



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

Annual Report

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Message from

Jackie King

Chief Executive of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.

2023/24 was a busy year for Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and I'm incredibly proud of everything we achieved during my first full year as Chief Executive.

The last few years have been challenging for local authorities up and down the country and we are no exception. However, we have met fiscal and social challenges head on, continuing to deliver high-quality services that meet the needs of our residents, and support those who are most vulnerable.

This year we also reviewed our financial frameworks and set in motion a plan to relocate the Town Hall which will deliver significant long-term cost savings for the council, as well as moving forward with our climate change ambitions associated with the move to a modern office.

We were very grateful to the almost two thousand Epsom & Ewell residents, local businesses, partners, and visitors who took the time to tell us what they thought of the Epsom & Ewell Draft

Local Plan and the Town Centre Masterplan during consultations last year. These plans are so important, helping to shape our borough for the future, maintaining a thriving economy and delivering quality of life for our residents both now and for generations to come. The next chance to have your say on Epsom & Ewell's Local Plan is expected to be in early 2025.

Another area where we have seen a real leap in terms of development is at Bourne Hall. We developed a new business plan for Bourne Hall to ensure that this special place continues to bring our community together. Find out more about this work on page 29.

An area where we are facing considerable pressure is around homelessness prevention. The cost of placing people facing homelessness into

temporary accommodation is considerable. Our housing team employ a huge range of tactics to help people avoid homelessness and accommodate those in need, and successfully prevented 164 instances of homelessness in 2023/24 as well as achieving 85% of the year one actions in our Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy. Read more about this situation and the work we are doing to combat it on page 12.

Finally, it has been such a pleasure to see the fruits of our new Arts, Culture & Heritage Strategy over the last year. The strategy underscores our commitment to nurturing creative talent and creating a thriving and inclusive creative and cultural outreach programme within the borough. Read more about our work in this area on page 26.

I hope you enjoy reading about the fantastic work the council has delivered over the last year as much as we have enjoyed compiling it; and I very much look forward to the year ahead.

Message from

Councillor Hannah Dalton

Chair of the Residents Association

(Majority Group at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council).

I became Chair of the Residents' Association, the majority group in Epsom & Ewell, in May 2021 and since then I've seen the landscape change dramatically, coming out of supporting the community and delivering essential support to residents throughout Covid, to bringing the council into a new era with its own challenges.

My colleagues and I are aware of the pressures that residents are under across our borough. The cost-of-living crisis, high inflation, and increasing energy costs to name a few. We are seeing more households facing homelessness who need our support. The challenges for someone in temporary accommodation are well documented, including mental health and wellbeing issues, social isolation, disrupted education, and difficulties holding down a job. For those residents in the borough in this situation, it is no different.

As a borough, we urgently need more housing of all types including, but not limited to, affordable housing. An important piece of work to help combat this issue is the new Local Plan. The Local Plan sets out where development across the borough can take place, sites

for new homes, supporting businesses, creating jobs, securing much needed infrastructure improvements, and more. I hope you will take the time to tell us what you think about the plan when the time comes. Many residents will have seen some councils declare insolvency (known as a s114) and unlike those councils, Epsom and Ewell is financially stable. However, without significant additional government funding, we need to look at all areas and develop plans to ensure that we remain in this position. For 85 years, the Residents' Association has been in administration, making us one of the longest political administrations in the UK and the longest independently led administration. The council is formed of a cross-party committee system made up of 35 Councillors, of whom 26 are Residents Association,

and the remaining are Liberal Democrats, Labour and Conservative party members. I urge anyone with an interest in how committees are run to watch a committee meeting on YouTube, or even come along to a meeting in person. The calendar of committee meetings can be found on the Epsom & Ewell website under 'Council', and all are welcome. The council's 2020-2024 four-year-plan and annual plan, consisting of the priorities agreed by each committee, sets the strategy for the council, and ensures that we can fulfil the high-quality services that you rightly expect from us. The Annual Report updates you on the performance of the statutory services, as well as the discretionary services that are so important, particularly for those most vulnerable. Finally, I'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council for delivering such an impressive portfolio of work over the last year. Also, to our residents, including all our Epsom & Ewell Councillors, who work in so many ways to keep our community thriving. It's that community spirit that makes all the difference in challenging times.

Introduction:

Epsom and Ewell

Epsom and Ewell is the smallest and most densely populated borough in Surrey, **occupying just 13 square miles** and **42% categorised as greenbelt**. Our population is growing; according to the 2021 Census between 2011 and 2021 our **population increased by 7.7%**, which is **around 5,800 more residents, to nearly 80,900**.

Like many councils across the UK, our funding from central government has decreased steadily since 2010. This, compounded by the continued rising cost of living, pressures around affordable housing and the cost of housing families in need in temporary accommodation, creates a significant challenge.

Housing in the borough is both desirable and unaffordable, with just over 2,700 homes making up the entire affordable housing stock of 30,000 homes in the borough.

Proportionately, Epsom & Ewell has one of the highest numbers of homeless households living in temporary accommodation in England, and the council is currently spending £2m each year on emergency accommodation.

In challenging times, our workforce of more than 280 officers take pride in delivering high quality services to around 80,000 residents and 3,700 businesses. Providing great value for money to residents is a key part of our culture: Council Tax is amongst the lowest in Surrey in Epsom & Ewell and our Councillors are committed to keep the rate below the Surrey average.

”

We have a strong track record of meeting the considerable financial challenges the past decade has brought for local government. We are confident that with the measures we have put in place to balance our budgets, and the work of our dedicated and loyal staff who continue to provide quality services to our residents, we are in excellent position to meet any challenges that the future may bring.

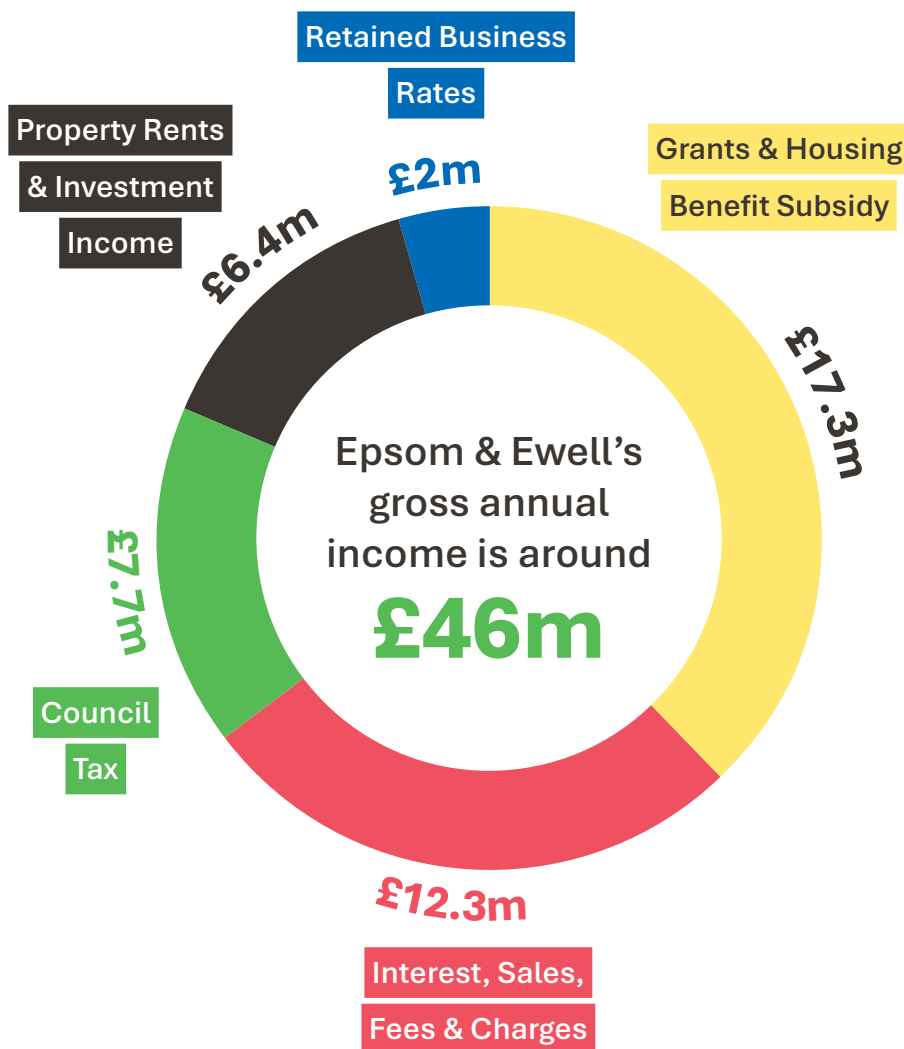
”

Councillor Neil Dallen,
Chair of the Strategy
& Resources Committee.

Our finances

We are in a financially stable position and we're looking ahead to develop plans which will ensure that we remain so.

How Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is funded:



Since 2010, like many councils across the country, we've faced the challenge of reductions in central government funding of local government, this is in combination with continued rising costs. As the budgeting process for 2025/26 commences; as well as future planning, officers and Councillors are working together to identify savings, efficiencies and income generation options that will enable us to balance our budget and continue delivering on local priorities and providing high-quality services for our residents.

We need to ensure that services are delivered in a cost-effective way, meeting the needs of our residents at a price we can afford.

As a council we are funded by five separate income streams and with this income we must fulfil our statutory duties, as well as deliver on our strategic priorities.

Our gross annual income is around £46 million, with just £7.7 million of this total raised from Council Tax.

In challenging times our workforce of more than **280 officers** take pride in delivering high quality services to around **80,000 residents** and **3,700 businesses**.

Providing great value for money to residents is a key part of our culture and our Council Tax is amongst the lowest in Surrey. Our Councillors are committed to keeping the rate below the Surrey average.

Did you know

... for every **£1** of Council Tax, **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council** receives just **10p**?

The money is distributed as follows:

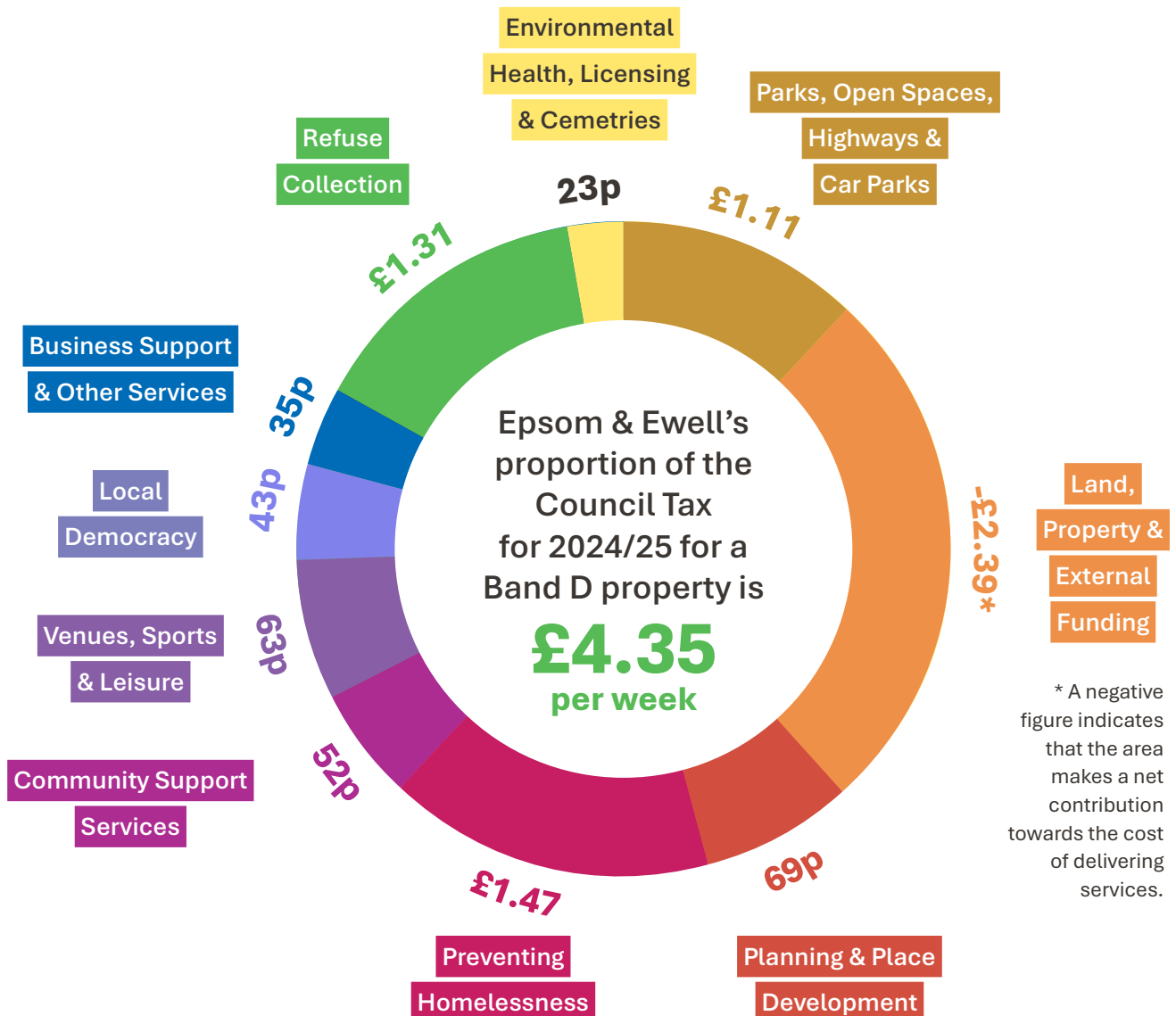
Surrey County Council receives **76p**.

Surrey Police Authority receives **14p**.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council receives just **10p**.



How your money is spent delivering key services in Epsom & Ewell:



Community Services

We are thrilled that our Community Development Manager Rachel Kundasamy has been recognised in the King's birthday honours this year. Rachel has been awarded a Medal of the British Empire (BEM) for her services to Refugee Resettlement.

We have been providing support for the national refugee programme including the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy, Homes for Ukraine since 2021.

It is estimated that there are up to 9,500 asylum seekers, migrants and refugees in Surrey at any one time.

To date, we have helped more than 160 people and more than 80 host families on the Homes for Ukraine Scheme across the borough. We work with other councils in Surrey and local partners to meet each person's different needs, helping them feel settled. We work with the Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network to provide support ranging from English courses, help to find work via the Employment Hub and support with documentation, as well as providing clothes and SIM cards.

“ Back in March 2022 we signed up for the Homes for Ukraine scheme and had no idea what we had signed up for, it just seemed like the right thing to do! We now have our second set of lovely guests, we know a lot more about the history of Eastern Europe, have negotiated government systems and learnt much about ourselves. We have no regrets and feel very proud to be a part of Homes for Ukraine. ”

Amanda,
Homes for Ukraine host.

Helped
more than
160
people and
80
host families



Epsom & Ewell Services

We carry out a wide range of services for our residents and businesses in Epsom & Ewell to improve life for our residents.

We couldn't do this without the help and support of partners including Go Epsom, other councils and services such as Epsom & Ewell Police and Surrey Fire and Rescue.

In 2023/24, we:

Responded to *more than* **117,000** queries from residents



Answered
67,554
phone calls



Helped
29,386
visitors in
Town Hall
reception



Answered
148
text messages



Responded to
9,341
emails



Processed
11,058
online web
forms

Our Home Improvement Agency has helped **350 residents** with a variety of advice and assistance, ranging from fixing a leaking tap to providing a wheelchair accessible bedroom and bathroom extension.

Licensed *over* **1,000** taxis & drivers

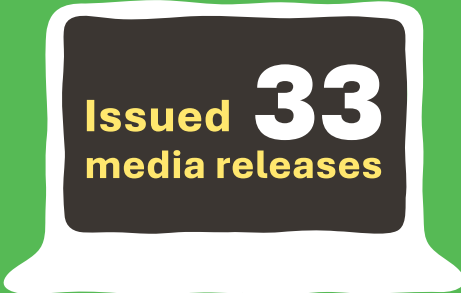
Awarded
around
£250,000
in grants to
local voluntary
organisations

Managed
over **80**
sports, recreation
and entertainment
facilities and venues

Licensed
over
400
restaurants,
bars &
events



Published
more than
1,500
posts on social media
which had over
1 million
impressions
(number of times it was shown
on someone's screen)



Issued **33**
media releases



Videos shared
on social media
were viewed
almost
6.5k
times

Waste and recycling

In 2023/24 our waste & recycling teams:



Collected
more than
14,000
tonnes of rubbish

Collected
99%
of bins
on time

Collected
over
14,500
tonnes of recycling,
food waste &
garden waste

Planning

The Planning department had a successful year, processing over 700 planning applications for the borough.

In February and March 2023 we consulted stakeholders on the draft Local Plan, hearing from 1,736 residents, businesses, organisations and partners about how they want to shape the future of our borough. A Local Plan is the key document that sets out the priorities and the policies for development in a certain area. It shows the opportunities for development in the area and states what will and will not be permitted. We're currently reviewing the feedback received during the consultation and gathering further evidence to develop the Local Plan: the next public consultation on the Local Plan (Regulation 19) is expected to be in early 2025.

In 2023 we also consulted on the Town Centre Masterplan, which will develop the vision for Epsom Town Centre. We heard from over 200 people who live, work in or visit Epsom and are now developing the Masterplan further; it also forms part of the evidence base for the draft Local Plan.

Last October we received notification from the Minister of State for Housing and Planning that our Planning department was no longer under review for designation. The review followed performance issues relating to planning applications between October 2020 and September 2022, a result of Covid and capacity-related issues. We took swift decisive action to address the issues, and as a result, service levels and performance on planning applications has improved rapidly and significantly. Since early 2022, the council has continued to determine at least 90% of planning applications within the statutory timescale target, compared to the government threshold of 70%.

We have also introduced a Fast Track Service which allows applicants to pay to 'fast track' their planning application more quickly than the statutory eight-week period.

Commenting on the Fast Track Service, **Councillor Steven McCormick**, Chair of the Licensing and Planning Committee 2023/24, said:

" We are incredibly proud of our Planning department who in the last year, have overcome significant challenges to go from being one of 10 UK council teams performing below an expected threshold of 70% for minor/ other applications, to well exceeding national targets. It is brilliant that Epsom & Ewell Borough Council can now facilitate a service which will meet an obvious need for many residents wishing to progress building projects within the borough. I hope that this will ease stress for many people working to tight timelines for their builds. "

Processed
over
700
planning
applications



Housing

Housing pressures and homelessness:

How Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is tackling a national issue to support residents in need.

Insufficient housing levels, particularly affordable housing, is a national issue affecting individuals and families up and down the country, and Epsom & Ewell is no exception.

The Government recently released their 2023 statutory homelessness figures, revealing a 12% increase nationwide in the number of households in temporary accommodation, with the figure now standing at over 112,000. The number of households with children in temporary accommodation rose even more sharply, by 15% to over 71,000.

There are many factors that contribute to this nationwide problem; the lack of affordable housing, high rental rates, the ongoing cost of living crisis; and higher interest rates and mortgage costs to name a few.

Epsom & Ewell has proportionately one of the highest numbers of homeless households living in temporary accommodation in England and is in the top seven boroughs outside of London.



In Epsom & Ewell we face the additional challenge of the South East's very high housing costs, coupled with a severe shortage of housing. Affordable housing options in the borough are severely limited, partly due to the low level of affordable housing development in recent years. There is also only a small stock of private rented properties available which are in very high demand.

So as a borough, we urgently need more housing of all types including, but not limited to, affordable housing. Every house fulfils a need that makes other housing available, improves supply and demand, and lowers costs.

The rising cost of temporary accommodation.

We don't have enough temporary accommodation in the borough to meet the large rises in demand we've seen over the last few years, so we often need to place people in nightly paid accommodation outside the borough. This can impact the household's wellbeing and is very expensive: Epsom & Ewell Borough Council spent £1,665,493 on nightly paid accommodation in 2023/24¹.

At present, we have 160 homeless households in temporary accommodation in the borough and more than 90 homeless households in nightly paid accommodation outside of the borough. Many of these families may have to wait more than three years before temporary accommodation in the borough becomes available, and even longer before a permanent housing solution can be found for them.

“ The vast majority of homeless households are those who cannot afford suitable accommodation. Perhaps they are sofa surfing or living with family in overcrowded households. 43% of homelessness is due to eviction from a private rented tenancy, with a further 24% people experiencing homelessness after living with family or friends who are no longer willing or able to accommodate them. There is also a significant percentage of households fleeing violence. ”

Councillor Clive Woodbridge,
Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Committee,
Epsom & Ewell.

Epsom & Ewell's very low supply of social rented housing is in high demand. Fewer than 90 social housing properties become available each year against about 1,300 households who are on the housing register.

The average waiting time for applicants with a high housing need² is between 18 months and more than a decade, depending on the size of the property required. Those in lower housing need bandings have little or no prospect of being offered social housing.

The only alternative to social housing is private rented accommodation, which is very expensive – rising to an average of £1,630 in June 2024, an annual increase of 10.7% (the rise in the South East over the year was 8.2%)³.

Fewer than **90**
social housing properties become available each year

Against about **1,300**
households who are on the housing register

Initiatives that Epsom & Ewell Borough Council undertake to prevent homelessness include:

Lobbying government

... in partnership with other local authorities, via the District Council Network (DCN) – recently, this has resulted in the Local Housing Allowance being increased, having not previously seen any increase since 2019.

Empty properties

Working in partnership with landlords to bring empty properties back into use.

Prevention focus

Liaising with family and friends of people at risk of homelessness, negotiating with private rent sector landlords on their behalf, and assisting with deposits.

Rent Deposit Scheme

The council is able to support residents with rental deposits that would otherwise be unaffordable, to help secure accommodation.

Local temporary accommodation

Working with partners to increase local temporary accommodation options including utilising any Council owned sites and properties.

Downsizing households

... in social housing to free up larger accommodation.

Affordable housing

Working in partnership with Registered Providers to increase affordable housing.

Private Sector Leasing (PSL) Scheme

The council leases a property for between three and five years from a private landlord for use as temporary accommodation:

[Epsom & Ewell Borough Council calls on landlords to sign up to their Private Sector Leasing Scheme](#)

The borough's Local Plan

If approved, will bring much-needed development to the borough to help ease the pressure, costs and demand for housing. This includes a policy to increase affordable housing delivery on all eligible sites.

Challenging developers

... to provide much needed affordable housing on eligible development sites.

“ The housing team at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council undertake a huge range of actions and activities to mitigate and help solve the many challenges, as set out in the council's Homelessness Strategy. Without the incredible work being done by this team, the situation would be much worse. ”

Councillor Clive Woodbridge,
Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Committee,
Epsom & Ewell.

Development of affordable housing.

There are limited sites in the borough to develop affordable housing due to the size of the borough, the existence of the green belt and the cost of redeveloping brownfield sites.

Furthermore, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that smaller sites (fewer than 11 homes) are exempt from providing an affordable housing contribution, and commercial to residential 'permitted development' sites are not required to provide affordable housing either.

“ As a council, we are working hard to ensure that local people have a suitable home to live in. This is crucial for the wellbeing of our residents – a home is not just a physical space to live safely and comfortably. A home provides roots, identity, a sense of belonging and a place of emotional wellbeing. We also want to be able to reduce the very high expenditure that is currently required to manage the housing crisis in the borough, so that we can continue to invest in, develop and protect the many other services that the council offers its residents. The many actions we are taking will help to ease the crisis for some, but this is a situation which requires significant action to bring about a long-term and sustainable solution. ”

Councillor Clive Woodbridge,
Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Committee,
Epsom & Ewell.



Editor's Notes

- ¹ This was due to a number of factors: the consistently high number of households approaching as homelessness, a 15% increase in rental costs by our accommodation providers and a lack of alternative accommodation options. The average net cost of nightly paid accommodation for a small family is about £23,000 a year, nearly 20% higher than it was in 2022/23. For those families who require three-bedroom or larger accommodation, the cost is £27,900 per year – we currently have 27 of these families in our borough.
- ² High housing need includes issues such as: their current accommodation lacks basic facilities, doesn't have enough bedrooms, they are experiencing homelessness, or they have high medical needs.
- ³ Office of National Statistics, 17 July 2024.

Environmental Health

Our Environmental Health Service helps ensure that our borough is a safe, healthy and hygienic place to live, work and visit. Last year the team responded to 2,618 service requests and conducted 459 site visits across Epsom & Ewell.

Case study:

After receiving complaints from residents, Environmental Health Officers investigated an incident of fly-tipping and an abandoned truck on a service road with no legal owner. They spoke to residents, businesses and visitors to the area and were able to arrange for the clearance of the fly tip and the removal of the abandoned vehicle, which was attracting further fly-tipping. As no owner of the truck came forward, the truck was then destroyed.

When Environmental Health Enforcement Officers visit an area to monitor for new fly-tips, the team look for evidence within the waste to identify who may have committed the offence, so that they can track them down and take action when required.

In areas where there is repeat fly tipping, the Environmental Health team put up fly-tipping signage to act as a visual deterrent. In addition to this, in the service road mentioned above, the team are considering deploying overt CCTV cameras to collect evidence if further offences are committed.

The team issued 9 Fixed Penalty Notices for fly-tipping and 114 enforcement notices, generally ranging from community protection notices, to housing improvement and prohibition notices, health and safety improvement notices, waste duty of care notices and food hygiene improvement notices.



Responded to
2,618
service
requests
and
carried out
459
site visits

Examples of locally fly tipped waste

“ Relocating council staff to a smaller, modern and fit-for-purpose building aligns strongly with our ongoing determination to be a modern, forward-looking organisation that can best meet the needs of our residents. We are excited to progress with this move and improve value for money for our taxpayers as well as continue to provide the best services possible to the community.” ”

Jackie King,
Chief Executive of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.

Town Hall relocation

In December, Councillors voted to undertake the relocation of the council’s Town Hall accommodation. Staff currently located at the Town Hall will move to 70 East Street, a modern purpose-built office building in central Epsom.

The move will bring about several benefits to the council and our residents:

Operating costs expected to reduce by over 50%

- **Financial benefits:** Remaining in the Town Hall building would require extensive, costly refurbishment over the coming years to comply with energy efficiency and fire regulations, along with general maintenance of existing building structures. The move is expected to reduce operational cost savings by more than 50%, which will help sustain key service delivery into the future.
- **Environmental benefits:** The new building will be more energy efficient with a smaller carbon footprint, which will support our ambitions to become carbon neutral by 2035.
- **Service benefits:** The move will provide a modern and fit-for-the-future workplace that will help attract and retain staff, as well as allowing us to implement new working practices so that we can better serve the borough.

Parks and green spaces

We're hugely fortunate to have such a wealth of publicly accessible, biodiverse countryside in Epsom & Ewell.

Of our three local nature reserves (LNR):

- **Epsom Common LNR** is a designated site of special scientific interest.
- **Horton Country Park LNR** is a rural landscape of fields, hedgerows, ancient woods, and ponds. The site achieved Local Nature Reserve Status in 2004.
- **The Hogsmill River LNR** is home to a newly created wetland at Chamber Mead which will increase biodiversity as well as improving water quality in the Hogsmill River, which as chalk stream is a habitat of international importance.



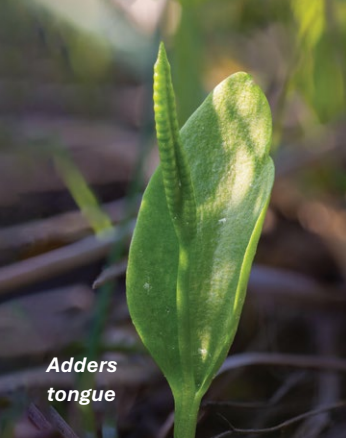
Epsom Common LNR, along with the adjoining Ashted Common LNR, are nationally and internationally important sites for nature. They harbour very rare insects in their veteran and ancient trees and provide much needed habitat for breeding birds.

“ A huge thank you to all our volunteers who turn out every week in all weathers helping to protect and conserve our nature reserves. A huge thank you also to our monitoring volunteers who help us survey the wildlife that make these sites so special. ”

Stewart Cocker,
Countryside Manager at
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.

Our countryside team run regular walks and talks which can be found on our website [epsom-ewell.gov.uk/visitors/whats-on/all](https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/visitors/whats-on/all).

They couldn't care for these incredibly special places without the teams of volunteers who support them in their work.



Adders tongue



Holly blue butterfly



Common spotted orchid



Nightingale

Epsom Common

Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve (LNR) was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the 1950s.

Today it is home to a host of flora and fauna such as silver washed fritillary butterflies, nightingales, adders and grass snakes; and scarce plants including bladderwort, Adders Tongue Fern, Corky Fruited Water Dropwort and Common Spotted Orchids.

Our vision, as set out in the ten-year management plan for Epsom Common LNR, is to:

Manage Epsom Common, to ensure the protection, maintenance and enhancement of the wildlife and heritage of Epsom Common whilst also ensuring good public access to a wonderful place!

A recent discovery at Manor Open Space

Our work ensures that biodiversity continues to flourish within our local nature reserves. We carry out regular surveys to monitor biodiversity across the borough. At Manor Open Space during an evening survey in summer 2023, the team recorded

78 different species of moth – a fantastic result – including the very exciting discovery of a moth that hadn't been seen in Surrey for over a century.

The rediscovered moth is called *Coleophora conspicuella* (*Knapweed*

case-bearer). Prior to the survey, the moth had been proposed as extinct in Surrey for the last 100 years by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). In the area where the moth was spotted, nature has been allowed to develop without much disturbance. Allowing the area to rewild has been important for wildlife – as this discovery demonstrates. A big thank you to Paul Wheeler for running the survey.

Coleophora conspicuella
(*Knapweed case-bearer*)



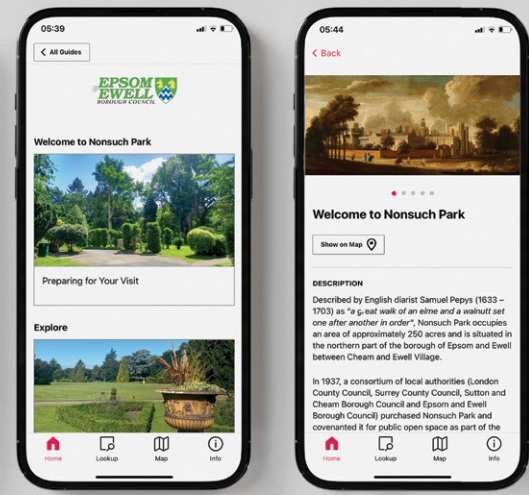
Green Flag award
Epsom Common



Green Flag Award

Epsom Common LNR was awarded the Green Flag award for the 18th year in a row in 2024.

A huge testament to the work of our countryside team and the volunteers who so diligently and passionately care for the place.



Accessible tours at Nonsuch Park

In 2023 we launched a free app offering a digital tour of the formal gardens at Nonsuch Park.

Making the park accessible for all visitors to experience at their own pace. See page 27.

Epsom & Ewell in Bloom

Nonsuch Park, along with Epsom Town Centre and Ewell Village were also recognised at the South & South East in Bloom 2023 awards.

Achieving gold, silver and bronze awards for South East in Bloom Awards.

Nonsuch Park



Climate Change Pledge

On 23 July 2019 we committed to tackling Climate Change and addressing Epsom & Ewell Borough Council carbon emissions.

Our pledge:

We are committed to achieve **net carbon neutral operations by 2035.**

Achieved a
14%
reduction
in our
operational
emissions
by 2022/2023*

Our [Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan](#) was developed in 2020 and a cross-party group was formed to oversee it.

The plan sets out a range of measures from reducing emissions created by our council buildings and vehicles, to promoting good practice in local community and businesses throughout the borough.

In 2023/24, we:

- installed solar panels and battery storage at **Epsom Playhouse**. We expect annual carbon savings of **7tCO₂e** (tonnes of carbon emissions).
- completed the **LED lighting replacement programme for Council operated buildings**. We expect annual carbon savings of **6tCO₂e**.
- are providing a **30% reduction in gas usage with heating improvement works at Longmead Wellbeing Centre**. Expected annual carbon savings of **10tCO₂e**.
- rolled out **Electric Vehicle charge points at the Town Hall, Dorset House and Depot Road car parks**. Data for first 6 months of 2023 show over **2,300 successful charges**.
- secured **£100k external funding to deliver carbon saving projects in 2024**. This includes replacing 3 fleet vehicles with electric vans, installing a voltage optimiser at Epsom Playhouse and additional tree planting.
- adopted our **Tree Management Plan, which includes a plan for additional tree planting**.
- adopted our **Taxi Emissions Policy, implementing a phased approach to higher emissions standards**.
- continue to support and promote **Surrey wide consortium schemes, including home energy grants and a second round of Solar Together**. This has led to **61 home energy efficiency measures being installed** in the past year and 28 households have had solar installation completed.



Health & Wellbeing

Our vision is that Epsom & Ewell is a place where everyone in our community can live healthily and well.

In March 2023 we announced that funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy would be used for projects including replacing the playground equipment at Rosebery Park and Alexandra Recreational Ground, repairing the pathway at Nonsuch Park to make it more accessible,

regenerating the grounds at Horton Art Centre to improve the garden there, and improving Stamford Green Pond to make it more accessible and to provide more seating.

We also worked with The Good Company to distribute funds from the Household Support Fund to families in financial need in Epsom & Ewell.



Swimming Programme

This spring, in partnership with leisure operator and social enterprise GLL, we secured an award from Sport England, funded by the National Lottery, for an innovative new swimming programme.

The scheme was aimed at residents experiencing barriers to sports and leisure participation, including families who have moved to the borough as refugees and families on low incomes. 50 people enrolled on the course which involved small, group swimming lessons at Rainbow Leisure Centre in Epsom.

Thanks to additional funds and resource contributed by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and GLL, participants aged four to eleven were also able to continue weekly swimming lessons until 31 May 2024.

" My children said that they had so much fun and it was very enjoyable and the staff were amazing, so helpful and so kind and we really enjoy being a member of the Better community. "

Rahaf

" Before the swimming lessons my daughter was scared of the water. We wouldn't have been able to afford lessons. This opportunity was a game changer for us, she built confidence and loved making friends. It also meant that I could have other mums to socialise with which also gave me more confidence. Thank you. "

Stacey

A photograph of a woman swimming in a pool, wearing goggles and a white swimsuit. She is smiling and has red foam rollers on her arms. In the background, other swimmers are visible in the pool. A large black graphic overlay is positioned on the right side of the image, containing the text 'Helped 50 people enrol on swimming lessons' in yellow and white.

Helped
50
people
enrol on
swimming
lessons

Community Boxing Project

We were also extremely pleased to be able to work with local partner Epsom Boxing Academy to deliver a new boxing programme which saw **14 young people graduate with an England Boxing Bronze Award**, complemented with an **AQA Empire Fighting Chance Award in nutrition and health**.

The structured boxing programme aimed to help young people build confidence, self-discipline, and resilience as well as improving self-esteem and supporting positive mental health.

“ The scheme was a great chance to create and deliver a programme specifically for our community in Epsom & Ewell. We saw an unbelievable change in the students over the weeks as they developed and demonstrated boxing techniques, learnt about the human body, and about food labels and nutrition. Life coaching and mentoring helped students’ progress in terms of their self-confidence, personal discipline, and punctuality. We were able to provide a safe space and an environment for the young people to express themselves. The results were outstanding. We were extremely proud to be part of such a great project. ”

Joe Harding,
Boxing Coach and founder
of Epsom Boxing Academy.

14
people
took part
in our
community
boxing
project

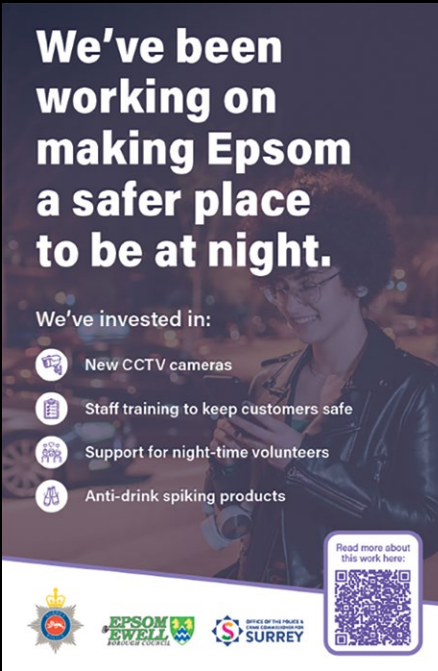


Community safety

We are a founding member of the Epsom & Ewell Community Safety Partnership, established in July 2020.

The Partnership is responsible for the strategic governance of crime and disorder reduction work in the borough and meets regularly to discuss community issues and identify priority actions, such as increasing safety measures for people, particularly women and girls, out at night in our town centres.

Community safety covers a wide range of activities designed to reduce the likelihood of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour, protect victims and hold perpetrators to account. It also involves reducing incidents of domestic abuse where vulnerable people are subject to coercion, exploitation and abuse. One of the outcomes of the partnership is the Safer Streets project. Through a successful bid for funding of £271,000 from the Home Office, we initiated the project with the support of Go Epsom, PubWatch and Surrey Police, in addressing violence against women





We've been working on making Epsom a safer place to be at night.

We've invested in:

- New CCTV cameras
- Staff training to keep customers safe
- Support for night-time volunteers
- Anti-drink spiking products

Read more about this work here:



and girls as well as improving the safety of the nighttime economy.

The project provided funding to support street pastors, installation of new town centre CCTV, training for licensed premises to be able to spot the signs of abusive behaviour and provision of anti-spiking equipment. A widespread campaign was also launched to raise awareness including a campaign targeting young men to encourage them to call out abusive behaviour when they see it.



Arts, Culture and Heritage in Epsom & Ewell

Our emerging Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy seeks to nurture and champion the creative talents within our community, while also showcasing our borough's rich heritage through arts projects and initiatives.

Last year we worked with local students and internationally renowned street artists to create a town centre community mural, delivered a programme of art workshops, hosted an art exhibition with local refugee families, organised a campaign of seasonal artworks in Ewell and Stoneleigh to help boost footfall to local shops, and even invited 30 local school children to become young curators at Bourne Hall Museum for the day as part of the 'Kids in Museums' national campaign!

Find out more about some of these initiatives below.

Town Centre Community Mural

" The students thoroughly enjoyed this unique experience to give back to the community in a very different way.

Glyn School

In September 2023 Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, twelve students from Glyn School and international street artists from Positive Arts came together to transform an unused building on the site of the Upper High Street car park. The community mural was funded via Central Government's Safer Streets initiative.

The community artwork has dramatically improved the aesthetics of the building, which previously looked tired and in need of renovation.

" It is a goal of the council to ensure that our natural environment is both celebrated and accessible to all. This project showcases how culture and creative practices can help to elevate the natural landscape of our borough in new and colourful ways.

Councillor Clive Woodbridge, Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Committee.



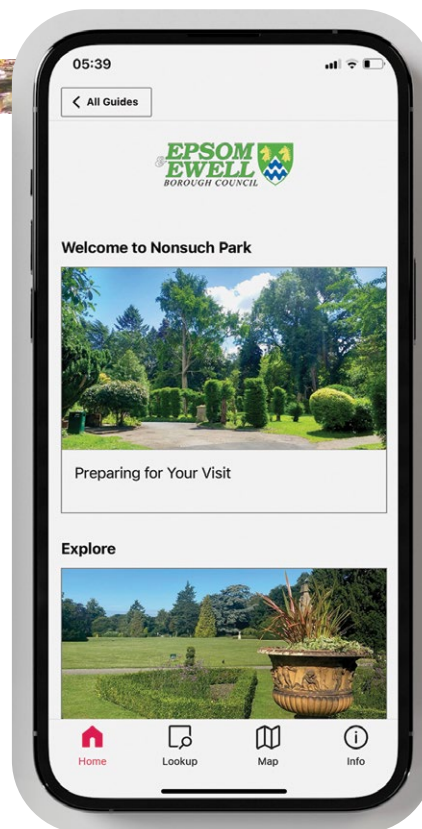
A guide to Nonsuch Park

Last autumn, in partnership with Bloomberg Connects, we launched a new digital tour of **Nonsuch Park Formal Gardens**. The fully accessible free tour enhances the experience of visitors to the park, who can learn about the heritage of the site and the ongoing work of those who volunteer their time at Nonsuch.

Rose arch in Nonsuch Park

The tour, which is always accessible to anyone who has downloaded the free app, enhances the experience of visitors to the park – who are now able to learn about the heritage of the site and the ongoing work of those who volunteer their time at Nonsuch.

The tour is the first of its kind for Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and is packed with interesting facts, history, images and more. It is updated throughout the year, adapting to the changing seasons at Nonsuch Park.



“It’s a pleasure to not only be able to showcase some of the most beautiful areas of the formal gardens to people both in and outside the borough, but also to be able to do this in a format which allows people to journey around the area at their own pace.”

Councillor Julian Freeman,
Chair of the Joint Management
Committee of Nonsuch Park,
2023/24.



Visit bloombergconnects.org
or download the app

'My Soul Gallery' Exhibition

We recently worked with Creative Minds, an arts collective committed to delivering empowering and accessible art sessions, and Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network to host weekly art sessions for adults and children from the borough's refugee community.



These sessions were put in place to provide an outlet for creativity, to nurture personal wellbeing as well as an opportunity to share conversation with like-minded individuals within the borough.

“ Being creative with art allows you to be part of the bigger picture and still remain yourself in ways that are dynamic, positive, revelatory and uplifting. It's what we can do together that is so inspiring, that defines us in the way that war can't. ”

Georgiana Dacombe,
an artist from Creative Minds.

We have more initiatives that will provide opportunities for residents to engage with arts and culture in Epsom & Ewell, including more community murals across the borough. To keep up-to-date with events, exhibitions and arts & culture initiatives in our borough, sign up to our monthly newsletter and follow us on social media.

“ We work with a host of dedicated and talented partners and volunteers to deliver initiatives across the borough. Our shared dedication to our community and commitment to the council's cultural strategy, makes it possible to ensure that these hugely important initiatives, that make such a difference to many people in our borough, can take place. ”

Jackie King,
Chief Executive of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.



Follow us on Facebook,
Instagram and X
@epsomewellbc
and on Nextdoor.

Bourne Hall

The last year has been an eventful one at Bourne Hall with updates both inside and outside the building, a new market and programme of community events.

The café was rebranded as the Flying Saucer Café and the décor has been refreshed to reflect the theme – including a model flying saucer inspired by... can you guess?

Visitors can buy homemade cakes, sandwiches and more at the venue – perfect for families visiting the new playground in the grounds. We have also built a new, more accessible seating area and replaced the patio to make it step-free down to the gardens.

Bourne Hall's new Pre-loved Clothes Market is now a firm fixture in the Bourne Hall calendar, every third Saturday of the month, when visitors shop for pre-loved, second-hand and vintage items.

The Bourne Hall Festival of Arts & Sustainability, a free community event, celebrated all things environmentally-friendly this spring, with nature-based activities, live music and entertainment, and eco-friendly shopping. The Bourne Hall Festival will be back next spring.



A historic market town

First granted by Royal Charter in 1865, Epsom Market has been a defining focal point for this bustling town for hundreds of years.

Today, Epsom & Ewell is home to a range of markets where you can buy fresh food and drink, vintage and pre-owned clothes, accessories, locally produced arts & crafts and more.



Regular Market

**Epsom Market Square.
Thursday and Saturday.**

A variety of stalls selling fresh, local products such as seasonal fruit and vegetables, fresh bread and baked goods, butchers, fashion and more.



Farmer's Market

**Epsom Market Square.
First Sunday morning of every month.**
Our larger Farmer's Market.



Bourne Hall
Pre-loved Clothes
Market

**Bourne Hall.
Third Saturday of every month, 10am-2pm.**
Pre-owned and vintage clothes and accessories.



Artisan Market

**The Grove, Ewell.
First Saturday of the month, 10am-3pm.**
Stalls include clothes, jewellery, skincare, baked goods, preserves, artwork, vintage items and lots more.

Contact us:

Call: **01372 732000**

Hard of hearing can SMS on **07950 080 202**

Epsom-ewell.gov.uk

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