EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

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Epsom and Ewell Borough Council out – Community Council's in?

28 May 2025



Earlier this month, at a meeting of the full Council, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) agreed new strategic priorities for 2025-2027, with the number one priority being to explore future local governance in Epsom & Ewell. This week, Councillors will attend a briefing on Community Governance Review (CGR) and will, with the Mayor's agreement, schedule an extraordinary full Council meeting on Thursday 26 June 2025. At the extraordinary Council meeting, Councillors would agree whether to commence with a CGR in Epsom & Ewell, that could eventually lead to the creation of new community councils.

Community councils provide a vital link between residents and larger unitary authorities, which will be critical as a result of imminent local government reorganisation in Surrey. They aim to enhance local representation by providing a direct route for the essential voices of residents and local communities, ensuring that residents are aware of local issues, and are involved in decision-making they are affected by.

Councillor Hannah Dalton, Leader of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, said "We are navigating the biggest change in local democracy for more than 50 years. As a priority we are working to ensure that, whatever the outcome of local government reorganisation, the voices of our residents and local communities continue to be heard in years to come – this is a vital element of local democracy. We will keep residents informed and updated throughout this process."

In the coming days, Councillors will be briefed on the CGR process and possible geographies for establishing community councils in Epsom & Ewell:

Should full Council decide to commence with the CGR, the process will include a public consultation which would take place summer 2025, with any final proposal being consulted on in early 2026.

EEBC council meetings, including extraordinary full Council meetings, are open to the public to observe and are also live streamed: details on how to watch meetings can be found on the council's website: Epsom and Ewell Democracy

In light of the plans for local government reorganisation, which will see the formation of new unitary councils and the dissolution of all current district, borough and county councils in Surrey; EEBC approved an amendment to the Council's Four-Year Plan earlier this month, replacing it with strategic priorities for 2025-2027. Prior to the 9 May final submission deadline, Epsom & Ewell with nine of the eleven Surrey district and borough councils submitted a proposal to government to create three unitary councils in north, east and west Surrey. The county council and two other district and borough councils favour a two unitary model. Council leaders ruled out the creation of one unitary council for Surrey in February this year.

Run for humanity in Epsom and Ewell

28 May 2025



On Sunday, 18th May 2025, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association (AMYA) in the Southwest Region of England hosted a remarkable charity run that brought together people from across the local community in a spirited show of unity and compassion.

Held at Auriol Park, a public park in the Borough of Epsom and Ewell, the event ran from 10 AM to 2 PM and served as a vibrant platform for both raising funds and awareness. With over £8,000 collected on the day, the event was a resounding success. All proceeds went to AMYA's partner charity, *Humanity First*.

Humanity First, established in 1995 and registered with the UK Charities Commission, operates in 66 countries across six continents. It runs eight core programmes that have collectively transformed millions of lives through disaster relief efforts, sustainable development, and community empowerment. The funds raised through this event will directly support the charity's response to various crises around the world, including the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza.

Participants came from across the region, with residents of Kingston, Worcester Park, Tolworth, Malden Manor, New

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Malden, Surbiton, Epsom and Ewell all playing their part in contributing to this noble cause.

The day began with a competitive 10K run that set the tone for the rest of the event, as runners, supporters, and volunteers came together with a shared purpose. Alongside the run, attendees enjoyed a variety of activities, including inflatable attractions, food stalls, and exhibitions that added a festive and welcoming atmosphere for families and supporters alike.

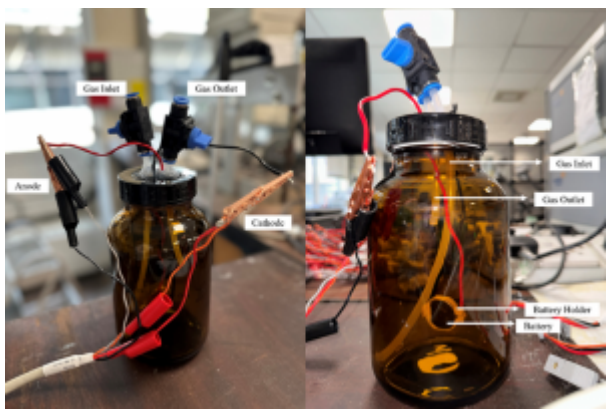
Beyond the fundraising, the event provided an invaluable opportunity for the public to learn more about the Islamic principle of serving humanity. In Islam, service to others is not just encouraged — it is considered a vital part of one's faith and spiritual fulfilment.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association, known for its strong emphasis on community welfare and interfaith cooperation, exemplifies this teaching by actively engaging in charitable activities across the UK and internationally. By organising such events, AMYA not only raises funds for critical humanitarian efforts but also helps foster mutual understanding and a sense of shared responsibility within the wider community.

Faran Shaheen
Regional Press Secretary for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association (AMYA) UK

Surrey battery leads

28 May 2025



Scientists at the University of Surrey have made a breakthrough in eco-friendly batteries that not only store more energy but could also help tackle greenhouse gas emissions. Lithium–CO_2 'breathing' batteries release power while capturing carbon dioxide, offering a greener alternative that may one day outperform today's lithium-ion batteries.

Until now, Lithium-CO_2 batteries have faced setbacks in efficiency – wearing out quickly, failing to recharge and relying on expensive rare materials such as platinum. However, researchers from Surrey have found a way to overcome these issues by using a low-cost catalyst called caesium phosphomolybdate (CPM). Using computer modelling and lab experiments, tests showed this simple change allowed the battery to store significantly more energy, charge with far less power and run for over 100 cycles.

The study, published in Advanced Science, marks a promising step toward real-world applications. If commercialised, these batteries could help cut emissions from vehicles and industrial sources – and scientists even imagine they could operate on Mars, where the atmosphere is 95% CO_2.

Dr Siddharth Gadkari, Lecturer in Chemical Process Engineering at the University of Surrey, and corresponding author of the study, said:

"There's a growing need for energy storage solutions that support our push toward renewable power while also tackling the growing threat of climate change. Our work on lithium–CO_2 batteries is a potential game-changer in making that vision a reality.

"One of the biggest challenges with these batteries is something called 'overpotential' – the extra energy needed to get the reaction going. You can think of it like cycling uphill before you can coast. What we've shown is that CPM flattens that hill, meaning the battery loses far less energy during each charge and discharge."

To understand why the CPM worked so well, teams from Surrey's School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering and the Advanced Technology Institute used two approaches. First, they dismantled the battery after charging and discharging to study the chemical changes inside. These post-mortem tests found that lithium carbonate, the compound formed when the battery absorbs CO_2, could be reliably built up and removed – an essential feature for long-term use.

They then turned to computer modelling using density functional theory (DFT), which allows researchers to explore how the reactions unfold on the material surface. Results showed how the CPM's stable, porous structure offered the ideal surface for key chemical reactions.

Dr Daniel Commandeur, Future Fellow at the University of Surrey and corresponding author of the study, said:

"What's exciting about this discovery is that it combines strong performance with simplicity. We've shown that it's possible to build efficient lithium–CO_2 batteries using affordable, scalable materials – no rare metals required. Our findings also open the door to designing even better catalysts in the future."

The discovery opens new doors for developing even better low-cost, easy-to-make battery materials. With further research into how these catalysts interact with electrodes and electrolytes, lithium–CO_2 batteries could become a practical, scalable way to store clean energy, while helping reduce carbon in the atmosphere.

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Cleanliness is next to Godliness in Epsom

28 May 2025



On Sunday, 4th May, the sun was shining — and so were the smiles of Councillors Steven McCormick (RA Woodcote and Langley) and James Lawrence (LibDem College). While Steven knew what to expect having joined the group several times before, James was astonished to be greeted by a 110-strong team of volunteers, all equipped with litter pickers, high-vis jackets, and green and grey litter bags (more on those later), gathered and ready in Rosebery Park.

The volunteers, from ASEZ WAO and the World Mission Society Church of God, had travelled from Surrey, London, and as far afield as Manchester, Guildford, and Birmingham. Their mission: to clean up the parks and streets of Epsom as part of a “Reduce Plastic” campaign — an initiative backed not just by words, but by real action.

The event began with inspiring words from the councillors. Councillor James expressed his surprise at the turnout, admitting he had expected a group of around 11 but was delighted to see 10 times that number. “This is wonderful — amazing,” he said. “It’s so pleasing to see so many young faces in the crowd… so many people think activism is just shouting something online, but it’s fantastic to see people actually doing something.”

Councillor Steven added: “Hopefully people will just put litter in the bin — I know it’s a big ask — but what you’re doing is great and sets a really good example. You don’t just explain it, you actually do it. Really good job.”

Although Councillor Neil Dallen (RA Town) was unable to attend in person, he sent a message of encouragement via email, which was read out by a representative: “Best wishes to you all. This country depends on volunteers in many ways. A clean and tidy town encourages others to keep it clean and discourages littering and graffiti.”

The mostly young adult volunteers were uplifted by the councillors’ support, giving them a resounding cheer and calling out, “We love you!” Following the speeches, a short presentation was given on plastic pollution, highlighting the dangers of microplastics and encouraging people to think about how they can reduce plastic in their daily lives — something we can all take part in.

Afterwards, the councillors and volunteers set to work along three key routes in Epsom, including the town centre, the car park near Lidl, Epsom Square, Rosebery Park, and Mount Hill Gardens — all areas where litter had been reported. Recyclable and non-recyclable waste were carefully separated, with recyclable items placed in green bags and non-recyclable in grey ones.

Members of the local community praised the volunteers, and several even signed up for future events. Other environmental groups also offered words of encouragement, recognising the volunteers’ hard work. By the end of the day, about 40 bags of rubbish had been collected and left at an agreed pick-up point, where they were retrieved by a ranger from Epsom and Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) and taken to the recycling depot. The EEBC depot had kindly supported the volunteers by providing around 30 litter-picking kits, which proved invaluable.

The day stood as a shining example of successful collaboration between community volunteers, councillors, and council staff. More activities are already being planned by ASEZ WAO, based at the World Mission Society Church of God on East Street, in partnership with Councillors Steven and James. These include further plastic awareness events, potential upcycling initiatives, and of course, more litter picks.

Epsom was recently ranked the second-best place to live in England, and the volunteers are hopeful that, with continued community effort, it will claim the top spot next year. They are committed to working alongside the community and the council to inspire civic pride, keep our streets clean, and make our local area a pleasant place for everyone. As Councillor Neil noted, by setting a good example, we hope others will be inspired to keep Epsom clean and discourage littering and graffiti.

Olivia from ASEZ WAO summed up the spirit of the day, saying, “The event was brilliant — I loved it. I really hope it makes a difference, and if you have the time, I’d definitely recommend getting involved in something like this.”

Joe Adams

Epsom man awarded for psychosis interventions

28 May 2025

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A Peer Support Volunteer based in Epsom has won a Gold Award at the annual Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Staff Awards for his extraordinary contribution to the Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIIP) team, which previously supported him.

David Laycock received the Award for a Person with Lived Experience, recognising his remarkable impact on the EIIP team for East Surrey, which supports individuals aged 14–65 who have experienced psychosis. Drawing from his own lived experience of the disorder, David now helps others on their path to recovery, sharing his personal story to inspire hope, reduce stigma, and encourage engagement—particularly among men who may find it difficult to talk about mental health.

He also contributes to the development of EIIP workshops, including the service's innovative Canal Boat project, which teaches service users to drive a boat—an initiative designed to build confidence and aid recovery through hands-on learning and empowerment.

David received his award during the trust's 17th annual Staff Awards, an event held at Reigate Manor Hotel on Wednesday, 14 May. Over 160 guests attended, including Councillor Rich Michalowski, Mayor Elect of the Borough of Reigate and Banstead.

Reflecting on the recognition, David said: "Having been cared for by the team I now volunteer with and to be recognised at such a prestigious event celebrating the incredible work so many people do within the trust has been extremely humbling. Volunteering with EIIP has been so rewarding in so many ways, from helping to organise groups to being able to share my lived experience—every aspect of my journey has been supported by our incredible team."

David's nominator added: "He has overcome his challenges and now proactively supports others. He is warm, welcoming and has a lovely sense of humour he brings to everything."

Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust provides a wide range of specialist services in mental health, learning disabilities, and substance misuse. Operating across Surrey, North East Hampshire, and parts of Sussex, the trust also delivers social care for individuals with learning disabilities in Croydon and autism assessment services in Hampshire. With a workforce of over 2,400 staff across 39 sites, the trust is a major regional provider. This independent recognition underscores the Trust's ongoing role in promoting recovery-focused, person-centred care through the dedication of staff and volunteers alike.

Image L-R: Graham Wareham, David Laycock, Peer Support Worker, Andrew Jackman, Lead Governor

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Yes to chocolate, tea, apples and grapes

28 May 2025



We might have another reason to enjoy our daily cup of tea or small piece of dark chocolate, as a new study from the University of Surrey has found that naturally occurring compounds called flavan-3-ols – found in cocoa, tea, apples and grapes – may improve blood pressure and the health of our blood vessels.

The research, published in the European Journal of Preventive Cardiology, analysed data from 145 randomised controlled studies, and found that regular consumption of flavan-3-ols can lead to a reduction in blood pressure readings, particularly in people with elevated or high blood pressure. In some cases, the average blood pressure-lowering effects were comparable to those seen with some medications.

Flavan-3-ols were also found to improve the function of the endothelium – the inner lining of blood vessels – which is crucial for overall cardiovascular health. This improvement occurred independently of blood pressure changes, suggesting a broader positive impact on the circulatory system.

Professor Christian Heiss, lead-author of the study and Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine at the University of Surrey, said:

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“The findings are encouraging for those looking for accessible ways to manage their blood pressure and support their heart health through enjoyable dietary changes. Incorporating small amounts of commonly consumed foods like tea, apples, dark chocolate, or cocoa powder into a daily balanced diet could provide beneficial amounts of flavan-3-ols.

“While not a replacement for prescribed medications or medical advice, including more flavan-3-ol-rich foods in a daily routine could be a valuable addition to a healthy lifestyle, especially for those with higher blood pressure. These are findings that, although promising, require ongoing investigation.”

Surrey Uni knows the display way to San Jose

28 May 2025



A radical new approach to display screen technology could halve production costs, reduce harmful waste, and deliver brighter, more energy-efficient screens for our smartphones, smartwatches, and even certain medical devices, say researchers at the University of Surrey.

Most display screens use complex circuits made up of tiny switches called thin-film transistors (TFTs), which control when each pixel turns on or off and how bright it should be. However, building these circuits requires a lot of time, energy, water and harsh chemicals, making the manufacturing process expensive and resource-heavy.

At this year’s Display Week 2025 Technical Symposium in San Jose, California (11-16 May), Dr Radu Sporea and Dr Eva Bestelink will unveil their latest research, based on a new type of electronic component called a multimodal transistor (MMT). Originally designed as a hardware AI computing element, the MMT also has the ability to simplify display circuits while improving performance and sustainability.

Dr Radu Sporea, Associate Professor in Semiconductor Devices at the University of Surrey, said:

“Our invention challenges decades of industry practice by embracing properties usually seen as flaws. In most displays, engineers try to eliminate the energy barriers that form where metals meet semiconductors because they restrict current flow. But instead of working around them, we’ve made those barriers central to how our transistors operate.

“Using these effects deliberately, we’ve shown that the electronic circuits at the heart of display screens can be made with fewer components and processing steps – reducing waste, cutting costs and improving performance. And because it works with existing materials and tools, it’s a smarter, more sustainable upgrade for the screens we use every day. For the user, the reduced power requirements in operation will also mean significantly improved battery life.”

The MMT’s unique operation enables extremely compact, high-performance circuits that are particularly well suited to devices where size, energy use and image quality are critical – such as smartphones, tablets, smartwatches, automotive displays, and future wearable devices.

The technology is already showing promise in simulations, with real-world applications in AMOLED and microLED displays – two of the most advanced and rapidly growing areas of screen technology. It can also be integrated into current production lines with minimal disruption.

Dr Eva Bestelink, Senior Research Fellow at the University of Surrey’s Advanced Technology Institute, said:

“I’ve been working on this technology since my undergraduate days at Surrey, where I had the idea to develop a transistor based on neural behaviour, so seeing it evolve into something with real-world potential is incredibly rewarding. We’ve shown that it’s possible to rethink how displays are built without starting from scratch.

“The MMT lets us design circuits that perform better while also being cleaner and cheaper to make. That’s a win for manufacturers, a win for users and a win for the environment. Beyond displays, it could also have major applications in areas like microfluidics, imaging arrays and hardware AI. We’re still actively researching the AI potential, but the implication for revolutionising manufacturing is clear – especially if we’re to achieve Net Zero.”

Dr Bestelink and Dr Sporea will present their research on 15 and 16 May at this year’s Display Week 2025 Technical Symposium in San Jose, California. Their invention – the multimodal transistor (MMT), now granted a US patent – builds on more than two decades of pioneering research in thin-film electronics at the University of Surrey.

Image: By Redd Angelo in Technology CC0 license

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£500 award for artistic contribution

28 May 2025

Twinned with Chantilly, France

The Epsom and Ewell Town-Twinning Association is delighted to invite applications for this year's **Cyril Frazer Award**.

The Cyril Frazer Award is a legacy set up as a memorial to Cyril Frazer, who died in 2016. He was Mayor of Epsom and Ewell when it was first twinned with Chantilly in 1995 and was a founding member of the association. As well as Twinning, one of his other great passions was singing, and he was a keen member of the Epsom Male Voice Choir.

Both are reflected in the requirements for the award of **£500**, which is available to individuals and groups within the Borough and will be awarded to qualified applicants who meet some or all of the following agreed criteria:

- Applicants live or study in the Borough
- The award meets a special need, such as mental or physical health
- It benefits young people
- It has cultural/educational value
- It is music or performing arts related
- It furthers friendships or links with Chantilly
- It supports a key twinning or community event

The prize will be awarded at the Twinning Association's AGM in June, and the deadline for applications is **May 31st 2025**.

For further information and to apply, please contact: **diana@epsomtwinning.com**.

Surrey Housing protocol agreed for people with mental health needs

28 May 2025

An agreement between councils and NHS services in Surrey will help people with mental health needs find housing and avoid delays in leaving hospital.

The Surrey Mental Health and Housing Protocol sets out how services will work together to support people who find it difficult to secure long-term housing because of the mental health challenges they face.

By strengthening coordination between health, social care and housing, the protocol aims to help people find accommodation to aid their recovery and reduce the risk of becoming homeless.

The protocol, which sets out step-by-step guidance to services, will also help prevent delays in people leaving hospital, freeing up space for others in need.

Housing difficulties are a key factor in people having to stay in hospital longer than necessary. The protocol outlines clear processes for making sure that people have access to suitable housing when they are ready to be discharged.

The protocol also aims to help prevent evictions from tenancies and reduce incidents of cuckooing, where criminals exploit vulnerable people by taking over their homes for illegal activities such as drug-dealing.

Detailing a number of possible scenarios and the approaches to follow for each, the agreement encourages services to identify early warning signs of housing problems and work together to intervene proactively and find tailored solutions. This is especially important for people with complex needs or who face multiple disadvantages, such as unemployment, poor health, domestic abuse and trauma.

An earlier version of the protocol was introduced in 2016 but it has now been strengthened, updated and expanded, with a sharper focus on supporting people at the right time. Surrey organisations renewed their commitment by signing up to the updated protocol in March.

Partners who have agreed the relaunched protocol are Surrey's 11 borough and district councils, Surrey County Council, Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, as the county's mental health NHS provider, and the five acute

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care hospitals in Surrey (Royal Surrey, Epsom, East Surrey, St Peter's and Frimley Park). The protocol can be found on the **Healthy Surrey website**.

Sinead Mooney, Surrey County Council's Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, said: *"We know that safe and stable housing promotes good mental health, and this relaunched protocol is an important step forward in helping people stay in their homes or find suitable new ones at a time when they most need support.*

"By strengthening the way that services work together, we can help people earlier, supporting their recovery, independence and overall wellbeing, and making sure no one is left behind. With local government reorganisation on the horizon, this protocol will also support partners in getting ready for the changes ahead."

Jo Lynch, Chief Nursing Officer at Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, said: *"I am delighted we are jointly working with our partners in social care and housing to ensure people have access to suitable accommodation when they are ready to be discharged from hospital.*

"It can be complicated to understand how best to support people to get the housing they need. The joint protocol guides us on who we need talk to and the conversations we need to have to help people more quickly find housing that can support them with their recovery and which then frees up hospital beds for others in need."

The boroughs of Reigate & Banstead and Runnymede represented Surrey's 11 borough and district councils on a multi-agency group which worked on updating and strengthening the protocol.

Cllr Mus Tary, Executive Member for Housing and Support at Reigate & Banstead Borough Council, said: *"Officers from our Housing Team have been involved in the co-design of the updated protocol, alongside other partners, bringing their expertise on some of the housing challenges faced by those with mental health needs. We hope this protocol will ensure consistency across the partnership and lead to improved housing outcomes for some of our most vulnerable residents."*

Cllr Mike Smith, Chair of Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Committee said: *"Homelessness affects people from all walks of life, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. For those facing mental health challenges, securing and maintaining stable accommodation can be even more difficult. This updated and vital protocol prioritises early intervention and strengthens collaboration between housing, health, social care, and many other agencies to ensure no one falls through the cracks. By identifying housing issues early and providing tailored support, we can help people transition from hospital into housing—giving them stability and the best chance to recover and rebuild their lives."*

What is Buddy-Up?

28 May 2025



Buddy Up is an **award-winning charity** designed to offer **mentoring to young people** identified by schools as needing one-to-one support from an experienced youth worker and mentor.

It was set up in **August 2020**, after a need was identified in the community. Following the return to school after the pandemic, many schools reported:

- Increased **anxiety**
- Reduced **confidence**
- Struggles with **attendance**

While schools recognised the need for additional support, they lacked the time and funding to provide it.

Buddy Up has been delivering mentoring in schools across **Epsom and Ewell** for five years. To date, we have delivered **over 1,500 mentoring sessions** and still have a significant waiting list.

Our goal is to **support young people early**, believing that early intervention makes the biggest impact.

Who do we work with?

The young people we support may be dealing with:

- Anger
- Addiction

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- Self-harm and suicidal ideation
- At risk of grooming
- At risk of county lines involvement
- Victims of domestic violence
- ADHD
- ASD
- ODD
- Bullying
- Low self-esteem
- Victims of abuse
- Trauma
- Disordered eating
- Suicidal inpatients
- Poor attendance
- At risk of exclusion
- Anxiety

Funding

Buddy Up is largely funded by **donations and grants**, allowing us to offer our services free to those in need.

However, in recent months, our **funding has decreased dramatically**. Like many charities, we are feeling the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.

We are now in **urgent need of funding** to keep the charity running and continue supporting young people in Epsom and Ewell.

If you're able to donate, we would be incredibly grateful. Please use the link below:

 https://www.justgiving.com/buddyupcharity

Contact Us

If you would like more information or to discuss anything further, please get in touch:

 07551 444 246
 info@buddyupcharity.org
 https://buddyupcharity.org

Registered charity number: 1190942

Surrey SEND parents owed money

28 May 2025



Parents of children with special educational needs who were left with little choice but to use private educational psychologists may be due money back from Surrey County Council.

So far 27 families have been reimbursed for having to go private between the 2023 summer term and May 2024 due to a lack of qualified professionals able to create educational care plans.

This has resulted in £26,475 being returned to families – although it has not been a straightforward process for some

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parents.

The figures emerged following a recently published complaint against Surrey County Council.

The local government and social care ombudsman upheld that the authority refused to reimburse a mother who used a private educational psychologist in support of her son's education health and care (EHC) needs assessment.

The ombudsman also upheld the council delayed making payments for her son's tutor and that its communications were poor.

The ombudsman upheld further complaints about delays at Surrey County Council in completing needs assessments due to the national shortage of educational psychologists – but that it has since been satisfied with the steps being taken to resolve the issue.

Between the 2023 summer term and May 2024 Surrey County Council said it temporarily agreed to reimburse private reports due to its backlog.

The ombudsman said: "If we were to investigate this complaint it is likely that we would find fault.

"This is because the council accepted that a report from an educational psychologist was required and used the one obtained by Miss X.

"Therefore, it should have reimbursed her for the full costs. Also, when responding to Miss X's complaint, the council accepted there were delays making payments to (the child's) tutors.

"Whilst the council did apologise, this is likely to have caused Miss X distress in the form of uncertainty that wasn't remedied.

"I therefore asked the council to write to Miss X within one month to apologise and to make a payment to her for the full cost of the educational psychologist assessment she obtained and to offer a payment of £100 to remedy the distress its delayed payments to tutors caused her.

"To its credit, the council agreed."

Councillor Clare Curran, cabinet member for children, families and lifelong learning, said she was not able to comment on any individual children specifically, but the council accepted the findings from the ombudsman report and apologised to the family affected for any distress caused.

A spokesperson for the council added: "Where we used the private EP report as the sole advice during that time at the parent/carer's request we would cover the cost.

"However, if we did not use it as the sole advice then we would not reimburse."

They added that authority was now operating at over 90 per cent "timeliness" and able to meet demand.

Image: New Surrey County Council HQ, Woodhatch Place on Cockshot Hill, Reigate. Credit Surrey County Council

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Epsom and Ewell Victory in Europe celebrations

28 May 2025



A number of commemorative events are planned to be held across the borough to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day on 8 May 2025.

VE Day marks the official surrender of Germany, the end of the hostilities in Europe and the beginning of the end of World War II. The war continued in the Pacific until September 1945, when Japan surrendered.

Celebrations will begin with a procession from the Town Hall led by the Mayor to Epsom Market Place at 8.45 followed by a proclamation led by Councillor Graham Jones MBE, To mark the occasion a specially designed VE Day 80 flag provided by the Royal British Legion will be raised. The clocktower will be lit up in tribute the evening of May 8th.

In the evening, there will beacon lighting event, hosted by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council in partnership with Go Epsom BID and the Jockey Club, taking place on Epsom Downs. Epsom Downs Racecourse will be open from 7pm. Food and refreshments will be on sale, and entertainment provided by a variety of local performers. The event is free to attend and will end at approximately 9.45pm.

At 9:30pm, visitors are invited to gather at the dedicated Beacon site on Grandstand Road, Epsom Downs where the Mayor will lead the Beacon Lighting Ceremony. Please note that there is limited on-site parking available, and the beacon site is on uneven ground.

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Bourne Hall is planning to decorate their café and reception area with homemade bunting and is asking local schools to take part in designing and making the bunting. Any schools willing to take part need to hand their bunting in at Bourne Hall by Thursday 1 May.

A patriotic matinee show, Land of Hope and Glory from Neil Sands Productions, is coming to the Epsom Playhouse on Thursday 1 May. This unforgettable afternoon of nostalgia is filled with more than 60 all-time favourite songs, celebrating the best of British entertainment through the decades. Book tickets via the Epsom Playhouse website.

Finally, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's streetcare team have been working hard in recent months to plant patriotic blooms in time for VE day celebrations.

Councillor Clive Woodbridge, Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee, said:

"The celebrations that have been arranged to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day are an opportunity for the whole community to come together to commemorate the bravest generation, who fought for the freedom we enjoy today.

"I would encourage local schools to take part in creating bunting for Bourne Hall and I hope as many residents as possible are able to attend the proclamation and beacon lighting."

Jackie King, Chief Executive, said:

"EEBC are very proud of those who fought for our freedom and also of all those friends and family members who supported their efforts at home. On this 80th anniversary we are celebrating and commemorating this important day along with local residents who we hope will join us at the Beacon event and also with their own street parties and other activities".

Karen Pengelly, BID Manager at Go Epsom, said:

"It is an absolute honour and privilege to be part of this year's VE Day commemorations, it will be both a moving and celebratory event.

"Performances from the Show Choir, Laine Theatre Arts Choir and Epsom Silver Band will take place from 7pm and the Royal British Legion, Epsom & Ewell Branch will be leading the standard bearers at the Beacon – it should be a wonderful event for all to attend."

Jim Allen, General Manager at Epsom Downs Racecourse, said:

"Epsom Downs Racecourse is proud to be part of the borough's VE Day 80th anniversary commemorations. The beacon lighting will be a moving tribute to those who served and a special opportunity for the local community to come together in remembrance and celebration.

"We look forward to welcoming everyone to the racecourse for what promises to be a meaningful and memorable evening."

Image: *VE DAY CELEBRATIONS IN LONDON, 8 MAY 1945 (HU 41808)*
A truck of revellers passing through the Strand, London, 8 May 1945.
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Volunteers Join Forces with Councillor to Give Epsom a Spring Clean

28 May 2025



Epsom Town Centre was treated to a thorough spring clean on Sunday 6th April, as a team of around 40 volunteers from the international youth group ASEZ WAO UK joined local councillor **Arthur Abdulin** (RA, Town Ward) in a community litter pick.

Dressed in high-vis jackets and armed with litter grabbers and bin bags, the group covered key areas including the High Street, Epsom Square, and alleyways leading to the railway station — even tackling neglected corners of car parks and hotspots often used by the homeless. In total, the team collected an impressive 38 bags of rubbish, which were later gathered by council rangers.

The ASEZ WAO UK is a local volunteer group in Epsom that works to serve the Surry area and make it a better place for everyone. Mostly made up of young adults who are passionate about doing their bit to help the local community, they have been carrying out various volunteer activities in Surry since 2021.

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The Epsom clean-up began with a presentation highlighting the dangers of plastic pollution — a growing threat to the environment and public health. The initiative aimed not only to tidy up the town centre but also to raise awareness about responsible waste disposal and inspire behavioural change among residents.

Councillor Abdulin, who frequently takes part in litter picks, joined volunteers in clearing a significant amount of long-neglected waste. “The greatest impact this kind of event has is sharing the message,” he said. “It will have a great impact on people so that they think before littering and get rid of it properly.”

The warm spring-like weather added to the atmosphere as locals strolled through the market and visited the Ashley Centre — perhaps unaware that just metres away, volunteers were working hard to ensure the town remained pleasant and welcoming for all.

Recent signage from Epsom & Ewell Borough Council reminds residents that dropping litter could lead to a £100 fine. But campaigners like ASEZ WAO UK hope that community-led efforts and education will play an even greater role in keeping the town clean.

Their message is clear: everyone can make a difference. Whether by using a bin, reducing plastic waste, or picking up just one piece of litter, every small action contributes to a cleaner, healthier Epsom — and a better world.

Image: L to R. A volunteer and Cllr Arthur Abdulin

Shock as Surrey Council Puts Protected Woodland Up for Auction

28 May 2025



A surprise decision by Surrey County Council (SCC) to auction off a cherished woodland in the heart of Cuddington has sparked uproar among residents and elected councillors, who are now rallying to save the green space from the threat of large-scale development.

The 13-acre site, situated between Grafton Road and Old Malden Lane and bordering Linden Bridge Special Needs School, was discreetly marketed for potential development of up to 40 homes by commercial estate auctioneers. The move came without prior consultation with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council or even the local Surrey County councillors representing the area.

Local County Councillor **Eber Kington** (RA) , alongside RA Cuddington ward councillors **Kim Spickett**, **Graham Jones** and **Phil Neale**, and the Cuddington Residents’ Association, have launched a campaign urging SCC to reconsider its course of action.

“This woodland isn’t just a patch of land – it’s a vital green refuge in our urban landscape, a space of peace, biodiversity, and community value,” said Cllr Neale. “We’re asking residents to stand with us and help protect it for future generations.”

The woodland, known locally for its mature trees and diverse wildlife, lies adjacent to the Grafton Park Road estate and has long been considered a buffer zone preserving local environmental quality and character.

The auction concluded in late January, but SCC is yet to announce a winning bidder. The auctioneers stated that the highest bid would not necessarily be accepted, leaving room for alternative proposals to be considered.

One such alternative comes from a joint venture involving the Cuddington Residents’ Association, the Wandgas Sports & Social Club, and a local developer. Their bid proposes a modest housing scheme to fund the creation of a community-led sports and recreational space, including public woodland access for walkers and cyclists. The vision includes safeguarding the majority of the natural landscape and establishing long-term protections for its use.

Campaigners argue that SCC’s recent adoption of a **Community Asset Transfer** (CAT) scheme—championed by Epsom & Ewell’s own county councillor Eber Kington—should provide the framework to enable this type of locally-driven project.

“Transparency and local accountability are vital when it comes to decisions that affect our shared spaces,” Cllr Webb added. “We’re calling on the County Council to respect the CAT process, consider our community proposal seriously, and honour the values of environmental stewardship and public trust.”

Residents are now being asked to sign a petition backing the community bid and urging SCC to reject blanket housing development in favour of a sustainable, locally-beneficial plan.

The petition can be signed online and will be submitted to Surrey County Council ahead of a final decision.

For more information or to add your name to the petition, visit: Change.org

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Surrey in race to capture carbon

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A unique carbon capture technology developed by researchers at the University of Surrey could offer a more cost-effective way to remove carbon dioxide (CO_2) from the air and turn it into clean, synthetic fuel.

A study published in Applied Energy demonstrated that the Dual-Function Material (DFM) process – which combines carbon capture and conversion – could match or outperform more established industry methods. Under optimal conditions, it was shown to remove carbon at a cost of US$740 per tonne, with the potential to drop below $400 as materials improve.

Dr Michael Short, Associate Professor of Process Systems Engineering at the University of Surrey and lead author of the study, said:

“For the first time, we’ve been able to demonstrate it can be financially competitive to use DFMs for direct air capture (DAC) – all the while creating clean fuel like methane in the process.

“Using green hydrogen from renewable electricity and carbon from the atmosphere, our system can help to replace fossil feedstocks in sectors like steel manufacturing. If a steel mill uses this fuel, it could effectively have zero net emissions – offering a sustainable path to decarbonise industries that are otherwise hard to electrify.”

Using superstructure optimisation – an advanced modelling technique – the team tested a wide range of configurations to identify the most cost-effective design for capturing 10,000 tonnes of CO_2 per year – a scale comparable to other commercial systems.

With further improvements in material performance and catalyst cost, researchers suggest it could hold promise for large-scale deployment and can be integrated with existing industry infrastructure.

Dr Melis Duyar, Associate Professor in Chemical and Process Engineering at the University of Surrey, said:

“Recycling carbon in this way is a powerful idea, with potential to create many new value chains and enable energy independence by embedding renewable energy into the production of conventional fuels and chemicals.”

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that limiting global warming to 1.5°C will require not only cutting emissions but also removing billions of tonnes of CO_2 from the atmosphere this century.

In the lead up to Net Zero target deadlines, the technology offers a promising and economically viable route to help achieve that goal – while helping us to reduce overreliance on fossil fuels.

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