

Epsom Civic Society

Newsletter

*Shaping the future,
safeguarding the past*

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COMMITTEE NEWS

Dear Members

Readers of our Spring newsletter, and attendees at our recent Annual General Meeting (a summary of which is included later in this Newsletter), will be aware that Margaret Hollins has stepped down as Chair of the Society, after 10 years in post – probably eight years longer than she originally envisaged when taking on the role! Karen Overington, our Hon. Secretary, and I are ‘holding the fort’ pending appointment of a new Chair – and hopefully of a Deputy Chair as well. As has been mentioned many times in previous newsletters, we very much need more members to join our committee and thereby enable the Society to meet its objectives of ‘shaping the future and safeguarding the past’ of Epsom. If you would be able to help in any way, please do get in touch with Karen or me: our email addresses are secretary@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk and finance@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk.

Margaret Hollins

In her valedictory commentary in the Spring Newsletter, Margaret paid tribute to Ishbel Kenward, who has stepped down as our Membership Secretary after 26 years on the Committee (although she continues to act as our temporary Minutes Secretary until a permanent appointee can be found!). Margaret’s 15 years on the Committee may have been shorter but were no less impactful.



Margaret Hollins

A qualified lawyer and, particularly, an expert in planning policy law, Margaret lectured at both Nescot and at the London South Bank University, where she was an Associate Professor and Deputy Head of the Department of Urban, Environment and Leisure studies until her retirement in 2018. This background and experience was invaluable to the Society, since the planning policy environment seem to have been in a state of flux for the entire period she was Chair, successive governments grappling with the problem of how to build enough new houses to accommodate a growing population (and a reduction in the size of individual households) without alienating their popular support bases through insensitive and unwanted developments. She was in her element keeping up to speed with all the myriad changes in Government policy, and with helping the Society to respond to numerous consultations - although unfortunately there is no evidence that the government of the day took much, or indeed any, notice of our comments!

This was the background against which Epsom & Ewell Borough Council was required to update its Local Plan,

including the need to identify sites to meet increasingly large quotas of new houses imposed by central government. The saga of the Plan update, now overdue by about 10 years, was a constant feature of Margaret’s term in office, with a quagmire of documents and decisions that needed to be reviewed, commented on and, where appropriate, objected to on behalf of the Society. Margaret took the lead in dealing with this work, even with all the other responsibilities she had both as Chair of the Society and elsewhere. Even though the Plan has now been submitted for approval, further documents are still being published by the Council and new sites are potentially being added to the list for housing development (see the article later in this newsletter about the current public consultation on this). There is no guarantee that the revised Local Plan will be accepted, and even if it is, it seems likely that a whole new plan will have to be written consequent on Epsom & Ewell being incorporated into the new East Surrey Unitary Authority from next year. I do think that one of the reasons for her retirement as Chair may have been that, even given her fascination with planning policy, Margaret cannot face yet further years of Committee discussion of local plans!

There is, of course, much more to being Chair of the Society than just responding to planning consultations! For much of her time as Chair, Margaret operated without the support of a Deputy Chair, meaning that she had to take on a significant additional workload – in fact, until Karen arrived recently, for a number of years we have had no Hon. Secretary either, so organising all the meetings fell to her as well! Luckily, she has excellent contacts in the Rising Sun pub that generously allows us to use their upstairs space for our monthly Committee meetings. In those meetings, she was always careful to gather views and aim for consensus, making sure that everyone had a chance to have their say. More recently, until Steve Bridger took on the role last year, she was also the interim newsletter co-ordinator and editor as well!

Margaret acted as the face of the Society at numerous events and meetings, judging competitions, attending openings and civic events etc. One of her most time-consuming roles was as a trustee of Civic Voice, the national charity for the civic movement in England, where her period in office coincided with some significant financial issues (since resolved) and a strategic review that resulted in a completely new operating model. She developed a wide network of contacts across the Borough as a means of information sharing and collaboration to achieve the best outcome for Epsom and whole. We could not have asked for a better ambassador and she will be a very hard act to follow.

Margaret, many thanks for all your work over the years: you will be sorely missed.

In this issue

As will be evident from the wide range of articles in this edition of our Newsletter, the work of the Society continues despite retirements

We would normally have a section on planning applications, both new ones and the outcome of older ones, but at the moment there is nothing significant enough to report. There are a number of contentious applications under consideration by the Council (e.g. Swail House, Oak Glade and Woodcote Stud, which we have covered in previous editions) but these had not been determined by the time of writing this newsletter. One important development on the planning front, however, is the recently launched public consultation on additional sites to be allocated for housing in the local plan. **Please do read the article on Page 10 as the response date for public comments is 15 June.** I hope you enjoy reading.

Nick Lock (Hon.Treasurer)



Epsom & Ewell Community Fund

Dedicated to empowering local initiatives and uplifting the Epsom & Ewell community

Epsom & Ewell Community Fund

The Society recently made a donation to this fund, which provides grants to voluntary or community groups and charities in the borough of Epsom & Ewell. A 'flyer' explaining more about the Fund is included with this newsletter: please do have a look and if you can make a personal donation to the Fund that would be great! I hope you enjoy reading this issue!

Details of the Epsom & Ewell Community fund can be found [here](#).

Nick Lock (Hon. Treasurer)



The 2026 AGM

The AGM took place on Wednesday 22nd April at Epsom Methodist Church. Margaret welcomed everyone and thanked the committee for all their hard work throughout the past year. She paid tribute to Ishbel Kenward, who after 26 years dedicated service has stepped down as Membership Secretary. Thanks also went to Eleanor Bland for taking over from Ishbel.

Our guest speaker this year was Susan Dalloe, the Curator at Bourne Hall museum. Susan gave us a very interesting talk, illustrated with slides on the history of Bourne Hall and planned future events.

At the end of the evening, Nick Lock paid tribute to Margaret as outgoing Chair, thanking her for all her hard work over the past 15 years. Both Margaret and Ishbel were presented with flowers and theatre tokens in appreciation of their contributions to the running of the Society.

Karen Overington



Bourne Hall 1930 Image courtesy of Bourne Hall Museum

Bourne Hall Museum

is coming to

EPSOM
Playhouse

Meet a Civil War soldier
Wednesday 1st July 2pm

Step into the world of the English Civil War and meet a soldier from the front line. Discover why Surrey played such an important role in defending Parliament and London, and uncover what life was like in Epsom and Ewell during this turbulent time. Learn about local skirmishes, religious tensions, and army training on the Downs, then hear a firsthand account of a soldier's experiences - including the harsh realities of battlefield injuries and medical treatments of the 17th century. An engaging and informative event that brings local history to life.

£23

ticket includes
admission only

£31

ticket includes tea
and scones

For more details, contact: Susan Dalloe
sdalloe@epsom-ewell.gov.uk
020 8394 1734

This event is being held at
Epsom Playhouse, Ashley Avenue, Epsom, KT18 5AL
Playhouse Box Office number 01372 742555

EPSOM
& EWELL



CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY: Modular Housing: A Sustainable Housing Opportunity for Epsom & Ewell

What is Modular Housing?

Modular housing is a method of construction where major parts of a home – such as rooms, wall panels, floors, or entire building sections – are manufactured off-site in a controlled factory environment and then transported to the development site for rapid assembly. These modules are built to precise standards, often including insulation, windows and doors, internal finishes and plumbing and wiring.

Once delivered, they are craned into place and connected to form a complete home. There are two main types of modular housing:

- 1) **Volumetric Modular:** where entire rooms or building sections are built in the factory and are delivered almost complete.
- 2) **Panelised MMC²:** which are 2D structural elements that form load bearing structures of a building and can include Structural Insulated Panels (SIP), Cross Laminated Timber (CLT) and can include walls, floors roofs which are delivered and assembled on site
- 3) **Hybrid Modular:** which includes a combination of volumetric modules and panelised elements.

Epsom, like many places across the UK is facing increasing pressure to deliver new homes while protecting the character of the town and meeting Net Zero 2050 national ambitions. Modular construction offers a practical way to achieve this balance: built in factory conditions and assembled quickly on site, modular homes could help Epsom meet housing needs with less disruption, lower carbon emissions, whilst deliver high quality homes that tie into a particular architectural vernacular and suit site constraints such as infill plots or small brownfield sites. Obviously Modular construction may not be applicable to all contexts although the industry and technology has moved on from the period and style of post-war prefab homes.



However, public perception of what modular housing could deliver would need to be addressed.

An example of a SIP Panel from Ecologic used as part of a small scale residential development in Hampshire. Source: [Completed projects \(Title\) | EcologicSIPs](#)

¹ This is a building category which forms part of a classification system for Modern Methods of Construction in homebuilding. This definition framework is an output of the UK Government Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government Joint industry working group on MMC which was tasked with improving stakeholder education and understanding of MMC.

Could it be appropriate for a town like Epsom?

Epsom's mix of heritage areas, suburban neighbourhoods, and small brownfield sites makes it an ideal location for modular building. As modules or panels are manufactured off-site, construction in tight or sensitive locations becomes faster, cleaner, and more predictable and can be designed off site. Key benefits include:

1) Faster delivery

Modular homes can be completed 40–60% faster than traditional builds. For Epsom, this means shorter disruption near schools, shops, and residential streets, faster delivery of affordable and key-worker housing and reduced pressure on local infrastructure. Modular homes could help councils and developers to meet demand.

2) High build quality and flexibility

Factory production ensures precise construction tolerances, better acoustic and thermal performance, fewer defects and weather-related delays. MMC2 allows for varied roof forms, traditional facades (brick, render, tile) and therefore easy integration into heritage contexts. Hazards exposure to workforce is also reduced with modular construction.

3) Supporting sustainability and net zero

Modular construction is one of the most effective ways to deliver homes that support the UK Government's Net Zero 2050 target and the Future Homes Standard (2025). Modular homes typically achieve up to 45% lower embodied carbon, significantly reduce waste (factory waste can be under 2%), provide excellent airtightness (which can lower energy bills) and can be designed to integrate low carbon technologies such as heat pumps, solar PV and MVHR systems.

Town-centre areas around Epsom Station, the Upper High street or East Street could benefit from larger scale developments delivered more quickly with less disruption. In the more sub-urban neighbourhoods or on larger plots of land volumetric modular homes could be considered and could include mid-rise blocks and key worker accommodation. Modular housing is also applicable to infill and back land sites suiting smaller plots with tighter access restrictions and neighbours. Examples of recently completed modular housing schemes include two modular housing schemes built in Grantham- the houses were delivered by lorry to site and fitted onto prepared foundations which included functioning pipe works and electrics. External elevations were fitted with insulation and brick slips.

(Source: [Innovative Modular Housing Scheme Completes in Lincolnshire | Design and Build UK](#)).



This type of design could suit smaller plots or infill plots. Another example consists of 15 townhouses on Weigall Road which was part of the Kidbrook Village regeneration scheme in South East London. Each house is composed of 3 pods one for each floor. The pods were steel framed, insulated and finished internally with windows, floors, skirting and kitchens. The project won the offsite Construction Awards -housing project of the Year in 2018. (Source: Alan Wood Partners).

Aur lie Paoli

CONSERVATION AREAS OF EPSOM & EWELL

In this Newsletter we launch the start of a major series of features focussing on the remarkable story of how the Conservation Areas that we take for granted today helped turn the tide against an orgy of post-War destruction of our Borough's once infinitely richer architectural heritage. In subsequent issues watch out for special focuses on Epsom & Ewell's 17 overarching conservation areas – an exceptional number for an authority of its size. Here, however, ECS committee member for heritage and conservation issues, Simon Alford, recounts the rocky road that needed to be travelled to secure official recognition that our built history even had a value, let alone merited legal protection... highlighting some of the important buildings that were lost along the way.

You can't help but wonder what could have been, what might have been, had only the demolition wrecking balls of the 1950s, 60s and 70s been held in check by Conservation Area protections.

The sad truth is, however, that the appreciation of historic and era-defining buildings in general is a surprisingly recent phenomenon – because as recently as the late 1960s, and throughout much of the 1970s, buildings that we would now consider historic gems were afforded little or no protection from property speculators with pound signs glinting in their eyes.

Epsom and Ewell was particularly susceptible to the resulting destruction. Despite escaping relatively unscathed by wartime bombing – certainly compared to

London and many of the UK's other major cities - our proximity to the capital, corresponding land values and a resumption of the pre-war outward march of suburbanisation that had been held in check between 1939 and 1945 all placed our borough in the eye of a redevelopment blitz.

Arguably, however, it was the prevailing "out with the old and in with the new" ethos in the post-war architectural and town planning establishment that was the ultimate undoing of a significant part of Epsom's rich Georgian Spa Town architectural heritage. Elegant historic structures that had survived two centuries and the Luftwaffe largely intact began falling like nine-pins as 1950s austerity made way for a 1960s building boom.

"It's tragic to look back and think what we lost," observes Epsom & Ewell History and Archaeology Society stalwart Ian West. "Even then many locals were horrified to witness what was happening – but at the time I think that those making decisions that would be unthinkable today considered it was the 'progressive' thing to do!"

Ian revels in the fact that, as part of a small group of locals who campaigned valiantly against the destruction – taking pains to record, photograph and salvage items from the litany of historic buildings that were lost one after another – he and his colleagues were routinely branded the 'lunatic fringe' for their protests by Epsom & Ewell's then Town Clerk and planning hierarchy.

Despite being considered a troublesome ‘awkward squad’ standing in the way of ‘progress’, those who dared fight the then pervasive orthodoxy of ‘modernisation’ –including the founders of the Epsom Protection Society (the forerunner of today’s Epsom Civic Society) – have certainly found themselves on the right side of history!

While unable to prevent multiple losses of historic buildings that would definitely have been saved for posterity had they only survived the 70s, ultimately the local pioneers of the now powerful national conservation lobby were able to nudge a still reticent Epsom & Ewell Borough Council towards the designation of its first Conservation Area in Church Street, Ewell (now part of the wider Ewell Village CA) shortly after the Royal Assent of the 1967 Civic Amenities Act made that possible.

Pressure for change nationally had been steadily building following widespread public outrage at the demolition of the Euston Arch and original station in 1962 – with protesters, including the poet laureate and Victorian Society founder John Betjeman going to on to fight another seminal fight to save St Pancras station.

The iconic Victorian Gothic edifice was finally awarded Grade 2 listed status in 1967, just ten days before demolition was set to commence. The fact, however, that four years later, in 1971, a battle was still raging against the proposed demolition of much of London’s now treasured Covent Garden tourist hotspot – to create, as the then GLC’s proposals put it, “high-rise buildings, new roads and a modern commercial zone” – demonstrates just how recent it is that the concept of conservation has become mainstream.

As such the designation of EEBC’s first CA was certainly forward thinking, albeit forced, more than anything, by local campaigners who had witnessed the lengths property developers were prepared to go to tear down much-loved historic buildings before protections could be set in place.

Ian West recalls: “Just before the Civic Amenities Act came into being it was demolition time! We lost Pitt Place in Epsom and The Turrets in Ewell literally over the weekend.”



The Turrets
Image courtesy of Bourne Hall Museum

This was on top of deeply controversial earlier losses including the original Georgian Bourne Hall in Ewell and Epsom town centre’s beloved Kings Head Hotel – a historic coaching inn

that dated back to the 1600s. It was visited, amongst others, by Samuel Pepys – but was torn down to widespread horror in 1957 to make way for the King Shades Walk shopping precinct (now Boots).

Questions were asked in Parliament about Pitt Place’s demolition and Surrey County Council attempted to prosecute the developer on the basis that the historic building, with parts dating back to the 1700s, had been

covered by a preservation order. That failed, however, after the developer suddenly produced a surveyor who claimed it had been a ‘dangerous structure’, even though none of what was demolished would have been accessible to the public had anyone bothered to lock the entrance gate!



Kings Head Hotel
Image courtesy of Bourne Hall Museum

Other notable losses included Cromwell Lodge in Church Street – built in the 1750s but pulled down without warning one Saturday morning in 1974 having been declared unsafe the previous evening by a building inspector. Tellingly, the building (which stood next to Hope Lodge) was on the line of Epsom’s Southern Relief Road,



Cromwell Lodge
Image courtesy of Bourne Hall Museum

which the then Council strongly supported, but was never actually built. 52 years later the site is still vacant and used as a carpark.

If only more enlightened views prevailed at the time, Ian West is convinced that Epsom’s

Georgian Spa town heritage would have been a far greater asset to the town than it is today – despite the survival of important buildings that still render our Borough distinct from the South London sprawl. Could we even have attained a place on today’s spa town tourist trail alongside Leamington Spa, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Matlock, Buxton and even Bath – aided by our easy accessibility from London?

“But for the attitudes that prevailed in the 1960s I think we could have been a really model town,” Ian laments. “People are far more aware now that the attractiveness and historical distinctiveness of town centres can be profitable because it makes them desirable to visit. I accept that old buildings cost more to look after than modern ones, but it can really pay to look after them. Why, after all, is it that people go to Bath? Because there’s something that is interesting and different to see – whereas to my knowledge people don’t take coach trips to Milton Keynes!”

Yet despite everything that has been lost, Ian still considers Epsom & Ewell’s Conservation Areas an important silver lining that protects what’s left and should hopefully prevent the mistakes of the past being repeated.

In future issues we will run special focuses on all 17 CA’s in alphabetical order: Adelphi Road; Burgh Heath Road; Chalk Lane; Church Street; Downs Road Estate; Epsom Town Centre; Ewell Downs Road/ The Green; Ewell Village; Higher Green; Longdown Lane; Hospital Cluster; Lintons Lane; Pikes Hill; Providence Place; Stamford Green; Woodcote and Worple Road.



NEVER-ENDING FIGHT TO KEEP OUR BOROUGH LEAFY

There's no better example of the need to mitigate creeping tree loss than the sad demise of the veteran Cedar in Church Street

that, until its felling at the end of April, had dominated the street scene for as long as anyone can remember.

Occupying a prominent position outside the former



police station (itself shortly to be redeveloped) the landmark 150-year-old cedar had been declining for some years - and, with much of its crown found to be either dead or dying in an inspection this spring, Surrey County Council's (SCC) decision to cut down this majestic survivor of the Great Storm of 1987 was not

only justifiable but essential on the grounds of public safety.

All too often such losses of landmark trees prove to be permanent... unless pressure is applied immediately for replacement planting.

Accordingly, Epsom & Ewell Tree Advisory Board (EETAB) was quick off the mark with its lobbying - and an initial positive response from SCC, along with the promise of further tree planting associated with the redevelopment of

the former police station, mean EETAB is as confident as it can be that long term tree cover in this part of Church Street will be maintained for future generations.



Other locations where EETAB is fighting for similarly positive outcomes include:

- The Yellow Box development in East Street, where EETAB managed to halt deep excavations within the root protection zones of three retained trees at the front of the site in April by lodging a planning enforcement complaint. EETAB remains concerned, however, at the level of care being shown to the trees during the final phase of construction work - especially with the large concrete blocks that were still in situ at the base of the trunks at the time of writing, despite obvious potential for ground compaction damage.

- Outside the former Green Gables site in Ashley Road - where EETAB is reminding Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) of a condition imposed by SCC Highways that none of the new dwellings can be occupied until a new street tree is funded, by the developer, to replace one at the entrance to the development site that was mysteriously felled by persons unknown at the outset of building work.

- At the Ashley Road Cemetery - where EETAB will soon be meeting with EEBC's Grounds Maintenance manager to discuss remedial planting following some inexplicably brutal pruning work along the Cemetery's Downs Road boundary wall.

Sometimes, however, it's swift action on more mundane fronts that can make all the difference.

A recent example involved the replanting and re-staking by EETAB of a newly planted street tree in Meadow View Road, West Ewell, which had been knocked over by a car.



With summer setting in, EETAB volunteers are also diligently watering as many of the 60 new street trees planted across the Borough this year they can viably reach - but the scale of this task is daunting and any help is welcome. If you value a new street tree near your home, please remember that a few buckets of water a week during the tree's first critical summer can make the difference between life and death.

- Find out more at www.eetab.org.uk

EVENTS

Walk back in time - with Ian West!

Following on from the fascinating glimpse into the past architectural glories of the southern part of South Street that Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society stalwart Ian West gave an intrepid group of ECS members last September, (reported in the **Winter 2025** newsletter at www.epsomcivicsociety.org.uk), Ian is preparing to head in the other direction – armed, as ever, with a host of interesting facts and anecdotes. The walk, which will begin promptly at 2pm on Sunday August 2 will once again start in front of Epsom Playhouse, but instead of going towards the Hospital will wend its way townwards – initially towards the Assembly Rooms and the western end of the High Street, and then into West Street. Not a long walk, but one with plenty of interest. Free, as ever, to ECS members, spaces on the walk are nonetheless limited – so anyone wishing to take part should email info@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk using ‘**Sunday August 2 Walk**’ as the subject line.

The Durdans



With Ian West's help, we're also hoping to organise another visit to the Durdans in Chalk Lane this Autumn for members who were unable to join the last two heavily oversubscribed tours – so watch out for details in the next Newsletter. While the date has not yet been set, you can tentatively reserve places in advance by emailing info@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk, using ‘Durdans’ as the subject line. Please name all members of your party and provide a telephone contact number. We will contact you when arrangements are finalised.

Anyone without access to email should contact Ishbel Kenward on 01372 438 361.

Places & Spaces art exhibition

As mentioned in our Spring Newsletter, Epsom Civic Society has been very pleased to provide sponsorship for the Exhibition entitled Places & Spaces being held next month at The Horton Arts Centre. This has given local 7-18 year olds the opportunity to create artworks of all kinds expressing

what appeals to them most as interesting, memorable or striking in Epsom and Ewell.

The date for entries has now passed and after judging the exhibition will open to the public on Wednesday 17th June



and run until Tuesday 30th June on The Horton's normal days of opening.

More information can be found on their website at: <https://thehortonepsom.org>

Jan Lanigan

Member Recruitment

We were very fortunate with the weather on Saturday 18th April when we had our Epsom Civic Society gazebo in the centre of town. There was plenty of footfall and a number of people showed an interest in our exhibits; over 30 people joined the Society which is a good result. A warm welcome to our new members and we hope that you enjoy your membership. Many of our members stopped to chat, which was good too.

Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society joined us in the morning. Thanks to those who were able to steward the exhibition.

Recruitment is essential to keep up our Membership numbers so if any members have family, friends,



neighbours or work colleagues who you think might be interested in joining Epsom Civic Society, please contact our Membership Secretary, Eleanor Bland ECSMembership@outlook.com and she will provide Newsletters and recruitment leaflets,

Ishbel Kenward

Local action to build a resilient Epsom and Ewell

When we hear the words 'climate change', it is likely we tend to start thinking about global emission targets, international summits, and policy-decisions that seem too abstract and removed from our day to day existence.

However as we are increasingly experiencing the direct and indirect impact of climate change, such as extreme weather conditions and rising food and energy prices, local communities are increasingly recognising that it is also a local challenge that requires a local response. Climate change is here and is happening to us. People are seeing its wider social consequences, particularly in relation to physical and mental health and wider wellbeing. Certain communities and social groups experience these effects unequally for instance, elderly people, deprived communities with low incomes, poor housing quality and limited mobility.

The question is no longer about simply preventing it but also how we adapt in ways that strengthen our communities, particularly those who are most vulnerable and improve local resilience.

In Epsom and Ewell, one group helping to turn that conversation into practical action is the [***Epsom and Ewell Climate Action Network \(eeCAN\)***](#).

eeCAN is a volunteer-led community organisation bringing together residents who want to promote realistic and community-focused approaches to sustainability and climate resilience. Their work is not about telling people how to live; rather, it is about helping local people discover practical ways to save money, reduce waste, share resources, and strengthen community connections.

One of the most exciting initiatives currently in development is the creation of Epsom and Ewell's first Library of Things (LoT). The concept is simple but powerful: instead of every household purchasing tools or equipment that may only be used once or twice a year, residents would be able to borrow items such as drills, gardening tools, sewing machines, carpet cleaners, camping equipment, or DIY supplies for free.

At first glance, a Library of Things may seem like a small idea. In reality, it touches on several important aspects of climate adaptation and resilience. But more importantly, it helps address wider priorities relevant to local residents. Sharing resources can help reduce household costs at a time when many families are already under financial pressure. It can reduce unnecessary consumption and waste. Most importantly, it encourages stronger community relationships, which are increasingly recognised as essential in helping neighbourhoods respond to future challenges.

Climate adaptation is not solely about infrastructure or engineering projects; it is also about social resilience. Communities that know one another, share skills, and support local initiatives are often better placed to cope with disruption, whether from extreme weather, economic pressures, or wider environmental changes. A number of eeCAN volunteers have received training to provide free home energy surveys. These surveys help residents save money by saving energy.

Regular Climate Conversations, held twice a month, provide an open and welcoming space for residents to discuss environmental concerns, share ideas, and learn from one another. Topics range from energy use and food systems to biodiversity and sustainable travel, but the emphasis remains practical and accessible rather than technical or political.

The group has also run successful community projects such as the Bike Amnesty, where unwanted bicycles are collected, repaired, and redistributed. Initiatives like this not only reduce waste but also support healthier, more affordable travel options within the borough. Plans are currently underway to hold a Bike and Tech Amnesty in October 2026 in collaboration with Relove Technology (B Corp), Community Calling, and Surrey's recycling contractor Suez.

Another recent initiative is the Living River Art Exhibition, which aims to encourage reflection on local waterways, biodiversity, and the relationship between communities and the natural environment. By combining creativity with environmental awareness, the exhibition hopes to engage residents who may not normally participate in climate-related discussions.

Importantly, eeCAN's projects demonstrate that local climate action does not need to feel overwhelming. Small, community-led initiatives can often have a meaningful cumulative impact. Borrowing instead of buying, repairing instead of discarding, attending local discussions, volunteering at events, or simply supporting neighbourhood projects all contribute towards building a more resilient borough.

There is also growing recognition that local organisations such as eeCAN have an important role to play alongside councils, civic groups, businesses, and residents. Effective climate adaptation requires collaboration across communities, and volunteer-led groups are often able to reach people in ways that formal institutions cannot.

As eeCAN continues to grow, the organisation hopes to expand awareness of its work, as well as increase volunteers and community involvement.

For residents interested in getting involved, there are many ways to participate.

Attending a Climate Conversation, volunteering at an event, contributing ideas to the Library of Things project, or simply following and sharing eeCAN's activities are all valuable starting points.

Climate adaptation can sometimes feel like an abstract or distant concept. Yet many of the solutions begin locally, through communities willing to share resources, exchange knowledge, and work together towards a more resilient future. In Epsom and Ewell, eeCAN is taking proactive steps in building local resilience and helping to show what that can look like in practice.

Upcoming Event:

- Bike and Tech Amnesty - 24th October 2026, 9-5pm at Epsom Methodist Church

If you are interested to volunteer, become a trustee or to find out more, please email eeclimateactionnetwork@gmail.com

Jen Din



LOCAL PLAN UPDATE – CONSULTATION ON ADDITIONAL SITES PROPOSED FOR ALLOCATION

Members will be aware from the Chair's commentary in the Spring edition of the Society newsletter that the Local Plan Inspector had required the Council to assess the suitability of additional Green Belt sites for potential allocation. Whilst undoubtedly controversial for many the Inspector has made it clear that 'failure to undertake this work will result in the submitted Local Plan being found to be unsound.' This could not be countenanced as it would mean the Council having to start again with much greater housing target figures (increased from 569 to 889 dwellings pa) required of us through changes in the more recent Government's National Planning Policy Framework. In addition, in the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan and without a 5-year housing land supply and additional measures introduced through the Housing Delivery Test there would be significant risks posed by speculative planning applications and appeals.

The Council has now undertaken the requested additional pieces of work, principally one in relation to Green Belt sites contained with the Land Availability Assessment (LAA) and their suitability for potential allocation and another in relation to whether some additional urban sites identified in the LAA can be considered to be developable.

The documents, along with instructions on how to comment, are available on the council's planning policy consultation platform; printed copies can also be found in local libraries and at Epsom Town Hall.

The consultation closes on Monday 15 June 2026.

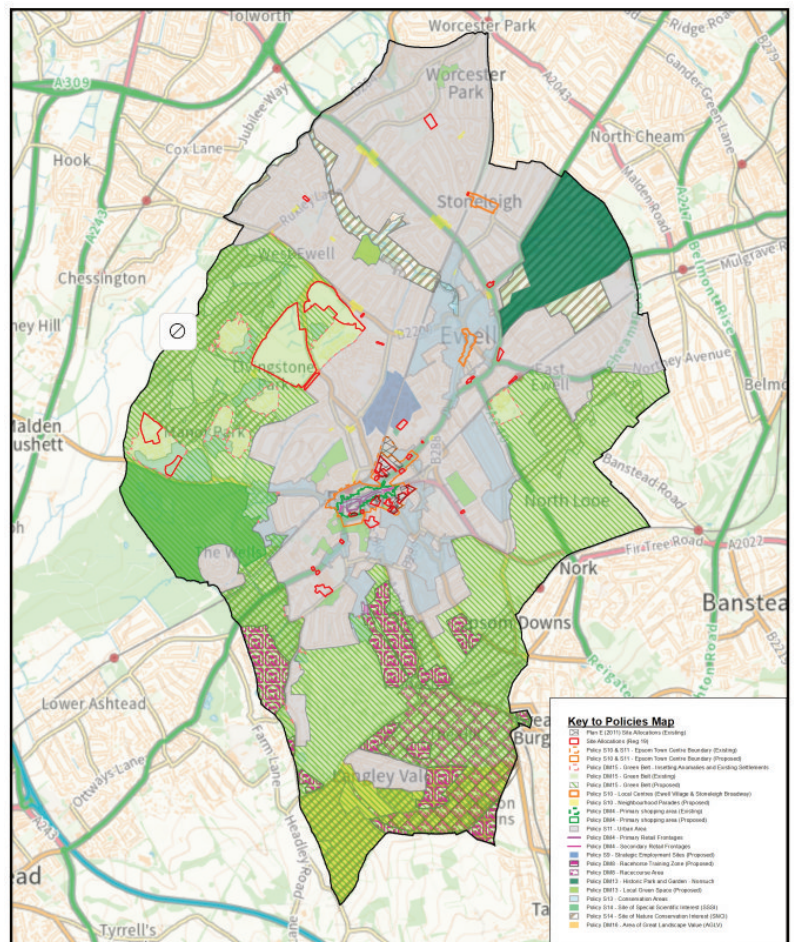
It is easy to comment on the additional documents. Comment forms can be downloaded from the consultation website and either posted back to Epsom Town Hall, The Parade, Epsom KT18 5BY, or emailed to:

localplan@epsom-ewell.gov.uk (link opens e-mail).

The results of this latest consultation exercise will be considered at an additional Examination Hearing on 2 July 2026.

Epsom Civic Society's planning sub-committee will be scrutinising these latest documents and submitting a response by the deadline.

John Mumford



THE DOWNS

In my update for the Spring Newsletter, I mentioned that the next **Downs Consultative Committee** meeting would be held on 16 March, and that I would once again be raising the issues of spoil heaps and noticeboard content – as I have for the previous 8 or so meetings. About a



week before the meeting, there was some progress in reducing the size of two of the spoil heaps (see picture of half-removed spoil heap), albeit at the cost of some damage to the grass caused by moving heavy equipment when the ground was soft. It seems like the imminency of a meeting has the effect of galvanising action, but everything goes on the back burner afterwards until six months later, and sadly that is what has happened again this time. Perhaps I should be pressing for more Consultative Committee meetings!

At the March meeting, I again pointed out that these were long-standing concerns that had been discussed a number of times previously, and I did get an assurance of sorts that improvements would be made. I was told that the new spoil heaps (!) that had been created near to the Tadworth road as a result of remodelling the 6-furlong start of the racecourse would be temporary – although not that temporary as they are mostly still there 3 months later... As regards the content of the noticeboards, this has now been fully agreed and all that is needed is for the Council to arrange printing; however, this has not happened in the 2 months since the

meeting. I fear I will be back saying the same things again at the next meeting on 12 October...

A video recording of the meeting can be found [here](#). Minutes had not been published at the time of writing.

On a happier note, the Tiger Lily coffee van that has begun operating in the top/7th furlong car park seems to be successfully attracting walkers, trainers and racehorse owners. It is normally open 6 days a week from 9.30am to 4pm, and as well as coffees and teas there is a selection of very tempting snacks and tray bakes. Do give it a try! Check their [opening times here](#) as they can change from week to week.

As I write, preparations for the Derby meeting on 5th & 6th June are in full swing, with marquees starting to be erected and fencing going up. I gather that ticket sales for the grandstands are going well, and the Jockey Club is aiming to attract more local people to attend this year after disappointing numbers last year (partly weather-induced). There will be lots of family-friendly features, so do book soon if you would like to see Epsom's internationally famous event. The Hill is free to access if you don't want to be in one of the enclosures.

Nick Lock





Upcoming Event

Bourne Hall Museum

Suffragette Stories

Tuesday 16th June

2 - 3.30pm

Step into the story of suffragette Emily Wilding Davison, and discover the hidden details of her dramatic actions at the Epsom Derby 1913.

Davison remains one of the most compelling and debated figures of the suffrage movement. What drove her that day? Protest, martyrdom, or something more complex?

Vivid storytelling and performance bring to life the suffragette movement, the risks these women took and the daring and sometimes controversial tactics they used.



For more details, contact: Susan Dalloe
sdalloe@epsom-ewell.gov.uk
020 8394 1734

Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell, KT17 1UF

£20 per ticket

scan QR code to book your ticket or visit our website [bournehall.org](#)

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If you haven't already paid and were not in when your Road Representative called to collect subscriptions, they will have left a small envelope with his / her name and address for you to arrange payment in a way that suits you. If paying by cheque, please make this payable to 'Epsom Civic Society'. You can pay online by Bank Transfer (*Epsom Civic Society Sort code 20 29 90 Account No 20353078*) or PayPal as detailed on the brown envelope. Select individual (£3) or household (£5) membership as appropriate or pay a different amount if you wish to make a donation.



NEW MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

First of all, let me introduce myself. I am Eleanor Bland the New Membership Secretary, and I can be contacted at: ECSMembership@outlook.com or by phone on 01372 722558. I should like to thank Ishbel for all her hard work over many years and I shall do my best to be a worthy successor. Please bear with me for a few weeks whilst I take in all the information and get everything up and running.

ECS ROAD REPRESENTATIVES

Thank you to those Road Representatives who were able to attend the 'Afternoon Tea and Cakes' to thank Reps for all they do for ECS on Wednesday 13th May. It was good to meet you and I look forward to meeting many more of you during the coming years.

Eleanor Bland – Membership Sec.

01372 722558 ECSMembership@outlook.com

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

Chair: **Vacancy**

Vice Chair: **Vacancy**

Hon Secretary: **Karen Overington**

Hon Treasurer: **Nick Lock**

Other Committee members:

- **Simon Alford** (Heritage)
- **Michael Arthur** (Planning)
- **Jonathan Lewis** (Planning)
- **Vacancy** (Minutes, Events)
- **Mark Bristow** (Webmaster)
- **Eleanor Bland** (Membership)
- **Jan Lanigan** (Events)
- **John Mumford** (Planning)
- **Aurélie Paoli** (Climate change and sustainability)

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Hon Photographic Archivist: **David Rowe**

Newsletter Editor: **Steve Bridger**

Publicity: **Vacancy**

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