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A year in the life of Epsom's Deputy Lieutenant Mary Zoeller

17 December 2025



From scout band concerts to royal visits, the past year has offered **Epsom** resident **Mary Zoeller** a front-row view of some of Surrey's most inspiring community activity. Appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of Surrey in 2023, Mary Zoeller is now well into the rhythm of a role that quietly connects the Crown with everyday life across the county — celebrating voluntary service, youth achievement and civic endeavour.

Based in Epsom, where she has lived for 33 years, Mary Zoeller was asked to take on the role in part because of her long-standing involvement with the voluntary sector, particularly youth organisations. "I was honoured to be asked to support the Lord-Lieutenant as one of his Deputy Lieutenants," she said. "My location of Epsom and my connections with the voluntary sector were some of the reasons I was approached."

An ancient office with a modern purpose

The Lieutenancy is one of the oldest institutions in county life. The role of Lord-Lieutenant was created by King Henry VIII, originally to act as the Monarch's personal representative and organise local defence. While the military function has long since disappeared, the modern Lieutenancy plays a vital civic role.

In Surrey, the Lord-Lieutenant — currently Michael More-Molyneux — represents the Sovereign at major events, supports Royal visits, promotes voluntary service and recognises achievement through honours and awards. He is supported by a team of Deputy Lieutenants (DLs), drawn from across the county to reflect Surrey's diversity of place, background and experience.

Deputy Lieutenants deputise for the Lord-Lieutenant at engagements across Surrey and may be appointed for a fixed term, typically five years, or serve until the age of 75.

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On the ground across Surrey

Over the past year, Mrs Zoeller has represented the Surrey Lieutenancy at a wide range of events, many focused on young people and volunteers.

Highlights have included attending the 1st Claygate Scout and Guide Band Concert, the Elmbridge Junior Citizen event, and a Chief Scout's Gold Award presentation evening, where she met young people being recognised for exceptional commitment and leadership.

One particularly notable occasion saw her escort HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh during a visit to Brooklands Museum for an International Space Station live contact, linking local students with astronauts in orbit.

Reflecting on her experiences, Mary Zoeller said she has been repeatedly struck by the scale of voluntary effort across the county. "I have met volunteers who have astonished me with their commitment and passion for the organisations they represent," she said.

Epsom connection

Although born in Bookham, Mary Zoeller has made Epsom her home for more than three decades and remains closely connected to the town's community life. Her contribution has already been recognised locally, including being named one of Epsom & Ewell's Coronation Champions in 2023.

Asked whether she wished to comment on questions of Surrey identity in the context of local government reorganisation, Mary Zoeller was clear that this would not be appropriate in her official capacity. "It would be my personal opinion and not that of the Surrey Lieutenancy," she said.

As she enters another year as a Deputy Lieutenant, Mary Zoeller's experience offers a glimpse into a role that is largely unseen but deeply woven into the county's civic fabric — quietly celebrating service, commitment and community across Surrey.

Sam Jones – Reporter



Photo: Deputy Lieutenant Mary Zoeller at Gold awards for Chief Scouts

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