

ASSOCIATION OF EWELL DOWNS RESIDENTS

(Founded 1926)

(Non-Political)

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2010

COMMITTEE REPORT

It has been a busy few months since our AGM. Our planning representative has been closely involved in such issues as Glyn School's proposal to develop all weather sports facilities at Priest Hill, the perceived inconsistency of the Borough Planning Department when assessing applications for extensions in the Conservation Area, and the growing problems with parking in the Higher Green area as parents drop off and collect their children at Wallace Fields Primary School.

Planning is a subjective and emotional subject, especially when it relates to your own personal hopes, ideas and standards, which, however, may not always accord with the wishes and thoughts of your neighbours. Most of us generally tend to be wary of change, so attempts to introduce a terraced effect by building two storey side extensions close to a neighbour's land can lead to strong objections. The Ewell Downs area is highly desirable and rightly so, with its pre-war Harwood-built houses, all of which are of similar design, but all slightly different. This Association seeks to protect the status quo, aware that residents of long standing value the gardens, the greenery and the space between the houses.

The verges in Longdown Lane North and Higher Green are not owned by the residents and the Council arranges for contractors to cut the grass on a regular basis. Officially, parking on these verges is not allowed. One does, however, see the occasional vehicle parked, and the Council tends to turn a blind eye. However, if you do park on there frequently and thereby create ruts and kill the grass, the Council may require you to make the verge good at your expense. Also, think of those who live in the area, who value the 'pastoral' effect and do not wish to be assailed by unsightly muddy ruts and grassless patches.

Our new website (qv later) gives you the opportunity to comment on all aspects of our area and community. We do hope you will take advantage and give us positive feedback.

WARD BOUNDARIES

With local elections approaching next May, it is perhaps helpful to re-iterate how the Ward Boundary changes of 2003 affected this Association.

Before 2003, our area fell wholly within Ewell Ward, but from 1 May 2003, only those roads north of the railway line, viz Reigate Road 28 -52, Beech Walk, St James Avenue, Hampton Grove, Langton Avenue, Park Hill Road, Windmill Avenue and east side of Windmill Lane remain within **Ewell Ward**.

All our roads south of the railway line, viz Reigate Road 54-140, Longdown Lane North (including part of College Road), The Green, Higher Green, Ewell Downs Road, and North Looe fall within **Nonsuch Ward**.

These arrangements have given us the added advantage of welcoming up to six Borough Councillors at our committee meetings.

LOCAL ELECTIONS MAY 2011

If we want the privilege of the attendance of six Borough Councillors at our committee meetings, we must ensure that we return them to power with our votes next May. First, however, we must find suitable candidates who are motivated to work on our behalf for the good of the Borough. If you feel that you would like to put your name forward, please contact our Secretary as soon as possible. It is easy to complain and to criticize, but somewhat more of a challenge to act and to address positively such concerns. Here is your chance to take action!

WEB SITE

The Association is proud to announce the launch of our own web site. This will give members details of the Association and names of useful contacts as well as copies of newsletters. The News and Info page will also provide information on dates of Committee meetings, planning and local issues and police matters with a 'Stop Press' section which will report up-to-date items of local importance. Members will be able to contact the Association by email via the web site and we shall be canvassing members to ascertain whether a paperless distribution of the newsletters via email would be an option for the future for those wishing to receive it that way. The address of the web site is www.ewelldownsra.org. As we are sure you will all appreciate, this is a new venture for the Association and there may be teething problems in the early days. Please bear with us but let us have your positive suggestions/recommendations via the web site or your Road Representative.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

May we remind those residents who have not yet paid their annual subscription (£3 per household) that these are now overdue and should be passed as soon as possible to your Road Representative. We are a voluntary organisation and are solely dependant on your contributions to cover our ongoing running costs. This does not apply to St James' Avenue which makes a lump sum contribution each year.

ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION

The Association seeks to protect and enhance the interests of residents. Our primary concerns centre on planning, traffic, security and other topics which directly affect our area. To this end, we maintain regular contact with our Councillors who also attend our Committee meetings. Visits are made to the Town Hall to view planning applications and to monitor the agenda items for the committee meetings of prime relevance e.g. Planning, Environment, Leisure and Strategy & Resources, and where appropriate to make our views known. Other activities include sponsoring our election candidates, helping to prepare manifestos and knocking on as many doors as possible at local election time. For the delivery of election manifestos and of our twice yearly newsletters, we rely on the vital services of our Road Representatives, who also provide indispensable communication lines. To keep in touch with Borough-wide issues, Committee members also attend as appropriate meetings of other bodies such as the Standing Committee of Residents Associations (SCoRA), the Environment Forum, Police Liaison, and the Epsom and Ewell branch of CPRE.

FOR NEW RESIDENTS

All residents are eligible to join. If they subsequently have any problems or concerns, we ask that these should first be taken up with the Borough or County Council as appropriate. If you are still not satisfied with the response, please approach your Road Representative, Councillor, or Committee member. Our aim is to assist as best we can.

HOUSEHOLDERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

May we remind you, as a householder, of your responsibility to ensure that hedges, trees and foliage growing from your land which encroach upon the public highway, whether pavement or road, should be cut back so that sight lines of cars and vehicles exiting from drives are not adversely affected. This applies particularly in Longdown Lane North and Reigate Road. Pedestrians and children on bicycles could be in danger of serious injury or worse. Low overhanging branches are also a hazard. Please think of the elderly, mothers with prams, the blind and small children.

You could be legally liable in the event of an accident for failing to control and cut back such growth and your insurance company might not be cooperative, citing contributory negligence! The Council may be prompted to take enforcement action, with you bearing the cost.

CONSERVATION AREAS

Many of the residents of AEDR live in one of twenty one Conservation Areas created by Epsom & Ewell BC in 2000. Estate Agents will tell you that there are queues of folk wanting to live in one of these areas, not only because of the Conservation Area status, but also because Epsom and Ewell frequently comes high up on TV shows as one of the most desirable places to live in the UK.

The features of a conservation area are highly valued by the majority of the residents. However, living in such an area comes with some rules that have to be observed. In our area the historical character is the original Harwood house design which ensured that there was light and space between each property and this is a clear and distinct feature of the character of the conservation area. The Council has a statutory duty to preserve the character of these areas. This is stipulated by the legislation of the Department of Communities and Local Government. The track record of Epsom & Ewell in observing this guidance is sometimes questionable and there have been occasions where some unsympathetic development has been allowed to take place.

Almost all types of development are regulated, not as you may think to make your life difficult, but in order to preserve the historical character of the Conservation Area. Residents are strongly advised to have a face to face pre application discussion with the Council to explore their proposals. This will avoid wasting time and cost later on. You can find a copy of the Conservation Area Appraisals on the website of Epsom & Ewell BC. They are well written and worth reading.

Recently there have been instances where residents have committed to ordering replacement windows without first checking with the Planning Department. The Council have informed AEDR that replacement windows are a “hot topic” at the present time. It is vital that you obtain planning permission before you place an order for replacement windows.

With regard to the Red and Yellow Notices, it is imperative that these are prominently and clearly displayed outside your property so that other residents can be informed of your proposals.

MID SURREY FARM

We are informed by Surrey County Council (SCC) that pre application discussions have been taking place between Mid Surrey Farm (MSF) and SCC. These relate to the erection of a building to enclose some of the activities, such as the operation of the machinery used in the soil screening and composting operations, and to regularise the use of the wood chipper to produce a bio fuel product which had been undertaken at MSF and fell outside the scope of the Certificate of Lawful Use.

Since the Certificate of Lawful Use was granted in March 2006 for soil screening and composting operations, a number of residents have complained that they have been detrimentally affected by noise, dust and fumes.

The Environment Agency (EA) commissioned a noise survey in August 2009 which substantiated residents' claims that MSF was creating noise which exceeded the upper limit in British Standard BS8233 and that there was reasonable cause for annoyance. The EA set a number of deadlines for noise and dust mitigation: however, residents claim that the mitigation has not been successful.

The EA have informed MSF that it is no longer covered by the waste exemption registered and have set an October deadline for MSF to apply for an environmental permit. The EA have stated that, prior to the granting of a permit, limited operations are permitted on site and that no new soils or aggregates should be brought onto the site. The EA also state that the permit will require effective noise, dust and odour control, amongst other things, to be in place which may involve works to be undertaken at the site that constitute development and thereby require planning permission.

SCC has informed residents that MSF's agent is arranging a public exhibition of the proposals, at which people can attend to view display information, ask questions, discuss them and provide the opportunity to make comments, prior to the application details being finalised and a planning application made. It is understood details about how to send comments and the timescale for doing so would be made available at the exhibition/meeting.

A number of residents have expressed their concern that development at MSF will amount to further expansion of the waste business currently taking place. They assert that this business, which is already causing them harm, is inappropriate for a residential area within the Green Belt.

PRIEST HILL

Glyn School recently submitted a planning application to install an all-weather pitch illuminated by 16 metre high floodlights at the playing field close to Nescot. This development has been refused following opposition from residents of Reigate Road whose properties face the playing field. Their opposition was supported by AEDR and Ewell Downs Road Residents' Association. The development would have led to considerable light pollution during the winter months in a Green Belt area, an increase of traffic late at night, parking congestion on a very busy road and a potential noise nuisance causing inconvenience to residents all year round.

POLICE MATTERS

New Campaign

The summer holidays are over; the new school term has begun. Surrey Police have launched a new campaign, named 'Park Smart'. This initiative is to reduce congestion and prevent any accidents around schools at drop off and pick up times. Please ensure when parking or dropping off to be considerate to other road users, pedestrians and residents near the schools.

Security

To all residents, please be mindful when securing your vehicles, garages and sheds, as there have been reports of thefts and minor criminal damage. Please also remember to report anything you feel to be suspicious to aid the police in reducing crime.

Neighbourhood Panel Meetings

For details of Neighbourhood Panel meetings and the name of your Neighbourhood Specialist Officer, check the Surrey Police Website on www.surrey.police.uk or call 0845 125 2222

. DATES FOR MEETINGS 2010/2011

Committee meetings for the coming year will be held at *Nescot College* in *Committee Room1 at 7.30pm* on the following Tuesdays:

23 November

11 January 2011

**Our AGM is scheduled for Tuesday 22 March 2011, to be held at
Nescot College in the Staff Lounge**

SCC LOCAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2010/2011

SCC meetings are open to the public and have been arranged for the following dates:

2010

Wednesday 8 December 17:00 Council Chamber Epsom & Ewell BC

2011

Monday 7 March 19:00 Council Chamber, Epsom & Ewell BC

Committee Manager: Lynda Tarling 020 8541 943

MAIN COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Borough

Michael Arthur: Planning (Vice-Chair)
Planning Policy Sub-Committee (Chair)
Social
SCC Local Committee (Co-opted member)

Pamela Bradley: Environment
Leisure
Licensing

Clive Woodbridge: Financial
Leisure (Chair)
Planning Policy Sub-Committee
Social

David Wood: Environment
Leisure (Vice-Chair)
Planning
Planning Policy Sub-Committee
Strategy & Resources

County

Chris Frost: SCC Local Committee-Epsom & Ewell (Chair)
Environment & Economy Select
Merton, Sutton & Surrey Joint Health Scrutiny
People Performance and Development

David Wood: SCC Local Committee-Epsom & Ewell (Vice-Chair)
Planning & Regulatory (Vice-Chair)
Safer and Stronger Communities Select

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR EPSOM AND EWELL

Our local MP is **Chris Grayling**, who can be contacted at the following:

House of Commons

or

212 Barnet Wood Lane

London SW 1A

Ashtead, Surrey, KT21 2D

COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

County

- *Chris Frost*

Wallace Fields Infant School and parking issues:

Following the increase in traffic in the roads around the Wallace Fields Infant School, I arranged for one of the County's Parking Officers to visit the area early one morning. The idea was that he would see the situation for himself, and then draw up proposals for some parking restrictions in the hope that it would ease some of the worst problems. Unfortunately, this plan has been hit by budgets cuts. The budget for the Parking Team has been cut from £250,000 to £75,000, so they cannot conduct any new reviews this financial year without funding from elsewhere. (There are some restrictions around the Borough that were agreed before the budget cuts, and they will go ahead).

Of course, parking restrictions are not a complete solution, as I expect most of you have seen that parents dropping off and collecting young children sometimes ignore them. At the time of writing another idea for action is being developed, but until we have approached those that would be involved, it needs to be kept under wraps for the moment.

More money for road surfacing:

Readers will have noticed that quite a few roads have been resurfaced over the summer. The County Council knows how important the state of our roads is to residents, and has found the money to carry out this work before next winter arrives. The resurfacing seals the road surface from water ingress, thus significantly reducing the likelihood of potholes developing.

Streetlight replacement programme and private roads:

More details of how the new streetlight contract will affect private roads are emerging. The contract allows for the replacement and future maintenance of lights in private roads where there is an access agreement. However, it has become apparent that there is no flexibility for those residents who wish to retain their existing light columns. Either they are replaced, or I have been told, the contract stipulates that residents will need to fund their future maintenance and pay for the electricity the lights would use. Councillors were

not given this level of detail earlier, and despite my efforts and those of others, the answer has been as above.

Parking meters for Epsom & Ewell:

The County Council's parking team has been asked by the Tory Leader of the Council to suggest sites across the County where parking meters could be installed. He specified that he wants at least 1500 in total across the County. At the time of writing, we are pressing for local County Councillors to be involved in any decisions on where they may be installed in our Borough, although it doesn't look as if we will be able to avoid having them.

Coalition Government gives Councils greater planning freedoms:

Communities Secretary, Eric Pickles, has written to all local authorities giving them permission to ignore housing targets so they can protect the green belt around towns. The County Council feels that government targets on home building are not required because local councils are best placed to balance sustainable development needs with protecting our countryside. In 2007, the Labour government announced a target of building an extra three million homes in England by 2020 to help deal with the growing demand for houses. It created regional strategies for each of England's nine regions, outlining targets for a 15 to 20-year period. These have now all gone; it remains to be seen what will be put in their place locally, if anything.

Replacement of East Street Railway Bridge:

Network Rail is planning to replace their bridge over East Street next April. The work is expected to take three weeks, and the A24 will be closed for this period. Pedestrian access will also be denied for the first three days. The police are considering a diversion route. A possible signed diversion route for the works might be Upper High Street, Alexandra Road, College Road (to roundabout), Reigate Road, and Ewell By Pass. Of course, local drivers will quickly realise they can cut a corner by using Longdown Lane North (College Road to Reigate Road). This cannot be stopped, but there may be scope to re-phase the signals at the College Road / Longdown junction to offer increased bias in favour of drivers on the prescribed route.

Borough (Ewell Ward)

- **Michael Arthur**

Our new homes -your comments sought

The new coalition government was quick to announce the abolition of the South East Plan. So on the one hand, Epsom & Ewell does not now have to accept the

higher number of new homes required by this plan (199 per annum over a 20 year period) whilst on the other, the government has said that local authorities must meet housing needs and must identify specific sites for new homes.

For the former, the council has agreed that the annual target number is 181 being the figure stated in the council Core Strategy – a major planning policy document adopted in 2007. However, over a 20 year period, 3620 becomes a very considerable number.

We have been lucky that the former “hospital cluster” has been able to provide what will be an eventual number of around 1,600 when all sites are completed.

Monitored numbers since April 2006 (the start of the plan period) show that 920 homes have been completed. A further 1,474 are currently under construction or have current planning approval including large sites at St. Ebba’s, West Park and Epsom Station. Also a further 563 homes are allocated under plan “E” proposals for Epsom.

This leaves 663 required homes for which sites have to be found and securing these is less straightforward.

The Council is proposing a 6 week consultation (8th Oct to 12th Nov) to seek the public’s views as to where these homes might be built. Notification about the consultation is being sent to all organisations on the council’s database and also available at Town & Bourne Halls and the website.

Finding the most appropriate locations for future housing is vital. The Council needs to know the public’s reaction to the options of:

(A) Building all of our future (as yet not designated) homes in the existing urban area.

(B) Building the majority, say 70 to 90%, within existing urban area and the balance on public open space and/or Green Belt land.

(C) Building a large number of new homes on a planned urban extension, this would mean approx. 40 – 60% of new homes still being built in the urban area, but the remainder on land released from Green Belt.

The response will be awaited with great interest. Although the housing numbers add up well in the early part of the plan period, the latter part is far less straightforward. The next 15 years will come along quicker than we might think!

DO MAKE YOUR THOUGHTS KNOWN

Sports pitch plans refused.

Two applications by Glyn School to construct synthetic sports pitches, floodlighting and other facilities at Priest Hill Playing Fields and on the school site in Ewell Ward were both refused in September.

Reasons for refusal at Priest Hill:

1. Impact of the floodlighting and car parking not acceptable in Green Belt.
2. Loss of trees unacceptable at southern edge of proposed car park
3. Detrimental impact to neighbouring residents arising from late hours of use proposed

Reasons for refusal at school site:

1. Application in conflict with open space and recreation policy
2. Lack of on site parking and impact detrimental to local residents (traffic grounds)

Doubtless residents will be relieved by the refusal of these proposals. Cognizance has been taken of local residents' strong representations to both applications.

Association of Ewell Downs Residents 2010 – 2011

OFFICERS

Vice-President	Peter Gilder, 44A Ewell Downs Road	020 8394 0429
Chairman	Jenny Coleman, 24 Longdown Lane North	020 8393 8124
Vice- Chairman:	<i>Vacant</i>	
Hon Treasurer:	Colin D White, 42 Longdown Lane North	020 8393 4290
Hon. Secretary:	Paula McNally, 25 Longdown Lane North	020 8393 1483

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Peter Kalinowski, 5 Higher Green	020 8393 4194
Michael Lockyer, 18 Higher Green	07818 067 741
Ian Morrison, 31 Higher Green	01372 815957
Danny Scanlon, Cherry Tree Cottage, Reigate Road	020 8394 1315

ROAD REPRESENTATIVES

Beech Walk	Meurig Thomas, 16 Beech Walk	020 8393 5197
Ewell Downs Road		
North End	Sheila Fairley, 1 Ewell Downs Road	020 8873 6242
South End	Joan England, 46 Ewell Downs Road	020 8393 2291
The Green		
North End	Paul Evans, 7 The Green	020 8393 8957
South End	Ann Broad, 77 The Green	020 8393 8653
Hampton Grove	Kim Thorp, 3 Hampton Grove	020 8394 0650
Higher Green		
Even numbers	Michael Lockyer, 18 Higher Green	07818 067741
Odd numbers	Liz Jones, 37 Higher Green	07982 234 149
Langton Avenue	Michael Arthur, 20A Langton Avenue	020 8393 1476
Longdown Lane North		
North End	Graham Evans, 30 Longdown Lane North	020 8394 0160
South End	Steve Gebbett, 53 Longdown Lane North	01372 720921
Park Hill Road		
Reigate Road		
No. 28, 34-52	Meurig Thomas, 16 Beech Walk	020 8393 5197
No. 54-92	Peter Wilson, 'Tandlewood' (Next to 54)	020 8393 5475
No. 94-118	Carol Billam, Cefn, Nth Looe Estate	020 8393 2490
No. 120-140	Carol Billam, Cefn, Nth Looe Estate	020 8393 2490
Small Holdings		
The Looe-143	Carol Billam, Cefn, Nth. Looe Estate	020 8393 2490
St James Avenue	Jason Barnett, 15 St James' Avenue	07880 958 592
Windmill Avenue	Sharon Perks, 21 Windmill Lane	020 8224 1706
Windmill Lane	Sharon Perks, 21 Windmill Lane	020 8224 1706
No 1-21		

BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

Ewell Ward

Michael Arthur	20A Langton Avenue	020 8393 1476
Pamela Bradley	Nulli Secundus, Chessington Road	020 8394 2491
Clive Woodbridge	16 Corbet Road	020 8393 2853

Nonsuch Ward

David Wood	1 Hays Walk, Cheam	020 8786 9386
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SURREY COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Chris Frost	Oak View, 8 Warren Hill, Epsom	01372 720430
David Wood	1 Hays Walk, Cheam	020 8786 9386