

FOCUS



Spring 2021

FROM YOUR LOCAL LIB DEM TEAM: Steve Gee, James Neill, Paul Vagg



Thank you to everyone who has worked through the past year to save lives and keep us functioning in what has been such a challenging year for us all. Thank you, of course, to the **NHS**, but also to all the **key workers** and **volunteers**. Without the hard work and dedication of you all we couldn't have made it through these terrible times and we will always be incredibly grateful for the sacrifices that you have made to protect and support us.

A particular thanks to everyone at **Epsom Hospital** in supporting us all locally and still giving a fantastic service. We are also very proud to have one of the national centres at **Epsom Racecourse** and thank everyone who has volunteered to help there.

The challenges facing us as we come out of lockdown

Retail and Hospitality. The very future of our local shops and high streets are in danger as we become used to shopping online. The use of office space and commuting is probably going to fall dramatically and we could be hollowing out central areas of towns – how do we regenerate them? Public transport challenges will exist with lower usage and may require bigger subsidies. **We would like to hear your ideas** on these key issues and how we regenerate our local areas and Epsom Town Centre in this changing world. (See contact details on back page.)



Mental Health. The last year has had a massive impact on the mental health of the nation. Mental Health has been underfunded for many years. Liberal Democrats have fought hard and campaigned to try and secure more funding for this forgotten service within squeezed NHS budgets. We demand that Epsom and Surrey:

- **Treat mental health with the same urgency as physical health**
- Increase access to **clinically-effective talking therapies**
- **Increase the number of psychiatrists and specialist mental health practitioners**
- Put a **focus on children's services**, eating disorders, and bipolar disorders.
- Provide **24-hour mental health services** in all hospitals.
- End the use of **prison cells** to hold those suffering from severe mental distress.

Through these policies, we will build a better future for those suffering from mental health issues and their families.

FOCUS action gets results

A **Noble Park** resident contacted **FOCUS** to tell us that the lack of clear guidance for parking in the area around the water tower means that vehicles are often parked in inconvenient or dangerous locations.

FOCUS team member **Paul Vagg** helped the resident write a statement to the county council, which is now proposing yellow lines around the corners of **Miller Place** and **Sherwood Way** (subject to public consultation).

For full details of this and other proposals of the parking review, look at the December 7th agenda for the Epsom & Ewell Local Committee on the Surrey County Council website.



Paul Vagg points out an example of inconsiderate parking in front of the water tower.

The Government has confirmed that **County Council elections** will go ahead on May 6th.

Steve Gee says "I don't want our county council wasting any more money on trying to abolish all the borough councils in Surrey. Instead, we need proper repair of potholes, better provision for carers, speeding up action on climate change issues and forward planning for school places."

NEWS IN BRIEF

The **council tax** rise this year will be 2.82%. This is determined by the borough council, county council and Surrey Police. The borough's rise is smallest at 2.43% and the police rise is 5.5%.

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Residents of **the Wells** have launched a new website aimed at reopening the Wells Centre following its closure by the borough council 5 years ago: epsomwellscommunityassociation.org.

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A new planning application has been submitted for 5x4-bedroom houses at the rear of **Clayhill Lodge** and adjacent to the new flats overlooking Court Rec. This application would not require the demolition of Clayhill Lodge or its neighbour Allonby, unlike the existing application which has yet to be determined. The latest application is not regarded by the council as a 'major scheme', so would not automatically be determined by the Planning Committee.

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Following councillors' refusal of the previous application, new plans have been submitted for the proposed care building at the rear of **Epsom Hospital**. The plans have been scaled down slightly - it's only an 8-storey building now!

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A group of dedicated individuals are trying to get proper recognition of the historic and cultural significance of **Horton Cemetery** that served the cluster of mental hospitals. See their website at www.hortoncemetery.org.

Sign up for our email updates at www.e-e.lib.dm/en/subscribe-by-email

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We want to hear from you...

Please use the space below to let us know your views, or give details of any issues you would like to raise with us:-

Can we keep you updated with our news? Yes

Please leave your details so we can contact you about issues you raise:

Name: _____ House No: ____ Post Code: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

The Liberal Democrats will use your contact details to send you information on the topics you have requested. Any data we gather will be used in accordance with our privacy policy at libdems.org.uk/privacy. To exercise your legal data rights, email: data.protection@libdems.org.uk

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