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19th November 2026

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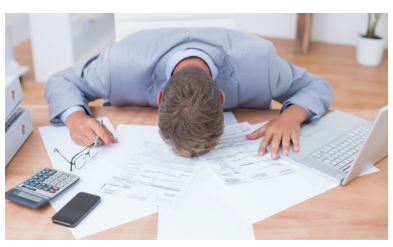
# 20th July 2023

20 July 2023



COUNCIL NEWS

## £10m Co-Vid grant pay-back put in wrong place

19 July 2023

A £10million accounting error at cash-strapped Guildford Borough Council was discovered in March but councillors were only told this month. The error meant it looked like there was more in … READ MORE



COUNCIL TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

## RA and Green motion to improve Surrey's "Green" motion

19 July 2023

It could soon be possible to take a "pleasant walk or cycle" along a Surrey road without being "slapped" in the face by "brambles or nettles". A motion calling on … READ MORE



BUSINESS COMMUNITY

## Contractors occupying the high-ground

18 July 2023

Ewell school benefits from local highway contractors' social value activities. Milestone Infrastructure, a part of M Group Services, is committed to supporting the communities in which it operates and was … READ MORE

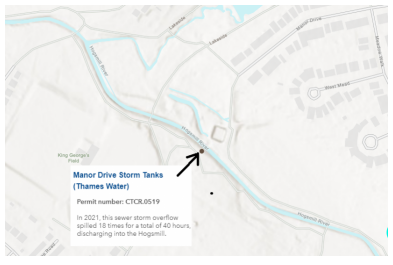


MARK TODD WESTMINSTER

## An alternative view from Labour

17 July 2023

Mark Todd lives in Epsom and is the Chair of the local Labour Party. He contested the new ward of Horton at the 4th May Epsom and Ewell Borough Council … READ MORE




BUSINESS NEWS TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

## Thames Water among worst in country

17 July 2023

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Standout levels of pollution and poor monitoring has left Thames Water languishing joint last among the country's "very disappointing" water and sewerage companies. The damning verdict was delivered in a … READ MORE




COUNCIL EDUCATION

## Kids takeover Bourne Hall digitally

15 July 2023

On Friday 7 July Bourne Hall in Ewell handed over its social media channels to young people from St Clement's Catholic Primary School in Ewell, as part of a national … READ MORE




COUNCIL HOUSING PLANNING

## Little plots of Council land for housing?

15 July 2023

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's Strategy and Resources Committee decided Thursday 13th July to submit two Council owned sites for housing. The Draft Local Plan sets out the framework for … READ MORE



COUNCIL NEWS

## Council's financial reservations

15 July 2023

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's finances came under the spotlight at a meeting 13th July of the Strategy and Resources Committee. Chair Neil Dallen MBE (RA Town Ward) opened the … READ MORE



EDUCATION NEWS TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

## Surrey's triple contribution towards net zero

13 July 2023

The University of Surrey is playing a role in three new national energy research centres which will boost knowledge, create innovative green technologies and reduce demand for energy to achieve … READ MORE



COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## Respite for carers in Surrey to increase?

13 July 2023

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The chronic shortage of overnight respite places in Surrey could improve if plans to increase the number of available beds by almost 50 per cent are given the go-ahead. Surrey … READ MORE




BUSINESS NEWS

## Capital punishment for local businesses?

13 July 2023

South East businesses are being forced to put the brakes on growth plans, as 97% of companies admit difficulty in accessing capital is impacting their business. According to BDO LLP's … READ MORE

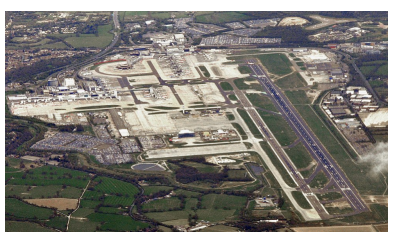


COUNCIL NEWS

## Another Surrey borough going under?

13 July 2023

Guildford Borough Council will bring in "strict controls" on new spending and aim to get its finances in order with a special budget to be set this month. The authority … READ MORE



BUSINESS TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

## Gatwick to get 2nd runway?

13 July 2023

Gatwick Airport's bid to double its capacity to 78 million passengers and effectively create a second Heathrow will cause a "bigger impact locally than Horse Hill" oil drilling, a local … READ MORE

## Contractors occupying the high-ground

20 July 2023



Ewell school benefits from local highway contractors' social value activities.

Milestone Infrastructure, a part of M Group Services, is committed to supporting the communities in which it operates and was delighted to volunteer its services to **West Ewell Primary School** recently by helping to clear a large, abandoned area of the school playground containing a disused swimming pool and outbuildings.

Milestone Infrastructure is the street lighting contractor for Surrey County Council and, as part of its commitment to undertaking social value activities and events throughout the year, the team formed a Social Value Alliance with the council and other highways contractors including Yunex, Atkins, Ringway and Surrey Skill Mill.

A team of 36 volunteers representing the Alliance met onsite to help remove the old swimming pool and outbuildings surrounding it and cut back overgrown foliage to make the area safe and accessible for the school children to use in future.

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Once the ground has been cleared and the overgrown vegetation removed, the area will provide an accessible space for the children to use and enjoy in future.

Vikki Kelly, Strategic Improvement Manager at Milestone Infrastructure, said: “Building social value into what we do and giving back to the local communities where we work is a large part of what we do. It was a rewarding day and, together with our alliance partners, we managed to achieve everything we needed to onsite and more.”

**James Joyce**, Business Manager at West Ewell school, said: “We would like to thank Milestone Infrastructure who organised the event but also the other companies that attended: Surrey County Council, Yunex Traffic, Atkins, Surrey Skill Mill and Ringway. On the day they achieved more than you could expect for a day volunteer event and transformed the area, giving the school a regenerated space that can now be used.”

**Mia Bennett**, Head teacher at West Ewell school, added: “We really appreciate the time, effort and resources your teams invested in making this project a reality. The cleared area is now a blank canvas which we plan to transform info a flourishing wildlife area and outdoor classroom which all our pupils can enjoy, while learning about nature, biodiversity and developing a deep appreciation for our environment.”

Milestone’s focus on social value is an essential element of M Group Services’ environmental, social and governance (ESG) commitments.

**Zoë Johnston** Corporate Communications Manager | M Group Services

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# 13th July 2023

20 July 2023




HEALTH NEWS

## Doctors’ strike: advice

12 July 2023

A wave of back-to-back strikes will severely impact hospital services over the coming week – and will follow the busiest month of 2023 for one hospital group. St George’s, Epsom … READ MORE



HEALTH NEWS VOLUNTEERS

## Epsom medics sky-dive for babies

12 July 2023

A team of obstetricians, gynaecologists, neonatologists and nurses who work at Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust have raised nearly £10,000 for Bliss, the UK’s leading charity for babies born … READ MORE




NEWS TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

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# We are the greenest?

12 July 2023

Epsom and Ewell is the greenest local authority in the UK, according to most recent data. Industries located in the borough produced 5 kilotons of carbon dioxide per year in 2020, a Utility … READ MORE




COUNCIL POLICING

# Surrey’s 999 services under one operator?

12 July 2023

A review into Surrey’s Police and Crime Commissioner taking control of the county’s fire and rescue service has been branded “a waste of time” and “unwarranted” by councillors. The proposals … READ MORE




COUNCIL LOCAL HISTORY

# Esher monument cleaners risk arrest….

8 July 2023

An Esher monument so “grubby” that people want to clean with toothbrushes is an “enigma” as to who owns and is responsible for it. The White Lady Milestone road marker, outside … READ MORE



BUSINESS EDUCATION SPORTS

# Epsom and Ewell High getting fitter

8 July 2023

Lifestyle Fitness and Bourne Education Trust have announced they will be working together to provide the leading sports facilities at Epsom & Ewell High School to the local community. Lifestyle … READ MORE



CRIME NEWS SPORTS

# Brawling Bowling Club reprieved

8 July 2023

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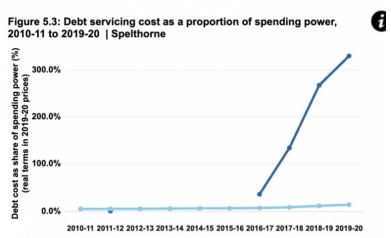
The “level of violence and hostility” during a mass brawl inside a Surrey bowling club was unlike anything a serving police officer had ever experienced before, they have claimed. A … READ MORE




COUNCIL NEWS

## Accountants shortage blamed for Surrey’s rising debts

8 July 2023

The scale of the financial problems unearthed by initial forensic exams of Woking Borough Council’s left many shocked. The council’s accounts had not been signed off by an independent auditor for … READ MORE



CRIME NEWS SPORTS

## Derby disrupter doesn’t quite go down

6 July 2023

Ben Newman ran onto the Epsom racecourse seconds after the starter gates opened on the 3rd June 2023 Derby flat-race. Though the horses were still out of sight by the … READ MORE

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# Surrey’s triple contribution towards net zero

20 July 2023



The **University of Surrey** is playing a role in three new national energy research centres which will boost knowledge, create innovative green technologies and reduce demand for energy to achieve greener, cleaner domestic, industrial and transport energy systems.

Academics at Surrey will help fairly reduce the energy used in the UK, develop hydrogen and ammonia as alternative fuels, and boost bioenergy production.

Professor **Jin Xuan**, Associate Dean (Research and Innovation) in the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences, said:

“There’s no single route to net zero so at the University of Surrey we’re involved with a wide range of interdisciplinary projects to find a portfolio of sustainable solutions. This latest funding shows we’re at the forefront of creating a sustainable future for everyone.”

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) has today announced a £53 million investment in six research centres which will lead innovation towards a fully sustainable energy sector. Surrey is involved with half of them:

A new national **Energy Demand Research Centre**. Reducing energy use could help meet half of the required reductions we need to reach net zero emissions by 2050 and the University of Surrey is helping ensure that disadvantaged people aren’t left behind as the UK’s energy demands are reduced. The project is being led by **Dr Lirong Liu** who will use AI to create models to help communities make scientifically informed decisions.

Dr Lirong Liu said: “Our new optimisation model will incorporate multiple objectives to balance society’s many needs so we can maximise equity while minimising cost and greenhouse gases. To achieve this, we need to understand technology, economics, environment and behaviour and to recognise different parts of society. It’s not just about technological developments, but also about creating a better, more equitable world.”

The **Hub for Research Challenges in Hydrogen and Alternative Liquid Fuels**, known as the UK-HyRES Hydrogen

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Hub. **Dr Qiong Cai**, a research leader in sustainable energy and materials, is working with industrial and academic partners to identify how we can decarbonise transportation and heavy industry by using green hydrogen and hydrogen-based, low-carbon liquid fuels, such as ammonia.

Dr Qiong Cai said: “Hydrogen and alternative liquid fuels, through combustion, can provide clean heat and power sources for decarbonizing heavy industry, aviation, maritime, and haulage sectors that are difficult to decarbonize using electric batteries. We’re developing durable and low-cost catalysts to promote ammonia combustion and to enable zero-emission of hydrogen and ammonia combustion. Together with industry partners and academic collaborators, we’ll develop innovative solutions that are safe, acceptable, and environmentally and economically sustainable.”

The **Supergen Bioenergy Hub**. Surrey’s **Dr Michael Short**, one of the technical project leads, will work on the rapid digitalisation of bioenergy, creating a collection of open-source models for enhanced decision-making across the biowaste sector. This will be informed by his work using artificial intelligence to boost biogas production in anaerobic digestors.

Dr Michael Short said: “We can make so much more of bioenergy, particularly if we can develop better predictive models of the complex reactions in bioenergy systems. If we can increase digitalisation and leverage advances in AI and optimisation, we can have more efficient sustainable energy generation from renewable sources, as well as improved energy security and boosted profits for the companies involved.”

Katherine Ingram – Surrey University

# Capital punishment for local businesses?

20 July 2023




South East businesses are being forced to put the brakes on growth plans, as 97% of companies admit difficulty in accessing capital is impacting their business.

According to BDO LLP’s bi-monthly Economic Engine survey of 500 mid-market businesses, one in five regional companies are struggling to finance expansion plans, with 30% finding it difficult to invest in the technology or software they need to improve the business. Nearly a quarter (23%) admit that a shortage of funding means they’re struggling to recruit new staff with the right skills and experience.

The survey by the accountancy and business advisory firm, also highlighted the ongoing challenges facing South East businesses. Over the next six months, increased operating costs will continue to blight regional companies, with a third (33%) saying rising energy bills, rent, and the cost of recruitment are some of their top concerns. Supply chain disruption, including delayed deliveries, stock shortages and cost increases, also continues to dominate for a third of South East companies (33%).

As businesses in the region contend with a growing list of problems, the task of upskilling and retaining their existing workforce is one of the top business priorities for almost half of regional companies (43%), with a further 30% also looking to invest in research and development and new technologies. In addition, more than a quarter (27%) intend to raise new finance from existing sources of funding, such as loans and re-mortgaging property, as South East companies look to take action over the next six months.

**Phil Cliftlands**, Regional Managing Partner at BDO in the South East, commented: “As a result of the tough economic conditions that continue to hamper regional businesses, companies are facing a real and immediate need to raise funds within the next 12 months, in order to kick-start their growth plans.

“Against a challenging backdrop, South East businesses are having to explore every option when it comes to raising additional finance, with many struggling to access the capital they need. For a third, the equity capital markets are the most appealing source of funding, with private equity and investment trusts also high up on the list.”

Mid-sized companies, which employ eight million people and provide around a quarter of UK jobs according to further research,[1] are now calling on the Government to support them with rising costs and improve access to capital to make the UK a more appealing place to do business.

Cliftlands added: “So far, mid-market businesses in the South East have shown real grit and determination to fend off the challenges that continue to rain down on them.

“However, many are reaching tipping point. The need for greater capital is critical for a significant proportion of businesses, not just to finance growth plans, but also to address key issues such as investing in staff retention, repaying debts, improving salaries and, importantly, recruiting new employees with the right skills and experience.

“South East businesses cannot tackle these challenges in isolation. Business leaders in the region believe more can be done to address their concerns, to help to drive growth, and to ensure the UK remains an attractive place to do business.”

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**Emma Ordridge**

# Doctors’ strike: advice

20 July 2023




A wave of back-to-back strikes will severely impact hospital services over the coming week – and will follow the busiest month of 2023 for one hospital group.

**St George’s, Epsom and St Helier hospitals** have faced significant pressure in recent weeks, with emergency attendances in June ramping up. Last month about 880 people visited one of the Group’s three emergency departments (EDs) daily – about 10% more than is usual.

The emergency departments also saw extraordinary demand some days – including one record-breaking Monday when they had their busiest day ever. Now, ahead of this week’s junior doctors’ strikes, which get underway at 7 am on Thursday and continue until 7 am the following Tuesday (18 July), members of the public have been warned to expect disruption and longer waits, and to avoid visiting the ED when it’s not an emergency.

There will also be an additional challenge when hospital consultants go on strike just days after the junior doctors’ action ends. That walk-out is due to take place on Thursday 20 July and Friday 21 July.

**Dr Richard Jennings,** Group Chief Medical Officer for St George’s, Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals and Health Group, said: “June was very busy and that’s also continued into July – which makes it more difficult when we’re trying to prepare for the inevitable challenges strike action brings. Ahead of each round of strikes I’ve urged the public to take steps to help us and to come to our EDs in an emergency only – and I am making the same request again now when it is more important than ever. We have a very tough week ahead and we need your support to ensure we can prioritise care for our sickest and most seriously ill patients.”

The hospital group recognise that it’s going to be the first time this year that a junior doctors’ strike has taken place over the weekend and into a Monday. This has prompted further concern, as Monday is normally the busiest day of the week in the Group’s EDs. This was even more pronounced last month, with 1,000-plus average daily attendances on Mondays – significantly higher than a typical day of 800.

Dr Jennings added: “If people need medical help – during the strikes or at any other time – we would encourage them to contact NHS 111 online for 24/7 advice on where to go and what to do if they have an illness or injury. When it’s a real emergency or life-threatening, of course, people should always call 999 or go to an emergency department.”

Strikes will also impact other services at the hospitals, and will mean that some appointments, procedures and operations may be postponed to ensure emergency care can be prioritised. Patients will be contacted directly if their appointments are rescheduled, and should continue to come forward for care as normal unless they hear otherwise.

NHS 111 online should always be the first port of call when you have a health need that’s not an emergency, as it will direct you to the best place to get help for your symptoms.

Pharmacies, meanwhile, can offer advice and over-the-counter medicines for a range of minor illnesses, such as coughs, colds, sore throats, and aches and pains. Some pharmacies will be open at weekends, and you can find your nearest one here:

https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy

In a life-threatening emergency, you should always call 999 or go to an emergency department.

If you need mental health support in a crisis, and live in Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Sutton or Wandsworth you can call South West London’s 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line on 0800 028 8000. There’s more information about this service here:

https://www.swlstg.nhs.uk/patients-carers/crisis-support/mental-health-support-line

For adults, young people, and children in Surrey and North East Hampshire, 24-hour support is available by calling: 0800 915 4644. There’s more information here:

https://www.sabp.nhs.uk/our-services

St George’s, Epsom and St Helier hospitals press.

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# Epsom medics sky-dive for babies

20 July 2023



A team of obstetricians, gynaecologists, neonatologists and nurses who work at **Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust** have raised nearly £10,000 for **Bliss**, the UK's leading charity for babies born premature or sick.

Radhika Viswanatha, Nina Underwood, Ramesh Ganapathy, Demetri Panayi, Salim Yasin, Charlotte Pearse, Vicky Minns, Cristina Arias-Rey and Sharon Young took part in a skydive on 28 May 2023 at the Old Sarum Park in Salisbury.

1 in every 7 babies born in the UK will need specialist care and the group have a special link to Bliss, as they each look after women and their babies during pregnancy and delivery and beyond at Epsom and St Helier Hospital.

Some of the babies they deliver are more vulnerable than others, so are looked after by the hospital's neonatal team.

**Demetri Panayi** said: "Our charity skydive was born out of moments of madness, midlife crises and irrational personal desire! But it gave us the opportunity to raise money for a cause close to our hearts, and to our patients."

Donations to their skydive are helping Bliss to drive improvements in neonatal care, to ensure that the needs of babies are at the heart of policy and planning for the future, and to provide information and support to all families with a baby born premature or sick.

Richard Moody, Director of Fundraising at Bliss, said: "We are so grateful for the exceptional fundraising efforts of Demetri and his colleagues. Each donation to Bliss is going towards our mission of helping all babies born premature or sick in the UK have the best chance of survival and quality of life.

"This is a great example of how a perinatal team can come together to raise awareness and money for Bliss."

You can find more information and donate here: https://www.justgiving.com/page/skydive2023

**Molly Gorman**

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# Epsom and Ewell High getting fitter

20 July 2023



Lifestyle Fitness and Bourne Education Trust have announced they will be working together to provide the leading sports facilities at **Epsom & Ewell High School** to the local community.

Lifestyle Fitness will begin operations at the site from 1st September. Development of this facility will see Lifestyle Fitness take over management of the existing sports amenities, which include outdoor pitches, tennis courts, a brand-new sports hall, and even a sprinting track, whilst also developing a Lifestyle Fitness gym, studio space, and group fitness classes. This combination of sports facilities, fitness suite and group exercise studios will make the club the perfect hub for fitness and wellbeing for students, teachers, and the community.

"We're so thrilled to be opening our 25th site and working in partnership with the Academy to provide these facilities to the community" said Lifestyle Fitness Managing Director, **James Lawrence**. "The facility will be the perfect location for the town's fitness needs, whether it be to play football or tennis outdoors, or to take a group exercise class or get a workout in at the gym."

The facility, which is situated within Epsom & Ewell High School, forms part of the planned growth and development of both Lifestyle Fitness and the Bourne Education Trust, who currently have a partnership at another school site, located at The Matthew Arnold School in Staines. Students of all ages will benefit from use of the facility during the school day, with the gym floor and sports facilities opening from 4:30pm for the wider community on weekdays, and 9:30am to 5:00pm on weekends.

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"After working with Lifestyle Fitness for many years at The Matthew Arnold School in Staines, I am delighted to welcome them to Epsom & Ewell High School to manage the sports facilities on our behalf." said **R. Davey**, Bourne Education Trust Sports Director. "I look forward to seeing the benefit this will have on the local community and surrounding areas in the coming months. We have collaborated with numerous schools and educational trusts over the last forty years."

James continued. "Their positions as vital hubs in the local community that connect students, teachers, parents, and the wider town allow us to do what we do best: create healthier and more active communities, with a focus on well-being. With facilities like these, we can take fitness and wellness to an even wider audience in the local area."

You can follow lifestylefitness.co.uk/club/epsom for any more information and updates on the club's progress. Anyone wishing to join the club ahead of its opening can also do so now online, with memberships from as low as £14.99 per month when using the promotional code 'EARLYBIRD'.

**Morgan Kimbel**

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# 6th July 2023

20 July 2023



NEWS POLICING

## Met poaches Surrey police claims Commissioner

5 July 2023

Surrey has more police officers than ever before despite attempts by the Met to "poach" officers, according to the county's Police and Crime Commissioner. Lisa Townsend told a meeting of … READ MORE



ARTS EDUCATION

## Epsom's University challenges for graduates

4 July 2023

Students from the Class of '23 at the University for the Creative Arts (UCA) in Epsom descended upon London's Royal Festival Hall for their graduation ceremony on Tuesday 4 July. … READ MORE




NEWS TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

## ULEZ court challenge begins

4 July 2023

The coalition of councils opposed to expansion of the ULEZ to outer London is optimistic of success on the first day of its legal challenge. Representatives from the five councils … READ MORE

COUNCIL PLANNING

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# Green complaints not black and white

4 July 2023

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council disagrees with the claims made by Green Belt campaigners reported 1st July. Yufan Si of Epsom and Ewell Green Belt and Alexander Duval stated that … READ MORE




COUNCIL TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

# Under 21s Surrey bus travel at 50%

3 July 2023

Young people aged 20 and under are now entitled to 50% off all bus journeys across Surrey. A new ‘LINK’ card has been developed by Surrey County Council which can … READ MORE



COUNCIL PLANNING

# Green Belt development objections excluded

1 July 2023

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council’s Draft Local Plan proposes housing developments on Green Belt land. Prominent local objectors to building on Green Belt land have discovered that their objections have … READ MORE




NEWS POLICING

# Confusing debate on police attending mental health calls

30 June 2023

An ex-police officer has responded to Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner’s calls for coppers to attend fewer mental health call outs – saying the first murder he attended was initally … READ MORE



ARTS COMMUNITY

# Local Talent Shines Bright

30 June 2023

On the evening of June 27th, 2023, The Epsom Playhouse opened its doors to The Epsom and Ewell Showcase, brought together by the Epsom Rotary Club. This evening had it … READ MORE

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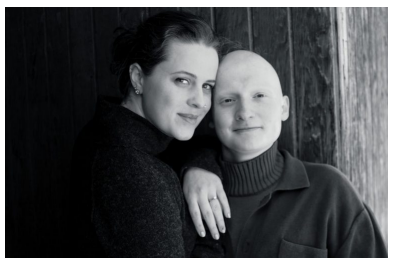


HEALTH NEWS

## Running ahead of Crohn’s disease

30 June 2023

“I didn’t think I would ever be able to run 10k” said Epsom man and Crohn’s disease sufferer Harry Reed. But he will now compete in the London race on … READ MORE

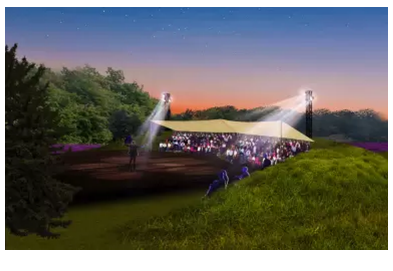


ARTS CULTURE

## Biggins departs for good conduct

30 June 2023

This was Mark Biggins’ last concert in charge of Epsom Chamber Choir. He may return some day as a guest. The conductor Chamber Choir have shared with English National Opera … READ MORE



ARTS CULTURE NEWS

## New Epsom theatre very open for business

30 June 2023

Set amidst rolling lavender fields, the Lavender Theatre will open for its inaugural summer season this July in Epsom. The theatre is located at 139 Reigate Road, Epsom KT17 3D … READ MORE




COUNCIL TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

## Time for us all to slow down?

29 June 2023

A default 20mph speed limit could be coming to Surrey’s towns and villages. Surrey County Council is developing a new speed limit policy with the aim of making streets safer … READ MORE



EDUCATION NEWS

## Epsom family Opened to a two degree challenge

29 June 2023

Joanna McLenaghan walked quite literally in her Epsom father’s footsteps when she followed dad Ian across the stage to

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collect identical degrees recently at a ceremony staged by The Open … READ MORE



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## Accountant’s fees in dispute

29 June 2023

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council‘s external audit fees, provided by Grant Thornton UK LLP, are in the region between £50,000 to £60,000 per annum for an annual budget in the … READ MORE

## Epsom’s University challenges for graduates

20 July 2023



Students from the Class of ‘23 at the **University for the Creative Arts (UCA) in Epsom** descended upon London’s Royal Festival Hall for their graduation ceremony on Tuesday 4 July. This year over 700 students graduated from the Epsom campus of UCA.

Opening the ceremonies, **Professor Bashir Makhoul,** President and Vice-Chancellor of UCA, told graduating students: *“You are stepping out today into a world of great promise – the thriving creative industries – and the opportunities for creative graduates are endless. Be ready to seize them, and to embrace challenges, with an open mind.*

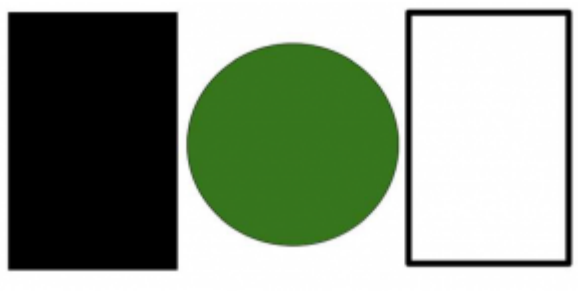
*“I am confident of your drive, unrelenting ambition, and passion for creativity, and I am eager to see how you will apply your talents and make a difference around the world.”*

During the ceremonies, UCA Chancellor and renowned ceramicist, **Magdalene Odundo OBE** offered this piece of advice**:** *“Commit wholeheartedly to your goals and trust that your talent will enable you to achieve them. I’ve had the pleasure of working with some of the world’s greatest designers and artists, and they all share a common value: staying true to their vision.”*

In the presence of families, friends and staff across two days of ceremonies, graduates came up to the stage and collected their degree certificates – the culmination of their journey at UCA. Graduating students will now take their place in the global creative community as they embark on the next stage in their creative careers.

## Green complaints not black and white

20 July 2023



**Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** disagrees with the claims made by Green Belt campaigners reported 1st July. **Yufan Si** of Epsom and Ewell Green Belt and **Alexander Duval** stated that their clear objections to Green Belt development were not so classified in the consultation analysis by EEBC.

**Steven McCormick** (RA Woodcote and Langley) Chair of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee has hit back and

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said: “I would like to reassure all residents in the borough that, contrary to the assertations in this article, no responses to the consultation have been excluded, or ‘not counted’. Every single response we have received has been logged and published on our online platform, Inovem.

“We received a significant number of responses during the Local Plan consultation. Most respondents chose to complete the online questionnaire on Inovem. We also received copies of the questionnaire by email and by post, which have since been uploaded onto Inovem. On the questionnaire, respondents were invited to tick a multiple choice box for each policy area (this shows as the ‘Option’ column in the published responses), and whether they want to add comments (this shows as the ‘Comment’ column in the published responses).

“Alongside responders that used the questionnaire, we also received a significant number of more general responses by email and post, which have also been uploaded onto Inovem. Whilst some of these responses made it clear which policy or policies they were referring to, in the majority of cases officers have used their judgement to assign the responses received to the relevant section of the Local Plan. As part of this process, officers have not completed the multiple choice ‘option’ questions and have left these blank, unless a response clearly stated the question number or policy reference and directly quoted one of the multiple-choice question response options.

“There is an important reason for this. Our officers cannot presume to know which option each respondent would want to use, if they want to use one at all – this would be a subjective decision by officers, and it may not be correct, particularly where responses do not state they are specifically for or against a policy, but are providing general feedback, which is common. All comments are still clearly displayed, and the comments are a vital element used by officers to ascertain what the views of respondents are regarding the different policies.

“All the comments received during the consultation period will help to inform the preparation of the next version of the plan for consultation, which will be the version of the Local Plan that the council intends to submit to the government for examination.

“We will publish a Consultation Statement alongside the next version of the Local Plan that will provide a summary of the main issues that have been raised and how they have been taken into account. Once again, we would like to assure residents that all responses have been published and are viewable on the consultation platform.”

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The Green Belt campaigners did not complain that their objections had not been published. How else could they have known how their responses were classified or not? Their complaint was that their stated objections were not classified correctly. As the reader will see from Cllr McCormick’s response the business is not straightforward. The Green complaint is not black and white.

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# Local Talent Shines Bright

20 July 2023



On the evening of June 27th, 2023, **The Epsom Playhouse** opened its doors to **The Epsom and Ewell Showcase**, brought together by the **Epsom Rotary Club**. This evening had it all, proving that our community is bursting with extraordinary talent and bringing everyone together to fundraise for local charities.

The evening began with a young Epsom saxophonist whose melodic tunes transported the audience to another realm. She was followed by **Kasumi Brooker**, whose soprano voice soared through the auditorium gracefully. Then came **Ambition School of Dance**, showcasing their remarkable choreography and flawless execution. **Cam Brown** lightened the mood with his humorous songs, and the **Bharathakalalayam South Indian Dance Troupe** transported the audience to the vibrant and rich world of Indian classical dance and legend. **Leatherhead Link**‘s inspirational and emotional performance closed the first half with the audience in complete harmony with the choir. In the second half, **Protègèm** brought us the 70s vibes and danced to Abba’s hits, the **Girlguiding Epsom** sang campfire favourites, and the **Epsom Silver Band’s Brass Quintet** perfectly played well-known versions of classic songs.

The presence of the **Mayor of Epsom and Ewell** Cllr Robert Geleit and the Mayoress added a touch of prestige to the event. Their support and appreciation for local talent underscored the importance of nurturing and celebrating our community’s creative spirit.

None of this would have been possible without the support of generous sponsors: Honey & Bamboo, a zero-waste shop from Ewell Village, Alexandra Park’s Park View Cafe, Rotary South D1145, a kind anonymous donor and the fantastic people at the Playhouse who helped with everything.

**Epsom Rotary** is active in the community with a wonderful allotment project delivering food to **The Pantry** in South

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Street and working in conjunction with the **Epsom and Ewell Royal British Legion** to look after our veterans, amongst many other activities. If you would like to join Rotary or become a Friend of Rotary and volunteer to help your community as well, then don't hesitate to fill out the form:

https://www.rotary-ribi.org/clubs/membershipenquiry.php?ClubID=874

You can find out more about Rotary here: https://www.rotary-ribi.org/clubs/homepage.php?ClubID=874

Reporter **Romana Sustar** is a multilingual freelance journalist, University Language Tutor, marketer and owner of Epsom Digital Ltd., a local digital marketing agency.

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# Biggins departs for good conduct

20 July 2023



This was **Mark Biggins**' last concert in charge of **Epsom Chamber Choir**. He may return some day as a guest. The conductor Chamber Choir have shared with English National Opera moves on to take a post with the Grand Théâtre de Genève, a bit too distant to combine.

Auditions for a replacement happen this autumn. Conductors leave their impression on this choir. For two decades **Michael Stevenson** worked on refinement and blend such that you needed to be very close to pick out individual voices from the ensemble. His successor, **Piers Maxim**, liked to entrust choir members with solo spots instead of hiring outside soloists. Mark Biggins has brought an added experience of the opera house, so the timbre has gained energy and exuberance, especially among higher voices, that would do justice to a larger venue even than **St Martin's Church, Epsom**.

All these influences were on show in Saturday's concert (24th June at St Martins Church, Epsom). The ensemble retains its refinement, between singers well used to listening to each other. The big and difficult tenor solo in the choral dances from Britten's Gloriana was skilfully handled by **Dominic Morris**. **Neil Thomas** took the baritone spotlight in the folksong arrangement The Lark in the Clear Air. The Britten choral dances, from Gloriana, were straight out of the opera house, with fast tempi and committed dynamic variations creating an aural spectacle.

There were over a dozen separate items, showcasing an eclectic range of repertoire, mostly on a theme of summer but with one bizarre Christmas piece apparently left over from an earlier programme, Jonathan Dove's Wellcome All Wonders. Covid may have cancelled the date when it should have been sung but the choir were not to be denied the chance of demonstrating their prowess tuning its complicated discords.

The audience got invited to sing a refrain in the title number, the mediaeval tune Sumer is Icumen In. A cuckoo has been known to visit Epsom Common. If you encounter it and were at this concert, you know now how to address it.

Instead of more Britten, Flower Songs were furnished by Eric Whitacre. His trademark use of dissonance is more velvety and luxuriant. I have heard it compared to chocolate cake. The choir tuned all the clusters confidently and allowed their audience to wallow in the rich sonority.

**Steve Ridge** played for the one jazzier piece, by Bob Chilcott, that needed a piano. The other accompanied items employed a harp, more exotic and less percussive and played by **Mared Pugh-Evans**. She was kept busy, in the Britten dances, in a mystical upper-voices song Summer by Gustav Holst and in two euphonous folk-song arrangements by **John Bawden**. He was singing tenor with Chamber Choir last time I heard these settings but has now gravitated to bass. He composes with a calm facility combined with a lifelong immersion in choral idiom. Hearing these songs was as refreshing as being handed a long, cool drink.

Mared Pugh-Evans switched from subtle accompaniment with hints of ancient bucolic tradition to virtuoso display for her solo item, Rhapsodie, by Marcel Grandjany. Composed by a harpist, it let her demonstrate a vast range of impossibly rapid ripples and resonant chords, sometimes at the same time, while always giving the impression that this is what harpists do for fun.

Epsom clarinettist **Zoë Humphries** joined her for the Victorian Kitchen Garden Suite by Paul Reade, a piece chosen to entertain rather than dazzle. They played with appealing, never forced tone, passing the tunes from one to the other and radiating serenity around the building as the evening started to cool. We heard a Monteverdi madrigal and two joyful, sparkling partsongs by Fanny Hensel.

Then Mark Biggins' valedictory item, a nod to his past studies in America, was Stephen Paulus' The Road Home, which was encored affectingly.

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**Nigel Williams**

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20 July 2023



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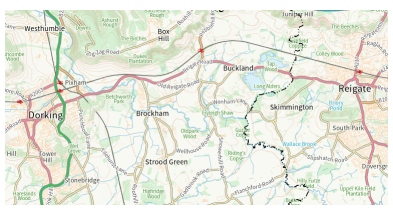


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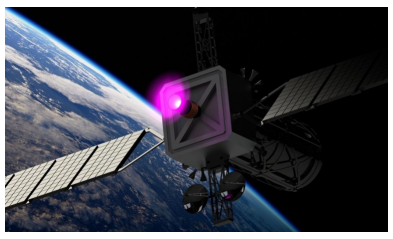

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The Epsom and Ewell Times has covered the bankruptcy of Woking Council. Recently we have received daily updates from our partners at the BBC's Local Democracy Reporting Service but spared … READ MORE

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# Epsom family Opened to a two degree challenge

20 July 2023



**Joanna McLenaghan** walked quite literally in her Epsom father's footsteps when she followed dad Ian across the stage to collect identical degrees recently at a ceremony staged by **The Open University**.

The pair signed up for an OU MSc in Maths in the same year and there followed six years of "total rivalry" to see who could get the best marks for assignments.

It's the third degree for Joanna, 36, who is now a data scientist managing a team of people at Gousto, the recipe box company.

She earned a first-class degree in physics at Oxford followed by a doctorate in the same subject from the University of St Andrews. But her latest achievement was hard won by burning the midnight oil whilst working full time.

Jo, as she is also known, says her OU degree was definitely a factor in her gaining her latest job at Gousto as she says employers know the "level of effort and commitment that you have to put in, particularly doing something over six years on top of a job. Whilst I already had the undergraduate degree and a PhD, I think as an employer, when you're looking through hundreds of applications having something like this on a CV really helps you to shine," she said.

**Ian McLenaghan**, 66, from **Epsom** in Surrey, is full of praise for his daughter: "I'm incredibly proud of her achievements. We might have started out on the same pathway but she's much more of a people person, who's capable of doing things like management. "That's something I avoided like the plague when I was working. I just wanted to go away in a cupboard somewhere and work on my own solving technical problems."

Yet Ian is something of an academic himself. He *also* has an Oxford degree in physics, and in the same subject holds a doctorate from Imperial College as well as an MS from the California Institute of Technology. He began his MSc while semi-retired to "keep Alzheimer's at bay" but also admitted "I guess we like studying".

Jo says she clearly remembers Ian encouraging her and supporting her studies through childhood: "I always remember, before I went to high school, that my dad and I had these study sessions where he cut out these different molecules and then we'd attach them together with paper clips. And he was always buying me things like magnet sets, so he definitely encouraged me from a young age." She says once he bought her a book on Java programming!

For Jo, her dad is an inspiration: "He's had a lifelong love of learning that he's been willing to pass on. He taught himself coding and computer programming and it's that curiosity that has guided him his whole life." She added: "I think a lot of people think you just learn when you're a child; a teenager and then you when you go to university and then that's it!"

The Open University (OU) is the largest academic institution in the UK and a world leader in flexible distance learning. Since it began in 1969, the OU has taught more than 2.3 million students worldwide and currently has over 208,000 students.Seventy-one per cent of directly registered students are in full-time or part-time employment, and 76 FTSE 100 companies have sponsored staff to take OU courses.

Philippa Green reporting.

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# A Midsummer's Night's Dream in Cheam

20 July 2023

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**Epsom Choral Society** gave us a night to remember at St Andrews Church in Cheam last Saturday. Their programme was an unusual and attractive coupling of works by **Constant Lambert** and **David Fanshawe**. In *The Rio Grande*, Lambert sets a poem by Sacheverell Sitwell for choir, two pianos and percussion, while in *African Sanctus*, written following visits to Africa in 1969, Fanshawe combines African sounds, both human and natural, with live musicians and a Latin Mass.

The concert got off to rousing start with the choir in fine voice, with plenty of rhythmic verve and effective dynamic contrasts throughout. It's worth remembering, however, that in very soft passages articulation needs to be even crisper. I did also wonder whether there might have been slightly more sway and swagger in phrases such as "… they dance in the city, down the public squares…". These are minor quibbles; the performance was as accomplished as one might expect.

**Marion Lea**, the choir's regular accompanist, took the solo piano role, with its virtuosic cadenzas, while **Peter Jaekel**, a regular visitor, took the 'orchestral' part. Both pianists dealt expertly with the technical demands, and they displayed an excellent rapport. This was also apparent as two pianos became one for the three lollipops from Walton's *Façade* suite, namely Polka, Popular Song and Foxtrot, hugely enjoyed by the sizeable audience. The first half ended with a brief introduction to *African Sanctus* by the late composer's widow **Jane Fanshawe**. During her very informative words and photographs, conductor **Julian Collings** was presented with one of David Fanshawe's trademark caps.

The second half of the concert was heralded by a mighty roar of "Sanctus" from the choir, accompanied by a full percussion ensemble. Having conducted this work myself many moons ago, I recall just how tricky it was to get all elements perfectly aligned – I wish I had had professional sound engineers such as the excellent team on Saturday! A mesmerising muezzin's call to prayer got the next movement under way. Here the gorgeous blend of the voices produced some exquisite singing with perfect intonation. Other qualities such as stamina and staying power presented themselves in the next two movements. The call of the muezzin translates into the key of D, and as any soprano will tell you a very high D lies well out of the comfort zone so full marks to the sopranos here.

Following the Credo came Love Song, a tender and moving episode in which a cattle boy in East Sudan sings about a girl called Abdha. At the start of the movement, we hear a recording of a mother ringing tiny bells outside her tent in an ancient custom signifying the birth of a baby son. In the context of the mass this signifies the birth of Jesus Christ, and as the sound of the bells gently faded the effect was intensely poignant.

The Crucifixus is described by the composer as the "heart of the work" and it features a fearsome mix of war cries, rainstorms and dances, resulting in a dramatic and menacing texture. I wondered for a moment whether the percussion was slightly overpowering here – the war cries from South Sudan, for example, were not easily picked out. A belated mention here of the excellent soprano soloist, **Lisa Swayne**, who managed the wide jagged leaps with great style and aplomb.

The gentle Lord's Prayer which followed drew a lovely gospel feel to the singing, although I did feel that the lead guitar was slightly over-amplified. After a movement of chants and a superbly effective Agnus Dei – with the soloist once again shining in her three consecutive cries of Jesu Christe – a thrilling, exhilarating and exuberant finale brought this unique work to a close. Rapturous applause followed, leading to an encore – a repeat of the Lord's Prayer – during which Julian Collings, fittingly I thought, wore the cap presented to him earlier.

**Martin Seath**

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Photo credit: Clive Richardson

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# Epsom and Ewell's refugee talent

20 July 2023



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Celebrating World Refugee Week (19th – 25th June) Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network has been celebrating the talents and success of refugees the charity has supported.

**Nataliia Zadorizhna** is a concert pianist who started playing the piano at the age of 4. She graduated from the Glier Kyiv Academy of Music and also has a PhD in Linguistics. She arrived here in May to flee the war in Ukraine.

Natalia has been appointed as a peripatetic piano teacher for Surrey Arts and also gives private piano lessons. She has formed a Ukrainian choir in Epsom and is a top-class musician who has played in several concerts in and around Epsom.




**Ksenia Bugrimova** is an award-winning film producer and creative director who has made many films and tv programs in Ukraine. Since arriving in the UK, she founded Talented U – https://talented-u.com/en – a Ukrainian-British Association of screen industry professionals. Here is an example of her much acclaimed work https://youtu.be/ayVgCK-3f00

**Samira** is a 17-year-old Afghan girl who came to the UK in summer of 2021 and moved to Epsom in May 2022. She is a gifted artist and doing a dressmaking course at college. EERN provided her with a sewing machine and one of our volunteers helped her learn how to use it (as she had never used an electric machine before). Within 2 weeks she had made 4 traditional Afghan dresses and she hopes to become a professional tailor.

Samira has been working very hard at her English, supported by EERN, and was very pleased to pass her driving theory test first time!

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**Helin Konyar** was studying singing at Kiev Municipal Academy of Circus and Variety Arts when, at the age of 20, she had to leave Kyiv last May. When she arrived here, she auditioned for the famous Laine Theatre Art College in Epsom and was awarded a 3-year scholarship. This week she appeared in her first show at Epsom Playhouse.

**Yuliia Komyshan** is a professional bandura player from Poltava, Ukraine (a bandura is a Ukrainian plucked-string folk-instrument). She has degrees from Poltava Professional College of Arts and from Glinka Dnipropetrovsk Academy of Music and a PhD in Educational and Pedagogical Sciences.

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Yuliia came to the UK when the war started in Ukraine. She dreams of introducing people all over the world to the interesting and rich Ukrainian culture and traditions. She loves giving people the opportunity to listen to the bandura and to connect with Ukrainian musical culture, both traditional and modern. She performs at concerts whenever she can.



Yuliia says that she is very grateful to the government, sponsors, volunteers and new friends for the support which she has received here.

For more information about the work of Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network visit their website. https://epsomrefugeenetwork.org

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