

ERA PLANNING CO-ORDINATION



Later in this Newsletter we report Chris Fisher's departure from the ERA Committee. For many years, one of Chris's important roles has been to lead ERA's response to Planning Applications in Egham & he did this with great zeal. His loss leaves us with a big gap to fill. Planning may sound rather dry & tedious, but vigilance against the dangers of improper, inappropriate or poor-quality development is of fundamental importance for ERA - after all, we were founded on the back of the successful fight against the destruction

of Manorcrofts Field, in its entirety, for housing development. The Council's approach to planning is legalistic. Resident-led scrutiny/intervention is our chance to have an influence in favour of better choices & to put common sense & heart into planning decisions - also to oppose, where opposition is needed.

The gap left by Chris' departure is bigger than any individual can reasonably fill. We thus propose to form a Planning Co-ordination sub-group of 3-4 people, to share the tasks (which are: scanning to filter & consider applications of significance, engagement with RBC planners, and drafting of responses). Our Councillors can advise us and help liaise with RBC - also they can speak and vote at RBC Planning Committee.

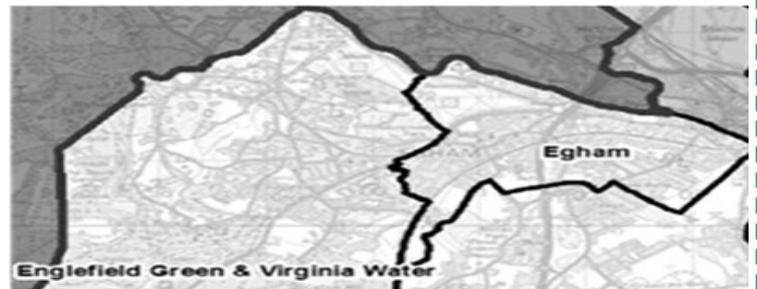
Please consider volunteering to join our new ERA sub-group. This is such an important function we'll first have an introductory meeting to work out the best way of organizing ourselves. To express interest or ask questions, please email the Chair at chair@eghamresidentsassociation.co.uk.

SCC ELECTORAL DIVISIONS

In August the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) published its draft recommendations for new divisions for Surrey County Council (SCC) - full details can be found in https://www.lgbce.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-08/surrey_-_dr_-_report.pdf. **Public consultation on their proposals runs till 16th October**, but there will remain 81 divisions across Surrey, each with one County councillor, but changes are in the offing for Egham itself.



Current Divisions



Proposed Divisions

Under existing SCC boundaries, Egham Town (the RBC ward) was split between one called 'Englefield Green', which was Englefield Green itself and Egham town centre; & the other called 'Egham', which was Egham Hythe & Egham to the east of the motorway & south of the railway line (see maps above).

Confused? You're not alone. Back in 2012, ERA opposed the concept of splitting the SCC responsibility for Egham between two County councillors, but to no avail. There was some compensation though, in having two SCC councillors to liaise with; were one to prove unresponsive, we might have more joy with the other.

The new proposal is more sensible & now reunites Egham's two halves, detaches us from Englefield Green but merges us with Egham Hythe to form one SCC division to be called 'Egham'. So, for SCC matters (roads, schools, social care, libraries etc) Egham would fall under the purview of just one County councillor.

The ERA Committee is in favour of this simplification & focus on joining 2 RBC wards as 1 SCC Division & will submit a positive response. If you wish to respond individually, **send your comments by 16th October**, either through the LGBCE website <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/surrey/feedback>, by email to reviews@lgbce.org.uk or in writing to Review Officer (Surrey), LGBCE, PO Box 133, Blyth, NE24 9FE.

What next? Public consultation runs till 16th October, and the LGBCE will publish its final recommendations on 9th January. Assuming Parliamentary approval, the new arrangements will apply at the next SCC elections in May 2025.

As we head into this autumn & winter what should we expect?

Firstly, the new variants - EG.5.1 (dubbed Eris) & BA.2.86 (dubbed Pirola) - are an offshoot of Omicron & hospital admissions have spiked amid bad weather and waning immunity this summer. The good news is that because most of the population now have hybrid immunity either from vaccination or natural infection then the majority of cases are now milder - **the main warning is not to be too complacent.**

Vaccines to protect at-risk people against Covid and flu this winter are now being rolled out a month earlier than planned. Anybody over 65, older adult care home residents and immune-suppressed people have been receiving jabs from 11th September, with the plan to jab as many eligible people as possible by 31st October. "Those who are eligible can book via the NHS website, on the NHS app, or by calling 119". Covid vaccines are also now available from Jays Pharmacy in the High Street or via the Grove Medical Centre (vaccinations to be at Chertsey Hall with booking via 119).

RUNNYMEDE YZ

RunnymedeYZ is a likeminded group of young adults in their 20s & 30s who want to build new connections & friendships, help volunteer at local community events and act as a source of support and advice for one another. It was set up by Councillor Sam Jenkins, Egham's youngest Independent Councillor, as part of his commitment towards engaging the next generation of residents within local matters. Since its inception, YZ have been supported the wider community in various capacities. In February it contributed to a fundraiser in aid of the Red Cross Ukraine Appeal, held at the Red Lion Pub, which raised over £1k. YZ members also contributed towards setting up this year's Englefield Green Fete and manning the ticket gates at the Egham Royal Show. For more information visit runnymedeyz.com or email Councillor Jenkins (cldr.sam.jenkins@runnymede.gov.uk).



A30 BYPASS PETITION

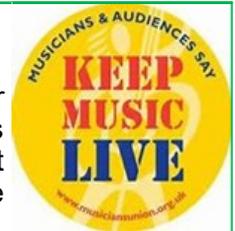


Do the speed and the volume of the traffic on the A30 Egham Bypass deter you from crossing the road to access Runnymede Meadows, the Pleasure Grounds or Yard Mead and the river? Or do you use the crossing but fear for your safety? Figures show that over 30% of traffic exceeds the 50mph speed limit. That's 5,786 speeding vehicles between 7am and 7pm, or over 480 speeding vehicles per hour during the daytime.

We're preparing to petition SCC for improvements to the by-pass crossing at the Hummer Road junction. This might include reducing the speed limit, installing speed cameras, having a pelican crossing, or a selection of these. One Monday in July, 17 ERA members conducted a 12-hour survey of the numbers crossing at the junction: we counted 276 people, 58 dogs and 43 bicycles. The petition will be available to sign online and as a paper copy, and a call will go out for volunteer door-knockers to gather signatures on paper. Please look out for this in the coming weeks.

MUSIC IN EGHAM

Most of us like music in our lives. There's a variety of tastes, & normally 'live' is better than 'canned'. There's a wealth of live music to go to, to join in with & enjoy. Some of it is very long-established - we have Royal Holloway on our doorstep - one of the strongest UK universities for music, often with concerts open to the public. If you see gaps in the summary below, please let the editor know & we'll try to compile a fuller list :



The **EGHAM BAND**, a brass band, has a history stretching back over 100 years. You'll see (and hear) them at community events such as the St George's Day and Remembrance Day Parades. They also give regular concerts - next up is 'A night at the Movies', **Friday 13th October**, 8 - 11 pm, at St. John's church. There's also a 20-strong Youth Band for children aged 10 to 16, and a Training Band for younger ones. For info, tickets etc, go to <https://eghamband.org.uk/>

EGHAM AND DISTRICT MUSIC CLUB has been bringing national/international quality live classical music to Egham for over 70 years. For their details and tickets go to <https://eghamanddistrictmusicclub.wordpress.com/>. The next concert is on **Sunday 15th October** at 3pm, in the United Church: a Guitar Recital by Daniele Piroddi playing Villa-Lobos, Sor, Theodorakis, and others.

EGHAM CHORAL, the founding choir of Egham & District Choral Society, has also been around for over 70 years. It's an un-auditioned choir for all abilities in all voice parts. The range is wide, from classical and modern choral works to fun short pieces. Rehearsals are weekly, Monday evenings 7:30 - 9:30pm, in the United Church on the High Street. David Darby, the well-known local pianist, is an accompanist. The next concert is the Christmas Concert, **Friday 15th December**, 7:30pm at Royal Holloway Chapel on the University campus. Go to <https://www.eghamchoral.org/> for info on joining and how for tickets etc.

The **NEW EGHAM SINGERS** (NES) is the second, more recent, choir of the Egham & District Choral Society, also for all abilities. The repertoire is modern, from musicals, spirituals, folk songs, arrangements of pop songs to light classics. Watch their Medley from the musical 'Hair', and other clips, at <https://www.neweghamsingers.org/>. The NES Christmas concert is on **Saturday 9th December** at St John's Church. Full joining and full details, go to the website.

ROYAL HOLLOWAY (RH) - the RH chapel choir, consisting of 20 choral scholars, is "one of the finest mixed-voice collegiate choirs in the country". The next up is the Concert for the Hellenic Institute, on **Saturday 28th October** at 7pm in the college Chapel, with music inspired by the Greek Classics. For details, see <https://www.chapelchoir.co.uk/>

EGHAM ROYAL SHOW (26th -27th August)

The weather was fine over the weekend & footfall was up overall, especially on the Sunday. The ERA stall did particularly well, making £330 in receipts - see the Mayoral visit opposite. After deducting the high stall booking fees, that left us with a net profit of £165 (compared to £15 last year).

Most of our increase was due to the raffle, where we sold 215 tickets, & our thanks go to Brigitte Kreuger & several local retailers for coming up with an impressive list of prizes. These retailers included Bar 163, Jays Pharmacy, SJ Forbes, The Red Lion, Polow restaurant, Top Nails, Esquires Coffee & Redan Print.

Our thanks also go to 10 ERA members that helped in manning the stall during the 2 days of the Show.



ERS BARN DANCE (26th August)



The annual Barn Dance at the Egham Royal Show was again a success with c.120 tickets sold - mainly in the afternoon on the day itself! The organisers, especially Sian Williams and Jim & Bev Pearcey (seen in the photo opposite), put on a good show. Thanks also go to our sponsors who provided more funds (see below). Overall, the Local Yokels band played until 10.30pm & the event made nearly £1,000 split 50/50 between the ERA & the ERS organisers.

Sponsors of the Barn Dance included :



BE A COUNCILLOR WORKSHOP (21st October)



ERA needs to be alert to the availability of candidates suitable for support as Independent Councillors for Egham. In the past this has been done by word-of-mouth. As a new initiative this year we're running a workshop, 'Be a Councillor' (at 2-4 pm Saturday 21st October, in the United Church in Egham) to encourage interest and to introduce what it's like and what it takes to be an Independent councillor on Runnymede Borough Council (RBC).

As circulated in our EMail Alert of 29th August, at the workshop, we'll describe and discuss the workings of RBC, the roles of councillors, the practicalities of becoming a candidate in Egham, and the perspective of ERA. Current Egham councillors will contribute. To join, you don't need to be a member of ERA, but you must be a resident of Egham. No-one attending is under any future obligation.

INTERESTED? Please email William Burgess, at chair@eghamresidentsassociation.co.uk for more info.

Councillors' Surgery

SURGERY (4th November)

The next surgery will be on Saturday 4th November 2 pm till 4 pm, at Egham Library - RBC Egham Town Independent Councillors will be there with advice on all Council-related matters.

EGHAM CHRISTMAS FAIR (9th December)

The Egham Chamber of Commerce are again organising a Christmas Fair in the High Street on Saturday 9th December from 11.00 to 16.00. As last year a range of stalls selling food, drinks & gifts are expected plus a Santa's Grotto, carol singing & fairground rides plus there will be an ERA stall (which you are invited to attend)

For details about the Fair contact Cynthia Reilly on 01784 431019 or cr@kseakens.co.uk



Alerts on issues that arose between Newsletters this quarter covered :

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|--|-------------------------------------|
| a) SWR Station Consultation (7/7) | b) Egham Trains (9/7) |
| c) Egham Trains (again) (10/7) | d) Barn Dance Photos (14/7) |
| e) RHUL Sustainability Festival (19/7) | f) Ticket Office Closures (20/7) |
| g) Games Club (30/7) | h) ERS Stall Manning (31/7) |
| i) ERS Barn Dance (2/8) | j) Crossing Closure (4/8) |
| k) LGBCE proposals on Surrey (8/8) | l) Station Crossing Closures (17/8) |
| m) Barn Dance Volunteers (17/8) | n) Be a Councillor Workshop (29/8) |
| o) Station Road Closure (1/9) | p) QE2 Wreath (8/9) |



Contact Glenda Thisdell on 07905 917440 or glendathisdell@eghamresidentsassociation.co.uk to be sent email alerts

EGHAM TREEWATCH

Egham Treewatch is a new group supported by ERA, launched in June at The Great Big Green Week and at the ERA stall on Magna Carta Day. The aim is to celebrate and protect Egham's trees, and to encourage tree planting. We're preparing a map of favourite, notable and protected trees, intending to have it for sale at Magna Carta 2024. To join the Egham Treewatch WhatsApp group, or to submit a tree for inclusion on the map, please send a description (at least of the location) to Willy Burgess, chair@eghamresidentsassociation.co.uk.



ERA COMMITTEE

Chair	Willy Burgess	07864 397208
Vice-Chair	Vacant	
Secretary (& Newsletter Editor)	Adrian Skelt	07956 875329
Treasurer (& Data Protection Officer)	Aneesh Gupta	07915 612291
Membership Secretary	Glenda Thisdell	07905 917440
Planning Co-ordinator	Vacant	
Social Media Co-ordinator (& RHUL Relations)	Stephen Pollard	07949 356537
Green Issues	Sue Holloway	07906 938041
Webmaster	Vacant (temporarily filled by Aneesh Gupta)	
Other Members	Bill Bessant	07775 333396
	Brigitte Kreuger	07887 891456
	Jim Pearcey	01784 432805

RALG
Runnymede Access Liaison Group (RALG) provides a representative voice for residents with disabilities as it acts as a channel of advice on how to access services and facilities. Over 31 years it has carried out over 50 accessibility assessments of public buildings, parks and other facilities within the Borough.

Cllr Sian Williams & Cllr Sam Jenkins both sit on RALG's management committee, and in July, Sam was additionally elected by the committee to be its Vice Chairman.

For more information please visit their new website: ralgcomms.wixsite.com/ralg

CHRIS FISHER



In August Chris Fisher, our former Chairman, decided to give up his Planning Co-ordination role within ERA & resign from our Committee. Chris was one of the founder members of ERA nearly 40 years ago in 1984 & was elected as an RBC Councillor in 1985 - see the "Origins of ERA" article circulated on 12th June this year. Since then, he has held a number of senior posts within ERA, culminating as our Chairman in 2019.

His resignation was a major blow to the Committee & Willy Burgess, our current Chairman, wanted to specially thank Chris for his "steadfast defence of Egham over so many years - the Committee will be much more the poorer without him". Adrian Skelt, our Secretary, added that he will "miss Chris's invaluable work on our behalf & on many Egham issues over the years, primarily both on planning & latterly as Chairman".

Local Councillors

Runnymede Borough

Sam Jenkins	(Independent)	07539 478951
Isabel Mullens	(Independent)	07562 644057
Sian Williams	(Independent)	07783 010121

Surrey County

Marisa Heath	(Conservative)	07816 117404
Robert King	(Labour)	07506 274314

Website : www.eghamresidentsassociation.co.uk



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