

Surrey's Big Guns ganging up

11 September 2023



Surrey is set to benefit from a deepening of ties between **Surrey County Council** and the **University of Surrey** through a new **Civic University Agreement** being developed between the two institutions.

Opportunities to work even more closely are being discussed at a special event today that hopes to explore new areas for collaboration including initiatives for economic growth, health and sustainability. The event will be opened by University of Surrey President and Vice Chancellor **Max Lu** alongside leader of Surrey County Council, **Tim Oliver**.

Both institutions recognise the huge potential that can flow from more consistently combining Surrey County Council's leadership, capacity and resources with the University of Surrey's research and innovation strengths, enormous economic contribution to the region and multiple global specialisms.

The University of Surrey has a good track record of working in and for the local community from hosting a space industry round table with the Science Minister; delivering air quality research that has benefitted local communities and schools; and carrying out health research that is helping earlier diagnosis of cancers in Surrey residents. The University also makes a significant positive impact on the Surrey economy – supporting 17,500 jobs in the county and contributing £1.3 billion to the county's economy. (Figures taken from a report by independent economic consultants Biggar Economics).

Other examples of current joint working include the Surrey Climate Commission and One Surrey Growth Board – both projects that are key to the sustainable prosperity of the county, and involving significant contributions from academics at the University of Surrey.

Professor Max Lu, President and Vice Chancellor of the University of Surrey, said:

"The University of Surrey is a global community, with our students, staff and collaborators from all over the world, and our research has tremendous global reach and impact. But we are proudly anchored in Guildford and Surrey, and have a symbiotic relationship with our region and county.

"In particular, we have a long and proud record of collaborating with Surrey County Council and many regional stakeholders. The Civic University Agreement that we are launching today will give us a bold and visionary framework for harnessing our world-leading research to help put Surrey on the world map, to help transform lives in Surrey for the better today, and to work together to build Surrey's future prosperity, to enrich lives and protect the planet."

Cllr Tim Oliver, Leader of Surrey County Council, said:

"The University of Surrey has long been a powerful asset and a trusted partner for the County. This agreement will take that to the next level. Combining our own high ambitions for Surrey with the Universities world-leading research strengths will help us bring the best of tomorrow to Surrey today, and to project Surrey's greatest strengths on a global stage. Our residents, our communities and our economy will be the beneficiaries of this deepened partnership with the research and education powerhouse with which we share our name."

The new Civic University Agreement is part of a national movement to elevate to a strategic level the relationships between universities and the communities in which they are based. The agreement will focus on enhancing life in Surrey through:

- driving sustainable economic growth
- tackling health inequalities
- enabling a greener future
- empowering thriving communities.

University centres of excellence that will contribute to delivery of these priorities include:

- The Institute for Sustainability – which has been founded to be a critical player in the global transition to sustainable living – through research, innovation, partnerships, education and civic engagement
- The People-Centred Artificial Intelligence Institute – which is driving research and innovation that places people at the heart of the future of AI
- The Centre for Sustainability and Wellbeing in the Visitor Economy – focusing on transport, tourism, hospitality and events

- Interprofessional expertise across human and animal health – including the combined strength of the University's School of Veterinary Medicine, School of Biosciences and new School of Medicine
- Surrey Space Centre – which is a key partner with the growing space sector in the region
- 5G/6G Innovation Centre – representing decades of experience at the forefront of high-speed and reliable mobile communications with multiple economic and societal applications.

Today's event is the first step in building closer ties between organisations that share a strong purpose to help society in the local region, and brings together an experienced team from across the University's faculties, schools and institutes, with leaders from all the directorates of Surrey County Council. It is focused on identifying creative opportunities for deeper collaboration, with the potential to deliver transformational change for our community. Other local stakeholders will be invited to join the agreement in the future.

White van man to go green?

11 September 2023



Diesel van owners who drive along the Guildford stretch of the A3 more than three times a week, could be eligible for a grant to replace their vehicle with an electric model.

Surrey County Council is working in partnership with Guildford Borough Council to deliver a £11 million National Highways scheme, aimed at reducing high levels of pollution in the area. Applications can be made here from today (Thursday 07 September) as 'International Day of Clean air for blue skies' gets underway.

Vehicle dealerships that sell and lease qualifying electric light commercial vehicles are also being encouraged to apply to participate in the scheme. Applications can be made at www.surreycc.gov.uk/a3evgrantdealer. A free event is being held for interested dealerships in Guildford on **Tuesday 12 September 2023**. Tickets can be booked [here](#).

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth said, "Reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality is a major priority for Surrey County Council as we strive to achieve our target to be a net-zero county by 2050. Pollution levels on this stretch of the A3 are unacceptable and we want to do all we can to improve this situation and protect the health and wellbeing of local residents.

"I'm delighted that we are able to offer van owners a financial incentive to replace their diesel vans with electric alternatives and to support small businesses in the switch to lower emissions. We'll also be increasing the provision of charge points near the A3 as we are across the county.

"I encourage franchised dealers who supply light commercial electric vehicles to support this scheme and apply to be an accredited dealership. This is an important first step in our joint work to improve air quality along the A3 and we hope to announce further joint interventions in the near future."

Andrew Bean, Principal Air Quality Advisor at National Highways said, "We are delighted to be working with Surrey and Guildford Councils on this scheme. Not only are we working together to improve air quality around the A3, we are reducing carbon emissions and helping businesses that regularly travel up and down the A3 at the same time.

"We strongly encourage all interested dealers to sign up and help deliver electric vans for local businesses and regular users of the A3".

Cllr Merel Rehorst-Smith, Lead Councillor for Regulatory and Democratic Services at Guildford Borough Council said, "This scheme is one of the new measures we're supporting to help improve air quality along the A3, benefitting Guildford and the surrounding villages. Our officers have worked hard to get this scheme off the ground and obtain the funding for it. We hope that local dealers and businesses will want to get involved."

"Offering diesel van owners financial help to switch to an electric vehicle will be a real incentive for them to use a greener form of transport."

More information is available at www.surreycc.gov.uk/a3evgrantdealer

Image: Will Mellor – actor from White Van Man series. CC BBC

Surrey to fight Ash dieback

11 September 2023



Surrey County Council will undertake a programme of woodland management across its countryside estate this autumn, with a focus on tackling Ash dieback to protect public safety where needed, as well as identifying current and future nature recovery opportunities.

As England's most wooded county, Surrey is heavily affected by Ash dieback, a non-native fungus which weakens the structure of Ash trees, making them liable to fall in an unpredictable way. Unfortunately, there is no known cure for Ash dieback and the disease spreads rapidly, with around 80% of the nation's ash trees anticipated to succumb to it.

While trees in higher risk areas will need to be felled in the interest of public safety, Surrey County Council recognises the amount of ecological, historical and cultural importance that woodland has in the county, as well as its contribution to biodiversity and carbon sequestration.

Residents had previously raised concerns about getting the balance right between protecting the public and protecting nature. As part of the planning process for this year's upcoming works, several local experts have been consulted to support in developing an appropriate approach and methodology, including Surrey Bat Group, Surrey Badger Group, Surrey Dormouse Group, Save Surrey's Countryside, Surrey Botanical Society and Butterfly Conservation Surrey amongst others. The Council will continue to liaise with local experts throughout the season in addition to its work with organisations such as Natural England, the Forestry Commission and Surrey Wildlife Trust.

Recognising the guidance provided, the Council's approach will now focus on higher risk areas around public rights of way, car parks and roads. This approach has led to around 2400 metres of permissive path being removed from the felling programme at Sheeples in West Horsley. Notices to divert the public away from some quieter permissive paths have been installed, an approach which follows similar action on National Trust land to minimise disturbance to biodiversity and encourage areas for wildlife to thrive.

A number of other measures are being put in place to minimise the impact of necessary works on nature including:

- Having a qualified ecologist on site throughout the works;
- Investing in specialist equipment and using specialist contractors to minimise disturbance;
- Undertaking work outside of ground nesting bird season;
- Creating new habitats for protected species such as Dormice;
- Development of new long term woodland plans linked to the Council's nature recovery strategy;
- Replanting or encouraging natural regeneration of suitable tree species wherever appropriate.

Following extensive arboricultural and ecological surveys, works are anticipated to focus around targeted areas of **Sheeples** (West Horsley), **Newlands Corner** (near Guildford), Park Ham (near Bletchingley), **Norbury Park** (Leatherhead/Dorking), **Brockham Quarry**, **Beech Avenue** (Effingham) and areas of the **Downs Link** path. All works are subject to all necessary permissions and licenses being secured, so may be subject to change. Where Ash dieback works are taking place, tree species other than Ash may also be removed for safety reasons.

Marisa Heath, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for the Environment comments: "Ash dieback has had a devastating effect on ash trees not only across Surrey but nationally. Over the coming months we will be undertaking safety works across our countryside estate, however we will be managing this carefully and have minimised felling where we can.

"We will also be looking at how we can improve the overall quality and biodiversity of our woodland in order to develop long term woodland habitat management plans, as we understand the important role that trees play in helping us reduce the impacts of climate change and also in providing important habitats to a range of species. We have facilitated the planting of over 385,000 trees and we have plans to plant more during this tree planting season, but also to ensure we have a range of habitats for nature recovery."

As part of Surrey's ambition to be a carbon neutral county by 2050, Surrey County Council has a target to facilitate the planting of 1.2 million new trees (one for every resident) by 2030. Tree planting season is underway and more details on how to get involved can be found online.

'Show and tell' walks are being offered to the public as an opportunity to find out more about Ash dieback and the Council's plans to address it. Details of the events are below:

- **Beech Avenue, Effingham:** 9 September, 9.30am to 11am. Meet on corner of Beech Close and Beech Avenue, KT24 5PQ. Please park respectfully in nearby roads.
- **Sheepheas, West Horsley:** 9 September, 12pm to 1.30pm. Meet at Green Dene car park, KT24 5TA.
- **Newlands Corner, near Guildford:** 16 September, 9.30am to 11am. Meet at White Lane car park, GU5 9BQ.
- **Norbury Park, Leatherhead:** 16 September, 11.30am to 1pm. Meet by Wild About Coffee (please note there is no parking at the coffee van – use Young Street, Fetcham or Crabtree car parks and follow signs)

Booking is not required, simply turn up at the meeting location shortly before the start time. For those unable to attend site walks, there will also be public drop-in sessions during September and October with details available online.

Further details on Ash dieback works are available at www.surreycc.gov.uk/ashdieback, including a short information video. Onsite information will also be available at each site throughout the works.

DIY waste charges lifted in Surrey

11 September 2023



From 1st September, **Surrey County Council** lifted charges on resident DIY waste in line with Government policy changes that were proposed in June.

The County Council, like most neighbouring authorities currently charge for all rubble and plasterboard to be disposed of at community recycling centres (CRCs). From 1st September up to two 50-litre rubble bags or one large item no larger than 2m x 0.75m x 0.7m per household will be accepted for free, at a maximum frequency of four visits over four weeks. Anything in excess of this will be chargeable at current rates.

DIY waste can be accepted at nine of the 15 community recycling centres and access to the rubble and plasterboard containers will continue to be controlled and monitored. A new monitoring system will be introduced using the automatic number plate recognition system to monitor usage.

Natalie Bramhall, Cabinet Member for Property and Waste said: *“Whilst we are still unclear on when the Government proposes to implement this law, we have made these changes already. It’s about making the system as simple as possible for our residents, while protecting our sites from commercial operators taking advantage of a tax-payer funded service.”*

CRCs are for Surrey residents only to dispose of household waste and recycling, including:

- Batteries
- Carpet
- Cooking oil
- Furniture
- Small electrical items
- Paper and card
- Metal

A full list of Surrey’s community recycling centres is available on the Surrey County Council website, along with details of what is accepted at each site.

Surrey’s support for using electric vehicles

11 September 2023



In Surrey, almost half of our emissions come from transport, and about half of that is from private vehicles. So, reducing the emissions from the way we travel about, whether that's by walking or cycling more, using public transport or switching to an electric car, can help to drastically reduce our carbon footprint.

Electric vehicles (EVs) produce no exhaust emissions, so are much cleaner than petrol or diesel cars. Approximately 40% of households in Surrey do not have access to a driveway at home, so innovative solutions are needed to encourage more people to switch to EVs.

Launch of domestic kerbside charging trials

On Thursday 15 June, Clean Air Day, we launched a trial of two domestic kerbside electric vehicle charging solutions for Surrey residents who do not have access to off-street parking. The trial, one of the first in the UK, will allow residents to choose from two options, either cable gullies or a Trojan AON charger. Both connect to the residents' domestic energy supply, to allow home charging for EVs without the need for a driveway.

Both options are being introduced as part of a trial, with limited numbers of each available. We will use the trial to assess effectiveness and popularity, combined with feedback from residents who participate.

The two products being trialled are cable gullies and Trojan AON chargers. Cable gullies are channels installed in the pavement that can be used to safely trail an EV charging cable, whereas Trojan AON chargers are installed on the pavement near the kerb with a cable laid underneath the pavement connecting it directly to a property's own electrical supply.

How can I take part?

Site selection for the cable gullies will take place in two stages. An initial survey will need to be completed to register interest and share location details. If the site is suitable, the electric vehicle team at Surrey County Council will contact applicants for a more detailed assessment. Site selection for the AON chargers will be determined by Trojan Energy. To read more information and apply, please visit the [Electric vehicles and on street charge points](#) web page.

What if I can't take part in either trial?

These pilots are part of a suite of EV charging solutions that we are working on deploying across Surrey. We have recently appointed Connected Kerb to install thousands of public EV chargepoints over the next five years across the county that may provide a suitable alternative to you in the meantime. Read the [press release](#) about our contract with Connected Kerb to find out more about on-street chargepoint installations.

For more information visit the [electric vehicles and on street chargepoint roll out](#) web page.

Related Reports:

[Let's go Electric Epsom and Ewell](#)

[Council driving forward with electric chargers](#)

[Kerbing car pollution trial in Surrey](#)

Restating the need for recycling in Surrey

11 September 2023



26,000 tonnes of recyclable waste can be found in Surrey's rubbish

Research shows that many people feel like they are already recycling as much as they can. But according to data, over

26,000 tonnes of recyclable waste can be found in Surrey's rubbish bins.

Categorised by material, that would look something like this...

- 9,096 tonnes of paper and card, equating to the weight of roughly 5,000 cars.
- 8,353 tonnes of plastic, equal to the weight of almost 1,500 elephants.
- 6,619 tonnes of glass, that's approximately the weight of 9,500 cows.
- 2,268 tonnes of metal, equivalent to around the weight of 4,500 polar bears.

Why is this a big deal?

By recycling more you can help fight climate change as recycling generates less carbon dioxide than rubbish disposal. When the extra carbon dioxide from rubbish disposal enters the air it increases the greenhouse effect, raising the planet's temperature to be warmer than it should be naturally.

If just over 26,000 tonnes of rubbish was recycled instead of going to disposal, we could save the equivalent of 42,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide from being released into the environment.

It costs less money to recycle than it does send rubbish for disposal, so recycling is good for the environment and for our pockets.

Win, win, with your recycling bin

This summer, please help the planet by recycling more. This includes:

- Letters, envelopes, paper, card, leaflets, catalogs, glossy brochures and magazines, junk mail, newspapers and cardboard.
- Food packaging such as plastic pots, tubs and trays.
- Plastic bottles used for shampoo, detergent, and cleaning products.
- Glass bottles and jars.
- Metal food tins for things like tuna, soup, fruit and pet food.

If you are unsure if a product you have can be recycled or not check the Surrey Recycles Search Tool for more information.

These small changes will make a big impact, not only to the planet but to local councils who can use the money saved for essential services for Surrey's communities instead.

Find out more at the Surrey Environment Partnership web page.

Rethinking your waste and changing your habits can earn you prizes

Would you like to win prizes when you rethink your waste? Rethink Waste is up and running and rewards you when you help the planet by reducing your waste. You can collect points by completing weekly activities such as quizzes, making a pledge, or watching a short video. Points can be transferred into prizes!

The scheme launched last month and so far, residents have been focusing their efforts on getting as much material out of the rubbish bin as they can. Over the coming months, the scheme will focus on reducing waste when cleaning the house and cooking. After that, if you've signed up, you will learn about some of the tools that can be used to make sure we're respecting the all-important waste hierarchy!

You can use your points in several ways. You can use them to donate money to charity or enter prize draws.

Rethink Waste is available for free and is exclusive to Surrey residents. It is being delivered by Surrey Environment Partnership, which is a partnership of all the councils in Surrey set up to deliver projects to reduce waste and increase recycling across the county.

If you're not signed up already and want to earn points, sign up today on the Green Redeem website.

Related reports:

Recycling for food

Council elastic on plastic?

Reaching recyclables others cannot reach

Surrey's outdoor benefits for children

11 September 2023



Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing and East Surrey MP **Claire Coutinho** visited **High Ashurst Outdoor Education Centre** on Monday 31 July.

High Ashurst is one of **Surrey's Outdoor Learning & Development centres** and is home to one of the county's 'Club4' camps. Funded by the Department for Education (DfE), Club4 is Surrey's response to the Government's national Holiday Activities & Food (HAF) programme which provides support for families whose children are on benefits related free school meals during the longer school holidays.

The Club4 programme covers six weeks of the summer holidays and offers a wide spread of camps in local communities, weighted to those areas of the county likely to see the highest demand. During the summer holidays alone, just under 40,000 places are being made available across 160 locations. The Club4 programme is run by Active Surrey on behalf of the council.

During her visit to High Ashurst, a regional champion for the South East in the national HAF 2023 awards, the Minister observed some of the activities taking place, talked to a number of the children and staff and took part in a woodland craft and skills session.

Claire Coutinho, Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing and MP for East Surrey said: *"The Holiday Activities and Food Programme plays a really important role in filling that gap between terms and providing childcare and food provision over the holidays."*

"It's been really great to see everything that Surrey Outdoor Learning & Development is providing children with over the holidays and how they are teaching our children valuable skills while making sure they are having fun over the holidays."

Clare Curran, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Education & Learning said: *"We know that school holidays can be difficult times for families who struggle financially, so I'm pleased that we are able to provide free holiday activities and food club places for those who need them throughout the summer holidays."*

"We're delighted that the Minister has chosen to visit one of the 160+ HAF locations in Surrey. Places at camps like the one at High Ashurst help keep children safe, occupied and fed during the school holidays, and make a real difference to the happiness and health of families who wouldn't otherwise have access to holiday activity camps."

"This offer is particularly invaluable during the ongoing cost of living crisis, which we know represents a huge challenge for families, and aligns with our guiding principle that no one in Surrey is left behind."

Lil Duggan, Managing Director of Active Surrey, said: *"More than 50% of children in Surrey are missing NHS guidelines to be active for at least 60 minutes a day. The nutritious meals and physical activities provided at Club4 camps are vital in safeguarding the health and wellbeing of young people who need it most."*

"The camps can even improve school attendance for some children: keeping them engaged during the long break helps them build social skills and make new friends."

The Club4 programme makes up part of the council's offer to families in need this summer, with the council also having agreed to continue funding Free School Meals for eligible children during the school holiday. More information on that is available **here**

For more information on 'Club4' please visit: **<https://www.activesurrey.com/community/club4>**

For more information on the Government's national Holiday Activities & Food Programme please visit: **national Holiday Activities & Food programme**

For more information on High Ashurst Outdoor Education Centre please visit: **<https://www.surreyoutdoorlearning.uk/centres/high-ashurst>**

Less disability by independent living in Surrey

11 September 2023



Purpose-built housing to support people with learning disabilities or autism to lead active and fulfilling lives in the community has been given the go-ahead at three Surrey sites.

Backed by investment of £24million, the three developments – planned for Horley, Byfleet and Cobham – will between them provide housing for 44 residents who will be supported to gain independence and daily living skills.

Planning permission has been granted for the three sites and with Morgan Sindall Construction now lined up to build them, construction is expected to get underway early next year.

The three supported independent living developments – at the site of the former Manor School in Byfleet, the former Coveham Hostel in Cobham and the former Horley Library – are expected to be ready in 2025 for tenants to move in.

The county council is aiming to reduce reliance on traditional residential care for residents with learning disabilities or autism, or both, and is also considering other potential locations for supported independent living. As well as earmarking sites on its own land, the council is working with independent care providers to further boost available specialist housing.

Mark Nuti, Surrey County Council’s Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, said: *“With a building contractor and planning approvals now secured, we’ve reached a significant milestone on our way to developing the first three of our planned new housing schemes for people with support needs so they can enjoy a better quality of life.*

“With support from trained staff, residents will be able to take control, make choices in their everyday lives, access more opportunities and play an active part in their communities, whether through volunteering, paid work or other activity of their choosing.”

Guy Hannell, Area Director for Morgan Sindall Construction in the Southern Home Counties, said: *“We’re looking forward to continuing our collaborative relationship with Surrey County Council by delivering this batch of three supported independent living developments. Having recently completed several education projects alongside the county council, I know we share a strong commitment to sustainability and achieving high-quality environments that enhance local communities. This is illustrated by the use of our digital carbon assessment tool Carbonica, which allows us to carefully analyse a project’s carbon emissions and ensure that we’re creating an efficient building design that will provide accessible, futureproof spaces.*

“Not only will we be bringing our experience of delivering award-winning residential developments in the South East to this project, but the innovation and insights gained from creating these facilities will inform Surrey’s future programme of supported independent living housing.”

Architects’ images show how the three housing developments could look. They will be homely rather than institutional and include shared spaces such as landscaped gardens. Support workers will provide care and support tailored to people’s needs.

Each development will comprise self-contained one-bedroom apartments. Two developments, in Horley and Byfleet, will also include, for those who would prefer a group living environment, five-bedroom shared houses. Tenants will be able to make choices about their living arrangements.

The accommodation is part of a wider Surrey County Council programme to enable older people and others with care and support needs to live independently in the community knowing that care is close at hand. It includes:

- **Extra care housing** – plans for 725 new homes across a number of Surrey sites which will give older people the freedom and independence of their own front door and the reassurance that care is on hand if they need it
- **New short breaks accommodation** – two new purpose-built short breaks centres to give adults with learning disabilities or autism, or both, a change from their daily routine and their families a break from their caring roles
- **Mental health needs** – new supported independent living accommodation for people with mental health needs which for some would be a permanent base and for others a shorter stay, to avoid a hospital admission or until they recover

Surrey cows driven by solar powered GPS

11 September 2023



Ground-breaking GPS technology is now being used on cattle across **Surrey County Council**'s Countryside Estate at Chobham, Wisley and Puttenham Commons to help with conservation grazing and benefit biodiversity.

'**Nofence**', is the world's first virtual fencing for grazing cattle, helping to control where they graze without the need for traditional electric fencing. The new technology helps to better target exact grazing areas for ecological enhancements and saves time and money by not building, moving and maintaining traditional fencing.

GPS collars are fitted to adult cattle and land managers map out virtual geographic boundaries of where cattle can go via an app. If cattle enter an area they are not allowed to go, the collar emits audio signals which increase in pitch until eventually a small electrical pulse is physically experienced. The cattle quickly learn that increasing levels of sound mean they need to change their direction of travel. Land managers receive regular alerts to keep track of where each member of the herd is. Cattle collars are individual to each cow and charged using an inbuilt solar panel.

The new system, approved by veterinary professionals, has been successfully initiated by Surrey Wildlife Trust who undertake the conservation management at Chobham and Wisley Commons and the Hampton Estate who own Puttenham Common.

Marisa Heath, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Environment says: *"We are delighted to be working in partnership with Surrey Wildlife Trust to make smart choices that make big differences to conservation. This technology works brilliantly on our large, open countryside sites, allowing us to successfully graze much wider areas of land. Not only does it save money but more importantly it hugely benefits biodiversity. At a time when nature is in global decline it is vital, we grab hold of new technologies like this to safeguard Surrey's countryside for generations to come."*

Surrey Wildlife Trust Conservation Manager Adam Bolton says: *"From training the animals and drawing up management plans to securing the backing of government agencies and other partners, the introduction of no-fence conservation grazing in Surrey has been a long but important journey for our team. It's great to be working with Surrey County Council to help preserve the beauty and biodiversity of Chobham Common, and to pioneer a new phase in the conservation of this special site."*

Conservation grazing plays a vital part in managing Surrey's countryside sites for wildlife and helps to promote biodiversity. It can be carried out on many types of land including woodland, scrub, wetlands and grassland. Grazing animals have shaped our landscapes for generations and are the most effective and sustainable way of maintaining habitats.

An example of how the new technology is already benefiting Surrey's countryside can be seen at National Nature Reserve (NNR), Chobham Common which is home to rare heathland plant species, Marsh Gentian. This plant grows in wet, humid heath which is difficult to install stable fencing. Surrey Wildlife Trust can plot the plant location and install virtual barriers so cattle graze elsewhere, protecting the clusters of plants.

About women's dignity. Period.

11 September 2023



Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) have launched an initiative aimed at fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for women and girls across Surrey.

Following a recent menstrual health education session, the SFRS Community Safety Partnership team is now equipped to provide support and period products to women and girls who need them when they are on duty in local communities.

The initiative is a joint collaboration between SFRS and **Binti** - a charity that provides menstrual dignity to girls and women worldwide.

Bernie Beckett, SFRS Chief of Staff, said: *"Addressing the topic of periods and menstruation can be challenging. However, by launching this initiative we aim to break the stigma and, most importantly, provide period products to those who face challenges in accessing them."*

"We know that many women and girls lack access to the necessary support and education surrounding menstrual health. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service can provide a vital role in ensuring that women and girls in our communities have access to period products when they need them. We're delighted to be playing our part in Binti's menstrual dignity mission, contributing to a more inclusive and supportive environment for women and girls in Surrey."

Manjit K. Gill, CEO and founder of Binti said: *"Manjit K. Gill MBE CEO and Founder of Binti said: "Working with a forward-thinking organisation like Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, especially in a traditionally male-dominated sector, is truly inspiring."*

"Their commitment to inclusion for their workforce and their willingness to tackle the issue of period dignity head-on sets a remarkable example for others to follow. By breaking down barriers and fostering a more inclusive environment, we are not only empowering women and girls but also challenging societal norms. It is a privilege to collaborate with such a visionary organisation and collectively drive positive change in the pursuit of gender equality."

The service will be storing period products on some of its Community and Partnership vehicles. An 'Ask me for period products' magnet will indicate to members of the public that period products are available when out in the community or attending events.

Related reports:

Lighting up for menstrual dignity

Surrey supports mental health projects

11 September 2023



The Surrey All Age Mental Health Investment Fund (MHIF) has awarded funding to 10 projects providing innovative, community-focused programmes to support the prevention of mental ill health and improvement of emotional well-being across the county.

Established in 2022, the MHIF is an integrated funding programme with a total budget of £10.5m. This allocation consists of a £6.5m contribution from Surrey County Council from the specific **1% precept on Council Tax collected from 2022/2023** and £4m from Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care Board. Additionally, the Council has partnered with the Community Foundation for Surrey and secured just under £1m via a match funding arrangement.

Funding is used to support services which are non-statutory; developed by local, community-based groups. The MHIF is aligned to meeting the outcomes of Priority 2 of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which focuses on prevention, removing barriers, and supporting people to become proactive in improving their emotional health and wellbeing.

Round 1 of applications took place in December 2022. There were 55 bids submitted of which 10 were successfully awarded funding totally approximately £530,000.

The projects awarded funding include a gardening space to increase access to nature-based therapy, providing support to life-limited children and their families and expanding the provision of a hub that uses drama to support people with mental health challenges.

All bids were assessed by a panel which represents the Integrated Care Board (ICB), Surrey County Council, Cabinet members, the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE), integrated commissioning representatives and Public Health.

Mark Nuti, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, said: *"I'm delighted that the first round of funding has been allocated to a range of different organisations, all working to tackle mental ill-health with innovative, community-focused projects."*

"The successful bids cover a broad age range and are spread across the 11 districts and boroughs of Surrey. We have also approved funding a large bid investing in primary schools across Surrey as part of Round 1, and I'm pleased to say we have already had significant interest in Round 2 of the fund after going live at the beginning of June."

Round 2 of funding has just closed and bids are currently being evaluated. Information regarding any future rounds of funding will be communicated via our webpage.

Find out more about the MHIF: **Surrey Mental Health Investment Fund - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)**

Round 1 Awards:

- **Merstham Community Facility Trust** – support groups for adults, and for children in Merstham, as well as supporting the recruitment and training of 16 further Health and Wellbeing Community Champions in the local community

- **The Lucy Rayner Foundation** - Counselling service to reach people (14-39 years) preventing them from reaching crisis.
- **Catalyst Wellbeing Garden** - Providing a project co-ordinator and a project assistant to develop the gardening space; establish, programme, and run nature-based therapy sessions, providing time and space for holistic support.
- **Prospero Theatre Community Wellbeing Company** - Prospero is an inclusive theatre company, that uses drama to improve the quality of life for adults and young people with disabilities and mental health challenges.
- **Shooting Star Children's Hospice** - Aiding the provision of mental health support for life-limited children, their family members (including parents and siblings)
- **Emerge Advocacy** - Community-based support following an A&E attendance to catch young people who have recently been in emotional or mental health crisis.
- **Peer Production** - Two full tours of each of Peer Production's mental health plays (Masking and The Space Between).
- **A2 Dominion** - Provision of 'Mind My Home' an online solutions-based therapy project, targeted at low income/social housing tenants.
- **Appeer Community Interest Company** - A project which aims to address the social isolation of young autistics girls, provide early help and resources and support parents and care givers of autistic daughters.

Further information about the awards: <https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/news/community-projects-500k-mental-health-investment-fund>

Image: Appeer Community Interest, Peer Productions, Prospero Friday Club.

ULEZ court challenge begins

11 September 2023



The coalition of councils opposed to expansion of the ULEZ to outer London is optimistic of success on the first day of its legal challenge.

Representatives from the five councils - Bexley, Bromley, Harrow, Hillingdon and Surrey - met on the steps of the High Court in central London on Tuesday 4 July, ahead of the opening day of the Judicial Review the coalition has brought against TfL and the Mayor of London, over planned expansion of the ULEZ to outer London.

The coalition's case will be argued on three grounds:

- Failure to follow statutory procedure - Schedule 23 Greater London Authority Act 1999
- Unlawful and unfair consultation regarding expected compliance rates in outer London
- Unlawfulness regarding scrappage scheme, including failing to consider a buffer zone, irrationality and inadequate consultation.

Through the new proposals, anyone driving a non-compliant vehicle in the expanded zone after the scheduled start date on Tuesday 29 August, would stand to be charged £12.50 per day - whether the journey is a 30-mile commute, or a short trip for essential groceries.

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth at Surrey County Council, said: "I'm pleased that our hearing begins today, as we continue to highlight the significant financial and social impacts expansion of the ULEZ scheme would have on many of our residents and businesses.

"However, it is very disappointing that it has had to come to this. Our concerns have never been addressed by The Mayor, forcing these legal proceedings in order to have the voice of our residents heard.

"We remain committed to delivering a greener future, but it must be done in a practical and sustainable way. We will now await the findings of the High Court."

The hearing is scheduled to last for two days, with a ruling from the judge expected to follow at an unconfirmed date but expected ahead of the courts break for summer on 28 July.

Related Reports:

ULEZ driving old cars to Epsom market

Challenge to ULEZ gaining grounds

Many Surrey motorists will be paying the ULEZ charge.

ULEZ Court battle looming

Under 21s Surrey bus travel at 50%

11 September 2023



Young people aged 20 and under are now entitled to 50% off all bus journeys across Surrey.

A new 'LINK' card has been developed by Surrey County Council which can be shown on any bus in Surrey to qualify for the discount on all single and return journeys. Applications can be made at www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreylink.

Journeys should start and/or end in Surrey and people in the qualifying age group must live in the county.

[**Epsom and Ewell Times** adds: the Surrey link discount card cannot be used on London Transport buses that many young Epsom and Ewell residents use, even for journeys entirely within Surrey. So, the 293 and the 406 and 418 etc are excluded. However, those who are 16 and 17 years old can apply for London Transport's own Transport for London's 16 plus Oyster photocard. The Oyster card will allow Surrey students to pay-as-you-go at half the adult single fare. For further details, contact 0845 300 7000 or visit the Transport for London website. And for young student train commuters you can apply for the National Railcard 16 to 17 Saver, it allows students 50% off single, return and season tickets.]

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth at Surrey County Council said, "I'm delighted that we can now offer half price bus travel to all our young people here in Surrey.

"We know that cost can be a barrier to people using public transport so we hope this significant discount will make bus travel a more viable option, whilst also reducing car journeys across the county.

"This new scheme is part of our significant investment in bus travel and our efforts to encourage more people to use Surrey's buses. We're investing in making our buses greener including £32.3m for more ultra-low and zero emission buses and £6.3m for more ultra-low and zero emission community transport minibuses. A further £9m is being invested in bus priority measures to ensure buses turn up on time, and £1.4m in improving information for passengers at bus stops."

Simon Rowland, Chief Executive Officer for White Bus said, "I am very pleased that Surrey County Council, supported by the Enhanced Partnership Board, is launching this fantastic initiative to promote bus usage amongst the under 20s. This is a scheme that all operators and stakeholders will embrace as a key driver of passenger growth.

"It is the under 20s that are the next generation of bus users, and with the new LINK passes providing heavily discounted travel, we hope that travelling by bus will be the first choice of transport for this cohort."

More information is available at www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreylink

Surrey splashing out

11 September 2023



Making a Claygate outdoor swimming pool an all year round indoor facility is one of many projects supported by Surrey County Council's Community Fund. Since November 2020 the Fund has splashed out over £10 million. This year sees a

commitment of £2.9 million to Surrey's premier theatre, The Yvonne Arnaud in Guildford.

The money will be used to improve the accessibility of the entire theatre and ensure existing and new community spaces be accessible for a variety of new groups, building on the community initiatives and outreach programmes already delivered by the theatre.

Joanna Read, Theatre Director and Chief Executive of Yvonne Arnaud said: *"By making this award Surrey County Council is recognising the value the people of Surrey place upon the Yvonne Arnaud and its' integral role as an arts provider across the county. This funding will help make the theatre accessible, sustainable and fit for purpose, better able to serve Surrey for future generations."*

"The Arts play a critical role in supporting our health and wellbeing and building cohesive communities. It's good to have the backing of our County Council as we continue our work bringing excellent theatre and arts engagement to the people of Surrey. Our vision for the Arnaud maintains its theatre traditions while building on our creative heart; repurposing a 1960's building to deliver multi-faceted offerings for 21st century audiences."

Surrey County Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities and Community Safety Denise Turner-Stewart said: *"This is a truly ambitious project to develop Guildford's iconic and much-loved building into a friendly, cultural community hub and is exactly the sort of project which offers a wider community benefit."*

"Surrey's cultural offer caters for all ages and budgets. It is an important part of what makes the county a great place to live, work and visit. I would like to congratulate Yvonne Arnaud who have been successful in their application to Your Fund Surrey."

"Improving accessibility will enable Yvonne Arnaud to build on its existing excellent reputation and become a place everyone can enjoy."

Master Park Pavilion in Oxted, another recent successful applicant to Your Fund Surrey Large Community Project Fund, will receive £1.86m towards replacing the current building with a new fit-for-purpose two-storey community and sports hub.

The Park Hub, set in the 11-acre park will become a valuable resource for the whole community with new facilities including a café, rooms for classes and community activities, improved changing facilities and accessible toilets.

Pammy McNaughton, Chair of Master Park said: *"We will be forever grateful to Your Fund Surrey for helping Master Park towards this goal. We knew that our request for £1.86 million was a large sum, but by granting us this amount, not only will Your Fund Surrey be helping Master Park Charity, but they will also be helping the many other charities, activities, clubs, and communities that we are engaged with."*

Other projects awarded funding via Your Fund Surrey so far include:

Claygate Community Pool, £363,500 to develop an existing outdoor pool into an indoor facility that will enable the whole community to use the pool all year round.

Leatherhead & Dorking Gymnastics Club, £550,000 to extend the current facilities and build a new gymnasium and sensory room.

Normandy Community Shop and Café, £570,189 towards building a new community shop and café at Manor Fruit Farm

Ripley Village Hall, £645,036 towards rebuilding of the Village Hall, including accessible community rooms and a new kitchen.

South Park Sports Association, £150,000 towards the construction and installation of a 3G artificial grass pitch with a spectator area.

Tatsfield Parish Council, £10,146 to install new picnic benches and planters on the village green.

Weybridge Men's Shed, £30,000 towards the internal fit-out of two sheds and the installation of an underground water treatment system.

Communities can submit applications via the Your Fund Surrey website for both small and large scale community projects and have their say on projects being proposed in their local area www.surreycc.gov.uk/yourfund.

Multi-million pound transformation for Surrey libraries

11 September 2023



A multi-million investment into **Surrey's libraries** has been approved by **Surrey County Council's** Cabinet to modernise services and create flexible, innovative and inclusive spaces that best meet the needs of our residents. This will revolutionise our libraries offer and make them fit for the future.

The first phase of this work will focus on key libraries including **Epsom**, Redhill, Staines, Woking and Weybridge with completion expected by the end of 2024.

The work is part of a library strategy focused on ensuring that Surrey libraries deliver a service that is fit for the future and accessible to all. The plans include significant changes at each location, including the creation of community 'Hubs' in Staines and Weybridge.

For Epsom, Woking and Redhill this means the creation of flagship facilities that will include:

- Flexible meeting rooms with kitchenette
- Moveable partitions/walls to create agile workspaces
- Meeting pods
- New furniture
- A fully flexible layout throughout with space for events and performances, exhibitions, partner organisations and community use.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding of £500k has been secured for Redhill Library from Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.

For Staines, this will include:

- Creation of a state-of-the-art flagship modern Library and Cultural Centre
- Relocation to the former Decathlon store located in the Elmsleigh shopping centre
- The new hub will include Citizens Advice, Voluntary Action, Spelthorne Museum and other lettable space.
- Integration of Spelthorne Museum into the layout of the library will create an enhanced resident experience
- External branding to windows and brickwork and landscaping to outside area

For Weybridge, this will include:

- Extending the ground floor library space
- Improving the current spaces and facilities to better serve the building's current occupiers such as Brooklands Radio and create a space for other partner organisation to deliver additional essential services
- External upgrade to improve the look of the building
- The refurbishment will also reduce energy use and carbon emissions, contributing to the Council's net zero ambitions
- A fully flexible layout throughout with space for events and performances, exhibitions, partner organisations and community use.

Denise Turner-Stewart, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities and Community Safety at Surrey County Council, said: "It's fantastic to be able to invest in our libraries and create cultural and community hubs so they are better placed to serve Surrey's residents. The improvements will provide the opportunity to redesign and refurbish some of our key libraries, providing updated, attractive and inviting places where people can read, socialise, study and relax. This work is all about making sure Surrey's libraries are all vibrant hubs, providing warm, friendly spaces where everyone is welcome."

Cllr **Clive Woodbridge**, Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Committee at **Epsom & Ewell Council**, said: "It is fantastic news that our much-loved library in Epsom is going to receive this investment. Our libraries are a vital resource for so many of the borough's residents, and ensuring that Epsom Library is fit for the future and accessible to all will mean our communities can benefit from all it has to offer for years to come."

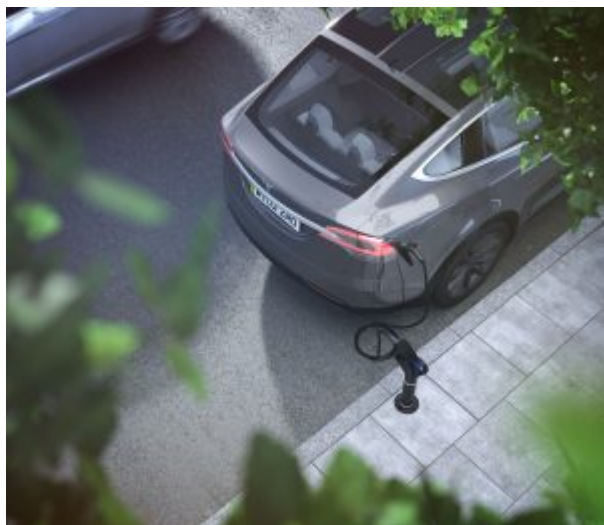
The development of the libraries follows on from the approval of the 2019 Library and Cultural Services Strategy and is closely aligned with the Surrey 2030 Community Vision and the Hubs programme, which looks to deliver services in a joined-up way allowing residents to access multiple services in one location and support the council's ultimate ambition - that no one is left behind.

To find out more about libraries in Surrey visit the Surrey Libraries web pages:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/libraries>

Kerbing car pollution trial in Surrey

11 September 2023



On Thursday 15 June, **Clean Air Day**, Surrey County Council is launching the trial of two domestic kerbside electric vehicle (EV) charging solutions for Surrey residents who do not have access to off-street parking. The trial, one of the first in the UK, will allow residents to choose from two options – either cable gullies or a Trojan AON charger. Both connect to the residents’ domestic energy supply, to allow home charging for EVs without the need for a driveway.

Both options are being introduced as part of a trial, with limited numbers of each available. The trial will be used to assess effectiveness and popularity, combined with feedback from residents who participate. To find out more and to register for the trial, residents can visit this **webpage**.

The two products being trialled are cable gullies and Trojan AON chargers. Cable gullies are channels installed in the pavement that can be used to safely trail an EV charging cable, and AON chargers are installed on the pavement near the kerb with a cable laid underneath the pavement connecting it directly to a property’s own electrical supply.

Councillor Matt Furniss, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport said: *“Many Surrey residents have written to us in the last year with interest in new and innovative ways to charge electric vehicles from their home. I am delighted to be able to offer these two new kerbside charging products to our residents. I look forward to seeing the outcomes of this trial and hope this could provide another charging solution for residents and allow more people to switch to electric vehicles.”*

In Surrey, almost half of our emissions come from transport, and about half of that is from private vehicles. So, reducing the emissions from the way we travel about – whether that’s by walking or cycling more, using public transport or switching to an electric car – can help to drastically reduce our carbon footprint. Electric vehicles produce no exhaust emissions, so are much cleaner than petrol or diesel cars. Approximately 40% of households in Surrey do not have access to a driveway at home, so innovative solutions are needed to encourage more people to switch to EVs.

The installation and maintenance of the cable gullies will be managed by Surrey County Council.

The AON chargers have been developed by Trojan Energy and Surrey County Council will license Trojan Energy to install, maintain and operate AON chargers on Surrey’s highways.

The Trojan AON charger differs from the cable gullies in that it can be shared across more than one local household to reduce the cost to residents. Both trials will involve a cost to residents.

Ian Mackenzie, Trojan Energy CEO, said: *“At Trojan Energy, we understand the importance of accessibility and convenience when it comes to EV charging. That’s why we’re delighted to be part of this trial bringing innovative solutions to Surrey residents. Our home-connected Trojan AON makes EV charging fully accessible to residents who don’t have off-street parking, helping everyone benefit from the transition to EV.”*

The trials are expected to run for a minimum of three years, with 30 cable gullies and 50 AON chargers being installed in the first year. A new quota will be agreed for the following years and if the trial is deemed successful, the limit on numbers will be removed. The aim of the trial is to understand whether there is demand for this type of charging method and whether this provides a good solution for residents without private parking. Several factors will be monitored throughout, including how easily the charge points are maintained and whether there is demand for continued use from Surrey residents.

Site selection for the cable gullies will take place in two stages. An initial survey will need to be completed to register interest and share location details. If the site is suitable, the electric vehicle team at Surrey County Council will contact applicants for a more detailed assessment.

Site selection for the AON chargers will be determined by Trojan Energy.

Related reports:

Let’s go Electric Epsom and Ewell

Council driving forward with electric chargers

Surrey lands largest EV charging contract in UK

Mayor’s electrifying car decision