

The Resident

The Esher Residents Association Newsletter

for Esher, Hersham Riverside, West End & Lower Green

Winter 2023 No: 106



Civic Centre reinvention to revitalise Esher High Street

Progress report on Esher Vision 2030

At last month's Esher Chamber of Commerce meeting, ERA councillor and Deputy Leader of EBC, Simon Waugh and Tim Oliver, Surrey County Council's leader, gave an upbeat report on the Esher Vision for 2030.

Very significantly, Simon and Tim are working together to improve Esher's town centre and to improve life in Lower Green.

Simon said there is placemaking work underway across the whole borough, but Esher has moved up the hierarchy.

Options for redeveloping the Civic Centre have been a catalyst for a full scale review of the town centre. This evolving vision has been driven by the public consultations carried out earlier this year.

It has been clear for a long time that Esher's town centre lacks a compelling reason for people to visit it. The traffic layout, congestion and pollution make it an unfriendly place to be.



Esher Civic Centre site (Google Earth)

CHANGE

JOIN THE DEBATE

ESHER

Elmbridge Borough Council wants to create a reinvigorated Esher town centre where, during the day, people will come to 'the Civic Heart of the Borough.'

It plans to attract a variety of businesses into the area offering employment opportunities and driving footfall to independent, creative shops, cafes and new public spaces.

There will be new space for community events and farmers' markets and our impressive, but inaccessible monuments will be moved, contributing to a new public realm.

At night, the restaurants, theatre and cinema will continue to draw visitors from across the borough.

As well as making Esher a destination, rather than a town through which people pass, the proposals will encourage sustainable living, improving access to better quality green spaces and high quality, safe spaces for children to play. The team working on this new vision also proposes a diversity of housing in improved settings on the High Street itself.

Since there is an urgent need for more sustainable travel, the proposals will mean increased safety for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users.

Save the date Tuesday 28 November 2023 @19.30 hrs Sandown Park

Esher Residents' Association Annual General Meeting. All are welcome.

Our guest speaker is **Cllr. Tim Oliver** Leader Surrey County Council.

email your name and postcode to helloesher@esher-residents.com or hellohersham@esher-residents.com

Esher Vision 2030 Progress Report

CHANGE

JOIN THE DEBATE

ESHER

Tim Oliver lives in Esher and, like all of us, struggles with the road layout. He reiterated the value of the new Vision 2030 and said it reflects Surrey County Council's desire that 'nobody is left behind'.



Surrey leader Cllr Tim Oliver

Across the county he is addressing health inequalities. Extraordinarily, there is a 10 year difference in life expectancy between Oxshott and Leatherhead, and Surrey is placing great focus on addressing this through public health initiatives, encouraging people to walk and cycle. Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) will be implemented in all parts of the county with one of the benefits being safe routes around schools.

Tim spoke of a greener future. 46% of carbon emissions come from vehicles and we need to get people out of their cars and into much more robust public transport. Interestingly, Surrey County Council has piloted, in Mole Valley, an 'on demand' electric mini bus service and Tim confirmed that this will be rolled out across the whole county in 2024 including here in

Elmbridge. He is very supportive of the work that Simon and the Borough Council are doing and will be working with the Borough Council to secure funding to deliver the vision. He is also committed to working with Simon to examine the closure of some of the slip roads to encourage a more relaxed, outdoor café environment.

Lower Green is a separate piece of work which Simon has led for some time. Again, the team is working with Surrey County Council to look at our wider land holdings to see if it is possible to include more housing and move some of the more industrial facilities around the borough.

Expect plans early next year.

This all sounds great. **What's next?**

The team is commissioning a Stage1 feasibility study to look at options for the public realm enhancements and working with Surrey County Council to assess the deliverability of highway improvements.

They will continue to engage with our businesses and residents as work progresses.

We will keep you posted.



Elmbridge Mayor, Cllr Richard Williams at the opening of Mehmet Yilmaz's Benan's Fish & Chips



Welcome to Gail's and Benan's Fish & Chips

Gail's Bakery has opened on the High Street. It is a welcome addition to our shops and will drive footfall. At the other end of the High Street, Benan's new fish and chip shop is proving very popular.

There is good news - almost all the vacant shop units have now been let.

Do you use the Hersham Golf Club footpath?

Support our campaign to get it cleared

Google Earth



Do you use this public footpath that connects Molesey Road to Esher Road? If so, we want to hear from you. This footpath runs along the back of the Hersham Golf Club grounds and is used by a wide range of residents as a cut through including those commuting to and from the station, those travelling to and from school and dog walkers. It has become a dumping ground and health hazard for residents and is in

immediate need of attention. If you share these concerns regarding the upkeep of this footpath please reach out to us at:

hellohersham@esher-residents.com



Raab's Road Page

Dominic Raab picks up our campaign

Many of you will have received a letter from our MP, Dominic Raab, referencing a survey of residents' opinions concerning the impact of traffic through Esher.

We are delighted that he is such an avid reader of our newsletters and that Simon Smith's article in our last edition No105 (still available at <https://esher-residents.com/newsletters/>) has prompted him into action.

Simon has been writing to Dominic since 2019 about this subject, but has enjoyed limited success, indeed the last response from Dominic's caseworker in February 2021 reads:

"Given Highways England's reply to you of February last year (which I have re-read) it's unlikely at this point that we would be able to get anything more productive from them at this point – however, I know from dialogue with Surrey County Council (who is responsible for the county's highways) that they are investing heavily in other forms of travel provision such as cycling lanes. This is with the specific view to get more people out from their cars".

While we rejoice at the Damascene conversion, years have been wasted with little or no action on this matter from those in national government and we respectfully request that whoever is our MP, following the next General Election, will pursue this matter with some vigour. We welcome your thoughts on this matter.



Save the date: February 3rd at Claygate Village Hall. 7.00 for 7.30 pm.

Our Quiz Inquisitor, the incomparable **Joan Leifer**, is already hard at work putting together a clever and challenging set of questions.

Do join us and bring your friends for a great quiz and some delicious fish and chips.

Tickets are £20 per person. Suggested table of 8 people.

Singles and couples welcome. We can make up tables on the night. BYO - Bring your own drink and opener.

To book please email:
helloesher@esher-residents.com or
hellohershams@esher-residents.com

**Our Quiz
night &
is back!**



Raffle proceeds go to the Mayor's charity Oasis childcare

10% of funds raised go to the Mayor of Elmbridge Trust Fund to assist residents who are in need.

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For over 30 years, Killik & Co have been dedicated to helping clients save, plan, and invest. As an independently-owned and award-winning partnership, our mission is clear: to help you achieve your financial aspirations.

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FRIDAY 26 JANUARY 2024

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Don't miss a memorable day of Military spectacle and thrilling racing action!

FREE TICKETS FOR RESIDENTS OF KT10 USE KT10 AT CHECKOUT



Sandown Park
RACECOURSE

Esher's revived Chamber of Commerce



Esher's growing Chamber of Commerce is a non-political, not for profit organisation promoting the best interests of our residents and businesses. It offers:

Networking Opportunities:

Monthly meetings help members network with other local businesses and professionals, creating new partnerships and business opportunities.

Advocacy and Representation:

Promoting the interests of local businesses. With members in all levels of government, the Chamber works to steer development for the community and is currently working with Elmbridge Borough Council on its exciting 'Esher Vision 2030' project.

The Chamber also has strong connections to the local police and, following member requests, is pushing to increase the police presence in Esher.

Business Support and Resources:

The Chamber is always looking for ways to help its members grow and succeed, inviting guest speakers to cover a wide range of topics.

Recently, members heard a talk from LoCASE which provides funding to small and medium size enterprises.

Community Engagement:

The Chamber plays a strong role in the local community, orchestrating the following initiatives in Esher such as:

1. Esher in Bloom – a community project to replant the flowers along the high street
2. Installation of the flag poles and the various flags to celebrate events of national importance
3. The Farmers Market that takes place on the 3rd Saturday of every month
4. Xmas decorations and lights with a **special celebration at Sandown Park on December 1st** to turn on the Xmas tree at 4.45 with a candle light procession up the High Street to Christ Church for their Christmas tree light up at 5.30

Overall, the Esher Chamber of Commerce plays a crucial role in the development of the local businesses and contributing to the social and economic wellbeing of Esher as a whole.

If you would like to become a member of the Esher Chamber of Commerce, please email Kieran Pezzack at kp@audleychaucer.com.





Cllr. Richard Williams has chosen Oasis to be his Mayoral Charity for 2023/4. "It does the most remarkable work with families who are struggling and I'm keen to raise as much money as I can for them" he says. Indeed, he's so committed to fund raising for them that he's recently signed up to making a sponsored skydive. He's set the target at £5,000 but would love to raise more.

"Being vulnerable is not limited to a particular social class. Financial hardship, abuse, addiction and poor physical and mental health can affect anyone at anytime," he continues, "and children are often the ones most affected by these issues. Oasis works hard to safeguard them and ensure they are in loving family environments".

Each family is different and, over time, their needs change, but Oasis sets no time limit on the support it offers, giving assistance for as long as it's required.

The team also provides outreach services to families. A holistic plan is put in place to make improvements in peoples' daily lives. Early preventative work helps families avoid falling into crisis and circumvents involvement with the police and social services. However, should a crisis arise, support is offered.

Emotional wellbeing support is given through counselling and family members have access to various courses including the Freedom Programme for survivors of domestic abuse, life coaching, art therapy, 1-to-1 parenting and special education needs support. Guidance on healthy eating and family nutrition is also offered.


Oasis is able to signpost families to services they themselves cannot provide such as addiction services and housing organisations and is able to advocate on behalf of families to these services when they lack the confidence to contact them and/or distrust them.

Alongside this, Oasis provides a legal surgery for questions relating to family law, it provides emergency services including clothing, fuel bursaries and fresh food banks and holds an annual Christmas appeal to support families in numerous ways at what can be a very difficult time of year for many.


For further information on the Oasis Charity and to see how you can support them or whether they can help you or someone you know please visit: www.oasischarity.co.uk

Please support the Mayor of Elmbridge

Skydiving for Oasis Childcare and the Mayor of Elmbridge Trust



Donate here:



In May 2023, Cllr Richard Williams launched Oasis as his Mayoral Charity for 2023/4 at Painshill Park.

*In **April 2024** he will be undertaking a **skydive** to raise funds for Oasis. His target is to raise **£5,000**. Please do support him by clicking on the accompanying Donate here QR code.*

Our Amnesty garden and the story behind it

In 1963 a state of emergency was declared in Syria. When President Hafez al-Assad, father of the present President assumed power in 1970, freedom of speech was curtailed, and human rights abuses proliferated. Security forces loyal to al-Assad arbitrarily arrested 'political' suspects and had the power to hold them indefinitely.

In 1983, while studying Physics at Damascus University, Syrian student Nabil Julao was arrested for supporting the removal of the state of emergency and his request for democratic elections. Amnesty International UK invited Esher & District's Amnesty Group to adopt Nabil as their 'prisoner of conscience'. From 1986 to 1995 the group worked tirelessly to draw the Syrian authorities' attention to his case.

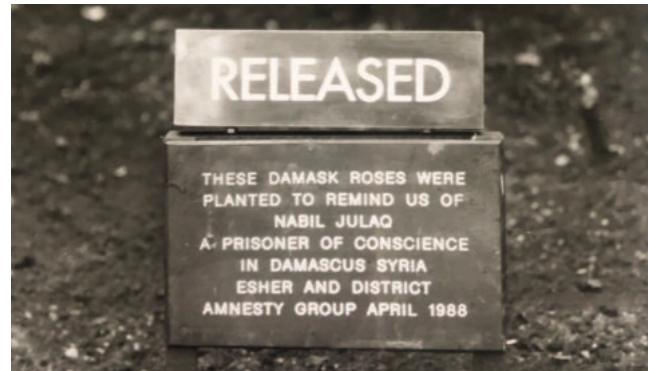
On 16th April 1988, the Esher & District Amnesty Group organised the planting of damask roses to commemorate Nabil's five year incarceration. Mayor of Elmbridge, Councillor Ruth Lyon planted the roses and a memorial plaque was erected in Church Walk, Esher. The event coincided with the 40th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights.

The group continued to write to Nabil in prison until his eventual release in 1995, 11 years after his arrest. During that time, he had been held without charge or trial.

A 'released' plaque was then added to the rose bed by Ruth Lyon. The group had further success in 1995 with their next prisoner of conscience, the Tunisian journalist Mohamed

Kilani. Following a campaign, where more than 100 letters were sent by people from Esher, Kilani was granted a presidential pardon that same year.

On his release, Kilani thanked the group.



Another Esher Amnesty Group memorial residents may find of interest, is the olive tree in the Recreation Ground opposite the Princess Alice Hospice. This was planted on Human Rights Day in 2011 by MP Dominic Raab to celebrate 50 years since the foundation of Amnesty International.

The Esher & District Amnesty group is still active, nearly 50 years since its formation. The mission of the group has not changed and they continue to take action, online or offline, to support refugees and other human rights causes and petition governments for the release of individuals at risk. The group is not political and bases its work on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

New members are welcome to join the letter writing group every second Wednesday of the month. If you are interested in human rights and the work of Amnesty International, please contact esherdistrictamnesty@gmail.com for further information.



Mayor of Elmbridge, Cllr Ruth Lyon at the planting ceremony 16 April 1988

Advertise with the ERA

The Resident is distributed to 3000+ homes in the Esher Ward and our regular e-bulletins have hundreds of subscribers.

If you'd like to place an ad, do drop us a line at: sfeltham@esher-residents.com

Submit an article

We know, from reader responses, that residents love articles about local history.

If there's something you're itching to write about, please write to us at: helloesher@esher-residents.com or hellohershams@esher-residents.com

About the Esher Residents Association

A message from Simon Leifer our Chairman



The ERA has been working for the Esher ward since 1976, giving people living and working here a louder voice in local affairs.

Our objectives are to:

- Foster community spirit
- Conserve and improve the way of life in Esher

- Provide a public voice on matters affecting residents
- Take action for individuals who need help on local authority matters

ERA Committee members share two important things in common - they live in Esher and they care deeply about it. Esher (which includes West End, Lower Green and Hersham Riverside/Longmore) is a vibrant and diverse community and belonging to the ERA gives you the opportunity to address issues of concern for the local community.

Although obliged to register as a political party to participate in local elections, we are very much a non-political organisation focusing solely on matters affecting Esher. Currently, the ERA is fortunate in having all three elected Elmbridge Councillors for the Esher Ward.

Your councillors

Elected in May 2021, **David Young** has lived in Esher for over 13 years and also works as Operations Director for a software firm.



He is passionate about protecting the Greenbelt, improving air quality, revitalising the town centre and making the area safer for families and local residents to walk and cycle. He opposes high density housing plans, and wants redevelopment plans that are sustainable and in keeping with our environment.



Richard Williams was first elected in 2019 and again in 2023. He is the current Elmbridge Mayor and raising funds for Oasis, his Mayoral charity, which does valuable work for vulnerable families and children. He has a strong interest in architecture and the built environment, which has

led him to playing a large part in our Change Esher campaign. In his spare time, Richard is a car nut who is never happier than wandering around Brooklands tracking down obscure French classics.

Simon Waugh has represented Esher as a Councillor for over 10 years and is Deputy Leader of EBC. He was our previous Elmbridge Mayor. He is a Chartered Surveyor and has lived in Esher for nearly 20 years. He is committed to protecting our green spaces and is a regular walker with his dog Chester. He opposes inappropriate development and represents Esher on the East Area Planning Sub Committee. He is also Chairman of the King Georges Hall Trust.



Tell us what's important to you as a resident in the Esher Ward

Email us at: helloesher@esher-residents or hellohersham@esher-residents

Committee members

Susannah Feltham: Publicity, Treasurer

Rose Leifer: Membership, Newsletter

Doug Fryer: West End rep

Michael Phillips: Planning

Chris Goldsack: Hersham Riverside & Longmore rep.

Chris Jones: Hersham Riverside & Longmore rep.

Sun Jones: Hersham Riverside & Longmore rep.

Paul Fielding: Road reps.

Simon Leifer: Chair

Simon Smith: Retail consultant

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Subscribe to our e-bulletin - local information right to your inbox!

Our e-bulletin is a great way to keep you informed about:

- Esher 2030 – Civic Centre redevelopment plans
- Events happening in the area
- Esher Theatre - What's on?
- Status of local planning applications
- Offers/discount vouchers for local businesses
- Invitation to the ERA AGM and public meetings
- Christ Church, Esher, - What's on?
- Local clubs and societies

How to subscribe

On our website www.esher-residents.com/register

Support us

We are a completely voluntary, not-for-profit organisation and receive no public funding. The financial aspect of running our campaigns, and producing our Newsletters and e-Bulletins, is only made possible by our valued supporters, the kind donations of local residents and the advertising of our great local businesses.

How to support us:

Please use one of the methods below or use the QR code at the top of this page (direct debit is preferable as it gives us a regular annual donation):

On our website: www.esher-residents.com/support-us

Online banking / Standing Order (Esher Residents Association, sort code 20-90-56, account 00232025)

Direct Debit: <https://esher-residents.com/direct-debit>

Cheque or cash by post to ERA Membership, 9 Broom Close, Esher KT10 9ET

Complete and return the slip below

I/We wish to subscribe to the Esher Residents Association e-bulletin and agree to receive email communications (you can subscribe at any time).

First name _____

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email address _____

House name/no _____

Postcode _____

Return slip to Esher Residents Association, 9 Broom Close, Esher KT10 9ET or photograph/scan and send to helloesher@esher-residents.com or hellohersham@esher-residents.com

Have spare time on your hands? Have a desire to improve our area? We are looking for volunteers to join our Committee, become road reps, help us in our campaigns or to be litter pickers.



We love old photos

Send us your old photos of Esher Ward

We're planning to build a collection of old photos of Esher Ward and will publish them on our Facebook page if you are kind enough to send them to helloesher@esher-residents.com or hellohershams@esher-residents.com

Here are two, courtesy of Elmbridge Museum



Esher Green, c. late 1950s - early 1960s

This photo, originally a postcard, looks across the grass with houses.



The Bear Hotel, c. 1920s

Two vintage cars are parked outside the front of the pub, which is shown covered in ivy. A sign for 'Jack Withers & Co. Bentley Specialists' is also visible to the left.



NORTH SURREY DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE

WHAT DO WE DO?

The service supports people experiencing or that have experienced domestic abuse and their children, offering practical and emotional support.

We also run a series of tailored recovery programmes that help empower survivors of domestic abuse to positively move forward with their lives.

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- housing issues
- welfare benefit entitlement
- child contact issues



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EMAIL- NSDAS@CAEW.ORG.UK

CHARITY NUMBER: 1094025

**citizens
advice**

**North Surrey
Domestic Abuse Service**
Covering the boroughs of Epsom,
Ewell, Elmbridge & Spelthorne

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL

999



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Festive fun with family and friends

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Sandown Park
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Sunday 10 December at Bushy Park

Sunday 17 December at Sandown Park Racecourse

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