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

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

Winter fuel support in Epsom

10 October 2024



Changes to the Winter Fuel Payments means that many people are worried that they may not be able to heat their homes this winter.

For the eighth year running, Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell (CAEE) has teamed up with the Rotary Clubs of Epsom and Ewell to bring much needed support to those in the borough in need of help with paying fuel bills this winter.

This year, residents in the Epsom & Ewell borough are being asked to donate any amount to Project Wenceslas to help those affected. All funds will help those struggling with electricity and gas bills, as well enable energy efficient appliances to be purchased. CAEE manages the distribution for the benefit for those in fuel poverty, direct to fuel suppliers with no deductions for costs or fees.
Lisa Davis, CEO, Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell, said:

“With changes to the Winter Fuel Payments this winter, an increased number of people in our community are worrying about heating their homes. Many people relied on the Winter Fuel Payments to help manage their energy usage and budgets. Some people may be eligible for benefits but many may not.

“Project Wenceslas is more important than ever to provide that much needed support and peace of mind for individuals and families across the borough who are struggling. Please get in touch if either you want to donate or you are in need of support.”

To find out more about donating, please contact via the websites epsomrotary.uk or ewellrotary.club and search for Project Wenceslas.

If you are struggling with fuel bills, then contact Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell on 0808 278 7963 (Mon-Fri, 10am – 4pm) or see our website: www.caee.org.uk.

Epsom Pantry has a sister in Banstead

10 October 2024



Sat bang in the middle between M&S and Waitrose on Banstead high street, a new community food store has opened to help people struggling to buy affordable groceries in Surrey.

Surrey’s second pantry officially opened October 7, stocked with donations and surplus food from supermarkets which would otherwise be thrown away. For just £5 a week, members of the pantry can receive £30-35 worth of food and household items.

“We want shopping to be a dignified experience,” said Project Manager Bex. She explained that everyone can access good quality food and members have the choice of what they want to buy, like in any shop.

After a soft launch in mid-September, the pantry already has about 75 members despite no advertising. “There is a really nice buzz when it opens up,” Bex said. “People sometimes shop at the same times to meet people every week, or share recipes if buying the same ingredients.”

Located on Banstead’s high street, Pantry Manager Ashley said it was important for there “not to be any shame associated” with coming to the food store. “Living in Surrey is can be really difficult when you don’t have a disposable income.”

Although Banstead features low on the level of deprivation in Surrey, Ashley explained that there are pockets of hidden

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

food poverty. “Sometimes where there is obvious need, there is obvious help,” Ashley said. Banstead’s pantry aims to address this issue in providing support for people who may be missed in areas more affluent.

Epsom Pantry first opened in July 2022, as the cost-of-living crisis was beginning to pinch. The typically leafy market town has been ranked in the top 10% of least deprived areas in the UK. Now, with around 400 members to the pantry, Epsom is now oversubscribed.

Bex, who used to work at Epsom Pantry, said there was a real community feel. “People used to come in at similar times, rely on each other and check-in how people were doing,” Bex said.

The mission of the Pantry is to bridge the gap between food banks and commercial grocery stores. Some people may not be eligible for crisis support from Food banks but are still struggling to make ends meet in their weekly shop.

Fresh fruit and veg is free, with high value items like Kellogg’s Crunchy Nut and Yorkshire Tea more restricted. Standard cupboard essential like pasta, tinned beans, herbs and biscuits are also on offer.

Customers can sign up to the Pantry and answer a few questions about their financial situation. Then, they will be invited in for an assessment to see if the Pantry is the right support for them or whether they need any other help.

Beyond the food store operations, the pantry is also looking at putting on cooking classes, sewing workshops, energy saving guides to help members save money and develop community.

The initiative is led by a partnership between Raven Housing Trust (RHT), Good Company Surrey, as well as Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. RHT’s housing association and the council can point people in the direction of the service who may be eligible for support.

Link: https://www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk/pantry-listings/banstead-pantry-surrey/

Food bank locations: https://epsomewell.foodbank.org.uk/locations/

Image: Project Manager Bex and Pantry Manager Ashley outside Banstead Pantry. (Credit: Emily Dalton/LDRS)

Epsom’s Love Me Love My Mind week of healing

10 October 2024



This year’s theme is ‘Be Kind to your Mind’

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

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES – BE KIND TO YOUR MIND

Saturday 5th October
10am – 4pm Community engagement stand in Epsom Marketplace, High St, Epsom KT19 8EB:

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

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

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

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

FREE taster sessions

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

Hatha Yoga Taster | 30mins | 13:00pm
Sound Bath Taster | 20mins | 13:40pm
please book via https://www.bodhieden.com/be-kind-tasters

Sunday 6th October
10.00am We Power On – Men's Social Walk and Talk, meet outside the Rubbing House pub, on Epsom Downs (every Sunday unless otherwise advertised) at 9.50am for a 10am start.

10.15am Church service at St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA – Being Kind to Your Mind
2 – 4pm Free Kids Art and Craft Club at Epsom Social, Derby Square, Epsom KT19 8AG join us for Colouring activities, create Be Kind bracelets and Seminal Events will be with us for face painting and henna tattoos

Monday 7th October
10am – 1pm Drop-in service at Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell, The Old Town Hall, The Parade, Epsom KT18 5AG
3 – 7pm Monday Drop-in at St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA

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

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

Tuesday 8th October
10am – 1pm Drop-in service at Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell, The Old Town Hall, The Parade, Epsom KT18 5AG
2 – 4pm Talking Table at The Old Moat Garden Centre, Horton Lane, Epsom, KT19 8PQ

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thursday 10th October – World Mental Health Day
9.15am-10.15am Yoga for Wellbeing – The Horton Arts Centre, Haven Way, Epsom KT19 8NP (Doors open 9am) Start the day with a session of gentle yoga. Yoga teacher Louise Tozer will incorporate breathing techniques, sound and gentle movements into her class to improve self-awareness, flexibility and relaxation. This is an all-inclusive class, suitable for all levels. Wear comfortable clothing and bring layers. • Bring your own mat or use a towel or blanket if you don't have a yoga mat. • Bring water
This session is normally £12 but for World Mental Health Day, the session will be freely open to all. Donations are welcome.

10am – 3pm Drop in service at Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell, The Old Town Hall, The Parade, Epsom KT18 5AG
10am – 4pm Community engagement stand in Epsom Marketplace, High St, Epsom KT19 8EB. Come and get a FREE hug, a high five or a handshake! Join LMLMM and Age Concern Epsom & Ewell for a Delicious CAKE sale, and an opportunity to chat to two local charities.
5 – 6pm Join the Sunnybank drama group for a workshop about being kind, St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA
6pm – 7pm Let's Talk Epsom Peer Support group at St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA
7 – 8pm Live Music performed by Steve Dyke, a trustee of LMLMM at St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA. Join us for an evening of stories and songs, written and performed by Steve. Some
funny, some poignant, some with themes from local history and a couple of singalong classics for everyone to join in. Refreshments are available, free entry with the option to donate on your way out if you feel you've been entertained. It promises to be a great evening, and we'd love to see you there.

Friday 11th October
10am – 12noon Advice Cafe at St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom, KT19 8HA – providing a space for our partners and groups to provide support, advice and care in a warm and welcoming environment. Action for Carers Surrey, Christians Against Poverty, Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell, Epsom Foodbank, Epsom Primary Care Network, Love Me Love My Mind, Mary Frances Trust

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

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

Saturday 12th October
10am – 4pm Community engagement stand in Epsom Marketplace, High St, Epsom KT19 8EB
Come along and meet the Friends of Horton Cemetery on Saturday 5th and 12th October and pick a ceramic flower to plant in your garden. Last year we painted over 1000 flowers to Remember Epsom's Forgotten Residents buried at Horton Cemetery, and we want to give the flowers back to the local community. Any donations that we receive for the flowers will support our future research into the
lives of the 9000 patients buried at the cemetery.

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

11am – 7pm Epsom Picturehouse, Epsom Square KT19 8AG. Join us for a Wellbeing Fun Day, in collaboration with Surrey Community Lounges, End Stigma Surrey, Epsom Library and hosted by Epsom Picturehouse – we'd love for you to be there! Come along for a day of community, connection, and fun!
Whether you're in the mood for a friendly chat over tea, want to play some games, or need a quiet space to relax, there's something for everyone. This special day will focus on celebrating wellness, sparking conversations around mental health, and showing you where to find support within the borough.

1pm Bodhi Eden, Epsom Yoga Studio – 29 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8EX
FREE taster sessions
Yin Taster | 30mins | 13:00pm
Meditation Taster | 20mins | 13:40pm
Please book via https://www.bodhieden.com/be-kind-tasters

Sunday 13th October.
10am We Power On – Men's Social Walk and Talk, meet outside the Rubbing House pub, on Epsom Downs (every Sunday unless otherwise advertised) at 9.50am for a 10am start.

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

Keeping Good Company

10 October 2024



Over the past 3 years we've been increasing our work to address the root causes of poverty in our community, while continuing to support those who need our help. This has hopefully contributed to a slight fall in foodbank use this year, although numbers are still much higher than a few years ago.

We have now opened our second Pantry and there have been increasing opportunities for us to influence and work with other organisations towards our vision of ending poverty in Surrey.

However, as we enter this Harvest season we are facing a number of challenges. Overall, our food donations are down, some of our funding has dried up, we have to be prepared in case foodbank use goes up again (with energy prices due rise) and we have both a higher number and more complex cases in our support work. Poverty is still very much in our midst.

The good news is that as we have developed our work and focused increasingly on prevention – trying to stop people getting to crisis point – preventing poverty is now very much getting on the agenda. Our End Poverty Pledge has picked up traction and gradually individuals and organisations are signing up and realising that to beat poverty we need to commit to actions and work together to change our culture.

This has been matched with our participation work which has grown mainly through the Poverty Truth Commission. With our commissioners we have produced a Short Guide to Participation, which includes some case studies to show how people with lived experience of poverty are shaping what we do and encouraging others to take the participation 'journey' too.

It's an exciting time but we need to continue pushing so that we see a constant in the reduction in foodbank use, people escaping poverty and developing their resilience so as an organisation we are working ourselves out of a job!

This year we have seen some encouraging changes within our foodbank. In May we piloted a new foodbank model at one

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

of our largest centres, after running 2 focus groups with both clients and volunteers. Our 'Choose Your Food' model seeks to recreate a shopping experience for our clients, where instead of being handed over a packed bag of food and toiletries, clients can now walk around with a shopping basket and select their own food and toiletries.

The positive impact of the new model has been felt across the whole of our foodbank operations. Our clients, who have consistently said they much prefer this model, not only because it helps make a foodbank visit more dignified but also because it means clients actively contribute to reducing food waste, by only taking the items they need and want, even when they are entitled to more.

Our volunteers, who have enjoyed greater engagement with clients as they choose their food. And, from an operational perspective, a decrease in stock sent to the centre. As clients are only taking what they need, they are actually taking less food. In the first 2 months following its launch, the amount of food taken per person has reduced by 20%.

We are now exploring how we can transition other centres to this model, so all our clients, across every foodbank centre, can share in the same experience.

With our Summer holiday period over and the restart of school, so too the foodbank is getting ready for a new Harvest season. Every year we are blessed to receive donations from schools and churches which help to keep our centres and pantries stocked for those in our community experiencing financial hardship. Whilst, so far in 2024,we have seen an encouraging decrease in numbers of people attending our centres, we know that with winter approaching, families and individuals will see their bills increase and many will need support to ensure they can access essentials, like food and toiletries.

Unfortunately, the first 6 months of 2024 saw an 18% reduction of stock in, compared to the same period in 2023. We rely on the generous and faithful donations of our community to help us secure the stock we need to continue supporting families and individuals through our food provision projects.

If you would like to organise a food donation this Harvest, see our 2024 wishlist below. Please click on this link for a list of our donation points. If you are organising a delivery directly to our hub (Good Company Hub, Ruxley Lane KT19 0JG), please let us know by contacting us on foodbank@goodcompany.org.uk

New Chair of Trustees needed!
A fantastic opportunity for someone who is passionate about helping people locally and being part of our vision to see a community free from poverty.

Fundraising Manager role

We're looking for an experienced, creative and proactive Fundraising Manager who is passionate about our vision to create a poverty-free future for our community.

Jonathan Lees
Founder and Managing Director, Good Company

For more information visit

Good Company – Supporting Our Community

Rosebery Park Public Party – Sat 21st Sept.

10 October 2024



Rotary is a global Club of like-minded individuals, friends, leaders, and problem-solvers founded in 1905 in Chicago in the United States, working to give something back to the community they live in. Epsom Rotary Club is celebrating one hundred years of working with the Community in Epsom on 21st September in **Rosebery Park**. This will be a fun filled day for all the family with market stalls, rides for children, entertainment, and food stands. It promises to be a day of family fun and entertainment. [See event entry HERE]

Rotary began its association with the people of Epsom in June 1924 with an inaugural lunch held by local businessmen marking the start of the Rotary Club of Epsom. Early Community involvement provided a member representative on the Epsom Cottage Hospital Committee and supporting street collections for the hospital fund. Very quickly the club provided support for disabled service men at the Star and Garter home and the Club began providing Christmas hampers to local distressed elderly.

The Armed Forces service connection was restored recently in 2020 when Surrey County Council and Royal British Legion Surrey started a monthly hub for military veterans who were potentially isolated and lonely. This is organised by Epsom Rotary and RBL Epsom and Ewell in partnership, with two offshoot activity groups, archery and model making. Over thirty members of various ages, men and women have formed small friendship / support groups of their own and are offered

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

coach outings such as to the D Day Museum Portsmouth. This year we have organised trips to the Poppy Factory in Richmond, and the Christmas lights in the West End.

Veterans' Hub members and supporters

Into the late 1920s/30s Epsom Rotary worked locally as Rotary members played an active role in restarting the Epsom Chamber of Commerce and nationally providing cash and clothing for the hunger marches during the General Strike in 1926. The Club continued to expand its involvement locally during the second World War by supporting Armed Forces personnel at the anti-aircraft gun sites at Ashtead and Headley and the Canadian soldier's military hospital at West Park.



In the Community the Club was instrumental in starting the Annual Careers exhibition in 1957 and soon after visits to Wisley Gardens were organised for the elderly in the community. In 1957 Epsom Rotary set up a Christmas tree by the clocktower in the town Centre which was an annual event for many years. During the 1970s Thomas the tank engine arrived as part of the Christmas Street collections. The train was constructed by apprentices at Epsom Coaches and remains the centre piece of Christmas collections to this day focussed on Epsom and Langley Vale, now renamed as Tilly the train. These are always joyous occasions with great excitement amongst both children and parents as the train approaches.

Recent years

In 2012 in conjunction with Epsom and Ewell Borough Council the Rotary clubs of Epsom and Ewell organised a Community Fun day at Hook Road arena with a fun fair, pitches for local artisans and charities. This proved highly successful and continued until 2019 until the pandemic.

The Centenary Party in the Park in Rosebery Park is a natural successor to this with the added element that it is a celebration of one hundred years of Epsom Rotary serving the Community. In recent years, the Club has developed more "service related" projects which involves members giving more of their time to work on Community projects. This approach has always been part of the Rotary ethos. Examples include supporting the Veterans Hub highlighted earlier, leasing an allotment from the local Council with a small group of resolute members growing an increasing volume of fruit and vegetables which are donated over the summer months to the Pantry, the Good Company/Food Bank shop in South Street in Epsom.

A current activity is providing support/volunteers to work on an Epsom BID led project called Family Fridays that provides family activities in the town centre for young families in the school summer holidays.
Epsom Rotary continues to prioritise support for young people with regional competitions for Young Musicians, Young Chef and French speaking competitions.

International

The first international visit undertaken by the Club was to the Rotary Club of Rheims in France in 1937 and the Club now has an association with the Rotary Club of Chantilly in France which started in the 1990s and there have been several visits in both directions. This ties in with the town twinning of Epsom and Chantilly and reinforces our shared involvement with the horse racing industry.

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

The Club has been involved in several international projects with the current focus being AMECA, a small charity in Malawi providing medical services to the local community in a rural setting. The charity has recently built a maternity unit in an area in great need of support for women and children. Secondly, we have supported the Zimbabwe Victims Support Fund for the last five years, which is a small charity supporting dispossessed families, mainly women and children in Zimbabwe.

The future

As we have seen Rotary continues to evolve whilst reacting to the needs in the local community. We face many challenges, particularly attracting new members from the diverse spread of residents locally the Club needs to continue to thrive. There is less emphasis on procedure and formality which potentially enables a wider cross-section of the local community to become involved.

Rotary is a unique organisation which like no other, gives opportunities to become involved in education, community support, training, international activities, visits to other countries, social welfare, and hands-on experience. The challenge is to ensure that our Club can adapt to whatever the future holds yet retain our
essential purpose of 'service above self.'

Summary

Throughout the Clubs "100 years in Epsom", it has actively looked for opportunities to take part in local charity projects. One of the threads which runs through the Club's history is its contribution to the local community and its close relationship with the Borough Council. From the beginning its membership has included ex-mayors, councillors, and senior officers of the local authority. Over the past one hundred years it has participated in civic ceremonies, attended the annual Mayor's reception and nowadays the incoming mayor is an honorary member of the Club.

Jim Munns – Joint President Epsom Rotary Club

If you wish to join Epsom Rotary you may apply HERE

Trust the public to check our rivers

10 October 2024



The **Big River Watch** is returning. From 6th to 12th September, the **South East Rivers Trus**t is inviting people across the South East to join the only UK and Ireland-wide citizen science survey of river health, which has attracted more than 9,000 participants in its first year.

Anyone can join the Big River Watch by downloading the free, easy-to-use app and spending 15 minutes by their local river, answering the simple survey questions. The results will be made available on an interactive dashboard and will help drive action to improve rivers both on-the-ground and via campaigns and political advocacy.

We want to build a complete picture of river health, and topics covered include the plants and wildlife people can see, as well as visible signs of pollution or observations on flow levels. Some of the rivers and chalk streams across South East England provide habitats for rare species such as Beavers, Otters, Nightingales, Turtle Doves, Salmon and Brown Trout. It's essential that we try and restore healthy ecosystems for these rare species and local communities by carefully monitoring the health of the waterways across the region.

The South East Rivers Trust is running a series of volunteer events across the South East throughout September, including river clean-ups, gravel seeding and planting, where local communities can get involved and help restore their river: www.southeastriverstrust.org/events

Bella Davies, CEO at The South East Rivers Trust, said: "People across the UK and Ireland are becoming more and more interested in the health of their rivers, using their voices – and their votes – to show they care. With the Big River Watch, anyone can get involved in monitoring signs of pollution, spotting wildlife, and sharing their connection with their local river. This isn't just important for us gathering data but is also empowering for people who are demanding better for our rivers."

Tessa Wardley, Director of Communication & Advocacy at The Rivers Trust, said: "We know that no rivers in England are in good overall health, but we also know that environmental monitoring is currently very sparse. Having a large set of data from one weekend will help our experts to understand what's going on in our rivers, and what needs to be done to make them cleaner, healthier, and part of a thriving wider environment. As well as learning where pollution and wildlife are spotted, we also want to know how spending time near rivers affects people's wellbeing, so I'd encourage anyone and

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

everyone to spend some time by their river and make their voice heard."

- The survey includes questions on river wildlife, signs of pollution, and health and wellbeing
- Results will be updated in near-real time on the **Big River Watch Data Dashboard**
- More than 9,000 people have now taken part in the Big River Watch, 59% of those being new to citizen science

Related reports:

Chalking up a victory for the Hogsmill

Voles let loose on the Hogsmill

Ewell's wetlands to be celebrated on an open day

Image: Views of the Hogsmill River that runs through Epsom and Ewell

---

Council pay tribute to Epsom tree hero

10 October 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

Council works with local charities for needy

10 October 2024

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

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

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771



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.caee.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)
- 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)

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.

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 (caee.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

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

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.

Surrey Scouts honour Armed Forces Covenant

10 October 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

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

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

Scoutabout success for Surrey

10 October 2024



More than 6,000 Scouts and Guides and adults from **Surrey** enjoyed an action-packed weekend of activities over the weekend of 28th to 30th June 2024.

Scouts, Guides, and adults from **Epsom & Ewell** joined other Scouts and Guides from Surrey.

The first Scoutabout was at Ardingly back in 1984 and and thus event 40 years was celebrated. The boys and girls aged 10 to 14 had the opportunity to take part in more than 100 activities at the three-day Scoutabout event at the South of England Showground in Ardingly, West Sussex, the only site big enough and close enough to house the Scouts and Guides of Surrey for the weekend.

There were over 150 activities including Bus Driving, car driving, bungee running, kayaking, archery, air rifle shooting and caving, to name just a few. The young people were able to try something new, in a safe environment, gain skills-for-life and make new friends at the same time.

The weekend will not have been possible without the hard work of a determined team of 1,500 adult volunteers from across Surrey who have carried out a range of roles to make Scoutabout a reality.

From camp cooks to a doctor and from fire teams to IT engineers, adult volunteers would have shared their skills to benefit these young people.

One of the biggest tasks has been to source the huge number of activities that make Scoutabout such a success.

On the Friday night Sour Kix played for the camp at the opening ceremony and on the Saturday night Doubting Thomas and The Ariston played on stage.

Over the weekend Scoutabout FM was broadcasting and along with competitions (Thanks to Guildford Flames, Bentley Copse Activity Centre, Airfix and Surrey Sports Park for the donation of prizes) Explorer Scouts were able to present shows.

Bear Grylls, Chief Scout said "A special message for all of you at Scoutabout 2024 at Ardingly showground. I really hope all of you have a brilliant weekend together, look after each other and most of all have fun. So proud of what you all do, helping other people always, showing the true Scouting spirit, you are all amazing".

Marcus Martin-Burns, County Youth Commissioner for Surrey Scouts said "Seeing 5,000 Scouts & Guides all together for one weekend at Scoutabout has been truly awesome, giving them the opportunities to learn skills for life, make new friends and discover new activities. From Archery to Zorbing, Scoutabout had it all and a big thank you goes to all the leaders and service crew who made this weekend possible."

Eashan, aged 10 from Epsom & Ewell district (**1st Ewell Court**) said "The best bit of Scoutabout was the fun activities, I enjoyed the bungee slip slide because its fast and fun and gets you active."

Lucy, aged 11 from Leatherhead district (3rd Bookham) said "I liked the quad biking as I have not done it before, and it was really fun."

- The first Scoutabout was at Ardingly in 1984.
- Scoutabout happens every three years (apart from this one, due to the pandemic the 2024 one puts it back into a tri-annual event.
- Scouts are for Boys and Girls aged 10.5 to 14.
- Guides are for girls aged 10-14
- Individuals are 15% less likely to suffer from mood swings and anxiety if you've been a Scout or Guide. Source: Cohort study by the University of Edinburgh and Glasgow, 2016

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

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

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

Neil Wibberley

Fire Assembly for Ukraine

10 October 2024



Saturday 10th March a Bronto Fire Engine came to Epsom's Market Square outside the Assembly Rooms. A crowd gathered to admire the magnificent machine and wish it well on its journey to a city near the front-line of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

Roy Deadman of the charity **Surrey Stands With Ukraine** explained: "Some population centres in Ukraine are so close to the Russian artillery that the missiles can strike before the sirens sound. This fire engine with its long-ladder can rescue lives trapped in apartment blocks."

Another volunteer with the charity **Nick Budd** said "There has been a tremendous effort to raise the money to purchase this vehicle and the public have been very generous. Our partners in Ukraine are very grateful to be receiving this vital equipment."

The Mayor of Epsom and Ewell **Robert Geleit** (Labour, Court Ward) was in attendance, confirming a moment of pride for Epsom and Ewell as the headquarters for the humanitarian efforts of SSWU.

Charity director **Lionel Blackman** said: "Post Brexit there remain various bureaucratic obstacles to the engine's transportation across Europe to the Polish border, where our Ukrainian partners will collect and take through their country to where it is most needed; but we will overcome and we expect it to be in place in a few weeks from now."

Civic awards at civic reception

10 October 2024



The Epsom and Ewell Mayor's civic reception took place at Bourne Hall, Ewell on Friday 8th March. The "great and the good" of the Borough, including Member of Parliament **Chris Grayling**, gathered at this special annual event that witnessed the conferment of the title of Alderman of Epsom and Ewell to three long-serving local councillors.

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

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

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771



The ceremonies began with the Mayor's Active Citizen Award. The Mayor, Cllr **Rob Geleit** (Labour Court Ward), presented this year's award to **Barbara Lewis**, praising her selfless dedication to the community: "Barbara, born in Kingston, was instilled with a strong sense of altruism by her late mother. After attending Tiffin Girls Grammar School and serving in the civil service, Barbara settled in Ewell with her husband Martin, celebrating their upcoming Golden Wedding Anniversary. Barbara's commitment to her local area, Station Avenue, has been unwavering. Notably, she spearheaded efforts to provide scrubs, masks, and other essentials to frontline workers during the pandemic, and organized a heartwarming visit from Santa for children in her neighborhood. Barbara's involvement extends to various charitable endeavors, including Epsom Twinning Society and Epsom Rotary Club, and she even finds time to teach a Spanish class for the University of Third Age (U3A). Additionally, Barbara has dedicated herself to fundraising, notably supporting the Mayor's Charity Committee. Her generosity knows no bounds, always willing to help and support her community."

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771



Cllr **Hannah Dalton** (RA Stoneleigh), spoke up for **Chris Frost**, and welcomed him as an Honorary Alderman of Epsom and Ewell, recognizing his positive impact on local politics: “Chris’s journey in politics began in his youth, and his dedication led to his election to the Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and later the Surrey County Council. Known for his community spirit, Chris spearheaded initiatives like the Interfaith Forum and the Epsom and Ewell Community Fund.”

Ms Dalton commended Chris’s wife, Cllr **Liz Frost** (RA Woodcote and Langley), for her unwavering support and thanked his family for their presence. She expressed gratitude to all who supported Chris over the years, including council officers.



Eber Kington signs the book with Mayor and EEBC CEO Jackie King looking on.

Cllr **Peter O’Donovan** (RA Ewell Court) reflected on **Eber Kington**‘s remarkable career, celebrating his induction as an Honorary Alderman: “Born in Battersea, Eber’s journey into local politics began in the 80s when he joined the Woodcote Residents’ Association, eventually becoming a respected councillor. Eber’s tenure was marked by his commitment to his constituents, often being the first point of contact for residents’ concerns. Despite his aversion to planning matters, Eber’s dedication to his community was unwavering. His tenure as Mayor in 1999 was memorable, highlighted by his unconventional but effective leadership style. Eber’s dedication to community service extends beyond politics, evident in his charity work and love for Chelsea Football Club.” Mr O’Donovan praised Eber’s integrity, noting his willingness to listen and support fellow councillors.

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

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

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771



Finally, Cllr **Jan Mason** (RA Ruxley) spoke emotionally in praise of the late Mr **Clive Smitheram** who was awarded the Honour of Alderman of the Borough of Epsom and Ewell posthumously. Clive was a central figure in West Ewell having lived there for over 30 years with his wife Gill and family and although a proud Cornishman, Clive was someone who knew everyone locally and if he didn't know someone, he knew someone who did! Clive was a former police officer, having served 31 years in the service and was a retired community safety officer. As an active resident, it led to Clive being elected as a Resident Association Councillor for West Ewell serving for over 20 years, Clive was a former Mayor of Epsom and Ewell in 2010- 2011.

Mrs Smitheram receives the honour on behalf of the late Clive Smitheram.

All photos below heading courtesy Steven McCormick Photography

Related reports:

Long serving Councillor Clive Smitheram dies at 76

Alderman awards for Epsom and Ewell trio

Local Council stalwarts up for local honour

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

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

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

Two years on – Epsom stilled by Ukrainian voices

10 October 2024



Saturday morning the Epsom community gathered at the Epsom Market Place to mark the solemn occasion of the second anniversary of the start of the war in Ukraine. Organized by the **Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network** (EERN) and **Surrey Stands with Ukraine** (SSWU), the event aimed to show solidarity and support for the people of Ukraine during these challenging times.

The atmosphere was one of unity and reflection as locals joined together to honour the resilience of the Ukrainian people. The local Ukrainian choir, **Renaissance**, delivered a moving rendition of the Ukrainian National Anthem, followed by a heartfelt prayer for Ukraine, touching the hearts of all those in attendance.

Jo Sherring, founder of the Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network, welcomed the crowd, emphasizing the importance of standing in solidarity with Ukraine during this difficult period. “We are privileged to have met and worked with such wonderful people and we will continue to support them as long as they need our help” she stated.

Roy Deadman, Chair of Surrey Stands With Ukraine thanked all the volunteers who have devoted countless unpaid hours to raising funds, collecting donations and sorting and packing aid for Ukraine.

A member of the choir, **Konstantyn**, a Ukrainian resident of Epsom, stepped forward and gave a poignant speech expressing his gratitude for Britain for its unwavering support to the Ukrainian community. “It is with a profound sense of appreciation that we extend our gratitude to everyone who has supported our country, whether in word or deed,” he remarked.

The presence of The Worshipful the Mayor of Epsom & Ewell, Councillor **Rob Geleit**, and the Lady Mayor, added a sense of official recognition to the event, further underscoring the community’s commitment to standing with Ukraine.

Although unable to attend in person, **Chris Grayling**, MP for Epsom & Ewell, conveyed his heartfelt message of solidarity to the Ukrainian community. “I am sorry not to be with you this year, but wanted to take this opportunity to extend my hand of friendship to all of our friends in Ukraine, both those of you who are here, and to your families who are back there.

I am very grateful to all of those locally who rose to the occasion, providing homes and other support for those escaping the War, to the teams of volunteers who continue to work with the Ukrainians who are here, and also the team in Surrey Stands For Ukraine who continue to provide direct aid to those back in Ukraine.

I know that this is a sombre occasion, but it is one which is really important as a signal of our determination to stand with Ukraine. That determination will not waver here in Epsom and Ewell.”

The event served as a reminder of the ongoing struggle faced by the people of Ukraine and reaffirmed the commitment of the Epsom community to support them in their quest for peace and stability.

This week SSWU sent its 100th van packed with aid to Ukraine and the day’s event raised over £1000. The charity is sending a long-laddered fire engine to Zaporizhzhia. Being near the front line the city’s tower blocks can be struck by Russian missiles before the siren warns.

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

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

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771



Alan Avis (SSWU), Cllr Neil Dallen (Residents Association), Mhairi Fraser (Conservative PPC), Cllr Bernie Muir (Conservative Borough and County), Lady Mayoress, Cllr Robert Geleit (Mayor and Labour Councillor), Helen Maguire (Liberal Democrat PPC), Roy Deadman (SSWU)› joined together at the offices of SSWU and EERN in Global House. Offices generously donated by the **Ashley Centre** and generously exempted from business rates by **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council**.

Politicians from all parties suspended differences in supporting the event.

Lionel Blackman director of the charity for SSWU observed: “After the disunity and chaos in Parliament this week over the war in Gaza it was heartening to see local politicians from all sides demonstrate their united support for the humanitarian work being done in the Borough and Surrey for Ukrainians here and at home.”

If you wish to hear the Ukrainian Choir Renaissance and other professional Ukrainian musicians come to the social and music evening free of charge (leaving collection at discretion) on Saturday 30th March at the Epsom Methodist Church Ashley Road. Bring and share nibbles appreciated from 6pm and music starts at 7pm. No booking necessary.

Top Image- Ukraine Choir Renaissance with supporters from EERN and SSWU

---

2 years on Epsom to gather in solidarity with Ukraine

10 October 2024



The Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network (EERN) and Surrey Stands with Ukraine (SSWU) are calling upon the community to join them in a special gathering on Saturday February 24th at 11 am in the **Market Place in Epsom**. This gathering marks the solemn second anniversary of the commencement of the war in Ukraine.

The local Ukrainian choir, **Renaissance**, will render the Ukrainian National Anthem. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage with Ukrainian residents regarding the ongoing situation in Ukraine and to learn how they can extend support to the Ukrainian community within Epsom & Ewell.

The Mayor of Epsom & Ewell, Cllr. **Rob Geleit** (Labour Court), will attend. The event will foster a sense of unity and solidarity with the Ukrainian population residing in and around Epsom.

“We are deeply moved by the outpouring of support from the Epsom community for Ukrainian refugees,” said **Jo**

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

Sherring, Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network Lead. “This gathering is an opportunity for us to stand together in solidarity with our Ukrainian friends and reaffirm our commitment to supporting them as they rebuild their lives.”

“It is important for us to get together on this sad date to commemorate those who lost their lives in the war, to thank our supporters, defenders, volunteers, and the British people who gave shelter to us at these hard times for Ukraine.” said **Nataliia Zadorizhna**, pianist and director of the Renaissance choir who has been living in Ashtead with her 11 year old daughter since May 2022. “It is an enormous privilege to stay in the UK and to be surrounded by such noble, caring and generous people.”

Epsom has exhibited remarkable solidarity with Ukraine since the outbreak of the war, with numerous families opening their doors to Ukrainian refugees and contributing substantial amounts towards humanitarian aid. The community has banded together, with volunteers actively aiding refugees in assimilating into the local fabric.

All members of the Epsom community are warmly encouraged to attend this event, which promises to be a meaningful demonstration of support for the Ukrainian populace.

For further inquiries, please contact:

Nina Kaye: nina@goodcompany.org.uk | 07778 406834



English classes for Ukrainians and other refugees in Epsom.

Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network (EERN)

Established in 2015, operates as a community-driven organization in close collaboration with the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council. It operates under the auspices of the charity **Good Company (Surrey)**, with a mission rooted in compassion, solidarity, and inclusivity. EERN extends support to refugees and asylum seekers within Epsom and its environs, facilitating their integration into the community through various initiatives including employment guidance, educational support, cultural orientation, and free English language lessons.



© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

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

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

Epsom and Ewell residents welcome Ukrainians fleeing war.

Surrey Stands with Ukraine (SSWU)

At the onset of the conflict in Ukraine, a collective of British and Ukrainian residents from Epsom joined forces to establish Surrey Stands with Ukraine (SSWU), a humanitarian relief project dedicated to aiding Ukraine. SSWU provides support to both the Ukrainian populace within Ukraine and those residing in the UK by gathering and distributing medical supplies and other essential aid. Operating under the registered charity **Harrop HR Missions Ltd**., SSWU ensures that 100% of all donations are directed towards supporting the people of Ukraine, with no fees or wages deducted for volunteers or trustees.

EERN and SSWU are very grateful for the magnificent support provided for their efforts by **The Ashley Centre** Epsom, through its donation of the use of a suite of offices used for processing donations, English classes and an advice centre. Also to **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** that has waived the imposition of business rates.

Related reports:

Epsom and Ewell Borough of Sanctuary

Hosts of Ukrainian refugees appreciated

Flight of refugees: history repeating?

Breaking the mould for Ukrainian refugees

Local refugee cash appeal

Longmead gets a Godly clean-up

10 October 2024



On Sunday, January 21, joined by the Mayor of Epsom and Ewell, Councillor **Rob Geleit** (Labour Court Ward), 40 volunteers from ASEZ (Save the Earth from A to Z), the young adult volunteer group from the World Mission Society Church of God in Epsom, gathered to clean Longmead Road and adjacent streets in Epsom.

In a matter of 2 hours, the volunteers collected a total of 75 bags of litter; allowing the greenery to flourish and preventing plastics and litter from entering the waterways. The residents of Longmead Road were pleased and cheered the volunteers expressing their gratitude. As they walked along the areas of the clean-up and honked when they drove through, as a way to show their gratitude and the glory of God spread.

Out of 35 participants, more than half were young adults aged from 18 to 29. The clean-up event was a great opportunity not only for the environment but also for promoting positive activities and reducing antisocial behaviour among young adults.Ahn Sahng-hongOut of 35 participants, more than half were young adults aged from 18 to 29. The clean-up event was a great opportunity not only for the environment but also for promoting positive activities and reducing antisocial behaviour among young adults.

A passer-by, **Howard Gregory** from the Epsom and Ewell Tree Advisory Board and Elms Over Epsom explained “I saw this amazing crowd and amazing pile of rubbish, and this is fantastic.”

The World Mission Society Church of God is in East Street Epsom. The Church was founded in South Korea, inspired by the writings of Ahn Sahng-hong, considered by followers to embody the second coming of Christ.

Regardless of beliefs ASEZ did a great job.

Local Co-Vid volunteers rewarded with Council support

10 October 2024

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

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

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771



Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's financial support for five key local voluntary organisations came up for review 16th January at the meeting of the Environment and Well-Being Committee.

Age Concern Epsom & Ewell:

- Focus: Providing support and services for older people in the community.
- Activities: Offering a range of services such as social activities, information, and advice to enhance the well-being of older individuals.

Citizens Advice Bureau Epsom & Ewell:

- Focus: Providing free, confidential advice and support to the local community.
- Activities: Offering assistance on a wide range of issues, including legal, financial, and personal matters, to help individuals navigate challenges they may face.

Central Surrey Voluntary Action:

- Focus: Supporting and promoting voluntary and community work in the area.
- Activities: Facilitating connections between volunteers and local organizations, offering resources and training, and fostering collaboration within the voluntary sector.

RELATE Mid Surrey:

- Focus: Providing relationship support and counseling services.
- Activities: Offering counseling for individuals, couples, and families to improve and strengthen relationships. Addressing a variety of relationship issues through professional guidance.

The Sunnybank Trust:

- Focus: Supporting individuals with learning disabilities.
- Activities: Offering a range of services and activities to enhance the quality of life for people with learning disabilities. This may include social events, skill-building programs, and support for independent living.

Introducing a report to the Councillors the Community Development Officer said: "I have to say that during the COVID crisis, we would not have been able to cope unless we had the support of our voluntary organizations who stepped up and were absolutely amazing in getting volunteers to come forward and help the Council give the service and help the residents in what was a particularly difficult time. This report, I think, reflects the fact that we appreciate that support and that we wish to continue supporting those organizations in what they do on behalf of our residents."

The support, approved by the committee, is summarised in the table below.

	Current and Proposed Support for Voluntary Organisations 2024/25 £s											
	Age Concern Epsom		Citizens Advice Bureau Epsom &		Central Surrey Voluntary Action		RELATE Mid Surrey		The Sunnybank Trust		Total	
	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25
Direct Grant Funding	0	0	74115	74115	7989	7989	0	0	0	0	82104	82104
Licence / Rent - Notional Grant	14,616	14,615	28,686	28,686	7,344	7,344	14,910	14,910	0	0	65,556	65,555
Service Charge - Notional Grant	15,639	12,764	30,694	25,052	7,858	6,414	4,800	4,800	0	0	58,991	49,030
Rent paid to EEBC	-2,936	-2,936	0	0	0	0	-1,294	-1,294	-3,420	-3,470		
Grant for Volunteer Parking	100	100	1920	1920	0	0	0	0	0	0	2020	2020
Subsidy for Staff Parking Permits	1,920	2720	3,840	4080	0	0	0	0	453	680	6,213	7480
Subsidy for volunteer Parking	0	0	7600	8000	0	0	0	0	0	0	7600	8000
Totals do not include rent paid to EEBC	32275	30199	146855	141853	23191	21747	19710	19710	453	680	222484	214189

Image Licence details Creator: NCVO London

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

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

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

Dancing for the Wells

10 October 2024



A sponsored “dancathon” took place on Saturday 6 January to help raise the funds needed to re-open the community centre.

Cllr **Bernie Muir** (Conservative – Horton Ward) danced for 5 hours, and **Neva Novaky** and **James Baird** danced for 10 hours on Saturday 6 January to help raise funds for the centre. It is still possible to make donations online – CLICK HERE

Speaking at the event, **Chris Grayling** MP said “I would like to congratulate the team who organised this successful event and on the valuable contribution they are making to this community hub. This community centre was rightly saved from being knocked down and it is great to see events like this that raise its profile.”

Cllr Bernie Muir said “Community centres play a crucial role as hubs for opportunities to socialise, learn and access key services. They nurture the community spirit, help tackle loneliness and give the youth a positive outlet. Let’s get The Wells community centre up and running again!”

Initially closed down by the Borough Council, the community centre was saved after local residents and Cllr Bernie Muir fought to save it. The **Epsom Wells Community Association** now have a long-term lease and are trying to raise the funds needed to help re-furnish it and have it fully functioning again.

A day of dance classes followed by a dance party in the evening, Dancing for the Wells saw classes of ballroom Latin, morris dancing, Jive and salsa. James who was previously a competitive ballroom and Latin dancer and danced with celebrities such as Jennifer Lopez, taught ballroom and Latin with Neva.

Morris dancing was taught by Thames Valley Morris, Jive by Surrey Jive and salsa was taught by Somos Caribe Academy.

“When I saw the two-floor community centre building with its own parking, I could understand why the community had fought so hard to save it and wanted to help re-open it. I would like to thank all those who have generously sponsored us and all those who supported the event on the day.” said Neva.

The fundraiser was led by **Neva Novaky** and Cllr Bernie Muir and the team organising it included James Baird, Stuart Carroll, Ben White, Tanya Solomon and Richard Robinson in collaboration with the Epsom Wells Community Association led by Vanessa Merchant. Sponsor’s included Lucy Demery, Tina Mountain, Ask Italia and Pari’s Beauty Salon.

Related reports:

Epsom’s Wells Plan has a hole in it

Wells Centre’s Appeal

All’s well that ends well for the Wells Centre

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY