

Public meeting about Epsom Hospital future

12 October 2024



A public meeting has been scheduled for October 17th, 2024, at the **Epsom Sports Club**, located next to **Epsom Hospital**, to discuss the future of local healthcare services. The meeting, organized by the **Epsom and Ewell's Residents' Associations**, will be centred on the evolving plans for Epsom Hospital and the broader health services in the area. The keynote speaker, **James Blythe**, Managing Director of the Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust, will provide an update on the trust's long-term plans, including the new Specialist Emergency Care Hospital (SECH) in Sutton and the modernization of both Epsom and St Helier hospitals. The event will be followed by a Q&A session, allowing local residents to voice their concerns and ask questions directly to the leadership.

This meeting follows recent developments within the Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust, which is moving forward with a £500 million project to build the SECH in Sutton. This new hospital will centralize acute services such as emergency care and surgery, while 85% of other services will remain at Epsom and St Helier hospitals, ensuring local residents continue to have access to a wide range of healthcare services nearby. The new SECH, located on the Sutton Hospital site, is designed to enhance patient outcomes by co-locating with the Royal Marsden Hospital and the London Cancer Hub.

Epsom and Ewell's newly elected MP, **Helen Maguire**, has made healthcare a key priority in her first 100 days in office. Maguire has been an advocate for the new hospital in Sutton, meeting with the Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust to see that the project moves forward without delays. In a press release marking her 100th day in office, Maguire emphasized her commitment to ensuring that the SECH is built and that Epsom and St Helier hospitals are modernized to better serve the local community. She has also scheduled a meeting with Health Secretary Wes Streeting to gain more insights into the government's broader healthcare strategy

Maguire's focus on healthcare comes at a time when the trust is also addressing other critical issues such as managing its financial constraints while improving patient services. Maguire attended the trust's recent Annual Public Meeting, underscoring the importance of the SECH in addressing long-standing challenges.

Local residents are encouraged to attend the public meeting on October 17th to stay informed about the future of their healthcare services and to have their say in the discussions about these transformative plans for Epsom and its surrounding areas.

Event Details:

Topic: The Future for Epsom Hospital and Local Health Services

Date: October 17th, 2024

Time: 7:30 PM

Venue: Epsom Sports Club, next to Epsom Hospital

Speaker: James Blythe, Managing Director, Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust

Format: Presentation followed by a Q&A session with refreshments

There's always Buckland Park for winter swimmers

12 October 2024



Guildford Lido, in Stoke Park, used to be open 12 months a year from 2014, but that ended during the pandemic. This year's summer season ended on September 15.

Nestled between Dorking and Reigate within the picturesque Surrey Hills, the Surrey Hills Activity Centre's (SHAC) private lagoon at Buckland Park offers a 400m loop and is the perfect setting for your open water swimming and cold water training needs.

Outdoor swimming enthusiasts have called on Guildford Borough Council (GBC) and operator Freedom Leisure to reinstate all-year-round swimming in the contract when it is renewed in November.

Reaching over 1,600 signatures, a petition has said restoring the lido's 'off-season' (autumn to spring) will promote health, well-being, and athletic achievement throughout the year.

“Not a financially viable model”

Councillors quizzed the Lead for Commercial Services about the lido at GBC Overview and Scrutiny Committee on September 30. Cllr James Walsh, referencing the petition, asked if a viable compromise could be made where winter swimmers can enjoy the pool without a financial loss.

“I don't know how many of those 1,600 people would like to swim in the winter,” said Cllr Catherine Houston, Lead for Commercial Services at GBC. She told the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, on September 30, that she went down to the lido a week before it closed and there were only 12 people in the pool. “That is not a financially viable model,” Cllr Houston added.

Run at £140k loss in the summer, the lido is still able to operate because it is paired with the Spectrum centre, according to Cllr Houston. She described it as a 'loss leader' model: where the lido is sold at a loss to attract customers to the Spectrum.

Cllr Houston said the lido is “already not a profitable operation in the summer” but the council chooses to run it because “we all love it”. She added: “It's such a wonderful facility and it provides a really valuable asset to the residents, visitors and beyond.”

Questions were raised about where the money is coming from for the council to invest to keep the pool open. Although there are some super keen winter swimmers, there are not the other leisure swimmers that may spend the whole day in the lido.

Cllr Walsh asked whether letting the pool out to clubs would subsidise the running costs. Officers explained that once the pool is open, the filtration and heating will be on so it is “tough” to see how many clubs and extracurricular sports groups will be needed to offset the costs. GBC would have to pay extra for the staff, heating, energy and catering arrangements.

The “grand old lady” needs upkeep

Around 91 years old, the 50m lido is a “grand old lady” in need of “tender loving care”, according to Cllr Houston. The off-season closure allows operators to have a safe area to operate the annual works without people in the pool.

Six new boilers will be installed this winter, as part of the lido's annual maintenance season. Three pool blankets, with an accompanying structure, will also be fitted on the lido to maintain the water's temperature.

GBC invested £2.1m into refurbishing the lido last year, including new changing rooms, improved drainage systems, environmental technologies to reduce energy and water usage, and updated poolside catering. Freedom Leisure also put in £1m towards the upgrade.

Contractual obligations

The contract renewal in November creates a new opportunity for the operator and the council to see if a new out of season activity can be put on offer.

Cllr Houston speculated Freedom Leisure might be asked to extend its opening hours by Friends of Guildford Lido. But the operator would have to look at a financial model to see if it is worth it without the extra cash input.

Operators of the lido are contracted to keep it open for 20 weeks, so the council cannot force it to stay open unless there is a big investment. “We're in financially challenging times so we have to make tough decisions,” the Lead for Commercial Services said.

NOTE: Friends of Guildford Lido and the petitioners were contacted for comment. Neither have got back in touch.

Image courtesy SHAC

Epsom's Love Me Love My Mind week of healing

12 October 2024



This year's theme is 'Be Kind to your Mind'

- Be active - For your mental and emotional health, and wellbeing
- Be Mindful - Practise mindfulness, live in the present moment and look for the positives.
- Be Kind - Connect with others, be kind to yourself.
- Give to others - Perform random acts of kindness, volunteer and give to your local community.
- Keep Learning - Invest in your interests and hobbies.
- Talk kindly to yourself: Think about how you speak to your loved ones and use that voice on yourself.
- Practise gratitude, reflect daily, write a journal.
- Focus on self-care and be responsible for your wellbeing.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES - BE KIND TO YOUR MIND

Saturday 5th October

10am - 4pm Community engagement stand in Epsom Marketplace, High St, Epsom KT19 8EB:

Come along and meet the Friends of Horton Cemetery on Saturday 5th and 12th October and pick a ceramic flower to plant in your garden. Last year we painted over 1000 flowers to Remember Epsom's Forgotten Residents buried at Horton Cemetery, and we want to give the flowers back to the local community. Any donations that we receive for the flowers will support our future research into the lives of the 9000 patients buried at the cemetery.

11am - 2pm Kids Art Club at Epsom Social, 1 Derby Square, Epsom KT19 8AG:

Join us for Colouring activities, create Be Kind bracelets and Seminal Events will be with us for face painting and henna tattoos

1pm Bodhi Eden, Epsom Yoga Studio - 29 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8EX:

FREE taster sessions

Hatha Yoga Taster | 30mins | 13:00pm

Sound Bath Taster | 20mins | 13:40pm

please book via <https://www.bodhieden.com/be-kind-tasters>

Sunday 6th October

10.00am We Power On - Men's Social Walk and Talk, meet outside the Rubbing House pub, on Epsom Downs (every Sunday unless otherwise advertised) at 9.50am for a 10am start.

10.15am Church service at St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA - Being Kind to Your Mind

2 - 4pm Free Kids Art and Craft Club at Epsom Social, Derby Square, Epsom KT19 8AG join us for Colouring activities, create Be Kind bracelets and Seminal Events will be with us for face painting and henna tattoos

Monday 7th October

10am - 1pm Drop-in service at Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell, The Old Town Hall, The Parade, Epsom KT18 5AG

3 - 7pm Monday Drop-in at St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA

3.30pm Guided Mindfulness and Relaxation practice with This Little Yogini at St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA

4pm Be Kind to your Mind - Debbie Brewin, Consultant Therapist, Supervisor & Trainer at Mind-Growth Mastery at St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA

Tuesday 8th October

10am - 1pm Drop-in service at Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell, The Old Town Hall, The Parade, Epsom KT18 5AG

2 - 4pm Talking Table at The Old Moat Garden Centre, Horton Lane, Epsom, KT19 8PQ

Come and join the team at The Old Moat Garden Centre for a cup of tea and piece of cake and find out what our Wellbeing Service has to offer, receive a free tour, or just come for a chat. We would love to meet you!

6 - 7.30pm Come and join The Include Choir Epsom at St Joseph's Church, St Margaret's Drive, Epsom, KT18 7JQ. The Include Choir provides social, musical and volunteering opportunities (for anyone age 16+), it also teaches inclusive Makaton signing and provides 'joy and uplift' which means you are 'guaranteed to leave with a smile'.

Wednesday 9th October

9:45 - 11:45 Home-Start Epsom, Ewell and Banstead, Ewell Family Centre, Riverview Road, West Ewell, KT19 0JP. Dealing with Difficult Emotions workshop - this workshop is designed to help parents who may be struggling to manage or deal with their children's emotions, providing emotional support and practical suggestions to make parenting just a

little more manageable.

10am - 1pm Open day at the Forget-me-not Allotment at Appley House Care Home, Longmead Road, Epsom, KT19 9RX. Love Me Love Me Mind volunteers have been visiting the allotment weekly since early 2024 helping the staff and residents of the care home to use the space, planting flowers and vegetables, and making future plans for a sensory space.

5 - 7pm Open evening at CYP Haven Epsom. Visit our Focus youth centre, 9 Depot Road, Epsom, KT17 4RJ and meet the staff at the CYP Haven in Epsom. We will be serving Tea/Coffee and biscuits and look around, we then showcase our youth services at 5.30pm, followed by a Q&A with staff and find out how we support children's mental health within the community. The CYP Haven is an open access wellbeing drop-in for young people aged 10-18 years. Working closely with local schools and CAHMS/Surrey CC services. Check out our website: cyphaven.net

7 - 8.30pm Grow & Glow - Epsom Methodist Church, Ashley Road, Epsom, KT18 5AQ. A woman's only mental health support group. A place to grow, glow and connect with others No booking required to attend, just come as you are.

Thursday 10th October - World Mental Health Day

9.15am-10.15am Yoga for Wellbeing - The Horton Arts Centre, Haven Way, Epsom KT19 8NP (Doors open 9am) Start the day with a session of gentle yoga. Yoga teacher Louise Tozer will incorporate breathing techniques, sound and gentle movements into her class to improve self-awareness, flexibility and relaxation. This is an all-inclusive class, suitable for all levels. Wear comfortable clothing and bring layers. • Bring your own mat or use a towel or blanket if you don't have a yoga mat. • Bring water

This session is normally £12 but for World Mental Health Day, the session will be freely open to all. Donations are welcome.

10am - 3pm Drop in service at Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell, The Old Town Hall, The Parade, Epsom KT18 5AG

10am - 4pm Community engagement stand in Epsom Marketplace, High St, Epsom KT19 8EB. Come and get a FREE hug, a high five or a handshake! Join LMLMM and Age Concern Epsom & Ewell for a Delicious CAKE sale, and an opportunity to chat to two local charities.

5 - 6pm Join the Sunnybank drama group for a workshop about being kind, St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA

6pm - 7pm Let's Talk Epsom Peer Support group at St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA

7 - 8pm Live Music performed by Steve Dyke, a trustee of LMLMM at St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA. Join us for an evening of stories and songs, written and performed by Steve. Some funny, some poignant, some with themes from local history and a couple of singalong classics for everyone to join in. Refreshments are available, free entry with the option to donate on your way out if you feel you've been entertained. It promises to be a great evening, and we'd love to see you there.

Friday 11th October

10am - 12noon Advice Cafe at St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA - providing a space for our partners and groups to provide support, advice and care in a warm and welcoming environment. Action for Carers Surrey, Christians Against Poverty, Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell, Epsom Foodbank, Epsom Primary Care Network, Love Me Love My Mind, Mary Frances Trust

10am - 12noon - Action for Carers Surrey - Find out more about Action For Carers and how we support unpaid carers throughout Surrey. You'll also be able to meet one of our specialist mental health carer support advisers, whose role is to support unpaid carers who are looking after someone with poor mental health or substance issues.

Saturday 12th October

10am - 4pm Community engagement stand in Epsom Marketplace, High St, Epsom KT19 8EB

Come along and meet the Friends of Horton Cemetery on Saturday 5th and 12th October and pick a ceramic flower to plant in your garden. Last year we painted over 1000 flowers to Remember Epsom's Forgotten Residents buried at Horton Cemetery, and we want to give the flowers back to the local community. Any donations that we receive for the flowers will support our future research into the lives of the 9000 patients buried at the cemetery.

11am - 2pm Free Kids Art and Craft Club at Epsom Social, Derby Square, Epsom KT19 8AG - Join us for Colouring activities, create Be Kind bracelets and Seminal Events will be with us for face painting and henna tattoos

11am - 7pm Epsom Picturehouse, Epsom Square KT19 8AG. Join us for a Wellbeing Fun Day, in collaboration with Surrey Community Lounges, End Stigma Surrey, Epsom Library and hosted by Epsom Picturehouse - we'd love for you to be there! Come along for a day of community, connection, and fun!

Whether you're in the mood for a friendly chat over tea, want to play some games, or need a quiet space to relax, there's something for everyone. This special day will focus on celebrating wellness, sparking conversations around mental health, and showing you where to find support within the borough.

1pm Bodhi Eden, Epsom Yoga Studio - 29 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8EX

FREE taster sessions

Yin Taster | 30mins | 13:00pm

Meditation Taster | 20mins | 13:40pm

Please book via <https://www.bodhieden.com/be-kind-tasters>

Sunday 13th October.

10am We Power On - Men's Social Walk and Talk, meet outside the Rubbing House pub, on Epsom Downs (every Sunday unless otherwise advertised) at 9.50am for a 10am start.

2 - 4pm join us for Free Kids Art and Craft Club at Epsom Social, Derby Square, Epsom KT19 8AG

Epsom pensioners gather less winter fuel pay this St Stephens

12 October 2024



Thousands of pensioners across Epsom, Ewell, Ashted, and Leatherhead are facing the loss of vital winter fuel payments following cuts by the UK government, sparking fears that many will struggle to keep warm this winter.

Helen Maguire, the Liberal Democrat MP for Epsom and Ewell, has urged the government to reconsider its decision, warning that vulnerable pensioners could be left choosing between “heating and eating” during the colder months. Maguire opposed the cuts when they were voted on in the House of Commons on 10th September, but the measures were passed despite her concerns.

The cuts primarily affect pensioners over the age of 80 who are not in receipt of pension credit. Previously, these pensioners were automatically entitled to an additional £300 to help cover their energy bills in the winter. Now, many will lose this support unless they qualify for other benefits.

Data released earlier this week shows that in Epsom and surrounding areas, 5,788 pensioners aged over 80 who do not receive pension credit are at risk of losing their Winter Fuel Payment. In total, 18,261 pensioners in Epsom and Ewell could be affected by the government’s decision.

Last winter, over £3.3 million in support was distributed to pensioners in the constituency, with £1,525,800 going to those aged over 80. These figures are expected to fall significantly this year due to the cuts.

“Thousands of pensioners here in Epsom and Ewell are desperately worried about how they will make it through this winter,” said Ms Maguire. “These latest figures are deeply concerning. It is not too late for this government to change course, reverse their plans, and protect vulnerable pensioners here in Epsom.”

In response, Chancellor **Rachel Reeves** has defended the government’s decision, framing it as part of a broader strategy to stabilise public finances. “We are facing challenging economic times, and difficult choices must be made to ensure the sustainability of our public services,” Reeves said in a recent statement. “However, we remain committed to supporting those most in need, and we have maintained targeted assistance for the poorest households.”

Reeves also pointed to ongoing support measures, including the Energy Price Guarantee, which she says will help alleviate pressure on households most at risk. “We recognise the importance of protecting our pensioners, and our policies are designed to ensure that no one is left behind. But we must also take steps to manage public expenditure responsibly.”

Despite this, charities and local advocacy groups have voiced concerns about the potential impact on older residents. Many fear an increase in demand for services such as food banks and emergency heating grants as pensioners struggle to afford rising energy bills without the additional winter fuel support.

As winter approaches, the situation remains uncertain, with many pensioners hoping for a reversal of the cuts or further government action to protect those most affected.

Image: Richard Peter Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 German

Epsom’s local life savers

12 October 2024



A Covid survivor who was so poorly her children were warned she wouldn't survive the night and the mum of a young boy who bravely battled leukaemia have thrown their support behind an inaugural event that celebrates incredible NHS staff.

Jan Ehtash, from Carshalton, spent 12 weeks in Epsom and St Helier hospitals after falling seriously ill with Covid - receiving care from a dedicated team of nurses, doctors, and other health professionals.

Sutton schoolboy Jackson Hall, meanwhile, was treated at St George's Hospital for leukaemia, where paediatric teams went "the extra mile" to support the now-seven-year-old and his family.

Both Jan and Jackson have finished treatment, and they and their families are calling on others to cast their nominations for the very first staff awards at St George's, Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals and Health Group.

"They are amazing, just wonderful people," said Jan, 60. "All of the nurses, the doctors, the cleaners, they are just so, so caring.

"When I went into hospital, all I took with me was a handbag with a set of pyjamas, a toothbrush, and a pair of underwear. I had no idea I would be there that long, but quickly started to deteriorate and was told I would have to go into intensive care. I just remember turning to the doctor and saying, 'I don't want to die'.

"It's thanks to the staff at Epsom and St Helier that I am here today, and I cannot thank them enough for saving my life and for being there when my family and I needed them the most."

Sam Hall, Jackson's mum, added: "All the staff were incredible throughout Jackson's treatment and they really went the extra mile - from giving me a hug when I had to choose between staying at hospital or going home with my daughter, to making me a cup of tea. The care they provided was fantastic, but it was these small things, too, that made a difference.

"Jackson is doing amazingly, settling back into school and becoming an amazing big brother to three-month-old Louie. He makes us so proud.

"Sometimes as a patient or a family member it's hard to know exactly how to show your gratitude to the incredible people who have been there in your time of need. But one way you can say thank you is by nominating a team or member of staff for this award."

The Outstanding CARE Award is dedicated to staff and teams who have been nominated by a member of the public, while colleagues will put forward their nominations in several other categories. All 17,000 members of staff working for the hospitals Group - from frontline clinicians, to essential support teams - are eligible for nomination.

Jacqueline Totterdell, Group Chief Executive, said: "Our biggest-ever awards event will recognise the incredible teams and individuals who go above and beyond for patients like Jan and Jackson.

"Hearing stories about the amazing efforts our staff go to is one of my greatest joys, and every single day they make me proud. I'm already looking forward to reading all the nominations and celebrating everyone who is shortlisted."

The awards take place on Tuesday 10 December at the Oval cricket ground, and will be generously supported by the hospital charities and local businesses. To make your nomination, visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/about/gesh-care-awards or www.epsom-sthelier.nhs.uk/gesh-care-awards by Tuesday 22 October.

NHS Press

Image: Jan in ITU with family

Surrey Coroner's bed safety concerns

12 October 2024



A frail, elderly man "cried for help for over an hour" before tragically dying after getting stuck in a gap between his care home bed extension, a Surrey coroner has found.

Paul Batchelor was found dead at The Red House, **Ashted**, on 27 June 2023, after a mattress extension fell through his bed's extension frame.

Assistant Coroner, **Susan Ridge**, raised concerns that Mr Bachelor's "numerous cries for help" were not responded to and there is a "lack of awareness" about bed extensions which could put other lives at risk.

A spokesperson for the care home said the circumstances around Mr Bachelor's death was "deeply distressing" and they "fully accept and respect" the assistant coroner's findings.

Ms Ridge found that despite one carer hearing Mr Bachelor's cries for help, she "did not open the door or go into his room as it was said she was frightened of him". Even as he called out for help for over an hour, between 10:05pm-11:15pm, much of the staff were doing their night-time routine.

Mr Batchelor, who was under respite care, was put into bed around 9pm by care home staff. Later that night he had manoeuvred himself to the foot of the bed and was lying on the mattress extension.

But because there was no deck in place supporting the extension, Mr Batchelor fell through the bed extension frame and became wedged in the gap.

Ms Ridge also addressed her report to the governmental Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) regarding a possible “lack of awareness” of the support needed for a mattress extension or bolster on extended beds.

She said: “Without adequate support there is a risk of death in that the mattress extension can fall through the bed frame creating a sufficient gap for a person to become wedged or stuck.”

A Red House spokesperson said: “We strive to provide the highest level of personal care and support to all our residents.” They added the company had addressed the concerns raised with equipment and staff protocols as a “matter of priority”.

The member of staff no longer works for the company, the spokesperson said, stating the care home has “ensured that the wider team understands how best to manage challenging or stressful situations”. They added: “We have underlined the importance of seeking support from others to sustain responsive and appropriate care, which is our highest priority.”

Dr Danielle Middleton, Deputy Director in Benefit/Risk Evaluation at MHRA, said she is reviewing the report carefully. The government agency has 56 days to respond to the coroner’s concerns.

Dr Middleton said the MHRA issued a National Patient Safety Alert, after reports of “adverse incidents” involving bed rails, medical beds, trolleys, bed rails, bed grab handles and lateral turning devices, warning of the risk of entrapment.”

The Alert requires staff receive device training suitable to their roles. Organisations are also required to have an up-to-date medical device management system in place, with regular servicing and maintenance of medical devices in line with the manufacturer’s instructions.

She added: “It also requires regular risk assessments for patients using bed rails or handles, including entrapment risks.”

The prevention of future deaths report, issued on September 13, has also been sent to the interim chief executive of the Care Quality Commission and chairman of The Red House (Ashtead) Limited.

The Red House Care Home, Ashtead. (Credit: Google Street View)

Local women’s health specialist on GTPS

12 October 2024



Greater Trochanteric Pain Syndrome (GTPS) is a prevalent condition, particularly affecting peri- and post-menopausal women. It causes significant discomfort in the soft tissue on the outside of the hip and can severely limit mobility. This article discusses the signs, causes, and management of GTPS, with a focus on why it predominantly affects women undergoing hormonal changes.

Luke Schembri is an Advanced Physiotherapy Practitioner working within the NHS, while also offering care to a limited number of private patients from his home. Born and raised in Epsom, he has always lived near Epsom Downs, which inspired his initial interest in the horseracing industry where he began his physiotherapy career. Luke is dedicated to delivering evidence-based, high-quality care to his local community. In addition, he authors a fortnightly blog that addresses health and wellbeing topics, particularly aimed at individuals over the age of 40.

What is Greater Trochanteric Pain Syndrome?

GTPS is characterized by pain and tenderness over the greater trochanter, a bony area on the outside of the hip. The condition involves inflammation of the gluteal tendons or bursa, and although it was once called trochanteric bursitis, the term GTPS is now preferred as it covers a broader range of tendon-related disorders.

Signs and Symptoms

The primary symptom of GTPS is pain over the lateral hip, which can radiate down the outer thigh. Key symptoms include:

- Lateral Hip Pain: Often worsened by activities like lying on the affected side, walking, or sitting in low chairs.
- Tenderness Over the Greater Trochanter: Touching this area typically causes discomfort.

- Pain with Activity: Repetitive movements, such as climbing stairs, exacerbate the pain.
- Night Pain: Pain at night is common, particularly when lying on the affected side.
- Weakness or Stiffness: Some may experience hip weakness or stiffness, affecting their gait.

Why is GTPS Most Common in Peri- and Post-Menopausal Women?

GTPS disproportionately affects women in peri- and post-menopause due to hormonal changes and mechanical stress on the hip. Here are the primary reasons:

Hormonal Changes

The decline in oestrogen during menopause impacts the health of tendons, ligaments, and muscles. Oestrogen plays a critical role in maintaining soft tissue integrity, and reduced levels lead to:

- Decreased Collagen Production: Collagen is essential for tendon strength and elasticity, and its decline makes tendons more prone to injury.
- Increased Tendon Stiffness: Lower oestrogen increases tendon stiffness, contributing to gluteal tendinopathies.
- Altered Pain Perception: Hormonal changes during menopause can heighten sensitivity to pain, worsening GTPS symptoms.

Mechanical Load and Changes

Other factors contributing to GTPS in menopausal women include:

- Increased Load on the Hip: Weight gain during menopause places more stress on the hip joints and surrounding tissues.
- Reduced Physical Activity: Lower activity levels can cause muscle weakness, altering hip mechanics and increasing the likelihood of tendon injuries.
- Altered Gait: Pain-induced changes in walking patterns can further strain the hip and lead to GTPS.

Treatment and Management of GTPS

Treatment for GTPS involves conservative methods, physiotherapy, and sometimes more invasive procedures, following the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines, which recommend starting with non-invasive options.

1. Conservative Management

- Rest and Activity Modification: Reducing activities that worsen symptoms, such as standing for long periods or lying on the affected side, is crucial. Using a pillow between the knees when sleeping may help alleviate pressure on the hip.
- Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs): These medications can reduce pain and inflammation and are often recommended as initial treatment.

2. Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy plays a key role in treating GTPS and involves:

- Strengthening Exercises: Targeted exercises to strengthen the hip abductors, particularly the gluteus medius and minimus, improve hip stability and reduce strain on the tendons.
- Manual Therapy: Techniques such as deep tissue massage and myofascial release can help relieve muscle tightness and provide short-term pain relief.
- Education and Advice: Physiotherapists offer valuable guidance on managing activities and loading the hip joint to prevent further injury.

3. Shockwave Therapy

Extracorporeal shockwave therapy (ESWT) is a non-invasive option that promotes healing by delivering shockwaves to the affected area. Some studies show positive outcomes for GTPS patients treated with ESWT.

4. Corticosteroid Injections

For patients who do not respond to conservative treatments, corticosteroid injections may be used to reduce inflammation. However, repeated injections can weaken the tendons, so they are not a long-term solution.

5. Surgery

Surgery is rare and reserved for severe cases where other treatments have failed. Options include removing the inflamed bursa or repairing the tendons.

Conclusion

Greater Trochanteric Pain Syndrome is a common condition that primarily affects peri- and post-menopausal women. Hormonal changes and mechanical stress on the hip contribute to its development. Effective treatment usually involves conservative management, physiotherapy, and sometimes shockwave therapy or injections. Early diagnosis and a tailored treatment plan can help alleviate symptoms, improve function, and enhance the quality of life for those affected by GTPS.

Surrey Coroner calls for action over ambulance wait

12 October 2024



The death of a man who waited more than three hours for an ambulance has prompted calls from a coroner for quicker clinical assessments.

Philip Ross died at the Royal Surrey County Hospital on December 19 2023 after a fall in his home on December 3.

Surrey's assistant coroner Susan Ridge ruled that Mr Ross died of multiple organ failure after his accidental fall. Ms Ridge said she was concerned South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECAMB) has not shown evidence that its timeline for clinical validation is being met, as in this case.

Clinical validation is when a case is sent to a clinician to decide the best response for the patient at the right time.

Mr Ross' wife called an ambulance at 11:25pm after her husband had a fall and was unable to move. Initially, Mr Ross' case was labelled by SECAMB as Category 3, which would have a response time of 120 minutes, or two hours. Paramedics did not arrive until 2:30am, the Prevention of Future Death report stated.

During the wait, Mrs Ross made "a number of increasingly anxious calls to the ambulance service" about the urgency to help her deteriorating husband, according to the report.

Ms Ridge said Category 3 cases had a response time of 120 minutes and SECAMB aimed to validate these calls with a clinician within 90 minutes. But the NHS Trust's target was not met in this case.

"No clinical validation of the calls took place until well over 2 hours from the initial call," Ms Ridge said. The court heard the delays came from a "surge" in the number of calls as well as a lack of available clinical staff or "clinical hours".

Categories 3 and 4 are judged as less serious cases and so have longer required response times from ambulances. However, this can become extended even longer at times of high demand.

The report stated: "Because of these potentially long response times, timely clinical validation is important to ensure correct categorisation and/or identify a deteriorating situation."

The coroner said she is concerned that late or delayed assessment and sorting of these initially 'less serious' cases is "placing patients at risk of early death".

The ambulance service has 56 days from 16 September to respond to the coroner's report.

A SECAMB spokesperson said: "Our thoughts and condolences are with Mr Ross's family. We are very sorry that we were not able to respond to him more quickly.

"We recognise that there are times when we are taking longer than we should to respond to some calls and are working hard to address this and improve performance across all categories of call. Having recently been written to by the coroner, we will respond in full to her within the requested timeframes."

Image: South East Coast Ambulance vehicle example. (Credit: Emily Dalton/LDRS)

Walking the talk on Epsom Downs

12 October 2024



On 10th September, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council hosted a Walk & Talk event at Epsom Downs Racecourse to mark World Suicide Prevention Day. Over 65 people, including residents and representatives from voluntary and statutory organisations, joined this insightful, moving and inspirational event, developed and delivered as part of the council's

Suicide Prevention Action Plan, produced in January 2024.

Chris Waller, founder of We Power On, led the walk around Epsom Downs. **Dale Millar** MBE from the Samaritans opened the second part of the evening talking about skills used in conversation and the impactful nature that this can have. **Joe Stroud** from End Stigma Surrey talked about the negative impact that silence can have and how we, as a community, can stand together to break the chains of stigma around mental health. And finally, Chris shared his own experiences including the importance of being able to talk openly. Cllr **Clive Woodbridge**, the Chair of the Council's Community and Wellbeing Committee, also joined him to discuss his journey from crisis to hope.

Local scribe, **Annalees Lim**, designed boards and captured key messages at the event. These boards will be shown at locations around the borough, starting at the Epsom Downs Racecourse and finishing at the Epsom Picturehouse around 10th October to coincide with Mental Health Awareness Day. More information to follow.

Councillor **Clive Woodbridge**, Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee said: "I'm proud that through our Suicide Prevention Action Plan, we've been able to provide a platform for residents and organisations to come together and have conversations about mental health and suicide, and also raise awareness of where support and resources can be found for those suffering from mental health issues or directly impacted by the loss of someone to suicide.

A huge thank you to We Power On, Epsom Downs Racecourse, End Stigma Surrey, the Samaritans and to the scribe who captured messages at the event. Thanks also to everyone who volunteered their time at the event. Without the support of all the volunteers and supporting organisations, this event would not have been possible. We look forward to continuing building on these relationships for the benefit of those who need our help the most.

As Chris himself said, "there is hope, and there is help out there".

Funding was allocated by the council from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to We Power On to help residents access support in the borough. Chris, founder of the organisation, led the walk for adults aged 18 and above.

For more information on some of the mental health support and resources available across Epsom & Ewell - <https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/resources-support>.

Walk on the Downs to feel Up.

12 October 2024



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is hosting a walk around Epsom Downs on 10th September to coincide with World Suicide Prevention Day. This event supports the council's Suicide Prevention Action Plan and aims to raise awareness of support and resources available to help those suffering from mental health issues or directly impacted by the loss of someone to suicide.

Funding has been allocated from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to **We Power On** to help residents access support in the borough. Chris, founder of the organisation, will lead the walk for adults aged 18 and above.

Immediately after the walk, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will host another event where Chris will talk about his story and the importance of having support available for people suffering from mental health problems. A scribe will create artwork which will then go on a 'tour' of the borough ending up at the **Epsom Picturehouse** on 10th October to coincide with Mental Health Awareness Day.

Residents will need to register to attend - 50 spaces are available for the walk and talk, and a further 50 spaces for those who only wish to attend the talk. Register [HERE](#)

End Stigma Surrey is also supporting this event, they are dedicated to raising awareness and reducing the stigma of mental health and are part of the council's wider Suicide Prevention Action Plan.

Councillor **Clive Woodbridge**, (RA Ewell Village) Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee said: "Mental health issues can have a devastating effect on sufferers and those close to them. No one should have to face mental health challenges alone and it's important as a council that we do all that we can to ensure vulnerable residents are informed, and can access, vital support when they need it.

Working with partners is an essential part of our Suicide Prevention Action Plan and I'd like to thank We Power On, End Stigma Surrey, and The Jockey Club for their support with this event.

I'd encourage anyone experiencing mental health issues to seek help. One life lost is too much."

Chris, founder of We Power On said: "I'm pleased to be able to support the council with its walk and talk. Walking helped

me especially during Covid lockdown and I'm looking forward to leading the walk across Epsom Downs and also sharing my experiences in the following event. It's important for everybody to know that they're not alone, encourage conversations and keep highlighting where those people suffering from mental health issues can turn to for support."

Image credit: Marathon - License details

Epsom welder's widow seeks help with cancer claim

12 October 2024



A woman who believed her incurable cancer may have been caused by washing her husband's work clothes is looking for information. Annette, who was married to a former welder in is appealing for information following her diagnosis with an incurable form of cancer linked to asbestos exposure.

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral composed of thin, needle-like fibres which was widely used in construction. Asbestos was completely banned in 1999 after research showed swallowing and breathing in the fibres trap them in the body, inflaming and scarring the lungs which can cause cancer.

Peter Vaughan, Annette's husband, worked as a welder around **Epsom and Ewell** throughout the 1960s, 70s and 80s, where he is believed to have come into contact with asbestos used in insulators for buildings and machinery such as asbestos blankets or gloves.

Annette claims she may have been exposed to asbestos while washing Peter's work clothes, if he came into contact with asbestos while at work. Annette was diagnosed with the rare and aggressive cancer, mesothelioma, in summer 2023 - six years after Peter sadly died in 2017.

Now, with the help of legal firm Leigh Day, Annette is appealing to Peter's former colleagues to help her with information about conditions at his work. She hopes the information will help her bring a legal claim as she faces the incurable disease.

"Mesothelioma is an aggressive, terminal form of cancer which can develop in an individual later in life even through secondary exposure to asbestos," said Claire Spearpoint, asbestos claims solicitor at law firm Leigh Day. "Annette believes that this may have been the case with her diagnosis, however following Peter's death she has limited access to information regarding the possible presence of exposure at his former places of work."

Leigh Day is looking to support Annette's claim by speaking to anyone who worked at Surrey Sheet Metal Crafts, Grundy Teddington and Vestec throughout the 1960s to 1980s. They may be able to offer information if asbestos was used and how asbestos exposure occurred. Annette is also hopeful that any local tradesmen who worked in the **Epsom and Ewell** area at the time may be able to offer information that could be of help.

Peter worked as a welder and director at Surrey Sheet Metal Crafts between 1965 and 1967, a company he set up with two other men. He was then employed at Grundy Teddington in the Twickenham and Teddington area throughout 1970 to 1971, before working at Vestec for 12 years between 1975 and 1987. During his time at Vestec, he was a supervisor and often referred to as 'guvnor'.

While former employees who overlapped with Peter at these companies would be particularly useful, Annette is also looking to speak to anyone who worked at Surrey Sheet Metal Crafts, Grundy Teddington or Vestec who could offer information on the kind of work undertaken.

All three companies are no longer in existence and have been dissolved, one as recent as March 2024. If you can provide any relevant information please contact Claire Spearpoint at: cspearpoint@leighday.co.uk

Picture of Peter Vaughan as a younger man (Credit: Leigh Day)

Mental health art exhibition in Epsom

12 October 2024



Children and young people using mental health services have been taking part in a 'My Voice Matters' exhibition, which allows participants to express themselves through the medium of art.

The exhibition is an opportunity to celebrate the talents of the children, young people, parents and carers and to support them in using art to tell us how their voices matter. The "My Voice Matters" Exhibition opens from 2pm on August 27 and runs until September 6 at The Horton Arts Centre in Epsom.

Children and young people who use services such as STARS and New Leaf were invited to create art and encouraged to think about how their voice matters. "I feel satisfied when I do art," said a young person who contributed to the exhibition. "It is simple." They are displaying a painting called 'Flowers' at the show.

"Being able to express yourself through art can be a therapeutic experience for some but can also during the process release traumatic thoughts, experiences, and feelings," said Rebecca Robertson, who works as a Specialist Mental Health Therapist within STARS and is also a qualified Art Therapist. She explained: "It's not just the finished image, which is useful, but also the process of creating it."

New Leaf and STARS provide specialist mental health services for children in Surrey. They offer trauma and attachment therapy to children in care, care leavers, adopted children and those subject to Special Guardianship Orders (New Leaf) and children who have suffered sexual trauma (STARS). The service is delivered by Mindworks Surrey.

The STARS service supports children and young people who have been affected by sexual abuse and assault. The New Leaf Service supports children and young people who are in care, leaving care, adopted or under special guardianship orders.

Emina Atic-Lee, Service Manager for STARS and New Leaf services, said: "Last year's exhibition received the most incredible feedback from young people, their carers and families, as well as the members of the local community who visited. We are really pleased to be able to put on another exhibition this year."

The exhibition is free to enter and showcases artwork by both young people and their parents/carers and staff.

Image: Sibling painting from My Voice Matters exhibition. (Credit: Surrey and Border Partnership NHS Trust)

Our Health Deserves Better

12 October 2024



I want to take this opportunity to thank those who voted for me at the general election. There is much to do to improve our situation in Epsom & Ewell and I am committed to help achieve this for all the residents of Epsom, Ewell, Ashted and Leatherhead.

Having visited Epsom Hospital only this week I reflect on the recent statement by Chancellor Rachel Reeves and find it impossible not to feel a deep concern for the future of our local healthcare infrastructure.

The Chancellor's announcement, which hinted at potential cuts to various infrastructure projects, including the ambitious plan to deliver 40 new hospitals, has left many of us in a state of unease. Among the projects at risk is the new emergency care hospital at Sutton, a critical facility that promises to alleviate the pressures on Epsom and St Helier hospitals. As the newly elected Liberal Democrat MP for Epsom & Ewell, I find this prospect deeply troubling.

Our community has been waiting far too long for this vital investment. The new hospital at Sutton is not just another building; it's a beacon of hope for many. It's designed to be a centre of excellence, equipped with state-of-the-art facilities for the most serious emergency cases. Without it, our local healthcare services will continue to struggle with sub-standard conditions at Epsom and St Helier. These facilities, already stretched beyond their limits, cannot continue to bear the brunt of our community's healthcare needs without significant improvements.

The situation is dire. The buildings at Epsom and St Helier are overdeveloped and outdated. They desperately need the

relief that the new Sutton hospital would provide. This isn't just about buildings; it's about the quality of care and the well-being of our staff and patients. Our community deserves better, and we cannot afford to wait any longer.

The Chancellor has offered a meeting with the Health Secretary for MPs representing affected constituencies. I eagerly anticipate this opportunity to voice the concerns of Epsom, Ewell, Ashted, and Leatherhead residents. Our message must be clear and resolute: the Conservative party's economic mismanagement has left our public services in disarray, and we cannot allow their broken promises to cost us our much-needed hospital.

For years, the Conservatives have failed to deliver on their promises, leaving our local health services to languish. The proposed hospital at Sutton represents a crucial lifeline, not just for today but for the future of healthcare in our region. It is a promise of better days, of healthcare services that our community can rely on.

As your MP, I am committed to fighting for this project. We must ensure that the funding for the new Emergency Care Hospital at Sutton is protected. The people of Epsom, Ewell, Ashted, and Leatherhead deserve nothing less than a healthcare system that meets their needs and supports their well-being. The time for waiting is over. It's time for action, and I will not rest until our community gets the healthcare investment it has been promised and so desperately needs.

Image: Maternity Unit at Epsom Hospital. Left to right; James Blythe CEO; Liz Cullen, Head of Midwifery; Helen Maguire MP

Epsom Hospital upgrade at risk?

12 October 2024



A "crumbling" Surrey hospital trust says it is "cracking on" with plans for a new hospital and upgrades despite concerns the government could scrap a funding plan

Epsom General Hospital and St Helier Hospital had been marked for redevelopment under the previous Conservative governments' £20bn New Hospital Programme. Regeneration of the health trust included a new emergency hospital in Sutton, South London, as well as much-needed facility upgrades.

But Labour's Chancellor **Rachel Reeves** announced last week she would review big hospital and road projects to fix a £22bn black hole in public finances. Although details are yet to be confirmed, the review will look into the previous government's plan to build 40 new hospitals by 2030.

Helen Maguire, Liberal Democrat MP for Epsom and Ewell, said her constituents "cannot wait any longer" for the investment. Described as "crumbling", "dilapidated" and "not fit for 21st century healthcare" in previous national reporting, the buildings at both the St Helier complex in Carshalton and the Epsom site are in dire need of repair.

If the funding is not forthcoming, Mrs Maguire said she is concerned about the impact on the local staff and patients. "My constituents have been crying out for improvements at Epsom and St Helier and so it is vital that this project must go ahead," she said.

The new Lib Dem MP said without the upgrade, staff and patients in Epsom, Ewell, Ashted and Leatherhead would continue having to put up with substandard buildings.

Healthwatch Surrey, a non-profit advocating for locals to get the best of their NHS, claims wellbeing "does not solely lie in the hands of doctors and other frontline staff" but the built environment can also affect patient safety. According to NHS data from 2022/23, estate and infrastructure failures in England disrupted the care of more than 2,600 patients.

Calling on the government to "protect funding for the new Emergency Care Hospital at Sutton", Mrs Maguire said the new emergency hospital would relieve pressure on the current sites. She added she was "looking forward" to meeting the Health Secretary to relay the concerns of people in Epsom, Ewell, Ashted and Leatherhead.

The news comes as another let down for locals after the £219m redevelopment of St Helier hospital promised by the 2010 Conservative-Lib Dem government also came off the rails. Budget cuts and a difficult 'financial context' were cited as the reasons at the time.

Most of the buildings at Epsom and St Helier are older than the NHS itself. Staff are reportedly working in areas with damp mould, leaking roofs, and floods. Trying to patch up failing infrastructure and out-of-date facilities is unsustainable for any hospital.

"Our ageing buildings are not fit for purpose," said a spokesperson for Epsom and St Helier Hospital NHS Trust. They said: "We're cracking on with plans for a new hospital and upgrades to our existing sites while this review takes place."

Plans include building a new Specialist Emergency Care Hospital in Sutton, where the sicker patients would have access

to high quality care in state-of-the-art facilities. The Trust also plans to invest in Epsom and St Helier hospitals, where 85 per cent of patients will continue to receive care.

The spokesperson added: “We continue to make significant progress, from detailed pre-planning application discussions, to refining designs of the new hospital, bringing us closer to a state-of-the-art facility that our patients and staff deserve.”

A Department of Health and Social Care spokesperson said the previous government’s commitment to build 40 new hospitals by 2030 is “undeliverable and unaffordable”. The funding allocated by the previous government runs out in March.

They said: “We must reset the New Hospital Programme to put it on a sustainable footing, following persistent delays and cost overruns.” The Department of Health and Social Care is launching a full review of the programme to provide a “thorough, costed and realistic timeline for delivery”.

The spokesperson added: “We can replace the crumbling hospital estate in England. This government is determined to be honest with people about what can be delivered, and not let them down again.”

Campaign to keep local child cancer services local

12 October 2024



Wandsworth Council is leading a campaign against the NHS decision to move children’s cancer services from two South London hospitals into Central London and the new Labour Government will be asked to step in. NHS England announced its decision to move the children’s cancer centre based jointly at **St George’s Hospital, Tooting**, and **The Royal Marsden, Sutton**, to Evelina London Children’s Hospital, Lambeth, in March.

Wandsworth has now confirmed it will refer the decision to new Health Secretary Wes Streeting in a bid for him to intervene. The council is particularly concerned about the prospect of parents having to travel via public transport into Central London with immunosuppressed kids to reach the Evelina.

The authority said Richmond, Kingston, Merton, Sutton and Surrey councils are set to join the cross-party campaign, as children in their boroughs currently receive care at the existing children’s cancer centre. Richmond approved plans to challenge the decision in May.

Opposition to the plans began to grow after the NHS launched a consultation on two options for the future location of the centre last year – either moving it entirely to St George’s or to the Evelina. The centre has provided specialist children’s cancer services to those aged 15 and under living in South London, Kent, most of Surrey, Brighton and Hove, Medway and East Sussex for 25 years.

The NHS said it has to move the centre as a new national service specification in 2021 outlined very specialist children’s cancer treatment services must be on the same site as a paediatric intensive care unit and other specialist children’s services. The Royal Marsden does not have a paediatric intensive care unit, meaning a small number of children with cancer requiring intensive care are transferred safely by ambulance to St George’s every year.

Labour Wandsworth Council leader Simon Hogg urged Mr Streeting to work with local authorities challenging the decision to find ways to keep services at St George’s. He said: “We have opposed these plans to move specialist children’s cancer care from St George’s from the start. Our serious concerns remain – getting to Evelina hospital through Central London traffic will be challenging at the best of times. Travelling by public transport is not an option for vulnerable children who are on immunosuppressant medication. So there has to be a better solution to these plans.”

Local MPs have also publicly opposed the plans. Tooting MP Dr Rosena Allin-Khan described the decision to move services from St George’s as ‘deeply disappointing’ when it was announced in March, and signed a letter to previous Health Secretary Victoria Atkins asking her to review it. The letter was also signed by Putney MP Fleur Anderson, Mitcham and Morden MP Siobhain McDonagh, Richmond Park MP Sarah Olney and Twickenham MP Munira Wilson.

Services are not expected to move until 2026 at the earliest. An NHS London spokesperson said: “Evelina London has been chosen as the future location for the children’s cancer centre following a rigorous process, including involving clinical advisers, parents, charities, nurses and research staff. The future centre will stand ready to give cutting-edge treatments that require intensive care on site, like other major centres worldwide.

“Service reconfiguration is rarely easy and we recognise that during consultation, parents and families raised a number of concerns about the change in location, including about travelling further into London, and what that will mean for them. Our focus now is on detailed implementation planning which takes all of these concerns into account to support families

and staff.”

An Evelina spokesperson added: “We are fully committed to working with patients, their families, staff from the current service, and other partners to design the new service with children, young people and staff at its heart. This will ensure continuity of care during the transition period and a plan for the safe transfer of the service.”

A St George’s spokesperson said: “We understand the concerns being raised by our communities who want to keep specialist children’s cancer care at St George’s. We are working with NHS England and our partners and will continue to provide outstanding care to children and their families throughout this process.”

Charlotte Lillywhite - reporter.

Image credit Jean Barrow Licence

Teen suicide risk underestimated by CAMHs

12 October 2024



An “underestimation” of suicide risk and significant mental health ‘failings’ contributed to the death of a vulnerable teenager, a Senior Coroner has found.

Locket Williams, described by their family as “a lovely person with a huge character”, was just 15 years old when they tragically killed themselves in September 2021.

Senior Coroner Richard Travers concluded that there were a number of key failures by Surrey and Borders Partnership (SABP) NHS Foundation Trust’s Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) which contributed to the death of the vulnerable teenager, who goes by they/them pronouns. The three-week inquest concluded Friday 31 May.

Locket’s older sister, Emily, said: “Hearing the coroner recognize what we have believed for three long years—that failures by CAMHS contributed to Locket’s death and ultimately meant Locket lost all hope—is heartbreaking.

“We’re thankful for the Coroner’s respect for Locket’s identity, which was so important to them, and we sincerely hope this process will help prevent more tragic deaths like Locket’s in the future.”

Described by their family as “vibrant” with a “massive heart”, Locket “brought colour to everything they participated in” their family said.

They had a long history of mental health difficulties, resulting in self-harming behaviours and three previous suicide attempts throughout within seven months of 2021.

Evidence heard at the inquest highlighted “illogical conclusions” that Locket was deemed “low risk” by clinicians, despite their ongoing suicidal ideation and three suicide attempts in close succession, the family’s lawyers said.

Coroner Travers found that Locket’s high risk of suicide was “underestimated” by clinicians, as there was an “insufficient account” of Locket’s long-running risk, which meant Locket did not receive the treatment they needed.

Commenting on the Coroner’s findings, the family’s solicitor, Elle Gauld from Simpson Millar’s public law team, said: “Given Locket’s three suicide attempts and deteriorating mental health, CAMHS’ approach repeatedly defied logic and palpable evidence of suicidality, bypassing the patient’s express wishes and placing an unrealistic burden on a family already in crisis. Treatment was not commenced in a timely manner”

Long waiting lists for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and a shortage of therapists meant that, although clinicians all agreed CBT was necessary, Locket remained at home. Without access to the required support and treatment, their mental health continued to deteriorate, the lawyers for the family said.

Coroner Travers said there was a ‘failure’ to assess the likelihood Locket could be kept safe while waiting eight months for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (‘CBT’), a treatment she was ready and willing to engage in.

Failures in communication between social services and CAMHS were also identified, leading to crucial information being missed in Locket’s assessment and care. CAMHS failed to attend Core Groups meetings held by social services to protect Locket, as a vulnerable child.

Locket was passed from service to service, with no continuous care from the same clinicians or who was responsible for Locket’s care, lawyers said.

Speaking of the family’s loss, Locket’s mother, Hazel Williams, said: “We hope the lessons learned from their death highlight the urgent need for change and prevent future tragedies. We are grateful for the thoroughness of this inquest and the potential for positive changes in managing mental health services for young people.”

SABP has 56 days to respond to the senior coroner's findings. Coroner Tavers has asked the NHS Trust to report whether there is now a system in place to ensure that young people referred to CAMHS are seen and treated promptly, and that clinicians are acting in accordance with the Trust's guidelines.

A Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust spokesperson said: "We are extremely saddened by the tragic death of Locket Williams and our deepest sympathies go to their family and friends.

"We are carefully reflecting on the Coroner's findings and the questions we have been asked and will respond within the given timeframe."

Image: Locket. (Credit: Simpson Millar law firm) Coroners Court in background - Google