



## Epsom and Ewell High getting fitter

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.

"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](https://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



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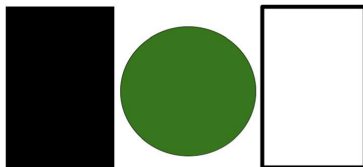


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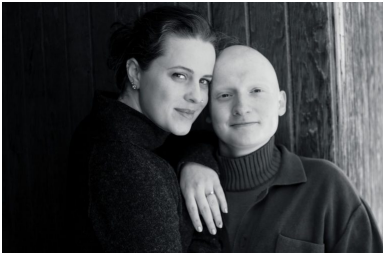
## ARTS COMMUNITY

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## Epsom's University challenges for graduates

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

**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 said: "I would like to reassure all residents in the borough that, contrary to the assertions 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.”

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.

## Local Talent Shines Bright

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, **Protégè**m 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 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.

## Biggins departs for good conduct

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.

**Nigel Williams**

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## 29th June 2023

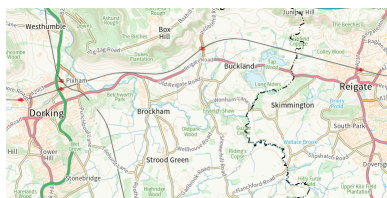


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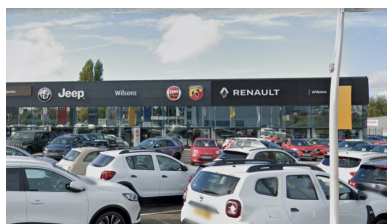


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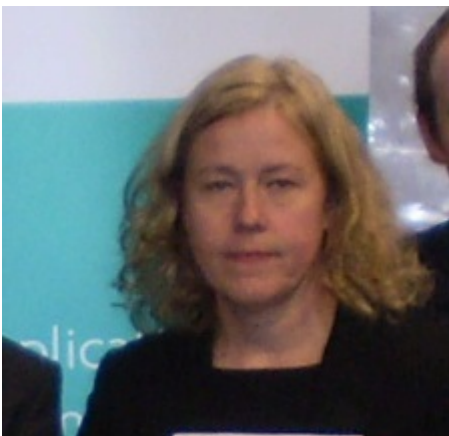


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## Epsom family Opened to a two degree challenge

**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.



## A Midsummer's Night's Dream in Cheam

**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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Epsom Choral Society opens its centenary celebration 2022

Photo credit: Clive Richardson

## Epsom and Ewell's refugee talent

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!





**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.

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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