

Annual Report

2018 - 19



Foreword

Welcome to the Annual Report of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council 2018-19.

This report sets out the progress we have made, together with our partners, in this the third year of our four-year Corporate Plan 2016 to 2020. It highlights some of our key achievements delivered under our four key priorities:

- Keeping our borough clean and green
- Supporting our community
- Managing our resources
- Supporting businesses and our local economy.

Overall, 2018-19 proved to be a busy and successful year, our teams worked hard on delivering services, projects and targets.

We transferred ownership of Horton Chapel to the Horton Chapel Arts and Heritage Society. Using funding from the Council of £1.45 million and a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery, their plans to convert the chapel to an art and heritage centre are now moving forward. We wish them every success with their plans.

We completed the development of 30 new properties at Hollymoor Lane. Comprising a collection of two bedroom flats, one of which is designed to provide full wheelchair access; three, four and five bedroom houses and a local shop, the development has increased the number of affordable homes now available in the borough.

We continued to work closely with our partners. We have agreed closer working arrangements with the police to tackle anti-social behaviour and environmental crime and have already run a number of joint operations. We secured

through the courts, an interim injunction that protects areas of Council land that are vulnerable to unauthorised encampments.

We continued to support local businesses, producing a film with the University College of Arts to promote our borough and supported local retailers as the construction phase of Epsom's market place re-development started.

Building on some strong commercial thinking already within the council, we took steps to develop further a more enterprising approach to the provision of services for residents, businesses and visitors to the borough. As well as helping to ensure we continue to operate in a financially sustainable way, this new and evolving outlook will help us place customers at the heart of everything we do and enable us to respond effectively to opportunities as they arise.

Over the course of the year we co-ordinated and supported a number of local events marking key dates of 2018 including 400 years since the discovery of Epsom Salts, 100 years since the end of the First World War and 100 years since some women won the right to vote.

Lastly you may be aware that during 2018-19 we consulted widely with residents, partners, businesses and other stakeholders to develop a long-term vision for the Borough - our Future40 project. Thank you to everyone that has contributed to this exciting project so far. We will be continuing our work in 2019-20 and plan to share the vision with you shortly. In the meantime, work is underway to complete the final year of our Corporate Plan 2016- 2020.



Councillor Eber Kington - Chairman of the Strategy & Resources Committee



Kathryn Beldon - Chief Executive

Keeping our Borough Clean and Green

We will do this by:

- ◆ Providing quality parks, nature reserves and other public spaces that are safe, pleasant and well maintained
- ◆ Accommodating sustainable development whilst protecting the green belt in accordance with Policy
- ◆ Introducing a premium weekly waste and recycling service as standard for all residents and encourage more household waste to be recycled
- ◆ Keeping the streets and public spaces clean and tidy
- ◆ Taking action to reduce graffiti, littering, flyposting, illegal advertising and dog fouling

In 2018/19 we:

- **Maintained accreditation for selected parks and open spaces**
We achieved Green Flag Awards, which recognise high standards of management, for Alexandra Recreational Ground, Rosebery Park, Ewell Court Park and Epsom Common Nature Reserve. Nonsuch Park secured a South & South East in Bloom Silver Gilt Award in the Heritage Parks & Gardens category; this award recognises horticultural achievement, environmental responsibility and community participation.
- **Improved Rosebery Park Wildlife Habitat**
We successfully refurbished the pond in Rosebery Park at the start of the year. To increase biodiversity, once the pond had settled, we placed coir rolls along the edge of the pond. These rolls provide an enhanced growing medium for vegetation and also help to conceal the gabion baskets (wire baskets filled with rocks) used to support the pond edge.
- **Improved our planting schemes for flower beds and flower displays**
We approved a new sustainable planting scheme for our flower beds and flower displays to provide for the continued enhancement of our streets and parks.
- **Reviewed our Simply Weekly Recycling**
We conducted a residents' satisfaction survey for our Simply Weekly Recycling Service introduced in 2017. We received over 650 responses, with 90% of respondents saying they were satisfied or very satisfied with the service.
- **Implemented Public Space Protection**
We implemented a Public Space Protection Order for areas of Epsom, Ewell and Langley Vale to reduce anti-social behaviour related to the drinking of alcohol and thereby improve the quality of life for our residents.
- **Established new enforcement arrangements with our partners**
We established new enforcement partnership working arrangements with the police and other agencies to target environmental crime and anti-social behaviour. A number of successful joint enforcement operations actions were run across the year as well as a number of successful prosecutions. To support this work we were awarded £50k by the Surrey Police & Crime Commissioner.
- **Worked with our community to keep the borough clean and tidy**
We held a number of Clean Up events across the borough with different community groups.



Supporting our Community

We will do this by:

- ◆ Supporting and enabling the delivery of affordable homes
- ◆ Helping those at risk of homelessness
- ◆ Promoting healthy and active lifestyles, especially for the young and elderly
- ◆ Encouraging and supporting volunteering initiatives

In 2018/19 we:

- **Transferred ownership of Horton Chapel to the Community**
We transferred ownership of Horton Chapel to the Horton Chapel Arts & Heritage Society, a local charity, which is converting the chapel into a new arts centre and creative hub for the community.
- **Delivered new Affordable Homes**
44 affordable homes were completed during the year.
- **Implemented new play equipment in our parks**
We installed new play equipment in Court Recreational Ground and two outdoor table tennis tables in Auriol Park. Both projects were funded by the 'neighbourhood bid' element of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), a levy which enables us to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in the borough.
- **Supported the Stoneleigh Station - 'Access for All' bid**
We supported the successful South Western Railway bid to deliver step and obstacle free access for Stoneleigh Station as part of the Department of Transport, 'Access for All' station improvement programme. This support includes £500,000 of match funding. Stoneleigh Station is the eight busiest in Surrey.
- **Completed the Hollymoor Lane Parade Development**
We successfully completed the Hollymoor Lane construction programme which has provided thirty new homes for our community. We ensured access to the local convenience store was continued throughout the construction.
- **Took part in the Specsavers Surrey Youth Games**
Team Epsom and Ewell, comprising 168 young people aged between 7 and 16 years, competed against other Surrey teams across a range of sports. Not only did Team Epsom and Ewell achieve numerous successes on the day, nearly 400 young people took part in the free training sessions in the lead up to the event.
- **Ran 'Round the Borough Bike' for the sixth year**
Our sixth Round the Borough Bike was the biggest ever, with 340 cyclists taking part in the 20 mile challenge which takes participants across Epsom and Ewell's numerous green and open spaces.
- **Finished the Long Grove Skate Park extension**
We completed the new extension to the Long Grove Skate and BMX Park which includes a beginners' section providing even greater leisure facilities for our community
- **Horton Country Park volunteer task**
A litter pick organised by our countryside team saw members of the community removing a phenomenal amount of rubbish



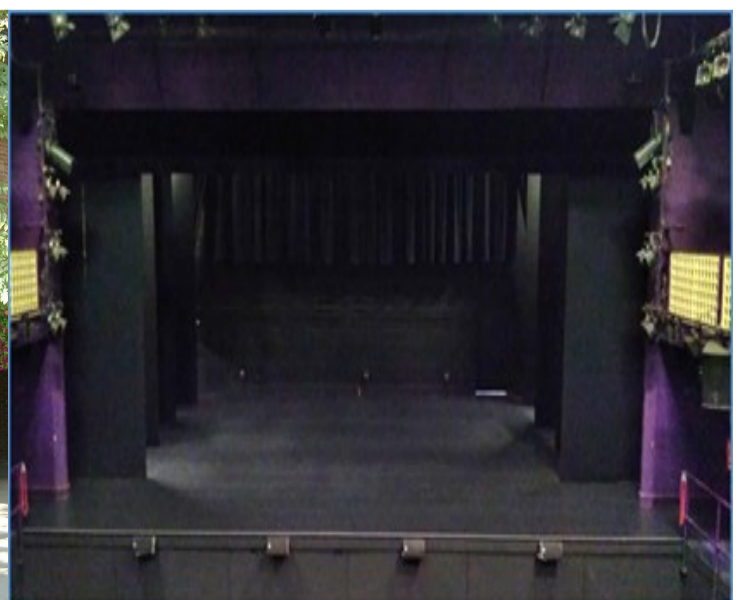
Managing our Resources

We will do this by:

- ◆ Developing multi-skilled & motivated staff
- ◆ Providing services digitally
- ◆ Identifying new sources of revenue and maximising our existing income
- ◆ Delivering further efficiency savings and cost reductions
- ◆ Maximising returns from properties and other investments

In 2018/19 we:

- **Installed new LED Lighting**
We completed a project to install new LED lighting for the Harrier Centre running track and at Court Recreation Ground for the AstroTurf football pitch and tennis courts. The new lighting, which meets the latest advice from Sport England, provides greater and more even distribution of illumination
- **Agreed an Income Generation and Enterprise Plan**
In light of the financial pressures on all local authorities we have taken a more commercial approach to the delivery of our services through adoption of the Income Generation and Enterprise Plan. Adoption of this strategy will help us to safeguard future core frontline services. In the first year of a four year action plan we developed marketing plans for Business Bins and Day Care+ and continued our focus on in-borough property regeneration.
- **Completed a 10 year Financial Projection**
As part of our budget setting process for 2019 - 20 we presented a 10 year Financial Projection for the council
- **Improved our Venues**
We undertook a number of projects to upgrade some of our venues. We completed a full refurbishment of four dressing rooms at Epsom Playhouse. This work included replacement of the shower trays, vanity units and flooring, installation of electric extractors and new low energy LED light fittings, replacement of defective mirrors and improved thermal insulation. We also replaced the stage floor. At Bourne Hall we replaced the air conditioning and lighting.
- **Increased our Online Services**
We improved our on-line functionality to increase digital services for residents. Residents can now undertake a number of transactions on-line: view their council tax bills and instalments; set up a direct debit; apply for or remove a Single Persons Discount; view benefit claims details and notifications; view recent benefit payment details and sign up for e-bills and e-notifications. We also increased functionality for businesses and landlords.
- **Adopted a Single Use Plastics Policy**
To help drive forward our work on reducing single use plastics we have adopted a Single Use Plastics Policy.
- **Managed our Financial Outturn 2018-19**
We kept our net expenditure less than that budgeted for the year and were able to make a contribution to our reserves for times of crisis or emergency.
- **Received an unqualified opinion on our 2018-19 Statement of Accounts**



Supporting businesses and our local community

We will do this by:

- ◆ Supporting a comprehensive retail commercial and social offer
- ◆ Maintaining strong links with local business leaders and representative organisations
- ◆ Supporting developers to bring forward the development of town centre sites
- ◆ Delivering an affordable Economic Strategy
- ◆ Promoting our Borough as an excellent place to do business

In 2018/19 we:

- **Supported Local Businesses**
The Epsom & Ewell Business Awards celebrate business excellence in the local community. For 2018 - 19, we sponsored the award for the Best Young Entrepreneur.
- **Ran events for local businesses with the Surrey Chamber of Commerce**
We held a number of business breakfasts and a successful event was held at Nonsuch Mansion with Surrey Chambers of Commerce on the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); 30 delegates attended.
- **Launched a new Planning Pre-application Advice service**
We launched a new pre-application advice and guidance note to assist those considering new development in the borough that may require planning permission or a related consent. This service provides professional planning advice to applicants before a planning application is submitted. The pre-application service is subject to a fee proportionate to the development proposed and the level of service offered.
- **Worked in conjunction with the University for the Creative Arts (UCA) Epsom**
We worked with the UCA to produce a promotional film for Epsom & Ewell.
- **Supported the work of the Business Improvement District (BID)**
We have continued to support the BID which is run by local businesses. The BID provides businesses with a unified voice. By working together the BID can generate benefits for the local economy and contribute to the wider aspirations of the local community.
- **Supported the Epsom Market Place Development**
The Epsom BID concert held in May 2019 marked the completion of the first stage of the Market Place renovation which was completed on time. Local businesses have complemented the way the work has been undertaken.
- **Upgraded Ashley Centre Car Park**
We have installed railings and safety mesh at the Ashley Centre car park to improve safety. Further works to upgrade the car park will continue into 2019-20.

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Performance

Key Performance Data

- ◆ 15 statistical targets covering different aspects of our work have been highlighted here. We successfully achieved 12 of these targets.
- ◆ Although we marginally missed our recycling target, we increased our recycling rate from 2017-18 by 2%. Our recycling target for 2019-20 remains at 54%.
- ◆ We are continuing to focus on tackling the increasing levels of graffiti across the borough during 2019-20, and will be once again concentrating our efforts on graffiti located on council owned land as well as removing offensive graffiti.

Target	2018/2019	Target status
Keeping our borough clean and green		
• Recycle 54% domestic waste	53%	✗
• Over the year at least 99% of bins to be collected on average each week	99.92%	✓
• Fly tipping – remove 95% of all fly tips on council owned land within 5 working days	98%	✓
• Graffiti – remove 95% of graffiti on council owned land within 5 working days of being reported	67%	✗
• Graffiti – remove offensive graffiti within two working days of being reported	72%	✗
Supporting our community		
• Less than 40 households living in emergency nightly paid temporary accommodation per month	38 (monthly average)	✓
• At least 8 households accommodated through the private sector leasing scheme	10 households	✓
• At least 30 new households supported through the rent deposit scheme	38 households	✓
Managing our resources		
• At least 99.0% of Business Rates to be collected	99.28%	✓
• At least 98.4% of Council Tax collected	99.10%	✓
• Process new Housing Benefit claims within an average time of 28 days	15 days (monthly average)	✓
• Process Housing Benefit change of circumstances within an average time 11 days	4 days (monthly average)	✓
Supporting businesses and our local economy		
• At least 90% of premises licence application determined within 21 days from the end of the statutory consultation	100%	✓
• At least 60% of major planning applications decided in time	100%	✓
• At least 70% of non-major planning applications decided in time	88%	✓

