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Press release: Time to support the draft Local Plan

Following last week's publication of the draft Local Plan, Epsom Civic Society's committee has concluded it's time to support the Plan.

ECS Chair Margaret Hollins said, "For the past eight years the Society's newsletters have chronicled for our members the saga of Epsom's efforts to get a new Local Plan adopted. The longer the Borough is without an up-to-date Plan the more vulnerable it is to speculative, inappropriate development.

"Since the Regulation 18 consultation, pressures on the Local Authority have ramped up with central government's planning reforms increasing housing targets and tightening timescales for renewing the Plan. Failing to progress the draft Plan now risks having to repeat the process all over again at significant cost, and yet more delay.

"Consequently, and despite some reservations on the details, we have written to Licensing and Planning Policy Committee members requesting their support for the Plan at Wednesday's meeting. The Society acknowledges the difficult balance between the need to defend the most important parts of the Green Belt and the demonstrably urgent need for more housing. Our motivation in supporting some limited encroachment on strategically less important land is based on the belief that some compromise now is the best way to defend the rest."

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