

EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Monday 16 October 2023 at 6.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall

Online access to this meeting is available on YouTube: [Link to online broadcast](#)

The members listed below are summoned to attend the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Committee Members

Councillor Steven McCormick (Chair)
Simon Durrant, Epsom Downs Racecourse
Councillor Bernice Froud
Sarah Rayfield, British Horse Society
Alex Stewart, Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society
Nigel Whybrow, Training Grounds Management Board

Representatives invited to attend

Caroline Baldock, Epsom Equestrian Conservation Team	Nick Harrison, Tattenhams Residents' Association
Richard Balsdon, College Ward Residents' Association	Conor Morrow, Lower Mole Countryside Management Service
Jane Clarke, Woodcote Epsom Residents' Society (WERS)	Tom Sammes, Epsom Downs Racecourse
Bob Eberhard, Epsom and Ewell Cycle Action Group	Stuart Walker, Epsom Golf Club
Nick Lock, Epsom Civic Society	James Vincenti, Epsom Downs Model Aircraft Club

Yours sincerely



Clerk to the Conservators

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

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

No emergency drill is planned to take place during the meeting. If the fire alarm sounds continuously, or if you are instructed to do so, you must leave the building by the nearest available exit. You will be directed to the nearest exit by council staff. It is vital that you follow their instructions.

- You should proceed calmly; do not run and do not use the lifts;
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings;
- Once you are outside, please do not wait immediately next to the building, but move to the assembly point at Dullshot Green and await further instructions; and
- Do not re-enter the building until told that it is safe to do so.

Agreed by the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee: **17 March 2014**

Ratified by the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators: **22 April 2014**

Terms of Reference:

To provide a means of regular consultation:-

- (a) on the future management and control of the tracks, rides, paths and areas for hack riding;
- (b) on the rights of horse riders on Epsom and Walton Downs pursuant to Section 15 of the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 and the byelaws made under the Act; and
- (c) on any other matters affecting the use and enjoyment of the Downs by the public.

Membership (voting rights)

The Committee shall comprise:

- (a) two Council members, one of whom shall be the Chairman of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators (“the Conservators”);
- (b) a representative of Jockey Club Racecourses Ltd;
- (c) a representative of the trainers nominated by the Epsom and Walton Downs Training Grounds Management Board;
- (d) approved representative (and substitute as appropriate) from :-
 - (1) Epsom Downs Riders' Protection Association (or such other body or bodies for the time being as in the Conservators' view represents the interests of local horse riders);
 - (2) a representative of the British Horse Society;
- (e) such other persons as the Committee may co-opt on an ad-hoc basis for such period as the Committee may determine.

Quorum

A quorum of the Committee shall be three members including one member appointed by the Conservators and one representative of either the Epsom Downs Riders Protection Association (or such substitute body as may be specified under paragraph 3(d) above) or the British Horse Society.

Constitution document

The full Constitution of this Committee (detailing the membership, voting rights, administrative arrangements and other information) is available on Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's website at the following address: <https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=173>

Public information

Please note that this meeting will be held at the Town Hall, Epsom and will be available to observe live using free YouTube software.

A link to the online address for this meeting is provided on the first page of this agenda. A limited number of seats will be available on a first-come first-served basis in the public gallery at the Town Hall. If you wish to observe the meeting from the public gallery, please arrive at the Town Hall reception before the start of the meeting. A member of staff will show you to the seating area. For further information please contact Democratic Services, email: democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk, telephone: 01372 732000.

Information about the terms of reference and membership of this Committee are available on the [Council's website](#). The website also provides copies of agendas, reports and minutes.

Agendas, reports and minutes for this Committee are also available on the free Modern.Gov app for iPad, Android and Windows devices. For further information on how to access information regarding this Committee, please email us at Democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk.

Exclusion of the Press and the Public

There are no matters scheduled to be discussed at this meeting that would appear to disclose confidential or exempt information under the provisions Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). Should any such matters arise during the course of discussion of the below items or should the Chair agree to discuss any other such matters on the grounds of urgency, the Committee may wish to resolve to exclude the press and public by virtue of the private nature of the business to be transacted.

Questions and statements from the Public

Questions and statements from the public are not permitted at meetings of this Committee. [Annex 4.2](#) of the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Operating Framework sets out which Committees are able to receive public questions and statements, and the procedure for doing so.

Filming and recording of meetings

The Council allows filming, recording and photography at its public meetings. By entering the Council Chamber and using the public gallery, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings.

Members of the Press who wish to film, record or photograph a public meeting should contact the Council's Communications team prior to the meeting by email at: communications@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Filming or recording must be overt and persons filming should not move around the room whilst filming nor should they obstruct proceedings or the public from viewing the meeting. The use of flash photography, additional lighting or any non-handheld devices, including tripods, will not be allowed.

AGENDA

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 7 - 10)

The Committee is asked to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 14 December 2022 (attached) and to authorise the Chair to sign them.

2. MATTERS RAISED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS (Pages 11 - 14)

To consider matters raised by Members of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee.

3. MATTERS RAISED FOR CONSIDERATION BY INVITED REPRESENTATIVES (Pages 15 - 20)

To discuss issues raised by representatives invited to attend the meeting of the Committee.

4. ITEMS FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE CONSERVATORS

To identify any items which the Committee wishes to be brought to the attention of the Conservators at their next meeting, and nominate a spokesperson to present them if appropriate.

This page is intentionally left blank

Minutes of the Meeting of the EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 14 December 2022

PRESENT -

Councillor Liz Frost (Chair); Simon Durrant (Epsom Downs Racecourse), Councillor Bernice Froud, Sarah Rayfield (British Horse Society), Alex Stewart (Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society) and Nigel Whybrow (Training Grounds Management Board).

In Attendance: Caroline Baldock (Epsom Equestrian Conservation Team), Richard Balsdon (College Ward Residents' Association), Nick Lock (Epsom Civic Society) and James Vincenti (Epsom Downs Model Aircraft Club)

Absent: Andrew Cooper (Epsom Downs Racecourse), Bob Eberhard (Epsom and Ewell Cycle Action Group), Nick Harrison (Tattenhams Residents' Association), Steven McCormick (Woodcote Residents' Association), Conor Morrow (Lower Mole Countryside Management Service), Stuart Walker (Epsom Golf Club) and Samantha Whitehead

Officers present: Jackie King (Interim Chief Executive), Ian Dyer (Head of Operational Services), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), John Samuel (Interim Property and Regeneration Manager) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager)

1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on 12 January 2022 were agreed as a true record and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.

2 EAFRD UPDATE

The Committee received an update report on European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) infrastructure installation which provides improvements to information and signage on Epsom and Walton Downs.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **EAFRD funding.** The Committee noted that the Conservators had been awarded over £132,000 in grant funding from the European Agricultural

Fund for Rural Development for improvements to signs and information on the Downs.

- b) **Works.** The Interim Property Development and Regeneration Manager informed the Committee that the following works had been completed or were in progress:
- 150 way marking posts.
 - 25 finger posts with over 80 direction fingers.
 - 40 A0 size information boards.
 - 8 A1 size lectern information boards.
 - 15 oak litter bins.
 - 4 tables and 8 benches around the Tea Hut area.
 - 5 interpretive benches located across the Downs.
 - 2 sets of electronic posts at the mile crossing and Rubbing House crossing, which are able to separately record pedestrians, cyclists and horses passing through.
 - 48 warning signs and information inserts were anticipated to be installed by the end of January 2023.
 - In addition, the Jockey Club was funding an educational rubbing trail consisting of 12 rubbing plates depicting historic events on the Racecourse and Downs.
- c) **Repairs to damage / vandalism.** The Committee noted that damage to the signs was repaired by the Council's operational services staff.
- d) **Bins.** The Committee noted that the full quota of bins had been received and installed on the Downs. Officers would consider whether any further bins were required.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved:

- (1) To note the progress made on improvements to signs on the Downs.**

3 MATTERS RAISED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Committee considered matters raised by Members.

The following matters raised by the Epsom Downs Riders' Protection Association Member were considered:

- a) **Replacement of Hack Sand Track with Hack grass canter.** The Training Grounds Management Board Member informed the Committee that the new grass canter opened in October 2022 and had proved very popular with hack riders.
- The Committee received a comment from an invited representative that the start of the track had become very wet and rough following the recent exceptional levels of rain, which had led to a fall from a horse. The Training Grounds Management Board Member informed the Committee that the area was rolled on a weekly basis to maintain its condition, and that he had not received any complaints regarding it. The Epsom Downs Riders' Protection Association Member informed the Committee that hack riders were delighted with the new canter.
- b) **Condition of hack canter at top of Six Mile.** It was noted that the Council's Streetcare Manager and the Epsom Downs Riders' Protection Association Member of the Committee would meet on 20 December to discuss this matter.
- c) **Marking of hack ride across The Hill and hack post renewal on the Downs.** The Committee was informed that the replacement of hack post signs was underway.
- d) **Water logging of track at top of Rifle Butts Alley.** The Committee was informed that scrub clearance work in this area had been undertaken.
- e) **Update on Downkeepers' winter work programme.** It was noted that the Council's Streetcare Manager and the Epsom Downs Riders' Protection Association Member of the Committee would meet on 20 December to discuss this matter.
- f) **Traffic light phasing for pedestrians and racehorses crossing by bus shelter.** The Committee was informed by the Head of Operational Services that no issues had been reported with regard to the traffic light phasing in the past 3 months.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved:

- (1) That it had considered the matters raised by members of the Committee as set out in the report.**

4 MATTERS RAISED FOR CONSIDERATION BY INVITED REPRESENTATIVES

The Committee considered issues raised by representatives invited to attend the meeting.

The following issues raised by the Epsom Downs Model Aircraft Club (EDMAC) Representative were considered:

- a) **Signage.** The EDMAC Representative asked whether it would be possible for the Club to be referenced on relevant signs on the Downs. The Head of Operational Services informed the Committee that some signs would feature a map of the Downs including the model aircraft area.
- b) **Epsom Downs Model Aircraft Club (EDMAC) mobility impaired parking.** The EDMAC Representative asked whether it would be possible for alternative parking arrangements for to be provided for Club Members with mobility issues. Some members were having difficulties with the present arrangements. The Chair informed the Committee that this matter would be considered at a future meeting of the Conservators.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved:

- (1) That it had considered the matters raised by invited representatives as set out in this report.**

5 ITEMS FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE CONSERVATORS

The Committee did not identify any items from the meeting which would require verbal representation to the Conservators.

The meeting began at 6.00 pm and ended at 6.30 pm

COUNCILLOR LIZ FROST (CHAIR)

MATTERS RAISED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Head of Service:	Andrew Bircher, Head of Policy and Corporate Resources
Wards affected:	College Ward; Town Ward; Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward;
Appendices (attached):	None

Summary

To consider matters raised by Members of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Consider the matters raised by members of the Committee as set out in this report.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 Section 7 c of the Constitution of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee permits any member of the Committee to have an item included on the agenda subject to the item being delivered to the Clerk at least 10 days before the next meeting of the Committee.
- 1.2 Accordingly, this report informs the Committee of items requested for this meeting by Members of the Committee.

2 Items requested by Members

- 2.1 The following matters have been requested by the Epsom Downs Riders' Protection Association Member, Alex Stewart:

1: The Condition of Hack Canter Ride from the west at the top of Six Mile Hill

This area has suffered severe damage from vehicle use. This has worsened following the upgrades to the fibre gallop. Works to restore the surface for hack use have been promised over several winters but it remains hard, very rutted and narrow for all but horse walking.

2: Protection from damage to large noticeboards around the Downs

These lovely and no doubt expensive noticeboards continue to suffer from graffiti and paint damage. Are there plans to add content and a protective covering?

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 None.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None.

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None.

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None.

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 None.

4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 None.

5.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** Not applicable.

6.2 **Service Plans:** Not applicable.

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

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

6.5 **Partnerships:** None.

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- [Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee, 14 December 2022](#)

Other papers:

- [Constitution of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee](#)

This page is intentionally left blank

MATTERS RAISED FOR CONSIDERATION BY INVITED REPRESENTATIVES

Head of Service:	Andrew Bircher, Head of Policy and Corporate Resources
Wards affected:	College Ward; Town Ward; Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward;
Appendices (attached):	None

Summary

To discuss issues raised by representatives invited to attend the meeting of the Committee.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Consider the matters raised by invited representatives as set out in this report.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 Section 4 of the Constitution of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee sets out that a number of representatives will be invited to attend meetings of the Committee and may participate in the discussions (but not vote) on items. The Chair has agreed to permit invited representatives to raise matters within the terms of reference of the Committee and to be included on the agenda subject to the item being delivered to the Clerk at least 10 days before the next meeting of the Committee.
- 1.2 Accordingly, this report informs the Committee of matters raised for consideration by invited representatives for this meeting by Members of the Committee.

2 Background

- 2.1 The following issues have been requested:

Woodcote Epsom Residents' Society (WERS), Jane Clarke

1: Maintenance of the Downs

There is a need for a better balance between mowing and cutting long grass with providing space for wildflowers and nature to help biodiversity and tackle pollution.

**Epsom Civic Society, Nick Lock and Epsom Equestrian Conservation Team,
Caroline Baldock**

2: Noticeboards content

The information boards were mainly installed in the middle of 2022, and at the Consultative Committee in January, we were informed that the content inserts for these boards would be put in place by the end of the month, or in early February. However, the boards are still lacking in any actual information and are gradually deteriorating, with some now mainly notable for graffiti. This seems a shame when so much effort has gone into installing them. Please could we know why it has taken so long to procure the actual notices for the boards and when, realistically, we can expect to see them fully installed?

3. Spoil heaps of training track material

As the various training tracks have been refurbished, there has been a proliferation of spoil heaps of both old and new track material dumped in places around the Downs. The most common of these tend to be in the 7 Furlong car park, but there has been an unsightly set of spoil dumps behind the racecourse start for about 2 years now, and although the pile of old plastic railings that was dumped next to it was moved in the summer, the spoil itself is still there. In addition, a new spoil heap, somewhat neater, has appeared at the back of the triangle of grass south of the

If there is a need to keep this material rather than removing it completely from the Downs, could it be stored in the compound at the Warren with the tractors and other equipment? The risk of using the Downs as a place for storing training track material is that it could encourage encourage others to treat it as a dumping ground for other material as well...

4. Incorrect Signage

A new set of warning notices have also been installed. Although neat and well made, these additional signs do risk presenting a very cluttered appearance to the Downs, especially given the number of other notice boards that are already in place. The main entrance to the Downs on Old London Road now has 5 large

boards on the verges and edge of the Downs-keepers hut car park before the point where the road crosses the racetrack, and 5 more on the other side. It is not obvious why a single board each side would not be sufficient for all the notices, plus possibly one for motorists advising when the crossing will be closed for the night and one temporary board each side for race day information.

Additionally, the new warning notice boards are sometimes confusingly worded and inconsistent with the other safety boards that are also in use.

The most obvious inconsistency is in setting out the times during which dogs may be walked on or off their leads: most of the new boards say unequivocally that dogs are to be kept on leads before 12 noon (and after 12 noon when horses are present). However, other older notices state that dogs are to be kept on leads "during race horse training times" and further notices again state that racehorse training times are "Monday to Saturday 6AM- 12 Noon & Sunday 8AM – 9.30AM". Historically, the expectation that dogs will be kept on leads has been linked specifically to the risks when training is in progress, so many users of the Downs will assume that there is no need for a lead (as long as the dog is under control) after 9.30am on Sundays – and from observation that seems to be the case. However, those unfamiliar with the Downs may assume that, while there is supposed to be a restriction on Sunday mornings as well, it clearly is not enforced and therefore it does not really apply at any time. In the interests of clarity, therefore, the relevant new safety boards should at a minimum be re-worded to say that well-behaved dogs only need to be kept on leads during racehorse training hours – i.e. that the expectation does not apply after 9.30AM on Sundays. This could probably be achieved by screwing a small insert with wording into the corner of each safety notice.

As well as the wording on dog control, some of the new notices are also poorly located and have other ambiguous wording. For example, when a notice set well back and at the junction of several paths says that readers should not "walk, run, cycle or hack in the vicinity of this track", it will not be clear to many where and when exactly these restrictions apply – which track and how close is a "vicinity"? This is especially the case when the notice has no time restrictions on operation, and is next to a public footpath where walking is clearly permitted. There are several examples of this and some photos below attempt to demonstrate this. It would be sensible to review whether the wording of the signs is sufficiently clear to lay users of the Downs, and that the signs are sited in a way that makes it obvious what they refer to.

The danger with putting up unclear and poorly sited signs is that they will just end up being ignored, which could worsen rather than improve the safety situation.

Epsom Equestrian Conservation Team, Caroline Baldock

5. Lark Nest

Fencing is needed in order to protect lark nests on Middle Hill - For over 5 years no fencing has been put up for the larks to nest behind, with the huge influx of dogs and humans their previously safe places to nest have gone.

6. Trees

Please could 4 oak trees be properly planted on the margin of the gallop? They need to have proper protective surrounds and be a decent size. The one tree which was planted is not sufficient.

7. Signs for Bridleways

There are many signs for bridleways all over the downs which are misplaced.

8. Crossing Lights for Farm Lane

Will the agreed Crossing lights for Farm Lane be installed? Councillors both local and CC decided that there was a place for the lights to be installed. An engineer was sent out from the CC. Still nothing has been done.

9. Dustbins

The new bins have proved to be very difficult to empty and the doors don't close.

10. Fencing on Grandstand Road

The fencing along Grandstand Road is now in a terrible mess, with great gaps allowing access to the Downs. When is it going to be mended?

Tattenham & Preston Residents' Association, Nick Harrison and Epsom Equestrian Conservation Team, Caroline Baldock

11. Public Toilets

TPRA (Tattenham and Preston Residents Association) have asked that toilet facilities been reinstated somewhere on the Downs, following a number of incidents.

12. Location of Ice Cream Van

TPRA have had complaints about the location of the Ice Cream van. When it is busy children are standing in the roadway. This is not a very safe place for the purchasers to stand. Is there a possibility it could be moved to one of the car parks?

College Ward Residents' Association, Richard Balsdon

13. Sycamore trees adjacent to the Bridle Path running alongside Longdown Lane South

It would be helpful to discuss management and plans for Sycamore trees on the downs, specifically those adjacent to the bridle path running up onto the Downs parallel with Longdown Lane South, and the potential threat they pose to horses.

14. Volunteer cleaning of Grandstand Road Carpark

What plans do the Conservators have to recognise the tremendous job the guy, whoever he is, does every day, rain or shine?

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 None.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None.

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None.

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None.

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 None.

4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 None.

5.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** Not applicable.
- 6.2 **Service Plans:** Not applicable.
- 6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None.
- 6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None.
- 6.5 **Partnerships:** None.

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- None.

Other papers:

- [Constitution of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee](#)