

THE Esher & Hersham News

Local issues, local action, local Conservatives | Visit our website: www.esherwalton.com



Your views matter to us!

HELLO and welcome to The Esher & Hersham News - a community newsletter written and distributed by your Local Conservative team.

I am Simon Waugh, your Conservative candidate for the enlarged Esher ward at upcoming Elmbridge Borough Council elections on 3 May. To help me better understand your views I recently launched a survey which we have delivered to nearly 4,000 homes in Esher and Hersham.

I really appreciate residents taking the time to complete the survey. Responses have been coming back and already the feedback has been invaluable.

Far and away topping the list were concerns on potholes

and the state of our roads (not surprisingly). Comments on this came up in well over half of the responses.

I work closely on highways matters with Conservative County Councillor for Esher, Peter Szanto, who you'll hear from elsewhere in this newsletter. We are working together to address the poor state of our roads and to make the case for increased funding.

In addition, planning and sensitive development featured highly in the survey as being of concern, closely followed by minimizing Council Tax and supporting our local shops and businesses. The majority of residents said that "Ensuring the Council spends my taxes wisely" is the most important role of your

Esher Borough Councillor.

Crime was highlighted as a major concern and, as you will see from the photo, I recently took the opportunity to discuss this issue with Home Secretary, Amber Rudd when she visited Esher. I also raised it with our MP Dominic Raab and our Police and Crime Commissioner.

I previously served on the Planning Committee and as Chairman of Audit and Standards during my last spell as your councillor. If elected this May, I will seek to ensure the planning is fair and that our precious green spaces are robustly protected.

I will work with colleagues to improve our high street and address congestion in Esher. I hope you enjoy this edition.

'£164 a day to spend a penny'



ELMBRIDGE'S RA/Liberal Democrat administration continues to demonstrate its financial recklessness, this time over public toilets.

At February's Full Council, Coalition councillors approved the purchase of five 'Tetragonal Classic' toilets from Swedish supplier DANFO for £350,000 and will spend an additional £164 a day on a contractor (still to be appointed) to maintain the new conveniences.

Esher's Tim Oliver, who leads the Conservative Opposition Group, urged the Administration to carry out a proper study into where the toilets might be needed, if at all. He warned: "There doesn't seem to be any science in the way in which this has been approached. We're coming out of a ridiculously expensive contract and are now being asked to commit to £350k.

"Before we go ahead we should identify where these toilets are needed and we have a proper capital budget to review."

But the RA/Lib Dem majority voted down the Conservatives' motion. They gave the go ahead for new toilets at Brooklands and RA dominated wards of Thames Ditton, Hersham (at the splash park) and Molesey.

Esher will not get a new automated toilet. Instead the town centre will be served with a community toilet scheme in which local businesses - Everyman cinema, Esquires Coffee Shop, Giro Cycles and The Bear Hotel - have agreed with the council to open their facilities to the public.

Funds needed to fix our roads

Esher's County Councillor PETER SZANTO brings readers an update on local highways and safety matters and the latest on the financial challenges Surrey is grappling with.

LOCAL residents are understandably angry at the state of our roads and I share their indignation.

Surrey is in financial straits, despite large efficiency savings, largely through no fault of its own but because of massive reductions in government funding and increases in demand for adult social care and children's services.

The Council still must act to improve our roads. It's a service that is critical to our residents and businesses. With neighbouring Local Conservative colleagues, we are applying maximum pressure to increase spending on our roads.

I can report some progress. Next year's budget for local highways will be doubled and we may have around £200,000 in total for work in Elmbridge. This will certainly be a help but much more needs to be done, I will keep on fighting!

Following yet another two accidents at Esher Green, Surrey's most dangerous junction, residents are rightly asking what can be done.

Your local Conservative team of County and Borough Councillors have been working hard. There are now firm plans to relocate the war memorial later this year with Cllr David Archer confirming that the move is expected to start in April.

We also conducted a comprehensive study into a collision reduction scheme of the junction. Nine improvements were considered in detail. The recommended phased



delivery includes monitoring and review following completion of each stage. The first two steps will be a review of existing signage to ensure that clear and concise information is provided, followed by placing the existing controlled pedestrian crossings in both Lammas Lane and Church Street on

raised road tables.

Our County and Borough Conservative team are fully engaged in the Esher traffic Study. The major finding of last year's Esher traffic survey was that on any given term time weekday approximately 84% of vehicles in Esher Town Centre are "through" traffic.

We are developing a project to optimise the synchronisation of traffic signals to improve flow and to investigate options to enhance pedestrian crossings.

My fellow Conservative Surrey County Councillors and I have rejected an independent panel's recommendation that cabinet allowances should increase by 8%.

This, coupled with the removal of future Councillor pensions and payments to committee vice chairs, results in savings of £225,000.

I'm delighted I have been able to deliver on this manifesto commitment. In these challenging times every penny counts. If only we'd had a Conservative administration at Elmbridge Borough Council, where Lib Dem and Residents Association politicians awarded themselves a staggering 12.4% increase in their councillor allowances.

We need to regain control of Elmbridge borough Council and electing our Esher Conservative candidate Simon Waugh on 3 May will go a long way to achieve this.

Getting there Lidl by Lidl

WORK has started at last on the new Hersham Lidl.

Builders Crest Nicholson will take forward development of the food store and 38 apartments. The groundworks, foundations, sub structure and boundary treatments are underway, and should be completed by end February.

Crest confirm that the build is expected to take 20 months with completion in Summer 2019.

Last November saw some teething problems on the Mole Road side, in particular the unplanned installation of an entrance gate contrary to the agreed access from Molesey Road.

Residents were understandably concerned by the proximity of large site offices and Local Conservatives raised the matter with Elmbridge's planning team. These are being monitored by Elmbridge Borough Council.



USEFUL NUMBERS:
Elmbridge Council's out of hours emergency number is 01372 466114. Surrey County Council Social Care out of hours emergency number is 01483 517898.



THOMAS COOMBES

INTERIOR DESIGN

94 HIGH STREET | ESHER | KT10 9QJ

info@thomascoombesdesign.com

01372 464736

COMMUNITY NEWS IN BRIEF

WE ARE informed that the extension of Waitrose in Esher high street is on hold but under 'regular review'. Waitrose tells us it is committed to remaining in Esher and to delivering a new store possibly in 2019. Meanwhile Lavanter Properties is bringing forward the re-development of Esher Police Station next door, to provide six apartments and a new 3,000sq ft retail unit.

LOWER Green Community Centre is expected to reopen in May, a year after it was temporarily closed by the council over concerns about its governance.

Elmbridge's Cabinet agreed in November to spend £200,000 to improve safeguarding for users and ensure the building met statutory compliance and a further £65,000 on a community development worker for one year to recruit new trustees and provide support to the community. A professional company is being sought to manage the catering and temporarily run the building. To apply to be a trustee, please email leisure@elmbridge.gov.uk

CONSERVATIVE councillors have encouraged Hersham golf club to apply for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies to improve and upgrade the footpath adjoining the Club. We are hopeful the application will be approved and the works carried out.

TALENTED local artists will be displaying their work at an exhibition in the borough. Original work including paintings (framed and unframed) including botanical art, landscapes, portraits, still life and more will be available view or buy. St Alban's Primary School, in Beauchamp Road, East Molesey is hosting the event from 3-8 April. Opening times are 11-5pm, or 2-6pm Tuesday and Thursday. See www.moleseyartsociety.co.uk

THREE Rivers Academy students moved into their new building in Hersham on 26 February. Demolition of the old school (Rydens) will commence in mid-March and take about 18 weeks. Redevelopment of the old school site as affordable housing is expected to take 18-24 months.

'Burglary gangs targeting Elmbridge'

FOLLOWING concerns raised by residents about a recent increase in burglaries, Esher Conservatives have met with Greg Turner, Elmbridge's Police Inspector.

He gave us a comprehensive perspective of activities the police have underway to address the spike in burglaries and the progress they are making.

After a long term reducing trend, recorded burglary in Surrey and nationally has started to rise this year and gangs from outside the area targeting Elmbridge.

The crimes are typically opportunistic, non-violent, 'quick in and out' seeking items such as cash, watches and jewellery. Crimes are typically carried out between 4pm and 10pm.

Surrey Police has launched Operation Spearhead which includes the deployment of extra overt and covert resources to beat the burglars. A number of arrests have been made so far this year.



Additionally, Surrey Police is offering the services of specialist 'Designing Out Crime Officers' to liaise with victims and the community to improve security, and it has also increased its use of social media and "In the Know" emails to raise awareness.

Esher Conservative candidate Simon Waugh said: "It is not only the Police who prevent crime. There is nothing better than a community that is engaged, vigilant residents who look out for each other and report things that look out of place. I would

urge residents to report anything suspicious by dialling 101 or, for genuine emergencies call 999.

"The police will never criticise someone for calling the wrong number in good faith. We all need to consider whether our own home security arrangements are effective and appropriate. In many cases, big houses with expensive contents have inadequate security, which increases the risk of becoming a victim."

Residents should consider such issues as: window and door locks; remote monitored burglar alarms; security cameras, security doorbells; access, particularly from the rear of properties where ladders, garden furniture and single-story extensions have all been used to gain entry.

To request a visit from 'Design Out Crime Officer' Mike Bessent, who can provide free bespoke home security advice go to: <https://www.surrey.police.uk/elmbridge/eshes-claygate>

Where will all the new homes go?

HUNDREDS of new homes are to be built in Elmbridge every year to help young families and key workers to get on to the property ladder - but the Council has still to publish a plan setting out where they will go.

The Conservative government is determined to tackle the chronic shortage of housing nationally which has pushed up the average cost of a home in Elmbridge to around £600,000 - beyond the reach of most first time buyers and average earners.

Elmbridge, like other Surrey boroughs has been asked to plan for around 600 new housing units a year for the next decade. It is a tall order and one that requires imagination and creativity - not at all what we've seen so far from the Residents Association political parties and Liberal Democrats currently running our council.

Cllr James Browne, Housing spokesman for the Elmbridge Conservatives explains: "The Administration's response to this challenge was so crude and



unimaginative - They proposed building more than 5,000 homes on three large tracts of the greenbelt at Long Ditton, Cobham and Oxshott.

"There was a predictable outcry from residents and the Coalition was forced into a retreat. We have seen no alternative plan since and this leaves us vulnerable to having one imposed centrally."

He added: "Just imagine what would be in their literature now if the Conservatives had proposed building thousands of homes on the greenbelt!"

If a Conservative Administration is elected in May, we will take a more responsible approach to meeting our housing challenge.

We will give careful thought to releasing public land, building on brownfield sites and to greater intensity in built-up areas, such as three-storey terraces.

Developers will be told to prioritise starter homes and affordable homes since these are what our community needs.

The failure of the RA/Lib Dem administration to push back against the government targets or to approve an updated Local Plan, setting the guidelines for new development in the borough, creates a potential free for all for developers and stacks the deck in their favour if they take the Borough to an appeal.

Cllr Browne said: "The lesson is clear - if you want to safeguard our greenbelt and want a competent and fair approach to tackling the Borough's housing needs then you need to vote Conservative in May."

Council tax to rise

COUNCIL tax is to rise by 5.4% from April - adding £95.74 to the average bill.

Overall, a Band D household will pay £1,862.86, which is split 76% to Surrey County Council (SCC), 13% to Surrey Police and 11% to Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC).

EBC has set a budget of £38.4million this year, topping up reserves in case the government imposes 'negative Revenue Support Grant' on the borough next year (requiring us to contribute to a central pot).

Council Leader Stuart Selleck and Conservative group leader Cllr Tim Oliver agreed this must be resisted and lobbied against.

Tim added: "It is never good to increase in council tax but it is important that this council manages its finances in a way that it can deliver sustainable services."

He defended SCC from criticism pointing out that it has a statutory obligation to provide adult social care and for children with special education needs, but has "absolutely no control" over these rising costs.

Heathrow Airport seeking residents' views

HEATHROW is running a consultation until 28 March to seek residents' views on how airspace should be modernised.

Aircraft are switching over to system of precision navigation and decisions must be made on whether to concentrate or spread out the routes. Changes to airspace will happen irrespective of the

third runway and this first phase of consultation is on general principals.

You can contribute at www.heathrowconsultation.com or by email to airspace.feedback@heathrowconsultation.com

A third runway consultation is being held in parallel.

Can we help?

Your local Conservative team will be pleased to assist you with any local matters relating to Elmbridge or Surrey County Councils.

Can you help?

We need deliverers to help us distribute the Esher News and leaflets. Could you spare some time to deliver your road or more? If so, please email us.



Cllr Tim Oliver
Elmbridge Borough Councillor for Esher

Little Oak, 25 Meadway, Esher
Tel: 01372 466069
toliver@elmbridge.gov.uk

Elmbridge Conservatives Leader
Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny
Surrey Cabinet member for
Business and Property



Cllr David Archer
Elmbridge Borough Councillor for Esher

19 Queens Close, Lammas Lane,
Esher. Tel: 07850 400595
darcher@elmbridge.gov.uk

East Area Planning Sub-Committee
Planning Committee
Esher & Hersham Spending Board



Dr. Peter Szanto
Surrey County Councillor
for East Molesey & Esher

21 Sandown Road, Esher
Tel: 07712 587831
MoleseyEsherPete@gmail.com
[facebook.com/peteszanto](https://www.facebook.com/peteszanto)

Audit & Governance Committee
Children and Education Committee
Vice Chair, Local Committee



Simon Waugh
Conservative candidate for Esher
Chairman of Esher Conservatives

Clare House, Copsem Lane, Esher
Tel: 07818 012425
simon@waugh-int.co.uk