved throughout the process including building stages.

We strongly urge that if you are aware of a development or planning application that you get involved in the planning application process in the first instance, and record any issues relating to the layout and positioning of any new extension to a building. If the development affects you or the immediate neighbourhood directly, then as part of the neighbour consultation process there should be an application detailing a Construction Management Plan. This plan should make clear hours of working, access, site hutting, operative parking, noise levels, large plant visits etc. Such matters should all be agreed prior to the start of the works.

We also advise that any urgent matters should be dealt with immediately and prior to any works starting (e.g. any excavations which may endanger or adversely affect your property). Take photographs, talk through the issues with the developer and if the matter is not resolved then forward your complaint or concerns to the Council. This should include the address, Planning Application reference, and urgent nature of the complaint. Many matters will not be urgent (e.g. variance of materials to those proposed on the approved drawings). Again, take photographs and forward your complaint.

We suggest that many site-related issues can be dealt with by having an onsite meeting with the applicant and their contractor prior to the start of the works. Get a contact name and phone number for the builder. Many of the later subcontractors will not have seen the agreed Construction Management Plan and therefore the plan should be communicated by the main contractor. Good communication early on in the process is vital in order to maintain a healthy working relationship and to assuage any concerns once construction commences.

**Bob Hollis**

## **CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

*This mixed feeling of dread, anticipation and hope (?)*



*Another busy school run. Will future housing developments be matched by infrastructure plans that encourage behavioural change with green walkable and cyclable streets? (Photo: Surrey Comet)*

As yet another week goes by where I've survived the road traffic with my children on their bikes trying to get them to school safely (including a few near misses with the ever-increasing fleet of tank-like vehicles in our streets), I cannot but wonder what awaits us in the highly anticipated draft Local Plan.

Will the Local Plan address the issues of our congested and polluted urban roads with forward-looking policies and proposals that address climate emission reduction objectives?

Will future housing developments plan for not only efficient buildings but sustainable place-making that encourages behavioural change through the creation of green walkable and cyclable streets?

Surrey's transport sector currently amounts to 46% of the County's total amount of carbon emissions (Surrey Climate Change Strategy, 2020) - this is therefore a key area to focus on in terms of emission reduction opportunities.

The NPPF (104) states that “transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals so that [...] opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued.” According to EEBC “Principle 5: Climate Change to reflect principles of the Climate Change Action Plan” and “Principle 6 Infrastructure to address the issues of necessary infrastructure to ensure new developments are sustainable” will form the backbone of the Local Plan.

Whilst one of the Strategic Priorities set out in the Surrey's Climate Change Strategy is to develop Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for each district and borough to promote a shift to walking and cycling, the Epsom and Ewell Cycling plan web page (last updated in December 2018) provides generic information only and does not contain measurable objectives specific to our Borough. Similarly Theme 3 of the Borough's Climate Change Action Plan for 2020 included piloting “school streets” and “increasing the number of safe cycle routes in the Borough”. How can we measure the success of these ambitions when no baseline and future metrics are presented? How many miles, how many streets, how many residents may benefit?



*My school-run bicycle. Epsom is trailing behind other local councils in introducing more safe walk and cycle schemes as part of the Surrey Climate Change Strategy. (Photo: Aurélie Paoli)*

***“When I look at the schemes developed by other councils and think of my own Borough I have mixed emotions. Dread because I don’t seem to see clear visions or drive for change; anticipation because I’m wanting better; and hope because other councils have shown it’s possible.”***

***Aurélie Paoli***

This year Sutton will have approved 10 schemes for “school streets” whilst Merton has 30 and Wandsworth 19 existing schemes. Nottingham has since 2011 implemented a workplace parking levy to fund public transport improvements (Rising to the Climate Crisis - A guide for Local Authorities on Planning for Climate Change, May 2018) and Bristol City is currently considering a similar scheme. Elsewhere in Surrey there is currently consultation on new and improved cycle provisions for two routes between Camberley and Frimley and Guildford and Godalming. Meanwhile in Epsom we have, for now at least, avoided the prospect of a six-storey car park on the hospital site and we still have no safe means to cycle to Ashted, Ewell or to cross the centre of town! When I look at the schemes developed by other councils and think of my own Borough I have mixed emotions. Dread because I don’t seem to see clear visions or drive for change; anticipation because I’m wanting better; and hope because other councils have shown it’s possible.

**Aurélie Paoli**

## THE DOWNS

### Top Car Park

At their June meeting, the Downs Conservators discussed a request from the Training Grounds Management Board (which is responsible for managing the racehorse training activities on the Downs) to prevent access by cars to the top car park (sometimes known as the 7 furlong car park) during racehorse training hours. The main reason given for the request was to reduce health and safety risks caused by increased public usage of the Downs, and a number of dangerous incidents were cited in support of this. Earlier closure in the evening was also requested to curtail anti-social activity.

The Conservators agreed to make a request to Surrey County Council for a Traffic Regulation Order that would close the part of the Old London Road leading to the car park from 5pm in the evening (7pm in summer months) until 12 noon the following day (or 9.30am on Sundays). The request was considered and agreed by the Surrey Local Committee for Epsom & Ewell at its meeting in July, and a draft Order is expected to be published in due course. There will be a public consultation following publication of the

Order, and the Local Committee appeared to be expecting a large amount of feedback - both in favour and against the proposed change. At the time of publication, the Order had still not been published. Members who have views on this proposal are encouraged to look out for notices publicising the Order, and to submit their own feedback to Surrey County Council.



### Public Conveniences

The Tattenham Corner public conveniences have been closed since the onset of

*A public consultation is awaited regarding the request from the Training Grounds Management Board (which is responsible for managing the racehorse training activities on the Downs) to prevent access by cars to the top car park during racehorse training hours.*

COVID in March 2020, and are now in a very run-down condition. The cost of repairing or rebuilding them is beyond the budget of the Downs Conservators, and their relatively isolated location (set back from the road with no adjacent buildings), renders them extremely vulnerable to vandalism. 'Debaucherous antisocial behaviour' has also been a problem that the police have been unable to prevent. The Conservators have investigated the possibility of building new 'modular' conveniences near to the Tea Hut or Downs Keepers Hut. They are investigating options but they may not have the resources to replace them. The existing conveniences will therefore be demolished and not replaced - at least in the short to medium term.

**Nick Lock**

## MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Welcome to our new members, some of whom joined at our stand in the market on 12<sup>th</sup> September. We were pleased to join many Epsom organisations promoting all that is good in our town. Our other new members this year have joined us through 'word of mouth'. We have a membership of over 1750 which is excellent but the more members we have the greater our influence, particularly in planning matters.

If you think that family, friends, neighbours or colleagues not already members might be interested in joining please pass on your Newsletter or contact me for another copy / more copies. Alternatively they can see what we are actively doing by consulting our website <https://epsomcivicsociety.org.uk/>

Keeping our town an attractive and a good place to live, work and play in as well as to feel proud of our environment, we all need to look about us and sometimes take action. The Epsom Civic Society wants our Borough to move forward with new developments but that development has to be appropriate and meet local requirements. By all means get in touch with me directly. **Tel: 01372 438361 Email: [membership@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk](mailto:membership@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk)**

**Ishbel Kenward**

## EVENTS

### THE MILL AT SONNING - DINNER THEATRE 19 December



We are looking forward to joining our members for what promises to be an exciting evening. Not long now!

Please do bring with you if you are coming proof of Double Vaccination or a 48hr Lateral Flow Test or proof of Natural Immunity. Wearing of masks is not mandatory but audience members are encouraged to wear one. If you need to get in touch, please do. **Tel: 01372-275580 Email: [wadsworthfamily@btinternet.com](mailto:wadsworthfamily@btinternet.com)**

I hope that we shall enjoy more social gatherings in 2022 and I would value offers of help with future events and someone I could hand over to as after 12 years I think the Society would benefit from some fresh injection of ideas to engage our current and future members.

**Sheila Wadsworth**

Please send any letters or comments for consideration to: Newsletter Editor: [publicity@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk](mailto:publicity@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk)

All of our newsletters are available in colour on our website: [www.epsomcivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.epsomcivicsociety.org.uk)

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