

Borough Insight

ISSUE 79



Safeguarding
nature

Keeping YOU informed...

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Mayor's message



I'm writing this on the same day that England's top scientists have reissued their advice for our safety and how we can respect ourselves and others.

Namely, to wash our hands more often, wear a mask when inside in public areas, maintain social distancing and follow 'the rule of six'. All good sensible advice.

As if we don't have enough to contend with, it is also coming into the flu season. If you are over 50, in one of the at risk groups or if you care for someone in an at risk group and you haven't booked a flu jab, I urge you to book a place as soon as possible.

Despite the current situation, Gillian and I have been proud to attend numerous events representing the borough. We attended the opening of the Cockney Museum in Stoneleigh; a service at Epsom Methodist Church to welcome the new vicar; and we laid wreathes to commemorate VJ Day in both Epsom Cemetery and at St Mary's Church in Ewell, where a small number of veterans and British Legion personnel were in attendance.

I have also spoken to some of our local businesses and retailers who are happy to be greeting their customers again in the new 'Covid secure' environment.

One of my personal recent highlights was an extensive interview with the local Talking Newspaper who provide such a useful service. They are run by volunteers and I'm reminded again of all the volunteers across the borough helping our residents in many different ways. I really wonder how we would get on without them and offer my sincere thanks on behalf of the community for everything they do.

It may be early but can I give my best wishes to you and yours for the upcoming festive period. Have a happy and healthy Christmas and stay safe.

Councillor Humphrey Reynolds

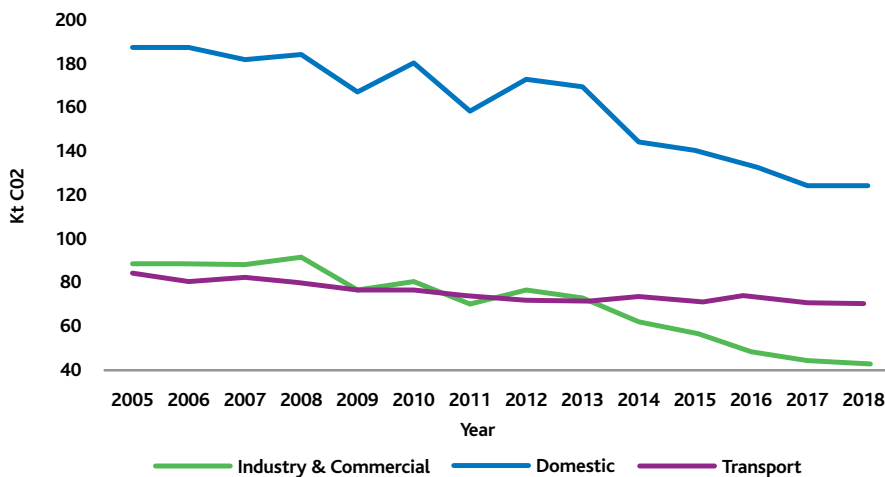
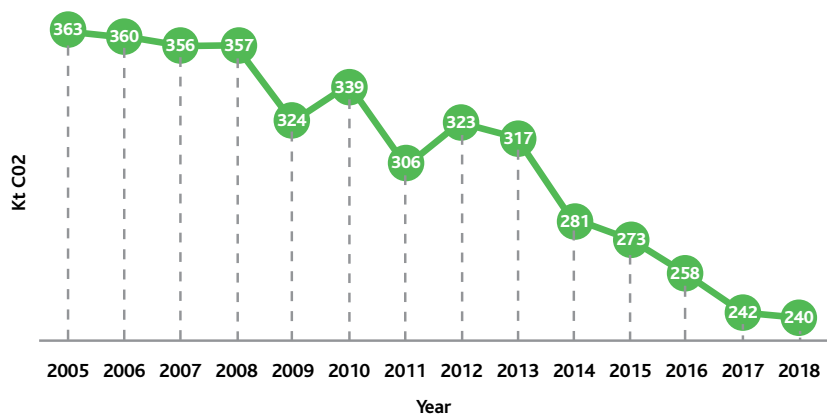
Cutting carbon!

According to the latest Government figures, the borough of Epsom and Ewell has seen its total carbon emissions decrease from 363kt CO₂ to 240kt CO₂ over a 13 year period (from 2005-2018).



Epsom Common boasts a colony of one of the rarest UK butterflies, the Black Hairstreak.

This data from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy excludes large industrial sites, railways and motorways to give us a great understanding of the emissions we can influence from the borough emissions and how they have changed over the years. However, these emission reductions come at varying rates across different sectors. Domestic emissions remaining the highest source in the borough.



The Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Climate Change Action Plan will continue to develop on this positive news by aiming for the ambitious target of being net zero carbon by the year 2035. This will be a collective effort and promote sustainability through a number of targets including reduction of waste, switching to renewable energy sources and the promotion of sustainable practices.

To consider ways to reduce your own carbon emissions, to calculate your own carbon footprint and find out more information check out our dedicated climate change web page.



A natural world

Biodiversity (biological diversity) includes all species found on earth and the habitats in which they live.



At home in the urban garden and the countryside the common frog

Biodiversity is all around us; in our woodlands and parks, our rivers, hedges, verges and our gardens. Countless varieties of birds, plants, insects and other animals live in a complex interconnected natural system. This is biodiversity – the rich variety of life on earth.

In common with the rest of the UK, and the planet, over the last 70 years the borough has seen huge losses of natural habitats and species. Biodiversity is under threat from human activity, including development, industry and recreation.

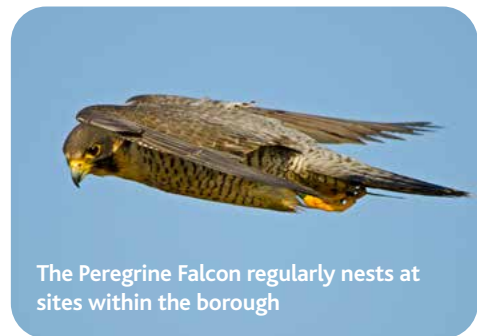
The borough covers an area of 3,411 hectares and with a population of 80,000 it is the smallest and most densely populated district in Surrey. Despite its size and population, the borough has 12 priority natural habitats and 13 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).



The stag beetle is a national priority species with a stronghold in Epsom and Ewell.



The Pipistrelle just one of the bat species that can be found in the borough.



The Peregrine Falcon regularly nests at sites within the borough



Fungi on Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve.

The Epsom & Ewell Biodiversity Action Plan sets out the main issues impacting on wildlife in the borough and some of the measures needed to help our wildlife. The plan is updated and agreed at committee every 10 years.

The 2020 - 2030 Biodiversity Action Plan identifies 17 habitats and 113 species, or species groups, present within the borough which are of principal importance.

The updated plan has five clear objectives with 27 targets and was agreed at committee this autumn. The plan will now be one of the basis for decision making within the council from areas as diverse as planning applications to grass cutting.

The action plan and our progress can be found on our website.



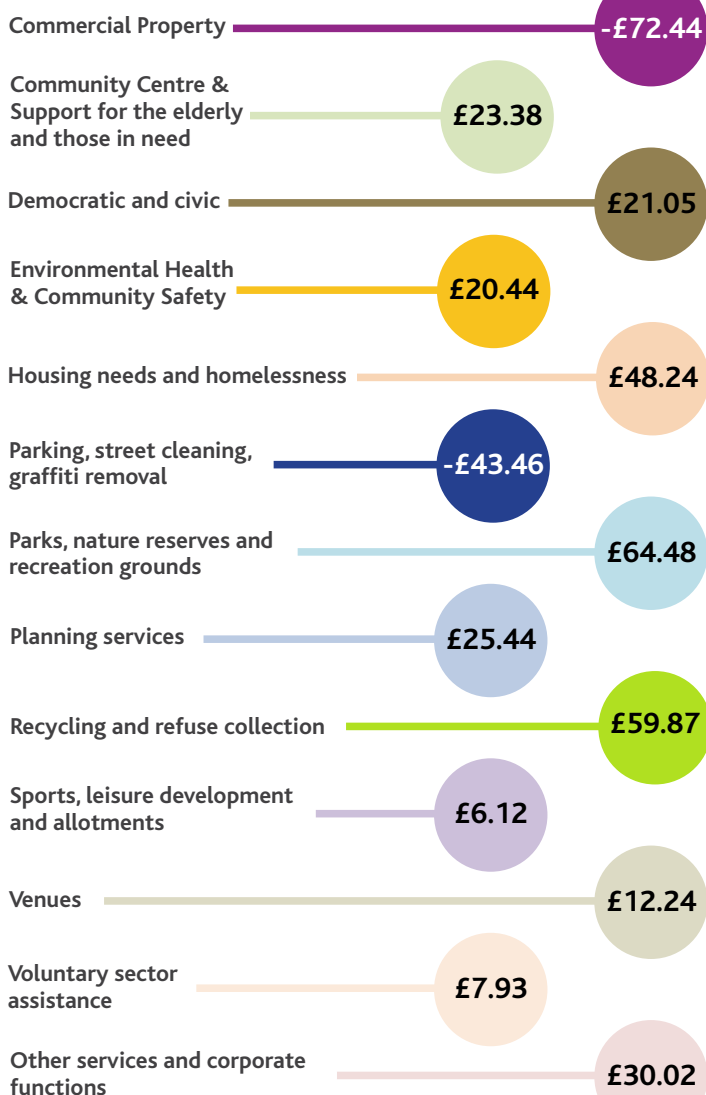


Delivering Services

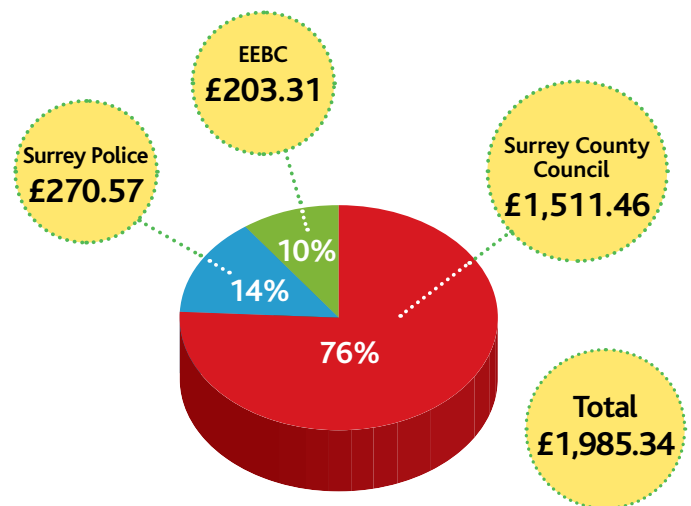
how we spend your council tax

All figures on this page relate to 2020/21 budgets and are expressed as Band D equivalents. Some service areas have minus signs in front of them as these services generate net income.

Borough Council expenditure per household



2020/21 Council Tax



How your Borough Council Tax is calculated:

	Per band D property	
	£'000	£
Total budget for EEBC services	£9,743	£295.06
Retained business rates	£1,617	£48.97
Prior year surplus	£1,413	£42.78
Council tax	£6,713	£203.31



News Bytes

The full Future40 vision and Four Year Plan can be downloaded from the council website.



► Value for money

At the end of each year, we produce detailed accounts. These set out our income, expenditure, assets and liabilities for that financial year. The accounts are then examined by an independent, external auditor and are published on our website, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

Our external auditors are Grant Thornton, one of the UK's largest professional accounting and consulting organisations.

Having nearly completed their audit (well ahead of the 30 November statutory deadline), Grant Thornton anticipate concluding that our accounts present a true and fair view, and that we have proper arrangements in place to ensure residents receive value for money.



“we have proper arrangements in place to ensure residents receive value for money.”

► We have a plan!

At the start of the year, we highlighted the Future40 vision. This is a roadmap for the borough influenced by individual residents, local businesses, our partner agencies and others and shows how the borough will move forward. This isn't the council vision, it's how the community will work together to achieve the borough we all desire.

As part of our civic timetable, following the borough elections and when your new councillors have agreed the content, we produce a four year plan. We have taken the five themes from Future40 and added a sixth, effective council, to deliver against over the course of the plan. Each of the six themes comprise a series of measurable targets, which your elected representatives will ensure we deliver.



Green & Vibrant



Effective Council



Safe & Well



Smart & Connected



Opportunity & Prosperity



Cultural & Creative

Planning matters

Over the summer, the Government published a white paper heralding wide-ranging reforms to the national planning process.



The Government's aim is to streamline and modernise planning in England. They propose to bring a new focus to design and sustainability, improve the system of developer contributions to infrastructure and ensure more land is available for development where it is needed.

Under the Government's proposals, a new way of producing local plans will be introduced, with land required to be designated into one of three categories; for growth, for renewal; or for protection.

The Government is also to set new housing targets for each local authority that must be met. The target will be set by a revised 'standard method' for calculating housing need.

Under the Government's proposed algorithm, the Borough of Epsom & Ewell would need to accommodate 604 new homes per year, a significant increase on previous Government targets.

This proposed standard method is based upon the latest (2018) Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures on the growth in household projections, which shows a significant decrease on previous figures in Epsom and Ewell. However the algorithm uses current housing stocks and the cost of housing against average salary with no cap - which results in the new target.

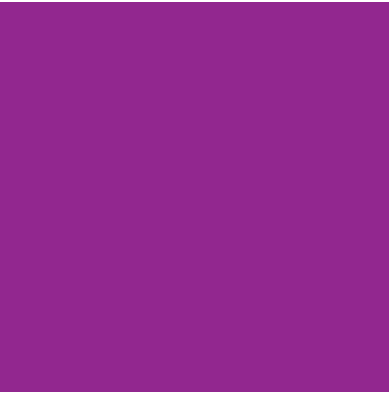
Councillor David Reeve, Chair of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee said "I welcome improvements to the national Planning process, but I also want to ensure that local development reflects local needs and maintains the distinctive

character of the borough. We are really concerned that if the Government press ahead with their new higher housing target for Epsom and Ewell, we would see a major negative impact to the borough."

The Local Plan should help us shape an even more successful future for the borough including how we strengthen the economy and employment opportunities, accommodate local housing need, protect the environment, and secure the required infrastructure such as facilities to support safe cycling, access to high quality green spaces, health and wellbeing, education and leisure. We have completed a lot of preparatory work to progress the development of a new Local Plan which has now been impacted by the COVID-19 restrictions. Currently we are still intending to move forward as soon as possible. We continue to press Government for confirmation of the housing target and the algorithm it intends to impose, while considering the implications of the Government's changes to the Local Plan process contained in the recently published Planning White Paper.

The latest information on the Local Plan, what it is and where we are in the process, can be found on our dedicated website.

The Government is also to set new housing targets for each local authority that must be met.



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Local democracy

Being prepared

Our annual canvass is nearly complete and next month, a new electoral register will be in place.

The electoral register is a list of all the names and addresses of those registered in the borough to vote in elections, such as local and national, as well as in referendums.

There are two versions of the register

- **The electoral register**

This is the full version used for the running of elections and contains the names of those eligible to vote. However, it is also used in the prevention/detection of crime (especially fraud), to call up individuals for jury service and to check credit applications.

- **The open register**

Under the Representation of the People Act 2013, it is a legal requirement for the council to produce an open register. This is not used for elections but is an extract of the electoral register with the names and addresses of people who chose not to opt out. Anyone (even you) can purchase the details on the open register. Organisations use this as one of their sources of up to date names and addresses for marketing purposes.

Your details will be included in the open register unless you opt out. Removing your details from the open register does not affect your right to vote. If you want to remove your details from the open register please contact our Electoral Services team.

Register for postal votes

Anyone on the electoral register can now apply to vote by post. You don't need to give a reason. We send out the postal vote packs around two weeks before polling day and they need to be back with us as soon as possible and no later than when polls close. If you are interested in postal voting email our Electoral Services team or check out the council website.

“ Removing your details from the open register does not affect your right to vote. ”

May elections

Currently, the next scheduled elections are next year, with both Surrey County Council elections and the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner election taking place on 6 May 2021.

Electoral review

A review into the borough's ward boundaries by the independent Local Government Boundary Commission will shortly commence.

Local government electoral reviews are conducted to see whether boundaries of council wards need to be altered, to ensure areas have the recommended numbers of voters. The review will also consider if the number of councillors on the council is appropriate.

The boundary review will be the first time that the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council ward boundaries and councillor numbers have been examined since 1999.

The boundary review will be the first time that the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council ward boundaries and councillor numbers have been examined since 1999.

There are currently 13 wards across the borough. 12 wards are each represented by three councillors and one ward has two councillors – 38 councillors in total.

The council is currently pulling together technical information required by the Boundary Commission. This will be examined along with other inputs and the Boundary Commission will then issue its initial proposal. A full consultation and engagement with residents, businesses and other interested parties will take place, prior to a final decision by the commission next year.



News Bytes

Every month, the latest news, features, events and community info are featured in our free e-Borough Insight e-newsletter. Here are some snippets you may have missed. You can subscribe today - insight.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/subscribe

first-hand the actions being taken on your behalf by your elected councillors from the comfort of their own home. Joining instructions for each meeting can be found via our website on the committee report published a week before each meeting.

► Do you want to save money on your energy bills?

Action Surrey can help! They can provide impartial advice on ways to save energy and money, as well as insulation options and renewables. A trusted network of experienced, reputable installers can provide you with free, no-obligation surveys and quotes.

If you are living in a hard-to-heat home and either receive a means-tested benefit or have an annual household income of less than £30,000, then you could be eligible to receive full funding for energy efficiency improvements to save money on your energy bills. Action Surrey can advise on current government grants and the new Green Homes Grant scheme.

Contact Action Surrey on 0800 783 2503 or fill out an enquiry form on their website: www.actionsurrey.org, to find out what funding is available.



► Virtual Committees

One of the consequences of the pandemic is that council committee meetings are currently on-line. This means that you can attend meetings and see

► Remembrance 2020

Remembrance activity this month will still be taking place, albeit not in the normal large group gatherings. The risk of COVID and the frailty of some of the veterans and others who are normally the cornerstone of these events plus social distancing measures mean that our observance is to be on a more personal level.

In 2020 we pay tribute to the men and women of the Second World War generation. We remember the service and sacrifice made by so many peoples, communities and nations 75 years ago.

The Mayor, Councillor Humphry Reynolds, will give thanks from the borough by placing wreaths at all public war memorials for Remembrance Day.

We will remember them



The Mayor places a wreath at the St Mary's war memorial in Ewell on VJ day in August – picture credit Steven McCormick

Epsom Markets



The Epsom Market Place improvements undertaken over the last year are bearing fruit, attracting more stall holders and different markets.

- The first Sunday of every month we host the Farmers Market
- The fourth Sunday of every month is the Vegan Market
- On Sunday 8 November we are holding our first Craft Market
- On Sunday the 15 November the Antique & Brocante market returns

There's also an increase in enquiries from new stall holders for pitches at the traditional Thursday and Saturday markets, this has recently led to a regular fresh fish stall.





Christmas 2020 bin collections

Christmas and New Year

After Christmas

IMPORTANT

Monday's collections of Christmas week will be made on **Sat 19 December**

Christmas Week

Put out these bins:



Normal collection day	Actual collection day
Mon 21 December	Sat 19 December ↑
Tues 22 December	Mon 21 December ↑
Wed 23 December	Tues 22 December ↑
Thurs 24 December	Wed 23 December ↑
Fri 25 December	Thurs 24 December ↑

IMPORTANT

There will be **no refuse collections** during **New Year's week**

New Year's Week

Recycling bins **ONLY**:



Normal collection day	Actual collection day
Mon 28 December	Tues 29 December ↓
Tues 29 December	Normal collection day
Wed 30 December	Normal collection day
Thurs 31 December	Wed 30 December ↑
Fri 1 January	Thurs 31 December ↑

There are no garden waste collections during Christmas or New Year's weeks



Normal collections

Normal collection schedules start again week commencing **Monday 4 January**.

Check your Garden waste collection day at www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/gardenwaste

Real Christmas tree recycling

In January we offer **free real Christmas tree recycling** for all residents.



Remove all decorations and leave your real Christmas tree next to your bins, and we'll collect it for recycling (see your bin label for details).

Leave your bins out for collection in a clearly visible place on the kerbside by 6:30 am on collection day.



Winter health

With temperatures now dropping, it is important to keep yourself and others healthy in the cold weather.



It is essential to keep warm in winter – both indoors and outdoors. Keeping warm over the winter months can help to prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression.

If you're not very mobile, are 65 or over, or have a health condition, such as heart or lung disease, heat your home to at least 18 degrees centigrade. Keep your bedroom at 18°C all night in winter and keep the bedroom window closed as breathing in cold air can increase the risk of chest infections. If you're under 65, healthy and active, you can safely have your home cooler than 18°C, as long as you're comfortable.

Food is a vital source of energy for everyone, which helps to keep your body warm. Try to make sure you have hot meals and drinks regularly throughout the day. Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables and keep some tins in stock and items in the freezer for when icy weather is forecast.

A well-stocked medicine cabinet is important to support you if coughs and colds develop – the last thing anyone wants to do when they are ill is go out.

Keep in touch with your friends, family and neighbours in the very cold weather, in case they have not been able to get out to the shops or chemist.

COVID-19

The Chief Medical Officer, Professor Chris Whitty has repeated the mantra **Hands. Face. Space.** He said "we want everybody to remember: wash your hands regularly, use a face covering when social distancing is not possible and try to keep your distance from those not in your household.

"As we approach winter and inevitably spend more time indoors, we need the public to keep following this important advice to control the spread of the virus.

"Following these simple steps could make a significant difference in reducing the transmission of COVID-19 and help protect you and your friends, colleagues and family from the virus.

It is essential to keep warm in winter – both indoors and outdoors.

It's not too late

If it's been recommended that you should have a flu jab and you haven't it's still not too late. Ideally you should get a flu vaccine before flu begins spreading in the community as it takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection against flu.

Older people, as well as those living with long-term health conditions or weakened immune systems are especially vulnerable to the effects of flu and should speak to their GP's about getting the jab. In

Surrey the flu jab is also available free for carers. For more information visit the Healthy Surrey website.



News Bytes



► Everyone in

During the COVID-19 lockdown, councils were instructed to provide emergency accommodation to protect rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping under a programme known as 'Everyone In'.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council assisted 33 people through the Everyone In programme. This was provided in decent accommodation to alleviate the greater risk of the spread of the virus in a typical homeless shelter.

The council has now successfully bid for and received £157k from the Government's Next Steps Accommodation Programme. The programme helps with the next stage of the Covid-19 rough sleeping response by making sure those rough sleepers assisted will continue to have accommodation while the council seeks to secure longer term accommodation.

Epsom & Ewell is one of 274 councils that will receive a grant from this fund which can only be used to accommodate those already accommodated under Everyone In.

Councillor Barry Nash, Chair of the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Community and Wellbeing Committee explained: "The reasons for sleeping rough are different for each individual and can be complex and include mental health issues and drug and alcohol problems.

"Providing accommodation over the winter will allow us to provide more dedicated support to these individuals and plan a transition to longer term accommodation either in the private rented sector or in supported accommodation"



► Celebrating our green spaces

Four green spaces within Epsom and Ewell have once again been recognised by the Green Flag Award Scheme as some of the very best in the world.

The prestigious international award – the mark of a quality park or green space, is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent visitor facilities.

The four green spaces that we put forward for judging for the award were selected as they are broadly representative of the different green spaces within the borough:

- **Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve** has won the award for the fourteenth consecutive year. It is the largest local nature reserve in Surrey and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- **Ewell Court Park** has won the award for the ninth year in a row. The park is the former gardens of the historical Ewell Court House.
- **Alexandra Recreation Ground** has also won the award for the ninth year in a row. It is a sports ground with facilities for cricket, soccer, bowls, tennis and basketball.
- **Rosebery Park** has won the award for the eighth year running.

Our parks and green spaces have been a lifeline during the COVID-19 pandemic and we know how much quality green spaces matter to residents and visitors. The Awards are a testimony to the hard work of our staff, community groups and volunteers. Let's continue to respect our beautiful green spaces by disposing of litter responsibly and keeping them clean and safe for everyone to enjoy.



Shop safe, shop local, shop Epsom and Ewell



Our bustling high streets and neighbourhood shopping areas are one of the reasons people choose to live in this borough.

Whether you want a leisurely weekend breakfast, local produce or an evening out to remember, there's something for everyone.

While the lockdown earlier in the year was really tough for our high streets and shopping parades, everyone has been working hard to ensure that there is a good and safe recovery.

The Council, the Business Improvement District (BID), major businesses and the Police came together before the easing of the national restrictions in the Summer to help plan the local recovery. Top of the agenda was to support shops, restaurants, pubs and small businesses with a safe, well managed reopening.

An information campaign launched, helping businesses to remain on top of changing Government regulations. Public information followed, reminding visitors of the simple steps needed to keep them safe.

Council staff, temporarily reallocated from other duties, joined a High Streets Task Force dedicated to fostering a safe shopping environment. They visited each high street and neighbourhood shopping area answering questions and sharing information. They also completed retail audits and footfall counts which shows that our shops and restaurants have been holding up well, and will be used to track the health of our shopping areas into the future.



Public feedback has been really positive. Visitors told us that they felt safe coming back to the shops and reassured by the team and appreciated their help. Local business leaders also shared their gratitude with the team for their support.

The work to support our shopping areas continues, backed by the views of local people: 97% of visitors have said that supporting local businesses is important to them. Our focus is to help businesses come back stronger and more resilient than ever before. As we look forward to 2021, do keep an eye out for our future information campaigns.

And remember: Shop Safe; Shop Local; Shop Epsom and Ewell!

Everyone has a part to play in helping our retailers recover. You can find out how we're doing our bit on our website: www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/business/reopening-high-streets-safely

Businesses can also download free to use posters and social media graphics to advertise the fact that they're open and remind customers how to keep safe – everything is available for free on our website.





Live well, your way with care at home

Your home is where you feel the most comfortable and the happiest. It's the place you know the best.

- ✓ Home help
- ✓ Personal care
- ✓ Companionship
- ✓ Dementia care

Contact us on: **01372 741544**
www.homeinstead.co.uk/epsom-mole-valley

Twins!

Have you wandered around the refurbished market place and wondered why there's a signpost pointing towards Chantilly? Have you seen other Chantilly references around the borough and always mean to find out more?



Chantilly lies just north east of Paris. Just as Epsom is known for horse racing and Epsom salts, Chantilly is known for horse racing and Chantilly lace.

Epsom and Ewell has a twinning arrangement with Chantilly and this year marks the 25th anniversary of the close ties between the two historic towns.

On 30 September 1995, the Mayor of Chantilly signed the Twinning Charter, and we were officially twinned with one of the most beautiful and historic towns in France.

A similar ceremony in Epsom in March 1996, signed by our then Mayor, Councillor Cyril Frazer, completed the formalities.



The Town Twinning Association was subsequently appointed by the borough to develop and run twinning.

Councillor Clive Woodbridge, chairman of Epsom and Ewell Town Twinning Association, says, "We are very proud of reaching this milestone and of enriching the lives of residents on both sides of the Channel for a quarter of a century.

"Over the years we have seen many visits to and from Chantilly by individuals, interest groups, schools and musicians.

"We also run a wide programme of cultural, educational and social events in the borough. Joining the Association is a great opportunity to find out more, help celebrate 25 exciting years (when we are hopefully free to do so in 2021) and plan the future.

If you are interested, contact the Association without commitment and find out all about it.
contact@epsomtwinning.com – you don't have to know French!



The magnificent Chantilly Chateau



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2021 Brochure Out Now!

Visit our shop in Stoneleigh or call 01372 610000 for a brochure. Visit www.epsomexplore.co.uk

Charity Christmas Tree Sale



We are selling UK grown Christmas trees in a variety of sizes to raise funds for 4th Ewell (Nonsuch) Scout Group. Run entirely by volunteers, all proceeds go towards supporting the Group.

Friday 4 December, midday - 8pm.

Saturday 5 & Sunday 6 December, 9am - 4pm.

Friday 11 December, 10am - 8pm.

Saturday 12 & Sunday 13 December, 9am - 4pm.

Find us at 4th Ewell (Nonsuch) Scout HQ, 1 Bluegates, London Road, Ewell, KT17 2SA. We deliver locally, accept cards and you can buy or pre-order online.

xmastrees.org.uk

#nonsuchtrees



Registered Charity No. 305718



Scouts

4th Ewell (Nonsuch)



Business Brief



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is committed to supporting local business, particularly in these difficult and challenging times.

We run a monthly business newsletter to keep you informed about what's going on with all things 'business' in the borough.

It's got everything you need to know – from the latest guidance, tools and resources to help grow your businesses, information on grants, virtual leaning and local campaigns to get involved in.

For more information and to subscribe, please visit www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/business/doing-business-epsom-and-ewell



Monthly business updates straight to your inbox...

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Communications survey – what you told us!



Thank you to the 343 people who took part in our online 'Who Reads What' survey back in May. What you've told us will help us improve the way we share news and information.

Here are a few headlines:

- Overall, respondents felt well informed about council services
- 80% of those who read Borough Insight felt that it keeps them well informed about what's going on
- Most respondents would also like to sign up for a regular email newsletter to keep them up to date with news from the council and partners
- Respondents were eager to find out more about **planning** and **recycling**. These topics were mentioned more than any other council services
- Generally, the strongest themes to emerge were around **timeliness and clarity of information** and the **responsiveness of the council to individual queries**

DID YOU KNOW

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The survey has also given us a lot to think about. There was a noticeable lack of response from people under 44 years old. In fact, no one under 24 took part in the survey at all.

Respondents also shared lots of ideas for improvement. These included

- Demonstrating how the council is acting on residents' feedback
- Making it clearer how residents can get involved with decision making
- Explaining council decisions more clearly
- Improving our website so that information is easier to find and more accessible for all users.

Due to the pandemic, we couldn't run this consultation as we usually would. Responses were limited to those who use the internet. In more usual times, we would have paper versions available as well so that we could get the widest possible range of views and experiences.

We are planning a follow up survey in 2021, which will include other ways to complete and return the information. This will help us to hear – and act on – the widest possible range of views and opinions.

In the meantime, we will take what you have told us as a guide to help us improve. Do let us know how you think we're doing!

80% of those who read Borough Insight felt that it keeps them well informed about what's going on.



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Useful links:

www.gov.uk/coronavirus

www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

[www.surreycc.gov.uk/
coronavirus](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/coronavirus)

[www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/
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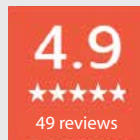
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