

Surrey History Centre throws light on Epsom's hospitals

4 December 2024



Epsom Surrey had more mental hospitals than most English counties and, at Surrey History Centre, we are justly proud of the quantity and quality of surviving records we hold. These range from the early private asylums of the late eighteenth century through to the county asylums of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Many of these records were rescued by our archivists when the institutions were closed down in the 1990s, and they include the records of some of the 'Epsom Cluster' of hospitals. In 1896 the newly created London County Council, faced with the need to provide for huge numbers of the mentally ill, purchased the Horton Manor estate at Epsom and built five large hospitals. The Manor opened in 1899; Horton in 1902; Ewell Epileptic Colony, later St Ebba's, in 1904; Long Grove in 1907; and West Park in 1924.

Among the extensive archive of The Manor hospital at Surrey History Centre is a wonderful collection of glass plate negatives of individual male and female patients dating back to 1899. The patients were photographed on admission to the hospital and many who recovered after treatment were often photographed again on discharge, showing a marked improvement in their demeanour.

These glass plates had been languishing in our strong rooms

so, earlier this year, we started creating digital positive copies of some of the plates that are over one hundred years old. Once digitised, the images were identified by matching them to the photographic prints in the Manor Hospital patient case books. Sadly a few of the case books had not survived, so a number of images remained unidentified, but more of this later. Thanks to our volunteer, Brenda, we have now successfully digitised over 500 images which can be viewed by researchers in our searchroom. The names of the patients whose photographs have been identified are also available on our online catalogue.

This digitisation project was actually prompted by the work of the Epsom based **Friends of Horton Cemetery**. Their Out of Sight, Out of Mind project explores and commemorates the lives of some of the 9,000 Epsom Cluster patients buried in unmarked graves in the disused cemetery. More information about this fascinating project can be found on the Horton Cemetery website.

This has truly been a collaborative undertaking. Also working in partnership with Surrey History Centre and the Friends of Horton Cemetery is multimedia artist and medic, Dr Eric Fong. His work spans film, photography, sculpture, and installation, often exploring themes of the body, identity, and vulnerability. His moving and haunting Cyanotype Apparitions exhibition, using some of the Manor Hospital patient glass slides, won the London Independent Film Awards' Best Experimental Short October 2024 award.

And here's a fitting postscript: last month saw the recovery of one of the long-lost Manor Hospital patient case books, filling an important gap in the hospital's record collection at Surrey History Centre. Discovered in an attic, this remarkable volume, spanning May 1900 to July 1901, records the medical histories of 250 women, complete with their personal details and poignant photographic portraits. And importantly, it has allowed us to identify some more of the unnamed glass

plate images.

For more news from Surrey History Centre – read more here.

Image: glass plate negative of Caroline Appleton and William Smith

Surrey History Centre

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Attic find fills gap in Epsom local asylum history

Portraits of pauper patients in Epsom's Horton Cemetery, inspires artist

Petition to reclaim Horton Cemetery from property speculator

Epsom and Ewell to be served by publicly owned trains

4 December 2024



The government has announced that South Western Railway (SWR), which serves commuters from Epsom, Ewell West, Stoneleigh and Worcester Park to London Waterloo, will be the first train operator to transition back into public ownership. The move comes following the passage of the Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Act 2024, signalling a historic shift for

Britain's railways.

Starting next year, SWR services, including the Epsom to London routes, will come under the direct management of DfT Operator Limited, a publicly owned body. This change aims to address long-standing issues of delays, cancellations, and high costs that have plagued privatized rail services for decades.

What This Means for Epsom Commuters

Epsom's SWR services connect thousands of local residents daily to key destinations such as London Waterloo, Wimbledon, and Clapham Junction and south to Dorking and Guildford. These routes are lifelines for commuters and leisure travellers alike, and reliability issues have often sparked frustration among passengers. Under public ownership, improvements in punctuality, affordability, and customer satisfaction are hoped for.

Local resident and commuter Sarah James commented: *"I've been using the Epsom to Waterloo service for over ten years, and while it's convenient, the delays and rising ticket prices have been hard to justify. If public ownership can bring real improvements, it'll be a welcome change."*

Government's Vision for the Railways

Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander said: *"We're putting passengers back at the heart of our railways. For too long, privatization has failed to deliver for the British public. South Western Railway is the first step in our plan to rebuild a rail system that works for everyone."*

The move forms part of a broader government commitment to overhaul the rail network, with c2c and Greater Anglia services also set to follow suit by 2025. The goal is to save up to £150 million annually by eliminating franchise fees,

redirecting those funds into service improvements instead of shareholder profits.

How Will the Transition Work?

The Department for Transport (DfT) is prioritizing a seamless handover, ensuring minimal disruption for passengers. Ticketing systems and staffing will remain unchanged during the transition period, with SWR's current workforce continuing to support commuters.

Publicly managed services will eventually integrate into Great British Railways (GBR), the government's new overseeing body for track and train operations. GBR promises a more unified and efficient approach to rail management, focusing on reliability, accessibility, and value for money.

Local Impacts Beyond the Commute

Epsom is known for its vibrant community and attractions like Epsom Downs Racecourse and Epsom shopping centre, which rely on reliable rail links to draw visitors. Public ownership of SWR could boost local tourism by ensuring smoother travel to and from Epsom.

Additionally, the promise of greater transparency and accountability could restore faith in public transport, encouraging more residents to opt for trains over cars, which aligns with Surrey County Council's environmental goals.

What's Next?

The first publicly run trains will start operating in 2025, and residents can expect regular updates on planned improvements, including timetable adjustments and station enhancements. The Epsom and Ewell Times will continue to monitor the situation closely, bringing you the latest developments as they happen.

For now, commuters and local businesses will be watching closely to see if public ownership delivers the transformative results promised by the government.

Image: CA850 (with cropping and exposure alterations by XAM2175) – CC BY-SA 2.0

Lucy Porter Returns to Her Roots with “No Regrets” at Epsom Playhouse

4 December 2024



Epsom Playhouse is set to welcome one of comedy’s most beloved figures, Lucy Porter, on **18th January 2025**, as part of her nationwide tour with the brand-new show *No Regrets*. For Lucy, this performance will be more than just a stop on her tour—it’s a nostalgic homecoming.

Lucy, who grew up in nearby Croydon and Wallington, has fond memories of Epsom. “Epsom was the place we went for a fancy day out—it seemed so much posher than anywhere else nearby,” she reminisces. “I used to hang out at the Ashley Centre, which is right next to the theatre. I’ll relive my youth by putting on some baggy jeans and Kickers, hanging around and terrorising the locals!”

Reflecting on her formative years, Lucy recalls special occasions at the **Berni Inn at Tattenham Corner**, where she developed her love of prawn cocktails, and visits to the Playhouse itself as a young fan. “I never dreamed that one day I’d get to perform there myself,” she says.

A Hilarious Exploration of Regret

In *No Regrets*, Lucy takes audiences on a journey through her most embarrassing mistakes and missteps, from disastrous dates and professional mishaps to parenting fails and ruined friendships. With her trademark wit, she examines the nature of regret, guilt, and shame—topics she knows all too well as a self-confessed middle-class, middle-aged ex-Catholic.

“It’s not all doom and gloom,” Lucy promises. “Regrets can also be inspiring. You can use them to change your ways. This show is about learning to laugh at the past and maybe using it to build a better future.”

Lucy’s comedic reflections are infused with sharp social commentary. In the show, she explores collective regrets, such as not maintaining the work-life balance we rediscovered during lockdown or failing to realise clapping for the NHS wasn’t enough to sustain it.

From Epsom to Stardom

Lucy Porter’s career spans acting, writing, and comedy. A familiar face on television, she has appeared on *QI*, *Mock the Week*, *Have I Got News for You*, and *Would I Lie to You*. Her stage credits include *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* and even a stint on *Eastenders*. A passionate quizzer, Lucy co-hosts the hit podcast *Fingers on Buzzers* with Jenny Ryan (The Vixen from *The Chase*), and she’s a former *Celebrity Mastermind* Champion of Champions.

Her dulcet tones are regularly heard on **BBC Radio 4**, where she

contributes to shows like *The News Quiz* and *Just a Minute*.

Don't Miss Out

For those eager to catch Lucy's laugh-out-loud performance and hear her candid confessions, tickets are available now at www.boundandgaggedcomedy.com.

Lucy's final word on her return to Epsom? "I'm so excited to come back and share this show with a place that meant so much to me growing up. I hope everyone brings their prawn cocktails!"

Surrey schools not out for so long in summer?

4 December 2024



Surrey County Council is looking at possible changes to school holidays.

A consultation has been launched on whether the county council should switch to a two-week half term break in the autumn – and is asking for families to give their feedback before making a decision.

About one in ten state-funded schools have already made the switch, including some in Surrey.

It has led some families facing added challenges when term times at different schools are not aligned.

If the switch to a two-week autumn half term break goes ahead, the added five days would be clawed back from the summer break, although the council said it would look to minimise this reduction “where there are opportunities to recover days through the natural positioning of bank holidays during the Christmas and Easter breaks”.

The consultation letter sent to parents read: “We are seeking to understand the views of all stakeholders in determining our future approach to term dates and if there is any appetite for change.

“This will enable the council, schools and multi-academy trusts to work in partnership to set term dates with an aim for more consistency for schools, school staff, and families.

“We acknowledge that there may be strong views on either side of this question, but we feel it is right and responsible to seek those opinions at a time when we are seeing movement towards a longer October half term by some schools.

“The combined responses from education settings, families and partners will help inform our approach to term dates for the 2026/27 academic year onwards.

“If it is determined that there is significant appetite for change, the council will adopt a two-week autumn half term break from the 2026/2027 academic year at the earliest.”

The survey runs until the end of the year, and closes at 5pm on Tuesday December 31 2024.

The school year would still be 195 days, including the five inset training days for staff.

Local Plan lessons from our neighbour?

4 December 2024



“Four more years?” is the resounding cry after a Surrey council has been moved back to square one with its plan for 8,000 new homes, potentially at a cost of £1m.

Local plans are a crucial framework for councils as they set out where and what type of development is allowed in the borough. Without one, developers effectively have a free-for-all to build where they wish and the council could struggle to defend it.

A planning inspector told Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) in September to reconsider its local plan, especially to increase the number of affordable housing. Despite asking for a 12-15 month extension to straighten out its plan, after six years working on the proposals, the council was given a firm ‘no’ by the inspector.

Christa Masters, the independent planning inspector, judged that Elmbridge could not prove it had five years’ worth of housing for residents. The inspector has also labelled the borough – which includes Cobham, St George’s Hill and Weybridge – as one of the “least affordable in the country”.

The two choices in front of the council are to withdraw the

plan and start again, or accept the inspector's findings of the report being 'unsound' and leave the borough open to speculative development. A report will be presented to the council in February 2025 for the council to decide.

"It is clear to us that building new homes is not this government's priority," a statement read from three senior councillors. They said: "Instead, it seems intent on forcing Elmbridge Borough Council and our residents to restart the lengthy 3-4 year process of developing a new Local Plan, with the significant additional costs (potentially £1million) this will bring to the council."

Council leader Mike Rollings, deputy leader Simon Waugh, and leader of Hinchley Wood Residents' Association Janet Turner, who wrote the statement, said they have been left with no choice by the government than to start again.

A Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government spokesperson said the decision was up to an independent inspector who found the council's plan 'unsound'. They said: "We are in a housing crisis and all areas of the country need to play their part in building more and delivering the homes that communities need. We want to see every council have a local plan as soon as possible, but it is for an independent Inspector to examine a local plan to ensure it is sound and legally compliant."

But not everyone has been so forgiving of the update on the Local Plan. Cllr John Cope, leader of the Conservative opposition on the council, said: "It's now clear years of work and millions of pounds of local people's money have gone down the drain – and an acute shortage of affordable housing allowed in Elmbridge."

He added that the borough will "have to accept the Labour government's 121% increase in top-down development targets meaning a huge loss of green belt and loss of local democratic

control of planning – but with no new roads, GPs, or schools to support the development.”

Dr Ben Spencer MP (Runnymede and Weybridge) and Cllr Cope have also written a joint letter to Planning Minister Matthew Pennycook MP, urging him to review the situation. The pair ask him to grant the council an extension “so this can be resolved with minimal further financial drain on the council’s resources”.

In the letter, Dr Spencer and Cllr Cope also requested for Elmbridge residents to “not pay the consequences” of the failed Local Plan through “higher council tax and reduced local services”.

“As a Council, we have done everything right,” said Cllr Rollings, speaking to the Local Democracy Reporting Service (LDRS). He said the council has worked to prepare a Local Plan “that meets its responsibilities” but the government has “have constantly changed and shifted the goalposts”. He explained that mandatory housing targets have kept replacing each other and national planning policy is constantly being tweaked.

Cllr Rollings said: “As a Council leadership we will continue to work for the best outcomes for our residents. And we will do everything we can to protect the green spaces we all love.”

Epsom Teen Selected as Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Youth

Ambassador

4 December 2024



A young woman from Epsom is amplifying young people's voices after being chosen as a UK Youth Ambassador for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE).

Kalina Hristova, 17, joins a select group of 35 DofE Award holders aged 16-24 from across the UK. These Youth Ambassadors will advocate for young people by sharing their insights on key issues, speaking at events, meeting decision-makers in Parliament, and contributing to the DofE charity's direction.

Originally from Bulgaria, Kalina has lived in the UK for ten years and credits the DofE with helping her socially. She began her DofE journey at the Silver level when she joined a new school, finding it a great way to meet people outside her classes.

Kalina said:

"Starting a new school in Year 10 is quite daunting, so I joined DofE to make new friends and learn new skills. I'm glad I did, as I've met some of my best friends through DofE, and I've been able to dedicate my time to something I want to achieve."

For her Volunteering section, Kalina coached netball, leading sessions for younger students, running drills, and planning fun games. This not only improved the students' skills but also enhanced Kalina's communication abilities.

For her Physical section, she focused on fitness, tracking her

progress through her Apple Watch. An avid sportswoman, she joined a gym to start weightlifting. *"Sometimes I found it a bit intimidating, as it can be a male-dominated environment, but the more I progressed, the easier it became,"* Kalina added.

She also participated in the London Vitality 10K race, raising awareness and funds for the DofE. *"I would never have run a distance like this if not for the DofE. I was not a runner before, but with all the work I put in for my Physical section, I knew I could do it,"* she said.

As part of her Gold Volunteering, Kalina became her school's DofE ambassador, supporting Bronze and Silver participants, organising expeditions, and teaching skills like map reading and food planning.

For her Residential section, Kalina attended a three-week summer programme in Pennsylvania called Leadership in the Business World, which inspired her to consider studying Economics or Finance at university. *"DofE has been so much fun, and it's way more than just an Expedition. I applied to be a Youth Ambassador to apply the skills I've learned through DofE to the real world,"* she explained.

Empowering Young Leaders

Funded by The Gosling Foundation, the Youth Ambassador programme places young people at the heart of shaping the DofE's work. Ambassadors have met Ministers, spoken at high-profile events, represented the DofE at international forums, and influenced key decisions across the charity.

Ashley Williams, UK Youth Engagement Manager at The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, said: *"Kalina is one of many young people who have achieved incredible things through their DofE. As a charity, we're determined to put young people at the heart of everything we do and give them opportunities to make a positive impact on the issues they care about."*

“It’s not an easy time to be a young person, with the after-effects of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. Opportunities like the DofE allow young people to have fun, grow in resilience and self-belief, and develop vital skills they can’t always get in the classroom.”

Young people aged 14-24 who participate in the DofE choose activities in four sections: Physical, Skills, Volunteering, and Expedition. Along the way, they gain confidence, discover new talents, and work toward a highly respected award.

Epsom rugby scrape a point lead over Gravesend

4 December 2024



Gravesend 22 Sutton & Epsom RFC 23. Saturday 30th November.

Sutton and Epsom RFC visited Gravesend RFC in October last season at the height of the high tackle hysteria. In a match not so much punctuated by penalties as strangled by draconian enforcement Freddy Bunting collected five penalties. However, the hosts won 36-29 outscoring the visitors 6-2 in tries with a brace of penalty tries and a double from the totemic Samraj Chahal. The Black & Whites returned to the delightful Rectory Field facility that rather contrasted the unflattering portrayal of Gravesend in Andrea Arnold’s recent film “Bird”. One hopes the council were well compensated for the depiction

of their town that raises the question: Is all publicity good publicity? S&E absquatulated again with the points sneaking home 23-22.

Sutton fielded the same starting XV that had snuck past Thurrock in the previous round, apart from an esoteric switch for the wingers. Tom Boaden returned to the bench and was joined by debutant Sam Lennie, the last arrival of the Christchurch triumvirate, who had flown in from New Zealand and not Dorset. An accident in the environs of Clackett Lane delayed the Sutton arrival but their blushes were spared as Mr Goksaran's tardiness that meant the kick off was delayed until 3:15pm. Finally, Freddy Bunting kicked off to the petanque end. Gravesend, belying their lowly league status, dominated the early exchanges. However, they struggled to cross the gain line owing to S&E's resolute defence. They squandered two opportunities in the opening ten minutes. Firstly, losing an attacking line out deep in the 22 and secondly knocking on with the line in sight.

Captain Bunting settled the visitors' nerves with an immaculate 45-metre strike for 3-0. His side now impressed with excellent continuity as rapid recycling aided forwards and backs alike. Gravesend, under severe pressure, conceded a penalty 10 metres out. The ball was prodded to the corner. The perfectly executed catch and drive ushered hooker Dan Jones over the whitewash for the opening try. Freddy Bunting's pin point accuracy made it 10-0. Five minutes later the Kent side found themselves in similar travails when they were not only turned over in their 22 but compounded the error by conceding a penalty. Another kick to the corner, another line out, another catch and drive ... another outcome. The home pack halted their adversaries so it was spun wide to winger Angus Findlay whose sublime footwork left the defender grasping thin air as the second try was scored. The metronomic Bunting converted for 17-0.

The Gs looked for a rapid response and the inspirational

Samraj Chahal went blind from a scrum. Rhys Betts then chipped ahead and a try was only thwarted by magnificent cover by Tom Lennard. Moments later Sutton provided the opposition with some degree of consolation when they conceded a penalty under the posts. Rhys Betts accepted the gift and the hosts trailed 3-17. The first half concluded shortly afterwards with no further addition to the scoreboard.

The second period started inauspiciously for the hosts when they kicked the restart out on the full. This was to be a rare blemish as they proceeded to besiege the Sutton 22. Following ten minutes of intense pressure it was centre Zac Filmer's perfectly angled run that opened the second half scoring with a try by the posts. Rhys Betts added the simple conversion and the home team trailed 10-17. Within five minutes a raucous Rectory Field sensed an equalising score but their team conceded a penalty one yard from glory. Undeterred by that misfortune the revitalised hosts continued to press for points. Finally, on the hour mark they levelled the scores. Sutton debutant Sam Lennie received a yellow card for a high tackle. The 3-point easy option was declined. They were rewarded when the redoubtable Samraj Chahal forced his way over. With Rhys Betts converting the scores were level 17-17 as Gravesend had scored 17 unanswered points. With S&E reduced to 14 the pendulum had swung dramatically in the favour of the Kent side.

Despite the numerical inferiority Sutton were the next to score. With Mr Goksaran hovering like Azrael the visitors were awarded a penalty and Freddy Bunting recaptured the lead at 20-17. A minute later following excellent work from Jordan Huie S&E had another penalty for a late tackle. A simple 3 points for a 23-17 lead, meaning Gravesend would need a goal to regain the lead, was declined and the penalty was run instead. The forwards approached the line and thought they had scored via Rob Hegarty. The referee adjudicated that he had been held up over the line. A relieved home XV cleared long.

Sutton were returned to their full complement but only momentarily. Ben Tame cleared out a ruck and was issued a yellow for high contact. Sensing blood Gravesend also declined an easy kick and went for glory. From the ensuing penalty their bravery was rewarded as replacement Nathan Fouche powered over. To add salt to the wounds of the Sutton Society For Kicking All Penalties Rhys Betts conversion drifted wide and Gravesend led 22-20. However, a couple of minutes later Freddy Bunting was given a long-range attempt from the sidelines to recapture the lead. Demonstrating as few nerves as a false tooth he bisected the uprights for 23-22 as the game entered time added on.

Gravesend immediately had a chance following a fabulous 50-22 kick that nestled in an ideal spot for an attacking line out. Sutton set themselves for the catch and drive and did not contest the ball. Remarkably the throw was not straight. The hosts cleared to halfway but then they conceded a penalty which saw them retreating back to the corner to defend another close-range line out. This time, roared on by the Rectory Field faithful, the Gs pack secured the ball. Numerous phases saw the hosts crab their way under the posts. The heroic Sutton defence refused to be breached and turned over the ball. From the scrum they secured the ball and dismissed it from the paddock for a very hard earned 23-22 victory.

Sutton played some of their most effective rugby of this campaign in the first half. Their defence was miserly, they were quick to capitalise on errors and impressed with ball in hand. They were clinical in the opposition 22 when scoring two tries. The second half transformation said more for the attributes of Gravesend than Sutton's deficiencies. Rob Hegarty's dynamism was a focal point throughout, Jordan Huie's running out of defence was exhilarating and Tom Lennard's all around game won plaudits. Close games come down to small margins and in Freddy Bunting S&E held all the aces in all the decks.

For Gravesend this was an unwanted hat trick being their third loss in a row by a solitary point to add to a single point defeat on the opening day to Old Reigatian, not to mention a 2-point deficit to Reeds. Such a run would make Jonah feel fortunate by comparison. The hosts defended aggressively denying Sutton time and space. They varied their game with forwards, backs and some astute kicking. They were undone by missed opportunities as more than one vital line out was lost and overlaps in the 22 were not perceived. In addition, they were up against a formidable kicker who missed nothing as he made the challenging look elementary.

Next Saturday December kicks off at 2pm with a visit from Reeds Weybridge who are proudly perched third in the league. The equivalent fixture last season culminated the campaign with Sutton winning with a Rob Hegarty try on the final play for a 12-7 success.

Sutton & Epsom

O'Brien, Huie, Bibby, Bunting ©, Findlay, Lennard, Munford, Johnson, Jones, Gibson, Glanville, McTaggart, Tame, Davies & Hegarty.

Replacements: Boaden, Lennie & Hilton.

Gravesend

White, Huckle, Cooke, Filmer, Bruce M, Bruce G, Betts, Alderson, Dadson, Brooker, Bird, Brett, Stener, Chahal & Hewitt.

Replacements: Fouche, Hampshire & Fisher.

Ewell village set to improve

4 December 2024



Earlier this month Epsom and Ewell Borough councillors met to agree their contribution of £1.25m Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding toward the Ewell Village improvement project. This funding will match the £1.35m that Surrey County Council have committed to the project.

This is an important milestone for the Ewell Village project and will ensure the improvements go ahead as planned in 2026. The improvements, which include the introduction of new pedestrian crossings, greenery, improvements to footways and the public realm and a 20mph speed limit in the village, aim to improve safety along the High Street and make Ewell a great place to live, work and visit.

The plans were finalised earlier this year, following several public exhibitions and an online engagement, in which over 1400 responses were received from local people. The results of the engagement helped decide the way forward and plans were approved by Surrey County Council's Infrastructure Board and Capital Programme Panel in August.

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth, Surrey County Council said, "It's great news that Epsom and Ewell Borough Council have agreed their funding contribution to this important project. Now that all necessary funding is in place, we are in a good position to deliver this work as planned in 2026. Delivering these improvements to Ewell Village will bring about much needed safety enhancements to the High Street, whilst still allowing vehicle access. We know this was important for many local people and believe the plans deliver necessary change, whilst reflecting what the community want in their village."

Councillor Clive Woodbridge, Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, said: "I'm very pleased that we can support this substantial infrastructure project which will hugely benefit residents, businesses, and visitors to Ewell Village.

This project shows partnership working at its best. I would like to thank Surrey County Council for working so diligently with our residents and businesses to ensure that the planned improvements are tailored to their needs, and that Ewell Village maintains its unique, and historical, characteristics for many years to come, whilst improving accessibility and safety throughout the village."

The Essential Guide to Maintaining Clean Carpets and Upholstery in Woking

4 December 2024



Sponsored article: Maintaining a clean and inviting home is a priority for every homeowner. Among the most overlooked aspects of cleanliness are carpets and upholstery, which, if left unattended, can accumulate dirt, allergens, and stains over time. For residents of Woking, finding reliable carpet and upholstery cleaning services is key to ensuring your home

remains a sanctuary. In this article, we'll explore the importance of regular cleaning, practical tips, and professional solutions to help you keep your carpets and upholstery in pristine condition.

Why Regular Cleaning Matters

Your carpets and upholstery are subjected to daily wear and tear, whether from foot traffic, spills, or pet accidents. Over time, these materials can trap dust, bacteria, and allergens, which can negatively impact indoor air quality and trigger allergies or respiratory issues. Regular cleaning not only prolongs the life of these furnishings but also ensures a healthier living environment for your family.

Signs Your Carpets and Upholstery Need Professional Attention

While routine vacuuming and spot-cleaning are essential, there are clear indicators that your carpets and upholstery need expert care:

- **Persistent Stains:** Stubborn marks from coffee, wine, or ink often require specialized treatments to remove without damaging the fibers.
- **Unpleasant Odors:** Lingering smells can indicate deeply embedded dirt or mildew.
- **Fading Colors:** A dull appearance is a sign of accumulated grime and wear.
- **Allergy Symptoms:** Frequent sneezing, itchy eyes, or a runny nose indoors could be caused by allergens hiding in your soft furnishings.

Professional Carpet Cleaning in Woking

For residents looking for high-quality **Carpet Cleaning Woking** services, enlisting a trusted provider is the best solution. Expert cleaners use advanced techniques like hot water extraction, dry cleaning, and stain removal to restore carpets to their original beauty. Not only do they tackle visible dirt, but they also eliminate deep-seated bacteria and allergens.

Don't Overlook Upholstery Cleaning

Your sofas, armchairs, and other upholstered furniture also deserve attention. Regular professional cleaning can preserve their texture and appearance, preventing premature wear. Companies specializing in **Sofa Cleaning Woking** and **Upholstery Cleaning Woking** offer tailored solutions for different fabric types. From delicate silk to durable microfiber, professional cleaners ensure the process is safe and effective.

DIY Tips to Maintain Cleanliness Between Professional Services

While professional cleaning provides a deep refresh, here are some DIY steps you can take to maintain cleanliness:

1. **Vacuum Regularly:** Use a vacuum with a HEPA filter to remove surface dust and debris.
2. **Address Spills Immediately:** Blot (don't rub) spills with a clean cloth and apply a gentle cleaning solution.

3. **Rotate Furniture:** Prevent uneven wear by changing the position of rugs and furniture periodically.
 4. **Use Protective Covers:** For high-traffic areas, covers can shield your upholstery and carpets from dirt and stains.
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Why Choose Professional Cleaning Services in Woking

Professional cleaners combine expertise with cutting-edge equipment to deliver exceptional results. Whether it's your carpets or upholstery, services in Woking provide customized solutions to suit your needs. With eco-friendly cleaning agents and meticulous attention to detail, they ensure a hassle-free experience and a fresher home environment.

Conclusion

Carpets and upholstery are significant investments that deserve regular care. By combining routine maintenance with professional services, you can enhance your home's appearance and promote a healthier living space. Don't wait for stains and odors to become a problem—schedule a professional cleaning today and enjoy the benefits of a spotless, inviting home.

Broad Gauges New Train Set to Serve Epsom

4 December 2024



Residents of Epsom will soon benefit from South Western Railway's (SWR) latest investment in modern rail travel as the new Arterio trains, officially launched this week, are set to roll onto local lines in March 2025. The £1 billion fleet of state-of-the-art trains promises greater capacity, enhanced comfort, and cutting-edge features for commuters and leisure travellers alike.

The launch event at London Waterloo was marked by cricketing great Stuart Broad CBE naming one of the trains the **Nighthawk**, in a nod to his storied cricket career. Speaking at the ceremony, Broad reflected on the role trains play in bringing communities together:

"Trains are a lifeline for fans travelling to iconic venues. It's exciting to think of the Nighthawk connecting people across London and the South East, including my beloved Oval cricket ground."

The Arterio fleet is a major upgrade for SWR's suburban network. By June 2025, these sleek trains will serve routes to **Dorking, Epsom, Guildford, Hampton Court, and Reading**, with some of the first services to Epsom and Guildford scheduled for March.

What's New for Epsom Commuters?

Local residents can look forward to a host of improvements:

- **More Space:** Each 10-car Arterio train offers over 50% more capacity than the outgoing Class 455 models.
- **Modern Comforts:** Passengers will enjoy Wi-Fi, charging points at every seat, air conditioning, and accessible toilets.
- **Real-Time Information:** Advanced technology will provide live updates, helping commuters stay informed.

These upgrades are set to make travel smoother for Epsom residents, whether commuting to London or exploring nearby destinations like Guildford and Hampton Court.

A Train Network Honouring Sporting Heritage

SWR's nod to sporting excellence was evident at the event, where trains were also named the **Jockey**, **Red Rose**, **Ace**, and **Thames Racer**, celebrating key destinations such as Ascot, Twickenham, Wimbledon, and the Boat Race course. The Nighthawk is expected to carry cricket fans heading to the Oval via nearby stations, including Vauxhall.

Stuart Meek, Interim Managing Director of SWR, highlighted the significance of the new fleet:

"The Arterio trains are more than just a means of travel – they symbolise connection and community. Epsom passengers, among others, will soon benefit from the extra capacity, reliability, and comfort these trains bring."

A Boost for Epsom and the Local Area

The introduction of these trains is part of a broader commitment to enhancing rail services across Surrey. With more

than 80 peak services planned each weekday, residents can expect reliable, comfortable journeys into London and beyond.

As Epsom prepares to welcome the Arterio trains, the town's position as a well-connected suburban hub is set to be further cemented, offering improved travel options for work, leisure, and everything in between.

For further updates on Arterio services to Epsom, keep an eye on the **Epsom and Ewell Times**.