



Dear Resident

We're In Touch.

The cost of living is the problem right now. We all know it comes in part from Putin's War which caused the wholesale price of gas to go up two and a half times between last February and August. But world interest rates and inflation were well on the increase before the mini budget. January 2022 figures showed inflation going up to 5.5% after years of being around 2% and the rate is now nearer 10%. This wasn't helped by the "mistakes" as Rishi Sunak politely described his inheritance, which the new Government is fixing.

During Covid, your Conservative-run Runnymede Council stepped up to provide extra support for residents including the foodbank and the vaccination centres and we are ready again to do what we can. Please access surreycc.gov.uk/welfare to see all our support options and if you need help please contact us. We will continue to provide well run services whilst keeping council taxes as low as we can and maintaining a balanced budget. Runnymede has always done well on this but there will be many councils across the country facing debt which will lead to cuts imposed on us—but we remain committed to keeping the services you value.

Climate Change

Cllr Marisa Heath (*pictured*) who represents Englefield Green on Surrey and Runnymede, is leading the joint Surrey County Council and Borough Councils Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan. This Programme has recently won the highest ranking in the annual USwitch Green Council Report.

Market leading renewable installation programmes are in place for solar panels, air and ground source pumps and biomass systems to decarbonise buildings and workforce activities. There is funding available (LoCASE) for small businesses (up to £10k for green initiatives) and access to the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery funding for households needing help to install renewable and low carbon energy systems.

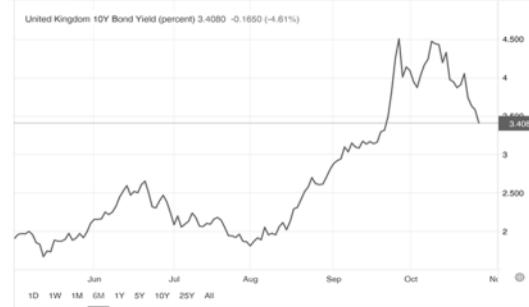
The "shift to green" is an ambitious but fiscally responsible project. It includes re-wilding our countryside, planting more trees (1.2m across Surrey) and developing plans to improve the walking and cycling infrastructure. You will start to see electric charging points in the area soon and we hope to get electric bike and car hire schemes.

Marisa says: "We now move on with the aim of making our green initiatives more local. In Englefield Green, we can improve the environment with schemes to improve biodiversity in the village. We would like to include any residents who would want to get involved in these projects, please let us know if you are interested". Contacts are below at the bottom of this letter



Footnote: world interest rates

UK 10 year bond yields (interest rates) have been climbing since August but seem now on their way down offering some prospect of relief to hard pressed borrowers. Currently at 3.4%, they are actually below US yields of 3.9%. That's also below the rate on the day of the mini budget.



Englefield Green Neighbourhood Plan

Your Conservative councillors have actively supported the work in preparing the Englefield Green Village Neighbourhood Plan. We are very pleased with the progress on this and welcome the draft Mike Kelly and his team have produced. Under the current planning arrangements, a local neighbourhood plan can help to shape our village for the future and ensure residents and their local representatives have more say in local development and counter inappropriate development more effectively. The plan can be viewed at www.egvplan.org.uk and we look forward to the final version.



In Englefield Green it will also help support the right balance between "Town and Gown" as we have such a well-established university within our community. Cllr Nick Prescot has looked at the whole issue of Homes in Multiple Occupation recently. It's not practicable or perhaps possible to restrict these by regulation. The Council's own Local Plan, which should take account of Neighbourhood Plan aspirations, projects a reduction in HMO's and more homes in Englefield Green returned to families, while the students who make a welcome contribution to the life of our community enjoy more suitable accommodation closer to the campus. The Royal Holloway developments in the village have contributed to this.

You can contact us about the issues in this letter and indeed any other issues and we are happy to meet in person.

Supporting our Community

Finally, there are a number of support schemes being put in place which residents might like to know about:

- Your Fund Surrey – A £100m fund of loaned money which community groups across the County can bid for to build new facilities or improve and expand existing ones. We want Englefield Green projects to get some of this funding to deliver facilities to help families, young people and those with physical or mental health problems. If you are interested, please use the contacts below
- Developer Contributions – As a result of developments all Councils get money to spend on projects, in our case, in the village. We want residents to have a say in how this gets spent. Come to our monthly councillor surgery on the second Saturday of the month 10-11am St Jude's Church to put forward ideas
- Small Grants –We can obtain small grants from £100 up to £2,000 to help get start small projects or community groups or to fund equipment around the Green.
- Small businesses are very important to growing the economy, and employment. Cllr Nigel King has set up an Englefield Green business hub. Contact Nigel for more information on the business hub. – open to any business no matter how small. See below

We want to hear from you

If you have any pressing issues concerning life in the village, please do get in touch with your Conservative team – we are here to help. Contact us at office@runnymedeweybridgeconservatives.com or call 01276 472910.

If you are willing to help by delivering a few leaflets or displaying a poster at election time, please get in touch.

£2.88 per week - the cost of Runnymede

Runnymede only keeps 9.1% of your Band D Council Tax (Surrey gets 77.4% and the Police 13.4%) and we remain the sixth lowest taxing of the 238 local councils in the United Kingdom.

This pays for local services including collecting household waste and recycling, street cleaning, day centres for the elderly, community transport and meals, parks, CCTV and other measures to keep our borough safe and planning and building control.

