



August Police warn drink drivers in Surrey

Surrey Police have launched their annual summer crackdown on drink and drug drivers in Surrey. Drink and drug-driving is one of the most common causes of collisions which result in death or serious injury, and in 2021 416 drink or drug drivers were arrested and charged on the roads of Surrey.

From 1 August to 1 September, Surrey and Sussex Police will have extra resources dedicated to preventing and detecting incidents of drink and drug-driving. This is in addition to the routine roads policing work carried out 24/7, 365 days a year, by their **Roads Policing Unit** and new **Vanguard Road Safety Team**.

The Vanguard Team are a new and dedicated police resource focusing solely on the 'fatal 5' - the leading contributory factors in collisions, to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on Surrey's roads.

In line with their previous campaigns, anyone arrested during this period and then convicted will be identified on their website and social media channels as a deterrent.

Chief Inspector Michael Hodder, of the Surrey and Sussex Roads Policing Unit, said: "It cannot be said enough how much drink and drug-driving can ruin lives.

"Drink-driving is something that is becoming more socially unacceptable but unfortunately, we are seeing more and more drug-driving on Surrey roads. This is something we are working hard to tackle, and these dedicated campaigns are crucial in raising awareness, deterring would-be offenders, and keeping as many people as possible, safe on the roads.

"As always, we will deal extremely robustly with these offenders through a combination of measures including education, engineering, and enforcement, with a special emphasis on reducing casualty rates of vulnerable users like motorcyclists and young drivers.

"Technology now allows us to test drivers at the roadside there and then for drugs, which allows us to be more effective in how we tackle drug driving and means that drivers who are breaking the law, will be caught.

"Alcohol and drugs affect everyone differently, so do the right thing, don't risk it and arrange alternative ways home if you are planning on going out."

The consequences of drink or drug-driving could include:

- Killing or seriously injuring yourself or someone else;
- A minimum 12-month ban;
- An unlimited fine;
- A possible prison sentence;
- A criminal record, which could affect your current and future employment;
- An increase in your car insurance costs;
- Trouble travelling to countries such as the USA.
- If you know someone is driving while over the limit or after taking drugs, call 999.

You can also contact the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or report it online. www.crimestoppers-uk.org

The campaign is being run in conjunction with the **DriveSmart in Surrey and Sussex Safer Roads Partnership**.

Council's last minute opposition to ULEZ extension.

With just one day to go before the end of the consultation period, **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** agreed on 28th July a response to Transport for London's (TfL's) proposed plan to extend the **Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ)** to all London boroughs, including neighbouring Kingston and Sutton. See Epsom and Ewell Times report 17th June on ULEZ extension.

ULEZ is a charge, currently £12.50 a day, imposed on the most polluting vehicles that enter the zone. Most petrol cars manufactured after January 2006, most diesel cars manufactured after September 2016 and all electric cars are exempt from the ULEZ charge.

In a special motion to the Council meeting on 28th July, Councillor **Phil Neale** (RA, Cuddington Ward) proposed a response to the consultation arguing for a significant increase in the number of exempt routes and an extension of any scrappage scheme to include Epsom and Ewell. The motion also called for an extension of the consultation period to allow more careful analysis of the cause and effect to the welfare and economy of the boroughs neighbouring London. "We support the move to reduce the high



level of air pollution caused by congestion and high-emission vehicles,” he said. “However, in this time of economic pressure, the scheme needs to consider the economic, social and mental health needs of all communities affected by the scheme, not just London boroughs. It is going to hit lower income families more. I’m not asking for ULEZ to be dropped, I’m asking for TFL to consider what will happen in the boroughs surrounding London.”

“There seems to be no thought by TFL whatsoever of the impact this will have on the borough and our residents” said **Cllr. John Beckett** (RA, Auriol Ward, Chair of the Environment and Safe Communities Committee). “I welcome the travel corridors that have been put in, but I do have to question why I can drive 98% of the way to the new hospital site, but the road I need to use to get into the hospital site is in the proposed ULEZ.”

“If we get public transport sorted, that would be the time to get people moving out of their cars” said **Cllr. Neil Dallen** (RA, Town Ward, Chair of the Strategy and Resource Committee).

Cllr Kate Chinn (Labour, Court Ward) provided the solitary voice opposing the motion. “It is only the oldest and most polluting vehicles that apply – these need to be taken off the roads...let’s give people help to do that and let’s look after this world for ourselves and the people who come after us.”

The motion was passed by a considerable majority. Exact voting figures were not announced by the Mayor who chaired the meeting.

“Statement of community involvement” involves what about what?

Following a 4-week public consultation, **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** unveiled its new draft **Statement of Community Involvement** (SCI) at a meeting of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee on 28th July. This describes how local residents, businesses and other organisations can be involved in the planning process in Epsom and Ewell.

It is a legal requirement for the Council to have an SCI and to review it every five years as the way in which communities and the Council interact changes.

Planning decisions affect us all so, if you are interested in your area and would like to be involved in shaping future planning policy in Epsom & Ewell, you can:

- Sign up to receive notifications about local plan consultations.
- Read the council’s Local Development Scheme to find out what documents are going to be produced and when.
- Monitor the council’s Planning Policy webpages for updates and latest news.

· Check if a Neighbourhood Forum has been established in your area to prepare a neighbourhood plan.

The draft SCI can be read in the Agenda Reports Pack of the committee meeting, but please be aware that it is subject to some small amendments as a result of questions and suggestions raised by councillors at the meeting.

Blues on a bandura blow minds in Epsom

Ukrainian refugee musicians delighted a packed audience in the Epsom Methodist Church Saturday 30th July. On behalf of the local community **Mayor of Epsom and Ewell Cllr Clive Woodbridge** extended a warm welcome to all Ukrainian refugees and thanked the sacrifices of local hosts who have taken them into their homes.



Organised by **Lionel Blackman** with **Nina Kaye** of **Epsom Refugee Network** and **Surrey Stands With Ukraine**, the evening was compered by **Darina Dvorinchenko**, a refugee from Odessa, who also conducted all the required interpretation.

In response to the Mayor professional pianist **Natalia Zadorizhna** expressed the deep gratitude to our community for all we are doing in standing with her country in the "evil time". And that gratitude was demonstrated by fine performances also from her young daughter **Diana**, who played the piano and recited from memory and in English the Ukrainian poem "**Love Ukraine**" by **Volodymyr Sosiura**.



Packed audience at Epsom Methodist Church

Young **Liza Pryiemska** played piano, recited the poem in Ukrainian and sang beautifully. 21 year old **Tetiana Zheliba** at short notice replacing an artist who fell sick, took to the fine grand piano at EMC for two compositions.



Young 16 year old **Nika Vlasova** played **Schubert's "The Bee"** solo on violin.

Like a winged harp carrying angel **Yulia Komyshan**, recently arrived from Ukraine, had heard about the event on a social network and simply turned up unannounced, **Bandura** in hand. She crowned the night with the audience standing to the national song and included in her performance was a remarkable rendition of a blues number. She certainly blew the blues away. The audience all rose to their feet in a sustained ovation for these remarkably talented and brave Ukrainians.



Darina Dvorinchenko, Mayor of Epsom and Ewell Cllr Clive Woodbridge, Natalia and Diana Zadorizhna, Liza Pryiemska, Tetiana Zheliba, Nika Vlasova and Yuliya Komyshan with her Ukrainian bandura.

Did the Inspector get to the Bottom of this?

Langley Bottom Farm in Epsom is to become a small housing estate following the decision of Planning Inspector **D Hartley** dated 14th July 2022. Overturning a refusal of the **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** and against overwhelming objections of the public in the 168 recorded submissions the Inspector allowed the appeal of **Fairfax Properties**, despite the location being in **Green Belt land**.

The Inspector made the following controversial observations:

"One of the purposes of Green Belt is to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The site includes a number of existing buildings and areas of hardstanding. The latter has the continued potential to be used for the parking of vehicles. Overall,



and taking into account the existing use, characteristics and extent of development on the site, I am satisfied that subject to the imposition of planning conditions the proposal would not lead to countryside encroachment and hence there would be no conflict with this Green Belt purpose."

Concerning **local facilities** for the future occupants he stated "Langley Vale is within reasonable walking and cycling distance of the appeal site. It contains a limited number of facilities and amenities such as the 'Park and Shop' petrol filling station convenience store, 'The Shop on the Corner', garage, village hall, pre-school and primary school. I acknowledge the Council's comment that 'The Shop on the Corner' appears to have ceased trading. There is of course some possibility that the property could be used again as a shop but, in any event, 'The Park and Shop' does provide some food and drink provision albeit that I acknowledge that it would likely only be used on the basis of day to day 'topping up'."

On **public transport, walking and cycling** he observed with optimism: "The site is located in close proximity to bus stops within Langley Vale and includes bus service E5 every two hours to Epsom (Monday to Saturday) and school service 618 (Monday to Friday). Furthermore, three mainline railway stations are located nearby (Epsom, Epsom Downs and Tattenham Corner) providing commuting services to London and access to destinations further afield. There is also bus service 408 from Epsom to Cobham and stopping at Leatherhead and which runs Monday to Friday calling at Langley Vale once a day. I acknowledge that services are not very frequent but nevertheless I find that some of the proposed residents would use them on occasion. The evidence is that the site is served well by a number of public footpath and cycle routes where some limited opportunities would be available, primarily in the day time and when there is no inclement weather. These could be used to visit services and amenities both locally and further afield."

The Inspector did observe that **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** had allowed arguably unauthorised uses of the land to continue unchallenged for so many years that the "developed uses" became lawful. The claims of threats to the Green Belt were thereby undermined.

40% of the houses are to be "affordable". Time will tell how affordable they will be.

Safer nights ahead in Epsom with funding boost

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will receive £271,712 in government funding for a project to improve safety for Epsom town centre's night-time economy.

The Home Office's Safer Streets funding was secured in partnership with Surrey Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Business Improvement District, Go Epsom.

These improvements are aimed specifically at supporting the safety and vitality of the night-time economy, including reducing violence against women and girls.

The funding will help the following items:

- Upgrade of CCTV in Epsom town centre
- Support businesses operating in the evening with training and accreditation
- Support the existing Street Pastors with equipment and training
- Develop a further night-time presence to build on the work of the Street Pastors
- Provide anti drink spiking equipment to licensed premises and customers
- Deliver a communications package promoting the safety of patrons in the town centre and promote personal safety

In response to ongoing issues in and around Epsom town centre, Surrey Police worked closely with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council to draw up an application for Safer Streets funding.

A survey was sent out into the community and the results were closely consulted when drafting the application. Among the concerns raised were drug use, threatening behaviour, extreme drunkenness, and violence within Epsom town centre, closely linked to the night-time economy.

The survey highlighted a desire for better signposting to help and support, and a need for increased confidence in the police response to issues within the town centre.

The application was drafted by the police and council, then approved and submitted by Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Lisa Townsend. Other areas in Surrey to benefit from successful funding bids are Sunbury Cross and the Surrey Towers



development in Addlestone.

The money will be used, among other measures, to modernise CCTV use, deliver training packages for licensed premises, and to provide free anti-drink spiking and spiking detection devices within Epsom town centre.

Councillor John Beckett, Chair of the Environment and Safe Communities Committee, said, "It's great to hear Epsom has received the Safer Streets funding, we are particularly proud of the partnership working that took place to bring this resource together for the benefit of local residents and businesses.

"Supporting the night-time economy while ensuring the safety of residents, particularly female ones, is an important priority and we will continue to work with everyone involved to ensure this money is spent effectively. Epsom town centre is a vibrant evening economy and we are delighted to enhance safety and boost confidence for every business and visitor."

Inspector Jon Vale, Borough Commander, said, "This is fantastic news. Surrey Police and Epsom & Ewell Borough Council have worked tirelessly as a partnership in the submission of this bid.

"The community have told us their concerns, and we have listened. The funding made available will allow the partnership to implement numerous measures that would not otherwise been a possibility.

"This will help to make Epsom town centre an even safer place for users of the night-time economy, in particular women and girls. Tackling violence against women and girls is a specific priority for the Epsom & Ewell Community Safety Partnership and this work demonstrates our shared commitment in this respect."

Rod Brown, Chair of the Epsom and Ewell Community Safety Partnership, said, "We know from speaking with residents that the safety of their environment is of great importance. I am delighted that this award will allow us to deliver lasting benefits to the late-night economy in Epsom to allow business to invest with confidence and secure safety improvements for the town."

Adam Kick the Chairman of Epsom and Ewell's **Pubwatch** enthuses: "This is amazing news for the borough and has most certainly been achieved as a result of tireless work by all parties involved in the proposal. This funding will most certainly help towards supporting the aim of providing a vibrant nightlife where customer safety is paramount."

Karen Pengelly, BID Manager at Go Epsom, said, "Since Epsom's businesses reopened after Covid lockdowns, the BID has been doing lots of groundwork on safety and security, engaging with our local licensed premises and retailers and working with security experts to reduce offending.

"This fresh investment in a modern and much improved CCTV system provides Epsom with the tools that are needed to reduce theft and anti-social behaviour. It's wonderful news."

Surrey Police fight dog theft forensically

Surrey Police are turning to DNA technology to tackle dog thefts in the county.

Wednesday 27th July **Surrey Police** officially launched its partnership with **DNA Protected**, a UK-wide dog DNA database service designed to deter theft and help ensure a stolen dog's safe return to its owner.

Over the past two years there has been a national increase in demand for dogs and puppies as we all spent a lot more time at home during the pandemic. Unfortunately, this demand also created a gap in the market for dog thieves and illegal breeders.

DNA Protected is a service from **Cellmark Forensic Services**, who hope that their innovative technology and partnership with police forces across the UK will be a game-changer when it comes to the prevention and investigation of dog thefts.

Much like a property register database, DNA Protected securely stores a profile of your dog's unique DNA, produced from a simple mouth swab, on the forensic database. Police forces across the country can swab a dog they believe to be stolen and send the sample off for analysis and comparison against the database.

Like ours, a dog's DNA cannot be changed or removed. If the swab comes back with a match, it can be used to reunite you with your beloved pet and provide valuable evidence in dog theft investigations.

Wildlife Crime Officer, **PC Hollie Iribar**, said, "Surrey Police are excited to support this unique opportunity to get ahead of the game when it comes to tackling dog thefts. These investigations are complex and can be emotionally fraught. We often see and feel that a dog clearly has a connection with its owner but trying to put that to paper and prove it beyond doubt in a courtroom is challenging. Our hope is that our partnership with DNA Protected will help us prove beyond dispute who the rightful owner of a



stolen dog is, so we can focus our attention on prosecuting those responsible.”

Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey, **Ellie Vesey-Thompson**, said, “Over the last year we have heard from Surrey residents who are worried about dog theft and recognise the deep emotional impact that this crime has on individuals in our communities. In many cases, dogs feel like part of the family, and I understand how distressing it can be when they are stolen.

“Working to ensure that our residents across Surrey are safe and feel safe in our communities is a key priority of the Police and Crime Commissioner’s Plan and supporting those concerned about dog theft is important to us.

“That’s why we welcome this new partnership with Surrey Police. Not only will this provide a powerful deterrent to those involved in these thefts, but it will also give residents who sign up to the scheme more peace of mind that if they are a victim of a dog theft there is a much better chance of them being reunited with their dog.”

David Hartshorne, Managing Director at Cellmark Forensic Services said, “We developed the DNA Protected service with the police to assist with crime prevention and to help reunite stolen or lost dogs with their owners. The powerful forensic DNA tools we use to identify people and investigate crime are now being used to help combat dog theft.”

Dog owners can purchase a sampling kit by visiting the DNA Protected website at <https://www.dnaprotected.co.uk/>. The payment is a one-off fee which includes the cost of DNA profiling, storage of your dog’s profile on the database for at least ten years, and a dog tag and window sticker to let people know that your dog is on the forensic database. The site also sells branded collars, leads, and other accessories to show you have DNA protected your dog.