

## A classes for Rosebery girls

15 August 2024



The class of 2024 at Rosebery School Sixth Form did themselves proud with one in three A level results including an A\* or A.

The excellent results also saw 86 per cent of students achieve grades A\* to C and the average vocational qualification saw a distinction, so it was celebrations all round.

“These results are a testament to the unwavering hard work, dedication and determination of our exceptional cohort,” said David Lach, Head of School.

“We could not be prouder of the Class of 2024. We have always known they were a special and talented group, and we are delighted that their efforts have resulted in such fantastic outcomes. Well done, girls!”

There were many outstanding results, but to highlight a few of the school’s most notable performers: Ysabel C was awarded an incredible 4 A\*, Ilana A and Edith P achieved 3 A\*s and 1 A, Rachel A achieved 4 A grades. Jessica W received 3A\*s. Connie H, Becca J, Elizabeth Q P and Maya S were awarded 2A\*s and an A in their core A levels but with Maya and Connie also achieving an A\* in their EPQ.

“Following the school’s recent Outstanding Ofsted Judgement for Sixth Form Provision, and building on last year’s record-breaking results, Rosebery School Sixth Form continues to excel and grow stronger each year – with the school receiving a record number of both internal and external applications to join the Sixth Form in September,” said Mr Lach.

## Mental health art exhibition in Epsom

15 August 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

15 August 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, Ashtead 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, Ashtead, 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, Ashtead, 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

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## Epsom Hospital upgrade at risk?

15 August 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, Ashtead 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, Ashtead 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.”



## Council pay tribute to Epsom tree hero

15 August 2024



Councillors of Epsom and Ewell stood in silence in memory of local tree hero **Mike Ford**. The full council meeting held in the Town Hall chamber on 30th July heard a tribute from Councillor **Steven McCormick** (RA Woodcote and Langley Vale).

“It is with great sadness that we share the news of the passing of Mike Ford on June 27, 2024. Mike was a pivotal figure in the creation of the Epsom Tree Advisory Board nearly three decades ago. He moved to Epsom in February 1981 and worked as a skilled carpenter for over 50 years, retiring in 2009. He is survived by his loving wife, Leslie, and their son, Darren, and daughter, Emma.

For many years, Mike dedicated himself to planting, nurturing, and caring for countless trees within our community and beyond. His passion for trees is evident in every project he undertook. I first met Mike in Rosebery Park around 2010 when the Friends group was developing a tree trail for park visitors. Thanks to Mike’s vast knowledge, the tree trail was published and is available to this day on the Friends of Rosebery Park website.

Mike’s deep understanding of the park’s trees was astounding, reflecting his unwavering commitment to the natural world. Mike could recount the origins of many trees in Rosebery Park and across the borough, often mentioning if they’d come from his own garden. I vividly remember finishing a walk with him, standing by the pond in Rosebery Park, gazing at willow trees, and he remarked, “We don’t plant trees to enjoy in our lifetime; we plant for future generations to enjoy.” This profound statement underscores the enduring impact of his work.

As our friendship grew, I became more involved with the Tree Advisory Board. Mike’s tireless efforts helped secure the planting and preservation of trees across the borough. His enthusiasm inspired a dedicated group of volunteers, embodying his can-do, will-do spirit. Mike’s passing leaves a significant void, and I will miss our conversations dearly. However, I am comforted by the memory of the successful replanting of the Mike Ford Copse in the Alexander Recreation Ground by board members last December. Mike was there to witness it.

Mike Ford’s legacy will endure through the Epsom Tree Advisory Board and the many trees he planted, which will continue to offer hope, shade, and beauty to future generations. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him.”

Related report:

Dedicated Epsom tree-man

Image: Dedication event at Alexandra Recreation Ground honours local hero Mike Ford Epsom & Ewell, 3rd December 2023

## Local football feel the blues from Chelsea FC

15 August 2024



The **Epsom and Ewell Colts**, a longstanding community-led grassroots football club, are facing a crisis after the abrupt cancellation of their primary training venue at Blenheim High School. The school’s decision to make way for the Chelsea FC Foundation has impacted 170 girls from the under-8s team and upwards, leaving them without a place to train or play.

Founded in 1971, the Epsom and Ewell Colts have been a cornerstone of the local community, providing young people with opportunities to develop teamwork skills and forge lifelong friendships. Community football offers far more than the possibility of turning professional or enhancing physical fitness and skills. It strengthens community bonds, offering young people a productive outlet that teaches important life lessons and steers them away from negative influences. Players, coaches, volunteers, and supporters collaborate towards common goals, fostering mutual respect and understanding. This inclusive environment breaks down social barriers and contributes to the community as a more welcoming and integrated place for all.

With the Epsom and Ewell Colts now displaced from their core training ground at Blenheim High School, both players and parents are left feeling disappointed and concerned for the future of their club. Elsie, the vice-captain of the U18 girls’ team, voiced her frustration, stating, “So much for encouraging girls football. How disappointing.” The disappointment was echoed by the manager of the team, **Steve Luff**, who stated: “It’s a grave mistake to prioritise commercial interests or go for the cachet of a professional club over the development of local athletes, who represent the true future of football.”

**Pauline Russell**, the Chairwoman of Epsom & Ewell Colts, claims that Blenheim School’s decision to displace the team in favour of a professional club “goes against the objectives and aims of the school listed in their last annual report.” This refers to Blenheim School’s objective ‘to promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of Epsom and the surrounding area the provision of facilities and recreation’.

**Rob Williams**, Director of Finance and Operations at Blenheim School responded “Blenheim made the decision to offer their 3G pitch to Chelsea FC on Tuesdays and Thursdays to further develop their existing relationship with Chelsea FC and in support of the work they are doing to develop grassroots youth football opportunities in the local community, particularly with girls. This change was not the fault of Chelsea FC or Chelsea Foundation.

“Blenheim have offered several alternative days and times for Epsom and Ewell Colts to move their Thursday booking to and are delighted that they have made additional bookings on Mondays, Saturdays and Sundays to use the newly installed 3G pitch which has seen unprecedented demand.

In the face of a possible crisis at the club, Pauline Russell is making an attempt to rally the community, stating: “We are calling on the community, local authorities, and Chelsea FC to recognise the importance of grassroots sports and to work with us to find a solution that allows these 170 girls to continue their training on Thursdays without disruption.”

While the club searches for alternative venues and potential collaborations with other local organisations, they have put forward an online petition for the public to show their support.

## Epsom Town as a Safe Place to Live? Is it our future or our past?

15 August 2024



Epsom and Ewell Times is putting the spotlight on crime and anti-social behaviour blighting residents and businesses in the centre of the town of Epsom. In a series of reports over the coming weeks journalist and local Town Ward resident Romana Sustar will bring facts, opinions and responses from those effected and those responsible for solving the problems.

Epsom, a market town in Surrey, England, is often celebrated for its charming high street, historical significance, and the famous Epsom Downs Racecourse but it would appear that a combination of reduced police presence, a lack of resources, and a far too tolerant attitude to anti-social behaviour has resulted in a perceived decline in the safety of residents at night in Town Ward.

Is the image above our past or our future? No one is certain, so all we can say for sure, is that for the residents of the Town Ward, this is our present. The picture was taken on 28 July 2024, the scales are for drugs, the alcohol is brought for purpose, not sold from any local club or bar, and the graffiti is more than a week old and unchallenged.

What the picture does not show, is that everyone in authority has been aware of the rat infestation and general filth for some time, and that they are specifically aware of this illegal activity after hours in this location, but are yet to engage with residents or respond to the increased criminality in any meaningful way.

To be clear the photo is genuine, entirely unstaged and fails to show the true extent of the decline in standards and the acceptance of criminality and anti-social behaviour within 300 metres in all directions. And so it is genuinely perplexing why our community fails to confront activities such as those shown, when it is apparent that they are bad for the community, bad for business, bad for residents and indeed bad for the drug users, as the spike in knife crime proves.

That being said, let's also be careful when we talk of failures, let's not talk in space or point any fingers. When communities fail they fail together and they live with the consequences together.

So let's start with an open mind and state that for now all we know is that the drug dealers, criminals, thugs and the lazy litterers are to blame. Today let's just simply ask ourselves why we put up with it, why we let it happen and what we can do to reverse the trend.

In April 2016 after the sale of the local police station Inspector Elkins said "If anything, the public will see more police presence with more officers patrolling the area." (Craig Richard Surrey Comet ) but we are yet to find a single Town Ward resident who actually believes this is true, so let's also be careful with our own statements.

We really don't know what role such comments, the lack of local charging and detaining facilities, and the general cuts to the police have actually played in damaging the reputation of the local Police. What we do know is criminals feel confident enough to have drug parties in open areas in Town Ward, and gangs in the same area will carry knives then chase down and stab their enemies without a care.

### Top reported crimes

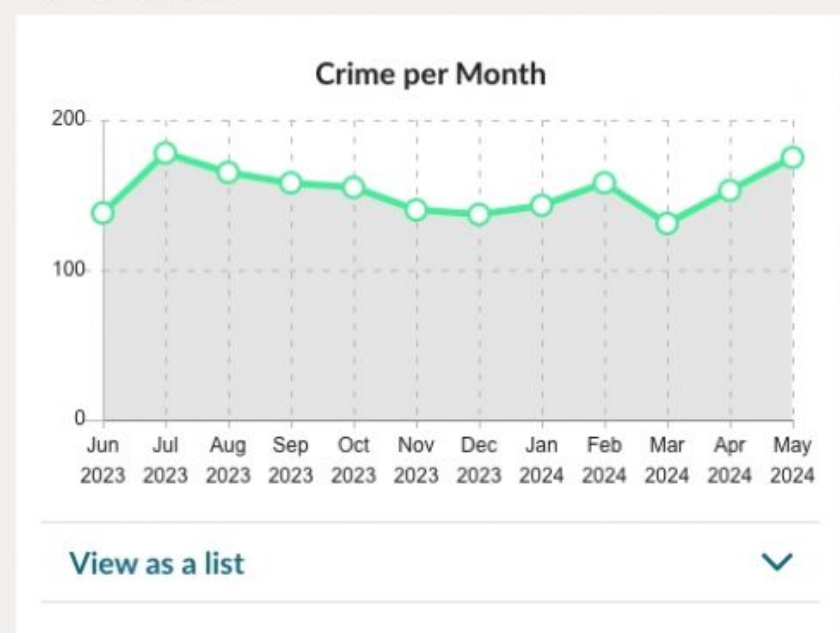
Most commonly reported crimes during May 2024

Violence and sexual offences	49
Anti-social behaviour	46
Public order	23
Other theft	13

[Get crime prevention advice](#)

### Crime levels overview

Crime for last year



What we need is data so perhaps the reported crime figures will give an insight. Here they are for May 2024, which is well before the Friday 21 June 2024 multiple stabbing that the straight line rise to May was obviously heralding. And who has not seen open and likely unreported shoplifting recently?

It does look fair that residents who live centrally might be questioning what has gone wrong, what has changed and what can be done to restore order?

"I have lived in this block for 18 odd years and have seen and felt a rapid decline in general of this once vibrant, friendly and safe area of the town." (long time Epsom Town resident).

Finger pointing and headline grabbing clickbait articles will ultimately achieve nothing, but resentment and distraction from the real issues, so what can we actually do to assist change?

In a series of articles, we will investigate the true position in 2024 and will ask the questions others appear too frightened, or too disconnected to ask. We will report the real statistics and engage with any and all local initiatives in order to advise residents how to access accurate information, and how to engage the elected and taxpayer funded bodies that exist to ensure the common good.

We will focus on the area from the end of Station Approach on West Street to the end of Upper High St including Derby Square and once we have the June figures we will move to focus on any efforts residents and local business owners are undertaking, to improve their environment, rid themselves of pests, and reclaim their common areas from the drugs and crime that seems to have moved in.

Whilst Epsom is not New York, the problems it faces today would appear to be similar to those of 1980s New York, with graffiti, fly-tipping, vermin, and a general disregard for law and enforcement, which then leads to open drug dealing and finally street violence. As the Mayor of New York at the time said: "Obviously murder and graffiti are two vastly different crimes. But they are part of the same continuum, and a climate that tolerates one is more likely to tolerate the other."

So the real question becomes can local residents and businesses introduce practical, appropriate and effective solutions to enable and assist our local politicians



and enforcement officers in carrying out their duties to us, or is our future already mortgaged to decline, filth and ever increasing criminality and anti-social behaviour?

See letter about the nuisance of delivery mopeds in the Town Centre.

## Ahmadiyya roti for local food bank

15 August 2024



Fresh bread from local Ahmadi Muslims will be made from the Roti-making factory at the UK's largest Muslim convention, the Jalsa Salana, as part of the "Bread for Britain" campaign organized by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and given to local food banks.

The annual convention (Jalsa Salana) is a three-day event held by members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community at a prop-up village near Alton that draws over 40,000 participants from more than 115 countries. The purpose of the event is for attendees to increase religious knowledge as well as to promote peace, spirituality and community. The convention is headlined by His Holiness Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Caliph of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community addressing the congregation on each of the three days of the event. The event is broadcast live internationally and also features faith and civic leaders, parliamentarians and diplomats speaking on the importance of enhancing unity, understanding and mutual respect in our ever-changing world.

Local Ahmadi Muslims from Epsom have been actively involved in organizing the Jalsa Salana. This year, the convention has expanded its outreach through the "Bread for Britain" campaign, which aims to help address food insecurity by distributing thousands of roti-breads to several different locations across the UK. Epsom will be one of the towns to benefit from this initiative.

The fresh bread, lovingly made at the convention's dedicated Roti-bread making factory, symbolises not just nourishment but also the values of compassion, service, and community. The local community's effort highlights their commitment to supporting their neighbours and addressing pressing social issues.

A local representative of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Epsom stated, *"The Bread for Britain programme highlights the essential duty of every Muslim to help and support their community as the Quran says 'give to the kinsman his due and to the needy and to the wayfarer. That is best for those who seek the favour of Allah'. We hope that through this small gesture we are able to help our local community."*

The roti breads will be delivered to Lidl Neighbourly food bank in Epsom, to be distributed to individuals and families in need, providing essential nourishment and demonstrating the strong community ties within Epsom.

As the "Bread for Britain" campaign continues, the Ahmadi Muslim community in Epsom remains dedicated to extending their charitable efforts beyond the Jalsa Salana, working towards a more compassionate and supportive society.

Image: kavita Kapoor License details

## Council works with local charities for needy

15 August 2024



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is working with three local charities to distribute up to £88,700 from the Household Support Fund to people experiencing financial hardship across the borough. The council will work with The Good Company, Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell and The Meeting Room to ensure that funds can be accessed by vulnerable residents including families, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers and disabled people, before 30 September 2024.

The Household Support Fund was first introduced on 30 September 2021 by Central Government to offer cost of living support over the winter months. This is the fifth time the scheme has been extended.

Councillor **Neil Dallen**, (RA Town Ward) Chair of the Strategy & Resources Committee, said "We know that the last few years have been difficult for many of our residents. By working with The Good Company, Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell and The Meeting Room, we aim to ensure that the financial support offered by the Household Support Fund can be accessed by the people in Epsom & Ewell who need it most.

"These trusted partners connect with vulnerable residents across the borough through their fantastic services which include, but are not limited to:

- The Epsom and Ewell Food Banks and Epsom Pantry, in South Street Epsom, run by the Good Company
- The Financial Wellbeing Support Service, run by Citizen's Advice
- Drop-ins and activities for residents at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness, run by The Meeting Room.

In addition, they have the expertise and administrative experience to ensure that allocations are distributed across the borough both promptly and efficiently."

Residents who require financial aid can contact one of the three organisations mentioned above.

Find out more about the Household Support Fund, including how to apply for funding in Epsom & Ewell: <https://epsom-ewell.gov.uk/residents/cost-living-support/household-support-fund>

Applications for Household Support Funds can be made through Citizen's Advice Epsom and Ewell: [www.cae.org.uk/household-support-fund](http://www.cae.org.uk/household-support-fund)

For advice about cost of living support, residents can also visit:

- The Advice Café in Epsom, for advice and support through a wide variety of services, on Friday mornings between 10am-12noon at St. Barnabus' Church, Epsom: Community Hub — St Barnabas ([stbarnabas-epsom.org.uk](http://stbarnabas-epsom.org.uk))
- The Cost of Living pages on Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's website to view a range of information and support: [Cost of living support | Epsom and Ewell Borough Council](#) ([epsom-ewell.gov.uk](http://epsom-ewell.gov.uk))

#### The Household Support Fund

The Household Support Fund is for anyone who's vulnerable or cannot pay for essentials. Residents do not have to be getting benefits to get help. If a resident does receive benefits, they will not be affected if a payment from a Household Support Fund scheme is awarded.

#### Good Company

Good Company is a charity working to prevent and alleviate poverty in East Surrey.

Their mission is: "To lead our community towards a poverty-free future, while supporting those who need our help. We demonstrate our values by being compassionate, kind, trusting, engaged, non-judgemental and resourcing."

Good Company Trust incorporates: Epsom & Ewell Foodbank, Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network, Poverty Truth Commission, Epsom Pantry (Part of Your Local Pantry network) and more. [goodcompany.org.uk](http://goodcompany.org.uk).

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell Citizens Advice provide free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or nationality.

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell was one of the first Citizens Advice Bureaux to be created in 1939 and is the member of the national Citizens Advice network serving people who live or work in the borough of Epsom and Ewell. Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell - Home ([cae.org.uk](http://cae.org.uk)).

#### The Meeting Room

The Meeting Room is a registered charity operating in the Mole Valley and Epsom areas. The charity was founded in 2014 by Graham Peddie MBE, who was a leading advocate for assisting the most vulnerable people in our community. Their clients are of all backgrounds and ages and their focus is to provide meaningful support to those with a wide variety of issues including homelessness, poverty, physical or mental health difficulties, breakdown of relationships, social exclusion and loneliness and issues with alcohol or drugs. [Home | The Meeting Room - Helping Vulnerable People](#).

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## Surrey Scouts honour Armed Forces Covenant

15 August 2024



Surrey Scouts have become the first Scout County in the UK to sign the Armed Forces Covenant. Representing a commitment on behalf of the 18,000 members of Scouting in Surrey, the Armed Forces Covenant was signed by Joe Rogerson (County Commissioner) and Colonel Tim Petransky, in the presence of His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, Mr Michael More-Molyneux.

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise that Surrey Scouts acknowledge and understand that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy, and society they serve with their lives. Surrey Scouts enables young people from the Armed Forces Community to join Scouting, supports military families, service members and veterans

The county of Surrey still sees a large amount of armed forces reside and work across Surrey and a number are currently involved as volunteers in Scouting.

Joe Rogerson (County Commissioner) said "Surrey Scouts is committed to honouring the Armed Forces Covenant and supporting the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our country and to Scouting".

Colonel Patrick Crowley MBE DL, Chief Executive of the South East Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association said "The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation ensuring that those who serve, or have served, and their families, are treated fairly. We are delighted that Surrey Scouts has signed the Covenant and with the commitments Surrey Scouts has made to young people, military families and all members of the Armed Forces Community".

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise that together we acknowledge and understand that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy, and society they serve with their lives.

Its two principles are that, recognising the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces:

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

You can read about the Covenant in depth, the full statement of the Covenant, or Covenant FAQs.

If you're a member of the Armed Forces (regular or reserve), a veteran, or a family member, the Covenant offers a wide variety of support to ensure you are treated fairly.

The Covenant focuses on helping members of the Armed Forces community have the same access to Government and commercial services and products as any other citizen. This support is provided in a number of areas including: healthcare, education and childcare, housing and accommodation, employment, financial services

You can find out how the Covenant supports you, as a member of the Armed Forces community.

A wide range of different organisations implement the Covenant, including: The UK Government and Devolved Administrations, The single Services (Royal Navy, British Army, and Royal Air Force), Businesses of all sizes, Local government, The NHS, Schools, Charities

Some of these organisations sign the Covenant or make other commitments, or have a Legal Duty to consider it.

This site will direct you to the information regarding policies, services and projects that is relevant to you.

The Covenant Legal Duty is a legal obligation on certain public bodies (including local authorities, governing bodies of certain state schools, various NHS bodies, and other organisations) to have due regard to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when carrying out certain functions in healthcare, education and housing. It has been in force since November 2022.

All genders, races and backgrounds are welcome at Scouts. Every week, it gives almost over a third of a million people aged 6-25 the skills they need for school, college, university, the job interview, the important speech, the tricky challenge and the big dreams: the skills they need for life.

Scouts helps members gain these skills by encouraging them to ask the big questions and listen with wide open minds. It helps them to take a deep breath and speak up, think on their feet, ignore the butterflies and go for it. With Scouts, young people don't give up – they get back up and try again, often with the support of the friends they've made there.

Neil Wibberley