EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
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UCA expands at its roots

Local councillors from the borough of Epsom and Ewell have granted the University for the Creative Arts (UCA) Epsom planning approval to change the use of two centrally located buildings for educational purposes.

The Wells Building on Church Street and Parkside House on Ashley Road signify an expansion of UCA's estate, providing more than 40,000 square feet of additional space and delivering high-quality teaching, learning and social spaces.

The building on Church Street marks a return to UCA's roots, as it is adjacent to no. 1 Church Street, which was previously home to Epsom Technical College and School of Art, its predecessor institution.

Investment in the buildings' construction and reconfiguration is likely to reach around £13 million.

By utilising existing office buildings close to its Epsom campus, UCA will be able to deliver these retrofitted spaces rapidly, in an environmentally friendly way and with minimal disruption to the community, student and staff experience.

The projects will also enhance collaboration with Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, the local community, and residents as the new buildings will provide opportunities and spaces for creativity and innovation and blaze a trail for greater engagement in the town's activities.

UCA's Chief Operating Officer, Mark Ellul, said: *"This is a massive step forward in growing our Epsom campus and building on our global reputation as a centre for Fashion & Textiles and Business School for the Creative Industries.*

"We must have facilities and functions in place for us to deliver the very best creative education and adding two new buildings to our estate will create a creative learning environment that is fit for the 21st Century."

Works will commence later this year and the plan is to occupy the buildings in 2024/25.

Emma Cook UCA

Change at the top at Epsom's University

Professor Nick Foskett has been named as the interim President & Vice-Chancellor of the University for the Creative Arts. This includes the campus in Ashley Road, Epsom.

Prof. Foskett, currently an independent member of UCA's Board of Governors, will take over from outgoing President & Vice-Chancellor, Professor **Bashir Makhoul**, upon his retirement from UK higher education in September.

"Having served on the Board of Governors, it was an honour to be asked to cover this interim period," said Prof. Foskett.*"UCA is a wonderful university with endless potential and under Prof. Makhoul's leadership is in a fantastic position. I will ensure his legacy continues and is built on so that UCA can continue its impressive trajectory."*

Prof. Foskett is a graduate of Oxford and Southampton universities and has had a long and diverse relationship with higher education, working at some of the UK's leading universities. He was Vice-Chancellor of Keele University from 2010 to 2015, and Interim Vice-Chancellor of Bath Spa University from 2017 to 2018. For around 20 years he held several positions at the University of Southampton, latterly as Professor of Education and Dean of the Faculty of Law, Arts and Social Sciences. Prior to that his first foray into higher education was at Aston University, working in school engagement and external relations.

An expert in education policy and management, Prof. Foskett has sat on and continues to sit on several boards in the UK and globally and has also made a huge contribution to the development of governance frameworks within the higher education sector.

Prof. Makhoul announced his retirement from UCA and from UK higher education in March of this year, after more than six years as President & Vice-Chancellor. Since joining, Prof. Makhoul has steered the University towards its aim of becoming a global authority on the creative industries, forging significant partnerships at home and abroad. He has overseen a five-fold increase in international students studying at the University's UK campuses and spearheading the opening of the Institute of Creativity and Innovation in Xiamen, China, along with the establishment of the UK's first Business School for the Creative Industries.

External recognition of these achievements includes being named Modern University of the Year by The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide in 2019 and being granted Research Degree Awarding Powers by the Office for Students.

Prof. Makhoul said: *"I am delighted Prof. Foskett will be overseeing operations while my permanent replacement is found. He has*

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a fantastic track record and understands UCA's unique position as a champion of the creative industries. I wish him all the best for his interim tenure."

Jeremy Sandelson, Chair of the Board of Governors, said: *"We are delighted Prof. Foskett has agreed to be our interim President & Vice-Chancellor at UCA. We couldn't think of a safer pair of hands to take the helm, and we offer him every support as he leads the University during this time."*

Emma Cook UCA

Surrey's triple contribution towards net zero

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The **Hub for Research Challenges in Hydrogen and Alternative Liquid Fuels**, known as the UK-HyRES Hydrogen Hub. **Dr Qiong Cai**, a research leader in sustainable energy and materials, is working with industrial and academic partners to identify how we can decarbonise transportation and heavy industry by using green hydrogen and hydrogen-based, low-carbon liquid fuels, such as ammonia.

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

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

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

Katherine Ingram – Surrey University

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Epsom and Ewell High getting fitter

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Morgan Kimbel

Epsom’s University challenges for graduates

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

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

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

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

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

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Epsom family Opened to a two degree challenge

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Philippa Green reporting.

Surrey takes European lead on Hong Kong

Europe's first research hub dedicated to Hong Kong Studies will be launched at the University of Surrey on Thursday 25 May 2023. Surrey's Hong Kong Studies Hub will look to shape policy debates and the wider question of the role of Hong Kong communities in International Relations.

The hub will also host the Hong Kong Studies Association Secretariat and a new Hong Kong Studies Library.

The hub's upcoming launch will bring together a prestigious expert panel of academics and practitioners, led by Dr Malte Kaeding from the University of Surrey, to investigate the latest research and policy developments, followed by a keynote conversation on Hong Kong's current role in international relations, and the work and impact of local Hong Kong communities.

The launch event is free to attend and will take place from 5pm to 8pm in the Wates House Green Room, on the University of Surrey's Stag Hill campus, with an opportunity to network from 8pm onwards.

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Dr Malte Kaeding, Senior Lecturer in International Politics at the University of Surrey, and the Director of the new Hub, said:

“The launch of the Hong Kong Studies Hub at the University of Surrey is a milestone for Hong Kong Studies in Europe.

“Surrey is a leading academic hub for Hong Kong Studies, having hosted two Hong Kong Studies Association conferences in 2021 and 2022. With over 15-years of my own research on Hong Kong politics, supported by a REF Impact Case, and my role as co-founder of the Hong Kong Studies Association, I believe Surrey is at the forefront of this field.

“The hub’s multidisciplinary perspective and its focus on methodological innovation, combined with a strong emphasis on engagement with the fast-growing Hong Konger community, positions the University at the cutting-edge of this important and exciting development.”

Professor Amelia Hadfield, Head of Department and Dean International at the University of Surrey, contributed her own views, saying:

“The Department of Politics is a perfect location in which to situate the new Hong Kong Studies Hub. We are proud of our track record on interdisciplinary approaches and providing cross-scholarly support, and the hub will help us engage authentically in this highly relevant area.”

Surrey University Press Office.

Council pays £3,900 to mother of SEND child

Surrey County Council failed to provide suitable full-time education to an SEND primary school child, causing the youngster to miss valuable learning time and creating undue stress for his mother, a local government watchdog has ruled.

The county council was ordered to pay £3,900 and apologise to the boy and his mother to acknowledge the injustice caused after the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman completed its investigation into the matter.

The council must pay £2,900 for the lack of education provided over a six-month period and a further £1,000 for the inconvenience, distress, time and trouble caused to his mother – including the impact on her employment. It must also provide updated guidance clarifying the legal position on complaints and appeals as well as evidence it has complied with the ruling.

The Ombudsman said it would not make further recommendations for service improvements to the council’s alternative education provision as these have been covered in “similar findings against the council in other cases in the recent past covering the same period”. Staff are also to be retrained and better records kept to “prevent a recurrence of the same fault in future cases.”

In 2020 the boy was on a waiting list for an autism assessment by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). In November 2021, his mainstream school then placed the youngster on a part-time, mornings only, timetable and by January 2022 it was assessed he should no longer attend school due to mental health concerns.

His mother said he was then given worksheets but no online or face-to-face tuition was offered. His mother, a single parent, said she had to cut her hours at work as her son could not attend school.

In late March 2022, the council offered the family two hours per week teaching assistant (TA) support.
Convinced her son was falling behind, his mother began paying private tutor to help for one hour a week.
Shortly after this the council increased TA time to three hours a week, and then later added one hour tutor time. By late June this was extended to four hours, increasing to seven and a half hours in September, and 14 hours in October 22.

Eventually, the council said the boy should have access to mainstream provision for the remainder of his time at primary school but he would not be in a position to return immediately. Discussions then turned to offering 25 hours educational provision through the county’s SEN team from September and a draft plan proposed he stay with his current school but likely to require specialist provision at secondary age.

In July, a meeting was then held with tutors, the school, and CAMHS – and an Education otherwise than at school (EOTAS) programme was suggested. His mother asked for this to be continued on an ongoing basis.

However, Surrey County Council decided he should continue with his current school in Summer 2022 and did not specify EOTAS or interim provision, or details of how he would reintegrate into the school.

His mother complained that the council failed to provide her son with proper education from January 2022 and failed to follow professional advice that he should receive EOTAS until he transferred to secondary school in September 2023 – instead proposing

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he be sent back to mainstream primary school for the remainder of the school year.

The Ombudsman upheld her complaint and found fault by the council in "failing to provide suitable fulltime education when a child was unable to attend school." The report said: "This caused the child to miss out on education and caused the parent carer unnecessary inconvenience and distress. The agreed actions set out above are a satisfactory resolution to the complaint."

A spokesman for Surrey County Council said: "We take the findings from the Ombudsman very seriously and we apologise for any distress the family experienced. We are not able to comment on any individual children specifically, however we know how important access to fulltime education is for all children to support their development and wellbeing, including when this must be provided outside of school.

"We remain committed to improving outcomes for children with additional needs so that they are happy, healthy, safe and confident about their future."

Image – Emily Coady-Stemp

Related reports:

Surrey County failed SEND boy

Surrey to SEND £40m for special schools

It's Walk to School Week in Surrey

May is the month to talk about walking, more walking and even more walking. The weather is brighter, dryer and warmer and is the best time to get outdoors as a family.

We know how important walking to school is for children's health and the environment. It reduces congestion, improves road safety at the school gates and instils lifelong healthy habits. It's been proven that children who do some form of exercise, especially a walk before school, do better in class because they arrive refreshed, fit and ready to learn.

The school run alone is responsible for generating half a million tonnes of CO2 nationally per year

Not everyone is able to walk to school, but there might be part of the journey you could walk. This Walk to School Week (15 to 19 May), could you think about turning rides into strides which can really make a difference? Take a look on our active travel webpage for inspiration.

Making it safe for Surrey's children

It's important for parents to know that their children are safe when walking along a road. This is where our Feet First: Walking Training comes in – a programme that provides school children aged 7 to 8 years old (Year 3) with the road safety skills to enable them to safely walk to and from school with their parents and carers, whilst also preparing children to travel independently in the future. The training is done in the classroom as well as using online resources, at home activities and taking children outside on Surrey's streets for them to practice what they've learned in a real-world environment. It includes teaching:

- The Green Cross Code and how to cross the road safely
- Road signs and pedestrian crossings
- Recognising safe and unsafe places to cross
- Dealing with distractions and rushing
- How to cross between parked cars
- Understanding vehicle lights and sounds
- Crossing driveways

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- The benefits of active travel

Last term, our Feet First: Walking Training instructors taught 3,500 pupils across 65 schools the skills they need to stay safe on Surrey's roads. By the end of this academic year our instructors will have taught over 5,500 pupils at nearly 100 primary schools in the county.

For more information on the training visit the Walking training for schools webpage or speak to your school to see if they're signed up.

Seismic change at Surrey University

A new national research facility could significantly improve our understanding of infectious diseases, ageing and cancers, leading to novel treatments and vaccines.

The University of Surrey's SEISMIC facility will offer scientists access to technology that enables them to pick up single cells or even parts of cells and measure the spatial position of biomarkers like proteins, metabolites and lipids.

Funded by £2.8 million from the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) and industry, SEISMIC uses an advanced type of microscope manufactured by Yokogawa Corporation.

Professor Melanie Bailey, Director of the SEISMIC facility at the University of Surrey, said:

"Thanks to SEISMIC, we've made a breakthrough in measuring lipids in individual mammalian cells. This new technology is a game changer because it allows scientists to measure important biomarkers while keeping track of where they are in the cell. This is important for understanding how healthy cells work and how infections or cancer can affect them.

"We're really excited about this because it will help us better understand how cells communicate with each other, and this knowledge could lead to new ways to fight diseases."

SEISMIC enables single-cell and sub-cellular analysis, which will help scientists understand what happens under defined conditions and how cells signal to each other.

Dr Dany Beste, Senior Lecturer in Microbial Metabolism at the University of Surrey, said:

"The new facility is free for academics working in BBSRC-funded areas and also available to scientists in industry. We are confident SEISMIC will enhance scientific training in single-cell work and overcome some of the challenges in this area."

SEISMIC is the University of Surrey's third national research facility with the Ion Beam Centre and the Environmental Flow Laboratory.

Prof Bailey said:

"The combination of SEISMIC, the proton beam facility and the Ion Beam Centre are a boon to Surrey's scientific and business communities and could allow us to understand the interaction between cancer cells and radiation in more detail. This has enormous potential and we are excited to welcome researchers to use our new facility."

Surrey University News.