

Epsom's Mental Health Week

14 October 2022



Epsom and Ewell based charities **Love Me Love My Mind** and **The Friends of Horton Cemetery** joined forces with Surrey County Council Youth Workers and others this week. In Epsom Market Square on Saturday 8th October local residents and visitors took part in the “**Out of Sight, Out of Mind**” Project. This **Historic England** supported project raises awareness of the **Horton Cemetery** in Epsom. There are buried 9000 patients of Epsom's five now closed psychiatric hospitals. The largest asylum cemetery in Europe.

Borough and County Councillor **Bernie Muir** joined in the Market Square painting of memorial flowers.



Cllr Bernie Muir paints a flower

The painting continued during a day of reflection and celebration on **World Mental Health Day** 10th October at **St Barnabas Church** in Temple Road, Epsom. Activities included a walk to Horton Cemetery beside Hook Road and a song and dance performance by students from Epsom's **Laine Theatre Arts** School.



Mayor Clive Woodbridge paints a flower

Mayor **Clive Woodbridge** joined the event and painted a flower. 900 ceramic flowers are being individually painted by young and old throughout the Borough over the year. Workshops will be held to discuss the significance of the Cemetery and the lives of those who ended up in this paupers' graveyard. The aim is to plant the flowers near the Cemetery on Mental Health Day 2023. The site was sold by the NHS to a property speculator in 1983 and has been neglected ever since.

“Sorry” is not such a hard word for Surrey

14 October 2022



Surrey County Council's leader said the authority will “learn lessons” from problems which left 150 families without school transport. Issuing an apology on behalf of the council, **Councillor Tim Oliver** said the authority had to “hold its hands up” after children, many with additional needs, had to find alternative travel arrangements. The cabinet member for education and learning, **Councillor Clare Curran** (Conservative, Bookham and Fetcham West), echoed his apology to the “families who have had such anxiety and delays” since the start of term.

Image: Tim Oliver Surrey County Council leader - credit Surrey Live

In a full council meeting on Tuesday (October 11) Cllr Oliver (Conservative, Weybridge) said a change in policy, along with increased demand and driver shortages, led to a backlog in processing applications. He added: “This has been a very complex and difficult situation and we have to hold our hands up on occasions like this to say that we have let some people down. However, I know that the home to school transport team have been working day and night alongside our customer services team to help as many families as they can.”

He committed to members that the authority would learn lessons from the beginning of the school year.

At the start of term, nearly 150 families were left without school transport as the authority attempted to work through more than 500 applications.

Parents came forward to the LDRS* with stories of long journeys on public transport and children who weren't able to stay for the whole school day because of sibling pick ups and drop offs. A council spokesperson at the time said there had been an increase in staffing as well as temporary financial allowances being given to families to make alternative arrangements.

Cllr Nick Darby (Dittons and Weston Green Residents, The Dittons) thanked local media for bringing attention to the issue and said there had been a “woeful lack of communication” with families when transport was withdrawn or delayed before the start of the school term. He added: “Lessons need to be learned, and quickly, to avoid any repetition. Sufficient resources in place well in advance, regular communication. This year [there was] none of that, the problem could have been identified months ago. Sorry may be the hardest word but here it is entirely appropriate, as you have said leader, addressed to our numerous left-behind children, their left-behind and stressed parents, our left-behind officers doing their best to sort out the problems.”

Cllr Curran said it was not the intention that a new policy, which said individual transport would only be agreed in extenuating circumstances, would push more parents through the appeals process.

Meeting documents also showed that no SEND (Special Education and Needs Disability) children had had their solo transport removed since the new policy was implemented. She said: “I repeat and reinforce the leader's apology to those families who have had such anxiety and delays in the recent weeks related to home to school travel assistance.”

Saying the council chamber had been turned into a “political environment”, Cllr Oliver admitted that though the authority's ambition was to ensure that no one in Surrey was left behind, “that isn't currently the case”. He added: “But it is our ambition and it will remain our ambition to make sure that we do look after every vulnerable member of this county, whether that's a family or a child or any resident.”

Cllr Curran confirmed a review was being carried out into what had gone wrong.

See our earlier report: Families ‘in limbo’ as SCC fails on school transport

*LDRS BBC's Local Democracy Reporting Service with which Epsom and Ewell Times is in partnership

Epsom College top independent school 2022

14 October 2022



Epsom College has been judged **Independent School of the Year 2022** at an annual awards ceremony that celebrates the very best in education and student experience in UK independent schools. The winner of the overall Independent School of the Year Award is seen as a standard-bearer for the sector. This year's esteemed judging panel of industry experts selected Epsom College, stating that the school is a 'beacon of excellence' and showcases the benefits of an independent education in the UK.

The award is not one that can be applied for. The judging panel looks at schools from across the country who are shortlisted for one of the 22 award categories for the Independent Schools of the Year awards and selects the school that has impressed them the most as the overall Independent School of the Year winner.

Dr Helen Wright, Chair, Independent Schools of the Year Awards 2022, said: "Epsom College is a shining example of all that is best about independent education in the UK. Epsom College is renowned as achieving academic success whilst delivering an exceptional student experience to its pupils of all ages, skills and backgrounds. The College is a worthy winner of the overall Independent School of the Year 2022 accolade and I congratulate all the students and staff who have helped to make the school the beacon of excellence which it undoubtedly is."

Epsom College was also named as the winner of the **Student Wellbeing Award** at the ceremony, hosted at the Royal Thames Yacht Club on Tuesday 11 October. The judges were hugely impressed by the evidence of the whole-school approach to mental health and the wellbeing of both its staff and pupils. Especially the supreme importance of such support in the 2021-22 academic year and beyond, as school communities continue to recover from the impact of the pandemic.

Independent schools are part of their local community and the College's commitment to its outreach and service programme was found to be a shining example of best practice in that area.



Emma Pattison head of Epsom College - c. John Wildgoose

Emma Pattison, Head of Epsom College, said: "What an incredible honour to be named Independent School of the Year. This Award acknowledges what a fantastic school Epsom College is. The founding principles of the school, benevolence and excellence, are two things we live by every day. We put focus on time, space and heart and spirit to give all the young people in our care everything they need to become the best version of themselves - in the classroom, on the sports field and in any field of interest that lights that spark within them. There is so much amazing work to be celebrated in the industry at the moment, so this is a real privilege to be named the best of the best. I am incredibly proud to be Head and we will display this award with real pride!"

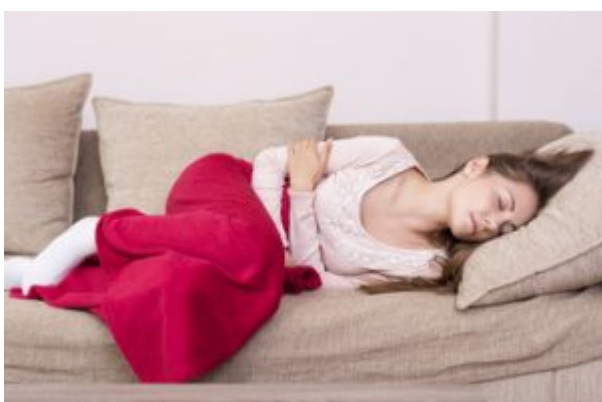
Emma Pattison, who joined Epsom College at the start of this academic year, takes over from the previous headmaster **Jay Piggot** after a ten-year tenure.

Epsom College was officially opened in 1855 by **Prince Albert** and granted Royal Patronage by Queen Victoria the same year. The reigning monarch has been Epsom College's patron ever since. The College - originally known as the Royal Medical Benevolent College - first opened its doors to 20 pensioners, who were either qualified medical men or their widows. They were provided with free accommodation and an income. The College also looked after 40 foundation scholars; these were the sons and orphans of medical men who were fed, clothed and educated by the College.

Today, Epsom College provides a rounded education to 1,100 girls and boys aged 11-18, where excellent results are aligned to a breadth of opportunity outside the classroom. The school is in the top 1% in the UK according to data from the Department of Education. Its co-curricular programme has been voted for six years running among the 'Best of the Best' in UK independent education by The Week magazine.

Lighting up for menstrual dignity

14 October 2022



On Tuesday 11 October **Surrey Fire and Rescue Service** lit up Guildford Fire Station in a show of support for **Binti**, an international menstrual dignity charity based in Weybridge, Surrey. The service will be looking to supplement **Surrey County Council's** ground-breaking initiative, as the first UK council to provide free period products across the county and eradicate menstrual stigma and taboo whilst normalising the conversation.



Surrey Fire and Rescue Service are to explore the distribution of Dignity Packs where needed when carrying out community engagement activities.

The event at Guildford Fire Station was attended by representatives from the Service, including Acting Chief Fire Officer, **Dan Quin**, and Chief of Staff **Bernie Beckett**. They were joined by actor and Binti ambassador **Nina Wadia**, star of TV programmes including *Eastenders*, *The Outlaws*, *Dr Who* and contestant on last year's series of *Strictly Come Dancing*.

The lighting up of Guildford Fire Station coincided with **International Day of the Girl Child**, which seeks to highlight the challenges faced by young females to their education, their physical and mental wellness, and the protections needed for a life without violence across the globe. 2022 marks the 10th anniversary of the International Day of the Girl, following its establishment by the United Nations. They note that over the past 10 years, there has been increased attention on issues that matter to girls amongst governments, policymakers and the general public, and more opportunities for girls to have their voices heard on the global stage. Yet, investments in girls' rights remain limited and girls continue to confront a myriad of challenges to fulfilling their potential; made worse by concurrent crises of climate change, COVID-19 and humanitarian conflict.

Surrey County Council initially worked with Binti to host collection and donation points at 35 Surrey buildings, including libraries and County Council buildings upon the launch of the partnership in May 2021. Since then, the initiative has spread to a total of 55 collection and donation points where people can take period products to enable Period Dignity.

Other organisations in Surrey have also come onboard, including Morrisons branches in Woking and Weybridge, as well St James Church in Weybridge.

Commenting on their support for Binti, Acting Chief Fire Officer, Dan Quin, stated: "We are delighted to be supporting Binti. As a Surrey-based charity with a global impact, they share our passion to support and protect those in need. I look forward to seeing the partnership develop, and hope that our communities will benefit from our planned work with Binti, as they have from the scheme established by our colleagues in Surrey County Council, and in particular Surrey Libraries."

Manjit K. Gill MBE, CEO and Founder of Binti commented, "We believe period products should be available like toilet paper is and Surrey County Council are leading the way to create this change. With the cost of living crisis impacting many the campaign has been designed to ensure everyone has free access. Surrey is having menstrual conversations every day and working with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is so exciting because we think period stigma will become a thing of the past."

Binti was the first period charity registered in the UK, they have offices in India, US and The Gambia. They have now opened a period charity shop the first of its kind in Walton on Thames. Girls can buy period products and discuss all things related to menstruation. Binti's vision is to provide menstrual dignity to all girls, all over the world. This means facilitating access to pads to ensure menstrual health, educating girls about what menstruation is and what they can expect from it, and dispelling stigma, taboos, myths and negative perceptions around menstruation.

For more information on how to donate and collect and ways to get involved, visit Surrey County Council's Period Dignity webpage or the Binti website.

Surrey County Council news

Princess Anne's Epsom visit kept a bit secret

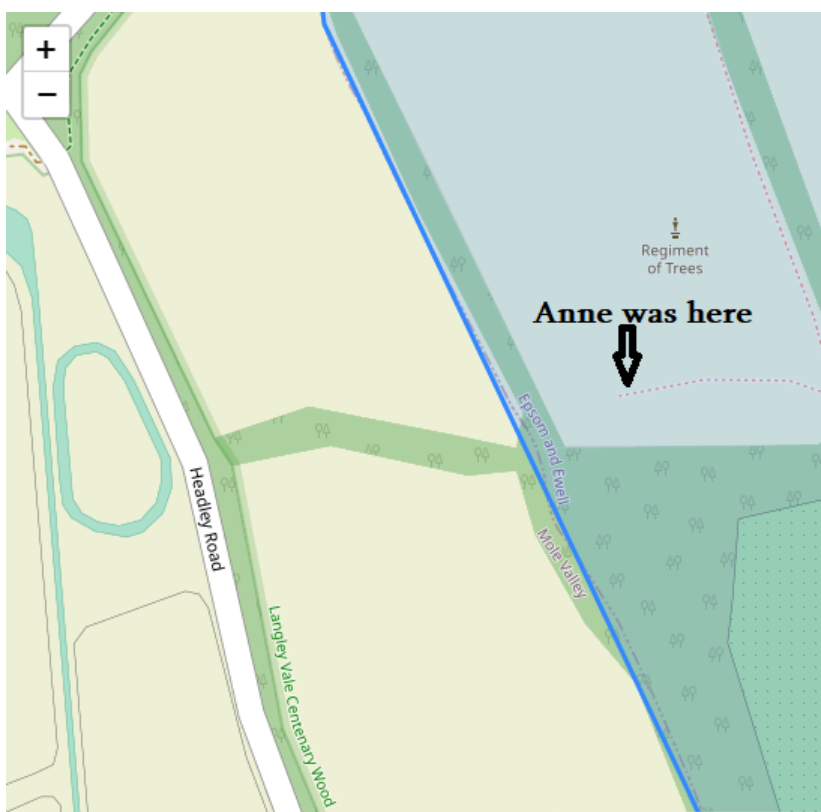
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Epsom and Ewell Times exclusive: 21st June 2022 **HRH The Princess Royal** entered the Borough of Epsom and Ewell. The Court Circular states: Her Royal Highness this afternoon opened the **First World War Centenary Woods' "Regiment of Trees"**, Langley Vale Wood, Langley Vale Road, Epsom, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey (**Mr. Michael More-Molyneux**).



The **Epsom and Ewell Times** requested **The Woodland Trust** to explain activity at the Headley Road Car Park entrance that day. The owners of the Centenary Wood fell silent. Our investigation reveals that no “song-and-dance” has been made of the Royal event as the car park cannot open until electric vehicle charging points are working.



Map showing part of the Centenary Wood and where the Princess Royal was on 21st June 2022

As today’s photos show, they are nearly ready but the car park remains closed. Walking is the best way to get to the Wood at the moment. The narrow country roads that surround the wood have no safe places to park.



Car Park closed during normal hours at the Centenary Wood



Line of electric vehicle charging points waiting for power.

The 650 acre Centenary Wood at Langley Vale is the English site of the four for the four nations of the United Kingdom. Epsom and Ewell is very privileged to have this extraordinary amenity at our doorstep.



Ed: This story was ready to break just before Queen Elizabeth II died. Out of respect for the Royal Family we put a hold on publication until after the State Funeral. The car park remains closed as of today.

Can we be sustainable?

14 October 2022



Sustainable Epsom and Ewell is an independent, apolitical and entirely volunteer led environmental group aiming to raise environmental ambitions in the Borough. Sustainable Epsom and Ewell was founded in late 2019.

As a group they organise events for local residents, have a website with useful local information and tips for residents, and take action with our Council. They also have a social media presence on Facebook and Instagram.

At Sustainable Epsom and Ewell they feel strongly about our local environment and want to share their resources and extensive local knowledge to get more residents involved and taking action. They have high ambitions for our Borough and believe the Council can and should take a greater lead and bolder actions to address, mitigate and adapt to the Climate and Environmental Crises.



Over the past years they have organised several events including “**Green Friday**” to raise awareness about the excessive consumption culture promoted through Black Friday events, a Cycling themed debate where both Surrey and Local councillors spoke as well as committee members of the **Epsom and Ewell Cycle Action Group**.

However, their biggest events to date have been two **Eco Fairs**, organised in partnership with **St Martin of Tour's Church** in 2021 and 2022. The aims of the Eco Fair are threefold:

- 1) to highlight and showcase the groups active in our Borough as well as Council teams active in the environment fields,
- 2) to inspire local residents and groups to volunteer, take action and share experiences,
- 3) to highlight the strong proportion of residents keen to take personal action whilst encouraging the Council raise their green ambitions through action.

The 2022 fair included over 14 different groups, including Surrey Wildlife Trust, Epsom and Ewell Tree Advisory Group, the Lower Mole Partnership, Oxfam, the Epsom Repair Cafe, Dr Bike and the Epsom Civic Society as well as local green businesses.



This year in addition to the many residents who attended, the Fair attracted a visit from MP **Chris Grayling** and Epsom and Ewell's Mayor **Clive Woodbridge**.

In the short-term future, they hope to continue to expand their reach to residents, campaign for real, ambitious and proactive Council measures in the environmental fields and provide opportunities for local groups and residents to meet and engage through events.

www.SustainableEpsomEwell.co.uk

Facebook/Instagram: @SustainableEpsomEwell

Surrey's Fire Service sends 4x4 to Ukraine

14 October 2022



Two **Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)** staff members set off to Poland yesterday (Thursday 6 October) to donate another 4x4 Land Rover to the **Ukrainian Fire and Rescue Service.**

This donation is part of the National Fire Chief Council and UK charity FIREAID's convoy 4. Convoy 3, which was delivered in May this year, also saw a donation of two 4x4 Land Rovers by SFRS.

The vehicles, which have been decommissioned by the service, are typically used for off-road/rural firefighting. The service has worked with its Fire Authority, Surrey County Council, to prepare and release the vehicle.

The two staff members who have volunteered, will meet other UK Fire and Rescue Services who are donating items, they'll then handover the vehicles in Poland next week.

Acting Chief Fire Officer, Dan Quin, said: "I am proud to be able to continue our support to the people of Ukraine during this incredibly difficult time. Thank you to all organisations who are supporting these efforts and to Chris, who also donated the equipment during the last convoy, and Lee from our Engineering team, who are supporting the delivery. Chris will be taking us on the journey over on our Instagram channel, so please do follow us so you can witness another historic effort from UK Fire and Rescue Services."

Cabinet Member for Communities and Community Safety (which includes Surrey Fire and Rescue Service), Denise Turner Stewart, said: "Surrey County Council's priority is to ensure no one is left behind and supporting yet another national convoy does just that. I am so pleased that we are able to support this national effort and we would like to sincerely thank all involved." Surrey County Council has a lot of information available on surreycc.gov.uk for communities who'd like to support, as well as guidance for Ukrainians coming to Surrey.

Surrey County Council News

Will "Top Tory" Surrey County lobby Coffey?

14 October 2022

A council chief has called on select committee members to use their status as a "top Tory" authority to influence health spending at government level. Calling ambulances backed up outside hospitals "dangerous" and saying "we don't want old people on trolleys in corridors", one of the council's health directors said it would take everyone working together to get through the winter.

Surrey County Council's adults and health select committee heard on Wednesday (October 6) from representatives from Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care System (ICS), South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmb) and Frimley Health and Care ICS.

As the health organisations set out their plans for winter pressures, and commitment to working together to cope, members heard of current issues including Frimley Park hospital beds being nearly 100 per cent full most of the time and systems issues causing delays in ambulance handover times.

Liz Bruce, joint executive director for adult social care and integrated commissioning (Surrey County Council and Surrey Heartlands ICS), said she "absolutely agreed" that ambulances backed up outside hospitals was "high risk and dangerous to everybody else in the community". She said: "We don't want old people on trolleys in corridors, and therefore we're all in this together." She highlighted the importance of the "whole system" working together, saying improvements were "everybody's responsibility".

The director said: "What can this committee do to help us? A Conservative council, a top Tory council, you can help us by influencing government around funding nationally for hospital discharge and social care, and how we support sick people safely to go into hospital and come out again. Because we don't want to see elderly people go into long term care when they don't need to."

While the government had announced £500million for health care over the winter, she said it was not yet clear how it would be allocated or if it was "truly new money". Saying she expected the winter to be "extremely challenging", she added: "It's very obvious that we're going into significant and stark problems in our system for people in discharge. I've asked [my team] to build, very quickly, a business continuity plan around with winter discharge."

The meeting heard from **South East Coast Ambulance** and **Surrey Heartlands** representatives about what was being done to improve ambulance handover times. Moving towards electronic patient records, virtual wards and daily meetings were all hoped to help with delayed handovers which were made worse by sicker patients and "systems problems".

SECAmb's deputy director of operations **Mark Eley** said he was having to balance offering staff overtime, particularly in the current financial situation, with the risk they might "work too hard, wear themselves out" and go off sick. He said: "Staff are becoming very weary and worn from the last two years, so I'm not pushing too hard because as I increase my overtime, I can increase my sickness if I'm not careful."

The issues with Frimley Park hospital beds being full "almost all of the time" were also said to be caused by not being able to discharge patients who were well enough to go home.

Epsom Firefighters making businesses safer

14 October 2022



Statistics for the UK show that 30 people die and 2,000 are injured each year as a result of fires in the workplace. The damage to businesses caused by fire costs the economy over £6 billion and 75% of businesses that have a fire within the first year never trade again.

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service aims to support businesses in reducing the risk and impact of a fire by offering free advice and guidance on fire safety.

Their **Business Safe and Well Visits** take just ten to fifteen minutes and cover aspects such as identifying the hazards, reducing the risk of a fire starting and steps to ensure the safety of staff and visitors.

Dean, a Fire Fighter on Green Watch at Epsom Fire Station, said “Our Business Safe and Well Visits are an effective way of educating businesses on fire safety and reducing the number of fires we have to attend”

If you would like a free Business Safe and Well Visit, please visit www.surreycc.gov.uk/businesssafety or simply scan the QR code below and complete the request form.



Surrey Fire and Rescue Service
Email businesssafety.education@surreycc.gov.uk



Epsom's Church Street Fire Station

How to help “low-incomes” with your £400

14 October 2022



The **Epsom and Ewell Energy Support Scheme** is a plan to offer those running into difficulties immediate help with their bills, and then advice and financial support to improve energy efficiency or reduce energy consumption in their homes and so reduce bills going forward. This might include buying a more efficient appliance for them or helping with improved insulation. The scheme is supported by local MP **Chris Grayling**

To help support this programme they are asking local households who have less difficulty paying for these higher energy bills to donate their £400 support payments to the fund so that it can be used to help reduce the bills of those who are struggling. If you are able to do this, they would be very grateful, and all other donations are of course also very welcome.

The Scheme is being run jointly by the **Good Company**, which runs the local food bank, and **Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell** helped by local Churches. It will offer both advice sessions to help those who are not sure how to improve their energy efficiency as well as assistance paying for improvements.

To make a donation, please visit the donations page at www.justgiving.com/campaign/epsom-ewell-energy-support-scheme