



Epsom Civic Society Newsletter

*Shaping the future,
safeguarding the past*

We need your help!

Chair's Commentary


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CHAIR'S COMMENTARY

Dear Members,

We Need Your Help!

Our Summer edition provides an opportunity for me to write to you directly on a matter that is now seriously urgent for the Society in terms of its continuing to function effectively, namely recruiting new members to our committee.

Of the Society's four Officer posts, two are vacant. Vice-Chair Bob Hollis stepped down at this year's Annual General Meeting after a very busy six years on the committee. We will be celebrating Bob's enormous contribution to the Society at an event later in the year. The post of Hon Secretary has been vacant for a number of years and as I reported in the Society's Annual Review, circulated with our Spring newsletter as part of the AGM papers, our team of remaining committee members has become additionally stretched in taking on extra responsibilities over and above their official roles. This situation is unsustainable and is now a serious cause for concern. Wonderful though my fellow committee members are, not least in finding new levels of resilience in management and delivery of the Society's activities over recent years, it is essential that volunteers come forward from our Membership base (1,573 as at May 2024) to help us.

I first joined the committee 13 years ago. Many of my committee colleagues have served the Society for considerably longer. Most of us are senior citizens and we are all 13 years older now than when I was warmly welcomed to the committee. Our younger committee members have extensive professional and family

commitments, yet willingly give their time when circumstances allow. Almost everyone volunteers with other organisations to which they feel equally loyal.

We need your help not only to ensure the Society is able to continue its current activities but also to inject fresh thinking and new ideas into what we do so that we continue to benefit our members, avoid becoming routine and don't run out of steam. Please take this opportunity to consider joining our committee. Lively and active people from all backgrounds are welcome and experience in planning, architecture or traffic management, though desirable, is not essential. Motivated members with expertise in, for example, local history, heritage, communications and publishing, information technology, working with schools and colleges, setting up and delivering community projects, and a general interest in the Borough will enable the Society to progress its range of activities, consistent with our constitution. General experience in organisation and management would be a helpful foundation for the Hon. Secretary's role in ensuring the overall smooth running of the Society in its operation, activities, and communications.

If you have any queries about meetings or anything, please get in touch with me chair@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk or any committee member who will be glad to help.





Epsom and Ewell Local Plan 2022-2040

LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

The revised timetable for production of the draft Local Plan (see below) remains current and we understand that the Council's planning policy team will keep on planning to that timetable, the general election notwithstanding.

Stage	Revised Local Plan Timetable
Regulation 19 – Public consultation – publication of draft Local Plan	January – February 2025
Regulation 22 – Submission of document (the draft LP) to Planning Inspectorate	May 2025
Examination in Public (EIP) – hearings commence	July 2025
Inspector's final report	March 2026
Adoption of Local Plan	April 2026

We intend to publish an update to the Society's Regulation 18 consultation **response** (March 2023) ahead of next year's formal Regulation 19 public consultation and anticipate that this will be in time for our Autumn newsletter.



IN OTHER PLANNING NEWS

Changes to planning enforcement law came into force on 25 April under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. The enforcement period for all breaches of planning control is now 10 years. The Act abolishes the four-year time limit for breaches and no longer applies from 25 April 2024. In practice this means that where the alleged operational development was substantially completed or where the alleged change of use to a single dwellinghouse was on or after 25 April 2024, the 10-year limit applies. Planning Practice Guidance on enforcement has been updated in consequence of the changes, accessible [here](#) and the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) has launched a new **Planning Enforcement Handbook** for the new rules. The Council's own **Enforcement Plan** (2021) will be updated to reflect these and other changes to planning enforcement, including increased penalties for non-compliance, coming into force on that date. Our thanks to Hannah Skeels, EEBC's Planning Enforcement Officer, for her update on these changes. Meanwhile we understand that **local listing letters** have now gone out from EEBC to

owners of properties nominated for local listing under Surrey County Council's government-funded Local Listing Project. Consultation ended at the end of May.

Redevelopment of SGN (gasworks)

Site, East Street: there were two public exhibitions hosted by the developers on the proposed scheme in the Methodist Church Hall, 11-13 Ashley Road KT18 5AQ on the following dates:

Saturday 13th July 11am-2pm

Tuesday 16th July 5-8pm.

Emails were sent to members that we have email addresses for so that they could attend if wished, and posts to the wider community put on X (Twitter) @EpsomCivicSoc.

More information on the proposals [here](#). Consultation closes 30 July. The Society encourages everyone to have their say on the intended transformation of this major redevelopment site.

LINKS IN THE PRINTED NEWSLETTER

If you are reading the printed version of the newsletter and you see underlined text like this, it usually denotes the presence in the electronic version of a “hyperlink”, which is a zone you can click on on your screen if you are reading the electronic version of the newsletter and be taken to the corresponding place anywhere in the document or the world wide web. Usually, the underlined text you see is a substitute for a long string of gobbledegook which the computer likes but is not very nice for humans.

Obviously, these don't work on the printed page. But if you want to follow these links and have a computer or mobile phone, you can still do so by opening a browser (a program to connect you to the internet such as Chrome, Firefox or Safari) and typing **[epsomcivicsociety.org.uk](https://www.epsomcivicsociety.org.uk)** in the “search” box, which will take you to the home page of the Society's website.

Once there, from the menu at the top, click on “Newsletters” and then on the heading for the latest newsletter (or any of the previous ones from the last few years which are further down the page). This will display that edition in a new window on your computer or phone.

In this version on your screen, all the hyperlinks will work and take you to the source documents, websites or web pages the author wanted you to be able to see and read.

As an extra benefit, all the pictures in the newsletter will be displayed in full colour if we revert to black and white in future printed versions.

If you have any questions or want further information or help getting to see the electronic versions, please email **webmaster@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk** to get in touch.

Mark Bristow

OPENINGS AND EVENTS

It's been a long wait, but **Epsom Picturehouse** opened on 1st June. It has six screens, a café and bar. You'll find it in Epsom Square, next to the library. The Picturehouse will be hosting this year's **Satisfied Eye International Film Festival** from 26th – 28th July.

The next **'Music in the Park'** concert will be in Rosebery Park on Sunday 4 August 2024, from c.2.00 – 4.00pm. Please bring your own chairs. Please confirm exact start time with **[Epsom & Ewell Silver Band](#)** or via park notices.

Margaret Hollins



PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Decided

Briavels Court (24/00085/FUL) Provision of additional vehicle parking and recycling storage facilities. This application has been **refused**: harm to the character of the area; harm to existing trees; unsustainable development. The applicant admitted this application is associated with the refusal to allow the permitted development application for four extra flats (an extra storey) as that failed to comply with prior approval conditions for extra parking and hardstanding and that the design and appearance would cause harm to the character and appearance of the existing building and the wider area.

Communications Hub outside 73 High Street (24/00209/FUL) This was for a moving display advertisement panel and also to house a telephone and defibrillator. ECS did not support this application as was seen as adding to the already extent of highway clutter particularly in this part of the High Street and in the Conservation Area. Decluttering of signage, boxes, etc. was a feature of the town Masterplan consultation last year which the Society supported. The application was **refused**.

6a Bucknills Close (24/00107/FUL): The Society is pleased that its objection to the 5 x 3-bed back-land housing scheme was instrumental in persuading the Planning Committee at the April meeting to refuse against officer recommendation to approve. The applicant has appealed the original scheme for 6 residential units and the outcome is expected shortly.

Green Gables, Ashley Road (23/00968/FUL): This application for the demolition of the existing dwelling and erection of four dwellings was surprisingly **refused** under delegated officer powers in March following a pre-application community consultation exercise. We are expecting a revised application to be submitted or an appeal to be lodged.

New applications

81 College Road (24/00360/FUL) A third application in just over two years to secure a new house development within the rear garden and access from private road of Copse Edge Avenue. ECS has again written in objection that it fails to address the reasons for the previous refusals, by remaining a backland development, out of keeping with the locality, the threat to survival of a fine oak tree subject to a TPO, having a small amount of amenity space and leaving the donor property with a very tiny back garden for a 4/5-bedroom house.

Cottage at St Ebbas Farm Hook Road (24/00420/FUL) To demolish a former farm cottage about 120 years old and replace with a very contemporary single storey flat roofed building of an enormous footprint and volume greatly in excess of the permitted allowance for replacement building in the Green Belt. We objected about its size, style and inappropriateness, very much against the current Build Better Build Beautiful expectations which we support.

12 Burgh Heath Road (24/00487/FLH) A detached single storey annex in rear garden. This address is a large house in a conservation area. The Society believes that garden buildings should be limited to workshops, working from home office, sheds and buildings which conform with rules as to size, use, etc. and not fully equipped living accommodation. We consider that this is inappropriate backland development contrary to a specific policy (DM16) covering this. A letter of objection has been sent.

Epsom Lodge 1 Burgh Heath Road (24/00308/FUL) Change of use of vacant care home to house in multiple occupation. A new application seeking approval for 13 bed house in multiple occupation (HMO), the same number as when in previous care home use. A similar application for a 7 bed HMO was refused a few months ago, now this application



12 Burgh Heath Road, Epsom

Epsom Lodge, 1 Burgh Heath Road

to almost double that of the refusal! In our letter of objection points were made that if it was unfit for 7 bed, 13 was excessive. Comparison cannot be made with care home beds whose occupants have a very sedentary life with residents in a confined space with possible friction coupled with active lifestyle of requiring vehicle and cycle parking spaces and likely coming and going at all hours with possible local neighbour disturbance.

Langley Bottom Farm (24/00568/FUL):

The Society is extremely concerned over a recent application submitted to build a freestanding 4 bed dwelling in the midst of the Green Belt alongside the access track to the former farm buildings. This is on the site of a long-demolished building where only the footings remain, but the applicant is claiming this constitutes 'Previously Developed Land'. This large dwelling would have a significant impact on openness and further undermine the integrity of this important area of Green Belt surrounding Langley Vale village. The Society will be submitting an objection.

Previous Planning Applications: Following up

44 Christchurch Mount (23/00487/FUL): This revised application for the demolition of the existing dwelling and associated outbuildings and the erection of 3 x 3-bed houses with associated access and soft and hard landscaping has been **dismissed on appeal**. The Society

had objected to the application on the grounds of overdevelopment, failure to respond to the pattern of development in the area, local character and distinctiveness, including loss of green infrastructure and resulting in overlooking of neighbouring properties. These concerns were fully endorsed by the appeal Inspector who concluded that the adverse impacts on the character of the area, including trees, on ecology and living conditions would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of 3 new houses associated with the proposal.

52 The Parade, Epsom (24/00057/FLH):

This application for a roof conversion including a side dormer and first floor rear extension to a locally listed building in the Church Street Conservation Area to which the Society had lodged an objection, was refused in March. The decision to refuse is now subject to an **appeal**.

Epsom Hospital, former proposed Guild Living site, Woodcote Green Road: Further to the report in the Spring Newsletter we are pleased to confirm that the demolition of the semi-derelict former staff accommodation buildings has been completed and clearance of the chimney is shortly to commence. It is understood that the site will be used for temporary car parking pending any new development proposals being submitted for planning permission.

Michael Arthur and John Mumford

MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Thank you to those members who have paid this year's subscription and especially to those who have generously given donations. If you have not yet paid [£3 per individual / £5 per household] and you were out when he/she called, your Road Rep. should have put a note on this Newsletter giving a reminder of his/her address. Please save them an extra trip by taking your subscription to them. If unsure whether you have paid or not, please contact your Road Rep or me.

Alternatively, you can now pay online by Bank Transfer or PayPal. Both options are available by going to our website:

www.epsomcivicsociety.org.uk click on



'Join Us' which is also the way to pay renewal subscriptions. If you have any queries feel free to contact me.

I hope you were able to make use of our updated recruiting leaflet to encourage new members. Do let me know if you could use more of them either personally or use them in a shop or business that you frequent.

Ishbel Kenward – Membership Secretary

01372 438361 email:

membership@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

The following members agreed to stand for the positions described:

Chair: **Margaret Hollins**

Vice Chair: **Vacancy**

Hon Secretary: **Vacancy**

Hon Treasurer: **Nick Lock**

Other Committee members:

- **Michael Arthur** (Planning)
- **Eleanor Bland** (Minutes, Events)
- **Linda Bristow** (Events)

- **Mark Bristow** (Webmaster)
- **Ishbel Kenward** (Membership)
- **Jan Lanigan** (Events)
- **John Mumford** (Planning)
- **Aur lie Paoli** (Climate change)
- **Carol Reed** (Publicity)

Hon Archivist: **Philip Clifford**

Hon Photographic Archivist: **David Rowe**

Newsletter Editor: **Carol Reed**

Hon Auditor: **Brian Atkinson**



Please send any letters or comments for consideration to: Newsletter Editor: publicity@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk

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