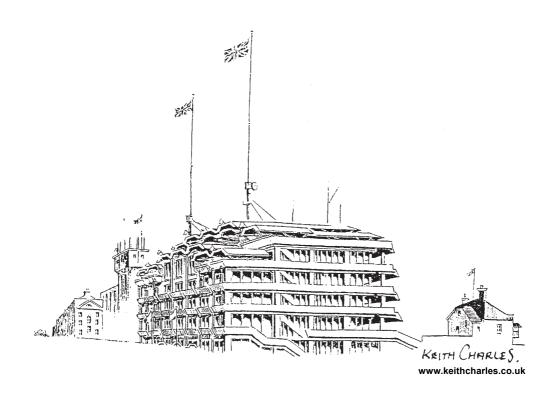
SPRING 2020 NEWSLETTER

WOODCOTE (EPSOM) RESIDENTS' SOCIETY

Local People Local Interests



Local People Looking after Local Interests

Visit our website: www.woodcoteepsomresidentssociety.org



Committee for 2019/20

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Woodcote (Epsom) Residents' Society

(http://woodcoteepsomresidentssociety.org)

Please join us at our Annual General Meeting

3rd March 2020 at 7.45 for 8.00 p.m. at St. Martin's Junior School Hall

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence
- 2. Approval of Minutes of the AGM held on 11th March 2019*
- 3. Approval and adoption of the accounts for the year ending 31st December 2019
- 4. Review of Group rules
 - a. Rule 2.4 Amount of life time subscriber multiple
 - b. Rule 4.14 Non voting member of borough councillor (RA)
 - c. Review of numbers required for quorum
- 5. Election of the committee and Hon Auditor for 2020-21
- 6. Reports from your RA Borough Councillors
 - a. Liz Frost
 - b Bernice Froud
 - c. Steven McCormick
- 7. Any other business
- * The minutes are available on our website; paper copies will be available at the meeting
- ** Copies of the accounts will be available at the meeting, and on the website after the meeting
- *** If you would like to stand for the committee please contact Steven McCormick by 25th February 2020.

Road Representatives

The W(E)RS committee are in the process of producing another Newsletter. Over the years quite a number of the Road Reps who help with the delivery have moved away or found that they are no longer able to help. This has left a few people with very large numbers to deliver.

Please would you help by taking on a 'round'? The Newsletters are normally produced 3 or 4 times a year. W(E)RS do also ask for help with delivering extra literature for local elections, but understand if you prefer not to do this.

You would be contacted either by e-mail or message (whichever you prefer) when the Newsletters are ready for delivery and it is normally requested that they are delivered within about a week.

Please let a committee member know, confirming how you would like to be contacted, and the details.

Councillor Reports

Councillor reports

Your Ward Councillors, Liz Frost, Bernice Froud and Steven McCormick have been very busy with committee and outside body work and meetings. A flavour of their activities is below, and there is more detail on the website.

Community & Wellbeing Committee (Bernice)

The Council has written its Health and Wellbeing Strategy, a very detailed and comprehensive document. It has ambitious targets within and the Committee approved the adoption of it at the January meeting.

Environment and Safe Communities Committee (Steven)

Two meetings held since May and a broad agenda of topics affecting residents' borough wide. Key items from my point are to continue tree planting, maintain our green space, ensure air quality is maintained and improved.

Licensing and Planning Policy Committee (Liz)

This committee is tasked with overseeing the production of our draft Local Plan, which has to show how we can achieve the housing targets set by Central Government. Last year the Borough commissioned a Masterplan setting out a growth strategy to deliver housing, employment, shops and infrastructure. The Masterplan has taken note of the feedback from the Future40 consultation and aims to give a clear and coherent vision of how the Borough will be transformed as it meets its objectively assessed housing need while retaining our locally distinctive character.

Difficult decisions will need to be taken, but the Committee has agreed 6 principles to look at how we can address the housing needs. These include the areas where increased density of housing could be focussed, maintaining the character of the borough and good design. These have been ratified by the Council.

To support the Local Plan, many other pieces of work are being commissioned as evidence. These include technical studies such as the updated Strategic Housing Needs Assessment and a Housing Delivery Action Plan; a Spatial Economic Development Strategy; a Retail needs assessment and Town Centres health checks; and papers on Biodiversity in the borough and on the Horse Race training and Equestrian industry.

Planning Committee (Steven)

A very technical committee and time consuming and I am loving it. The policy and framework that the borough must review applications against is extensive and complex. Since May there have been a number of planning committee meetings and site visits. The first planning meeting reached its guillotine timing of 11pm when we had to finish the point being examined and reconvene a few days later to complete the agenda of applications. A long day.

Standards Committee (Liz)

Part of the remit of the Standards Committee is to keep the Borough's Constitution under review and update where required. A major review is currently underway, with many of the amendments just involving updating (e.g. changes to terminology or job titles and amending numbering etc) to ensure consistency and some clarification. As chairman of this committee, I've spent many hours going through all the points to try to check all the details. There have also been some changes. The Council introduced the facility to nominate 'Champions' several years ago, and

this has now been formalised in the Constitution. Some parts have been agreed, but there is still work to be undertaken, including agreeing our Planning Code of Practice.

Audit Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee (Liz & Steven)

The Committee met in November and February. We received reports and asked questions on the Internal Audit progress report; the Annual Governance Statement and External Audit findings; the Risk Management Framework Annual report; and the performance report at Q2 of the Key Priority Targets in the Corporate Plan. Where there have been recommendations of additional work to be undertaken, this appears to be on target.

Health Liaison Panel (HLP) (Liz & Bernice)

At our meeting in July we welcomed Dr Hilary Floyd who told us about the integrated care partnership which enables many older patients who would previously have been admitted to hospital to stay in their own homes. The partnership has access to hospital consultants and has a multi-skilled team who can visit residents at home to provide support for them.

The Council has developed a Health Strategy for the borough. Although Borough Councils do not commission health or social care, we are still able to influence improvements in the health and wellbeing of our residents – e.g. the Round the Borough Bike event, our involvement in the Surrey Youth Game, and the social prescribing link service.

Liz, as chairman, attends meetings in public of the Epsom & St Helier University Hospitals Trust board and is part of the group looking at the Quality Report priorities.

The news of the Government approved £500m of funding to be made available to develop a new specialist acute hospital facility for Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust is very welcome. We will continue to make the case for this facility to be provided at Epsom Hospital and have published press releases supporting this view. In view of this very important development, we are organising a meeting for Epsom & Ewell residents on February 26th, 7pm in Bourne Hall where Mr Daniel Elkeles, Chief Executive of the hospital trust will explain the current and planned future services provision at Epsom Hospital.

Downs Conservators (Liz, Bernice & Steven)

Downs Conservators consist of 6 Borough Councillors and 4 representatives from the Racecourse / landowner. We have held a series of workshops for all members to look at our roles and responsibilities under the 1984 Act of Parliament that governs the use of the Downs. This should lead to improved communications and understanding between those who are responsible for managing the different aspects of the use of the Downs.

The Act specifies that priority is given to the training of racehorses until noon, Monday – Saturday and until 9.30 on Sundays. Life has changed dramatically since the Act was introduced, with greatly increased traffic, financial pressures, and the popularity of different (sometimes new) leisure activities – which can lead to health and safety issues. Balancing the needs of the training industry with the desires of people to use the area for leisure and exercise is a huge challenge.

Training Grounds Management Board (TGMB) (Liz)

As chairman of Downs Conservators, I have a place on TGMB.

Epsom trained horses performed well in 2019 and have made a good start in 2020. Having enough horses using the training grounds is crucial for the continuation of the industry and the maintenance of the Downs. The redevelopment of the Downs House training yard is scheduled to start soon, which should result in a welcome increase in horse numbers within the next couple of years.

5

The trainers' open day was held on Bank Holiday Monday, where there was the opportunity to watch and hear about local horses in training, and to visit several of the training yards. All three of us attended and regarded the day as a great success – helped by the excellent weather. We even considered whether in 2020 Conservators should enter a team for the Space-Hopper race!

Council

Climate Change

A motion was passed at the July Council meeting recognising the UK Parliament's declaration of a climate change emergency and recognising both the importance of continuing to respond to the environmental concerns and the serious and accelerating changes to the world caused by climate change.

The Council agreed to establish its own climate action plan, with targets to cut its environmental impact and steps to become carbon neutral. Steven was a member of the working group tasked with preparing the Council's Climate Change Action Plan, which was unanimously agreed by Council in January.

Planning Issues

The government's new homes target for Epsom & Ewell is 579 new properties / year for the next 20 years. We also have to show a 5 year supply of land for housing. Currently we are not able to identify this amount of land amount of land nor have we been meeting our previous targets, therefore the government has increased the number of homes we are required to build by 20% to 697 per year!

Officers are working hard to enable us to show how we can meet these targets. There have been public consultations; greenbelt studies; calls for available land: and help with bringing unoccupied homes back into use or redeveloped. Any land that is offered for building must be considered by the Council, even if it appears to be unsuitable and is then rejected, so that the Council can show that it has looked at it and had good reasons to reject it.

Residents' Issues (Liz, Bernice & Steven)

We try to be in touch with those residents newly included in the register of electors to give them information about the Council. It has been a pleasure to meet you.

We were made aware of gas canisters being discarded on the Downs in the evenings on a regular basis. The relevant council officer has been notified and we will also raise this at the next Community Police meeting which is to be very soon. If you have evidence of antisocial behaviour or other crime in the Ward, please let us know so that we are able to highlight these during our meetings with the police. For them to be able to police the area efficiently they need to be aware of the scale of any problems and where they occur.

Many residents wish to see more tree planting in the Borough. RA Councillors and Epsom & Ewell Tree Advisory Board fully endorse this and are lobbying Surrey County Council to do more to enable this. Unfortunately, we have been met with resistance, particularly with regards to street trees. We are continuing to pressurise the relevant personnel and are aware that Surrey County Council are updating their guidance on planting trees, shrubs etc on grass verges..

We have been asked to help residents with a wide range of other issues. Several of these related to Surrey County Council responsibilities, including problems with the bus services; broadband services; pavement obstacles; yellow lines; on street parking provision; and the way that utility companies have been working. With these we either signpost, provide advice or contact SCC to help find a resolution.

Borough Council issues have included graffiti; litter and litter bins; untidy front gardens; dangerous / inconsiderate parking; street cleaning and weed clearing; noise nuisance; issues with refuse collections; planning applications and planning infringements.

Woodcote Ward has several major planning applications to be decided. All of these will be determined by the Planning Committee.

- Atkins have sold part of their Woodcote Grove site to a developer, Stonegate Homes.
 They have applied to build 108 properties there, with very limited parking. The scale of the proposal, the conservation area and narrow roads around the site mean that this is a very contentious application. We have attended the consultation and have been assisting residents with submitting their views.
- 22-24 Dorking Road. This is a proposal to demolish 2 detached houses in Dorking Road, on the corner of White Horse Drive and put up a block of 20 flats with underground parking. The proposal is described as part two and part three storeys, with rooms in the roof and basement
- The developer working with the company that bought the former Epsom Hospital land has undertaken some consultation which have resulted in some changes from their original plans. However now that the plans have been validated we can see that this is still for a very large development. We have notified those who approached us about the proposals to give them the reference so that they can assess the proposals and submit their views.
- Fairfax Properties has plans for 20 new properties on the Langley Bottom Farm site, where the current barns and other farm buildings are. The application has not yet been validated. Liz and Bernice attended a meeting recently with Fairfax and we requested that they hold a public meeting in the Village Hall to enable all residents to gain as much information as possible, in order that they may make their views known should a planning application be validated by the council. We hope they will fulfil our request and we will let residents know if and when we receive further communication from them about this.

Armed Forces champion (Steven)

Several meetings held with the Armed Forces Covenant, an information day event hosted by the 11th Battalion, attendance and support of the Royal British Legion, and attendance and support of the breakfast club on Sunday mornings at the Assembly rooms Weatherspoon's in Epsom.

Further study and outreach with local organisations is required to support this very worthwhile cause

Several councillors along with the Mayor volunteered to help with the poppy collections in October/November.

Cycling champion (Steven)

Met with the cycling action group who had a long meeting with Surrey Council to prioritise cycle enablement options throughout the borough.

Due to attend the follow on regular meetings with this group.

Climate Change Update

A cross-party working group was set up and a term of reference agreed at the October meeting of the Environment Committee and their work has completed which has resulted in a Climate Change Action Plan.

The Borough Council:

- has curtailed the use of single-use plastics
- has worked to improve biodiversity in the borough's green spaces
- is encouraging and supporting the recycling of crisp packets, not only do they get recycled but the Air Ambulance also benefits. If you don't know where to recycle them, please hand them into the Town Hall Reception
- continued to encourage residents to reuse, reduce and recycle, (and put the right thing in the right bin!)
- has purchased an electric Nissan Leaf, a zero-emission vehicle to replace a petrol vehicle for Council use.

The Climate Change Action Plan was presented for approval at a special Environment Committee meeting, followed immediately by a Full Council meeting on 20th January at which it was supported by all.

Council agrees ambitious climate change action plan -

https://epsom-ewell.gov.uk/news/council-agrees-ambitious-climate-change-action-plan

W(E)RS Newsletter

At our recent open committee meeting, several residents expressed the wish to contribute ideas for articles for our Newsletters. If there is something that you would like considered, please send your ideas to one of the committee

Formal Notice of Meeting

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of WOODCOTE MILLENNIUM GREEN TRUST (Registered Charity Number 1075872)

will be held at Fingo Marketing, 17a West Street, Epsom KT18 7RL on Monday 30th March 2020 at 8.00 p.m. Do go along to hear what the Millennium Green Trustees have been doing, and to influence future plans. Please note the different venue.

Epsom & Ewell's Targets Trebled!

Planning - why are there proposals to build much taller buildings in Epsom and to substantially increase the town's housing density?

The answer is: Epsom & Ewell's Housing Targets have been trebled!

The Government now requires Epsom and Ewell Borough Council to plan for **579** new homes each year for the next 20 years. This compares with a target new build in (2017) of **181**.

What is more, the Government has added 20% to the target as a penalty, because the Borough does not have enough land identified to build 5 x the Government's annual target (a "5 year land supply").

This makes a total target of **695** new homes each year! The net result will be **at least** 9843 new homes by 2036.

- These much higher housing targets imply a 30% plus increase in housing in the Borough over 20 years.
- The "Local Plan" now being created has to show how it will achieve this, or the government will not approve it.

Where should the homes go? The Conservatives say that homes should not be built on Green Belt, however the housing targets are so demanding that all the Conservative Borough Councils in Surrey are planning to build on Green Belt!

Epsom and Ewell does not have enough available land to meet these targets, without using some Green Belt land. Our Borough is the smallest and most densely populated in Surrey, with 44% of available land in Epsom & Ewell already built on, and 42% of the remainder is Green Belt / publicly accessible open space. To say the targets, present a "huge challenge" is an understatement!

Failure to adhere to Government Planning Policy could lead to penalties against the Council.

Your Residents' Association Councillors fully accept the need for the right homes in the right places, provided they are appropriate, include the necessary levels of social housing and are accompanied by the necessary infrastructure such as schools, roads and services. Your Councillors also will be stressing the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states that developments should be both good quality and maintain the character of the area. However, recent changes in national planning policy state that:

- lack of infrastructure is not a valid reason for refusal.
- the base position is that planning applications are expected to be approved.
- the Council must ensure that no more than 10% of refused major planning applications are subsequently overturned on appeal. In such a small borough as Epsom and Ewell, this figure can be easily exceeded. If 10 major planning applications are refused and go to appeal, the Council will breach this test if more than one is overturned.

Failure to comply with Government demands brings the threat that **Central Government will take control of planning in Epsom and Ewell,** meaning the Borough Council and residents will have even less say on future planning decisions.

These threats mean that in practice local councils have far less control over local developments than the public believes, and expects.

A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE? Yes, but Epsom and Ewell Borough Council is doing all it can to challenge the Government and find a compromise.

The Borough Council has investigated ("The Longmead and Nonsuch Industrial Estates Capacity Study") options and concluded it is unviable and at best could only meet a small fraction of the number of additional homes demanded, because:

- little if any of this land is available for such development,
- much of the rest is unsuitable for redevelopment as housing for various reasons (such as the location of "the Dump"),
- it is important to also keep affordable space for businesses in the Borough, or we will become a dormitory town with no local economy.

A recent meeting of the Licensing and Planning Policy committee agreed the following six key principles, which will form the backbone of the new Local Plan:

Principle 1 – Character of the Borough

Planning policies should support the "desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting" (NPPF para 122(d)). In addition, developments, should "function well and add to the overall quality of the area ... [be] visually attractive ... sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting ... [and] create places ... with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users" (NPPF para 127).

Principle 2 – The focus for Development

As outlined in the approved draft Masterplan, we will focus housing development in the following locations:

- Epsom Town Centre
- Other centres and stations

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Prices: Nov - March £40 per night April, May, Oct, £50.00 per night June, July, Aug, Sept £60.00 per night



Email: Tony at costablancaapartment1@gmail.com Tel: 01372 811555

- Principal movement corridors
- Strategic employment sites
- Intensification of the urban area
- Urban edge of green belt.

Principle 3 - Design

Design Policies will require developers to deliver design quality with an emphasis on green and family friendly, and which ensures that each development is "of Epsom and Ewell" reflecting the local character and setting.

Principle 4 – Height and Density

Policies will also address the density and height of developments and place a height restriction [storeys] which reflects each locality's character and setting based on the NPPF.

Principle 5 – Climate Change

The Local Plan policies will reflect the Council's commitments in the Environmental Action Plan (Climate Change Action Plan).

Principle 6 – Infrastructure

The Local Plan policies will address the issues of necessary infrastructure to ensure that new developments are sustainable.

Your views

Last year the Borough council consulted residents and the response was to optimise use of the urban sites we have, while accepting that some of the less valuable Green Belt could be lost to housing, protecting as much Green Belt as possible.

We are already seeing planning applications for higher buildings on brownfield sites in the borough. Epsom and Ewell is the smallest and most urban of all the Surrey boroughs, and there are limited brownfield sites to use, so **how high and dense should we accept that these buildings must be?**

Your Woodcote ward elected Councillors and your Residents' Association committee are interested in your views. We are happy to meet to hear your views and answer questions.



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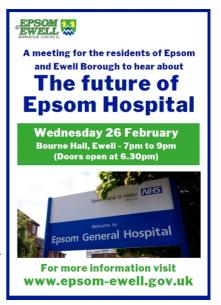
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The Future of Epsom Hospital

The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 26 February at 7pm at Bourne Hall (doors open from 6.30pm)

Please note, this meeting is not part of the public consultation the IHTP has just launched. The intention of our meeting is to ensure residents of our borough have opportunity to hear about possible changes specific to Epsom Hospital, and to ensure they have their views/concerns heard, and responded to.

Registration to attend is via email: Health1@epsom-ewell.gov.uk and residents can be directed to the events page of our website for further information on the event and registration.





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The Emily Davison Memorial Project

A group of local residents are leading a project to install a memorial to the suffragette Emily Wilding Davison in Epsom, the town where Emily lost her life campaigning for women's right to vote.

Emily is widely known for her role in the campaign, and particularly for her actions at the 1913 Epsom Derby where she ran out in front of the King's horse during the race. Emily became a controversial figure as the incident was captured on the newly invented technology of the time, the moving image, and was viewed by millions nationally and internationally. There was much debate about her intentions but new evidence recently came to light suggesting Emily was attempting to attach a suffragette banner to the horse's bridle as it passed the Royal Box, in order to highlight the campaign for votes for women to the King. The Emily Davison Memorial Project is raising money to produce and install a life-size bronze statue of Emily, sitting on a contemporary granite bench in the redeveloped Market Place in Epsom town centre. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and Surrey County Council are both behind the project, and over £25,000 of the £50,000 target has been raised so far.

It is hoped that the community will continue to support the project, which will represent Epsom and Ewell's commitment to gender equality, bring people into the town centre, and add to a number of similar statues of suffragettes installed nationally in the past few years so the sacrifices they made are never forgotten.

Sarah Dewing, Chair of the EDMP says. "It is time that Emily Wilding Davison is properly recognised for the part she played in bringing about the Governments' decision to give some women the right to vote. It is due to her sacrifice and that of many others that women today have equal rights in law and opportunities to fulfil their potential that Emily's generation could only dream of".

To find out more or to donate please visit www.emilydavisonproject.org, or find us on Instagram @emilydavisonproject, on twitter @EmilyMemorial, or on the Emily Davison Memorial Project Facebook page. You can also contact the project via email on info@emilydavisonproject.org

Round the Borough Bike

The Round the Borough Bike is a route of approximately 20 miles, mainly off-road, linking many of the beautiful open spaces in Epsom and Ewell. It starts and finishes at Horton Country Park and includes Epsom Downs, Nonsuch Park and the Hogsmill local nature reserve.

This year the event takes place on Sunday 13th May. It is free to take part, but registration in advance is required. Please see https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/RBHB for more information.

Planning

The W(E)RS committee is very pleased that a small group of residents has offered to look in detail at major planning applications in the ward. Where the overwhelming views expressed to W(E)RS by residents is opposed to the application, and there are legitimate planning reasons to oppose it, they draft objections on behalf of the society. Their experience is invaluable in putting together comments backed up by policies and guidance.

Events at Langley Vale Wood in 2020

The Woodland Trust is pleased to be offering some brand new events at Langley Vale Wood in 2020, as well as a repeat of the popular guided walks.

Choose from dawn chorus and butterfly themed walks, yoga and photography workshops this year.

Details and booking information is at https://woodlandtrusttickets.cloudvenue.co.uk/search for 'Langley' in the box on the top right corner



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