

19th March 2026

19 March 2026

Council Council constitution Finances

Epsom and Ewell Council transparency row erupts as council backs publication of urgent decisions



17 March 2026

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has agreed to improve transparency over so-called “urgent decisions” following a heated debate that revisited the controversy surrounding the Rainbow Centre and allegations of secrecy ... [Read More](#)

Council Council constitution

Epsom and Ewell Council put in proportion



17 March 2026

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has approved changes to the political balance of its committees following further shifts in councillor allegiances, amid continuing tensions within the ruling Residents’ Association group. ... [Read More](#)

Council Finances

Epsom’s empty and second homes face local tax increases



17 March 2026

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has approved a 2.98% increase in its share of Council Tax for 2026/27, alongside new measures to penalise empty properties and second homes, but not ... [Read More](#)

Business Council

Surrey-wide plan aims to get thousands back into work



17 March 2026

A cross-county plan to bring thousands of people back into employment in Surrey has received backing from Surrey

County Council and government ministers. The Get Surrey Working Plan brings together ... [Read More](#)

Environment News

Ash dieback keeps Thames island closed



17 March 2026

The Environment Agency has warned against any planned protests over the closure of a Surrey riverside island and announced a public engagement event to update residents on safety work there. ... [Read More](#)

Business Council

Support programme launched to help Surrey's high streets



17 March 2026

Dedicated support for high street businesses across Surrey to attract new customers, boost sales and drive growth is now available as part of wider efforts to strengthen and futureproof town ... [Read More](#)

Football Sports

Epsom and Ewell FC's first home game of 2026 drawn



16 March 2026

Epsom & Ewell FC 0 v Camberley Town FC 0 14th March, Chalky Lane, Chessington Combined Counties Premier League We finally saw our first home game of 2026 at Chalky ... [Read More](#)

Community Education Health

The big child smartphone use debate starts in Surrey



16 March 2026

Parents are facing "no bigger issue" than the impact of smartphones and social media on their children, says Godalming and Ash MP Jeremy Hunt. The former chancellor told a public ... [Read More](#)

Community Council

Karl Nicholas honoured with Active Citizen Award at Borough Civic Reception



14 March 2026

A long-serving community volunteer whose work spans youth organisations, music, policing and education has been honoured with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's Active Citizen Award at the Mayor's Annual Civic ... [Read More](#)

Council Council constitution News

Sun sets on Residents' Associations' cherished Parishes for Epsom and Ewell



13 March 2026

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has formally abandoned plans to create parish-style community councils after a public consultation produced overwhelming opposition, bringing to an end a controversial review that has ... [Read More](#)

Arts Culture

Epsom resident launches UK Choir of the Year



13 March 2026

A Worcester Park resident and former Epsom College music scholar is behind a new national competition celebrating Britain's thriving amateur choral scene. Lucy Mitchell, founder of UK Choir of the ... [Read More](#)

Council Education

Hope courted in new Surrey school for extra needs



13 March 2026

The official opening of Hopescourt School in Walton-on-Thames marks a new chapter for children with additional needs in Surrey. The Lord Lieutenant of Surrey joined pupils, staff, Bourne Education Trust, ... [Read More](#)

Arts Business Planning

Three beers for Dorking



13 March 2026

Beer fans will be pumped to know that Dorking Halls will be able to offer customers a greater variety of booze after planning permission was secured to convert storage units ... [Read More](#)

Community Council Health

Some Surrey care services at a crossroads?



13 March 2026

A Surrey charity has warned that unpaid carers could be pushed “beyond breaking point” after Surrey County Council ended contracts for two carer support services. Crossroads Care Surrey said the ... [Read More](#)

Community Council Health

Green light for MRI scanner at Leatherhead Leisure Centre



12 March 2026

Surrey will get a new MRI machine at Leatherhead Leisure Centre after councillors were “all in favour” of building the musculoskeletal scanner. The new machine will be housed in a ... [Read More](#)

Council Planning

Epsom and Ewell Local Plan tensions surface as committee debate curtailed by chair



12 March 2026

A meeting of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council’s Licensing and Planning Policy Committee (LPPC) on 10th March exposed growing tensions over the borough’s Local Plan after councillors attempted to debate ... [Read More](#)

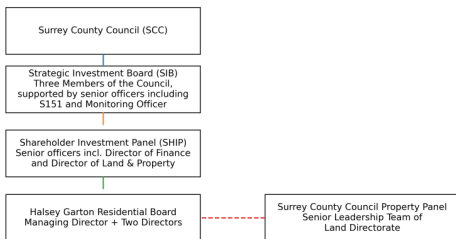


12th March 2026

19 March 2026

Council Finances

Surrey Council reviews property sales as it signs off business plans for own firms



10 March 2026

Surrey County Council has signed off the latest business plans for two companies it owns as it tries to strengthen its finances during a difficult period for local government. The ... [Read More](#)

Council Housing

Dorking housing plan rejected again over affordable homes shortfall



10 March 2026

Plans to build even more homes on the former Aviva site in Dorking have been thrown out after developers failed to include enough affordable housing. It is the second time ... [Read More](#)

Council Housing Planning

Council response to Epsom and Ewell Green Belt concerns



10 March 2026

In response to the report in the Epsom and Ewell Times, Fresh Local Plan row as councillor questions Green Belt revisions and governance at Epsom and Ewell, Epsom and Ewell ... [Read More](#)

Council Housing Planning

Affordable housing scheme approved on Leatherhead green belt



9 March 2026

Greenbelt land in north Leatherhead will be built on after a 100 per cent affordable housing estate was granted planning permission. Mole Valley District Council's development committee approved the proposals ... [Read More](#)

Council Elections

Guide to the upcoming East Surrey Council elections



9 March 2026

When voters head to the polls on Thursday, May 7, the local election in Surrey will look very different from previous years. This local election will mark the first step ... [Read More](#)

Rugby Sports

Horsham hold a win against Sutton & Epsom RFC



9 March 2026

Horsham 26 Sutton and Epsom 20. 7th March. In November Horsham travelled to Rugby Lane and were victorious. The Black & Whites scored a late Kyren Ghumra try to add ... [Read More](#)

Arts Local History

Remarkable Ukrainian who lived his final decades in Epsom



8 March 2026

MICHAEL BIALOGUSKI (1917-84) Ukrainian born Doctor, musician, conductor and spy who spent the last 20 years of his life in Epsom Mykolo Bialoguski was born in Kiev (then in Russia, ... [Read More](#)

News

Dorking gnome fails in bid to win property rights



7 March 2026

A Surrey couple have won a legal battle over a tiny strip of lawn outside their home after a neighbour tried to reclaim it by placing a garden gnome on ... [Read More](#)

Community Council News

Could you put Surrey Council's empty buildings or land to good use?



7 March 2026

Surrey residents could soon have the chance to take over unused council buildings and land under a new policy designed to put more local assets into community hands. Surrey County ... [Read More](#)

Arts Health Local History

Epsom author shares personal epilepsy journey amid town's historic link to the condition



7 March 2026

An Epsom author has published a deeply personal account of living with epilepsy, adding a modern voice to a local story that stretches back more than a century. Madeline Bolton-Smith, ... [Read More](#)

Community Council Finances

Last round of developers' funds in Epsom and Ewell to be spent



6 March 2026

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is inviting local community groups and organisations to apply for funds, raised by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), to deliver projects that benefit residents and ... [Read More](#)

Community Crime Policing

Epsom and Ewell February crime and safety round-up



5 March 2026

Epsom and Ewell Times does not normally report individual crime incidents. However, as part of a trial we are publishing a monthly round-up of crime and community safety developments affecting ... [Read More](#)

Council Council constitution News

Epsom and Ewell to ditch Parish Councils plan



5 March 2026

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has all but confirmed it will not proceed with plans to create community councils in the borough after consultation responses indicated a lack of public ... [Read More](#)

Council Housing Planning

Fresh Local Plan row as councillor questions Green Belt revisions and governance at Epsom and Ewell



5 March 2026

Concerns are growing over Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's Local Plan after campaigners and a borough councillor raised questions about revised evidence submitted to the Government Planning Inspector – including ... [Read More](#)

Remarkable Ukrainian who lived his final decades in Epsom

19 March 2026



MICHAEL BIALOGUSKI (1917-84) Ukrainian born Doctor, musician, conductor and spy who spent the last 20 years of his life in Epsom

Mykolo Bialoguski was born in Kiev (then in Russia, now in Ukraine) on 19 March 1917. His parents, Gregorii and Paulina, were Polish professionals, being a veterinary surgeon and dentist respectively. Gregorii was a non-practising Jew and Paulina a Christian.

Apparently, the family fled Kiev in about 1920, having nearly been shot by Bolsheviks, and from 1927 to 1935 Mykolo attended a secondary school in Wilno, Poland – which is now Vilnius, Lithuania, a graphic illustration of the ever-shifting political sands of Eastern Europe. He studied the viola and began to study medicine.

The Nazis invaded Poland on 1 September 1939, thus triggering World War 2. The political goings-on in relation to Poland at that time were hideously complicated and we shan't dwell on them here, but we do need to know where Mykolo was at the time and why he probably decided to leave. The following map will assist matters – Wilno is in the top right-hand portion and occupied by the Soviets.

In present-day terms Wilno/Vilnius is quite close to the Belarusian border, just over 200 km as the crow flies, and during WW2 Belarus (then the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) was initially under the control of the Soviets: however, in 1941 the Germans invaded and if, like Mykolo, you were both anti-communist and had a Jewish parent, then Wilno was not a place to be under either regime. (If you want to know more about Wilno during WW2 there is ample material on Wikipedia in the articles on Vilna Ghetto and Ponary Massacre.)

Mykolo had married an Irena Vandos in Poland at some point, but they were divorced in 1941. He had already been jailed briefly for protesting against some actions of the occupying Red Army and so, spinning a yarn about going to Curaçao, he travelled across Russia to Japan, the latter not yet having joined in WW2, although it did so in December 1941. Fortunately, Mykolo had arrived in Sydney, Australia by then and became Michael.

So, we are now in Sydney and in 1942 Michael enlisted in the Australian Army Medical Corps as an orderly; he was then discharged with Government approval and assistance to study medicine at the University of Sydney, which he did successfully. In 1943 he married divorcee Agnes Patricia Humphry (known as Patricia – they were ultimately divorced in 1954). After a year in general practice at Thirroul, a seaside suburb south of Sydney, he set up on Macquarie Street, in central Sydney itself.

Spying

One would think perhaps that building up a practice as a doctor in a thriving city district would be more than enough for any young man, but there were other facets to Michael. He was certainly anti-communism but that in itself doesn't turn you into a spy, especially if you're safely ensconced in Australia. It looks more as if he wanted to 'play spies' because he was fascinated with it all. He offered his services to the Commonwealth Investigation Service (CIS) in 1945 and was engaged as an agent: the CIS was apparently as secure as a chocolate padlock in terms of leaks and had been infiltrated by Soviet spies, which led to the creation of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO). In 1949 Michael was engaged as an ASIO agent.

As is usually the case with that era of peculiar 'peace', spies, agents and double agents were everywhere and it was hard for them to know which side anyone was on, let alone any amateur researcher trying to make some sense of it 70 years or so later. Still, it must be done, as it was the man's main claim to 'fame'.

The Petrov Affair

Petrov had started out as Afanasy Shorokhov, born in 1907 to peasant parents in a Central Siberian village. In 1923 he joined an organisation for young communists and then the Soviet Navy, by which time his name had become Vladimir Proletarsky and later Vladimir Petrov. Having worked his way up, slowly, from cipher clerk in the Navy to the MGB (a predecessor of the KGB which dealt with myriad security and intelligence issues) he became third secretary at the Soviet Embassy in Canberra – or, to put it another way, a senior KGB officer and spy control in Australia. It was quite surprising that Petrov had survived Stalin's vicious purges and executions of officials over the years, but he had mainly worked under a very nasty piece of work named Lavrentiy Beria and nobody had managed to get rid of this vile man to date. Beria will become significant in a moment, but, returning to Australia, Petrov met Bialoguski and, against a background of mutual friendship, copious alcohol and prostitutes, Petrov thought he had recruited Bialoguski as a Soviet spy, whereas the latter continued to work for ASIO and was spying on Petrov.

Matters came to a head in 1953 when Stalin died and a power struggle ensued. Beria was confident of working his way to the very top, but certain people, Nikita Khrushchev in particular, had other ideas, and Beria was executed. Bialoguski and his colleague, Ron Richards, used this as part of the argument that Petrov should defect, saying that when he was recalled to the Soviet Union under the new regime, he would be in mortal danger. Another part of the persuasion was a large sum of money.

Petrov did defect in 1954, but had neglected to forewarn his wife, Evdokia (also a spy), who, when recalled by the Soviets, was torn between her sister back home and her husband.

Evdokia decided to cooperate with the Australian authorities. Next came a ghastly episode: she was kidnapped by Soviet agents and dragged kicking and screaming to an aircraft.

A high-ranking Australian official witnessed this and fired off an urgent telegram requesting Prime Ministerial intervention, as it was certain that Evdokia would come to a horrible end if she was taken to Moscow. When the plane landed for refuelling at Darwin, Australian police boarded, extricated her from the kidnappers and asked whether she wanted to go to Moscow or stay in Australia. You can guess what her answer was.

There was subsequently a Royal Commission investigating Soviet espionage in Australia, but there is no need to go into that here, save to say that it generated enormous press coverage and political wrangling. The Petrovs remained in Australia as Australian citizens.

As mentioned earlier, Michael and Patricia were divorced in 1954 and it wasn't an amicable parting. He wrote a book about the Petrov Affair, which was serialised in various newspapers and Patricia went to the papers with her own story. She said that he had a strange, almost weird, personality and that he was a clever, self-absorbed, manipulative and ambitious man who could also be charming and entertaining. This seemed to accord with others' views of him.

Michael was apparently a minor press celebrity for the rest of the 1950s but didn't seem to make significant headway with either his career or finances. In 1957 he applied for a reduction in Patricia's alimony, claiming that he hadn't made much money from the book and that his medical practice had suffered as a result of all the publicity. He got the reduction in alimony and in 1961 he won a libel case over Patricia's published allegations and was awarded £1,000 in damages.

Meanwhile, in 1957 he had married Nonnie Frieda Peifer, then a secretary; she had had a brief career as a film actress in minor roles under the name of Nonnie Piper in the late 1940s/early 1950s. He was still determined to pursue a musical career of some kind, preferably as a conductor, and had actually played the violin in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, but he wasn't getting anywhere on that front.

In about 1964 the family moved to England, where Michael continued to work in medicine but pursued his musical ambitions too. They lived at 24 Shawley Way, Epsom, which by a boundary quirk came under Tattenhams Ward, Banstead for election purposes and is now designated as 'Reigate and Banstead'.

Finally, Michael was able to study conducting and conducted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1969 he conducted at

the Royal Albert Hall, then he formed the Commonwealth Philharmonic Orchestra and also wielded the baton in Westminster Abbey. Perhaps at last he had found his true vocation.

Michael died of cancer on 29 July 1984 at Kingswood, Surrey. Nonnie remained in England and lived until 14 February 2020, aged 89. She was survived by three of her children and several grandchildren.

Linda Jackson 2023

This article is reproduced with the kind permission of Epsom and Ewell History Explorer (www.eehe.org.uk). The original article forms part of EEHE's extensive and richly illustrated archive of local history. Epsom and Ewell Times readers are warmly encouraged to explore the many other fascinating histories available on the site.

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Other histories from Epsom and Ewell History Explorer on Epsom and Ewell Times:

A surprise glimpse into 1883: Christ Church Epsom Common's Parish Magazine

Have your say on the future of Epsom and Ewell government

19 March 2026

The Epsom & Ewell Times is launching an independent reader survey to invite views not only on Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's proposals, but also on an alternative approach to local consultation and civic participation which is not included in Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's formal consultation. Namely, Neighbour Area Committees.

The Council's consultation

The Borough Council consultation follows its Full Council decision in December to continue exploring the creation of two new parish-style councils. According to the council's press release, the proposed bodies would:

- initially be responsible for allotments
- act as statutory consultees on planning matters
- be funded by a parish precept of around £43-£46 for a Band D property
- hold elections in May 2027 if created

The consultation also asks for views on warding arrangements and councillor numbers for the proposed new bodies.

The Epsom & Ewell Times encouraged residents to read the council's consultation material in full and respond to it, whether in favour or opposed, so that the decision ultimately reflects as broad a range of resident opinion as possible.

The EEBC CGR Consultation officially closed on 31st January.

Why EET is running an additional poll

During the December council debate and in the public correspondence that followed, a number of councillors and residents raised questions about whether the consultation should also invite views on alternative forms of local representation, such as Surrey County Council's pilot Neighbourhood Area Committees, under the new unitary structure. See the Epsom and Ewell Times guide to Neighbour Area Committees [HERE](#)

See letters to the Epsom and Ewell Times from a number of Epsom and Ewell Borough Councillors [HERE](#).

The council's consultation asks residents only whether they wish to establish parish-style community councils and, if so, how they should be constituted. It does not ask whether residents would prefer any alternative approach or different mechanisms for an additional local voice to the 10 Epsom and Ewell elected Councillors to the East Surrey Unitary Authority

The Epsom & Ewell Times believes that the wider discussion about local democracy after 2027 may benefit from hearing resident views on more than one potential model. Our independent survey therefore allows participants to express:

- support for or opposition to the creation of community councils
- support, if any, for the alternative form of additional local consultation of Neighbour Area Committees
- views on cost, value for money and accountability
- opinions on how civic traditions, such as the mayoralty, might continue

The results will not form part of the official consultation process, but may provide an additional picture of community sentiment to inform public debate and future reporting.

Click [HERE](#) to access the Epsom and Ewell Times reader survey

Two platforms, one community conversation

Residents are invited to complete both the council consultation and the Epsom & Ewell Times survey. The two exercises serve different purposes:

- the council consultation forms part of the statutory Community Governance Review

- the EET poll provides a space for residents to express views on a wider range of possibilities and priorities

Both, however, share a common aim — helping to ensure that local voices are heard at a time of significant change in how Epsom and Ewell will be governed in future.

The Epsom & Ewell Times will continue to report on developments in the Community Governance Review, the consultation outcomes and the wider debate about the future of local representation as the borough approaches the transition to the East Surrey Unitary Authority in 2027.

Sam Jones - Reporter



Related reports and articles:

[Parish power, democratic ideals — and the Residents' Association dilemma](#)

[Epsom and Ewell's Local Democracy Debate: What's at Stake as Consultation Enters Phase Two](#)

[Letters from local Councillors on Epsom and Ewell parishes](#)

[Epsom and Ewell Council leader message for 2026](#)

[Long serving Epsom Councillor blasts LGR and NACs](#)

[Neighbour Area Committees HERE](#)

5th March 2026

19 March 2026

Business Council Planning

Ewell's Looe Set for Flush of New Industrial Investment



2 March 2026

An ageing industrial site in Ewell is set for a major overhaul after councillors backed plans to knock it down and rebuild it with bigger, more modern units. The scheme ... [Read More](#)

Education News Science

Surrey Space Institute could lead UK missions to the stars



2 March 2026

UK-led and UK-enabled space missions within this decade should be the hard-coded goal of the country's space industry at every level, says the Director of the newly launched Surrey Space Institute at ... [Read More](#)

Rugby Sports

Sutton & Epsom Fall Short in Entertaining 10-Try Battle at

Rugby Lane



2 March 2026

Sutton & Epsom RFC 27 Battersea Ironsides 38. Saturday 28th February. With hindsight being, as ever, twenty-twenty vision, the defeat of the Black & Whites at Garratt Green has been ... [Read More](#)

Family Notices Notices

Dr Antony John Hayward



28 February 2026

Antony John Hayward died peacefully on 1st February 2026. Devoted husband to the late Judith, loving father to James, Simon (predeceased), Christopher, Joanna and Jonathan. Proud and loving grandfather and ... [Read More](#)

Football Sports

Epsom and Ewell FC rise to challenge on penalties



28 February 2026

26th February Horley Town FC The New Defence, Horley - Southern Combination Challenge Cup 2nd Round Epsom & Ewell progress to the next round of the Southern Combination Challenge Cup ... [Read More](#)

Council Housing Planning

Horses beat cars in Epsom's Langley Vale housing development application



28 February 2026

Plans to build up to 110 homes on agricultural fields in Epsom have been thrown out with fears of a horse vs car 'collision corridor'. The Langley Vale scheme has ... [Read More](#)

Council Elections News

Party Leader visits Epsom to launch East Surrey election

campaign



27 February 2026

The Liberal Democrat leader Sir Ed Davey visited Epsom yesterday to officially launch the start of the East Surrey election campaign, promising a “fresh start” to the county after years ... [Read More](#)

Environment Transport

Battle of the skies above Surrey



27 February 2026

Air pollution, noise, and climate change are three of the reasons Surrey Heath Borough Council is objecting to plans to increase weekend flights at Farnborough Airport. The business travel hub ... [Read More](#)

Education News

Surrey’s big brains on tiny matters recognised



27 February 2026

Surrey ranked world’s leading university for nuclear isomer discovery, with three physicists in global top ten A global database of nuclear physics discoveries spanning more than a century has ranked ... [Read More](#)

Crime Environment News

Fly-tipping “running out of control” but major incidents disappear in Epsom and Ewell



27 February 2026

Fly-tipping on an industrial scale is at risk of “running out of control” across England, with organised criminal gangs blamed for dumping tens of thousands of tonnes of rubbish in ... [Read More](#)

Community Education

Surrey's declining birth rate means fewer school classes



26 February 2026

Surrey's falling birth rate has led to nearly 50 fewer classes of school children in less than a decade. That is according to a new strategy report aimed at protecting ... [Read More](#)

Environment News

EV charger grants increased as thousands of Surrey drivers without driveways could benefit



26 February 2026

Renters, flat-owners and businesses in Surrey will be able to claim up to £500 towards installing electric vehicle (EV) chargers from April, after the Government increased grants by more than ... [Read More](#)

Council Education

Surrey to create 220 SEND places



26 February 2026

Surrey will press ahead with two long-planned specialist free schools but councillors have admitted the plans will still leave "significant" gaps in provision. The scheme will unlock £16.14m of government ... [Read More](#)

Health News

Epsom and St Helier Trust doctor appointed by Privy Council to GMC



26 February 2026

The General Medical Council (GMC) has announced a paediatrician as the latest member of its governing body, the GMC Council. Dr Lucinda Etheridge, a consultant in general and adolescent paediatrics, ... [Read More](#)

Council Council constitution Finances

Bourne Hall row escalates as Chief Executive suspends councillors' decision



26 February 2026

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's decision to delay plans for investing in Bourne Hall Museum has itself been suspended after the Council's Chief Executive intervened, raising questions about whether councillors ... [Read More](#)

Business News

On the Primarks Epsom, ready, steady, go 25th March



25 February 2026

Primark will open the doors of its new store at Epsom's The Ashley Centre on Wednesday 25 March at 10am, taking over the former House of Fraser unit. To mark ... [Read More](#)

Dr Antony John Hayward

19 March 2026



Antony John **Hayward** died peacefully on 1st February 2026.

Devoted husband to the late Judith, loving father to James, Simon (predeceased), Christopher, Joanna and Jonathan. Proud and loving grandfather and great grandfather.

Brilliant GP working in Ewell all his professional life.

Funeral Service -10.00 am Friday 13th March at St Joseph's Catholic Church, Epsom KT18 7JQ.

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Battle of the skies above Surrey

19 March 2026



Air pollution, noise, and climate change are three of the reasons Surrey Heath Borough Council is objecting to plans to increase weekend flights at Farnborough Airport. The business travel hub has a cap on weekends and is looking to increase that as part of a wider push to get to 50,000 annual flights. The airport has also seen an increase in demand despite only 2.6 people travelling per flight, the February planning committee heard.

The application, part of a neighbouring authority consultation, wants to increase weekend and bank holiday flights from its current limit of 8,900 to 13,500. As it stands there are about 30,000 flights using the airport, which sits 1.5km from the border of Surrey Heath, but it has a limit of 50,000 a year. If the application is approved by neighbouring Rushmoor Borough Council, airport chiefs expect it to reach its capacity by 2033. If it is rejected, that pushes the target date back to 2045.

Officers told the meeting: "The climate change manager has raised doubts about whether projections, which rely on the suggested level of uptake, are sufficiently robust. The council therefore raises objections on the noise, but also on the potential impact on air pollution, potential impact on biodiversity, potential impact on climate change, and that the economic benefits to this borough do not outweigh the harm."

Councillor David Whitcroft (Liberal Democrat; Mytchett and Deepcut) said the airport was currently turning away weekend flights and felt the weekend slots would be used primarily for wealthy leisure travellers - with the borough paying for the impact. The meeting heard that about 70 per cent of aeroplanes landing at the airport come in over the borough, and that it misses out on any direct economic benefits. He said: "The current level is 8900, and that level has been met. So if this application were to go through, the weekend impact on residents particularly in Mytchett, Deepcut and Bisley would be immediate and dramatic. Weekend flights would go up by 50 per cent. Why does it need to go up on weekends for a business airport designed to relieve traffic from the bigger airports, because it has seen an increase in leisure travel. Should people be able to avoid what they consider to be the inconvenience of mass commercial flying in order to create noise and air pollution simply because they can afford it."

The plans were universally objected to by all members. The final decision rests with Rushmoor Borough Council at a yet-to-be-set date.

Chris Caulfield LDRS Farnborough Airport (image SHBC)

Epsom and St Helier Trust doctor appointed by Privy Council to GMC

19 March 2026



The General Medical Council (GMC) has announced a paediatrician as the latest member of its governing body, the GMC Council. Dr Lucinda Etheridge, a consultant in general and adolescent paediatrics, is the latest registrant member to join the body. She joins from St George's Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals and Health Group in Surrey, where she is Site Chief Medical Officer. Her appointment replaces Dr Alison Wright on the Council, who stepped down after being elected as President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

The Council's primary role is to protect the public by setting the GMC's strategy and goals and overseeing the work of the regulator. It is led by GMC Chair, Professor Dame Carrie MacEwen, and comprises up to six lay members and six registrant members. Following her appointment by the Privy Council, Dr Etheridge will start her role on Tuesday, 3 March. She has worked with the GMC since 2007, initially in the development of fitness to practise assessments, then as a performance assessor and training others for that role, before becoming a Responsible Officer for an acute trust.

Dr Etheridge, whose clinical interests are in the management of eating disorders, will step down from her current medical director role in spring 2026. She will then combine her work at the GMC alongside three days of clinical practice each

week.

Professor Dame Carrie MacEwen said: "I'm delighted to welcome Dr Etheridge to the Council. She brings a wealth of experience to support us in our role overseeing the GMC and supporting registrants to deliver the best possible care. Dr Etheridge joins at an important time as we continue our work to be a more compassionate and effective regulator, and ahead of vital reform to the regulation of UK healthcare professionals. I would also like to thank Dr Alison Wright for her work and her contributions to Council. On behalf of the GMC, I wish her the very best in her new role."

Dr Etheridge said: "I am delighted to be joining the GMC Council as a registrant member. I look forward to working collaboratively across the four nations to help shape a fair, transparent and forward-looking regulatory environment that enables registrants to provide the highest standards of care for patients."

GMC Council members work a minimum of three days each month with the regulator. More information about the Council is on the GMC website.

The GMC Press Office

26th February 2026

19 March 2026

Community News Volunteers

Epsom and Ewell's four year commitment to Ukraine



24 February 2026

4 Years of War in Ukraine, 4 Years of Heart Ache, Support and Immense Pride in this Community By Roy Deadman, Chairman and Co-Founder, Surrey Stands With Ukraine Four years ... [Read More](#)

Council Housing Planning

The Ripley effect of rural development in Surrey



24 February 2026

Surrey villagers say they fear their semi-rural community will be "overwhelmed" by development. Ripley is frequently named one of the prettiest and best places to live in Surrey. But locals ... [Read More](#)

News Policing

Surrey armed officers in fatal shooting to remain anonymous?



24 February 2026

A coroner will soon decide whether armed police officers involved in a fatal shooting in Surrey will have their names kept out of the public eye. At a pre-inquest review ... [Read More](#)

Council Education

Surrey wasting education in primary schools



24 February 2026

Surrey County Council (SCC) has launched the Surrey Schools Waste Engagement Grant Scheme for primary schools in the county. Through the scheme, SCC will support schools to educate their children ... [Read More](#)

Council Finances News

“It’s my meeting”: Cllr Dallen stops questions about his role in alleged Rainbow “cover-up”.

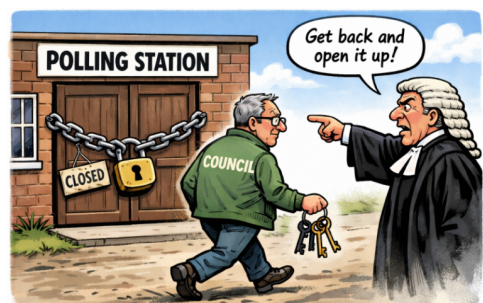


23 February 2026

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On the Primarks Epsom, ready, steady, go 25th March

19 March 2026



Primark will open the doors of its new store at Epsom’s The Ashley Centre on Wednesday 25 March at 10am, taking over the former House of Fraser unit.

To mark the moment, the first customers and loyal Primark fans will be welcomed by a live DJ. The new store will cover 31,400 sq. ft set over two floors and follows the retailer’s recent recruitment of 90 new team members ready for opening day.

Customers will be able to shop the bestselling Primark products they know and love across clothing, kidswear, beauty, lifestyle and home.

In further good news for local shoppers, its popular Click & Collect service will also be coming to Epsom to enable customers to browse and order on the Primark website before picking up their items in store, at a time that best suits them.

Ewa Klepczuk, Primark Epsom’s store manager, said: “After working at Primark for many years, I’m excited to now be part of bringing our exciting new store to Epsom. We know there is a lot of anticipation for our arrival, and with 90 new retail colleagues now in place, we’re all working hard behind the scenes to ensure we’re ready for opening day. I’m really looking forward to seeing the reaction of local shoppers when our doors open, where they’ll find our famous Primark must-haves, all at unbeatable value for the entire family. Everyone is welcome to join in with our celebrations – we can’t wait to see everyone there!”

Louisa Butters, Head of Urban Destinations (Retail & Offices) at CBRE Investment Management, owners of Ashley Centre, said: “The opening of Primark marks a significant milestone for the Ashley Centre and is a strong acknowledgement of the progress we’ve made through our recent refurbishment programme. As one of the UK’s leading retailers, Primark brings both scale and drawing power, playing a key role in strengthening the scheme’s anchor line-up and enhancing its overall proposition. Its arrival will further elevate the quality, accessibility and relevance of the destination, while reinforcing the confidence that major national brands have in our long-term vision for its continued transformation.”

The new Epsom store will be Primark’s 199th store on the UK high street and follows the retailer’s last store opening in December 2025 in Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

As shoppers prepare for the opening day, Primark customers can continue to shop at nearby stores in Sutton, Kingston-Upon-Thames and Guildford – and use Primark’s handy online stock checker tool to track down their favourite styles before heading in-store.

Primark Press Release

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Epsom and Ewell’s four year commitment to Ukraine

19 March 2026



4 Years of War in Ukraine, 4 Years of Heart Ache, Support and Immense Pride in this Community

By Roy Deadman, Chairman and Co-Founder, Surrey Stands With Ukraine

Four years ago, we woke to news that changed Europe overnight. Ukraine had been invaded. I remember sitting in shock, watching the images unfold, feeling an overwhelming mix of disbelief and anger. I was incredibly angry that Russia had invaded Ukraine. What mattered to me in that moment was not politics, but people. A proud European nation was under attack, and I wanted to do all I could to defend it.

On day one of the war, I called my Ukrainian friend Natalia Irvine, who lives here in Epsom. I asked her a simple question: “What do you need?” I made her a promise that I would support her and her country in any way I could, for as long as it took. At that point, I thought in terms of weeks, perhaps months. I could never have imagined we would still be here four years later.

Together, Natalia and I reached out to our local community. We asked for help and the response was overwhelming. Donations flooded in almost immediately. People wanted to stand with Ukraine. They wanted to do something tangible in the face of such horror.

Within hours, it became clear that we needed space. The generosity of the Ashley Centre was extraordinary. On day one, they offered us 6,000 square feet of retail space. Even though it was rent-free, I had to take a personal risk and sign a lease that made me liable for the business rates, as we were not yet a registered charity. It was a leap of faith, but it was the start of what we proudly called “The Hub.”

By the end of that first week, 180 volunteers had registered with us. We had raised close to £20,000 and sent two truckloads of humanitarian aid, donated by this incredible community. It was breathtaking how quickly everything moved.

Those early days were intense. Some people spent up to 20 hours at a time sorting and packing boxes. We worked through exhaustion fuelled by tea, determination and a shared sense of purpose. The emotional rollercoaster was constant, heartbreak at what we were seeing unfold in Ukraine, and immense pride at how Epsom and Ewell pulled together.

We quickly realised this could not be chaotic goodwill alone. We had to run it like a small business operation. Every item had to be sorted, categorised, packed and properly manifested before being loaded onto whichever truck was available. Transport offers poured in, with drivers volunteering to take aid directly into Ukraine. It was inspiring, and it required careful coordination.

In that first week, we formed a core team. Some volunteers stepped forward to create a committee to help make difficult decisions about what we could send and where it should go. These were not easy choices. Demand was enormous, and resources, though generous, were not infinite.

Natalia, based here in Epsom, worked tirelessly alongside us. Her sister Anya, coordinating from inside Ukraine, helped guide where our aid would have the greatest impact. Between Epsom and Ukraine, somehow, we made it work. It was teamwork across borders, built on trust and shared determination.

Very quickly, we understood that we needed to become part of a registered charity. One reason was practical, the burden of business rates. The other was credibility, and the invaluable ability to claim Gift Aid on donations. I was introduced to Lionel Blackman, who ran a charity called Harrop HR Missions. After a coffee and a conversation about our mission, Lionel generously agreed to let us operate under his charity’s structure.

From there, Surrey Stands With Ukraine became the fully formed charity we know today: Surrey Stands With Ukraine. As we reach the four-year mark, we have shipped £5 million worth of aid. We have sent 153 trucks, a fire engine, over 50,000 mobility aids and 650 winter family survival packs, and so much more besides.

Today, our charity is based at Global House, where we share space with the totally amazing Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network. EERN provides local support for Ukrainian families who have made Epsom and Ewell their temporary home. It has been a privilege to work alongside such a dedicated team and to witness their daily commitment.

One unexpected gift from these four years has been friendship. What began as an emergency response has grown into a powerful community bond. I have made lifelong friends through this work. We meet for quiz nights, coffee mornings, beers, lunches and parties. That human connection is not a side note, it is central to our resilience.

This work is emotionally hard. While we do not face the same unimaginable horror that Ukrainians endure, we are closer to it than most. We receive constant requests for help. We watch videos from the ground. We hear heartbreaking stories of families torn apart. We cry. We carry it with us.

That friendship network sustains us. There is always someone ready with a hug, someone to make you smile, someone to pick you up when you are exhausted. This is what being part of this charity and this community truly means.

Every single one of us is a volunteer. No one is paid a wage. We are there because we care deeply and because we want to do something meaningful on behalf of the Ukrainian people. That purity of purpose has shaped everything we do.

Over these four years, I have learned so much about Ukraine and its people. The obvious lesson is their extraordinary courage. But that courage is not confined to the front lines. It runs through all Ukrainians, young and old, men and women. Their commitment to preserving their culture, history and identity in the face of attempts to erase it is profoundly inspiring.

When I made that promise on day one, I thought this would be short term. I do believe Western governments have not done enough, or not quickly enough. This is a war in Europe, on our doorstep. History teaches us hard lessons, yet we so often seem slow to act.

If we are not careful, we may look back five or ten years from now at a Europe that has changed for the worse. It feels at times as though we have moved from a post-war world into a pre-war one. The longer this conflict continues without decisive resolution, the more lives are lost.

And yet, despite the geopolitical uncertainty, I find hope here at home. I find it in every donated sleeping bag, every cheque written, every volunteer shift completed. I find it in schoolchildren raising funds and pensioners knitting winter hats.

When people come together with kindness in their hearts, extraordinary things can happen. A community can unite behind people from another country simply because it is the right thing to do. That gives me hope.

I am immensely proud of what Epsom and Ewell has done over these four years. Proud to live here. Proud to raise my family here. Proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with all of you.

Four years of war. Four years of heartbreak. Four years of unwavering support. And four years of immense pride in this remarkable community.

Roy Deadman – Chair Surrey Stands With Ukraine

There will be a commemoration today at 5pm in The Ashley Centre, marking the 4th anniversary of the war and the Mayor of Epsom and Ewell Cllr Robert Leach will be in attendance. All are welcome.

Image: Roy Deadman with SSWU's latest appeal for negative pressure wound dressings

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19th February 2026

19 March 2026

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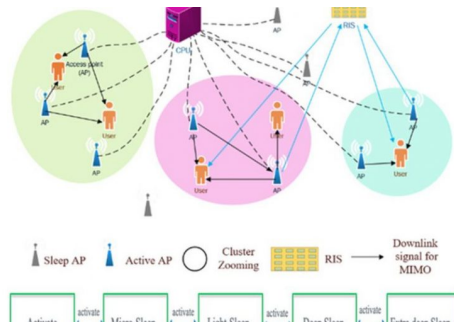


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Epsom and Ewell Town-Twinning Association



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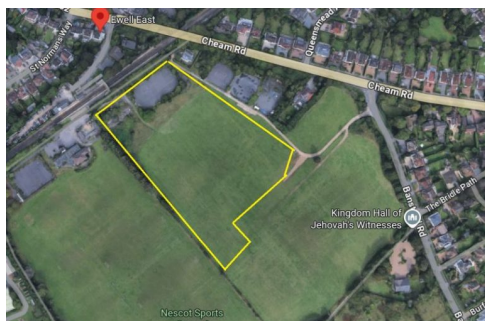


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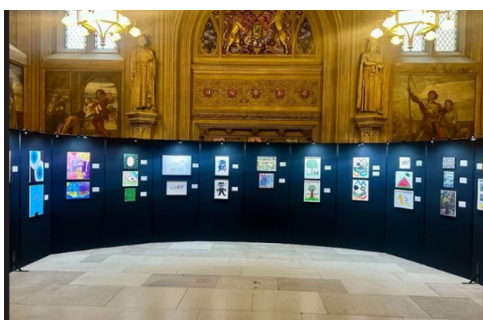


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