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Democratic Services

**To: All Members of the Strategy and Resources Committee**

Dear Councillor,

**STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 17TH MARCH, 2026 , Council Chamber - Epsom Town Hall**

Please find attached the following document(s) for the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee to be held on Tuesday, 17th March, 2026.

8. **EEBC 2025-2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: COMMUNITY ASSET REVIEW** (Pages 3 - 102)

This report outlines the progress made in respect of the Council's 2025-2027 Strategic Priority 4 in relation to Community Assets.
It recommends completion of the Phase 2 work to ensure each of the 3 key Community Assets (Bourne Hall, Community & Wellbeing Centre and Epsom Playhouse) are provided with a business case to help safeguard their future success.

9. **EEBC 2025-2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: 70 EAST STREET** (Pages 103 - 108)

This report outlines the progress made on the Council's 2025-2027 property related Strategic Priority 3 and recommends the sale of 70 East Street.

For further information, please contact democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk or tel: 01372 732000

Yours sincerely

Chief Executive

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# EEBC 2025-2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: COMMUNITY ASSET REVIEW

| | |
|---|---|
| **Head of Service:** | Mark Shephard, Head of Property and Regeneration |
| **Report Author** | Mark Shephard |
| **Wards affected:** | (All Wards); |
| **Urgent Decision?(yes/no)** | No |
| **If yes, reason urgent decision required:** | N/A |
| **Appendices (attached):** | Appendix 1: Community Asset Mapping Report<br>Appendix 2: Issues and Opportunities<br>Appendix 3: Bourne Hall Status Report<br>Appendix 4: Playhouse Status Report<br>Appendix 5: C&W Status Report |

## Summary

This report outlines the progress made in respect of the Council's 2025-2027 Strategic Priority 4 in relation to Community Assets.

It recommends completion of the Phase 2 work to ensure each of the 3 key Community Assets (Bourne Hall, Community & Wellbeing Centre and Epsom Playhouse) are provided with a business case to help safeguard their future success.

## Recommendation (s)

## The Committee is asked to:

**(1) Note the update and progress made as set out in this report.**

**(2) Agree to complete the more detailed Phase 2 work at a cost of £30,000 as set out in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.4.**

**(3) Agree to release the £30,000 Phase 2 funds from the LGR Reserve.**

### 1 Reason for Recommendation

1.1 The Council has a statutory obligation under s123 Local Government Act 1972 to seek Best Value from its land and property assets.

1.2 The Phase 2 work (as described in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3) will ensure that each of the 3 key Community Assets is provided with a business case for transfer to the new East Surrey Unitary Council.

1.3 The recommendations represent the outcome of the work undertaken to date (and reported below) demonstrating the Council's commitment to its s123 statutory obligation.

## 2 Background

2.1 At its 6 May 2025 meeting, Full Council approved seven Strategic Priorities to be delivered in 2025-2027. The revised Priorities replaced the Council's Four-Year Plan and focused its strategic delivery in the context of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) timescales.

2.2 To ensure the 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities continue to be delivered swiftly alongside business as usual and existing commitments, support has been provided by an external specialist property consultant.

2.3 This report relates to the Community Assets of Strategic Priority 4, which stated:

***Priority 4: Carry out and complete major Asset Review***

*Outcome: To Review key council owned property assets, including EEPIC, Bourne Hall, Playhouse and C&W Centre but excluding commercial assets on long term leases, to understand market values. Identify assets that could transfer to a new local governance entity (subject to the creation of new entity/ies) and likely revenue/maintenance costs for that new entity.*

2.4 Strategy & Resources Committee had previously considered EEPIC, Operational and Surplus Assets at its 11 November 2025 meeting. The report also included an update on the initial work to review the Community Assets including:

- As part of the wider review of all Council assets, those assets held for community purposes, and which might be considered appropriate for a Community Transfer had been identified.
- As requested by Strategy Priority 4, particular focus was applied to:
    - Bourne Hall
    - The Epsom Playhouse
    - Community & Wellbeing Centre

- Work was undertaken to better understand the implications of holding the assets in any new local governance entity - which was linked to Strategic Priority 1: *Explore and implement future local governance (i.e. Town Community Council).*

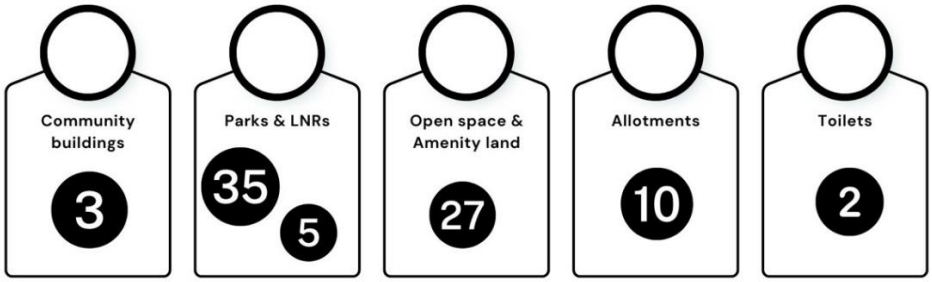
2.5 This report provides further information of the Community Asset Review work to date (Phase 1) and outlines the second phase of the Community Asset Review work (Phase 2).

2.6 Phase 2 is designed to put the above assets in the strongest position possible as the Council moves towards becoming part of the new East Surrey Unitary Council.

## 3 Strategic Priority 4: Community Asset Review - Phase 1 (work undertaken)

3.1 The first step was to identify those assets held for community purposes which included community buildings, as well as Country Parks, Allotments and other open space.

3.2 The assets were attached as an appendix to the earlier 11 November 2025 Strategy & Resources report and can be summarised as:




3.3 Focussing on the 3 key community buildings (Bourne Hall, The Playhouse and the Community & Wellbeing Centre), the first phase of the Community Asset Review has primarily focussed on building a more detailed understanding of the ‘as is’ arrangements for these assets. This included looking at existing operating, staffing and management models.

3.4 A review of past budgets, along with current and future forecasts, both in terms of revenue and capital spend was also undertaken. This identified areas that could be reviewed and considered in more detail.

3.5 In parallel, initial Community Asset Mapping work was carried out to identify local community need, resources and assets already in the Borough. However, this work is ongoing and currently does not include all local groups.

3.6 The Community Asset Mapping work is attached at Appendix 1.

3.7 The final stage of Phase 1 was to pull together thoughts around key issues, ideas and opportunities including a SWOT analysis. This highlighted several areas that could be explored in more detail, with the aim of both strengthening the community benefit and creating a more financially sustainable model for the 3 key Community Assets.

3.8 Appendices include:

- Appendix 2: Draft Community Assets Issues and Opportunities
- Appendix 3: Draft Bourne Hall Status Report
- Appendix 4: Draft Playhouse Status Report
- Appendix 5: Draft C&W Status Report

3.9 Epsom & Ewell benefits from a range of community building and facilities, which provide important services to both residents and the wider community.

3.10 Phase 1 demonstrated the extent of the Council's continued investment in its community assets ranging from environmental upgrades (e.g. solar panels at Bourne Hall / Epsom Playhouse and replacement windows at Bourne Hall); to creative ways to enhance income (e.g. Flying Saucer Café at Bourne Hall and the new Upper Bar at Epsom Playhouse).

3.11 However, a Council budget of circa £2m per annum is currently required to maintain the 3 key Community Buildings. While the above environmental and income generating initiatives have played their part, there is a need to look at how these assets can be reimagined and business cases developed.

3.12 In the current challenging financial climate and with Local Government Reform now well underway, there is a need to continue the work required to formulate business cases for each key Community Asset.

3.13 These business cases would ensure sound future decision making by the new East Surrey Unitary Council.

## 4 Strategic Priority 4: Community Asset Review - Phase 2

4.1 In light of the financial challenges and the Council's continued wish to support its community, it is proposed to continue the work to look at the key Community Assets and move forward with Phase 2.

4.2 The aims and objectives of Phase 2 are:

- **Strategic aim:** to continue to support the community of Epsom & Ewell through its community assets, giving residents access to services, experiences and social connection.

- **Objective:** to create a sustainable & resilient business case for the key assets; enhancing the community offer and safeguarding them for the longer term, while preparing for transfer to the Unitary Council.

4.3 The themes of Phase 2 are:

- **Finance, funding & business planning:** further ways to deliver efficiencies and increase income and funding streams.
- **Stewardship, governance & partnerships:** including opportunities to strengthen links with existing and/or new community organisations, as well as resourcing and scope for new partnership working.
- **Building and asset management:** including spatial and development opportunities.
- **Community and stakeholder needs:** positioning the assets to better meet community need while strengthening their long-term sustainability.

4.4 The total cost to complete Phase 2 (as described above) is approximately £30,000 and proposed to be released from the LGR Reserve.

4.5 Building on the work already undertaken, Phase 2 is intended to provide each of the 3 key Community Assets with a business case and consolidate the learning into a framework.

4.6 This will prepare the 3 key Community Assets for transfer to the new East Surrey Unitary Council and support sound future decision making.

## 5 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

5.1 Equality Impact Assessment

5.1.1 Not applicable

5.2 Crime & Disorder

5.2.1 Not applicable

5.3 Safeguarding

5.3.1 Not applicable

5.4 Dependencies

5.4.1 None

5.5 Other

5.5.1 None

## 6 Financial Implications

6.1 **Section 151 Officer's comments**: The financial implications are detailed within the body of the report.

## 7 Legal Implications

7.1 The Council has a statutory obligation under s123 Local Government Act 1972 to seek Best Value from its land and property assets.

7.2 **Legal Officer's comments**: None arising from the content of this report.

## 8 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

8.1 **Council's Key Priorities**: The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- *Priority 4: Carry out and complete major Asset Review*

8.2 **Service Plans**: The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

8.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations**: None

8.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications**: None

8.5 **Partnerships**: None

8.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications**: The Council remains under a statutory duty to achieve Best Value and ensure services can be delivered and maintained until LGR Vesting Day on 1 April 2027.

## 9 Background papers

9.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

**Previous reports:**

- EEBC 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities 3 & 4, Strategy & Resources Committee 11 November 2025

https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=1843&Ver=4

**Other papers:**

- Community Governance Review, Full Council 9 December 2025

https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MId=1790

- EEBC Strategic Priorities 2025-2027, Full Council 6 May 2025

https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MId=1627

# Community Asset Mapping Report
# Epsom and Ewell, Surrey

## 1. Introduction

This report has been prepared by Community Stewardship Solutions for Epsom and Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) to provide a high-level overview of the community assets in and around the surrounding areas of Epsom and Ewell. **It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all community assets or operators, but rather to provide a summary of the existing key resources, assets and needs of local communities, giving an indication of the breadth, depth, scope and number of organisations operating within the locality.** The report also highlights relevant demographics and official statistics that will enable a more defined analysis of local communities and their potential needs.

The Borough of Epsom and Ewell, located in north Surrey just south of Greater London, is the smallest borough in the county and comprises the main settlements of Epsom, Ewell, Stoneleigh, and their surrounding neighbourhoods. The borough has no civil parishes and is divided into 14 electoral wards under the latest local boundary review. Rich in history, the area is known for its association with the discovery of *Epsom Salts* and the former *Nonsuch Palace*, built by Henry VIII in the 16th century. Today, Epsom and Ewell blend historic character with significant green spaces and cultural landmarks such as Bourne Hall, Ewell Court House, and the Epsom Playhouse. The borough is also home to several major parks and natural reserves — including Epsom Common, Horton Country Park, and Nonsuch Park — as well as the River Hogsmill, which rises at Bourne Hall and flows north through the area. Over 40% of the borough lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, contributing to its distinctive balance of urban living, heritage, and accessible countryside.

### Governance

Through the Devolution Bill, national government is conducting a Local Government Review (LGR) with Unitary Authorities being created across the country. Surrey is on the accelerated programme. Surrey County is moving towards a system of larger "super-districts" to replace the current two-tier model of county plus many small boroughs/districts. Under these reforms, Epsom & Ewell could be amalgamated or merged into a broader administrative area, which may mean its local authority autonomy is reduced but its capacity for shared services, resources

and strategic planning increased. The changes aim to streamline governance, reduce duplication, and improve efficiency, though they also raise questions about local identity, representation, and how services will be preserved or redistributed.

In light of the proposed amalgamation of the borough councils, this report will both identify key community assets within Epsom and Ewell and examine additional assets across the boroughs of Elmbridge, Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead, and Tandridge. The objective is to promote greater cohesion and explore opportunities for potential collective transfer. These are thought to be the existing District Councils with whom Epsom and Ewell may merge and therefore consideration, particularly in understanding the local theatre scheme (which require specialist skills and management) may be helpful.

## 2. District and Local Borough Community Assets

This Community Asset Mapping report will examine the variety of community-oriented assets located in and around Epsom and Ewell. Community assets refer to a broad spectrum of resources that boost a neighbourhood's well-being and vibrancy. These resources may include individuals, organisations, buildings, public open spaces, and more. Such assets are vital for fostering thriving, resilient, and inclusive communities.

Asset research and reporting will be based around 4 key areas;

1. Civic Buildings
2. Theatres and Performance Venues
3. Community Hubs Spaces
4. Country Parks and open space.

## Civic Buildings

### Bourne Hall

Bourne Hall (Spring Street, Ewell KT17 1UF) is a multi-use civic building (Grade II listed) built 1967–70, that houses a public library (Ewell Library / Surrey County Council), a free local museum, a café, exhibition/gallery space, multiple hireable halls/meeting rooms, and is set in Bourne Hall Park with a pond and footpaths. It is widely used for regular classes, clubs, exhibitions, children's museum club, U3A talks and room hire events (weddings, conferences, exercise classes etc.) Bourne Hall has an on-site car park and is within walking distance of other Ewell Village car parks; local bus routes serve "The Spring" stop close by.

| Facilities within Bourne Hall | |
|---|---|
| Bourne Hall Museum | • Free local museum with permanent displays (prehistoric → modern),<br>• Changing exhibitions<br>• Education services<br>• Children's Museum Club<br>• Open Mon–Sat |
| Ewell Library (Surrey County Council branch) | • Public library services<br>• PCs/Wi-Fi<br>• Events (children's & adult programmes)<br>• The library is located within the Bourne Hall complex and is managed by Surrey CC |
| Flying Saucer Café (on site) | • Café for visitors (listed on Bourne Hall site) |
| Park & pond | • Attractive grounds (Hogsmill stream/park), pleasant for informal recreation and events with the recent addition of some play equipment |
| 2x large rooms to hire<br>5x rooms to hire (up to 50 guests) | • Main Hall<br>• Banqueting Suite<br>• Hire includes A/V, catering options and event support |

| Community groups and activities that run from Bourne Hall | |
|---|---|
| U3A (University of the 3rd Age) | A self-help educational movement for people no longer in full-time employment. It is the national representative umbrella body for all u3as in the UK |
| | • Pilates<br>• Zumba<br>• Fitness classes<br>• French Club<br>• Yoga<br>• Art Groups<br>• Tea dances<br>• Choir Groups<br>• Children's Museum Club |
| C3 United Life (all day Sunday) | • A Christian church that is part of the C3 movement which has two main locations in Ewell (Bourne Hall) and Sutton Central |

| Events that run from Bourne Hall | |
|---|---|
| Dance School on Stage | • A showcase for local dance schools which uses the Bourne Hall stage |
| Festival of Ewell | • Performances by local dance and musical theatre groups |
| Summer Festival | • Large free public family-event: live music, children's entertainment, food & craft stalls, games, DJ, artisan & market stalls |

| | |
|---|---|
| Pre-loved Clothes Market / Table & Rail Sale | • Community market selling second-hand clothes, accessories; free entry; supporting sustainability / upcycling ethos |
| Artisan Market | • Local artisans selling crafts, homemade goods, food, etc. Also aligned with café/library/museum visits |
| Museum Club | • For children aged 8-12: monthly themed sessions (e.g. workshops, re-enactors) run by the museum |

### Bourne Hall Regeneration Project

Bourne Hall and its surrounding park are currently undergoing a programme of regeneration led by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) to enhance community use, accessibility, and sustainability. Key improvements include the installation of solar panels and upgraded glazing to reduce carbon emissions and running costs, the creation of an outdoor fitness trail linked to social prescribing, and the development of a woodland play area to attract families and younger visitors all add value to Bourne Hall as a destination. Landscape works are also opening up sightlines and restoring historic views to make the park safer and more welcoming. These changes aim to broaden participation, encourage physical activity, and strengthen Bourne Hall's role as a vibrant, inclusive community hub for Ewell Village.

### Ewell Court House

Ewell Court House is a Grade II-listed historic house owned by EEBC and operated by an external provider. Set in extensive parkland (Ewell Court Park), it has roots back to the late 1730s and was remodelled in the late 19th-century for grand entertaining. It was refurbished following a serious fire in December 2013 and reopened in late 2015 for use as a community and event venue.

| Facilities within Ewell Court House | |
|---|---|
| Rooms / Spaces for Hire | • Multiple celebration / meeting rooms including: *Social Suite*, *Ante Room*, *Whist Room*, *First-Floor Meeting Room*. These have decorative historic features: stained-glass windows, wood panelling, polished floors, decorative ceilings<br>• Available for weddings and civil ceremonies<br>• Capacity-90 seated<br>• On site parking |
| Catering / Food & Bar | • Bar & foyer available; catering provided through *Bovingdons*, a caterer with menus designed by Michelin-trained chefs. The bar is included in hire; external approved caterers can also be used |

| | |
|---|---|
| Library | • Ewell Court Community Library is housed in Ewell Court House. Facilities include computers, free WiFi, printing/copying, book drop |
| Nursery & Child-care | • Bambini Children's Nursery is based in part of the building |
| Tea Rooms / café / Garden Nursery | • Bizzy Lizzy plant nursery and Tea Rooms tucked away behind the house; garden nursery; tearoom serving visitors |

| Community groups and activities that run from Ewell Court House | |
|---|---|
| The Ewell Court Residents' Association | • Uses the (and the park) for social events, fundraising, quiz nights, bingo |
| Bambini Nursery | • Childcare / nursery services during term times |
| Ewell Court Library | • Rhyme time and story time twice a week<br>• Regular Children's events<br>• Ewell Court Library reading group (bimonthly)<br>• Lego Club (Once a month) |

## Theatres and Performance Venues

### Epsom Playhouse

Epsom Playhouse (Ashley Avenue, Epsom KT18 5AL) is the principal theatre venue in Epsom & Ewell, owned by the Borough Council and opened in 1984. It stages a wide variety of events: professional touring productions (opera, comedy, drama, dance), local amateur productions, family and children's shows, and occasional film seasons. Recent refurbishment plans under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund aim to improve its accessibility, hospitality areas, and audience amenities.

| Facilities within Epsom Playhouse | |
|---|---|
| Main Auditorium | • Seats up to 450<br>• Orchestra pit or forestage extension).<br>• It is a proscenium-arch theatre with raked seating<br>• Space for up to eight wheelchairs and attendants per performance |
| Myers Studio | • Up to 80 audience capacity<br>• Octagonal in shape<br>• Flat-floor performance area with optional raised seating rostra for the back rows<br>• Used for community events, children's shows, studio jazz, smaller productions |
| Bars / Bistro / Foyer Spaces | • Ground-floor bar / bistro (called Eligo Bar & Bistro),<br>• Members' Bar that can be hired for meetings/functions |

| | |
|---|---|
| | • Foyer area, box office, and reception |

| Community groups that run from Epsom Playhouse | |
|---|---|
| Epsom Players | • A long-established amateur dramatic society (since 1911). They put on several plays/musicals per year, often using the main stage (Main Auditorium) of Epsom Playhouse |
| Epsom Symphony Orchestra | • Resident orchestra, performing classical music concerts (roughly five per year) in the Main Auditorium. Rehearses elsewhere but uses the Playhouse for its performance concerts |
| Epsom Light Opera Company | • musical / operatic amateur company that presents shows at Playhouse |
| Theatre Box | • Youth / junior musical theatre group: classes and shows, particularly using the Myers Studio for their rehearsals / classes (various age groups) |
| Epsom Literary Society | • A community group that organises literary themes event, such as talks by authors and experts, often using Epsom Playhouse as a venue |
| Epsom Choral Society | • Occasionally use Epsom Playhouse for concerts |

### Epsom Playhouse Refurbishment Programme

Epsom Playhouse is undergoing a significant refurbishment programme funded partly through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to modernise facilities, improve accessibility, and enhance energy efficiency. Recent works include installing 90 solar panels to reduce emissions and energy costs, refurbishing bar and foyer areas, adding murals and aesthetic improvements, and introducing a new platform lift for better accessibility. Planned upgrades include replacing ageing stage lighting and dimmers, refurbishing dressing rooms, and updating air-conditioning systems. Approximately £225,000 has been allocated for technical improvements, with additional funding from a new £1.50 per ticket facility fee expected to generate around £80,000 annually for ongoing maintenance and future enhancements.

### The Horton (Horton Chapel Arts & Heritage Society Gardens / Hub)

The Horton is a not-for-profit arts, heritage and community venue, run by the Horton Chapel Arts & Heritage Society. The venue is set in a Grade II-listed former chapel ("Horton Chapel", built 1901) that stood empty/at risk for many years before being renovated. The building is owned by Epsom and Ewell Council. It officially opened in 2022 after a major restoration & conversion project.

| Facilities within The Horton | |
|---|---|
| Performance / Event Space | • A flexible "Performance Space" inside the chapel, with modular stage, event lighting, sound system, projector & screen etc. Capacity: theatre 130; banquet / cabaret 100; standing 250 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Mezzanine Room | • Overlooks the green space outdoors; used for meetings, workshops, smaller functions. Capacities: Boardroom 30 / Classroom 30 / Theatre 40 |
| Atrium | • A large welcome / reception / exhibition space, high ceilings, arched windows (heritage features intact), used for break-outs, exhibitions, networking, small events. Capacity: standing 250, table seating 150 |
| Café & Bar | • On-site café / bar serving visitors; place to meet, relax, socialise |
| Heritage Exhibition | • Permanent exhibition about the history of Epsom's psychiatric hospital "cluster" (including Horton Hospital), archives / research) |
| Outdoor Gardens / Grounds | • Recently opened gardens (July 2025) featuring accessible paths, wildflower meadows, event lawns, workshop area, seating, habitat zones etc. These create space for outdoor events and nature-based enjoyment |

| **Community groups and activities that run from The Horton** | |
|---|---|
| Performances, Workshops & Events | • Children's theatre, outdoor family shows in the gardens (interactive / immersive theatre, dance, etc.) |
| Arts & Craft / Exhibitions | • Rotating exhibitions, craft fairs and makers' markets; studio / workshop activities; "Heritage for All" grants for community heritage projects |
| Heritage / Education | • The permanent exhibition about hospital history; volunteer researchers; community heritage education and interpretation |
| Outdoor Events in the Gardens | • Since the gardens opened, there are programmes of outdoor performances, e.g. morning show for children, aerial theatre etc |

### The Restoration Project

The Horton's transformation from a derelict Grade II-listed chapel into a thriving arts and heritage centre was made possible through more than £3million in funding raised between 2016 and 2022. This included around £1.7 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and £1.4 million from Section 106 developer contributions via Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, alongside grants from heritage organisations, charitable trusts, and private donors. The development of the Horton Gardens has since been supported by Your Fund Surrey, the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy, and further contributions from local businesses and the community.

## Community Hub Spaces

### Longmead Community and Wellbeing Centre

The Community & Wellbeing Centre (also called the Longmead Centre) is a local council-run support hub primarily for residents aged 55+, plus vulnerable adults. It provides a mix of social, recreational, health, and support services. It operates Monday to Friday (9am-4pm for general centre, some services until 5pm. It also includes the *Dementia Hub (Wellbeing Daycare+)* which offers specialist respite care for people living with memory loss or dementia.

| Facilities within The Longmead Centre | |
|---|---|
| Main Hall / Activity Halls | • Several rooms for hire evenings/weekends: Main Hall 120 capacity (full or half), Park Lounge-50, Small Lounge-25, Dining Room- 50, Counselling Room |
| Dining / Restaurant / Café | • A self-service restaurant open 11:30am–1pm Mon–Fri with freshly made meals, snacks, and café service. Also special occasion lunches with entertainment |
| Hairdresser / Salon, Foot Clinic, Bathing Clinic, Laundry and other additional services | • Privately paid for services offered from the Centre's facilities |
| Wellbeing Daycare / Dementia Hub | • Respite care service with full or half-day sessions, social & therapeutic activities, support for memory loss. Also access to assisted bathing, laundry services etc |
| Transport from Home | • Accessible door-to-door transport for those who can't easily use public transport |
| Car Parking | • For use by users of the Centre |
| Multi-Use Games Area | • Located behind the car park at the Centre, the MUGA is open for community use |

| Community groups and activities that run from The Longmead Centre | |
|---|---|
| Regular classes & social activities for older adults | • Tai Chi, Line Dancing, "Stay Young" exercise classes (mixed ability, seated / standing) |
| Indoor games | • Whist drives, Indoor Bowls, Chess, Bingo, quizzes, arts & crafts, singing groups |
| Computer / digital learning | • Beginner to intermediate computer classes, help with devices |
| Health & wellbeing support | • Foot care clinic, hairdresser, assisted bathing, laundry, shopping service, Dementia Hub for memory loss support, Meals at Homes, Transport from Home, Community Alarm |
| Dining & social café environment | |

### The Wells Community Centre - Spa Drive

The Wells Community Centre is owned by the Council but operated by an independent, volunteer-run charity; Epsom Wells Community Association (EWCA). It is not directly council-funded; its income comes from room hire, donations, events, etc. It was closed for a period (around 2016) but in 2022 the Council approved that EWCA take over running and activities at the Centre under a lease, with a two-year rent-free period initially. The vision is to revive it as a "multi-generational community centre" offering rooms for hire, a café, business hub / hot-desking (or equivalent), and classes and activities for a variety of ages.

| Facilities within The Wells Community Centre | |
|---|---|
| Main Hall | • The biggest space in the building. Approx dimensions 10.5m × 17m. Windows on three sides. Can be divided with built-in screens. £30/hr typical hire cost |
| Spalding Room | • Multi-functional mid-size hall (10.5m × 8m) with a hard floor, serving hatch / small kitchenette with fridge, and access to the children's playpark outside. Good for dance, exercise, or "messy" activities |
| Lounge | • Medium room (10m × 10m), with chairs and tables, kitchenette (sink, fridge, etc.). Connected to Main Hall via doors if needed. Hire £30/hr |
| Study | • Smaller, more intimate carpeted room (approx 8m × 7.5m), suitable for therapy sessions, small group meetings, discussion groups, or classes. Exterior access & wifi, etc. Hire £20/hr |
| Hairdresser / Salon Suite | |
| Kitchen / Refreshments Facilities | |
| Children's Play Park | |

| Community groups and activities that run from The Wells Community Centre | |
|---|---|
| Daisychain Pre-School | • Operates during term-time: providing preschool childcare in the centre |
| Dance / Fitness / Exercise Classes | • Epsom Bellydance, martial arts classes, movement and wellness classes |
| Am-dram / Theatre Groups | • Epsom Players |
| Games / Social Clubs | • Games Club<br>• Coffee Mornings |
| Events | • Community BBQs<br>• Christmas Fairs/Market<br>• Barn Dances |

### Rainbow Leisure Centre

Rainbow Leisure Centre is the main public leisure / fitness / swimming facility for Epsom & Ewell, owned by the Borough Council. It provides a broad range of sport, health & wellbeing offering for all ages: swimming, gym, classes, soft play, spa etc. As of 1 October 2025, the operator changed from GLL ("Better") to Places Leisure (part of PfP Group) under a new 10-year contract (with an option to extend for five more years).

Places Leisure is investing £34.5m in the centre over the lifetime of the project, in partnership with the Council including;

- Gym Refurbishment
- Refreshed Fitness Studios

- Brand New Health Suite

| Facilities within Rainbow Leisure Centre | |
|---|---|
| Swimming Pools | • Two pools: a 25-m, 6-lane swimming pool plus a smaller teaching / learner pool. Access aided by a PoolPod lift for accessible entry |
| Studios / Group Fitness | • Dedicated studios for classes, mirrored walls, music system equipment, also cycling classes |
| Gym / Fitness Suite | • Large gym with 100+ stations (cardio, resistance, weights). Multiple studios for fitness classes. Air-conditioned |
| Sports Hall / Multi-Court (Indoor) | • Sports hall that accommodates multiple sports, e.g. badminton courts, basketball, 5-a-side |
| Soft Play / Play Park | • Indoor soft play for under 10's: slides, multi-level play frame, ball pits, baby/toddler area etc. Additionally, a children's play park facility/site |
| Spa / Health Suite | • Spa pools, sauna, steam room, health & relaxation treatments (currently closed for refurbishment) |
| Cafe | |

| Community groups and activities that run from Rainbow Leisure Centre |
|---|
| Swimming lessons & programmes |
| Soft Play / Youth / Children's Activities/Holiday Clubs |
| **Senior / Older Adult Activity**: The "Club Rainbow 55+" offer: classes such as water workout, Pilates, dance aerobics, strength and balance. Also social and wellbeing space |
| Fitness & classes for general adults |
| **Special & inclusive programmes**: Activities for those with disabilities, partnerships or special needs groups in SEN, inclusive play, etc. Also subsidised access programmes for families on low incomes or those facing barriers |

## Country Parks and Open Spaces

### Epsom Common

Epsom Common is a 177-hectare Local Nature Reserve located to the southwest of Epsom town centre, bordered by Christ Church Road and the A24, and adjoining Ashtead Common. It is the largest local nature reserve in Surrey, featuring ancient woodland, grassland, ponds, and heath. The Common is owned and managed by EEBC in partnership with the Epsom Common Association and Natural England, who together maintain its habitats for wildlife conservation and public recreation.

| Facilities, Access and Features | Community / Clubs / Volunteer Activity |
|---|---|
| Multiple habitats: woodland, grassland, scrub, heathland, ponds | Epsom Common Association: local volunteer group that works with the council on management, conservation |
| Several ponds including Great Pond, Barons' Pond, Stew Pond and smaller ones | Guided walks, seasonal events via Countryside / Parks teams |

| | |
|---|---|
| Paths: lots of footpaths, cycle paths, a 3-mile surfaced horse/ride & walk loop around the edge | |
| Epsom Common Allotments site | 200 Plots |

## Horton Country Park

Horton Country Park is a 152-hectare Local Nature Reserve situated to the west of Epsom, between Horton Lane and Chessington Road. The park is made up of woodland, meadows, ponds, and hedgerows, providing a haven for wildlife and a peaceful setting for walking, cycling, and horse riding. It also includes attractions such as Hobbledown Adventure Farm and Park, Horton Golf Club, and Horton Park Equestrian Centre. Horton Country Park is owned and managed by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, with support from local volunteers and the Epsom & Ewell Countryside Team, who help with conservation and public engagement activities.

| Facilities, Access and Features | Community / Clubs / Volunteer Activity |
|---|---|
| Mixed uses: public paths, grassland, woodland, ponds | |
| Hobbledown Children's Farm: adventure/fairytale playgrounds, farm/zoo animals (meerkats, emus | Volunteering via the Countryside Team: guided walks, task programmes |
| Golf (18-hole), equestrian centre, restaurant/dining facilities | Golf Club, Polo Club pony trekking |
| Barbecue sites (4 of them) available | Friends of Horton Country Park |

## Nonsuch Park

Nonsuch Park is a 120-hectare historic parkland located between Ewell and Cheam, on the northeastern edge of the Borough of Epsom & Ewell. The park features open grassland, tree-lined avenues, formal gardens, and the impressive Nonsuch Mansion, which dates back to the 18th century. It provides excellent facilities for walking, running, cycling, and picnicking, with a café (the Nonsuch Pantry) and public toilets on site. Nonsuch Park is jointly managed by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and the London Borough of Sutton, who work together to maintain its heritage, landscape, and recreational facilities.

| Facilities, Access and Features | Community / Clubs / Volunteer Activity |
|---|---|
| Open grassland/parkland plus formal gardens around Nonsuch Mansion. | Local usage for events, parties |
| Paths: mix of surfaced & unsurfaced. Good for walks, cycling | 'Friends of Nonsuch', 'Nonsuch Watch' |
| Mansion House rooms that can be hired (weddings/private parties); café/refresher facilities | The Nonsuch Park Volunteers (also called the Nonsuch Voles) are a small group of enthusiastic volunteers who help to maintain and enhance the beautiful formal |

| | |
|---|---|
| | gardens and woodlands within Nonsuch Park. |

### Hogsmill Local Nature Reserve

| Facilities, Access and Features | Community / Clubs / Volunteer Activity |
|---|---|
| Wild open space; network of grass & surfaced paths. Birdlife, nature observation | Volunteer opportunities via Countryside Team |
| It is more on the "natural" side, with less formal recreation infrastructure | |
| Some small playgrounds etc in nearby parts but not specifically on the Reserve | |

### Epsom & Walton Downs

Epsom and Walton Downs cover around 177 hectares of open chalk grassland to the south of Epsom and ais owned by Epsom Downs Racecourse and managed by the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators under the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984, which ensures public access while supporting their use for horse training and conservation.

| Facilities, Access and Features | Community / Clubs / Volunteer Activity |
|---|---|
| Mainly chalk downland, open space. Used for horse training (gallops) especially mornings; supports biodiversity | Walking / running groups use the Downs |
| Public access rights, walking paths; scenic views | Conservators meeting structure includes community interest |

### Smaller Recreational Spaces

| Name | Type of Facility |
|---|---|
| Poole Road Recreation Ground | • Athletics track; tennis courts; basketball courts; football pitches; large playground; pavilion / hall<br>• Epsom & Ewell Harriers Athletics Club |
| Alexandra Recreation Ground | • Auriol Recreation Ground, Gibraltar Recreation Ground, etc: sports pitches (football, cricket), tennis/netball courts; playgrounds; pavilions |
| Hook Road Arena | • Large flexible open space for events |

### Faith Organisations in Epsom and Ewell

**The following list provides representative examples of groups and organisations; it should not be considered comprehensive.**

| Name and location | Community Groups and activities within the facility |
|---|---|
| **Christ Church, Epsom** | • Has a newly refurbished hall with a capacity of 100 people, suitable for various events like children's parties, wedding receptions, and community meetings<br>• Christmas concert for Age Concern<br>• Youth Group |

| | |
|---|---|
| | • Wellness Wednesdays-social meeting and exercise<br>• Common Ladies Book Club<br>• Baby and toddler group for 0-3 year-olds<br>• Christ Church United FC is a community football club which was set up by Christ Church in 1992 as community outreach.<br>• Kids church and Sunday School<br>• Alpha Courses |
| **All Saints Church, West Ewell:** | • Offers a larger hall attached to the church and a smaller, separate hall<br>• Prayer Meetings<br>• Games Nights<br>• Café and social gatherings<br>• regular stay and playgroup<br>• Kids Church<br>• Youth Café<br>• Games nights<br>• Quiz nights<br>• Disco's |
| **Ewell Hall (formerly St Mary's Church Hall):** | • Located in London Road, opposite the church, with a capacity of 100 seated in rows or 60 seated at tables. It also has a fully fitted kitchen and a large projection screen |
| **St. Clement's Church Hall, Ewell:** | • Can accommodate up to 150 guests, with 150 chairs and 25 tables provided. The hall also features a stage, good lighting, and a large parking area |
| **St Martin of Tours (Church House):** | • Offers four rooms for hire, including a large main hall that can seat 80 people |
| **Epsom & Ewell Islamic Society (EEIS – Epsom Mosque)** | • Madrasah / Maktab (Islamic schooling / religious education) for boys and girls<br>• Youth services / youth project: supporting young people in recreation, education, welfare |
| **Sri Raja Rajeswary Amman Temple, Stoneleigh (Hindu Temple)** | • Function rooms / social / festival gatherings: weddings, cultural festivals (e.g. temple festivals) are held<br>• They host community visits (for example Age Concern visits for cultural performances |

## Community Voluntary Sector (CVS) and Charity Groups across Epsom and Ewell

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Central Surrey Voluntary Action (CSVA)** | Supports voluntary and community groups in Epsom & Ewell: helps with volunteer recruitment, governance advice, funding, training, DBS processes etc. Useful as a backbone organisation for capacity building | Home - Central Surrey Voluntary Action |
| **Good Company (Surrey)** | Originally Epsom & Ewell Foodbank, now wider remit: foodbank, refugee support, pantries, one-to-one advice, support & advocacy, working to alleviate poverty in the borough | Good Company – Supporting Our Community |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell (CAEE)** | Provides free, independent, confidential advice (benefits, housing, debt, family issues etc.), helps thousands of people per year | Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell – Home |
| **Mary Frances Trust** | A well-established mental health / emotional wellbeing charity in the borough. Offers "wrap around" support, working with people in recovery, supporting mental wellbeing etc | Community-Connections-Evaluation-Report-April-2016.pdf<br><br>Mary Frances Trust \| mental wellbeing charity in Surrey |
| **Age Concern Epsom & Ewell** | Supports older people in the borough; social groups, befriending, activities, reducing isolation etc | Home - Age Concern Epsom and Ewell |
| **The Sunnybank Trust** | Works with adults (and young people) with learning disabilities in Epsom & surrounding area, helping them lead fuller lives; inclusion, opportunities, support.<br>Work in new build housing too | Home \| Sunnybank Trust |
| **Epsom & Ewell Phab Club** | Provides inclusive activities for people who have learning or physical disabilities: social & recreational activities. | Home - Epsom & Ewell Phab |
| **Home-Start** | Support for families with at least one child under 5, especially those facing challenges (isolation, illness, hardship etc.) | Home-Start Epsom, Ewell and Banstead \| There for parents when they need us most... Because childhood can't wait. |
| **Conquest Art** | Arts and creative groups for people living with disability / long-term illness; helps engagement and wellbeing through art | Home - Conquest Art Enriching the lives |
| **Family Centres (Barnardo's)** | There are at least two Barnardo's Family Centres in the borough (Pound Lane, West Ewell). They offer early-years family support and support up to age 18 (up to 25 with SEND), via courses, one-to-one, group sessions | Family centre locations - Surrey County Council |
| **Epsom & Ewell Inter Faith Forum / Surrey Faith Links** | The Inter Faith Forum organises inter-faith dialogue events, panel discussions, meeting different faith groups, communal activities (e.g. Iftar during Ramadhan, festival observances, visits between places of worship) to build understanding<br><br>Surrey Faith Links works to connect faith institutions with public services, | Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | community initiatives, and to promote inclusion | |

# 3. Surrounding Borough Key Community Assets

## Reigate & Banstead

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Civic Building | **Reigate Priory / Museum & Park (Reigate)** | • Grade I listed historic house<br>• Museum<br>• 65 acres of parkland; used for exhibitions, events and community activities Reigate Priory Museum |
| Theatre and performance venue | **Harlequin Theatre & Cinema (Redhill)** | • Council operated theatre/cinema<br>• 494-seat auditorium plus multiple meeting/function rooms available for hire —<br>• Used for community and commercial events. Home - Harlequin |
| Community Hub Spaces | **Banstead Community Centre** | • Council-owned centre offering classes, lunch clubs, and volunteering opportunities |
| | **Woodhatch Community Centre (Reigate)** | • Recently refurbished; multipurpose hall and café for all ages, managed by Reigate & Banstead BC |
| | **Horley Young People's Centre / YMCA East Surrey** | • Youth, family, and wellbeing activities; partnership between *YMCA East Surrey* and the borough |
| | **Salfords Community Hall & Merstham Hub** | • Newer multi-agency spaces offering foodbank, library kiosk, community café, and children's services |
| Country Parks and Open Spaces | **Reigate Priory Park** | • Flagship borough-owned park with formal gardens, playground, café, and community events. Managed by *Reigate & Banstead Borough Council* |
| | **Banstead Woods & Chipstead Downs LNR** | • Managed by *SCC Countryside Estate* and *Banstead Commons Conservators* |
| | **Earlswood Common & Redhill Common** | • Both borough-managed open spaces with active "Friends" groups and nature walks |
| | **Memorial Park, Redhill** | • Central civic park recently redeveloped; used for festivals and remembrance events |

## Mole Valley

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Civic Building | **Fetcham Park** | • Grade II listed building with a rich history and beautiful grounds, including six acres of gardens and landscaped grounds for relaxation and inspiration<br>• The venue is equipped for business with professional services, catering, and audiovisual aids |
| Theatre and performance venue | **Dorking Halls (Dorking)** | • Art-Deco civic theatre + cinema with flexible halls for concerts, community meetings, conferences and exhibitions (multi-use cultural & community hub). |
| | **Leatherhead Theatre (Thorndike / Leatherhead)** | • Grade-II listed theatre with auditorium,<br>• Studio and meeting rooms used by local societies and for community hires. |
| Community Hub Spaces | **Fairfield Centre (Leatherhead)** | • Mole Valley District Council-run wellbeing and social centre for older residents; activities, lunches, and social groups |
| | **Dorking Christian Centre** | • Independent faith-based hub offering childcare, youth sessions, foodbank support, and community hire rooms |
| | **North Holmwood Village Hall & Dorking Halls Function Rooms** | • Frequently used for clubs, parish meetings, and fitness/community events |
| | **Leatherhead Community Hub (in partnership with Transform Housing & Support)** | • Offers advice services, training, and family support projects |
| Country Parks and Open Spaces | **Box Hill (National Trust managed)** | • Nationally famous chalk downland overlooking Dorking; strong volunteer engagement through *Friends of Box Hill* |
| | **Norbury Park** | • Owned by *Surrey County Council* (SCC); includes woodlands, river walks, and tenant farms. Managed for recreation and conservation |
| | **Denbies Hillside (National Trust) and Leith Hill (NT)** | • Major open-access countryside within Mole Valley |
| | **Dorking Meadowbank Park** | • District council park in central Dorking with café, lake, and community events |

## Tandridge

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Theatre and performance venue | **Oxted Community Hall / Barn Theatre** | • Large hall + meeting room<br>• Historic Barn Theatre (performance space & rehearsal rooms) — both used for classes, community events and performances |
| Community Hub Spaces | **Caterham Community Centre** | • Large, purpose-built hall offering classes, groups, and events |
| | **Lingfield & Dormansland Community Centre** | • Charity-run hub offering fitness, youth clubs, U3A meetings, and social support |
| | **Godstone Parish Hall & Village Halls network** | • Used widely for clubs, local associations, and outreach |
| | **Tandridge Voluntary Service Council (TVSC)** | • Operates smaller hubs and volunteer support centres in Caterham and Oxted |
| Country Parks and Open Spaces | **Staffhurst Wood** | • Ancient woodland near Limpsfield; owned by *Surrey County Council* and managed by the *Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT)* |
| | **Limpsfield Common (National Trust)** | • Woodland and heath with volunteer rangers |
| | **Titsey Place & Estate** | • Privately owned but open to the public with volunteer garden teams |
| | **Godstone Green, Lingfield Common, and Blanchman's Farm Local Nature Reserve** | • Local community-managed green spaces with active volunteer boards |

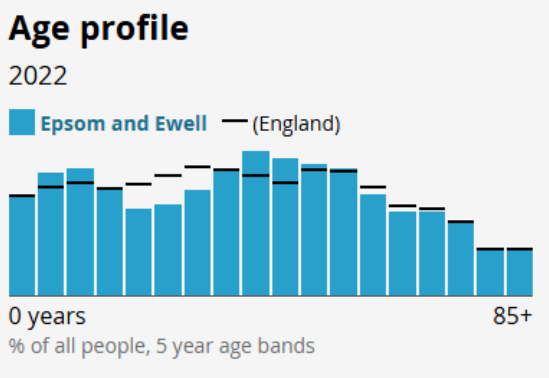
## Elmbridge

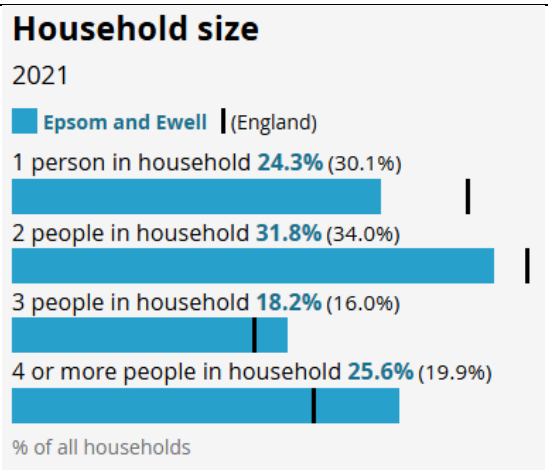
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Community Hub Spaces | **Elmbridge Community Hub (Walton)** | • Central hub connecting services and volunteering opportunities |
| | **Molesey Centre for the Community** | • Recently refurbished; community hire rooms and regular social activities |
| | **Cobham Centre for the Community** | • Hosts lunch clubs, dementia support, and intergenerational events |
| | **Vital Village Community Hub** | • Previously known as the Thames Ditton Community Centre and is recently refurbished<br>• Run by Vital Village CIC<br>• Community garden, community fridge<br>• Wide range of programmes and activities including food depot, recycling centre, workshops, local artisans, eco initiatives, stuff depot, community groups and more<br>• Community cafe |
| | **The Bridge (run by Walton Charities)** | • Focusing on those struggling with the cost of living<br>• Community shop<br>• Specialist support and advice service including Citizens Advice, Elmbridge Family Centre, etc |

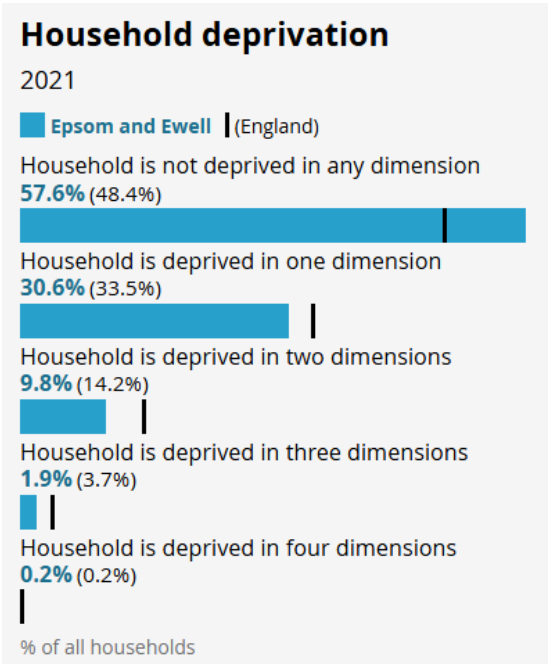
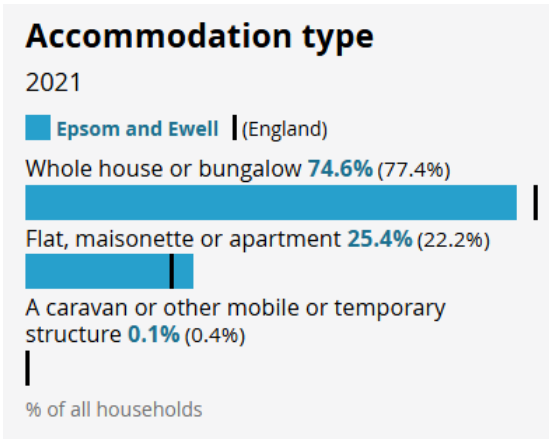
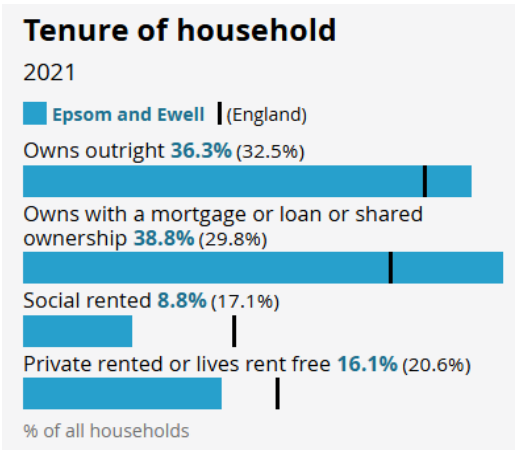
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | • For working families with children U18 |
| Country Parks and Open Spaces | **Esher Commons, Oxshott Heath & Woods, and Fairmile Common** | • All part of *Surrey County Council's Countryside Estate* but managed locally by *Elmbridge Borough Council* with active "Friends" groups |
| | **Hersham Riverside Park** | • Council-owned riverside park and LNR by the River Mole |
| | **Brooklands Community Park** | • Large open space near Brooklands Museum, co-managed by *Elmbridge BC* and partners; used for community events |
| | **Painshill Park** | • Privately run heritage landscape garden (charitable trust) but strong community and volunteer engagement |

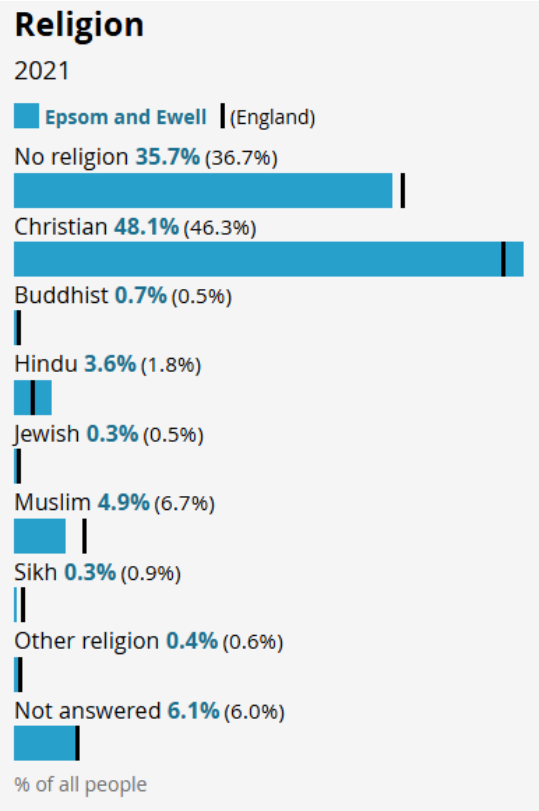
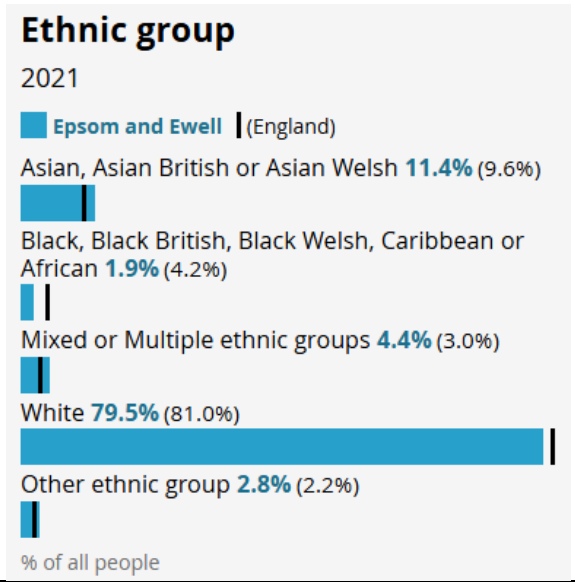
# 4. Demographics of Epsom and Ewell Local Authority

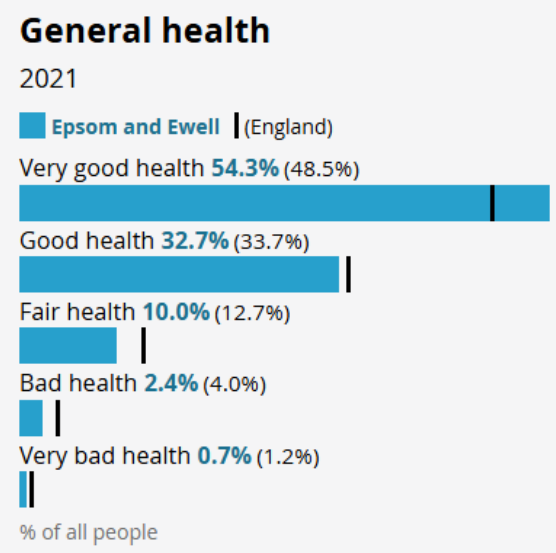
This mapping report presents an analysis of the designated area of Epsom and Ewell to evaluate the demographics of the region. The report employs a custom profile and data set selected from the Office for National Statistics website to assess the overall demographic characteristics.

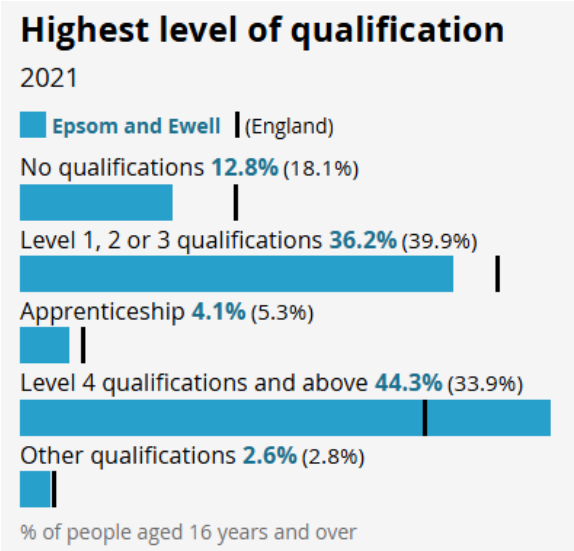
| AGE PROFILES | |
|---|---|
| **Population of the area selected: 81,400** | |
|  | (National figure)<br>**Below Average Ages for the area**<br>Age 20-24: 4.7% (6%)<br>Age 25-29: 4.9% (6.5%)<br>Age 30-34: 5.7% (7%)<br><br>**Above Average Ages for the area**<br>Age 5-9: 6.6% (5.9%)<br>Age 10-14: 6.9% (6.1%)<br>Age 40-44: 7.8% (6.5%)<br>Age 45-49: 7.4% (6.1%) |

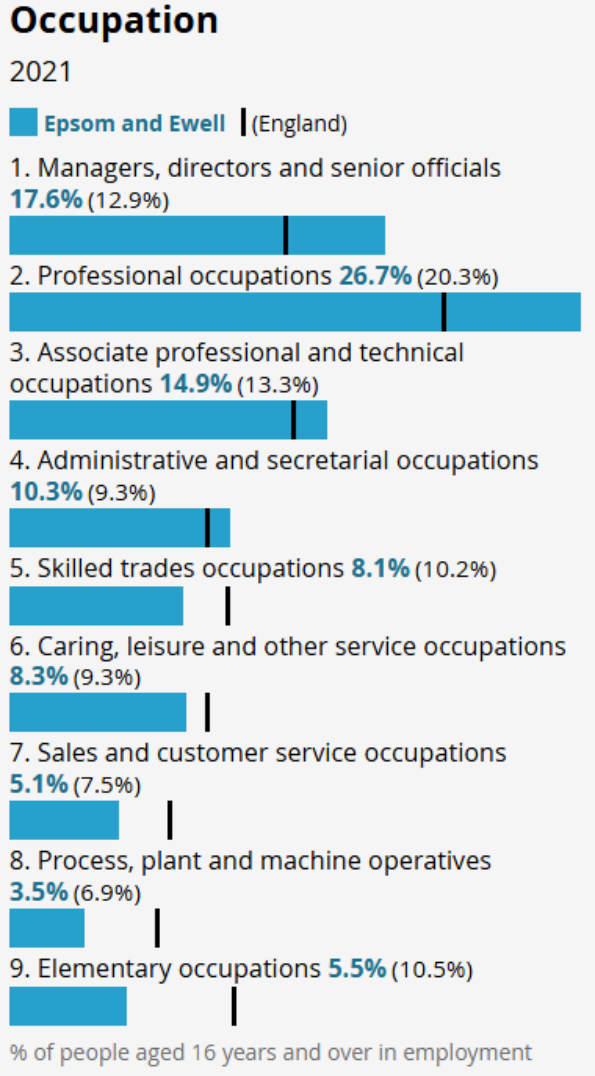
| HOUSEHOLDS | |
|---|---|
| **Number of Households in the area selected: 31,300** | |
|  | Data reveals that households comprising one or two individuals are notably below the average in this area, while households with three or more members exceed the average. This suggests a higher prevalence of larger family households within the region. |

| | |
|---|---|
|  | Statistics indicate that there is generally a significantly low level of deprivation in the selected area, with only 18.1% of households reporting deprivation in two or more dimensions. |
|  | The majority of residents in the selected area reside in either a whole house or bungalow, with a proportion of 74.6%, which is just below the average of 77.4%. |
|  | According to data, only 8.8% of individuals in the selected area reside in social housing. This figure is below the national average of 17.1%, indicating that the area is relatively affluent.<br><br>Homeownership with a mortgage or shared ownership in the area is 9% higher than the national average. |

| ETHNIC GROUPS AND RELIGION | |
|---|---|
|  | 35.7% of residents in the selected area stated they had no religion which was just below average in comparison to England. 48.1% of residents identified as Christian, and the proportion of residents practicing Hinduism in the area is above the national average. |
|  | The selected area has a white ethnicity rate of 79.5%, on par with the national average of 81.0%.<br><br>The area has an Asian population of 11.4%, which is higher than the national average, while the proportion of residents identifying as Black is below the national average at 1.9% (4.2%). |

| HEALTH AND WELLBEING | |
|---|---|
|  | Statistics show that the residents in the selected area have above average "Very good health". |

| EDUCATION AND SKILLS | |
|---|---|
|  | 44.3% of residents in the selected area who are 16 years and over have achieved Level 4 qualifications and above, this being 10.4% more than the national average. |

| | |
|---|---|
|  | Statistics show that 69.5% of the residents in the selected area are significantly above average in high level professional occupations. |

## Epsom & Ewell Borough Councillors (by Ward)

**Auriol Ward**
John Beckett (Residents' Association)
Darren Talbot (Residents' Association)

**College Ward**
Julian Freeman (Liberal Democrat)
James Lawrence (Liberal Democrat)
Julie Morris (Independent)

**Court Ward**
Chris Ames (Labour)
Kate Chinn (Labour)
Rob Geleit (Labour)

**Cuddington Ward**
Graham Jones MBE (Residents' Association)
Phil Neale (Residents' Association)
Clive Woodbridge (Residents' Association)

**Ewell Village Ward**
Christine Cleveland (Residents'

Association)
Clive Woodbridge (Residents' Association)

**Ewell Court Ward**
Peter O'Donovan (Residents' Association)
Chris Watson (Residents' Association)

**Horton Ward**
Bernie Muir (Conservative)
Kieran Persand (Conservative)

**Nonsuch Ward**
Shanice Goldman (Residents' Association)
Christine Howells (Residents' Association)
Robert Leach (Residents' Association)

**Ruxley Ward**
Alex Coley (Independent)
Jan Mason (Residents' Association)

**Stamford Ward**
Steve Bridger (Residents' Association)
Alison Kelly (Liberal Democrat)

**Stoneleigh Ward**
Hannah Dalton (Residents' Association)
Tony Froud (Residents' Association)

**Town Ward (Epsom)**
Arthur Abdulin (Residents' Association)
Neil Dallen MBE (Residents' Association)
Rachel King (Residents' Association)

**West Ewell Ward**
Lucie McIntyre (Residents' Association)
Humphrey Reynolds (Residents' Association)

**Woodcote & Langley Vale Ward**
Liz Frost (Residents' Association)
Bernice Froud (Residents' Association)
Steven McCormick (Residents' Association

## High Level Analysis

In the context of the work that the Council is conducting as part of the CGR workstream, this high-level community asset mapping provides an indication of the varied number of community facilities (buildings and green spaces), community groups and organisations on offer to the residents of Epsom and Ewell and in the context of potential community asset transfers to a new community council/third party, an indication of similar facilities in neighbouring boroughs.

The population analysis is helpful in building understanding and shaping thinking around the priority groups for the provision of services and facilities both now and in the future.

It is clear that Epsom and Ewell Borough have a strong provision of community facilities offering services to local people and with some, such as the Playhouse, likely to be drawing audiences from a wider geographical area.

CSS and Clare Chester Consulting agreed collectively that given the nature of the three facilities under consideration for community asset transfer (Longmead Community and Wellbeing Centre, Epsom Playhouse and Bourne Hall) that analysis of similar facilities in the Borough's which have been indicated to be those which could potentially be merged with Epsom and Ewell through the LGR process, would be helpful.

Of particular interest is the Epsom Playhouse, which is a heritage venue providing cultural and arts programmes to residents but also a wider audience. By the nature of its provision and therefore specialist skills to operate it, there is merit in considering whether an alignment with other theatres in the wider geographical region would be of greater long-term benefit to safeguard this asset.

The Asset Mapping exercise demonstrates that there are a number of other theatres operating in the area but beyond the current Epsom and Ewell Borough boundary.

## Recommendations

The three Status reports produced by Clare Chester Consulting and CSS and this Asset Mapping Report, bring to light a number of further areas of work which could be helpful in facilitating and aiding the best long term stewardship solution for the three assets in question.

Below are a few high-level recommendations for the council to consider further to inform the next stages of work, that being the development of a 'Creative Ideas' report and the high-level business plans for each asset;

- Establish whether local community/charitable organisations have the capacity, skills and willingness to take on additional assets either directly under lease from the new unitary authority or under lease from the new community council. What resource would they need to enable them to scale up?
- Further research into the wider geographical theatre scene (new Unitary area once known);
    - Who runs the other theatres?
    - How successful are they?
    - What are the merits in creating a new community trust to manage ALL the theatres collectively?
    - Establish where existing theatre charities in the area could potentially take on Epsom Playhouse
- Secure specialist advice from those in the cultural and arts industry re the future of Epsom Playhouse eg Theatres Trust, AEA Consulting, Indigo, etc
- Would there be merit in creating a charitable trust to take on the country parks or consider third party organisations such as The Land Trust to safeguard them in perpetuity?
- Arrange a series of meetings with colleagues and peers in other local authorities (once the new unitary boundary is known) to discuss their intentions for their community assets and establish whether there is a position of unity in progressing further work together
- Could there be a position of consolidation across all current boroughs which could aid the financial security and legacy of Bourne Hall and Epsom Playhouse?

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Community Stewardship Solutions

CLARE CHESTER CONSULTING

# Community Assets

## Issues & Opportunities

**December 2025**

DRAFT

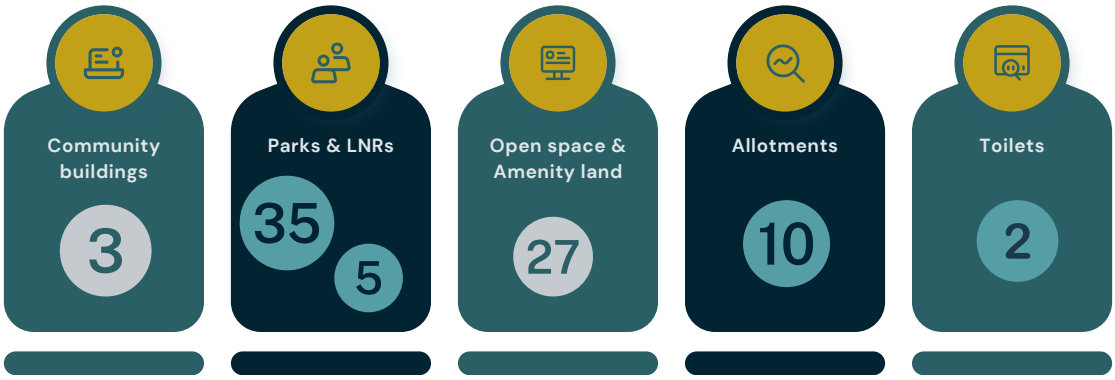
EPSOM EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL

# INTRODUCTION



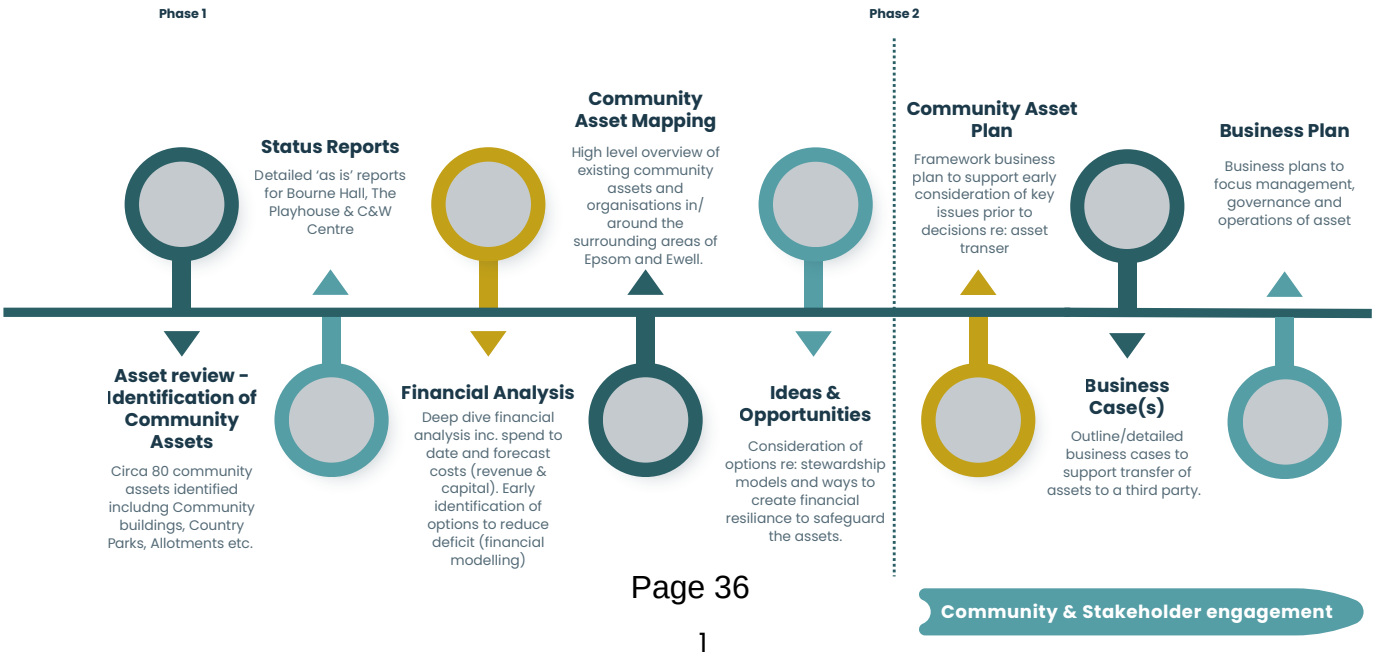
Epsom & Ewell Borough is a borough rich in community assets. The Council owns and is responsible for a number of those key assets and has long provided support through both its Place Leadership role, as well as through extensive officer and funding support. The Venues Community Commercial Service are proactive and creative in seeking to find ways to enhance and develop the facilities and their services, with the Property Team managing the assets both in terms of planned maintenance and capital investment.

In 2025 the Council undertook a Strategic Asset Review (Strategic Priority 4) and as part of that work, it identified over 80 assets held for community purposes;




The Council has also been consulting on proposals to create a Community Council under a Community Governance Review (CGR) process. One of the objectives of the Asset Review work was to identify those assets that could be considered for transfer to a new Community Council, as well as consider the financial (revenue and capital) implications of any such transfer. In parallel, the Government has recently confirmed the new shape of Local Authorities in Surrey as part of the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process. As such and notwithstanding the outcome of the CGR, it is considered prudent to review these Community Assets, put them on a sustainable footing and prepare them for onward transfer..

The routemap below sets out the broad direction of travel for this workstream.



The **first phase** of this work has primarily been focussed on creating a stronger and shared understanding of the 'as is' arrangements for the assets. This has included reviewing previous work carried out and looking at the current operating model, approach to asset management and the financial implications (revenue and capital). The more detailed work has focussed on the key community buildings;

- Bourne Hall, Ewell
- The Playhouse, Epsom
- Community & Wellbeing Centre

In parallel, alongside some initial community mapping, early ideas and thoughts have been developed to consider how the assets and services delivered can be put on a more sustainable footing, including alternative stewardship models and opportunities for a more resilient financial plan.


Ultimately the Council's aim is to make best use of the facilities in the short term, while putting them in the strongest position possible, such that they can continue to support the local community into the future - preparing them for transfer to either a new Community Council, the Unitary Council or even an alternative stewardship model.

The purpose of this paper is to capture those early thoughts and ideas to enable them to be explored and developed as part of the second phase of this work. The next phase of this work will seek to prioritise and develop these ideas further, identifying a long term plan (Community Asset Plan) for the assets. Subject to the Council's requirements, this could take the form of a strategic roadmap setting out the long term plan, including a plan for future investment and ownership, but importantly supported by a clear short term action plan to identify the tangible and deliverable steps that can be taken within existing budget, resources and timelines.

# IDEAS & OPPORTUNITIES



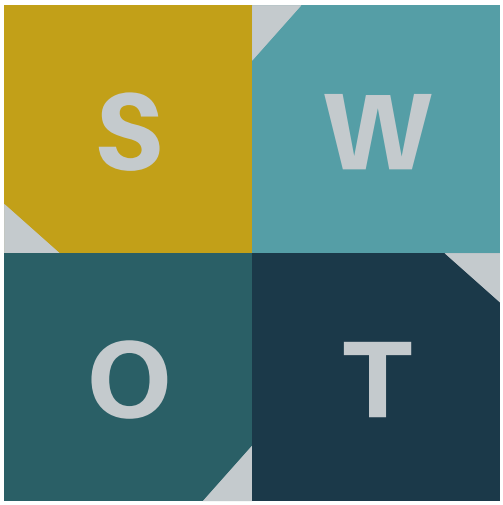
Below is a headline SWOT analysis to aid broad thinking about the Community Assets and to set a broad framework and context for future detailed work.

### STRENGTHS

Fantastic & diverse range of well loved and well used community assets.
Strong & supportive leadership
Passionate and creative staff

### OPPORTUNITIES

LGR may provide opportunities to consolidate assets and work at scale
Scope for further income generation and alternative funding streams to be secured.
Options around stewardship models
Scope for alternative operating regimes




### WEAKNESSES

Level of subsidy currently required
LA accounting approach -LA accounting approach using internal recharges does not support commercial decision making
Significant capital investment required going forward

### THREATS

LGR may pose a threat to the Community Facilities as efficiency drive/savings are likely to be identified


The following sections set out a range of ideas, which could be explored and considered further.

Mindful of budget and timelines, it is suggested that this document acts as a 'longlist' and that they be refined and prioritised in terms of areas for further work.

The ideas & opportunities are considered under the following themes for ease, although it should be noted that there will be cross-over between these themes. Other ideas and options will emerge and it will be critical to work with the service managers and wider operational team to help shape and refine the future areas of focus.

# STRATEGIC



There are likely to be a number of both challenges and opportunities for the Borough's Community Assets in light of Local Government Reorganisation. Regardless of where the assets end up being transferred into (Unitary, Community Council or other) it will be important that there is a clear, robust and sustainable plan for each asset, acting as the foundation for a long term sustainable future and to support future decision making.

Set out below are some of the broader strategic issues that could be considered - some of these are explored in more detail in the sections below.

- Work with new unitary partner authorities (& other LAs as helpful) to understand their community asset base, management, operational and financial model, along with their strategic plans for their community assets. Identify and explore synergies and opportunities for creative and joint working in advance of LGR.
- Work with Surrey County Council to bring them into the Bourne Hall discussions and to explore opportunities to reconfigure space/amend lease arrangements sooner rather than later (in light of LGR).
- Engage specialist experts in the arts/culture space to aid development of thinking around Epsom Playhouse (& Bourne Hall as appropriate) and to support the development of future business plans.
- Capture the story to the venues (past, present and future) to build a narrative which helps to shape the future, strengthen the brand and support funding bids and business plan development.
- Consider the strategic development options of Bourne Hall to include alternative uses for The Lodge, Bungalow, Park, car park AND the main building.
- Consider other income generating assets that the council could endow to any stewardship organisation to generate income. To be explore further in the financial section.

# FINANCIAL



There is currently a ~£4.2m annual Council subsidy (as per the published budget for 25/26) to operate the Council's Community Assets, which include Bourne Hall, Playhouse, the C&W Centre and other facilities such as Country Parks and allotments. More detailed financial analysis has taken place and it is recommended this work continues. Some key areas for further consideration are;

## Local Authority Accounting Approach

A Local Authority accounting approach using internal recharges does not easily support commercial decision making. Analysis of the methodology of allocating costs to facilities should be reviewed. Each facility has a mixture of direct costs, plus allocations of centralised Council overheads of £477k in FY25-26. These re-charges cover items such as management, IT, HR and procurement. **The aim of cost allocation is two-fold;**

1. To ensure that costs are recovered through the organisation in order to understand the true cost of running each function. The allocation methodology is more suited to a Service Provider, rather than a commercial operator that generates income, like the facilities being considered.

2. To ensure that the costs allocated drive management and to understand the implications of expansion and growth of operations. For example, one extra member of staff costing £20k p.a. may be able to generate £30k more gross profit by supporting additional sales at the café at Bourne Hall. This would lead to incremental surplus income, but if the new role attracts an inflated allocation of central costs, rather than an incremental allocation of central costs, then management would **incorrectly conclude** that increasing sales has led to a deficit.

## Opportunities to reduce cost

It is suggested there is a review of the services delivered from each of the facilities to explore potential for:

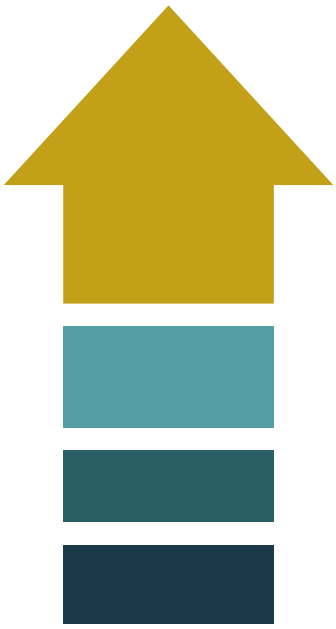
1. Reduction in any duplicate running costs e.g. for heating and lighting
2. Opportunities to consolidate actvities
3. Review of overheads
4. Opportunities to generate revenue savings and/or deliver capital receipts.
5. Opportunities to look at expenses (& associated income) with items like car parking and property maintenance.

In order to save cost on heating and maintenance in any assets, it may be necessary to further invest in up-to-date heating systems, for example at Bourne Hall.

# FINANCIAL



## Opportunities to increase income



- Increased **utilisation of facilities** leading to spin-off F&B sales for eg. at BH - meeting rooms targeting 40% utilisation, rather than 12% to 20%.

- Enhancing the **technology** within existing meeting rooms to make them more appealing to a wider audience. E.g. video conferencing equipment.

- Increase the ratio of **anchor tenants,** for example small business start-ups or rent-a-desk. This helps to de-risk cashflow by generating a predictable revenue stream and generates more footfall leading to café sales. For example, there are many rooms in Bourne Hall that are currently used in a minimal way for administration, museum storage or by the NewSPAL.

- Is there a better venue for NewSPAL. E,g, a dedicated storage facility where items can be shipped easily around the County?
- The museum uses some prime space for storing artifacts. There may be better storage options, that would then open up prime space for other uses?
- Could some users be consolidated into existing rooms, opening up space for other paying users or for rented storage e.g. church and other clubs?

- Swap the **library** in Bourne Hall to the centre of the building and the café to the library venue. This provides a better experience for the high footfall café and provides café users with a view of the park and closer to the external café seating area.

- Seek **cultural and community grants**. These applications have not been successful, so consider engaging consultants to generate a couple of bids on a no-win, no fee basis and learn from their successes. Then Council staff can leverage the successful approaches.

- Explore **alternative revenue streams** including income from CIL and S106, for capex and revenue funding. For example, County archiving; explore whether S106 sums could be passed onto the BH museum to offset costs. Review the Planning policy to require sums from developers, if it is not already a requirement.

## Management Reporting

- Review the use of the **Sales booking tool** so that it can provide helpful information to support decision making about utilisation and income. Although the data appears at first glance to be very detailed, it generates some misleading information regarding room utilisation in certain circumstances. An upgrade to the software and some configuration changes should make it possible to deliver better information and standard reports.

# SERVICES/OFFER



The service/programme offer should drive the requirements for the operations of the venues (see next page), with the service/programme offer being informed by local need and aspiration.

**Community capacity building** is key to delivering more, with other local service providers and volunteers bringing resource, funding, resilience and expertise to the table. The current Team has delivered extraordinary change to the venues since they have taken them over. The creation of further capacity should now include community development action working with other providers and volunteers to build local ownership and long term resilience, meaning less core reliance on Council staff. Building community capacity will be key to success and will move the venues closer to a model more akin to a community run approach.

The **community asset mapping** already completed helps to inform the local community offer and identify key local organisations, stakeholders and users who are acting or involved locally. No conversations with local operators have taken place as yet to deepen the current understanding and to build a knowledge of the local challenges and risks facing the community and voluntary sector. Building relationships with these operators and users of the venues will be a key part of the next stage.

There is always value in learning from others and identifying **best practice organisations** from which ideas and learning can be drawn and implemented locally. It would be incredibly valuable for Council project leads to visit community organisations who are operating services and programmes in historical buildings and conduct site visits to establish key learning points. **Chichester Community Development Trust** was created about 15 years ago as a result of new housing development on a Homes England site. The Trust has since become a national award winner and has developed buildings of a historical nature to deliver community services and protect them in perpetuity. These include a listed water tower, stables and a church! They have secured grants which amount to many millions and are hugely successful locally.

In order to support the council's position, further improve the service offer and income generating opportunities of Bourne Hall and Epsom Playhouse, additional work could be undertaken to create an action plan which looks to take advantage of local gaps in service provision or spaces for hire, complementing the existing offer across the borough. This work could include consideration of the following;

- How the council could work with the **existing voluntary and community sector** to seek their input and support to protect BH and the PH. This could potentially be achieved through the creation of a working group, coordinated by the Council and positioned in a way which is seeking to support and underpin the Borough's offer, building on local community capacity and providing complementary services and support to a sector which is typically over stretched, under financed and under resourced. Potential connections with organisations/groups such as Connect and Support Surrey could support this agenda.

# SERVICES/OFFER



- Work with peers in **neighbouring authorities** to start a conversation about the future of unitary wide community services and facilities. What are their ambitions and are there opportunities to work together now to refine and sustain Bourne Hall and Epsom Playhouse? Are they delivering similar services to those delivered from the Community and Wellbeing Centre which could be jointly delivered to reduce costs or are there community organisations in the wider area delivering similar services which could extend their services to Epsom and Ewell, protecting the services for the community long term? Link the outcomes of this work to the working group identified above.

- Conduct a **holistic review** of Bourne Hall in terms of its functions, spaces, uses and offer.
    - Consider and understand the limitations of the Listed Status and how this may affect programming/services.
    - Identify and agree the Unique Selling Point (USP) for each venue and how these fit with the local offer and community need
    - Give further consideration to the development of the museum – revisit the current location as part of the overall consideration of Bourne Hall. Is the current location the right space? How can further funding be secured to support the modernisation of the museum eg use of tech?
    - Consider how to reconfigure spaces to better fit a renewed vision/purpose eg move café into library space and generate further income
    - Extend the kitchen to better accommodate the Meals on Wheels service and hot food offer in café
    - Look at the long term provision of space for Surrey Pals. Is Bourne Hall the right location? Does the Council own another space suitable for Surrey Pals?
    - Are there services, hires or functions which could be stopped, reframed, increased or consolidated? Conduct a review and establish potential changes
    - What other service partners could be brought in to increase offer/provide rental income?
    - Are the NHS looking for rental spaces to deliver preventative services that could complement the Health and Wellbeing Centre services and GP Practice adjacent to Bourne Hall.
    - Can spaces to accommodate private health services such as physio, osteopath and beauty be easily and efficiently be accommodated in BH to create a quick win?
    - Identify which of the ideas above (and more) could be achieved at pace to drive income to BH.

- Conduct a similar **review for Epsom Playhouse**, noting its niche offer and therefore more limited potential market. Bring in specialist advisers to bring national experience and expertise to the table

- Consider further **environmental improvements** such as grey water[SA1] recycling and electric car charging to reduce utility bills, provide an additional service to residents and raise income.

# OPERATIONAL



Changes have already been made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the venues' operations.

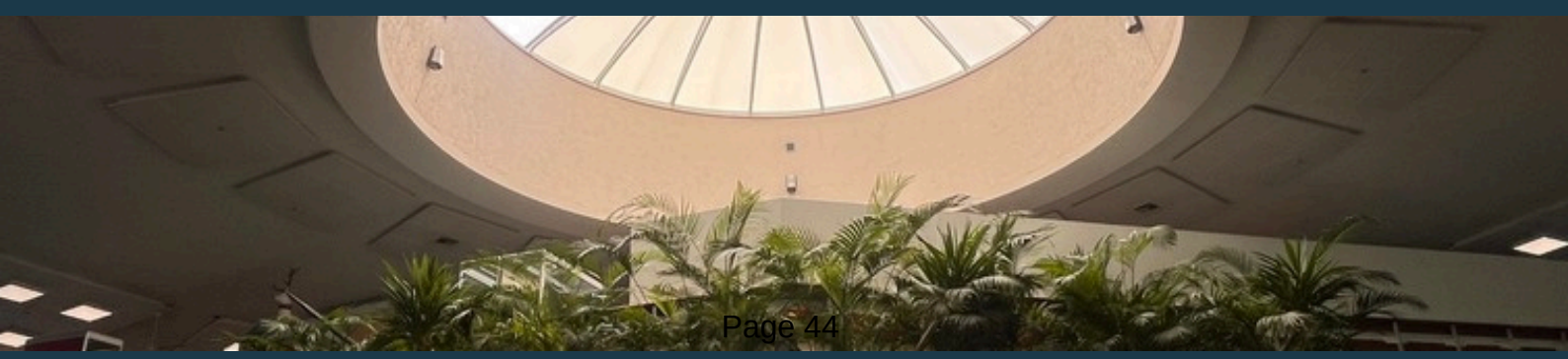
To further support the creation of an optimal environment to aid growth in the business, there are a number of further changes which could be made and which include;

- Further evolving and embracing a management approach which supports a commercial approach to venue operations, moving away from LA methodologies
- Considering opportunities for apprenticeship/internship programme for BH, museum and PH
- Creating a hirers/tenants 'forum' to receive feedback (can be virtual and physical)

## Bourne Hall

Bourne Hall has a wide variety of hireable/lettable spaces which serves a varied range of hirers. However, with some re-organisation/refurbishment of existing spaces, it could deliver even more. The ideas below focus on those which can be implemented now with no/limited changes to existing spaces;

- Opening hours - look to extend/amend opening hours to meet local demand e.g. Sunday café offer working alongside Church hirer (end exclusive use)
- How can the existing booking tool be adapted to reduce the number of manual overrides required e.g. acoustic issues between rooms A, B & C? Is there a better system out there which suits the team's needs?
- Revisit hire charges policy and procedures to ensure parity across all hirers (including long standing ones) and benchmark against other local venues
- Develop a volunteer programme for BH/museum– establish opportunities, roles, etc
- Consider an indoor farmers market (or outdoors in the car park/park), community foodbank/shop, warm space, co-working space or other ideas which would drive footfall to the venue
- Explore the potential to extend the museum outreach programme (secure funding to support)
- Could the roof space in BH be used for art installations or other uses?
- Interim measure until café offer is extended; could a local coffee cart provider be outside of BH/in the Park outside of BH café opening times?



## Epsom Playhouse

The Playhouse has more limited scope to flex its offer, particularly in the theatre, where it is more difficult to radically change the layout and neither would one want to, given the niche and unique market of a theatre. However, there are other spaces in the building which could (and do) flex could be used for alternative purposes to support income generation and raise the visibility of the venue;

- Consider extending the volunteer programme to other functions in the Playhouse, e.g. lighting engineer, caretaking
- Offer 'Behind the Scenes Tours' (already in motion)
- Offer corporate team building days
- Given the niche and specialist nature of a theatre, it is believed that with specialised input and advice, the council could be supported to implement new innovations by both taking best practice from elsewhere and through seeking advice and support from specialist advisor/s to take Epsom Playhouse to the next level.

# MARKETING & PROMOTION



Understanding the **place and value** held by the venues and services delivered from them locally is key to success.

Understanding the **current and future target markets** will help to inform service planning and ensure maximum value (financial and community need) is derived from changes. With this intelligence, the current offer can flex to fill gaps to accommodate new audiences/users.

The **community asset mapping** has been helpful in identifying the local demographic across the borough. Further work now to identify the target market for the venues will enable the branding, marketing and promotion to be more focused on reaching out to existing and new audiences. This will inform the marketing and promotion plan.

The work described in previous sections to collaborate with the local community and voluntary sector will help to inform future marketing and promotion.

Further work with local residents/users to seek their feedback on the venues, their service offer and future requirements from the spaces would be helpful. This could be achieved through focus group sessions and a wider survey.

Furthermore, the following could be undertaken;

- Review the branding for each venue in light of any feedback from residents/users/stakeholders to support and underpin the narrative of the spaces
- Ensure that any promotion tools/avenues used are adequately articulating the 'offer' and hitting the right notes for the customer eg are the websites of the right calibre to attract key audiences?
- Promotion routes; consideration to using more visual promotion tools, such as film clips and posting them on TikTok, reaching out to a new audience
- Ensure the use of social media is regular, current and the content of interest to the customer
- Celebrate successes, new clients, users and the achievements of those groups
- Use promotion tools to create a networks of followers who actively engage with your promotional pieces and become advocates for you, helping to sell your services through 'word of mouth'
- What other channels are out there that the venue teams could utilize?
- In order to make best use of social media channels, the staff team at the venues should have authority to control the marketing and promotion so that it is timely, dynamic and 'of the moment.
- Develop a membership programme for Epsom Playhouse, providing benefits to local people. Maybe provide them with a 'members only' area of the website which shares particular narratives or offers 'early bird' ticket sales which only they have access to.

The refinement, refreshing and extension of current marketing and promotion approaches will have a significant impact on the profile and reputation of the venues. The preparation work and discussion with the community, will provide valuable insight into the views of existing users/hirers but extend the venues reach to new audiences. This work need not be of significant cost, but there may be value in securing some external support and expertise to help place the websites in the right dimensions

The buildings, land and infrastructure provide a wealth of opportunity, but are also potential liabilities, given the level of both capital investment required and revenue resource needed to maintain and operate them.

The Council has invested significant capital over the last few years and maintained the buildings proactively and as best as possible within the resources available. However, additional significant investment is required both in the short and long term and it is unlikely that the Council will have access to the level of capital required. This needs to be factored into any future business planning and decision making.

A number of ideas and options relating to how the buildings' use could be optimised have been highlighted in this document, with some further areas that could be considered further set out below;

## Capital investment

The Property Team, working alongside the Service Managers, has done a great deal of work to consider what further capital works are required and this is set out in the Council's Asset Management Strategy, as well as considered annually as part of the Capital Programme and Asset Management Process. However, it may be prudent to undertake further structural and or condition surveys to provide a more detailed view and costed plan, with proposed phasing of works. This should include items like asbestos and other abnormal costs (including matters relating to some of the building's Listed status). This will be particularly relevant if the assets are to be transferred to a Community Council or alternative community organisation.

## Ownership Models

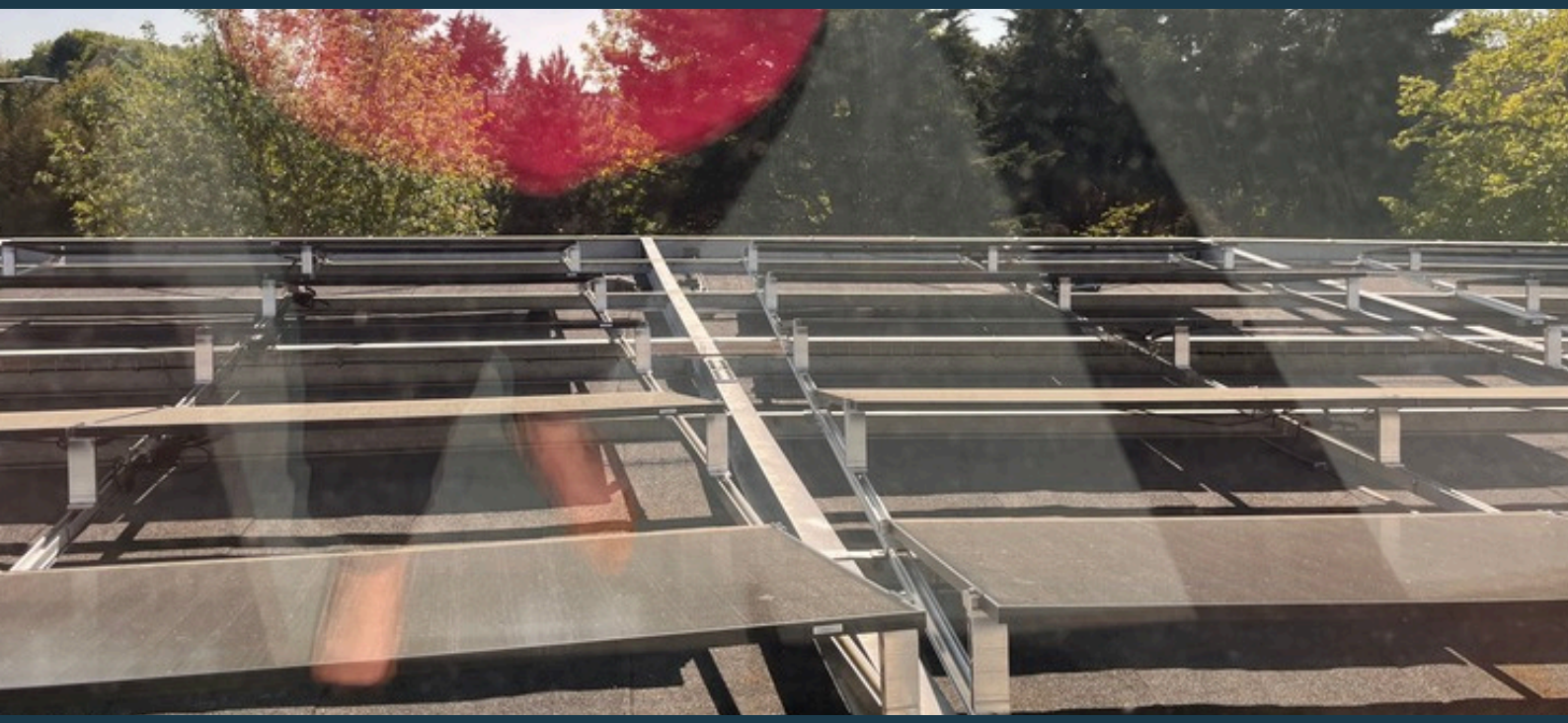
Currently the assets are all owned and managed directly by the Council, with the Council having full responsibility for the assets themselves. Moving forward, there are a number of different options in terms of both ownership and division of responsibility for the external (structure) and internal repair & maintenance of the assets themselves, as well as day to day management. These options should be considered in more detail, alongside the work to consider optimum stewardship models, to ensure responsibility sits with competent organisations who have the appropriate capabilities and are clear about their obligations.

## Alterations and conversions

To further optimise the use of the assets, there may be a requirement for further capital works in the form of alterations and or conversion of existing space. These works should be considered as part of the future plan and there will need to be business cases made for any further investment, taking into account any financial and social returns.

## Environmental Enhancements

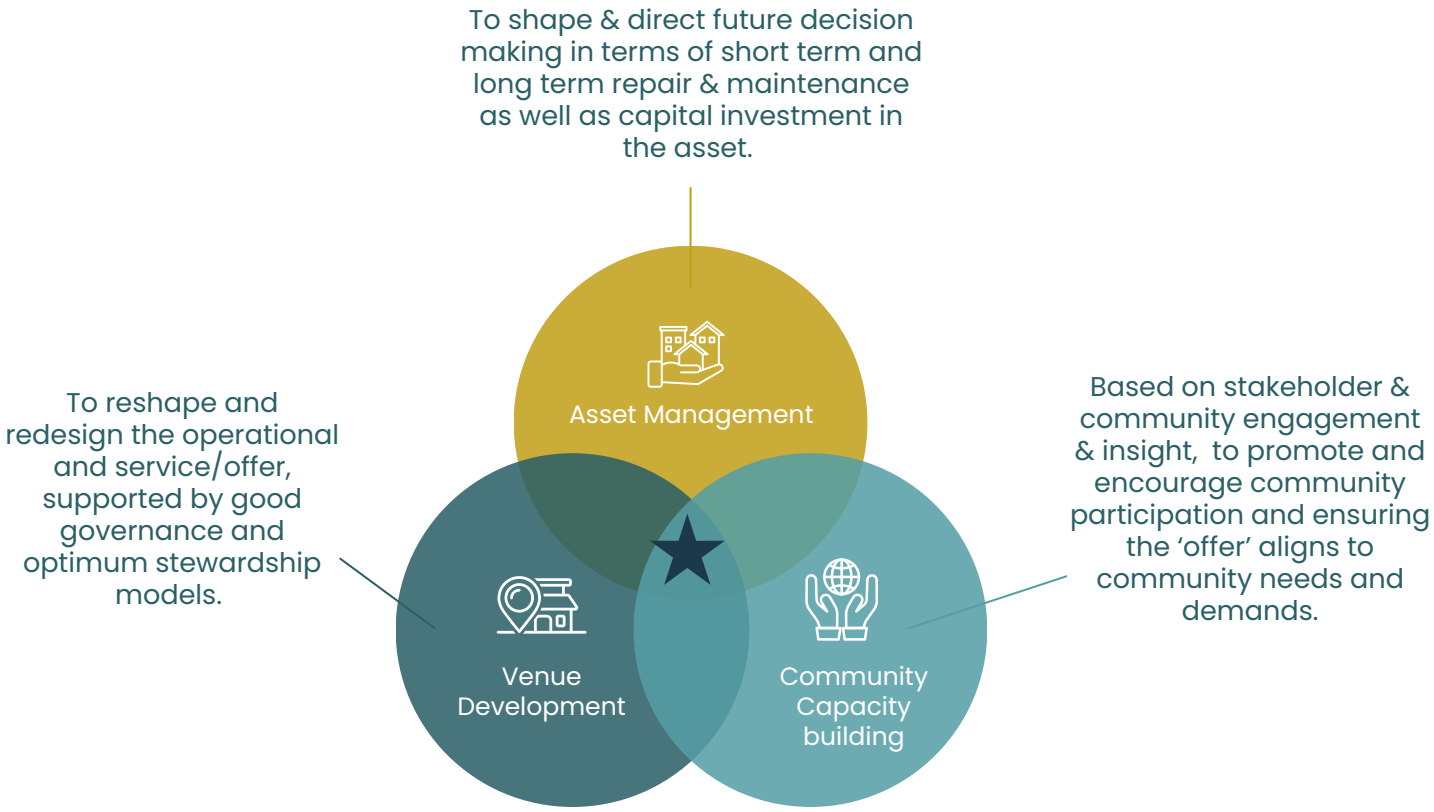
While the Council has already begun to invest in environmental enhancements in its assets, there are further investments that could be made which would both increase the efficiency of existing green investments and increase the use of green energy. This will in turn drive down longer term energy costs.



# RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS



It is recommended that the second phase of work consider these ideas further, with a view to developing a long term plan for the assets in the form of a **Community Asset Plan.** The Community Asset Plan would brings together the ambitions for the Community Asset, aligning future investment in the physical (building and sites) to the needs of the community, supported by an optimum operating model. It would support the development of business cases for asset transfer and set the framework for a future detailed business case for each asset.




The items listed above are some which collectively and individually could have an impact on the community offer and help to improve the bottom line of the community spaces. Once the holistic reviews are conducted and the outcomes assimilated, the Council will be in a better position to make decision about immediate changes which are low cost/low resource input and longer term changes which require additional finance and greater resource planning. The outcomes will help to inform the business case for any Community Asset Transfer.

In terms of practical next steps, it is suggested the ideas set out in this paper are considered (& expanded as helpful) and then developed as part of the second phase of this work. Stakeholder and Community engagement will be an important part of the next phase of the work to both build on the Community Asset Mapping work already undertaken and engage the local community.

It will be important that the long term plan for the assets is supported by a clear short term action plan, which identifies the tangible and deliverable steps that can be taken by the Council over the next 18 months, mindful of existing budgets, resources and LGR framework and timelines.

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Community Stewardship Solutions

CLARE CHESTER CONSULTING

# Bourne Hall, Ewell

## Draft Status Report

**December 2025**

Bourne Hall

EPSOM & EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL

# CONTENTS

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bourne Hall is a Grade II Listed community asset in Ewell, owned and managed by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (EEBC). It serves as a multi-purpose community hub, offering library services, a museum, café, event and meeting spaces, and access to extensive parkland. This Status Report consolidates current information on operations, governance, finance, and strategic considerations to inform future planning and decision-making.

Bourne Hall operates within a shifting strategic landscape shaped by Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and an ongoing Community Governance Review (CGR). These changes create opportunities to re-evaluate long-term stewardship models and explore potential transfer of ownership or management to a local organisation. Historically, the facility has required a significant council subsidy, previously around £700k and now £450k–£600k per annum. Recent improvements, including enhanced commercial activity and marketing initiatives have contributed to lowering the subsidy, though further work is required to achieve financial sustainability.

Operationally, the facility is run through the Council's Venues Community Commercial Services team, alongside linked support from Property, Car Parks and Parks services. Surrey County Council operates the library under a 1998 agreement, providing contributions to certain costs. The current staff cost base has increased, partly due to the expanded catering hub function. Governance is provided through the Community & Wellbeing Committee, supported by corporate performance and risk management arrangements.

Condition surveys and the Council's Asset Management Plan identify Bourne Hall as one of the highest-cost buildings in terms of future capital investment, with approximately £1.1m of works forecast and a wider proposed programme of £4.6m. Recent capital projects—including windows, roof works, solar panels, and a new playground—have been funded through a mix of Council capital, grants and s106/CIL contributions.

Bourne Hall plays an important cultural, social and wellbeing role within the Borough. Strengthening the community offer, diversifying income streams and improving operational efficiency remain core priorities. A Community Asset Plan will assess commercial opportunities, explore new stewardship models, align services with strategic priorities, and identify opportunities to maximise use of the site—potentially including relocation of nearby health and wellbeing services. These steps aim to secure long-term financial resilience while preserving and enhancing Bourne Hall's value to the community.

# INTRODUCTION

The aim of this Status Report is to collate information about the management, operations, governance and financial arrangements for the Bourne Hall site into a single comprehensive document.

It is intended to capture the 'as is' situation but also lay the foundation for a new high level business plan to be produced, which will consider ways in which the asset could be further optimised to deliver both a stronger community offer, as well as work towards becoming financially sustainable. Consideration will be given to options around stewardship models and this work will be built into the future business planning process.

This work is being done in the context of **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)** and a **Community Governance Review (CGR)**, with Members keen to explore opportunities for key community assets to continue to be owned and managed locally. As such, this will also provide a foundation for a business case to consider the potential transfer of this key Community Asset to a local organisation.

# BACKGROUND



**Bourne Hall** is a Grade II Listed Building, owned and operated by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) as a community space. The building itself sits within the wider site of Bourne Hall Park in the centre of Ewell Village and adjacent to the river Hogsmill. It comprises a number of elements:

### Bourne Hall
1960s Grade II Listed building incorporating a library (operated by the County Council), café, meeting, venue and event space.

### Parkland & Lake
Large, landscaped parkland and lake to the front of the building.

### Lodge
A period 2 storey former gate house located by the corner of High Street, north side of Spring Street and Bourne Hall gated entrance. Formerly let on a service tenancy from April 1993 for the provision of service accommodation and currently under refurbishment.

### Bungalow
Located in the grounds of the site, a 1960's single storey former caretaker's cottage, currently let on a lease and providing an active income stream.

### Car Park
Around 100 spaces wrapping around Bourne Hall, with cycle parking. Chargeable parking with a maximum 4 hour stay during the day and concessionary £1.50 charge after 6:30pm. There is also a nearby (chargeable) car park which can accommodate overflow parking for large events.

# BACKGROUND CONTINUED

The main Bourne Hall building is a unique circular building of significant architectural interest. It was designed by Fidler & Associates in the late 1960s and has been open since 1970. It was awarded **Grade II** listing status in 2015, with further details to be found on the Historic England register.

The building is home to the County library, a museum, café and social meeting space, as well as various halls, rooms and spaces that can be hired. The venue is licenced for weddings and events. Externally, the surrounding park is open to the public seven days a week and contains open space, a lake and walks, as well as a recently installed children's playground and outdoor gym.


## LIBRARY

The **library** is operated by Surrey County Council (SCC) by way of an agreement dated 18th March 1998 (see Appendix 1). Under the terms of this agreement, SCC (the occupier) is obliged to contribute a proportion of the running costs (outgoings), repair and maintenance costs and cost of capital works (so long as they directly benefit the occupier). There are detailed provisions in the agreement as to the process, exclusions and appropriate apportionment of costs. The agreement gives SCC the benefit of issuing either 3 months' notice to reduce the footprint of their occupation (with EEBC having the right to object) and 6 months' notice to terminate the agreement in full. EEBC (as freeholder) does not have the mutual benefit of such provisions.

# STRATEGIC CONTEXT



Bourne Hall is a key community facility within the Borough. The Council owns, manages and operates it directly, providing both revenue and capital support, within the following policy framework;

- **Strategic Priorities (2025-2027)**: the Council has recently adopted a set of core priorities in light of the LGR context. This includes a strategic asset review, with a focus on community assets, along with the consideration of options to transfer suitable assets to a new local governance structure.

- **Four Year Plan (2020-2024);** it is noteworthy that community facilities and venues such as Bourne Hall have been a priority for many years, linking in with the broader focus on Health & Wellbeing and Culture.

- **Arts, Culture & Heritage Strategy;** makes clear reference to Bourne Hall, recognising its importance and significance in support of the strategy's core objectives.

- **Health & Wellbeing Strategy**: focussing on improving the mental health & wellbeing of the Borough's residents, recognising the important role that arts, culture and heritage facilities play.

# STRATEGIC CONTEXT CONTINUED

In 2019 a **Business Plan** was produced (Appendix 2) to review the footfall and usage of Bourne Hall, with the view to improving room hire utilisation and reduce the amount of subsidy the council was required to contribute yearly. At the time of writing, the subsidy was circa £700k per annum.

The business plan considered four options, with option 2 being the preferred and recommended option.

**Option 1:** Do nothing
**Option 2:** Enterprising Approach – deliver a stronger and more diverse commercial offer to improve viability
**Option 3:** Tapered substitute - including internal remodelling and reconfiguration of the space
**Option 4:** Change the use of Bourne Hall

Unfortunately, the Covid pandemic meant that the facility had to remain closed for long periods and progressing the actions from the business plan had to be de-prioritised.

However, since then and post covid, significant progress has been to make changes and implement some of the recommendations, including the installation of the playground and outside gym. In addition, work has been done to drive forward income-generating activity and to strengthen the community offer. The subsidy (which is still significant) is now much lower at around £450,000 for 24/25.

in 2023, work was commissioned to produce a Communications Plan for Bourne Hall (see Appendix 3). This included analysis of current audiences and activity and also made a series of recommendations, under the following themes;

- Development of a **vision/new identity**
- **Rebranding** – to include new signage and cover all communications channels
- Creation of a **marketing role**

There were a range of more detailed suggestions provided, most of which have been taken forward and implemented, where budget has allowed.

# CURRENT OFFER

Bourne Hall offers a wide range of activities, services, events and access to resources, acting as a form of 'community and social hub' for local residents. This constantly evolves as new opportunities arise and creative ideas are considered, with a current snapshot including;

## Library

Operated and run by Surrey County Council. It is open 5 days a week by SCC (Tue-Sat) and on Monday is opened by the staff at Bourne Hall. It has a large provision of traditional and more contemporary library material and a programme of events and activities run.

## Museum

A free museum open 6 days a week, with exhibits, displays and regular exhibitions, charting the Borough's history through a range of medium and materials. Providing free access to schools and home-educating groups and other interest groups.

## Flying Saucer Coffee Shop

Open six days a week, with external patio space to take refreshments outside in good weather.

## Meeting, events & performance space

A wide range of different sized meeting space and event venues, including performance space and with ability to hold licenced wedding and ceremonies.

## The Catering Hub

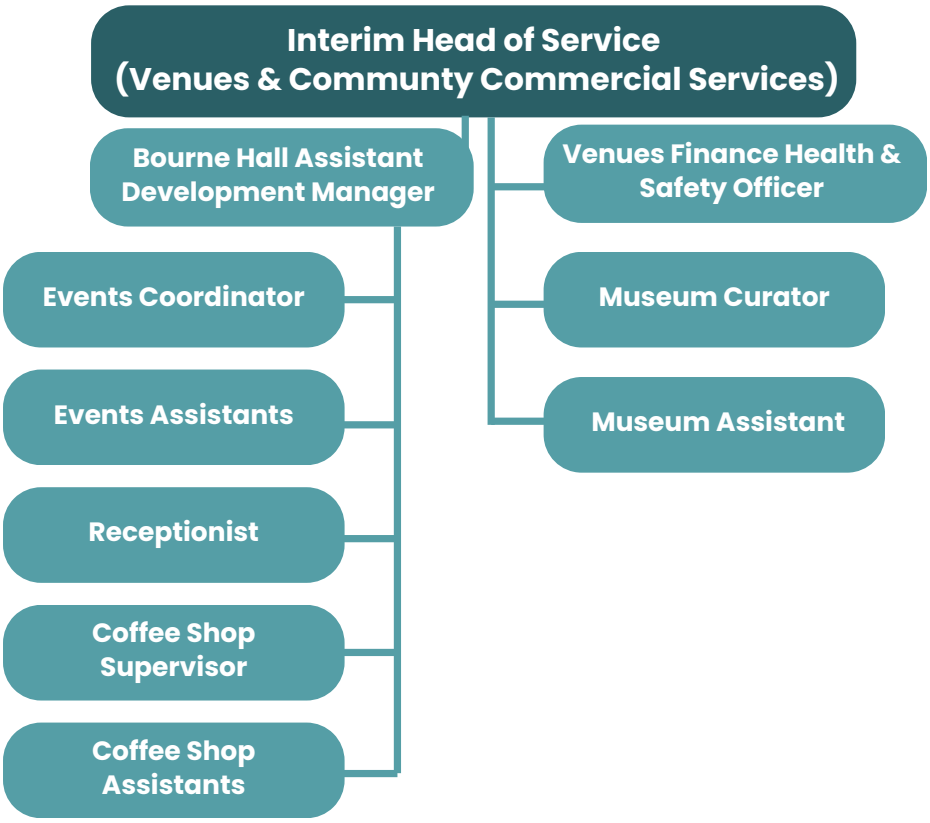
Offers catering services to larger events and also provides food to The Community and Wellbeing Centre. Embryonic work is underway to extend this offer to supports the events/café offer at The Playhouse with a business case required to understand the full extent of the opportunities available.

More detailed work, including a SWOT analysis will be carried out to look in more detail at the opportunities and challenges facing the facility, as part of a future business plan.

# OPERATIONS AND ORGANISATION

Bourne Hall is operated and run by the Council, with staff employed directly. It sits within the **Venues Community Commercial Service** function, reporting into the **Interim Head of Service**. There are links across to staff within the Car Parking, Parks and the Property team.

The following sets out the current staff structure (FTE equivalent not known). For 24/25 the staff salary costs were reported as circa £290k (probable outturn). For 25/26 the reported forecasted cost is circa £435k, most likely reflecting the inclusion of costs for the catering hub. A contribution to internal Corporate Support Services also forms part of the budget and this has been reviewed as part of the financial analysis work.




The museum has previously benefitted from volunteers, although none are understood to be active at the moment.

The library is operated and managed directly by Surrey County Council under an occupation agreement dated 1998.

# GOVERNANCE, RISK & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Bourne Hall is overseen by the **Council's Community & Wellbeing Committee**, with reports or decisions going to Full Council as required. The Council's **Constitution** sets out the formal governance and decision-making arrangements.

**Performance & Risk management** forms part of the Council's Corporate Performance & Risk Management process, with regular reporting in line with Council procedures.

While there have periodically been wider groups and partnerships in place around key themes (e.g. Museum), there are understood to be limited active formal groups in place at the moment, although partnership working takes place as and when beneficial.

The library is managed directly by Surrey County Council with all formal working arrangements and governance through County operations and structures.

# ASSET MANAGEMENT



The site is managed on a **Corporate Landlord** model, with operational matters dealt with locally and through the Head of Venues Community Commercial Services. Repair and maintenance issues, as well as capital projects are managed by the Property and Facilities team through the normal processes, with relevant officers from the Car Park and Parks teams liaising as appropriate.

The Council's **Strategic Asset Management Plan (AMP)** 2020-2030 sets out the Council's approach to the strategic management of its land and property assets. It includes a 10 year Planned Maintenance Programme (PMP), which is reviewed annually and indicates the long term financial cost, underpinned by condition surveys undertaken on a five year rolling programme. Of note;

- **Routine maintenance and repairs** will be a mixture of planned and reactive works, met from the revenue budget. Minor day to day repairs are covered under the facilities management contract.
- **Maintenance works** are currently categorised in three levels of priority and are undertaken as soon as possible, as budget allows.
- Approval for **major capital works** and improvements is through a project basis through the capital programme bidding process.
- Forecasts around **capital expenditure** will be mindful of emerging legislation, guidance and priorities around **Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES)** and associated work to continue to decarbonise the estate.

# ASSET MANAGEMENT CONTINUED

The AMP sets out an average annual maintenance forecast as a 'global' figure for the key venues comprising Bourne Hall, Epsom Court House, Hook Road Arena and Ewell Court House of £256,260 per annum, equating to £2.56m over 10 years.

The AMP notes that 'the buildings that will require the highest level of capital expenditure will be the Town Hall at circa £1.5m followed by Bourne Hall at £1.1m and the Epsom Playhouse at £0.87million.

Further, in the 2025 budget, it was also reported that Bourne Hall would require circa £1.1m of capital investment.

A breakdown on the current proposed capital works for future years for Bourne Hall, along with indicative costing is set out below;

| Works | Budget (indicative) |
|---|---|
| Heating and ventilation replacement. | £2,200,000 |
| Lodge refurbishment | £360,000 |
| Bungalow refurbishment | £300,000 |
| Roof covering replacement | £120,000 |
| Car park works | £75,000 |
| Lift controls replacement | £120,000 |
| Main Hall stage lighting | £150,000 |
| Colour wash external lighting | £100,000 |
| External decorations | £100,000 |
| Library toilets refurbishment | £70,000 |
| Internal refurbishment works | £1,000,000 |
| | **£4,595,000** |

# FINANCIAL MATTERS



The Council oversees and manage the finances for the facility through its existing Council financial management arrangements.

The Council insures/arranges insurance as required, including public liability insurance. Users of the premises for events and venue hire will be required to provide appropriate public liability cover as part of their user agreement. Purchase of supplies and procurement of professional fees and building contracts is undertaken in line with the Council's existing procurement and purchasing rules.

## Revenue

The following table is extracted from the Council's approved Budget Book 2025/26 and sets out the last 2 years high level revenue accounts, with a forecast for the current year.

It is clear that expenditure fell considerably from 23/24 to 24/25, but is predicted to increase again for the coming financial year. This includes a significant increase across all categories, including staff costs, premises, supplies & services and support services. Costs of capital charges have remained the same.

Total income has remained broadly stable, but is predicted to increase significantly for 25/26.

These figures have been reviewed and explored in more detail. There are some reported operational discrepancies that need to be worked through. However, the current published proposed revenue deficit for 25/26 is currently forecasted at £608k.

| | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual £ | Original Estimate £ | Probable Outturn £ | Estimate £ |
| Employees | 199 | 262 | 289 | 435 |
| Premises | 426 | 336 | 289 | 435 |
| Supplies & Services | 31 | 23 | 28 | 61 |
| Support Services | 119 | 43 | 3 | 149 |
| Capital Charges | 241 | 117 | 117 | 117 |
| **Total Expenditure** | **1016** | **781** | **789** | **1107** |
| Contributions from other agencies | (154) | (111) | (111) | (111) |
| Sales | 0 | 0 | 0 | (151) |
| Fees & Charges | (188) | (229) | (229) | (242) |
| **Total Income** | **(342)** | **(340)** | **(340)** | **(504)** |
| Contributions to (from) reserves | 29 | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| **Net Expenditure/(Income)** | **703** | **446** | **449** | **608** |

# FINANCIAL MATTERS CONTINUED

## Capital

Capital projects to date have included the following;

| Works | Completion | Cost (£) | Funding source |
|---|---|---|---|
| Patio installation | 2022 | 90,000 | EEBC Capital Programme |
| Windows replacement | 2025 | 636,000 | Grant funding & EEBC Capital Programme |
| Solar panel installation | 2024 | 116,000 | Grant funding |
| Playground installation | 2023 | 55,000 | s106 funding |
| Roof & insulation | 2024/25 | 220,000 | EEBC Capital Programme |
| | **Total** | **1.17m** | |

The current 'ask' for the 26/27 Capital Programme is circa £1.6m, with further details provided in the Asset Management section above.

To date, the funding streams to support revenue and capital activities have primarily been direct Council funding and/or use of Community Infrastructure Level (CIL) funding, with some grant funding for specific items.

Moving forward, depending on the future ownership & stewardship model, other sources of funding may be secured including opportunities for new grants and further income generation. This would be considered as part of a future business plan.

# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

A number of improvements around communications have already been implemented following the 2023 report.

Through recent staff changes, 0.25FTE is now allocated for Communications and Marketing activities, working alongside the Council's in-house communications team, as appropriate.

The main communications channels are currently the website and Facebook pages.

The website is currently being upgraded following system upgrades.

There will be opportunities to further enhance the Communications & Marketing offer going forward, and this will be considered as part of a future business plan.

# FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES



Moving forward, there are a number of areas to be considered in more detail, including;

- ‘True cost’ accounting to ensure full and transparent understanding of costs (existing and projects), alongside consideration of benefits.
- Further development of the ‘offer’ at Bourne Hall to move towards a more financially sustainable model and strengthen the community benefit.
- Review the facilities to improve financial stability and release any surplus space or land.
- Consideration of options around future stewardship models including Community Council, Charitable Trusts etc.
- Local Government Reorganisation context, which will see the formation of a Unitary authority, providing opportunity to reshape the arrangements with the (currently SCC) library function.

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Community Stewardship Solutions

CLARKEBRIDGE CONSULTING



# The Playhouse, Epsom

## Draft Status Report


**December 2025**

EPSOM Playhouse

EPSOM EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL

# CONTENTS

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Epsom Playhouse is a key cultural and community asset within the Borough, owned and operated by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (EEBC). This Status Report consolidates the current operational, financial, governance and strategic position of the Playhouse to provide a clear baseline for future decision-making and to support the development of a new Community Asset Plan. That plan will assess how the Playhouse can strengthen its community contribution, increase commercial viability and move towards long-term financial sustainability. It will also evaluate future stewardship options, including potential transfer to a local organisation, in the context of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the Community Governance Review (CGR).

The Playhouse occupies a distinctive building that blends three Grade II Listed former residences with a purpose-built 1980s theatre structure. It delivers a broad and diverse programme of live performances—comedy, music, theatre, opera, ballet, children's shows and the highly successful annual pantomime—alongside community hires, studio events, workshops and a developing community programme. Recent investment in new management roles, upgraded facilities and strengthened marketing activity has brought renewed momentum to programming, audience development and income opportunities.

Operationally, the theatre is managed within the Council's Venues Community Commercial Services team, supported by volunteers who contribute nearly 5,000 hours of stewarding each year—equivalent to over £84,000 of staffing value. The organisation benefits from cross-working opportunities with Bourne Hall, particularly in marketing, bookings and community engagement.

Financially, the Playhouse continues to require a Council subsidy, with the 2025/26 deficit forecast at approximately £360k. While expenditure has stabilised over recent years, income remains below pre-pandemic levels. A series of capital projects—funded through Council capital, grants, Shared Prosperity Funding and CIL—have improved accessibility, environmental performance and customer experience, including new lighting, solar panels, lift installation, auditorium works and foyer refurbishment. Further planned capital investment totals approximately £1.25m.

Marketing and communications have significantly improved in 2025, with a more proactive approach to campaign planning, digital engagement and audience development. Future enhancements will be shaped through a dedicated Communications and Marketing Plan, to be produced as part of the wider business planning process.

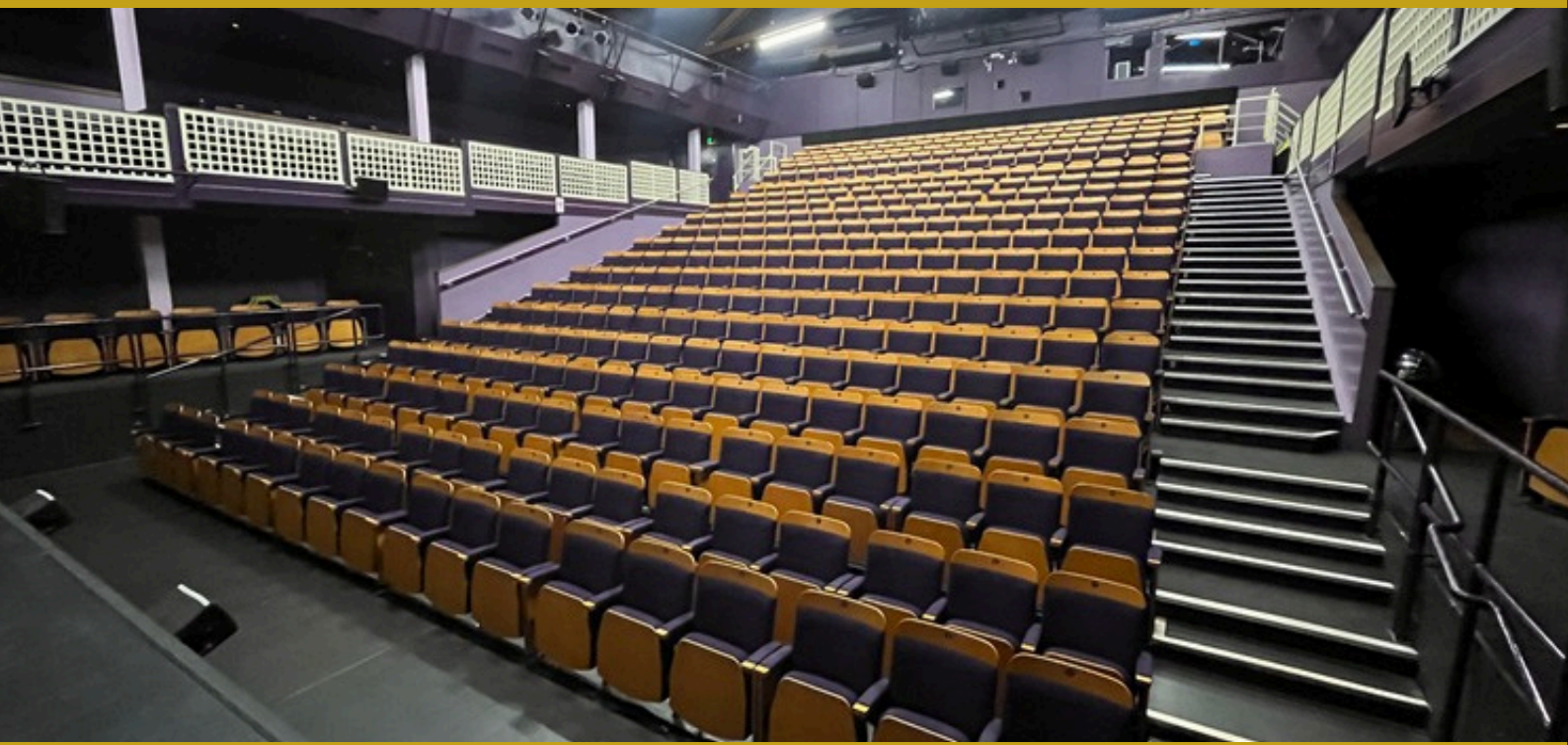
Looking ahead, key opportunities include broadening the Playhouse's offer, increasing commercial income, embedding community programming, developing a membership or loyalty scheme, strengthening collaboration with Bourne Hall, and undertaking 'true cost' accounting to fully understand operational and investment needs. These actions will support a sustainable future for the Playhouse and enable it to continue playing a vital cultural, social and economic role within the Borough.

# INTRODUCTION

The aim of this Status Report is to collate information about the management, operations, governance and financial arrangements for the Epsom Playhouse into a single comprehensive document.

It is intended to capture the 'as is' situation but also lay the foundation for a new high level business plan to be produced, which will consider ways in which the asset could be further optimised to deliver both a stronger community offer, as well as work towards becoming financially sustainable. Consideration will also be given to options around stewardship models and this work will be built into the future business planning process.

This work is being done in the context of **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)** and a **Community Governance Review (CGR)**, with Members keen to explore opportunities for key community assets to continue to be owned and managed locally. As such, this will also provide a foundation for a business case to support the potential transfer of this key Community Asset to a local organisation.



# BACKGROUND



**Epsom Playhouse** is a building of two halves; part of the theatre incorporates the frontage of three Grade II Listed Buildings which were previously residential but are now home to the theatres' bar areas. The remainder of the building was built and opened in 1984 as part of a wider shopping centre and multistorey car park development, all of which is owned and operated by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council (EEBC).

The Playhouse is operated as a theatre. The building itself sits within the wider Epsom town centre attached to the Ashley Shopping Centre and car park. The theatre comprises of a number of elements;

### Main Auditorium

The auditorium has capacity for 450 people, accommodated on tiered seating to watch performances on a main stage. There is seating and access available for customers with additional needs

### Myers Studio

The Studio accommodates up to 80 people. It has a small stage, providing a more intimate space for smaller performances & events. There is seating and access available for customers with additional needs

### The Member's Bar

This area is upstairs, accessed by a new mezzanine level and lift, in the listed part of the building and has a bar. This space is available for private hire

### Epsom Playhouse Bar

Located downstairs in the listed part of the building, the bar area is home to the main bar and kitchen area serving light refreshments both inside and outside of performance times

### Foyer

There is a large welcoming foyer area which provides access to the rest of the theatre and is home to the Box Office. This area is currently being refurbished

### Car park

The adjacent car park is for customers use on a pay and display basis with access to the theatre directly from the car park and Ashley Shopping Centre

# BACKGROUND CONTINUED



| | |
|---|---|
| **Ancillary Spaces** | The theatre has a number of ancillary spaces including changing rooms for hire, office space, storage, technical and lighting rooms, etc all of which support the smooth operations of the theatre |
| **Solar Panels** | 90 Panels were installed on the roof of the Playhouse in 2024, providing a third of the facilities electricity requirements |
| **Public Art** | At the front of the Playhouse is a statue which is now seen by residents as an integral part of the identity of the theatre. Named Le Spectre de la Rose and created by John Gilpin, it was installed in 1999, 15 years after the Playhouse opened. The sculpture is on permanent loan from Tom Merrifield and his wife. |

The theatre is an interesting building, blending modern architecture with 18th Century residential properties. Designed by The **Percy Thomas Partnership**, The Playhouse replaced the Ebbisham and Myers Halls which were Epsom's social centre up until this time and whose partial structure was incorporated into the development of Ashley Shopping Centre. The listed part of the building (47-51 South Street) can be found on the Historic England register.

The building is home to the theatre, a bar/café, a further upper-level bar and studio space, as well as various halls and ancillary rooms. Externally, the theatre sits on the edge of the ring road, at the rear or the High Street. There are a mix of residential and commercial buildings neighbouring the theatre.

The theatre is operated by the **Venues and Community Commercial Services** Team within Epsom and Ewell Council for the benefit of the community. It accommodates a substantial programme of commercial performances (live music, comedy, opera and theatre), including a highly successful annual pantomime as well as community hires to local people/community groups. In the past couple of years, there has been an increase in marketing and programming alongside physical upgrades to the spaces within the building.

Further works are underway to improve the uses of the spaces within the theatre including extending the food and beverage offer and at different times of the day and providing a wider community programme to engage and inspire local people (especially children and young people) in culture and theatre.

# STRATEGIC CONTEXT



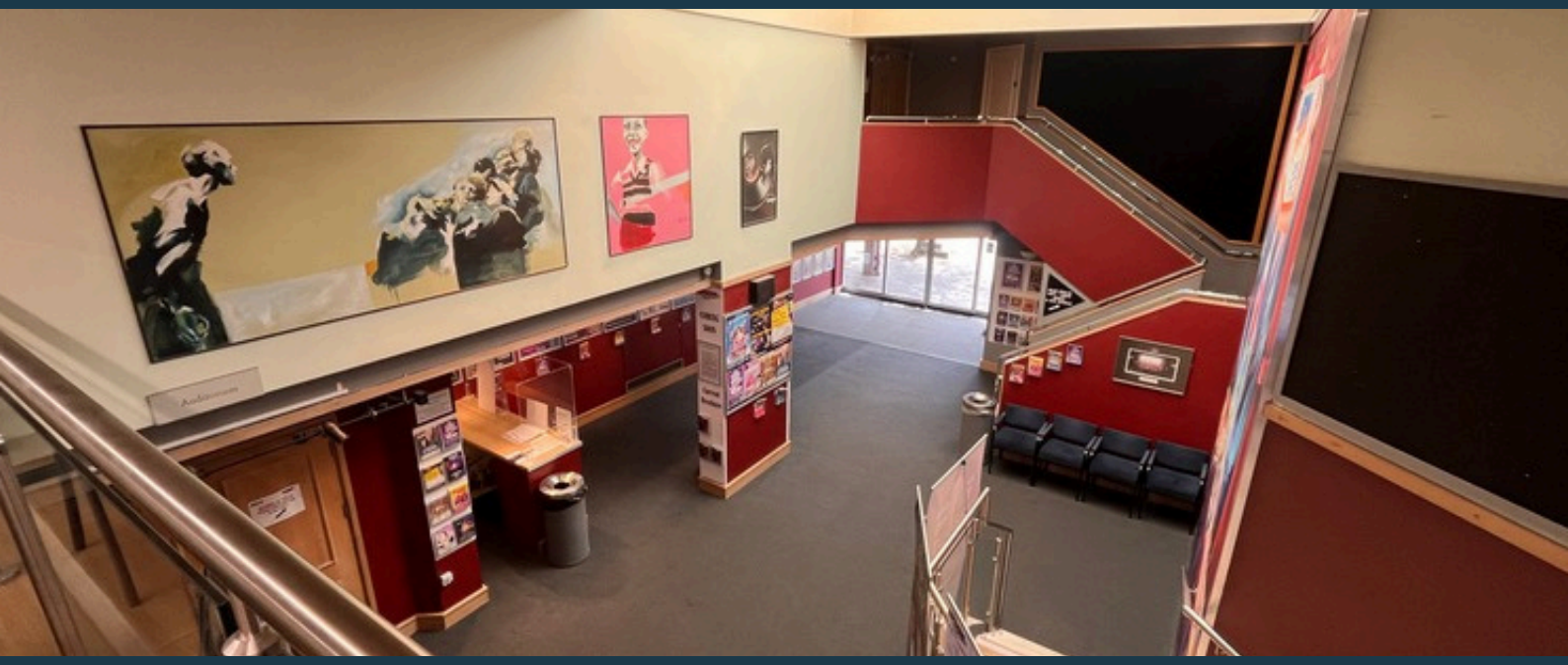
Epsom Playhouse is a key community facility within the Borough. The Council owns, manages and operates it directly, providing both revenue and capital support, within the following policy framework;

- **Strategic Priorities (2025-2027)**: the Council has recently adopted a set of core priorities in light of the LGR context. This includes a strategic asset review, with a focus on community assets, along with the consideration of options to transfer suitable assets to a new local governance organisation.

- **Four Year Plan (2020-2024);** it is noteworthy that community facilities and venues such as Epsom Playhouse have been a priority for many years, linking in with the broader focus on Health & Wellbeing and Culture.

- **Arts, Culture & Heritage Strategy;** makes clear reference to Epsom Playhouse, recognising its importance and significance in support of the strategy's core objectives.

- **Health & Wellbeing Strategy**: focussing on improving the mental health & wellbeing of the Borough's residents, recognising the important role that arts, culture and heritage facilities play.



# STRATEGIC CONTEXT CONTINUED

The Covid pandemic had a significant impact on the theatre with it being closed for many months during both lockdown's and then visitor numbers/bookings taking time to recover in the subsequent years.

Through the council's annual capital programme, the team has requested capital investment into the Playhouse each year to enable the facilities to be brought up to date, meet current accessibility requirements (e.g. lift to the first floor) and play its part in the Councils Climate programme. Collectively, these investments will have had a positive impact on the bottom line and reduced the current subsidy provided by the Council.

Alongside the capital programme, the staff team have worked tirelessly to increase bookings and put in place/trial other income stream opportunities.

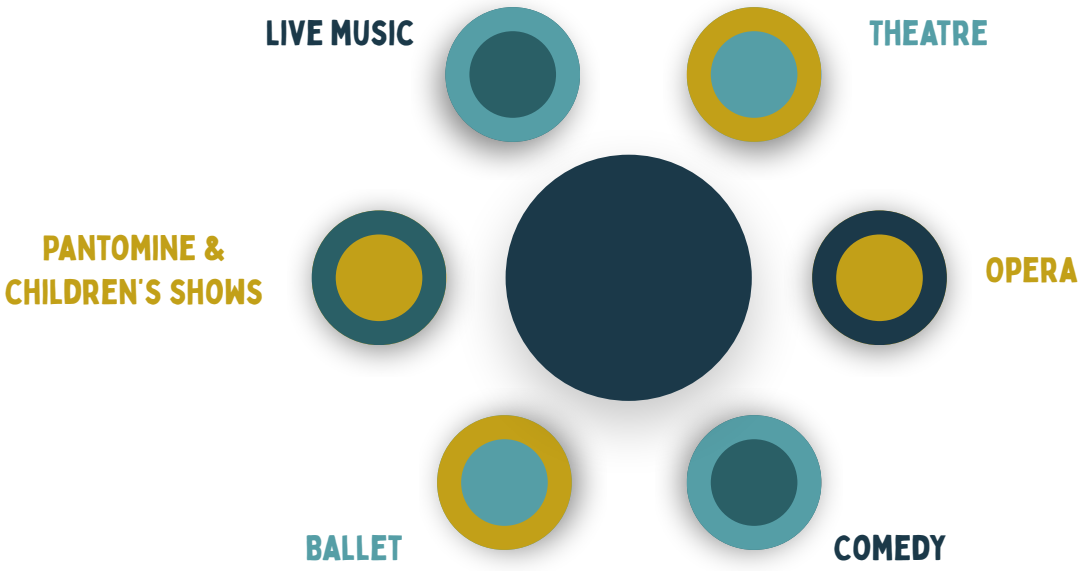
In 2025, a new theatre manager and marketing manager have started working for the Council to run the Playhouse. These members of staff have brought fresh energy and vision to the work of the theatre, energising the implementation of new ideas and programmes and placing greater emphasis on community programming.

Further work includes a closer working relationship between the Bourne Hall and Playhouse teams to cross fertilise ideas and share potential clients/customers where appropriate to do so.

# CURRENT OFFER



Epsom Playhouse offers a wide range of performances to the public, acting as a cultural and community hub for the borough and beyond. The team also provide reduced rates to local community organisations and dance groups who use the venue for summer schools, dance exams, performances and more. This constantly evolves as new opportunities arise and creative ideas are considered, with a current snapshot including;




In addition, the following are offered;

- Additional support including technical services, equipment hire, box office services, dressing rooms and rehearsal space
- Volunteer steward programme
- Emerging community programming offer, including Behind The Scenes tours & Theatre Box, the programme run weekly in term time for those aged 4-19
- Private hire of spaces, including enhanced promotion of the Myers Studio which lends itself to more quirky, unusual events and productions
- Host community projects together with the hire of the bar and café as a meeting, social and café space
- Commercial corporate days with meeting/training space, lunch and team building opportunities provided which link to the theatre's purpose

More detailed work, including a SWOT analysis will be carried out to look in more detail at the opportunities and challenges facing the facility, as part of a future business plan.

# OPERATIONS AND ORGANISATION

Epsom Playhouse is operated and run by the Council, with staff employed directly. It sits within the **Venues Community Commercial Service** function, reporting into the **Interim Head of Service**. There are links across to staff within the Car Parking and the Property team.

The following sets out the current staff structure (FTE equivalent not known). For 24/25 the staff salary costs were reported as circa £417k (probable outturn). For 25/26 the reported forecasted cost is the same (circa £417k). A contribution to internal Corporate Support Services also forms part of the budget and this is set out in the financial matters section below.


The Playhouse benefits from the support of volunteer stewards who are essential to supporting each performance through helping to direct customers before, during and after performances. Each performance requires at least six stewards for at least four hours and with an average of four performances a week (with a £16.90 G11 hourly rate), this equates to an equivalent investment of £84,364.80 a year and 4,992hrs of volunteer time to support the operations of the facility.

# GOVERNANCE, RISK & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Epsom Playhouse is overseen by the **Council's Community & Wellbeing Committee**, with reports or decisions going to Full Council as required. The Council's **Constitution** sets out the formal governance and decision-making arrangements.

**Performance & Risk Management** forms part of the Council's Corporate Performance & Risk Management process, with regularly reporting in line with Council procedures.

The Playhouse Team work with the Bourne Hall Team to share and cross fertilise potential bookings and complementary activities. The Interim Assistant Head of Service actively encourages the teams to engage and support each other wherever possible. This broadens the depth of local experience and knowledge, helps to ensure that revenue hires stay within the two venues and creates a natural support network and level of resilience.

# ASSET MANAGEMENT



The site is managed on a **Corporate Landlord** model, with operational matters dealt with locally (see Organisation and Operations below) and through the Venues Community Commercial Services. Repair and maintenance issues, as well as capital projects will be managed by the Property and Facilities team through the normal processes, with relevant offices from the Car Park team liaising as appropriate.

The Council's **Strategic Asset Management Plan (AMP)** 2020-2030 sets out the Council's approach to the strategic management of its land and property assets. It includes a 10 year Planned Maintenance Programme (PMP), which is reviewed annually and indicates the long term financial cost, underpinned by condition surveys undertaken on a five year rolling programme. Of note;

- **Routine maintenance and repairs** will be a mixture of planned and reactive works, met from the revenue budget. Minor day to day repairs are covered under the facilities management contract.
- **Maintenance works** are currently categorised in three levels of priority and are undertaken as soon as possible, as budget allows.
- Approval for **major capital works** and improvements is through a project basis through the capital programme bidding process.
- Forecasts around **capital expenditure** will be mindful of emerging legislation, guidance and priorities around **Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES)** and associated work to continue to decarbonise the estate.

# ASSET MANAGEMENT CONTINUED

The AMP sets out an average annual maintenance forecast as a 'global' figure for the key venues comprising Bourne Hall, Epsom Court House, Hook Road Arena and Ewell Court House of £256,260 per annum, equating to £2.56m over 10 years.

The AMP notes that 'the buildings that will require the highest level of capital expenditure will be the Town Hall at circa £1.5m followed by Bourne Hall at £1.1million and the Epsom Playhouse at £0.87million.

A breakdown on current proposed capital works for Epsom Playhouse , along with indicative costing is set out below.

| Works | Budget (indicative) |
|---|---|
| Front of house toilet refurbishment | £175,000 |
| Heating replacement & air conditioning | £530,000 |
| Flat roof recovering with insulation | £300,000 |
| Pitched roof replacement | £250,000 |
| | **£1,255,000** |

# FINANCIAL MATTERS



The Council oversees and manage the finances for the facility through its existing Council financial management arrangements.

The Council insures/arranges insurance as required, including public liability insurance. Users of the premises for events and venue hire will be required to provide appropriate public liability cover as part of their user agreement. Purchase of supplies and procurement of professional fees and building contracts is undertaken in line with the Council's existing procurement and purchasing rules.

## Revenue

The following table is extracted from the Council's approved Budget Book 2025/26 and sets out the last 2 years high level revenue accounts, with a forecast for the current year.

It is clear that expenditure fell considerably from 23/24 to 24/25 and is predicted to remain broadly similar for the coming financial year. The costs of premises and suppliers & services has reduced, with small reductions in the cost of support services over that period. The costs of capital charges have increased since 23/24.

Income has also decreased over that period, although broadly stable over 24/25 and the forecast for 25/26.

| | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual £ | Original Estimate £ | Probable Outturn £ | Estimate £ |
| Employees | 389 | 373 | 417 | 417 |
| Premises | 304 | 259 | 288 | 228 |
| Supplies & Services | 1160 | 852 | 852 | 856 |
| Support Services | 244 | 216 | 216 | 222 |
| Capital Charges | 79 | 101 | 101 | 101 |
| **Total Expenditure** | **2176** | **1801** | **1874** | **1824** |
| Sales | (1061) | (953) | (953) | (969) |
| Fees & Charges | (578) | (495) | (495) | (509) |
| **Total Income** | **(1639)** | **(1448)** | **(1448)** | **(1478)** |
| Contributions to (from) reserves | 0 | 14 | (29) | 14 |
| **Net Expenditure/(Income)** | **537** | **367** | **397** | **360** |

These figures have been reviewed and explored in more detail. There are some reported operational discrepancies that need to be worked through. However, the current published proposed revenue deficit for 25/26 is currently forecasted at £360k.

# FINANCIAL MATTERS CONTINUED

## Capital

Capital projects to date have included the following;

| Works | Completion | Cost (£) | Funding source |
|---|---|---|---|
| Windows replacement | 2024/25 | 50,000 | Revenue funding |
| Solar panel installation | 2023/4 | 61,000 | Grant funding |
| Foyer upgrade & mezzanine floor with lift | 2024/5 | 307,000 | Grant funding |
| Stage & house lighting | 2024/5 | 280,000 | EEBC Capital Programme |
| Auditorium refurbishment | 2023/4 | 160,000 | EEBC Capital Programme |
| | **Total** | **858,000** | |

The current 'ask' for the 26/27 Capital Programme is circa £685,000, with further details provided in the Asset Management section above.

To date, the funding streams to support revenue and capital activities have primarily been direct Council funding and/or use of Community Infrastructure Level (CIL) funding, as well as Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF).

Moving forward, depending on the future ownership & stewardship model, other sources of funding may be secured including opportunities for grants and further income generation. This would be considered as part of a future business plan.

# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



2025 has seen significant enhancements to the marketing and communications approach of the Playhouse, with the new Playhouse Manager and Marketing Manager providing impetus and resource to this vital workstream.

The Playhouse Team meet with the Council's Communications Team once a month to support communications activity and pool resources. The approach is working but a Communications and Marketing Plan would be helpful to help define and focus activity further to maximise exposure and revenues.

The Playhouse has a range of communication channels from its printed programmes, to highly visible posters within and outside the venue, website and social media pages. Further work is planned and there will be opportunities to further enhance the Communications & Marketing offer going forward with a high level Communications and Marketing Plan to be included in the future business plan.

The Playhouse website is functional and includes a significant amount of information. The team will soon be working with the Council's IT team to improve the functionality and content of the website. This will help to drive traffic to the website and ultimately result in further income generation.

# FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES



Moving forward, there are a number of areas to be considered in more detail, including;

- True cost' accounting to ensure full and transparent understanding of costs (existing and projects), alongside consideration of benefits.
- Further development of the 'offer' at Epsom Playhouse to move towards a positive financial position through increasing commercial income and strengthen the community benefit
- Look to further enhance the cross working between Bourne Hall and The Playhouse to mutual benefit and to conduct further work to add to the current community programming, securing external grants to underpin the costs of these projects together with how the Catering Hub can help to provide additional services to visitors of the Playhouse
- Consideration of an Epsom Playhouse membership/loyalty scheme
- Consideration of options around future stewardship models including Community Council, Charitable Trusts etc.
- Development of a Communications and Marketing Strategy.

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Community Stewardship Solutions

CLARE CHESTER CONSULTING

# Community & Wellbeing Centre, Ewell

## Draft Status Report

**December 2025**

EPSOM & EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL

# CONTENTS

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community & Wellbeing Centre is a key community facility providing vital support and wellbeing services—particularly for older residents and those living with dementia—within the  area of Epsom. This Status Report consolidates current operational, financial, governance and strategic information to form a comprehensive baseline for future planning. It also begins to explore wider opportunities as part of strategic considerations driven by Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the Community Governance Review (CGR).

The Centre operates from a 1970s building comprising activity spaces, a café/restaurant, hall, offices and a dedicated dementia hub wing. It also provides a range of non-statutory but highly valued services including Meals at Home, Community Alarm, and Transport from Home. Through a membership model and an extensive activity programme—from exercise classes and social groups to hairdressing, foot clinics and a low-cost café—the Centre plays a crucial role in reducing isolation, supporting health and wellbeing, and enabling older residents to remain independent. Operational management sits within the Council's Venues Community Commercial Services team. Staff costs have recently reduced due to the transfer of catering functions to Bourne Hall. Volunteer support exists but is inconsistent. Governance and risk management follow corporate processes, and no formal collaborative partnerships are currently in place.

Financially, the Centre requires a significant subsidy, with a 2025/26 deficit forecast of around £438k. Expenditure has reduced due to service realignment, but income has also fallen. Capital works undertaken in recent years have included boiler and freezer upgrades, and a further £490k of proposed capital investment has been identified for windows, roofing, kitchen refurbishment, solar panels and electrical infrastructure. Under the Asset Management Plan, the Centre has an average annual maintenance forecast of £303k.

The Centre faces strategic choices. Initial feasibility work is being carried out to review the services and enhance the community offer.

Marketing and communications are currently limited but will be strengthened through a dedicated approach developed with the Council's Communications Team. A strategic communications plan should form part of future business planning and sit alongside a new Community Asset Plan.

Looking forward, key opportunities include evaluating stewardship models, developing external partnerships, strengthening marketing and community outreach and conducting 'true-cost' accounting to inform future decisions. These steps will support both improved community outcomes and progress towards financial sustainability.

# INTRODUCTION

The aim of this Status Report is to collate information about the management, operations, governance and financial arrangements for the **Community and Wellbeing Centre ('the Centre)** site into a single comprehensive document. It is intended to capture the 'as is' status.

Furthermore, the document considers ways in which the services to the community could be better optimised o deliver both a stronger community offer, as well as work towards becoming **financially sustainable.** Consideration is also being given to options around **stewardship models**, and this work will be built into the future business planning process.

This is being done in the context of **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)** which has instigated the start of a **Community Governance Review (CGR)**, with Members keen to explore opportunities for key community assets to continue to be owned and managed locally.

# BACKGROUND

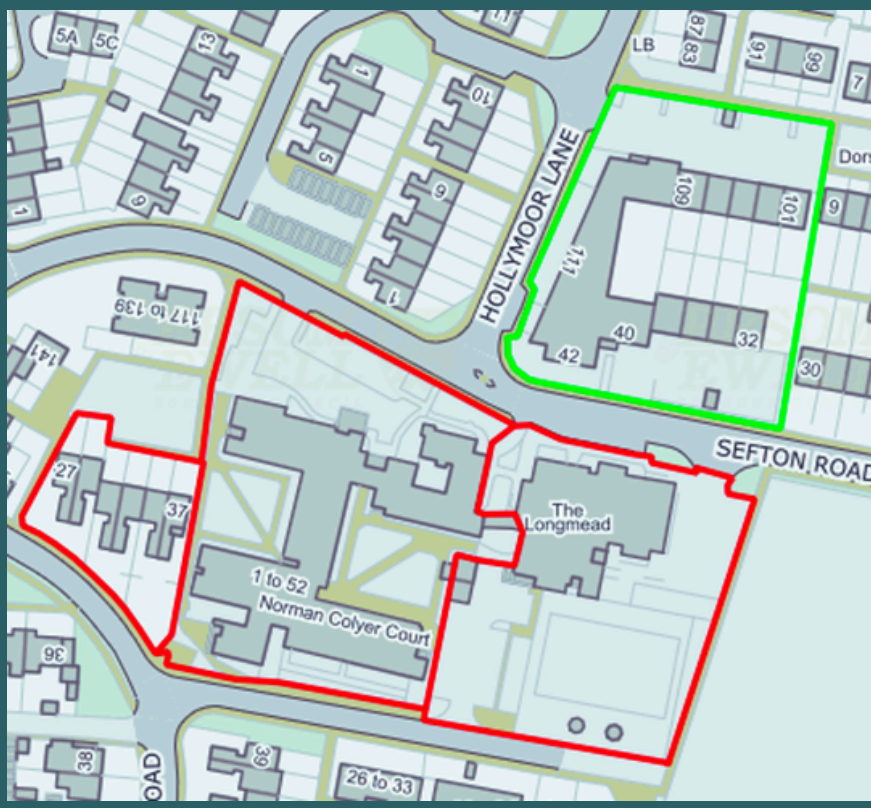


The **Centre** is a circa 10,000 square ft, brick build 1970's building accommodating a site area of approx. 0.47ha at the heart of the community, on the edge of Epsom. There is a small car park on site together with a Multi-Use Games Area, open for the community to enjoy. The building is physically attached to the social space of the adjacent Norman Colyer Court sheltered housing via a corridor, which is owned by Town and Country Housing Association (Rosebery Housing). There are six further houses thought to be owned by the affordable housing provider.

Opposite the Centre is affordable housing provided in recent years for local residents.

Within the Centre itself, there are a range of rooms and facilities used primarily to provide services and activities for those over 55, including the **Dementia Hub**. The Centre has a wider community purpose outside of the core times and is hired by a number of local groups and for private hire.

The building itself sits within the Estate, located to the north of Epsom town and comprises a number of elements.




The **Community and Wellbeing Centre** incorporates a range of spaces for community use including a restaurant/café area with associated kitchen, social space, hall, ancillary rooms/offices and spaces used for the dementia hub service. Also on the site is;

- **Norman Colyer Court:** a sheltered housing provision which utilise the facilities and services of the Centre
- **Car Park:** a small publicly accessible car park for the users of the Centre lies adjacent to the building
- **Multi-Use Games Area:** An open access facility for local people to enjoy.

# BACKGROUND CONTINUED

The Centre is home to a café/restaurant and social meeting space, as well as various halls, rooms and spaces that can be hired. There is also the Wellbeing Day Care (respite for people with dementia and memory loss) which functions in a wing of the building with its own entrance and is provided with its' own ancillary facilities, providing a calm and welcoming space for its clients.

A membership programme is operated at the Centre. Annual membership for those age 55 and over is £15.50 for residents of Epsom and Ewell and £31 for non-borough residents. This includes a discount on a wide ranging programme of activities, some of which are tutor led and some of which are led by the onsite staff.

The building provides an operating base for the following additional non-statutory income generating services operated by the council and which are believed to be highly valued by the community;

**Meals at Home:** tasty, nutritious meals prepared by our chef on-site and delivered direct to your door, five days a week

# STRATEGIC CONTEXT



The Community and Wellbeing Centre provides important and crucial services to the borough's residents and should be retained regardless of the long-term use of the Centre. The Council owns, manages and operates the venue directly, providing both revenue and capital support, within the following policy framework;

**Strategic Priorities (2025-2027)**: the Council has recently adopted a set of core priorities in light of the LGR context. This includes a strategic asset review, with a focus on community assets, along with the consideration of options to transfer suitable assets to a new local governance structure.

**Four Year Plan (2020-2024);** it is noteworthy that community facilities and venues such as Community & Wellbeing Centre have been a priority for many years, linking in with the broader focus on Health & Wellbeing and Culture.

**Health & Wellbeing Strategy**: focussing on improving the mental health & wellbeing of the Borough's residents, the Strategy recognises the important role that arts, culture and heritage facilities play in this agenda. It therefore supports the case for the services to be provided from Bourne Hall, which is able to promote a greener setting and wider range of facilities and services to complement that which is currently provided at the Centre.

# CURRENT OFFER



The **Community and Wellbeing Centre** offers a wide range of activities, services, facilities and programmes which support a vulnerable sector of the population, complemented by the wider community venue provision for the immediate community. The Centre acts as a community and social hub for local residents and residents in need. The Team is constantly considering how to improve, extend and maintain the current service offer to support local people whilst also generate income to underpin the Centre's operating costs.

The **Dementia Hub** provides a vital service for those with early onset dementia and memory loss, acting as a respite space for both the individual and their families. Additionally, the Centre provides a meal service through the onsite cafe, laundry and bathing service. The café provides affordable meals five days a week to its members and other users of the Centre together with a space to gather and socialise. With the cost of living having very real impacts on many people, this service provides lifeline for some who could not otherwise afford a healthy, nutritious meal.

Other regular services provided from the Centre include hairdressing and a foot clinic which are chargeable services but provide a vital 'one stop shop' for Centre users, alongside clothes, card and tabletop sales.

There is a large hall which serves as a space for activities and programmes to meet the needs of the clients and which operates a varied programme throughout the week to meet a diversity of interests including;

Chair yoga
Bingo
General Knowledge Quiz
Scrabble Club
Line Dancing

Outside of daytime hours, the Hall can be hired for private parties or by local organisations wanting to run their clubs/programmes from the Centre, operating in a more traditional community hall hire manner.

More detailed work, including a SWOT analysis will be carried out to look in more detail at the opportunities and challenges facing the facility, as part of a future business plan.

# OPERATIONS AND ORGANISATION

The **Community and Wellbeing Centre** is operated and run by the Council, with staff employed directly. It sits within the Venues Community Commercial Service function, reporting into the Interim Head of Service. There are links across to staff within the Housing and the Property team.

The following sets out the current staff structure (FTE equivalent not known) For 24/25 the staff salary costs were reported as circa 355k (probable outturn). For 25/26 the reported forecasted cost is circa £210k, reflecting the movement of the costs associated with the Catering Hub to Bourne Hall. A contribution to internal Corporate Support Services also forms part of the budget and this is set out in the financial matters section below.


A  new Senior Coordinator will be in post at the Centre in late 2024.

The Centre does have volunteers, but their support is inconsistent and therefore data to analyse their impact is not available.

# GOVERNANCE, RISK & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The services from the Centre are overseen by the Council's Community & Wellbeing Committee, with reports or decisions going to Full Council as required.

The Council's **Constitution** sets out the formal governance and decision-making arrangements.

**Performance & Risk Management** forms part of the Council's Corporate Performance & Risk Management process, with regular reporting in line with Council procedures.

The Council does not currently have any partnerships in place with other service providers to add capacity to the current offer. Services are delivered in-house.

# ASSET MANAGEMENT



The site is managed on a **Corporate Landlord** model, with operational matters dealt with locally (see Organisation and Operations below) and through the Venues Community Commercial Service. Repair and maintenance issues, as well as capital projects are managed by the Property and Facilities team through the normal processes, with relevant officers from the Car Park team liaising as appropriate.

The Council's **Strategic Asset Management Plan (AMP)** 2020-2030 sets out the Council's approach to the strategic management of its land and property assets. It includes a 10 year Planned Maintenance Programme (PMP), which is reviewed annually and indicates the long term financial cost, underpinned by condition surveys undertaken on a five year rolling programme. Of note;

- **Routine maintenance and repairs** will be a mixture of planned and reactive works, met from the revenue budget. Minor day to day repairs are covered under the facilities management contract.
- **Maintenance works** are currently categorised in three levels of priority and are undertaken as soon as possible, as budget allows.
- Approval for **major capital works** and improvements is through a project basis through the capital programme bidding process.
- Forecasts around **capital expenditure** will be mindful of emerging legislation, guidance and priorities around **Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES)** and associated work to continue to decarbonise the estate.

# ASSET MANAGEMENT CONTINUED

The AMP sets out an average annual maintenance forecast as a 'global' figure for the Community and Wellbeing Centre of £303k over the ten-year period of the plan.

A breakdown on current proposed capital works for the Community & Wellbeing Centrel, along with indicative costing is set out below;

| Works | Budget (indicative) |
|---|---|
| Switch gear & distribution board replacement | £100,000 |
| Windows replacement | £50,000 |
| Solar Panels installation | £60,000 |
| Kitchen refurbishment | £130,000 |
| Pitched roof replacement | £250,000 |
| | **£490,000** |

# FINANCIAL MATTERS



The Council oversees and manage the finances for the facility through its existing Council financial management arrangements.

The Council insures/arranges insurance as required, including public liability insurance. Users of the premises for events and venue hire will be required to provide appropriate public liability cover as part of their user agreement. Purchase of supplies and procurement of professional fees and building contracts is undertaken in line with the Council's existing procurement and purchasing rules.

## Revenue

The following table is extracted from the Council's approved Budget Book 2025/26 and sets out the last 2 years high level revenue accounts, with a forecast for the current year.

It is clear that expenditure fell considerably from 23/24 to 24/25 and is predicted to decrease again for the coming financial year. This is reported as being due to the transfer of the Catering Hub to Bourne Hall, not as a result of any changes in services being provided. Costs of capital charges have been reduced significantly since 23/24 but have since remained the same. Total income has reduced significantly over this period, but is presumed to relate to the transfer of the Catering Hub & associated income.

These figures have been reviewed and explored in more detail. There are some reported operational discrepancies that need to be worked through. However, the current published proposed revenue deficit for 25/26 is currently forecasted at £438k.

| | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual £ | Original Estimate £ | Probable Outturn £ | Estimate £ |
| Employees | 379 | 323 | 355 | 210 |
| Premises | 146 | 95 | 97 | 97 |
| Supplies & Services | 75 | 29 | 29 | 21 |
| Support Services | 154 | 253 | 253 | 160 |
| Capital Charges | 148 | 57 | 57 | 57 |
| **Total Expenditure** | **902** | **757** | **791** | **545** |
| Contributions from other agencies | (35) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sales | (212) | (143) | (143) | 0 |
| Fees & Charges | (85) | (169) | (101) | (109) |
| **Total Income** | **(332)** | **(312)** | **(244)** | **(109)** |
| Contributions to (from) reserves | 14 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| **Net Expenditure/(Income)** | **584** | **447** | **549** | **438** |

# FINANCIAL MATTERS CONTINUED

## Capital

Capital projects to date have included the following;

| Works | Completion | Cost (£) | Funding source |
|---|---|---|---|
| Walk in freezer refurbishment | 2023/4 | 21,000 | Revenue funding |
| Boiler replacement | 2023/4 | 100,000 | EEBC Capital Programme |
| | **Total** | **121,000** | |

To date, the funding streams to support revenue and capital activities have primarily been direct Council funding.

Moving forward, depending on the future ownership & stewardship model, other sources of funding may be secured including opportunities for grants and further income generation. This would be considered as part of a future business plan.

# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

A **Promotions Strategy** was put together for the Centre by the Council's Communications Team in 2025. The new Senior Coordinator will work with the Council's Communications Team to pull together further promotional and marketing approaches, once they are in post.

The main communications channels are currently the website and Facebook pages. There will be opportunities to further enhance the communications & marketing offer going forward, and this will be considered as part of a future business plan.

# FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES



Moving forward, there are a number of areas to be considered in more detail, including;

- 'True cost' accounting to ensure full and transparent understanding of costs (existing and projects), alongside consideration of benefits.
- Review of services currently delivered, with scope to further enhance the offer and improve financial stability.
- Building partnerships with local service providers to add further value to the existing offer, potentially generating further income or alleviating pressure on current council budgets
- Opportunities for coordinated and targeted marketing campaigns of the Centre and its services to meet local need and increase income to offset operating costs
- Consideration of options around future stewardship models including Community Council, Charitable Trusts etc.
- Utilising the Local Government Reorganisation context, which will see the formation of a Unitary authority, providing opportunities to reshape the arrangements for the benefit of all those in the borough

# EEBC 2025-2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: 70 EAST STREET

| | |
|---|---|
| **Head of Service:** | Mark Shephard, Head of Property and Regeneration |
| **Report Author** | Mark Shephard |
| **Wards affected:** | (All Wards); |
| **Urgent Decision? (yes/no)** | Yes |
| **If yes, reason urgent decision required:** | To facilitate an early exchange of sale contracts |
| **Appendices (attached):** | Exempt Appendix 1: Offer Report |

## Summary

This report outlines the progress made on the Council's 2025-2027 property related Strategic Priority 3 and recommends the sale of 70 East Street.

## Recommendation (s)

## The Committee is asked to:

**(1) Agree the sale of 70 East Street to the highest unconditional offer as recommended in the attached Exempt Appendix 1.**

**(2) Nominate and authorise the Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration, Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Property & Regeneration to take all necessary actions further to the above decision being made, as is necessary and appropriate, to progress the sale to completion.**

## 1 Reason for Recommendations

1.1 The Council has a statutory obligation under s123 Local Government Act 1972 to seek Best Value from its land and property assets.

1.2 The recommendations represent the outcome of the work undertaken to date (and reported below) demonstrating the Council's commitment to its s123 statutory obligation.

1.3 This report is considered Urgent to facilitate an early exchange of sale contracts taking place shortly after the Committee date. If Committee agrees with the recommendations above (and to proceed with the sale of the property to completion), then it is in the interests of both parties to exchange sale contracts as soon as possible. This provides certainty that the transaction is progressing to completion and commits the purchaser to the payment of a deposit. Completion of the sale would then typically occur 6 weeks after the contracts were exchanged.

## 2 Background

2.1 At its 6 May 2025 meeting, Full Council approved seven Strategic Priorities to be delivered in 2025-2027. The revised Priorities replaced the Council's Four-Year Plan and focused its strategic delivery in the context of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) timescales.

2.2 Full Council, as part of its approval of the 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities, further agreed that in light of LGR, the proposed office move to 70 East Street would no longer be proceeding.

2.3 70 East Street had previously formed part of the Council's income generating commercial property portfolio and now remains vacant, with no income stream being generated and vacant costs being incurred.

2.4 This Committee received an update on Strategic Priorities 3 & 4 at its 11 November 2025 meeting and (in relation to 70 East Street) agreed to:

- Declare 70 East Street surplus to operational requirements.
- Place 70 East Street on the market for sale.
- Report back to committee in January 2026 with an Exempt marketing progress report.

2.5 The above actions ensured the Council could continue to meet its s123 Best Value obligation by demonstrating that every opportunity was being taken to mitigate the revenue pressure caused by the vacant site.

2.6 At the time of the November 2025 S&R Committee, considerable uncertainty had been caused in the commercial property market by the late delivery of the UK Autumn Budget. For this reason, expectations for a swift sale of the property were reduced and replaced by the likelihood of regular marketing progress updates.

2.7 There has been no adverse impact on the marketing of 70 East Street and the building generated a high level of interest. Consequently, interim marketing updates were not required, and this report (supported by Exempt Appendix 1) concludes the sale marketing and proposes a sale outcome.

2.8 The Council's external commercial property agent concluded the sale marketing on 17 February 2026 with the submission of interested party written offers.

2.9 Encouragingly, 40 parties viewed 70 East Street at least once and of these, 13 submitted written offers. Conditional (for example, subject to planning) and non-conditional offers were received covering both a mixture of residential and owner-occupier uses.

2.10 The externally prepared Exempt Offer Report is attached at Appendix 1.

2.11 Please note the Exempt Offer Report is commercially sensitive as it contains the identity of third-party bidders, their respective offers and external offer analysis advice to the Council. To disclose the Exempt Offer Report pre-sale completion would potentially jeopardise a successful sale.

2.12 The externally prepared Exempt Offer Report is only available to Councillors attending this Committee as voting members of the Committee, to inform their decision making.

## 3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 Not applicable

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 Not applicable

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 Not applicable

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None

## 4 Financial Implications

4.1 70 East Street remains vacant with no income stream being generated and vacant costs being incurred. This includes cost of business rates, interest / debt payment and other maintenance costs of the building.

4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments**: The disposal of 70 East Street will remove an ongoing financial liability for the Council and generate a capital receipt that can support future priorities.

## 5 Legal Implications

5.1 The Local Government Act 1972 ("the 1972 Act") provides the Council with powers to dispose of land, including the ability to sell or lease land. However, under the 1972 Act, the Council must ensure that any disposal is for the best consideration reasonably obtainable unless specific exemptions apply.

5.2 The Council has a statutory obligation under s123 Local Government Act 1972 to seek Best Value from its land and property assets.

5.3 The property has been fully marketed by an external commercial property agent and Best Value is evidenced by the submission of offer bids as analysed in the Exempt Offer Report.

5.4 Legal services are being provided by external solicitors instructed by the Head of Property & Regeneration further to the agreement of the Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer.

5.5 For the reasons noted in paragraph 2.11 and 2.12, it is the decision of the Council's 'proper officer' for access to information to limit access to Exempt Appendix 1 to those voting members of this committee that shall be in attendance at the meeting this report shall be brought to. That decision relies upon the provisions of Annex 4.4 of the Council's Operating Framework; the grounds for limiting access shall be published within the agenda to this meeting in the usual manner.

5.6 **Legal Officer's comments**: Any relevant comments are included within the body of this report.

## 6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities**: The following Key Strategic Priorities are engaged:

- *Priority 3: Investigate future options for the existing Town Hall, East Street*

6.2 **Service Plans**: The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations**: None

6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications**: None

6.5 **Partnerships**: None

6.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications**: In the event a sale does not proceed, 70 East Street will transfer to the new East Surrey Unitary Authority.

## 7 Background papers

7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

**Previous reports:**

- EEBC 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities 3 & 4, Strategy & Resources Committee 11 November 2025

https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MId=1627

- EEBC Strategic Priorities 2025-2027, Full Council 6 May 2025

https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MId=1627

**Other papers:**

- None

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