



ELECTIONS MAY 6th



a) RBC - for those who may have missed the results, Sian Williams (left), as the Independent Residents candidate supported by ERA, was impressively elected in the RBC election for the Egham Town ward. The votes were :

Sian Williams (Independent Residents)	917	{ 53% of vote
Max Darby (Conservative)	372	
William Heal (Labour)	355	
Ian Heath (Liberal Democrat)	<u>89</u>	

1,733 Turnout 35.56%

Sian added : "A big thank you to all those who voted for me & a special thanks to everyone who helped with leafleting - and to my agent Willy Burgess for all his hard work. Since then, I have spoken at the RBC Full Council, attended training & committee meetings as well as meetings with Officers via MS Teams to answer queries from individual residents. Residents can contact me by email (cldr.sian.williams@runnymede.gov.uk) or leave a voice message on 07783 010121. Meanwhile we will be arranging our first Councillor Surgery in the High Street once the current Covid restrictions are lifted".

b) SCC - Isabel Mullens (right), already a RBC Egham Councillor &, as the Independent Residents candidate supported by ERA, came a remarkably close 2nd to the incumbent in the Englefield Green/Egham district. The votes were :

Marisa Heath (Conservative)	1,171	{ 36% of vote
Isabel Mullens (Independent Residents)	1,027	
Dominic Breen (Labour)	580	
Maciej Pawlik (Green)	319	
Kin Kwong (Liberal Democrat)	<u>159</u>	

3,256 Turnout 29.83%



Isabel said "Thanks to all who supported me in the SCC election campaign. Although I missed winning by 144 votes (as verified with a recount) I learnt a lot. I hope that the campaign has made me a better RBC Councillor & that ERA's money was well spent. Earlier this month 5 residents attended the Environment & Sustainability Committee at RBC offices in Addlestone, to hear the discussion on RBC's Climate Change policy. I am very keen to facilitate residents attending RBC meetings, most obviously to listen, but with an additional option of having their questions answered in a public arena. I'll shortly be providing further information on this, for anyone who's interested, but do get in touch at cldr.isabel.mullens@runnymede.gov.uk to find out more. The question of Runnymede's response to SCC on the planning application to extract gravel at Whitehall Farm is a hot topic at the moment!"



PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARIES

On 8th June the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) released its initial proposals for revising the constituencies across the country to make them more even in terms of electorates. Any change will not come into effect before the end of 2023 & there are 3 consultation stages: a) **to 2nd August** - initial review & **feedback via www.bcereviews.org.uk**; b) early 2022 - publish responses to initial proposals & conduct a secondary consultation, including between 2-5 public hearings in each region; c) late 2022 - publish revised proposals and conduct four-week written consultation & then June 2023 - BCE submit & publish final report & recommendations.

The initial BCE proposal has, surprisingly, moved Egham Town (and Egham Hythe) out of the current Weybridge & Runnymede parliamentary constituency & added them to a new Windsor County one! As with our 2018 comments on the RBC ward boundaries, the BCE is quite open to get its first proposals wrong (as it has been a pure mathematical exercise to date to create equal constituency sizes). Tim Bowden, BCE Secretary, said: "During the last review, we changed over half of our proposals to reflect the local knowledge submitted by the public during the consultation process". We think it is odd to move Egham across the county line & into a constituency where it would be swamped by Windsor issues, so **please go online & give your comments on www.bcereviews.org.uk before 2nd August....**

Cases of the Delta variant, first identified in India, have surged 46% in the UK last week, with most cases being in the under-50s, according to Public Health England as of June 20th (the most recent on going to press). While the Delta variant now accounts for 95% of new cases sequenced in the UK, PHE says vaccines are having a "crucial effect on hospital admission and death".



Coronavirus infection rates have gone up in half of Surrey, while the weekly rate has fallen in five areas. Epsom and Ewell has the highest coronavirus infection rate in Surrey at 115.3 per 100,000 people on June 20th, which is now the one area in the county which is higher than the national average. Breakdown of the number of Delta variant cases recorded so far in each of the 11 Surrey local authority areas are (with the number in brackets indicating the increase in cases since June 9th): Epsom & Ewell - 115 (116%), Mole Valley - 87 (90%), Runnymede - 69 (22%), Guildford - 63 (46%), Woking - 59 (-20%), Spelthorne - 59 (18%), Waverley - 58 (97%), Reigate & Banstead - 57 (-23%), Elmbridge - 55 (-4%), Surrey Heath - 54 (-34%) & Tandridge - 30 (-32%) & with Runnymede now around the Surrey average.

On 14th June the government said it will hold off removing all legal restrictions in England until 4 weeks later than 21st June i.e. **by 19th July**. This is except for weddings & funerals that can still go ahead with more than 30 guests provided social distancing remains in place. Pilot events like Euro 2020 & some theatrical performances can continue, they said. The government says that it is sensible to wait "just a little longer". The delay is designed to allow more people to be vaccinated & have 2nd doses amid rising cases. There will be a review after two weeks (on 5th July) and the government reserves the possibility to lift all restrictions then (but is unlikely to lift them).

GRAVEL RAISING



a) Milton Park Farm (MPF) - this 12 year old project by Hanson's has been continually deferred by SCC & the latest deferral to their Planning & Regulatory Committee is until **8th September** (at the earliest). Reasons for the further delay have not be advised.

b) Whitehall Farm (WF) - with an initial SCC closing date of 1st June for comments, a comprehensive response to the CEMEX application was submitted by the ERA, which was then followed by an even more comprehensive submission from the umbrella group, Residents Against Gravel Extraction (RAGE). Our MP, Dr Ben Spencer, has also submitted a response to SCC, which supports most of the points already made by residents, including the overall need for this gravel?

A follow-up Zoom meeting with CEMEX/Curtin & Co on 21st May did not move the situation on much & was "somewhat lacking in hard facts" - although CEMEX thought it would probably be "next year for a decision to be made by SCC" - although it has taken them more than 12 years to decide on MPF?

RBC initially sent a "no objection" notice to SCC from their officers but this caused major concern amongst the Councillors (who were not consulted in advance) & led to a request for the application to be heard first at an RBC Planning Committee (as was the case with MPF many years ago, when it garnered a very strong objection to SCC) - the debate continues.....

@ the Lit

@TheLit, our new Community Cultural Hub charity, eventually signed the lease for the ground floor of the Literary Institute in the High Street with RBC on 20th May & celebrated by holding a small craft fair on the 22nd, followed by drama groups & livestreaming of the Egham Festival of Music on 21st June. Official opening by the RBC Mayor was held on 26th June, coinciding with Magna Carta Day, when they held an Art & Craft fair & the "Egham Visions" exhibition, of corn dolly specialist Estella Castle, the Museum's Artist in Residence, including the magnificent life-size horse - opposite.



MAGNA CARTA DAY (26th June)



After a year off, the High Street celebrated what was the 27th Magna Carta Day (MCD) on 26th June, deferred from 12th June, with more or less the usual entertainment programme & fair-rides. On a very hot & humid day, MCD footfall was much better than anticipated - including our MP, Dr Ben Spencer - despite there being a limited number of 30 stalls rather than the usual over 50.

This was our first social & fundraising event for nearly 18 months & the ERA stall did surprisingly well, making over £100 profit from the sale of ERA merchandise (especially the old favourites of tea towels & mugs). Thanks go to those who helped man/woman the stall.



Virtual

Reports (25th May)

Chairman

In a virtual AGM, held via a Zoom conference call & deferred from February, some 25 members of the Association attended. Chris Fisher opened by stating what a weird year 2020 had been, due to the impact of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. He wished to heartily thank everyone in the Association for their Covid-19 responses, which underlined the efforts of the local community. He noticed that Egham Gateway West (EGW) was increasingly dominating the Egham skyline, which had caused some dilemmas for ERA. While he saw it as a big investment & a new start for the Town centre, the 2 major issues were the lack of car parking & the perceived height of some of the buildings. The amount of shop closures in the High Street was worrying but was indicative of the decline of physical retailing, more leisure activities & movement of office blocks into the residential sector.

On student accommodation, the prospect of development of EGW, 40-44 High Street & the Rusham Park Student Village was noticeable but should lead to some reductions in Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs). There had also been some incidents of student bad behaviour (e.g. in Park Road & Mooregrove Crescent) but, although sitting on the Royal Holloway & Runnymede Consultative Group, he was still trying to improve RUL's complaints procedure.

On the recent elections, many congratulations go to Sian Williams, to be elected as an Independent Councillor in RBC's Egham Town ward, & commiserations to Isabel Mullens, on coming a remarkably close 2nd in the SCC Englefield Green/Egham district.

Regarding ERA membership, the pandemic had meant no progress on increasing our membership (now down to c.400), which remains a major task going forward.

On the Committee, thanks go to Graham Basset (as Vice-Chair), Aneesh Gupta (for checking our finances), Glenda Thisdell (for our membership records), Sian Williams (especially for her @TheLit work) & Steve Williams (for his considerable Webmaster efforts & need a replacement). Special thanks are due to Adrian Skelt who, through his efforts as Secretary, the EMail Alert programme & the quarterly Newsletter, is as much of a key representative of the ERA as the Chairman.

Treasurer

Examined accounts as @ 31/12/20 were circulated at the meeting & the key points were that both income & expenditure were substantially down because of the Covid-19 pandemic, our income in 2020 being only c.£145 in excess of expenditure. Overall ERA had net reserves of c.£6,500 & the 2020 accounts were adopted from the audience.

Aneesh Gupta proposed that the Association consider increasing its annual fees to £7.50 normal/£5 senior/£12.50 for couples/households from 2022 - the first increase since 2016. After some discussion, this increase was approved unanimously & agreed that ERA should consider regular updates on its subscription amounts every year.

Secretary

Adrian Skelt was happy to report that most of the current Committee members wanted to stand again, apart from Cynthia Reilly, who is standing down, Stephen Williams, due to his health condition, has had to step down from the Committee & his Officer Webmaster post & Sian Williams will also be standing down, after her election as an RBC Councillor. One other member has offered to join the Committee, Stephen Pollard, & if any other member wanted to join, then they should contact the Secretary after the meeting.

All the nominations for Officers & Committee members for 2021/2 were supported from the audience.

Councillors

The Egham Town Independent Councillors on RBC, with the exception of Brian Clarke who was absent, gave their summary annual reports for 2020. Alan Alderson, as the "senior" Egham Councillor (first elected in 2002), had served on various RBC Finance Committees, which had seen that RBC finances are not looking good in the light of the Covid-19 problems. Isabel Mullens rather than listing all her RBC Committees, wanted to advise on her efforts to get residents more involved in RBC meetings & events, which had been helped by the remote involvement caused by Covid-19.

The Chairman wanted to thank all our 3 Councillors, especially Alan Alderson, who will be retiring in 2022, & Brian Clarke, who had stood in late in 2019 & had subsequently suffered some health issues.

Alerts on issues that arose between Newsletters this quarter covered :

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| a) 1/4 Egham School of Performing Arts | b) 1/4 Covid Champions Briefing |
| c) 6/4 e-Activ in the Precinct | d) 8/4 Covid Champions Briefing (|
| e) 9/4 Prince Philip Condolences | f) 12/4 Egham Surge Testing Results |
| g) 13/4 Leafleting Support in EG | h) 14/4 ERA EGM (20/4) - Reminder |
| i) 15/4 Egham Town Team AGM (21/4) | j) 15/4 Cemex Whitehall Farm Update |
| k) 15/4 Covid Champions Briefing | l) 19/4 Egham Surge Testing Corrected |
| m) 22/4 Staines Riverside Developments | n) 22/4 Covid Champions Briefing |
| p) 29/4 Covid Champions Briefing | o) 26/4 Whitehall Farm Update |
| q) 4/5 ERA AGM (25/5) | r) 5/5 Babybel Recycling |
| s) 5/5 Election Results Viewing | t) 6/5 Covid Champions Briefing |
| u) 9/5 RBC & SCC Election Results | v) 12/5 RHRCG Minutes |
| w) 13/5 GBSC Litter Pick (5/6) | x) 14/5 Covid Champions Briefing |
| z) 21/5 @TheLit Lease Status | aa) 21/5 Covid Champions Briefing |
| bb) 22/5 Cemex Meeting Whitehall Farm | cc) 24/5 Quarry Health Petition |
| dd) 26/5 Royal Show Cancelled | ee) 31/5 Covid Champions Briefing |
| ff) 1/6 Walking & Cycling Runnymede | gg) 4/6 Covid Champions Briefing |
| hh) 11/6 Covid Champions Briefing | ii) 14/6 Egham Half Marathon (22/8) |
| jj) 15/6 Barclays Bank Shuts (16/6) | kk) 18/6 Covid Champions Briefing |
| ll) 25/6 Covid Champions Briefing | mm) 25/6 Community Memorial |



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



CYCLING & WALKING

A new Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for the Borough is being developed by SCC which RBC is supporting. SCC are creating a programme of new LCWIPs across Surrey by end of 2022, after implementing the first one in Woking in March 2020.

Based on latest guidance & best practice, the plan will help identify where new or improved walking & cycling facilities would be most beneficial and the type of facilities that are most appropriate.

Local issues that make it difficult to walk or cycle in our area, as well as improvements, were input by a closing date for comments of 13th June.

Improvements that are identified in the completed plan will be taken forward in future projects, subject to funding & feasibility.



ERA COMMITTEE

Chairman	Chris Fisher	07837 782012
Vice-Chairman	Graham Basset	07710 841510
Secretary	Adrian Skelt	07956 875329
Treasurer (& Data Protection Officer)	Aneesh Gupta	07915 612291
Membership Secretary	Glenda Thisdell	07905 917440
Webmaster	Vacant	
Other Members	Bill Bessant	07775 333396
	Brigitte Kreuger	07887 891456
	Jim Pearcey	432805
	Stephen Pollard	07949 356537
	Julian Richardson	435578
	Ian Rosteghin	07866 329249
	Social Media Co-ordinators	
	Sian Williams (Facebook)	07783 010121
	Vacant (Twitter)	

CANCELLED IN 2021



Unfortunately it has now been decided to cancel the Show for this August Bank Holiday - this means that the Egham Barn Dance will also be cancelled this year. As the organisers have said : "Egham Royal Show 2021 would have been 163rd year of the Show. We can look forward to 2022 with renewed vigour and optimism, and our determination to make next year our most exciting and successful Show".



GBSC (5th June)

Only a small group of 5 adults & 2 children attended a litter pick on Manorcrofts Playing Field - which was surprisingly tidy & meant that only less than 3 rubbish bags were collected.

We also went on to clean Waspe Farm carpark, with its collection of spent nitrous oxide canisters!

Runnymede Borough Councillors

Alan Alderson	07831 441638
Isabel Mullens	07562 644057
Sian Williams	07783 010121

Surrey County Councillors

Marisa Heath	07764 247098
Robert King	07308 954788

Website : www.eghamresidentsassociation.co.uk

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