EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

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ISSN 2753-2771

7th March 2024

6 March 2024

BUSINESS COUNCIL FINANCES WESTMINSTER

Mixed reaction to Hunt’s budget in Surrey



6 March 2024

In a significant development outlined in today’s Spring Budget, Surrey MP and Chancellor Jeremy Hunt confirmed the Surrey County Deal agreement, heralding a new era of devolution for Surrey County … READ MORE

BUSINESS TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

Water company blind to Mole pollution?



6 March 2024

A single Surrey river and its tributaries have had more than 4,500 hours of raw untreated sewage dumped into it by Thames Water already this year, according to a campaign … READ MORE

COUNCIL FINANCES

Woking’s whopping bail out and tax rise

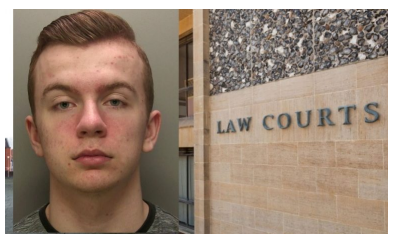


5 March 2024

Woking Borough Council has raised its share of tax by 10 per cent. It comes as the bankrupt council was offered an “exceptional” £785 million Government bail out The major … READ MORE

CRIME NEWS

False schizo claim rapist gets 8 years



4 March 2024

Following a three week trial an Epsom man who claimed schizophrenia goes down 8 years for rapes. Joseph Head, 25, of Chase Road, Epsom, was found guilty of three counts … READ MORE

RUGBY SPORTS

Cornish Collect Crucial Win on Heartbreak Hill

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4 March 2024

Sutton & Epsom 22 – London Cornish RFC 31 . Saturday 2nd March. The fixture at the Richard Evans Memorial Playing Fields in November was notable for thedebut of Willem … READ MORE

FOOTBALL SPORTS

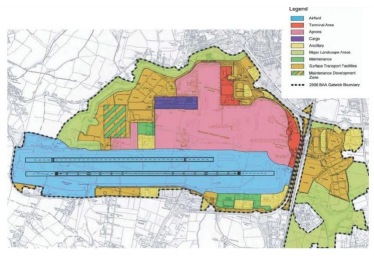
March puts spring in Salt’s steps

4 March 2024

Epsom & Ewell FC 6-2 Sandhurst Town. Combined Counties League – Premier Division. Saturday 2nd March 2024. Cast your mind back just four days to our heaviest defeat of the … READ MORE

BUSINESS TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

Gatwick Airport Expansion



2 March 2024

The six-month inquiry into Gatwick Airport’s plan to double capacity is underway. Airport chiefs at the country’s second busiest airport want to modify its northern runway so that it can … READ MORE

BUSINESS COUNCIL

Surrey takes over enterprise partnerships

1 March 2024

Businesses will be at the heart of Surrey’s economic growth as they are set to benefit from a single strategic vision and leadership for the Surrey economy as part of the … READ MORE

EDUCATION NEWS

IoT Launch: Nescot Welcomes Industry Leaders



29 February 2024

The Sussex and Surrey Institute of Technology (IoT) at North East Surrey College of Technology (Nescot) in Ewell welcomed over 60 guests at its opening event on Wednesday 28 February. … READ MORE

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IoT Launch: Nescot Welcomes Industry Leaders

6 March 2024



The Sussex and Surrey Institute of Technology (IoT) at **North East Surrey College of Technology** (Nescot) in **Ewell** welcomed over 60 guests at its opening event on Wednesday 28 February. Visitors had the opportunity to explore the state-of-the-art facilities, participate in hands-on activities and discover the wide range of resources and training opportunities available at the newly opened IoT.

The IoT at Nescot is the first new space to open as part of the Sussex and Surrey IoT and specialises in digital technologies with courses and apprenticeships from software development, cyber security, AI (Artificial Intelligence) and networking to cloud computing, data handling, 'internet of things' and IT support.

Visitors included partners and employers from varied industry sectors who were able to find out the many ways in which they can support the future of skills development in the IT sector. Anchor employers including NatWest, Roche Diagnostics, Southern Water, Pearson and Gatwick Airport pledged their ongoing support to work with the Sussex and Surrey IoT in various ways, from recruiting apprentices and upskilling existing staff to working with curriculum experts to help shape study programmes and providing mentoring.

Nescot staff and students also had the chance to explore the newly opened IoT. Computing staff, and students on our computing courses were on hand to showcase the specialist technology facilities and share their excitement with visitors about the courses available.

Julie Kapsalis, Principal and CEO at Nescot said, "We were delighted to welcome our first guests to the IoT at Nescot which was buzzing with activity the whole day. It's been wonderful to showcase our specialist digital technology facilities, resources and training. We are looking forward to working with businesses and partners to address current skills gaps and prepare for future skills needs."

Demonstrating some of the technology, Joseph, a student on our Level 3 Computing course said, "The focus on specialist digital technologies is a great opportunity to enhance my knowledge. Nescot is the perfect choice for the Institute of Technology with great access and networking opportunities."

Another student, Jeremy added, "I'm really excited about the Institute of Technology which is a great addition to Nescot. The technology and devices being installed here are amazing!"

Peter Goodenough, Computing tutor at Nescot, said, "With the Institute of Technology we can offer progress. Computers are in every walk of life and every industry. The IoT at Nescot is offering courses to enhance future skills and aid long term sustainability. You can choose from a wide range of courses on offer, from learning how to design, create and program smart devices, industrial and home robotics to making you mindful of your digital footprint."

For more information on the IoT at Nescot please visit their website

Sussex and Surrey IoT

The Sussex and Surrey IoT includes Nescot, Chichester College Group (CCG) and the Universities of Sussex and Brighton. The IoT will enhance higher level skills training, with a new state-of-the-art hub and specialist satellites for delivery at locations across the region. The investment will create new cutting-edge facilities for higher level technical training with a focus on digital, sustainable technologies, engineering and construction.

Find out more about the Sussex and Surrey IoT here

Image: A guest trying some of the VR (Virtual Reality) kit in the VR room at the IoT. Credit NESCOT

29th February 2024

6 March 2024

COUNCIL FINANCES

Computer lets down County Council workers

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28 February 2024

Surrey County Council's new £30 million payroll system has left staff "wiping tears of frustration and helplessness" over missed payments, it its claimed. It is claimed that the payroll system … READ MORE

COMMUNITY

Money advice and more for free in Epsom and Ewell

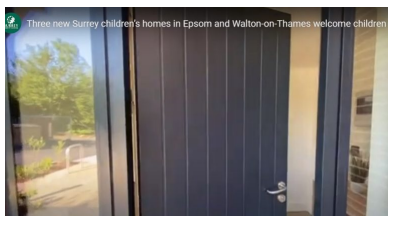


28 February 2024

A report published in October of 2023 by the UK mental health charity Mind found 2.7m people had considered suicide due to financial pressures and over the last couple years … READ MORE

COUNCIL SOCIAL CARE

More Surrey children in care to be cared for in Surrey



28 February 2024

In a move to bolster support for children in care, Surrey County Council has announced the inauguration of three state-of-the-art children's homes, marking a significant stride in their commitment to … READ MORE

NEWS POLICING

Surrey Police roots out non-PC conduct



27 February 2024

There is a culture of "sexualised conversations" within a Surrey Police training group, an officer's gross misconduct hearing panel heard. PC Adam Watkins was found culpable of making sexually inappropriate … READ MORE

COUNCIL CRIME

Primary school blighted by drive-by fly-tipper



27 February 2024

A "horrible, antisocial" pile of rubble was fly tipped outside a popular Surrey primary school by a lorry in a drive-by dump and run. Neighbours heard a truck driving down … READ MORE

COUNCIL HOUSING PLANNING

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A Green Group that won’t belt up



26 February 2024

In a comprehensive critique of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council‘s handling of the Local Plan, a local environmental advocacy group, known as Epsom Green Belt, argues there are shortcomings in the … READ MORE

FOOTBALL SPORTS

Face saved by late rally

26 February 2024

Epsom & Ewell FC 3-4 Alton. Combined Counties League – Premier Division. Saturday 24th February. A competitive and entertaining, if niggly encounter at the Madgwick on Saturday ended with visitors … READ MORE

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

Two years on – Epsom stilled by Ukrainian voices



24 February 2024

Saturday morning the Epsom community gathered at the Epsom Market Place to mark the solemn occasion of the second anniversary of the start of the war in Ukraine. Organized by … READ MORE

COUNCIL CRIME FINANCES

Police probe abuse of public funds



24 February 2024

Suspected fraud and alleged breaches of procedure in Guildford Borough Council’s housing maintenance team have snowballed, culminating in a police investigation. Last year, the council instigated a staff investigation following … READ MORE

FAITH

Lessons in slowing down in Surrey



23 February 2024

St Augustine’s Abbey in Chilworth, near Guildford Surrey, will open its doors to the public on May 18, 2024, offering a rare insight into the world of Benedictine monks. This … READ MORE

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COMMUNITY HEALTH

Bags of Confidence in Epsom for cancer survivors



22 February 2024

Epsom-based cancer support charity Look Good Feel Better is partnering with Epsom Café Moka in the Ashley Centre for a pop-up sale of preloved bags on Thursday 29th February 2024 … READ MORE

ARTS BUSINESS

All things Epsom in art work

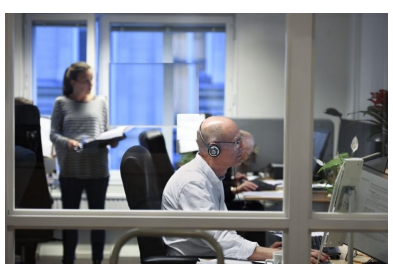


22 February 2024

A young artist’s work was unveiled for the first time on 16th February at The Ashley Centre in Epsom. Created in celebration of all things Epsom, the giant mural by … READ MORE

COUNCIL HEALTH

Surrey’s hotline for mental health



22 February 2024

Ahead of Helpline Awareness Day (Friday, 23 February), Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Surrey County Council are highlighting a local 24-hour NHS mental health crisis helpline that … READ MORE

Two years on – Epsom stilled by Ukrainian voices

6 March 2024



Saturday morning the Epsom community gathered at the Epsom Market Place to mark the solemn occasion of the second anniversary of the start of the war in Ukraine. Organized by the **Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network** (EERN) and **Surrey Stands with Ukraine** (SSWU), the event aimed to show solidarity and support for the people of Ukraine during these challenging times.

The atmosphere was one of unity and reflection as locals joined together to honour the resilience of the Ukrainian people. The local Ukrainian choir, **Renaissance**, delivered a moving rendition of the Ukrainian National Anthem, followed by a heartfelt prayer for Ukraine, touching the hearts of all those in attendance.

Jo Sherring, founder of the Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network, welcomed the crowd, emphasizing the importance of

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standing in solidarity with Ukraine during this difficult period. “We are privileged to have met and worked with such wonderful people and we will continue to support them as long as they need our help” she stated.

Roy Deadman, Chair of Surrey Stands With Ukraine thanked all the volunteers who have devoted countless unpaid hours to raising funds, collecting donations and sorting and packing aid for Ukraine.

A member of the choir, **Konstantyn**, a Ukrainian resident of Epsom, stepped forward and gave a poignant speech expressing his gratitude for Britain for its unwavering support to the Ukrainian community. “It is with a profound sense of appreciation that we extend our gratitude to everyone who has supported our country, whether in word or deed,” he remarked.

The presence of The Worshipful the Mayor of Epsom & Ewell, Councillor **Rob Geleit**, and the Lady Mayor, added a sense of official recognition to the event, further underscoring the community’s commitment to standing with Ukraine.

Although unable to attend in person, **Chris Grayling**, MP for Epsom & Ewell, conveyed his heartfelt message of solidarity to the Ukrainian community. “I am sorry not to be with you this year, but wanted to take this opportunity to extend my hand of friendship to all of our friends in Ukraine, both those of you who are here, and to your families who are back there.

I am very grateful to all of those locally who rose to the occasion, providing homes and other support for those escaping the War, to the teams of volunteers who continue to work with the Ukrainians who are here, and also the team in Surrey Stands For Ukraine who continue to provide direct aid to those back in Ukraine.

I know that this is a sombre occasion, but it is one which is really important as a signal of our determination to stand with Ukraine. That determination will not waver here in Epsom and Ewell.”

The event served as a reminder of the ongoing struggle faced by the people of Ukraine and reaffirmed the commitment of the Epsom community to support them in their quest for peace and stability.

This week SSWU sent its 100th van packed with aid to Ukraine and the day’s event raised over £1000. The charity is sending a long-laddered fire engine to Zaporizhzhia. Being near the front line the city’s tower blocks can be struck by Russian missiles before the siren warns.



Alan Avis (SSWU), Cllr Neil Dallen (Residents Association), Mhairi Fraser (Conservative PPC), Cllr Bernie Muir (Conservative Borough and County), Lady Mayoress, Cllr Robert Geleit (Mayor and Labour Councillor), Helen Maguire (Liberal Democrat PPC), Roy Deadman (SSWU)، joined together at the offices of SSWU and EERN in Global House. Offices generously donated by the **Ashley Centre** and generously exempted from business rates by **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council**.

Politicians from all parties suspended differences in supporting the event.

Lionel Blackman director of the charity for SSWU observed: “After the disunity and chaos in Parliament this week over the war in Gaza it was heartening to see local politicians from all sides demonstrate their united support for the humanitarian work being done in the Borough and Surrey for Ukrainians here and at home.”

If you wish to hear the Ukrainian Choir Renaissance and other professional Ukrainian musicians come to the social and music evening free of charge (leaving collection at discretion) on Saturday 30th March at the Epsom Methodist Church Ashley Road. Bring and share nibbles appreciated from 6pm and music starts at 7pm. No booking necessary.

Top Image- Ukraine Choir Renaissance with supporters from EERN and SSWU

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Bags of Confidence in Epsom for cancer survivors

6 March 2024



Epsom-based cancer support charity **Look Good Feel Bette**r is partnering with Epsom **Café Moka** in the Ashley Centre for a pop-up sale of preloved bags on Thursday 29th February 2024 from 11am until 2pm. Funds raised will go towards supporting people facing cancer to build back their self-confidence and improve their overall well-being.

Leigh Beth Stroud, Look Good Feel Better's Community Fundraising Manager, explains: "Our first ever 'Bags of Confidence' pop-up sale is open to everyone and will raise much-needed funds for people undergoing treatment for cancer. Pre-loved, quality handbags will be available to buy, so do come along and have a browse on the day."

This year, Look Good Feel Better celebrates its 30th anniversary. The charity embarked on its journey in 1994 to support people living with cancer and has helped over 200,000 people to date regain their confidence and self-esteem. Look Good Feel Better knows how challenging it can be to process a cancer diagnosis and manage the physical and emotional side effects of cancer treatment.

The charity runs workshops face-to-face and classes virtually to support women, men, and young adults through this time. Services are free and open to anyone facing cancer, and the workshops are led by trained volunteers in the beauty industry to provide practical advice about changes to skin, eyebrows, eyelashes, hair, and nails during treatment, and body confidence.

Ann M, who was recently diagnosed with cancer, attended a workshop and said: "I signed up to a number of the charity's workshops, including the hand and nail care; the headwear, wigs, brows and lashes, and the styling for confidence sessions. And I haven't looked back. The biggest thing was that I felt less alone. Cancer can make you feel very isolated, but here I was surrounded by other people, soaking up the good advice and information. It was just what I needed and I would recommend anyone undergoing treatment for cancer should sign up for a workshop."

If you are interested in hosting your own 'Bags of Confidence' event, the charity will provide you with all the support you need, with a colourful fundraising pack with helpful hints and tips available at www.lookgoodfeelbetter.co.uk

Leigh adds: "You might find your favourite designer bag or pick up another hidden gem. 'Bags of Confidence' is a simple and sustainable event where these handbags will go to a new home, while raising funds for the charity. And no bags go to landfill, so it's a win-win situation."

Established 30 years ago, Look Good Feel Better delivers cancer support services in local communities across the UK through a series of face-to-face and online group workshops, along with video tutorials. Its services help people face cancer with confidence, regain their sense of normality, make friends, and most of all look good and feel better. Its vision is to be recognised as one of the UK's leading cancer support charities and the only one dedicated to improving the physical appearance and overall well-being of people living with cancer.

All things Epsom in art work

6 March 2024



A young artist's work was unveiled for the first time on 16th February at **The Ashley Centre** in Epsom. Created in celebration of all things Epsom, the giant mural by 21-year-old Bristol University student **Ole Murphy** is being displayed in the Ashley Centre before moving to its permanent home in the pedestrian tunnel on West Hill. The local community and representatives from Epsom Business Improvement District (BID) attended the unveiling along with the artist and his

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family. The artwork was unveiled outside the shopping centre's flagship store which later this year will become the largest Primark in the UK outside of London.

The mural strengthens Epsom's role as Surrey's leading destination for inspirational artworks. Its bright, bold colours celebrate many elements of Epsom's history, culture and people. Ole Murphy's piece aligns beautifully with the graphic design students from the University of the Creative Arts (UCA Epsom), who created vibrant, colourful artworks for Epsom's outdoor East Street gallery and Ashley Centre windows in 2022, to celebrate the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

A year previously, the town unveiled a statue of suffragette **Emily Wilding Davison**, who died after stepping out in front of King George V's horse Anmer at the Epsom Derby in June 1913. The suffragette flag Davison was carrying when struck by the horse now hangs in the Houses of Parliament, while her statue holds a position of honour in Epsom's marketplace.

Karen Pengelly, BID Manager for Go Epsom, comments: "We are delighted to be adding Ole Murphy's vivid and colourful mural to Epsom's wealth of existing artwork, for enjoyment by all who live in and visit Epsom. Our town has such a rich history and culture, which Ole has captured beautifully in his creative and colourful design. The mural will ensure the West Hill tunnel is bursting with cheer, bringing joy to all those who walk, cycle or drive past."

Every aspect of Murphy's mural has been drawn from local life, from well-known elements such as horseracing and the discovery of Epsom Salts to more niche connections to the area.

Artist Ole Murphy comments: "I wanted the mural to represent the past and present of Epsom. Within my piece, I draw attention to the history and life that surrounds the town. Whilst Epsom is rich in historic events, I wanted to pay homage to current issues. I reference this in the sprinkling of music from the hands and the silhouetted figures that are walking down a runway. The figures represent the old and the new; their silhouettes are traditional but the red runway they are walking in foreshadows modernity in creative degrees at the university. Most importantly, I wanted my mural to be vibrant and light up the tunnel. I hope its colours run joyfully through the spirits of those who stop to observe it."

Epsom has a long history of investing in the arts – as well as a bright future. UCA Epsom announced in 2023 that it had obtained planning permission to turn two former office buildings into exciting new places for students and staff. The campus expansion speaks to how valued the role of art is in Epsom life and how intrinsically it is linked with the town's past, present and future.

22nd February 2024

6 March 2024

COUNCIL HOUSING PLANNING

Here we go again on the Local Plan?



21 February 2024

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has launched a dedicated FAQ section on its website to inform residents about the ongoing development of the borough's Local Plan. According to the Council … READ MORE

ARTS CULTURE

Arts plan to surprise Surrey and nation



21 February 2024

In a bold move to redefine Surrey's cultural landscape, a comprehensive strategy and vision for the years 2024–2034 has been unveiled by The Surrey Cultural Partnership (SCP). The "Surprising Surrey: … READ MORE

ARTS CULTURE

English music for Lent in Epsom

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21 February 2024

Stainer’s The Crucifixion is a classic of the Victorian era which is still loved by church choirs and choral societies. It tells the story of Christ’s Passion with compelling arias … READ MORE

COUNCIL HOUSING PLANNING

New housing around Surrey’s cathedral in contention



21 February 2024

A developer is arguing the benefits of 124 new homes next to Guildford Cathedral outweigh the potential harms to the heritage and green space. Vivid Homes is appealing for a … READ MORE

EDUCATION NEWS

The fellowship of NESCOT



20 February 2024

Nescot (North East Surrey College of Technology) Reigate Road, Ewell, celebrated student success at the annual Higher Education (HE) Awards graduation ceremony at Epsom Downs Racecourse earlier this month (7th … READ MORE

COUNCIL HEALTH

Coroner catalogues care failures in diabetic death



19 February 2024

Surrey County Council (SCC) has been accused of not taking its responsibilities seriously after an eighteen-year-old tragically died from diabetes. Jake Baker, an 18-year-old with a learning disability and type … READ MORE

RUGBY SPORTS

Outwitted by Sidcup’s set pieces



19 February 2024

Sidcup 45 Sutton & Epsom RFC 22. Saturday 17th February. Sutton & Epsom RFC first played at Crescent Farm in February 1898 and it is a delight to record thatmodern … READ MORE

FOOTBALL SPORTS

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First win of the year for Epsom & Ewell FC

18 February 2024

Camberley Town 1-2 Epsom & Ewell FC. Combined Counties League – Premier Division. Saturday 17th February 2024 After seven successive defeats we finally opened our account for 2024 with an … READ MORE

COMMUNITY EDUCATION FAITH

New Family Centre grows out of Nursery



18 February 2024

For nearly 25 years Epsom Methodist Nursery has been providing early years childcare in the heart of Epsom – just two minutes from the town centre. Now the Nursery is … READ MORE

BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Business that connects by insulating



18 February 2024

The Wickes Community Programme has donated insulation products to the value of £1000 to help struggling families in the local community. This initiative is run by the Epsom based charity, … READ MORE

BUSINESS COUNCIL

A boozy blow to Epsom’s “gentrification”?



15 February 2024

Epsom’s new B&M bargains store, formerly Wilko, can sell booze from 7am-11pm despite a resident’s concerns it could “attract the wrong crowd”. After entering administration last summer, the former Wilko … READ MORE

English music for Lent in Epsom

6 March 2024

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Stainer's The Crucifixion is a classic of the Victorian era which is still loved by church choirs and choral societies. It tells the story of Christ's Passion with compelling arias and dramatic choruses, as well as moments of reflection, such as the anthem, "God So Loved the World."

The work features in Epsom Choral Society's spring concert at St Martin's Church Epsom on Saturday 9th March. The programme showcases some of the most celebrated English anthems of the twentieth century. In Elgar's "The Spirit of the Lord" the Apostles tell of their calling to preach the Gospel, while Ireland's transcendent "Greater Love Hath No Man" and Howells' haunting "Like as the Hart Desireth" offer evocative interpretations of biblical texts. Finzi's "Lo, the Full, Final Sacrifice" is a poignant reflection on the communion gifts of bread and wine, in the words of the 17th-century mystic poet Richard Crashaw.

Isobel Squire, Chair of Epsom Choral Society, expresses her excitement for the event, stating, "We are thrilled to offer balm for the soul with an evening of glorious English choral music. Whether or not you are a believer, the soaring melodies and gorgeous harmonies of these wonderful settings of sacred texts are guaranteed to uplift your spirit."

Epsom Choral Society is delighted to welcome back esteemed international soloists John Findon (tenor) and Jon Stainsby (bass), alongside organist Peter Jaekel, for what promises to be an unforgettable evening of musical inspiration. Music Director, Julian Collings, said: "The five works chosen for this concert revolve around the Lenten themes of preparation, waiting and penitence. From John Stainer's gloriously Victorian depiction of the events leading up to the Crucifixion to the emotional intensity and heartfelt intimacy of the music of Herbert Howells and Gerald Finzi, this concert presents some of the best and most moving music from the English Choral tradition."

Tickets for "English Music for Lent" are available online at https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/epsom-choral-society/t-moaqzdo or by phone at 01372 727078.

Tickets are priced at £20 in advance or £22 on the door. Admission is free for attendees under 18 years of age. Each ticket includes a complimentary programme and a glass of wine.

The fellowship of NESCOT

6 March 2024



Nescot (North East Surrey College of Technology) Reigate Road, **Ewell**, celebrated student success at the annual Higher Education (HE) Awards graduation ceremony at **Epsom Downs Racecourse** earlier this month (7th February). 110 graduands along with 300 family members and friends came together to mark the culmination of their hard work.

Degrees, diplomas and professional awards were conferred in over 15 subjects ranging from teaching to osteopathy. Colleagues from Nescot partners including University of Greenwich, Kingston University, Open University were on hand to assist **Julie Kapsalis**, Principal and CEO, with conferring the degrees.

Guests of honour for the ceremony included Councillor **Robert Geleit**, Mayor of Epsom & Ewell (Labour Court Ward), a former HND student of Nescot and **Brian Finch**, Chair of Epsom Downs Racecourse who kindly brought along the amazing Derby trophy. Brian who was the guest speaker, congratulated the graduates on their achievement and spoke about key lessons from his career journey in his inspirational speech.

At the ceremony, annual awards for outstanding endeavours and achievements were also presented by our guests of honour to six nominated students from the Nescot Class of 2023. The prizes included awards sponsored by the College and by the **Rotary Clubs of Epsom and Ewell**.

To mark Nescot's 70th anniversary, Principal and CEO, Julie Kapsalis was proud to award the college's first **Honorary Fellowships** at this year's graduation ceremony. "2024 sees Nescot celebrate its 70th anniversary, to recognise this incredible milestone and achievement, the college is introducing a new Honorary Fellowship award, the highest accolade the college can bestow. It recognises exceptional achievement and excellence by individuals associated with the college,"

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said Julie.

The first Honorary Fellowship was awarded to **Dee Mathieson**, Senior Vice President and Managing Director of Elekta. A former student of Nescot, Dee has had an exceptional career in the science and medical sector. Sharing her journey, she said, “I am very grateful to Nescot for helping me on my way to what has been a fantastic and varied career in cancer care.”

The second Honorary Fellowship on the day was awarded to Nescot staff member, **Daniel Addo** from our Security Team. Presenting the award, Julie said, “With his kindness and positivity he is a wonderful role model and encourages students to make the most of their opportunities both in the college and life.”

The student vote of thanks was given by **Craig Clout**, who graduated with an Integrated Masters in Osteopathic Medicine. Craig spoke about the supportive and collaborative nature of the college community that contributes to everyone’s success.

HE degrees and awards were conferred for the following subjects: osteopathy, animal management, sports therapy, counselling, early years, animal management, healthcare play specialist, food premises inspection, business, creative media (moving image), performing arts, computing, public services, sport and exercise science.

Image: Honorary Fellowship award winners, Dee Mathieson Senior Vice President and Managing Director of Elekta (left) and Daniel Addo, Nescot staff member (right), with Principal and CEO of Nescot, Julie Kapsalis (centre).

New Family Centre grows out of Nursery

6 March 2024



For nearly 25 years **Epsom Methodist Nursery** has been providing early years childcare in the heart of Epsom – just two minutes from the town centre. Now the Nursery is entering an exciting new chapter in its history. As well as continuing to offer early years education for two to five year-olds the Nursery will become a **Family Centre**.

Following consultation with parents the Family Centre is planning to offer a broad range of activities and support including:
 A bumps and babies group for new parents providing ante-natal and post-natal support.
 Support groups for parents and carers of toddlers and young children.
 Courses and classes covering areas such as potty training, coping with challenging behaviours and family budgeting.
 Support for speech and language development.
 An affordable after-school club.
 A summer lunch club.

Already the Family Centre is running two stay-and-play groups for parents and young children and in April it is offering a free ‘Ready Steady Cook on a Budget’ course. With the cost of living rising, the FREE four-week course aims to support parents to provide easy, wholesome and healthy meals for the whole family whilst sticking to a budget.

The course will cover menu planning on a budget, planning the weekly shopping list, hands on experiences of creating easy recipes and top tips for saving money and time. The move to becoming a Family Centre has been made possible by a grant award from the Community Foundation for Surrey (CFS). CFS has arranged for the Netherby Trust and the Epsom and Ewell Community Fund to provide £12,450 which will match a contribution from Epsom Methodist Church. This money will help fund both the employment of a Family Centre Manager for the next year alongside the various activities that are planned.

Commenting on the grant award **Cara Golding**, the manager of Epsom Methodist Church Nursery, said:
“We are delighted to have secured this funding from the Community Foundation for Surrey. Our work with families at Epsom Methodist Nursery has shown us how committed parents are to their children and families and how keen they are to pick up ideas that will help them with the everyday and sometimes complex challenges that parenting can bring. Local agencies and public services are under pressure and services have been cut back. So the more we can do to provide practical help to parents and give children the best start in life the better. That is our mission.”

For further details on the ‘Ready Steady Cooking on a Budget’ course see

https://www.instagram.com/emcfamilies?igsh=bnNpYnFzNzhzaHp4&utm_source=qr

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Business that connects by insulating

6 March 2024



The **Wickes Community Programme** has donated insulation products to the value of £1000 to help struggling families in the local community. This initiative is run by the Epsom based charity, **Good Company**, which also operates a network of local food banks. Since launching the Epsom & Ewell Energy Support Scheme in October 2022, Good Company has helped more than 300 families and over a thousand people in the local area.

The primary aim of the programme is to offer support to families struggling to pay energy bills by helping them make their homes more energy efficient and offering advice on how to reduce their energy use in other ways.

Tom Sefton, the Poverty Lead at Good Company, said: “The products donated by Wickes included secondary glazing film, various draught excluders and heat reflective radiator foil. These were handed out at group workshops that we have been running in Epsom, Leatherhead, and Tadworth for food bank clients and other local families most affected by the cost-of-living crisis. We wanted to show people that making small changes like this can significantly reduce your energy usage.”

Feedback from participants has been extremely positive, including one client who said: “I found the workshop very helpful and really enjoyed talking to the other participants, sharing tips on how to save energy. The takeaway tips are also very informative. Thank you so much for your kindness and for giving me really useful information about the cost of energy and how to reduce usage and keep warm and safe this winter – which, like many people, has been scaring the life out of me.”

Tom went on to say: “Other clients have told us they are wearing the hooded blankets we provided to stay warm and are using an air fryer instead of their oven to save energy, as well as fitting draught excluders and radiator foil to heat their homes more efficiently.”

Chris Grayling MP Epsom and Ewell said: “Last year we ran an appeal in conjunction with **Citizens Advice Epsom** and Good Company and raised over £40,000 to support our local community. These funds were used to provide short-term help with energy bills and to offer energy-saving advice. We were delighted when Wickes agreed to support us with these products through the Wickes Community Programme. It’s at times like these we need to work together with businesses like Wickes to make a difference.”

Wickes Store Manager in Epsom, **Ben O’Leary** said: “Supporting our local community is really important to Wickes, especially during the current cost of living crisis. For any families interested in how they too can make their homes more energy efficient there’s some great advice on the Wickes website.”

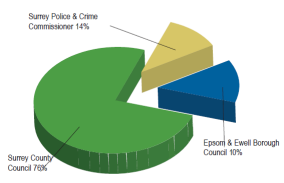
The Wickes Community Programme is open to all local community groups and charities seeking help for improvement projects.

15th February 2024

6 March 2024

COUNCIL FINANCES

No budging on Council budget



14 February 2024

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council met for two hours Tuesday 13th February to debate the proposed budget and Council tax increase for 2024/2025. Councillors received a 288 page report containing … READ MORE

LOCAL HISTORY

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Spitfire downed Messerschmitt over Epsom



14 February 2024

What connects Epsom's Market Square statue of Emily Davison and the Spitfire that shot down a German Messerschmitt over the Town in World War 2? "WW2 People's War" is an … READ MORE

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

2 years on Epsom to gather in solidarity with Ukraine



13 February 2024

The Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network (EERN) and Surrey Stands with Ukraine (SSWU) are calling upon the community to join them in a special gathering on Saturday February 24th at … READ MORE

BUSINESS COMMUNITY NEWS

30 years' smile stamped on local Post Offices



12 February 2024

Postmistress Nidhi Prashar has reached her 30 years' milestone of serving Post Office customers in Surrey. Three decades ago, Nidhi and her husband, Anil, bought Oxted Post Office and for … READ MORE

HOUSING NEWS

Epsom 3rd in a 2024 "Best Places to Live"



12 February 2024

In the latest edition of national estate agents "Garrington's Best Places to Live" index for 2024, Epsom has clinched the third spot after an assessment of rankings in a range … READ MORE

FOOTBALL SPORTS

Salts defeated in presence of legend

11 February 2024

AFC Croydon Athletic 5-2 Epsom & EwellFC. Combined Counties League – Premier Division. Saturday 10th February. Despite scoring seven times in matches against AFC Croydon Athletic this season, we only … READ MORE

CRIME NEWS

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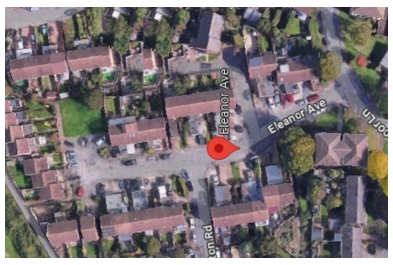
Murder investigation in Epsom



9 February 2024

A murder investigation has been launched following the death of a man at a residential address in Epsom on Wednesday (7 February). Officers were called to Eleanor Avenue at 9pm … READ MORE

BUSINESS NEWS

Another news in store for Epsom!



9 February 2024

Following Primark‘s announcement it is opening in Epsom we have a further welcome boost to the local economy, B&M are thrilled to announce the launch of its brand-new store in Epsom, Surrey. … READ MORE

CRIME POLICING

Epsom PC is tough on crime and the causes of crime



9 February 2024

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EDUCATION NEWS

Epsom MP cuts ribbon of new nursery



9 February 2024

Children at a new nursery welcomed MP Chris Grayling who cut the ribbon to officially open the new provision at an Epsom school. The Vale Primary School now offers a … READ MORE

BUSINESS NEWS

Primark to open in Epsom



9 February 2024

Primark will occupy 44,000 sq ft in the former House of Fraser space in the Ashley Centre, Epsom, utilising two floors and

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sitting adjacent to the scheme's central square near … READ MORE

30 years' smile stamped on local Post Offices

6 March 2024



Postmistress **Nidhi Prashar** has reached her 30 years' milestone of serving Post Office customers in Surrey. Three decades ago, Nidhi and her husband, Anil, bought Oxted Post Office and for most of that time Nidhi has served that community. Now Anil runs that branch since Nidhi became Postmistress for **Epsom** in July 2017.

Postmistress, Nidhi Prasahar, said: "I loved serving the people of Oxted, but there was suddenly an opportunity to take on a bigger, busier, branch as well at Epsom, so Anil now runs Oxted branch. First Epsom was temporarily based at Epsom & Ewell Town Hall to restore service to the town, then I opened my permanent branch and card and gift shop in the High Street in February 2018.

"I get on really well with my customers in Epsom too. Thankfully I'd just got settled before Covid struck, but that was strange as many businesses in the high street were closed, so those customers were not around. However, other people who would normally have been commuting to elsewhere, were suddenly working from home and visiting my Post Office, so there were lots of different customers to get to know. People were grateful that Anil and I were able to keep both Oxted and Epsom branches open."

Last year Nidhi was filmed at Epsom branch as part of an episode of Stacey Solomon's Sort Your Life out programme. A local family had their home de-cluttered and they came across lots of different foreign currencies, which was then converted into useful sterling at her Post Office. Many of her customers immediately recognised her from the programme.

Nidhi, said: "I love being a postmistress. It's the people that you meet that make it so great. There aren't many jobs where you have this great interaction with people. People come in regularly and you build up a relationship. Customers become like extended family.

"In Oxted there are no banks left and we meet the banking needs of the community – so it's non-stop banking customers. In Epsom there are lots of banks and building societies, but we are open longer hours than all of them, so for some customers they find it more convenient to come here."

At Oxted and Epsom customers also have the choice of DPD and Evri services in addition to Royal Mail and Parcelforce mail services.

Post Office Area Manager, **Richard Wilder**, presented Nidhi with a 30 Years' Long Service Award. He said: "I want to thank Nidhi for being a first class Postmistress in Surrey for 30 years. Nidhi and Anil provide great customer service and they really care about the people that they serve in Oxted and Epsom. Both branches look great too with the retail alongside."

The Post Office.

Another news in store for Epsom!

6 March 2024



Following **Primark**'s announcement it is opening in **Epsom** we have a further welcome boost to the local economy, B&M are thrilled to announce the launch of its brand-new store in Epsom, Surrey. The launch of the new store

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will create 60 jobs for local people.

The discount retailer has taken possession of a previous Wilko store which provides a space of 26,548sqft. which will undergo a comprehensive internal and external refurbishment programme before officially opening its doors at 8am on Friday 1st March 2024.

Customers can expect to find a wide variety of branded groceries for the best possible price including a range of food, drink and pet food. There will also be a fantastic selection of quality health and beauty products, homeware, electricals, DIY essentials, toys, games, gifts and plenty more to explore.

The store manager from B&M said: “We’re feeling extremely positive about the creation of more jobs for local people, and we hope customers are going to be delighted with their new store.”

“We are all really excited to get the doors open and welcome new customers through the door.”

Related reports:

Primark to open in Epsom

5 Shops that could replace House of Fraser in the Ashley Centre

Epsom PC is tough on crime and the causes of crime

6 March 2024



Police Constable **Bethan Evans-Jones** has been working to reduce shoplifting in **Epsom & Ewell** including working with one prolific individual who has recently been convicted of 24 counts of theft. Thanks to her interventions, he is also being supported to break out of the cycle of crime.

Bethan joined Surrey Police in 2022 via Police Now’s National Graduate Leadership Programme, which recruits, trains and develops talented graduates to excel as neighbourhood officers across England and Wales. Previously training to be a solicitor and working in her local MP’s office before deciding to become a police officer, Bethan speaks to us about her role on the frontline and her passion for supporting vulnerable people in the community.

Last summer, Bethan investigated a series of repeated thefts that targeted a petrol station in the borough of Epsom & Ewell.

Bethan began to visit the petrol station as part of her regular patrol route, and developed strong relationships with the staff, to ensure she would be directly alerted to any incidents while in the area.

She was subsequently able to intercept and arrest the offender as he attempted to shoplift alcohol. Thanks to the evidence she gathered during her investigation, he was convicted of 24 counts of theft at a local magistrates’ court. He was given a Community Protection Warning prohibiting him from entering any local businesses without the means to pay. He is also required to undertake drug rehabilitation and to pay compensation for his offences.

Police Constable Bethan Evans-Jones said: “I’m pleased to have been able to support staff at the local petrol station, who have the right to feel safe in their place of work.

“It is also important to me that the offender is supported to break out of the cycle of crime he had fallen into and receive the help he needs. He is well known within the community and, despite the crimes he committed, the shop staff spoke kindly of him – so it was important to all of us that he receive help.

“I referred him to local partner agencies, and he was able to get help from a charity that supports those with drug addictions and was also assigned a social support worker. He recognised that these were the first steps to ‘getting better’ and we believe that this will be an important step to prevent him from re-offending.

“Drugs and drug misuse has become a particular area of interest for me, because of the often-vulnerable nature of the offender themselves, as well as the need for victim support. This is the kind of thing that neighbourhood police officers can really support with, through strong partnership working with local charities and organisations, as well as compassion and a real understanding of what the vulnerable members of society experience. Getting to know people in the neighbourhood and being on patrol is what ultimately enabled me to apprehend this individual.

“That’s one of the reasons I decided to join the force via Police Now’s neighbourhood programme, where I knew I could embed myself in the local community and build relationships to make a difference. The programme also offers other

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development opportunities and I have successfully secured a four-week secondment with the Home Office to work on county lines policy. This will be a great opportunity to develop my skills further and bring key knowledge back to my neighbourhood, to better support residents across Epsom and Ewell."

West Surrey Intelligence Manager, **Inspector Alan Knight**, said: "Bethan is a very competent and capable police officer. She has the principles of community policing at the heart of all the work she undertakes, and this is reflected in what she has achieved.

"By tackling the core issue of the matter and diverting offenders from the vicious circle of reoffending to fund an addiction, Bethan has not only supported her community by preventing future criminality but is inspiring neighbourhoods that feel safe. I hope that the results in this case will provide reassurance to victims of crime that we are focused on pursuing those responsible.

"Bethan's work has shown that working with communities and victims of crime promotes the partnership sharing of intelligence and information which is so vital when combating all levels of criminality."

Epsom MP cuts ribbon of new nursery

6 March 2024



Children at a new nursery welcomed MP **Chris Grayling** who cut the ribbon to officially open the new provision at an Epsom school.

The **Vale Primary School** now offers a curriculum for two to 11-year-olds and its nursery already has 23 children on the roll with more joining in the spring.

Mr Grayling, MP for Epsom and Ewell, joined **Julian Drinkall**, CEO at GLF Schools, in cutting the ribbon to officially open the nursery on Wednesday 7 February.

"I was delighted to be invited to attend the official opening," said Mr Grayling. "The additional nursery places will support the government's expansion of childcare support to working parents and offer the local community free, funded 15 and 30 hour early years places for two, three and four-year olds. It is clearly going to be a really happy nursery," he added.

The school is a member of the GLF Schools Multi-Academy Trust which has a strategy to promote school readiness by ensuring as many as possible of its primary schools can cater for children aged from two to 11 with a school-run nursery on site.

Sarah Leyland and **Cathy Browne**, co-heads at The Vale, said they were both very proud of the hard work and community collaboration which has seen the creation of 'such a positive environment for our young children.'

To add to the celebration aspect of the event, a specially made cake depicting the school logo and an array of cupcakes were made by a former parent of the school.

"I am delighted for our community and the parents and carers with us today that GLF can offer this new nursery provision. GLF's nursery strategy emphasises the importance of ensuring our youngest children have access to high quality early education and being ready to start school," said Mr Drinkall.

"It was clear today that our new nursery at The Vale Primary School is quickly becoming an integral part of the local community and provides local families with the opportunity to access a new and exciting two-11 curriculum."

The nursery will be holding an open morning on Wednesday, March 6 and Friday, March 8 and visits can be booked at the school on 01372 273639 or via info@thevaleprimary.org

The Vale Primary School website also has details on how nursery funding is changing and how parents can apply for funded places for 15 hours childcare for two-year-olds. More details on www.thevaleprimary.org

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Primark to open in Epsom

6 March 2024

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Primark will occupy 44,000 sq ft in the former House of Fraser space in the Ashley Centre, Epsom, utilising two floors and sitting adjacent to the scheme's central square near retailers such as JD. Forming the destination's anchor tenant, the new store will feature Primark's full offer, incorporating menswear, womenswear and childrenswear, as well as accessories, beauty, home, and lifestyle. The store is expected to create around 100 jobs for the local community and is set to open in early 2025.

Louisa Butters, Head of Retail Asset Management UK at CBRE IM, commented: "Primark's signing is a milestone moment for the Ashley Centre. The opening will mark the final stage of our two-year repositioning project that underpins our long-term strategy for the revitalisation of the Ashley Centre, ensuring that it continues to serve the needs of the community in every way possible. We are looking forward to welcoming Primark early next year, and delivering an optimised and enhanced experience and environment for our visitors."

Philippa Nibbs, Director of Sales UK, London and the South East at Primark, also said: "As we continue to invest in the UK high street, we are delighted to announce our new store in Epsom that will open next year. We look forward to becoming a part of this community and playing a central role in the refurbished Ashley Centre."

Primark in Epsom will join Newbury, Berkshire, as the next locations confirmed for Primark in 2025. This follows the recent news that Primark will be investing more than £100m in its UK stores this year, as it celebrates 50 years of Primark on the Great British High Street. Local shoppers in Epsom and the surrounding areas looking to get their Primark fix in the meantime will be able to visit the nearby Sutton, Kingston or Woking stores.

In 2023, the Ashley Centre welcomed a raft of new openings such as JD, Deichmann, and GAIL's Bakery, forming a key part of the centre's leasing strategy to evolve its retail and F&B offer. The centre's £7 million refurbishment will also work in tandem, seeing the reconstruction of the East entrance and enhancements to the interior, creating a refreshed and modern look.

Related Reports:

5 Shops that could replace House of Fraser in the Ashley Centre

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