

A message from our
Chief Officer
Dorah May Hancock



Welcome to our Summer newsletter.

**This edition is all about celebrating,
something we love to do here at ACEE.**

Do take a look at our Sunday Tea pictures of our VE Day celebrations, we even served spam sandwiches! Our George & Claire befriending story celebrates a wonderful friendship, they partied celebrating George's 105th birthday!

Alan is celebrating his life with our latest client story and at the age of 92 he has booked a trip to Kathmandu hopefully to fulfil a long-held dream to fly over Everest!

There is lots to celebrate when the new shoots of life spring up at our open spaces in Epsom & Ewell.

This is what we are doing at our 'In Memory Woodland' in Long Grove Park, Epsom: we are installing two benches and an information board and have planted Elm, Silver Birch, Rowan and Pine trees and vibrant bulbs including daffodils and bluebells. You may even spot bees a buzzing and butterflies fluttering around.

And finally, we wish to celebrate our dedicated staff here at The Old Town Hall, our amazing volunteers out and about in the community and most importantly the older generation of Epsom & Ewell who we can't thank enough for being a huge part of our community.

Happy Summertime everyone!



A Huge Thank You to **Epsom Allsorts!**

We would like to extend our **heartfelt thanks** and a **big well done** to everyone who took part in the Epsom Allsorts Hogsmill 5 on Sunday 18th May.

Over 200 women signed up for the 5-mile challenge, and a group of enthusiastic children joined in for a fun run—making it a fantastic day for participants of all ages!

A special thank you also goes to the club members, friends, and families who baked an incredible variety of cakes. Every type imaginable was on offer and thoroughly enjoyed by runners and supporters alike.

Thanks to the amazing efforts and generosity of everyone involved, the event raised a staggering £480, with all proceeds generously donated to Age Concern Epsom & Ewell.

We are so grateful for your support—it truly makes a difference in helping us continue our work empowering older people in our community.

Thank You

Sri Raja Rajeswary Amman Temple

We delighted to share that the hindu temple in Stoneleigh has chosen Age Concern Epsom & Ewell as their Charity of the Year.

We are incredibly grateful for their support and generosity. Partnerships like this are vital in helping us continue our work supporting older people in our community.

We're very much looking forward to attending the Chariot Festival on 8th June and celebrating this wonderful occasion together.

Thank you once again to all involved.



Our services for older people living in Epsom & Ewell



Information & Advice

Our Information & Advice telephone line is open 9.30am - 1pm, Mon - Fri. We provide free and confidential information and advice on a wide range of issues that affect older people.



Medical Transport

Do you need transport for your medical appointments?
Our team of volunteer drivers will collect you from your home, take you to your appointment and then bring you home again.



Home Visiting

Our Home Visitor can assist you with applications for Blue Badges, Attendance Allowance and much more in the comfort of your own home.



Sunday Teas

Sunday Teas are held on the second Sunday of each month
Afternoon tea and entertainment is provided.



Befriending

Our Befrienders are volunteers who spare an hour or two a week to visit a lonely or isolated older person.

Our offices are open
9.30am - 1pm, Mon - Fri.
The Old Town Hall,
The Parade,
Epsom,
KT18 5AG

For all enquiries please contact:

Age Concern Epsom & Ewell

01372 732 456

info@ageconcernepsom.org.uk

www.ageconcernepsom.org.uk

Registered Charity No: 1139652

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Celebrating VE Day at our Sunday Tea



Our Sunday Tea, held on 11th May at our usual venue—St Mary's Church, The Avenue, Worcester Park—was themed around VE Day.

The tables were beautifully decorated with Union Jack tablecloths, serviettes, and plates, creating a festive wartime atmosphere. Each guest received a flag to wave along with the music and a bowler hat to wear, adding to the fun.

Entertainment was provided by Dickie and Nigel, who played the guitar and ukulele. They were joined by friends who sang and played tambourines and other instruments. Quite a few of our clients joined in as well, playing instruments handed out by Dickie and Nigel. Throughout the hour-long performance, Nigel moved from table to table, holding the microphone for guests to sing along—and everyone joined in enthusiastically.

Nigel also handed out songbooks with the lyrics to all the songs. The programme featured a delightful mix of music—popular, new, old, and wartime favourites—ending on a poignant note with *We'll Meet Again*.

The VE Day-themed buffet included sandwiches with spam, ham, tuna, egg mayonnaise, and cheese, followed by a selection of homemade cakes: fruit cake, lemon cake, and chocolate slices.

A wonderful time was had by all, and everyone went home with full hearts and fond memories.

Written by Gloria Fox



A special thanks to one of our Sunday Tea Volunteers, Vicky Burgess for these lovely photographs.

Client News



Our Men's Club recently enjoyed a lovely afternoon at the Horton Golf Club. Good food, company and conversation was enjoyed by all.



Dates for the Diary

Sat 20th September - Epsom Sounds Festival

A new mini music festival is coming to Epsom & Ewell and all funds raised will be in aid of **Age Concern Epsom & Ewell**.

Friday 3rd October - Quiz Night!

Our annual event is back with our hugely entertaining quiz master, Eber Kington, at the helm. This will be a great night promising lots of laughter, with pizza and a free drink in with the ticket price. You can book single tickets or as a team via our website.

Friday 5th December - Candlelit Christmas Concert

Our annual festive concert takes part in the beautiful setting of Christ Church, Epsom. With a stellar line up ensured, this wonderful event promises to get you into the festive spirit. Suitable for all ages.

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Please check our What's On pages of our website for updates.

www.ageconcernepsom.org.uk

Please see our What's On section for further details about upcoming events



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about Attendance Allowance

If you (or a family member) live in the Borough of Epsom and Ewell and have reached state pension age and have long-term physical or mental health issues or a disability that significantly affects your daily living, with care or supervision needs, which you have had for more than 6 months* and which are likely to be ongoing, you may be eligible to receive the **Attendance Allowance**. It's tax free and not means-tested and is based on the care you need, not what you're getting. *[You cannot claim Attendance Allowance if you already receive Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment]*

Eligibility

You can apply for Attendance Allowance for free, by downloading the forms from the GOV.UK website Attendance Allowance claim form - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) or by requesting these from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) on 0800 731 0122.

If you need help with the application our Home Visitor will come out and complete the forms for you. This takes about 2 hours. There is a small charge for this service.

Attendance Allowance covers a range of conditions such as physical disabilities, illnesses, dementia and mental health issues and sensory impairments (more details on the DWP GOV.UK website).

There are some tasks you may find difficult and might need assistance with: personal care, washing and bathing, using the toilet; help with eating and drinking or cutting up food; help with dressing; assistance getting in and out of bed; help to keep yourself safe and to avoid accidents. Also note if things take you a long time or make you breathless or tired; and any equipment or aids you may need. All this information will help DWP with their decision - this takes about 12 weeks.

"She took all the worry away about filling in forms"



Increased needs or turned down previously?

If your previous application has been refused it doesn't mean that you can't make another application, especially if your needs have increased. The same applies if you receive the lower rate allowance and you now feel you should qualify for the higher rate (both day and night care needs). As long as you have had the condition or disability for more than 6 months*.

The allowance may help you to keep living independently



Contact us

If you'd like Age Concern Epsom and Ewell to help you with your application, please call our Information and Advice Helpdesk on **01372 732456**, between 9.30am - 1.00pm Monday to Friday, to ask any questions and to book and pay for your appointment.

We can also help with arranging a Home Visit to apply for a Blue Badge or Pension Credit. We can also support you with information and advice on issues you may need help with or with referring or signposting you to other services.

**Your application is fast tracked if you have a terminal illness / SRI form*

Celebrating Our Volunteers

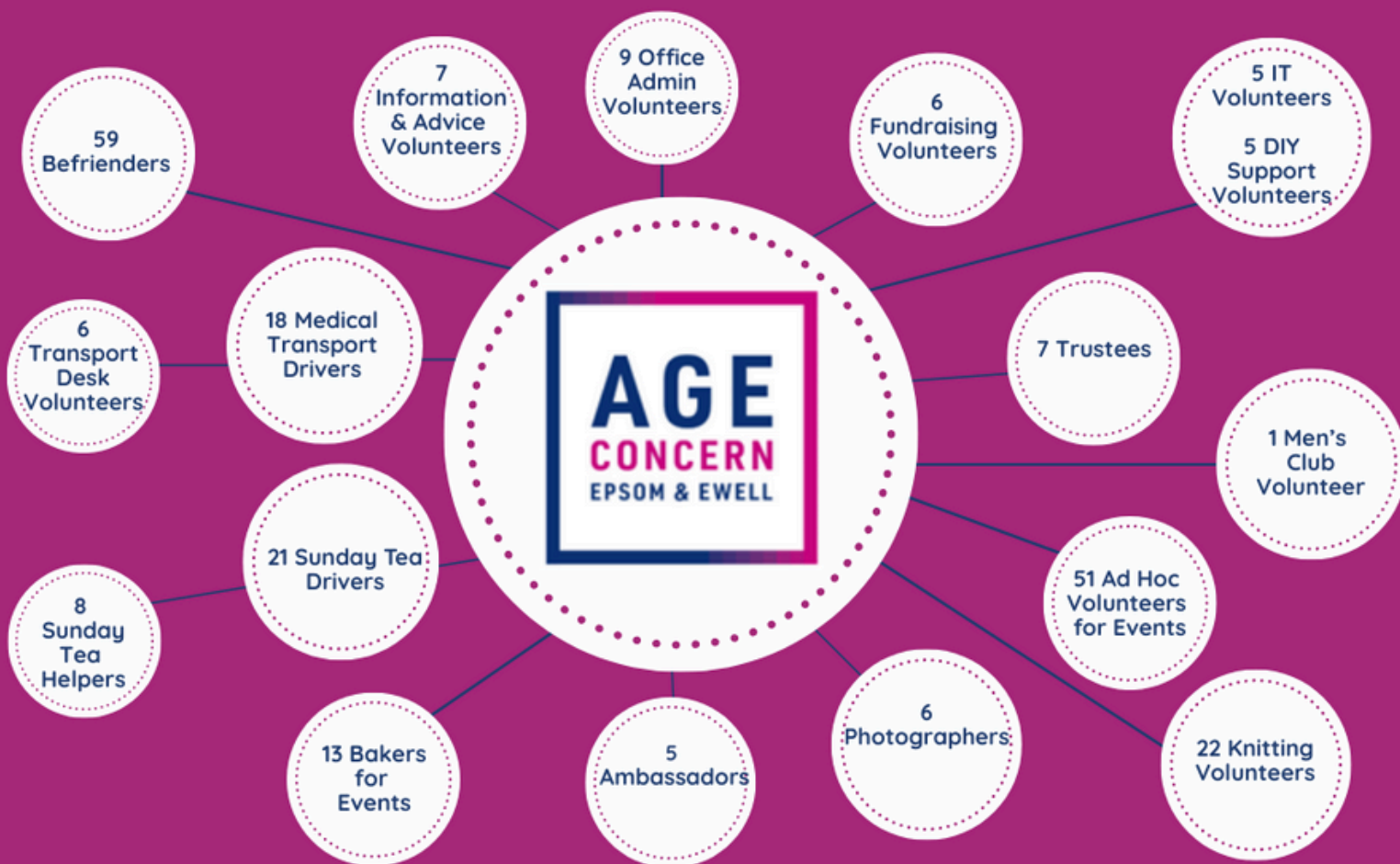
VOLUNTEERS'
WEEK

Thank You, Volunteers

#VolunteersWeek

Volunteers' Week is an annual UK wide campaign during the first week of June to recognise and celebrate the amazing contributions that volunteers make to their communities.

As a small local independent charity we really couldn't achieve what we do without the support of our volunteers. Volunteers' Week is a special time when we say a **heartfelt thank you** to all our volunteers who do so much throughout the year.



We are lucky to have so many local people willing to give their time in so many different ways to support the older generation in Epsom & Ewell.

A huge thank you to each and every one of our 189 volunteers,
many of whom take on more than one role!

If you are interested in volunteering for Age Concern Epsom & Ewell please
contact our Volunteers' Coordinator, Sue Brinsden on 01372 732 458

Email: sue.brinsden@ageconcernepsom.org.uk

Volunteering Update

George & Claire – A Befriending Story

George and Claire's friendship is a wonderful example of the difference Age Concern Epsom & Ewell's befriending service makes. When George, who is 105 and lives alone with limited social contact, was matched with Claire through Age Concern Epsom & Ewell in 2023, neither of them could have imagined how meaningful their connection would become.

Age Concern Epsom & Ewell's befriending service provides companionship and emotional support to older people who may be feeling lonely or isolated. Volunteers like Claire are carefully matched with individuals like George based on shared interests or backgrounds, and they build relationships through regular home visits and friendly chats.

Each week, Claire brings joy and companionship to George, helping him feel more connected and appreciated. Their conversations are filled with laughter, shared stories, and mutual respect—reminding both of them of the power of human connection. George, with his fascinating past as a decorated war veteran and his lively, fun personality, always has interesting tales to share, making their time together something really special.

"Claire's visits bring a real spark to my week. We laugh, we chat, and it's just lovely to have someone to share life's stories with." – George

"George is such a character, full of mischief and fun. Spending time with him is so rewarding - we're always learning something from each other." – Claire

What started as a simple act of kindness has grown into a genuine friendship that enriches both of their lives.



Going the extra mile...

Dickie has been one of our invaluable Medical Transport Drivers for over three years, taking clients in his own vehicle to their medical appointments, waiting for them at the hospital or clinic and then safely driving them home again.

Our clients really appreciate a personal service like this which helps take away some of the inevitable stress of attending hospital appointments.

Dickie doesn't stop at that though. He is also a talented musician and with his friend Nigel recently entertained clients at our VE Day themed Sunday Tea.



Dickie performing at our recent Sunday Tea



Drivers Wanted!



If you have a few hours to spare and like chatting to people this may be an ideal role for you.

We need medical transport drivers and monthly drivers for our Sunday Teas.

*** Mileage is paid at 50p per mile**

** DBS check is required*

**For further information please contact our Volunteers' Coordinator, Sue Brinsden,
Sue.Brinsden@ageconcernepsom.org.uk
Tel: 01372 732 458**

Volunteering & Other News



Join Us as a Charity Ambassador

Would you like to support a great cause in a way that fits around your life?

We're looking for local Charity Ambassadors to offer ad hoc, flexible support in your own time. This is a role perfect for people who are out and about in their communities and want to help make a difference.

What does it involve?

- Keeping an eye out for our brochures and posters at local GP surgeries, pharmacies, community centres, libraries, and other relevant venues.
- Noting where materials are missing or need replenishing.
- Looking out for new opportunities to display our promotional materials in your area.
- Reporting your observations back to our team.

You'll be our eyes and ears on the ground, helping to raise awareness of our services and ensuring we reach the people who need us most.

This is a great opportunity to support a charity in a low-commitment, high-impact way, and to stay connected with your community.

Interested? We'd love to hear from you!

Please get in touch with

Marie Thackwell for further details:

marie.thackwell@ageconcernepsom.org.uk

Getting creative for the festive season!

Apologies for mentioning the festive season when summer has just begun — but we know that many of you love to knit all year round!

Whether it's a relaxing hobby or a way to give back, your incredible efforts help us prepare well in advance for the busy season. So if you're already thinking about making things for the festive period then we'd love to have your support.

For further details please contact:

Marie Thackwell

marie.thackwell@ageconcernepsom.org.uk

Tel: 01372 732 451



HELPING OLDER PEOPLE FEEL LESS ALONE

We are delighted to be selected as one of the charities taking part in the Co op UK Local Community Fund which will run until October 2025, to find out more about this scheme and to choose us as your cause, please visit

<https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/88540>



Invite us for a chat. We love visiting local community groups, retirement homes, care homes or housing associations to talk all about our charity's fantastic services and support.



'In Memory Woodland'

Long Grove Park, Epsom



Welcome to this Special Feature on Age Concern Epsom & Ewell's 'In Memory Woodland' at Long Grove Park

I'm excited to introduce you to our growing 'In Memory Woodland', a beautiful new space created in Long Grove Park, Epsom. This newly planted woodland offers a peaceful place for reflection and connection - a sanctuary where you can remember loved ones or simply enjoy a quiet moment surrounded by nature.

As someone who often walks my dog through this park, I can say it's a hidden gem - a truly calming spot that more people should discover and enjoy.

Over the coming pages, you'll learn more about this woodland, its planting and unique Lifecycle approach. You'll also see the

incredible work of our illustrator Clair, whose beautiful illustrations bring the woodland to life. And who knows - by the end, I hope you might just be inspired to visit yourself.

The Age Concern Epsom & Ewell 'In Memory Woodland' has been made possible thanks to funding from Surrey County Council's Your Fund Surrey, the generous provision of space by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, and the thoughtful design and planting of the Epsom & Ewell Tree Advisory Board.

I hope you enjoy discovering more!

Dorah May Hancock
Chief Officer



Meet Clair – Illustrator Extraordinaire

Sarah Prowse, Giving Coordinator at Age Concern, first met Clair Rossiter at Stoneleigh Library during a talk on her work as an illustrator. The moment Sarah saw Clair's beautiful artwork, she knew she was the perfect person to bring the 'In Memory Woodland' to life. Clair's ability to capture atmosphere, detail, and warmth with such a distinctive style felt like magic on the page.

Based locally in Sutton, Clair has worked with a wide range of clients across licensing, children's publishing, and editorial illustration. She loves map-making, hand lettering, and food illustration. Her process begins with a big A3 sketchbook and a 5B pencil, experimenting with gouache, ink, and coloured pencils before piecing everything together digitally - usually surrounded by a cheerful mess of paint pots and snacks!

When approached about the 'In Memory Woodland', Clair was full of ideas and enthusiasm to bring the space to life. She immediately understood the project's heart and set out to create illustrations that would help the community envision what the woodland will become.



Bringing the woodland to life

Working closely with EETAB's planting layouts, Clair has brought the woodland to life through a beautifully illustrated map and a series of enchanting supporting artworks.

Her illustrations celebrate the rich variety of trees and bulbs chosen for the space, alongside glimpses of local wildlife - mammals, birds, and insects - that will call it home. With warmth and imagination, she has captured a vision of a thriving, inclusive woodland filled with people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities - walking, playing, reflecting and connecting with nature in a space created for the whole community to enjoy.



Meet Howard – Tree & Nature Champion

Howard Gregory, Chair of Epsom and Ewell Tree Advisory Board (EETAB) and Elms over Epsom is passionate about restoring, improving, and future-proofing habitats. He has brought a visionary approach to the creation of Age Concern Epsom & Ewell's 'In Memory Woodland' in Long Grove Park. EETAB is a partnership of environmentally-minded local volunteers, working together to safeguard and enhance the borough's trees.

Howard has designed the 'In Memory Woodland' to follow a unique "Lifecycle" model. This approach focuses on creating a self-sustaining ecosystem from the start by carefully selecting plants and trees that support various stages of wildlife life cycles.

The aim is to provide food, shelter, and breeding sites, ensuring the woodland not only thrives but actively supports a diverse range of native fauna from the outset. Through this sustainable, wildlife-friendly method, the woodland will become a vibrant, lasting habitat for plants, insects, birds, and other wildlife, fostering a rich ecosystem for years to come.



A home for wildlife

The woodland features a mix of carefully chosen trees, shrubs, and plants, including disease-resistant Elms, Alder Buckthorn, and the nectar-rich Caucasian Bladdernut. These species support the lifecycle of butterflies, bees, birds, and insects. Essential habitats like log piles and hibernacula provide shelter for local wildlife.

Howard's design also includes a central evergreen, the Western White Fir, offering year-round shelter for birds and bats. The project enhances the local ecosystem and serves as a vital seed bank, supporting the regeneration of nearby parkland.



Howard Gregory
www.eetab.org.uk



Illustrated by
Clair Rossiter

'Here I sit, together with my memories. Listen
the bird song in the canopy, as nature



Listening to the breeze through the leaves,
the envelopes me in its place?

IN MEMORY Woodland AGE CONCERN EPSOM & EWELL

Plan Your Visit to the 'In Memory Woodland'

The Age Concern Epsom & Ewell 'In Memory Woodland' is located in the south-west corner of Long Grove Park, Epsom. It's easily accessible on foot via a fully tarmacked path from the nearest public car park, just a few minutes' walk away. The path is suitable for wheelchairs, pushchairs, and other mobility aids.

Handcrafted wooden signs will guide you to the woodland. Still in its early stages, the area is home to a growing variety of native trees and plants, offering something new to see with each changing season. An information board at the woodland shares more about the space and its purpose, helping visitors connect with its meaning and vision.

At the heart of the woodland, two benches have already been placed, providing a peaceful spot to rest, reflect, and enjoy the natural surroundings. We'll continue to share updates about the Age Concern Epsom & Ewell 'In Memory Woodland' through our marketing materials and website. We hope this space becomes a valued part of the community - a peaceful, natural retreat for all to enjoy in the years to come.

If you would like to help support initiatives like this and the wider work of Age Concern Epsom & Ewell in supporting older people in our borough, please consider making a donation, nominating us for an In Memory gift, or leaving a lasting legacy in your Will. Every contribution helps us continue making a meaningful difference.

The 'In Memory Woodland' is located in Long Grove Park, Epsom, KT19 8TF



With thanks to our partners and supporters



Surrey County Council helped to fund this project via the Your Fund Surrey Small Community Projects fund

IN MEMORY
Woodland
AGE
CONCERN
EPSOM & EWELL



www.ageconcernepsom.org.uk

Easter with

AGE CONCERN EPSOM & EWELL

Over the previous few months talented individuals and groups had been busy knitting, crocheting and crafting beautiful gifts for our Mother's Day and Easter stalls in the Ashley Centre.



We're Delighted to Share Some Wonderful News!

Thanks to the incredible support for our beautiful handmade merchandise — showcased at events throughout March and April, including eight days in the Ashley Centre — we are thrilled to announce that £2,682 has been raised for our cause!

This is a fantastic result, and we're so grateful to everyone who supported these creative projects. It was a real pleasure to meet members of the public, see their smiles (especially at the adorable animals hiding chocolate eggs!), and witness their appreciation for the work on display.

We were also lucky to meet many of the talented volunteers who created these delightful items — thank you for your time, skill, and generosity.



Local knitter, Ms Hoar, viewing her work on display at our Ashley Centre Easter Stall

Helping to raise awareness

Our stalls gave us a valuable opportunity to share more about the services we provide for older people in our borough. We hope this visibility will help us support even more individuals in our community — and inspire others to join us as volunteers.



It was wonderful to see the park filled with young families searching for clues to reveal their mystery Easter prize.



thank you

We would like to thank all the volunteers who helped on the day with setting up, serving refreshments and selling our handmade Easter gifts.

A big shout out too to our wonderful bakers who made a lovely array of delicious cakes - they were enjoyed by many!





Spreading Easter joy!

We send our huge thanks to everyone that supported our Easter Egg Trail - we hope you had a fun time participating in this activity.

*We raised **£1,000** on the day to support the older generation in Epsom & Ewell!*



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& THE HAPPY WINNERS OF OUR
EASTER BUNNY PRIZE DRAW.**

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We would like to send our special thanks our sponsors for their support with our Easter Egg Trail.

Rainbow Leisure Centre, Epsom

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A special thanks to
St Christopher's School, Epsom for
providing a team of volunteers for this
event.



A special thanks to
Alex & Kata Coffee of Rosebery Park, Epsom
for donating 15% of their proceeds to our cause on
the day of the Easter Egg Trail

New local coffee trailer brings family spirit to Epsom in Rosebery Park!

A new coffee trailer is bringing a fresh sense of community to Epsom. Alex & Kata Coffee, founded by husband-and-wife team Gabor and Kata, inspired by their son Alex, serves quality coffee, pastries, and a growing range of homemade treats.

Positioned near offices, a university, and a busy park, Alex & Kata Coffee offers a warm, personal service that has already made it a favourite among students, professionals, and dog walkers.

"Our aim is to offer more than just coffee — we want to create a little community around our trailer," says co-founder Gabor.

With sustainability and genuine hospitality at its core, Alex & Kata Coffee is ready to welcome even more visitors this summer.



Epsom proudly took part in the 80th anniversary of VE Day with a series of commemorative events throughout the day.

In the morning, Councillor Graham Jones read the official VE Day Proclamation at the Clock Tower, followed by a heartfelt community sing-along of 'I Vow to Thee, My Country'.

That evening, church bells rang out across the borough and the nation, just as they did in 1945 to celebrate the end of the war.

A free concert at Epsom Downs Racecourse brought the community together, featuring performances by The Show Choir, Nescot, Laine Theatre Arts, and the Epsom Silver Band.

Attendees also had the opportunity to view a special exhibition showcasing Epsom & Ewell during WWII and past VE Day celebrations.

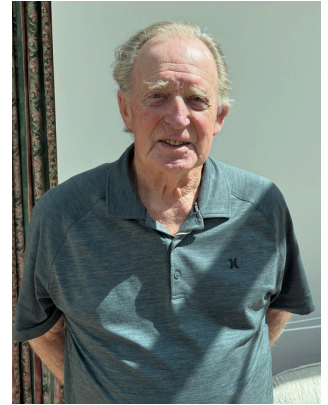
One particularly special moment was meeting a lady who was born on VE Day itself. Fittingly named Victoria, she shared her unique connection to this historic date. To mark the occasion, she received a thoughtful birthday gift at the event: a beautifully etched portrait created by a talented Nescot student.



As night fell, a beacon was lit while the crowd once again sang 'I Vow to Thee, My Country', creating a poignant and memorable close to the day's events.

Age Concern Epsom & Ewell and the Epsom & Ewell branch of the Royal British Legion were present to offer information and support. It was lovely to meet members of the public and share in the spirit of remembrance and community on this historic occasion.

It was a pleasure to meet and chat with one of our clients, Alan Baldwin, recently. Alan, who enjoys attending our Sunday Teas, has many memories he's happy to share and it was fascinating to listen to his stories.



We spoke about the VE Day celebrations, and Alan went on to share his childhood memories from the time of World War II.

Alan was born in Colliers Wood in 1933, the middle child of three, with a sister on either side. He vividly recalls the day the outbreak of World War II was announced. He was just six years old at the time and remembers being huddled around the radio with his family, listening to the broadcast in silence.

At the start of the war, Alan was able to remain at home, although he felt he barely saw his parents, both of whom were involved in the war effort. His father worked for the Hawker Aircraft Factory in Kingston. His mother worked for the NAAFI (Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes), in Chessington.

At first, school continued as normal, and Alan recalled walking past bomb damage in Worcester Park on his way to class around the time of the Blitz. However, as the war intensified, the government grew increasingly concerned about large gatherings of children. As a result, lessons were moved into small groups held in local living rooms.

Alan reminisced fondly about playing football and cricket in the streets. "You could do that back in those days," he said, "as there were very few cars." But the war cast a shadow over childhood freedom. There were no street lights due to the blackout, and when the air raid sirens sounded in the evenings, it was a frightening scramble through the darkness to reach the nearest air raid shelter.

Client Story Continued

He also vividly remembered the sight of doodlebug bombs lighting up the sky—a moment that left a lasting impression. Not long after that, the decision was made to evacuate all children from London and the surrounding areas to the countryside, where it was considered safer.

Alan spoke about the evacuation process and how children travelled with their schools and classmates. Though he had no idea where his older sister had been sent, he was reassured knowing his younger sister would be in the same village, as they attended the same school. Alan was just ten years old at that time.

I could only imagine how unsettling this experience must have been, but Alan simply said, “You just got on with it.”

He couldn’t recall a formal send-off.

A steam train took the children from Stoneleigh to a village called Lanivet, near Bodmin in Cornwall.



A pre-war photo of Alan and his older sister

Alan remembered feeling a little scared upon arrival—he reached the farm in the middle of the night, with no idea where he was. He knew his friend would be at a neighbouring farm, but otherwise, it was a daunting experience for someone so young. Coming from a relatively urban environment, the rural setting felt strange at first. There was no electricity, no running water, and the toilet was across the yard.



Farmer Archy Philip at Tremabyn Farm, Cornwall

Despite the initial shock, Alan quickly adapted to country life. At the time, education took a back seat to supporting the war effort; it was more important to help by growing food for the nation. He remembers that year with great fondness. On the return journey home, the farmer gave Alan and his sister a box to take with them. They placed it on the shelf above their seats, and it squeaked the whole way. Once home, they opened it—and to their delight, it contained six ducklings, just a few days old.

The farmer and his family were kind and caring, and remarkably, Alan is still in touch with them today—through their grandchildren.

After the war ended and schools resumed, Alan began to realise that he struggled with his learning. He later understood that he was dyslexic—something that was neither widely recognised nor openly discussed at the time. Fortunately, this hadn’t affected him too much during the war years, as much of that time had been spent outside the classroom, contributing to the war effort in small ways. It took schools several years to return to any sense of normality following the disruption of the war. By then, Alan was nearing the school leaving age of fourteen.

Alan went on to take an apprenticeship with a printing company, where he remained until he was conscripted for National Service—something compulsory for young men at the time.



He trained as an armourer, a highly skilled and hazardous role that involved servicing guns and bombs, including working with delicate fuses and complex weaponry. After completing his training at various RAF aircraft stations across the country, Alan was posted on detachment to the RAF Bomber Training Unit in Leconfield, near Hull. By then, it was the 1950s and the immediate threat of war had passed, so there wasn’t a high demand for active servicing work. Much of his time was spent supporting other units, and at the age of 19, Alan had the unforgettable experience of flying over the North Sea in a Lancaster Bomber. Alan said he enjoyed the regimental structure and the camaraderie he shared with his peers during this period of his life.

Upon returning from National Service, Alan resumed his career in printing, which soon began to flourish. His strong people skills and work ethic led him to managerial roles across several industries. Over time, Alan gained a reputation for creative thinking and being an excellent problem solver—qualities he now believes were enhanced due to his dyslexia.



Client Story Continued

He reflected on how his dyslexia helped him see the world differently, enabling him to approach challenges from unique angles. He often thought outside the box and found innovative solutions where others might not have. These strengths, combined with his natural patience and people skills, eventually led Alan to an entirely new path in his late fifties—becoming a driving instructor. Thinking it would be a good way to be his own boss for a few years, Alan launched this second career with enthusiasm. What he expected to last a short while turned into a fulfilling 35-year vocation. He finally retired at the impressive age of 85!

Alan has always had a love for the outdoors, and we spoke briefly about the many hobbies and pastimes that have helped shape his life. He began his journey with the Cubs, later joining the Sea Scouts—a step that sparked a lifelong love of sailing. Sailing became a passion not just for Alan, but something he shared with others, including his own children.



He also devoted many years to teaching young sailors aged 7 to 17 at Hampton Sailing Club. He recalls with great pride that one of his Cadet groups went on to win the World Junior Sailing Championships in 1977. Today, while no longer instructing, Alan still keeps closely involved with the club.

Another great love of Alan's has been skiing. For over 50 years, he delighted in hitting the slopes whenever the chance arose, embracing the challenge and freedom the sport offers. Travel, too, has been a great love and Alan has been fortunate to visit many countries over the years. It was incredible to hear that, even now, he continues to plan new adventures—this year, he's booked a trip to Kathmandu with his daughter and hopes to fulfil a long-held dream: flying over Mount Everest.



It was only at the end of our meeting that I realised Alan is 92 years young—which truly astounded me. Here is a gentleman with a remarkable zest for life, filled with interests and hobbies, many of which he still actively enjoys today. And yet, we were only able to touch on a handful of his incredible experiences.

Alan reflected that, in many ways, World War II set the course his life would take. Being evacuated at a young age and living with dyslexia taught him resilience early on—qualities that, he believes, helped shape the man he became. His motto in life is simple, yet powerful: “Keep your mind and body active, and let nothing hold you back.”

On VE Day in 1945 Alan, aged twelve, reunited with his family in the jubilant crowds outside Buckingham Palace. He witnessed history firsthand by joining the celebration of the nation - marking the end of a devastating war and the beginning of peace.

Interview with Marie Thackwell

**If you have an interesting hobby or story that you would like to share with our readership please get in touch with Marie Thackwell. Tel: 01372 732 451
marie.thackwell@ageconcernepsom.org.uk**



EPSOM & EWELL VETERANS FRIENDSHIP GROUPS

Come and join us at Epsom and Ewell Veterans Community Hub for a friendly cuppa, natter and a biscuit or two!

Where: The Army Reserve Centre Welbeck Close, Ewell KT17 2BG
When: The first Tuesday of every month Time: 10:30 – 12:30

Please contact:

Maggie Rowell Epsom Rotary
Email: maggie.rowell@hotmail.co.uk

Barbara Warwick Epsom and Ewell Royal British Legion
Email: barb.warwick@virginmedia.com

MODELS FOR HEROES

Model making sessions for veterans and armed forces personnel, also painting and table games.

Come and join us:

Where: The Kings Church, Longmead Road, Epsom KT19 9BU
When: the 1st Thursday of every month Time: 14:00 – 16:00

INDOOR ARCHERY

Why not learn a new skill, join a group of people with shared experiences in a relaxed friendly environment? We are currently doing indoor archery.

Come and join us:

Where: The United Reformed Church, London Road, Ewell KT17 2BB
When: the 2nd Tuesday of every month Time: 10:30 – 12:30

Protecting your accounts

If the account you are using has sensitive data, the website will have incorporated two factor authorisation. When you log on, the website sends a 6 digit code to your mobile' phone and you have to use this code to complete the website login procedure.

This is called Two Factor Authorisation - 2FA. (Or Two Step Verification - 2SV) It's a second layer of security. As the hacker doesn't have your mobile' phone, they can't pretend to be you.

Turn on 2 Step Verification

Many websites have 2FA /2SV as an option. Your email account (with optional 2FA) is a gold mine to any hacker – particularly if it is associated with 'Cloud Storage' - Microsoft and Google for example. It is strongly recommended that you use 2FA on every account where you can.

Pwned? (Slang. Verb meaning to defeat or take control.)

A very well respected employee of Microsoft in Australia has created a website that collates information about data breaches and puts them in one place. You can see if your data has been stolen in any data breach on his website.

<https://haveibeenpwned.com/> If your data has been stolen, change your password on that site.

Data Breach

Several high profile, high street businesses have been in the news recently – for the wrong reasons. They have been 'hacked'. The criminals gained entry to their systems and stole customers' data – email addresses, passwords, credit card details etc. Firstly: If you are a customer of any of these businesses, change your password as soon as you can.

Secondly: Be very wary of any emails in the future which appear to come from your retailer asking you to update your details. As the scammers have your email address, they might try to obtain more information from you.

Thirdly: If you don't allow a provider to store your card details, you'll be less exposed should they be 'hacked'. Just make sure the box called 'Save these card details for future use' is not ticked. In future, you'll have to enter your card details for each purchase. It's not as convenient, but maybe better safe than sorry?



Save these card details for future use.

Life Writing



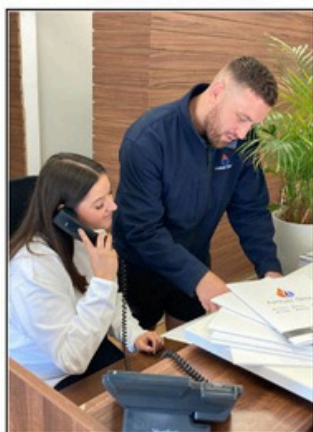
3rd Wednesday
of every month
from 10-11.30am
at **The Wells**
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Explore meaningful memories through writing & conversation

- Enjoy step-by-step activities that will spark ideas and get your words flowing.
- There's no pressure to share your writing with anyone else.
- Come along and give it a go!

*£15 or what
you can afford*

Call Kate on 07438 823728
or visit www.katemcbarron.co.uk/life-writing



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Need equipment? - You can search for items or post a wanted listing if you can't find what you need.

Have equipment to sell or donate? - It's free to list items on the website.

If you prefer, you can donate your items for us to sell, this helps keep the website running and we give 25% of all proceeds to raising funds for Support Dogs, our current chosen charity.

We also purchase used equipment ourselves so please contact us if you would prefer this option.

To find out more please visit :
<http://disabilityequipmentservice.co.uk>



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JOIN OUR LOTTERY

Support your local community

LOTTERY WINNERS

January Winners

Mrs W (£58.40) **Mrs C** (£36.50) **Mrs L** (£21.90)

February Winners

Mr G (£56.40) **Mrs R** (£35.25) **Mrs P** (£21.15)

March Winners

Mr W (£57.60). **Mrs Re** (£36.00) **Mrs A** (£21.60)

April Winners

Mr R (£56.80) **Mr D** (£35.50) **Mrs Wh** (£21.30)

Mrs Rye was the winner of our special hamper, for joining the lottery between January and March 2025.

She joined our lottery in February 2025 and not only did she win the hamper, but she also won second prize in her first ever lottery draw!



**Join our lottery for just
£2 per month**

To sign up:

- Scan our QR code
- Email us on info@ageconcernepsom.org.uk
- Phone 01372 732 456

Did you know, that 40% of our lottery fund is paid out in prizes and 60% goes to support our work in the community

**Join our lottery before
31st August 2025 and be in
the draw to win a special
hamper!**

**This also applies if you refer a
friend or take an extra ticket**



Scan the QR
code for details
on how to join
the lottery
online



Beneath the Boughs

A gentle path through whispering trees,
Where sunlight dances on the breeze,
Each step a balm, each breath a grace,
The forest wears a peaceful face.

The birds compose a skyward tune,
The brook hums soft beneath the moon,
And troubles, like the morning dew,
Dissolve in green and skyward blue.

No clock can chime, no walls confine,
The world is wide, the air divine.
In every leaf and earthy sound,
A deeper self is gently found.

Through Epsom's downs and
Ewell's green lanes,
Where quiet reigns and peace remains,
The fields unfold, the skylarks call,
And hearts grow light beyond it all.

Written by an Age Concern Epsom & Ewell Client



Gardening

Word Search Puzzle



CLIPPERS	RAKE	SUNSHINE
COMPOST	SEEDS	TILLER
FLOWERS	SHEARS	TROWEL
GARDEN HOSE	SHOVEL	VEGETABLES
GLOVES	SNAILS	WATER
HERBS	SNIPS	WATERING CAN
HOE	SOIL	WEEDS
PLANTING	SPADE	WHEELBARROW

Please help us to spread the word about the services that we provide for older people living in Epsom & Ewell!

Do you have a friend or a neighbour that might benefit from receiving our latest brochure and our newsletters?

Do you have a communal area or do you work in a public building where our information can be displayed?

If so, we would love to hear from you.
Please see our contact details are below.



For all enquiries please contact: **01372 732 456**
Email: info@ageconcernepsom.org.uk www.ageconcernepsom.org.uk
Our office and telephone lines are open Mon- Fri; 9.30am - 1pm
The Old Town Hall, The Parade, Epsom, KT18 5AG

SCAN HERE

