# The lime light a foot in Epsom

Aydin Mustafa, a lifelong performer and dedicated advocate for the arts, has taken on a new role as the Owner and Director of **Footlights Epsom**, the first Footlights franchise in London. Aydin's passion for the performing arts began at a young age, starting in the industry at the tender age of 4. Reflecting on his early beginnings, Aydin shares, "My mum introduced me to the world of performing arts not with the aim of fame, but to instil confidence, nurture development, and foster social connections. It was a love that ignited in me instantly and continued to burn bright throughout my teenage years."



After studying performing arts at GCSE and A-level at Woodcote High School in Coulsdon, Surrey, Aydin pursued a career in the corporate world but found himself yearning for something more fulfilling. Inspired by his deep-rooted passion for the arts and his desire to make a positive impact on the community, Aydin sought guidance from Jo Fisher, the visionary founder of Footlights, founded in 2005.

Aydin recalls, "Jo Fisher's journey from leaving school at the age of 14 to crafting Footlights into the illustrious, multi-award-winning performing arts franchise it is today has been a constant source of inspiration for me. Her commitment to empowering young talent and creating avenues for personal growth resonates profoundly with my own beliefs and values."

With a vision to establish a sanctuary of excellence, diversity, and inclusivity for children and teenagers aged 3-18, Aydin envisions Footlights Epsom as a nurturing environment where individuals can freely express themselves and cultivate lifelong skills "In a world that can often feel overwhelming and chaotic".

Aydin poignantly expresses, "Our mission is to nurture the generation of tomorrow today, equipping them with the tools, confidence, and resilience needed to navigate the complexities of the modern world."

Aydin's unwavering dedication to fostering young talent and nurturing personal growth is deeply rooted in his love for his 2-year-old daughter, Ayla, who serves as his greatest inspiration. "Every step I take with Footlights Epsom is guided by the hope of creating a world where my daughter can flourish, learn, and boldly express her true self. A performing arts school isn't just about creating the next star; it's about empowering young individuals, fostering their creativity, and equipping them with essential skills for life," said Aydin Mustafa, Owner and Director of Footlights Epsom.

The grand opening of Footlights Epsom is set to take place on Saturday 14th September, at Epsom and Ewell High School from 9:30am to 1pm. Individuals aged 3-18 years old, regardless of background or experience, are invited to join in the celebration. The Mayor of Epsom and Ewell, Steve Bridger, will be in attendance to mark this exciting new chapter in the performing arts scene in Surrey.

Aydin lastly adds "Join us at Epsom and Ewell High School on Saturday 14th September for a day filled with fun, creativity, and the magic of Performing Arts. We look forward to welcoming the Epsom and Ewell community and neighbouring towns to our

grand opening event."

For more information about Footlights Epsom, including updates on workshops and events, follow them on Instagram and Facebook @footlightsepsom. To learn more about the school and register for the open day, visit www.footlightstheatre.co.uk/location/footlights-epsom/ or contact Aydin Mustafa via email at epsom@footlightstheatre.co.uk

Text provided by Footlights.

# 25th July 2024

ARTS CULTURE NEWS

#### Satisfy your eye at Epsom film festival



24 July 2024

Epsom based Satisfied Eye International Film Festival (SEIFF) is set to dazzle film enthusiasts with its "Best of Fest 2024," running from July 26-28 at the brand new Picture House ... READ MORE

**COMMUNITY FAITH** 

### Ahmadiyya roti for local food bank



24 July 2024

Fresh bread from local Ahmadi Muslims will be made from the Roti-making factory at the UK's largest Muslim convention, the Jalsa Salana, as part of the "Bread for Britain" campaign ... READ MORE

COMMUNITY COUNCIL VOLUNTEERS

## Council works with local charities for needy



23 July 2024

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is working with three local charities to distribute up to £88,700 from the Household Support Fund to people experiencing financial hardship across the borough. The ... READ MORE

CRIME POLICING

# Footage of Epsom College murders aftermath not for idle police viewing



22 July 2024

An ex-serving Surrey Police officer has been banned from the profession for gross misconduct after viewing body-worn camera footage of a "significant local and national case" without a legitimate reason. ... READ MORE

COUNCIL TRANSPORT

## Mixed responses in Surrey to 20mph zones



22 July 2024

Plans for new speed limits in Surrey could go ahead despite lack of confidence it would improve road safety. Locals said they considered road conditions and potholes to have a ... READ MORE

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

## **Surrey Scouts honour Armed Forces Covenant**



20 July 2024

Surrey Scouts have become the first Scout County in the UK to sign the Armed Forces Covenant. Representing a commitment on behalf of the 18,000 members of Scouting in Surrey, ... READ MORE

COUNCIL NATURE

## Making Box Hill more accessible on foot



20 July 2024

Access has been vastly improved up to iconic landmark, Box Hill in the Surrey Hills National Landscape thanks to the refurbishment of 300 steps. Originally installed by volunteers back in ... READ MORE

COUNCIL NATURE

## Community urged to help restore nature in Surrey



20 July 2024

Surrey County Council is seeking support from residents, businesses and community groups to help shape a new 'Local Nature Recovery Strategy' (LNRS). Developed with partners, the strategy will set out ... READ MORE

**COUNCIL SPORTS** 

## Anyone for tennis?



20 July 2024

Continuing the enthusiasm for tennis following Wimbledon, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will be offering bookable free tennis sessions from Tuesday 23 July to Monday 26 August, between 8am and ... READ MORE

**EDUCATION NEWS** 

#### Surrey teacher banned for underwear social media pupil chat



18 July 2024

A Surrey teacher has been banned after messaging pupils about thongs, favourite underwear, and shaving. [The Teachers' Regulation Agency (TRA) has not published the name of the school in the ... READ MORE

# Ahmadiyya roti for local food bank

Fresh bread from local Ahmadi Muslims will be made from the Roti-making factory at the UK's largest Muslim convention, the Jalsa Salana, as part of the "Bread for Britain" campaign organized by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and given to local food banks

The annual convention (Jalsa Salana) is a three-day event held by members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community at a prop-up village near Alton that draws over 40,000 participants from more than 115 countries. The purpose of the event is for attendees to increase religious knowledge as well as to promote peace, spirituality and community. The convention is headlined by His Holiness Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Caliph of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community addressing the congregation on each of the three days of the event. The event is broadcast live internationally and also features faith and civic leaders, parliamentarians and diplomats speaking on the importance of enhancing unity, understanding and mutual respect in our everchanging world.

Local Ahmadi Muslims from Epsom have been actively involved in organizing the Jalsa Salana. This year, the convention has expanded its outreach through the "Bread for Britain" campaign, which aims to help address food insecurity by distributing thousands of roti-breads to several different locations across the UK. Epsom will be one of the towns to benefit from this initiative.

The fresh bread, lovingly made at the convention's dedicated Roti-bread making factory, symbolises not just nourishment but also the values of compassion, service, and community. The local community's effort highlights their commitment to supporting their neighbours and addressing pressing social issues.

A local representative of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Epsom stated, "The Bread for Britain programme highlights the essential duty of every Muslim to help and support their community as the Quran says "give to the kinsman his due and to the needy and to the wayfarer. That is best for those who seek the favour of Allah". We hope that through this small gesture we are

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able to help our local community."

The roti breads will be delivered to Lidl Neighbourly food bank in Epsom, to be distributed to individuals and families in need, providing essential nourishment and demonstrating the strong community ties within Epsom.

As the "Bread for Britain" campaign continues, the Ahmadi Muslim community in Epsom remains dedicated to extending their charitable efforts beyond the Jalsa Salana, working towards a more compassionate and supportive society.

Image: kavitakapoor License details

# **Surrey Scouts honour Armed Forces Covenant**

Surrey Scouts have become the first Scout County in the UK to sign the Armed Forces Covenant. Representing a commitment on behalf of the 18,000 members of Scouting in Surrey, the Armed Forces Covenant was signed by Joe Rogerson (County Commissioner) and Colonel Tim Petransky, in the presence of His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, Mr Michael More-Molyneux.

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise that Surrey Scouts acknowledge and understand that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy, and society they serve with their lives. Surrey Scouts enables young people from the Armed Forces Community to join Scouting, supports military families, service members and veterans

The county of Surrey still sees a large amount of armed forces reside and work across Surrey and a number are currently involved as volunteers in Scouting.

Joe Rogerson (County Commissioner) said "Surrey Scouts is committed to honouring the Armed Forces Covenant and supporting the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our country and to Scouting".

Colonel Patrick Crowley MBE DL, Chief Executive of the South East Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association said "The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation ensuring that those who serve, or have served, and their families, are treated fairly. We are delighted that Surrey Scouts has signed the Covenant and with the commitments Surrey Scouts has made to young people, military families and all members of the Armed Forces Community".

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise that together we acknowledge and understand that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy, and society they serve with their lives.

Its two principles are that, recognising the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces:

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

You can read about the Covenant in depth, the full statement of the Covenant, or Covenant FAQs.

If you're a member of the Armed Forces (regular or reserve), a veteran, or a family member, the Covenant offers a wide variety of support to ensure you are treated fairly.

The Covenant focuses on helping members of the Armed Forces community have the same access to Government and commercial services and products as any other citizen. This support is provided in a number of areas including: healthcare, education and childcare, housing and accommodation, employment, financial services

You can find out how the Covenant supports you, as a member of the Armed Forces community.

A wide range of different organisations implement the Covenant, including: The UK Government and Devolved Administrations, The single Services (Royal Navy, British Army, and Royal Air Force), Businesses of all sizes, Local government, The NHS, Schools, Charities

Some of these organisations sign the Covenant or make other commitments, or have a Legal Duty to consider it.

This site will direct you to the information regarding policies, services and projects that is relevant to you.

The Covenant Legal Duty is a legal obligation on certain public bodies (including local authorities, governing bodies of certain state schools, various NHS bodies, and other organisations) to have due regard to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when carrying out certain functions in healthcare, education and housing. It has been in force since November 2022.

All genders, races and backgrounds are welcome at Scouts. Every week, it gives almost over a third of a million people aged 6-25 the skills they need for school, college, university, the job interview, the important speech, the tricky challenge and the big dreams: the skills they need for life.

Scouts helps members gain these skills by encouraging them to ask the big questions and listen with wide open minds. It helps them to take a deep breath and speak up, think on their feet, ignore the butterflies and go for it. With Scouts, young people don't give up - they get back up and try again, often with the support of the friends they've made there.

Neil Wibberley

# 18th July 2024

HORSE RACING SPORTS

#### Get a lift from Epsom's flat season.



17 July 2024

The Flat season continues at Epsom this Thursday, with six evening races for fans to enjoy in the summer sun. The going on the Downs is good to soft, soft ... READ MORE

ENVIRONMENT WESTMINSTER

## Surrey's LibDem MP majority take on Thames Water



17 July 2024

Buoyed by having the majority of Surrey County's 11 Parliamentary Constituencies returning Liberal Democrat Party Members of Parliament, the six new law-makers, including Epsom and Ewell's Helen Maguire MP, have ... READ MORE

ARTS CULTURE

### **Epsom Choral Society goes to Town on English music**



16 July 2024

Epsom Choral Society joined the musical forces of The Barnes Choir, The English Sinfonietta and the Arcubus Ensemble on Saturday 13th July in The Cadagon Hall, London for a stirring ... READ MORE

**COUNCIL FINANCES** 

#### Safety set back for a Council's car park revenue



16 July 2024

Safety work to repair crumbled concrete and rusted steel reinforcements at the Swan Car Park in Leatherhead could cost a council more than £200,000. Mole Valley District Council is set ... READ MORE

BUSINESS COUNCIL EDUCATION

## Surrey's cyber sleuth students at work



15 July 2024

Cyber-curious students from Ash Manor School have been inspired to consider future careers in the sector after taking part in a special one-day workshop. The event was hosted by Surrey ... READ MORE

**COUNCIL HOUSING** 

## Call to landlords to help Council help housing need



15 July 2024

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is looking for landlords of three-, four- and five-bedroom houses to sign up to their Private Sector Leasing Scheme. The Private Sector Leasing Scheme allows ... READ MORE

ARTS EDUCATION

## **Epsom UCA artists wear their mortarboards**



15 July 2024

Last week, the next generation of artists and designers from the University for the Creative Arts (UCA) in Epsom received their degrees alongside Yinka Ilori MBE and Jonathan Anderson, who ... READ MORE

HOUSING NEWS

#### Average house price in Epsom and Ewell over half- million.



15 July 2024

Epsom and Ewell saw the largest increase in new build completions in the South East between 2021-2023, new data has revealed. The study, conducted by architectural visualisation experts at Modunite, investigated ONS data on the number of ... READ MORE

COUNCIL TRANSPORT

#### 90% of Surrey road hole damage claims go to pot



14 July 2024

Pothole damage has given rise to 5,619 claims for compensation from Surrey residents to the county council since May 2021. Since the last local election three years ago, only 581 ... READ MORE

**HEALTH NEWS** 

## Campaign to keep local child cancer services local



12 July 2024

Wandsworth Council is leading a campaign against the NHS decision to move children's cancer services from two South London hospitals into Central London and the new Labour Government will be ... READ MORE

COUNCIL EDUCATION

### Give back OBE for SEND failures parents demand



12 July 2024

Parents say "children and families lives are at stake" after the repeated "failings" by Surrey County Council (SCC) over special needs provision for children. Local authorities are legally obliged to ... READ MORE

COUNCIL EDUCATION

#### Bet your boots on skill camps?



12 July 2024

Hundreds of residents across Surrey can fast track their careers for free thanks to a range of courses in nine exciting and growing sectors. Surrey County Council is offering anyone ... READ MORE

COUNCIL PLANNING TRANSPORT

## Mutual easing of access benefits Epsom development



12 July 2024

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has agreed to enter into a mutual deed of easement with the developer of the SGN Gas Works site in Hook Road, Epsom. This site ... READ MORE

**NEWS TRANSPORT** 

## Local roadworks taken to task



12 July 2024

Surrey County Council has established a critical new task force to reduce the impact of utility roadworks and drive better coordination and communication of works across Surrey's road network. Utility ... READ MORE

COUNCIL EDUCATION

## **Epsom County Councillor win for childminders**



12 July 2024

Surrey County Council (SCC) has announced a significant change in the payment system for childminders, following a successful campaign led by Residents' Association County Councillor Eber Kington (Ewell Court, Auriol ... READ MORE

**COUNCIL HOUSING** 

## Surrey Borough fails social housing tenants



12 July 2024

Guildford Borough Council (GBC) has failed to meet new rules on social housing a judgement has rules. The report published by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) said the social ... READ MORE

BUSINESS NEWS PLANNING

#### No more German supermarkets in Epsom



12 July 2024

Plans for an Aldi store have been rejected again over fears the increased traffic would have a severe impact on road safety. [The site is a few hundred yards away ... READ MORE

# Get a lift from Epsom's flat season.

The Flat season continues at Epsom this Thursday, with six evening races for fans to enjoy in the summer sun.

The going on the Downs is good to soft, soft in places, but with a day of sunshine forecast, it could firm up throughout the day before the first race at 5:55pm. The racing runs all the way through until 8:35, with the main attraction being the Class 4 Betfred "Bet Builder" Handicap at 8:05.

Read below to find out the latest **horse racing betting** and tips from Epsom's card on Thursday:

#### 17:55 - Betfred Play Fred's 5 Million EBF Maiden Stakes

The first race of the evening will put on show some promising two-year-old horses, who will race along seven furlongs. Having been bred from Andrew Balding's stable star Kameko, there are high hopes for Spell Master having debuted in sixth place at Newbury 14 days ago. However, Oisin Murphy's presence on John and Thady Gosden's **Attack** cements its place as the top pick for this contest.

#### 18:30 - Steve Donoghue Handicap

For this Class 5 race, a slightly longer trip of 1m 1/5f awaits the runners and riders, with nine entries competing for the top prize of £4,448.90. The standout runner in the race is **Blenheim Star**, with three wins in six outings so far this year, most recently at Brighton 16 days ago, but trainer William Knight will hope that the ground firms up.

#### 19:00 - Chantilly Handicap

Next up, the second handicap of the card sees six runners competing over a 1m 2f trip. For Jack Channon, **Amancio** is the type who can bounce back from a disappointing fifth place at Chester 34 days ago and Rossa Ryan will hope to guide home the three-year-old to a win which replicates success at Haydock on April 27.

#### 19:35 - Betfred Ladies' Derby Handicap

For the fourth race, for female amateur jockeys only, **Naasma** looks like the smart option having operated well at this C&D. One to watch out for in this race is also Roost, who is down in grade and with blinkers back on could enter the running.

#### 20:05 - Betfred 'Bet Builder' Handicap

For the second Class 4 race of the evening, ten runners will take to the short 7f 3y trip. Having performed well at this C&D, **Guiteau** is the top pick for the race, although the highly rated Miss Information will be expected to produce a strong performance under the charge of Oisin Murphy for Andrew Balding.

#### 20:40 - Betfred 'The Classic Bookmaker' Handicap

For the final race of the evening, 12 runners will take to the course in a race which is exclusively for three-year-olds. From a career low mark, **Bated Breeze** catches the eye, especially when first-time blinkers are added into the equation. Meanwhile, Havana Mojito is the forecast favourite having finished runner-up here 16 days ago and is at a 4lb lower mark.

#### Selections - odds via BoyleSports

17:55 - Attack 5/2

18:30 - Blenheim Star 9/4

19:00 - Amancio (NAP) 6/1

19:35 - Naasma 5/1

20:05 - Guiteau 3/1

20:40 - Bated Breeze (E/W) 10/1

Image: Credit Paul. CC BY 2.0

# **Epsom Choral Society goes to Town on English music**

**Epsom Choral Society** joined the musical forces of The Barnes Choir, The English Sinfonietta and the Arcubus Ensemble on Saturday 13th July in The Cadagon Hall, London for a stirring celebration of English music, including William Walton's stupendous Belshazzer's Feast. **Peter Lutton** reviews the concert.

England in the 18th and 19th centuries is often said to have been a 'land without music'; this concert proved emphatically that from early in the 20th century every effort was being made to disprove that notion. From Parry in 1902 to Walton in 1931 we heard music of great confidence, assuredness of technique and not least, great beauty. The large forces needed were cleverly squeezed into the venue, including the optional extra brass. Such a splendid all-English offering encourages those of us who feel that much concert programming pays too little heed to the sheer quantity of excellent composition in these isles over the last one hundred and twenty years.

Parry's 'I was Glad' and 'Blest Pair of Sirens' are staples of the repertoire but were given more than the usual respect; indeed, there was some very careful treatment of the various parts of the text. Even if the brass opening in the former left little room for the choirs' entry to crescendo, mostly the dynamics were carefully observed, the Vivats were sensibly omitted (against current trends) and the contrasting middle sections in both were sensitively presented. The tempo of 'I was Glad' could perhaps have been a notch or two faster, given that this building has no noticeable reverberation period. In the louder parts, choral forces this size were able to balance the sheer power that modern orchestral instruments can produce and yet the climaxes were not overwhelming in a venue which might have been thought not quite large enough for such massed forces.

The baritone soloist, Philip Tebb, was a very good communicator in both Vaughan Williams' 'Five Mystical Songs' and Walton's 'Belshazzar's Feast', only very occasionally losing out to the scale of the orchestral sound behind him. A few hints of intonation fractionally under the note did not detract from his impassioned performance. When the choir was assigned to very gentle but tutti accompaniment, they were well balanced and the effect was surely exactly what the composer intended. Also particularly effective was the orchestral wind playing in 'The Call'. Finally, the tightness and drive of 'Let all the World' with its excellent dynamic contrast ensured an inspiring finish to these heartfelt settings of George Herbert's powerful poetry.

The English Sinfonietta's strings provided a very appropriate breather in Elgar's 'Serenade', before Parry's 'Blest Pair of Sirens' rounded off the first half. This was precise, immaculate ensemble playing of a very high order. The music was allowed to breathe and a great many nuances of rhythm and dynamic were brought out in all three movements. Particularly notable was the restraint in the final part of the second movement. The stylish yet slightly skittish playing evident in the third movement reflects Elgar's confident orchestration; string players eulogise Elgar's writing for their instruments, saying that his understanding of their needs is shown in the way the individual lines often lie under their fingers.

The climax of the evening was of course Walton's ground-breaking cantata, 'Belshazzar's Feast'. This

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must have been a revelation to all its hearers back in 1931 – it has this power now, as we heard clearly in this performance. The orchestra made the most of the dramatic brass and varied percussion writing,

carefully designed so as not to drown out the choral writing, itself written deliberately in homophonic style so that the text would be clear to the listener. The rhythmic demands in this music are considerable, yet this performance came across as confident and accurate, even if some furious counting must have been going on amongst the differing voice parts.

The emotional outpouring in the first few pages reached a peak of luminosity in the repeated setting of the words 'How shall I sing the Lord's song in a strange land?' Walton's bold choral writing broke new ground and the choirs did it full justice. The long and demanding unaccompanied baritone solo was delivered with both accuracy and passion before we launched into the vivid description of the feast and its musical elements.

Walton's music strikes a balance between modernity and tonal tradition which makes him more approachable than many other composers; this performance was admirable for its clarity and direction. The sinister percussion introduction to the writing on the wall and the choral shout of 'Slain!' were as effective as any visual image, showing the power of modern oratorio when brilliantly crafted and expertly handled.

The final romp of celebration was given due impetus and we were left breathless at the end by the grandeur of the conception and the quality of the performance.

Congratulations are due once more to Epsom Choral Society, The Barnes Choir, the Arcubus Ensemble and the English Sinfonietta, all under Julian Collings, for their stirring performance of a great classic.

#### **Peter Lutton**

Formerly Assistant Director of Music, St John's School, Leatherhead and Organist Emeritus, St Nicolas, Great Bookham.

# **Epsom UCA artists wear their mortarboards**

Last week, the next generation of artists and designers from the University for the Creative Arts (UCA) in Epsom received their degrees alongside Yinka Ilori MBE and Jonathan Anderson, who were awarded honorary doctorates for their outstanding contributions to the creative industries.

Held at Royal Festival Hall in London, the fashion designer Jonathan Anderson shared his experience of being a student with dyslexia and starting his own company.

He encouraged graduates not to fear failure, but to be curious, to take risks, and above all else avoid getting stuck in the mud!

He also admitted that he thought rules were useless and reflected on the value of authenticity:

"Authenticity is invaluable; originality is non-existent. Steal, adapt, borrow, he said.

The British-Nigerian artist and designer, Yinka Ilori MBE, who is known for his bold use of colour and playful designs added:

"For as long as I can remember, I've dreamt of being an artist... If you told my younger self where I would be today, he wouldn't believe you."

He also urged graduates to: "Never stop dreaming. . .always say 'yes' to new opportunities. We live in a world that is all about connection and connectivity. Above all, have trust in yourself, and listen to your intuition."



Prof. Jane Roscoe UCA Vice-Chancellor

The graduation ceremonies saw over 3,000 students from UCA receive their degrees and attending for the first time was UCA's President and Vice-Chancellor, Professor **Jane Roscoe**, who said:

"The global arts and creative sector are vibrant – there are so many opportunities, and the major challenges facing our planet will need creatives and creativity in every shape and form. You, of course, have all been prepared for this future and your UCA degree has given you the skills and is your ticket to success."

Spread across three days, the ceremonies marked the culmination of 3,000 students' time at UCA, before taking the next step on their journey in the creative industries.

# Average house price in Epsom and Ewell over half-million.

**Epsom and Ewell** saw the largest increase in new build completions in the **South East** between **2021-2023**, new data has revealed.

The study, conducted by architectural visualisation experts at Modunite, investigated ONS data on the number of new build completions from 2021-2022 and 2022-2023, to find which local authority has seen the biggest increase in new build completions year-on-year.

#### **Key findings:**

- Epsom and Ewell saw the largest increase in new build homes, at 133% compared to the English average of 21%
- Tunbridge Wells ranks second with an increase of 130% new build completions
- West Oxfordshire had the biggest drop in house prices across England (13.10%)
- Milton Keynes saw the largest volume of new build homes in 2022-23 (2,480) in the South East, and the second-highest in England

For the full study, head to: https://www.modunite.com/a-review-of-englands-new-build-market/

#### The results:

Local Authority	Average house price 2022	Average house price 2023	% decrease in house prices	2021-2022	2022-2023	% increase 2022-2023
Epsom and Ewell	£543,670	£533,491	1.90%	90	210	133%
Tunbridge Wells	£454,657	£446,490	1.80%	270	620	130%
Hastings	£271,727	£270,043	0.60%	10	20	100%
Arun	£351,693	£350,191	0.40%	490	930	90%
Eastbourne	£298,348	£296,227	0.70%	40	70	75%
Dartford	£355,378	£353,765	0.50%	400	660	65%
Canterbury	£361,144	£357,128	1.10%	370	600	62%
Thanet	£315,384	£310,705	1.50%	290	410	41%
Chichester	£470,413	£452,668	3.90%	590	810	37%
Tonbridge and Malling	£438,694	£431,931	1.60%	270	370	37%

Please find the full dataset here.

Modunite can reveal that **Epsom and Ewell** has seen the largest increase in new build completions in the South East, with a **133% increase** from 2021-2022 compared with 2022-2023. Between 2021 and 2022 **90 new builds** were completed, in comparison to **210 in the following year**. House prices in Epsom and Ewell also dropped by 1.90%, down to **£533.491**.

#### Hastings ranks third

**Hastings** ranks third. From 2021-2022, Hastings completed **10** new build homes, increasing by **100%** by the end of 2023 with a total of **20**. This is largely higher than than the average number of new build completions across all the local authorities in England **(21%)**. House prices in Hastings have also fallen by **0.60%** between 2022-2023, to an average of **£270,043**.

Tunbridge Wells ranks second, with a 130% increase in new build completions between 2021-2022 and 2022-2023. A total of 270 new builds were completed in 2021 -2022, in comparison to 620 the following year. House prices in Tunbridge Wells have also decreased by 1.80%, down to £446,490 on average.

Image: https://oaktondevelopments.co.uk/henrietta-place-new-build-homes-epsom-surrey/

# Campaign to keep local child cancer services local

Wandsworth Council is leading a campaign against the NHS decision to move children's cancer services from two South London hospitals into Central London and the new Labour Government will be asked to step in. NHS England announced its decision to move the children's cancer centre based jointly at St **George's Hospital, Tooting**, and **The Royal Marsden**, **Sutton**, to Evelina London Children's Hospital, Lambeth, in March.

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Wandsworth has now confirmed it will refer the decision to new Health Secretary Wes Streeting in a bid for him to intervene. The council is particularly concerned about the prospect of parents having to travel via public transport into Central London with immunosuppressed kids to reach the Evelina.

The authority said Richmond, Kingston, Merton, Sutton and Surrey councils are set to join the cross-party campaign, as children in their boroughs currently receive care at the existing children's cancer centre. Richmond approved plans to challenge the decision in May.

Opposition to the plans began to grow after the NHS launched a consultation on two options for the future location of the centre last year – either moving it entirely to St George's or to the Evelina. The centre has provided specialist children's cancer services to those aged 15 and under living in South London, Kent, most of Surrey, Brighton and Hove, Medway and East Sussex for 25 years.

The NHS said it has to move the centre as a new national service specification in 2021 outlined very specialist children's cancer treatment services must be on the same site as a paediatric intensive care unit and other specialist children's services. The Royal Marsden does not have a paediatric intensive care unit, meaning a small number of children with cancer requiring intensive care are transferred safely by ambulance to St George's every year.

Labour Wandsworth Council leader Simon Hogg urged Mr Streeting to work with local authorities challenging the decision to find ways to keep services at St George's. He said: "We have opposed these plans to move specialist children's cancer care from St George's from the start. Our serious concerns remain – getting to Evelina hospital through Central London traffic will be challenging at the best of times. Travelling by public transport is not an option for vulnerable children who are on immunosuppressant medication. So there has to be a better solution to these plans."

Local MPs have also publicly opposed the plans. Tooting MP Dr Rosena Allin-Khan described the decision to move services from St George's as 'deeply disappointing' when it was announced in March, and signed a letter to previous Health Secretary Victoria Atkins asking her to review it. The letter was also signed by Putney MP Fleur Anderson, Mitcham and Morden MP Siobhain McDonagh, Richmond Park MP Sarah Olney and Twickenham MP Munira Wilson.

Services are not expected to move until 2026 at the earliest. An NHS London spokesperson said: "Evelina London has been chosen as the future location for the children's cancer centre following a rigorous process, including involving clinical advisers, parents, charities, nurses and research staff. The future centre will stand ready to give cutting-edge treatments that require intensive care on site, like other major centres worldwide.

"Service reconfiguration is rarely easy and we recognise that during consultation, parents and families raised a number of concerns about the change in location, including about travelling further into London, and what that will mean for them. Our focus now is on detailed implementation planning which takes all of these concerns into account to support families and staff."

An Evelina spokesperson added: "We are fully committed to working with patients, their families, staff from the current service, and other partners to design the new service with children, young people and staff at its heart. This will ensure continuity of care during the transition period and a plan for the safe transfer of the service."

A St George's spokesperson said: "We understand the concerns being raised by our communities who want to keep specialist children's cancer care at St George's. We are working with NHS England and our partners and will continue to provide outstanding care to children and their families throughout this process."

Charlotte Lillywhite - reporter.

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