

# Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Invites Community to Share 'A Million Acts of Hope'

18 June 2026



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, in partnership with the Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network, is inviting residents to take part in *A Million Acts of Hope* during Refugee Week this June - celebrating the everyday actions that bring people together and strengthen communities.

*A Million Acts of Hope* is a national initiative recognising the small but meaningful contributions people make to their community each day. From coaching youth teams and volunteering at food banks to supporting neighbours and caring for shared spaces, these acts may go unnoticed, but they play an important role in building compassionate and connected communities.

Running from 15 June to 21 June, Refugee Week offers an opportunity to recognise the contributions of refugees, while celebrating the diversity, resilience and community spirit that enrich local life. This year, the borough will also mark *A Million Acts of Hope* during the same week, highlighting how simple actions can help create a more welcoming and inclusive place for everyone.

These shared values are reflected in the work of the Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network (EERN), which supports refugees to feel welcomed, connected and part of the community. EERN, which is partly funded by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, delivers a range of services, including: group activities, helpdesk support, language classes and community initiatives - all designed to help foster inclusion and understanding.

To encourage residents to get involved, *A Million Acts of Hope* boards were installed at Epsom Library and Ewell Library (Bourne Hall) this week. The CEO of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Jackie King, Councillor Clive Woodbridge, Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Committee at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, the Mayor of Epsom & Ewell, Councillor Lucie McIntyre and Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network Lead, Jo Sherring, have all added their messages to the board. We encourage visitors to share messages of kindness, gratitude or community spirit.

Participants can write a short note on a postcard, available at both locations, and add it to the display, creating a collective expression of hope across the borough.

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

"Epsom & Ewell is a borough defined by the strength of its community, and initiatives like *A Million Acts of Hope* highlight the kindness, compassion and generosity that bring our residents together. It has been truly heartwarming to read the many stories already shared on the boards across the borough, each one reflecting small but meaningful acts of care, gratitude and support.

These stories capture what makes Epsom & Ewell such a special place to live, and I encourage residents to continue adding their voices as we come together to celebrate hope and the power of community."

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council



Image EEBCC: from left to right: Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Committee, Councillor Clive Woodbridge, Mayor of Epsom & Ewell, Councillor Lucie McIntyre and Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network Lead, Jo Sherring.

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## Heart attack survivor abseils hospital with Epsom NHS daughter

18 June 2026



A heart attack survivor has abseiled down the side of St Helier Hospital with his daughter, an occupational therapist at Epsom Hospital, to raise money for the charity supporting both hospitals.

Sutton-based Fred Mendonca, 62, and his daughter Sarah Beard, 30, took on the 125-foot drop at St Helier Hospital ahead of Father's Day weekend. The descent is roughly equivalent to the heel-to-crown height of the Statue of Liberty.

Sarah works in the Mary Seacole Unit at Epsom Hospital, part of Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust. The unit provides inpatient frailty and rehabilitation services for some of the most vulnerable patients in the local community.

The father and daughter team joined more than 70 fundraisers taking part in the second annual Abseil St Helier event, which has already raised more than £20,000 towards Epsom and St Helier Hospitals Charity's £30,000 target.

For Fred, the challenge had a deeply personal meaning. In June 2024 he was at work when he felt chest pain which he initially thought was indigestion.

"I had no idea I had an arterial clot and was flabbergasted when the consultant said I had suffered an acute myocardial infarction — commonly known as a heart attack — and heart failure," he said.

"You think you're indestructible. It doesn't feel like your heart is under attack — it's all the surrounding muscles which end up aching. I tried to self-medicate. Fortunately, my wife called an ambulance which turned up within ten minutes. They hooked me up to an electrocardiogram and I was being treated in A&E within half an hour."

Fred was treated by emergency teams at St George's Hospital before receiving cardiac rehabilitation care at St Helier.

"What a phenomenal team, from the paramedics to the emergency and ward staff," he said. "They were highly professional, efficient, friendly and informative. You know immediately that you are in good hands. The cardiac rehabilitation staff at St Helier nursed me back to full health. Now I'm focusing on keeping fit and I feel better than I have done in the last 20 years.

"I feel like I've been given a new lease of life, and I had the go-ahead for the abseil with Sarah, which means the world to me. Our whole family is grateful for the support we've received from the hospitals and I'm happy to support this important cause."

Sarah has worked in community healthcare roles across Sutton and Surrey for more than eight years and is now based at Epsom Hospital.

She said the experience of her father's illness had brought home the life-saving work of NHS colleagues across the Trust.

"Most of our family was born in St Helier Hospital and the A&E is where all our family goes when we need urgent help, so they've looked after all of us, including my grandad who used to be a chaplain there," she said.

"When my dad was poorly, it really brought home the impact of the work my colleagues do to save lives. I can never be more grateful to them for giving my dad a second chance. My dad's choir often goes to sing for the patients at St Helier at Christmas, which he's been doing for the past 40 years, so we're always keen to show our gratitude for their exceptional care."

Sarah said the abseil was the first time either of them had attempted such a challenge.

"We've never abseiled before, so this is a new adventure for us," she said.

"My dad is a huge source of inspiration for me. He looks after everyone, he's extremely resilient and I know he's always there for us. He's so giving with his time — not just to his family, but to the whole community — so I'm very proud of him and I'm very lucky to be his daughter."

Money raised through the event will support Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust, helping to enhance patient care, support staff wellbeing and improve hospital environments.

Recent charity-supported projects include part-funding a state-of-the-art surgical robot, supporting staff recognition and long-service events, and improving maternity spaces including the maternity bereavement room and early pregnancy unit.

Molly Simpson, Head of Epsom and St Helier Hospitals Charity, said: "We are incredibly grateful to everyone taking part in this year's abseil. It takes real courage to step over the edge at that height, but everyone is doing it to make a real difference for patients, families and NHS colleagues, and to support our hospitals' life-saving care.

"Events like this help bring our community together. I wish all our abseilers the very best of luck and thank them for going above and beyond for our hospitals."

Supporters can still donate to Fred, Sarah and others taking part in Epsom and St Helier Hospitals Charity's Abseil St Helier event through the charity's fundraising page.

Epsom and St Helier Hospitals Charity - Abseil St Helier

Sam Jones - Reporter



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## Surrey's Big Poetry Weekend launches in Egham this summer

18 June 2026



A major new poetry festival is coming to Surrey this summer, as the Surrey Poet Laureateship launches its first annual poetry festival.

Surrey's Big Poetry Weekend '26 will take place on Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 August 2026 at the Egham Literary Institute.

The festival has been created by the Surrey Poet Laureateship CIC, a self-funded, volunteer-led organisation founded in 2024. In its first two years, the Laureateship says it has delivered eight free Poetry Hubs across the county, created more than 5,000 engagements with poetry, established more than 20 partnerships and welcomed more than 200 open mic performers to the stage.

Organisers say the new weekend festival will celebrate Surrey's poets while also bringing nationally recognised contemporary UK poets to the county.

Adam Gary, President of the Surrey Poet Laureateship, said: "When we launched the Surrey Poet Laureateship, people told us poetry was struggling. What we've found is the opposite. People are hungry for connection, creativity, and spaces where they can express themselves and be heard.

"Everything we've built has been powered by volunteers, belief, and an extraordinary community. Surrey's Big Poetry Weekend is our biggest leap yet.

"We're bringing together nationally recognised poets, celebrated Surrey voices, and complete newcomers under one roof because we believe poetry should belong to everyone. We want people to leave inspired, connected, and excited about what poetry can do."

The weekend programme will include headline performances, talks, panel discussions, workshops and community meet-ups.

Poets appearing at the festival include Len Pennie, Bradley Taylor and Dakota Warren, alongside Surrey poets and emerging voices.

Talks will explore poetry, creativity and literary life, with speakers including Adam Gary, Nia Broomhall and Katie Griffiths. Panel discussions will bring together poets, performers, educators and creatives to consider poetry's place in modern life.

Topics include Finding Your Voice: Poetry, Wellbeing and Empowerment, looking at how poetry can support wellbeing, self-expression, confidence and resilience.

Another panel, Poetry Without Borders: How Different Voices Shape the Art, will consider how poetry can bridge communities, preserve heritage and create understanding across different backgrounds and lived experiences.

The programme will also include Poetry in the Digital Age: Social Media and the Modern Poet. Guest panellists are expected to include Len Pennie, Bradley Taylor, Adam Gary, Shaniqua Benjamin and others.

Workshops will cover writing, performance, creativity and spoken word. These include a performance workshop led by Bradley Taylor and a poetry for beginners workshop led by Surrey Poet Laureate Adam Gary.

A key feature of Surrey's Big Poetry Weekend will be its Community Meet-Ups initiative, allowing festivalgoers to help shape the festival experience themselves.

Organisers are inviting attendees to arrange their own gatherings across the weekend, whether focused on Victorian poetry, spoken word, performance technique, niche poetry movements or simply meeting other creative people.

Tori Monks, Vice President of the Surrey Poet Laureateship, said: “One of the things that makes the Laureateship so special is that it welcomes everyone, regardless of their experience with poetry.

“As someone who is new to the poetry world myself, I know how important that sense of openness can be. Our inaugural programme is packed with an incredible line-up of events, performances and voices, offering something to inspire, entertain and engage adults of all ages and backgrounds. We can’t wait to welcome everyone and celebrate poetry together.”

The Surrey Poet Laureateship says the festival is the next stage in two years of community-building, volunteer effort and work to make poetry more accessible.

Despite operating without regular funding, the organisation says it has created free creative opportunities for thousands of people across the county through workshops, outreach projects, open mics, competitions and community partnerships.

Organisers hope Surrey’s Big Poetry Weekend will become an annual fixture in the county’s cultural calendar, attracting nationally recognised poets while continuing to nurture local voices and emerging talent.

Early Bird weekend passes have already sold out. General release day passes are now available.

For more information, visit [www.surreypoetlaureateship.org](http://www.surreypoetlaureateship.org).

The Surrey Poet Laureateship is based at The Literary Institute, 51 High Street, Egham, Surrey, TW20 9EW.

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## **Epsom counselling service aims to make therapy more accessible**

18 June 2026



Mental health challenges can affect anyone, at any stage of life. Yet many people still struggle to access the support they need because of long waiting lists, financial pressures or uncertainty about where to turn.

One local counselling service, The Wellbeing Therapy Hut, is working to help address those barriers.

Founded by Epsom-based therapist and director Jess Farazmand, The Wellbeing Therapy Hut was created with a simple mission: to make talking therapy affordable, accessible and available to those who need it.

Since opening, the service has supported children, young people, adults, couples and families across Epsom, Ewell and the surrounding areas, offering both in-person and online counselling.

The organisation places particular emphasis on affordable options, with the aim of ensuring that financial circumstances do not prevent people from accessing support.

Jess said: “Mental health support shouldn’t be something that people only access when they reach crisis point. We believe that early intervention can make a significant difference, helping people build resilience, improve relationships and maintain positive wellbeing before difficulties become overwhelming.”

The team’s work has been recognised through several awards, including the Commitment to Community Award at the Epsom & Ewell Business Awards, along with other regional business and mental health industry accolades.

For Jess and her team, however, the greatest achievement is seeing the positive effect that counselling can have on people’s lives.

The Wellbeing Therapy Hut also works with other local wellbeing professionals and organisations, believing that strong community partnerships help create a wider network of support for residents.

By collaborating with local businesses, charities, schools and community groups, the organisation hopes to continue raising awareness of mental health and encouraging people to seek support when they need it.

Jess added: “Mental health affects every family at some point. The more we talk about it, the easier it becomes for people to reach out and access support. We are proud to be part of a community that cares about the wellbeing of its residents.”

To learn more about The Wellbeing Therapy Hut and the services available, visit [www.thewellbeingtherapyhut.co.uk](http://www.thewellbeingtherapyhut.co.uk).

Sponsored article.

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## A brand-new pregnancy scanning clinic has opened in Epsom & Ewell

18 June 2026



With pregnancy being one of the most special times in an expectant parent's life, many choose to make the journey even more memorable by having additional scans outside the NHS in a private setting.

When carried out safely, at a reputable Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulated clinic and by an experienced team, private pregnancy scans can be a magical experience for parents-to-be.

As technology advances, 4D ultrasound scans are becoming increasingly popular, offering parents images of what their unborn baby looks like.

A new clinic, **Hey Baby 4D in Ewell**, has opened to bring greater convenience and accessibility to the local community. It offers expectant parents reassurance, bonding and experience-led pregnancy scans, including gender and 4D scans.

The service aims to help bridge the gap between routine NHS appointments, providing additional reassurance and memorable bonding opportunities during pregnancy, particularly during the waiting periods between standard scans.

Alongside pregnancy scanning services, the clinic will also offer access to specialist testing, including Non-Invasive Prenatal Testing (NIPT), early gender blood tests and women's health blood testing, giving local families easier access to additional pregnancy and wellbeing support in one convenient location.

Owner Chelsey, who also runs Hey Baby 4D Clapham and Hey Baby 4D Sutton, has a strong passion for providing an excellent customer experience. She has now opened a brand-new pregnancy scanning clinic on Cheam Road, Ewell, after successfully establishing the Sutton and Clapham clinics.

Chelsey said she wanted to bring her experience to the Epsom and Ewell area so that more parents-to-be could enjoy the bonding experience of private pregnancy scans.

The clinic, which opened its doors this June, offers reassurance scans from six weeks, sex confirmation, wellbeing scans, NIPT blood tests and immersive 4D scans.

With gender reveal parties on the rise, the scanning room also includes "Gender Reveal Lighting", which turns the room pink if the baby is a girl and blue if the baby is a boy.

The clinic says it offers a safe and professional service, coupled with a fun experience for families to enjoy. It also has a referral system in place for continuity of care with the NHS, if needed.

Website: [heybaby4d.co.uk/epsom/](http://heybaby4d.co.uk/epsom/)

Sponsored article.

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## Surrey research: independent directors help rein in bossy bosses

18 June 2026



**Surrey research: independent directors help rein in risky CEO pay**

New research from the University of Surrey suggests that independent company directors may be more effective at scrutinising executive pay than critics often assume.

The study found that companies with a higher proportion of independent board members were quicker to correct CEO pay arrangements that could expose shareholders to unnecessary risk.

The research, published in *European Financial Management*, focused on “inside debt” — a term used to describe executive rewards such as pensions and deferred compensation. Unlike bonuses or shares, these forms of pay can encourage chief executives to take a more cautious approach, because part of their personal wealth is tied to the company’s longer-term financial health.

Researchers examined 6,357 firm-year observations across 942 US companies between 2006 and 2019. They looked at executive pay, company accounts and governance data to assess how quickly firms adjusted CEO compensation towards what the researchers calculated to be a healthier balance.

The study found that companies with more independent directors adjusted CEO pay structures more quickly. This effect was particularly strong in high-growth companies, financially secure firms and businesses led by overconfident chief executives, where poor incentives may create greater risks for shareholders.

The findings challenge the view that company boards simply approve executive pay packages shaped by powerful CEOs. Instead, the research suggests that independent directors do intervene when pay structures move too far away from what may be financially appropriate for the business.

The study also found that boards did not simply cut or increase compensation automatically. Where the risks linked to CEO inside debt were lower, independent boards moved more slowly, suggesting that directors weigh the costs and benefits before changing pay structures.

Bonnie Buchanan, co-author of the study and Associate Dean International for the Faculty of Arts, Business and Social Sciences at the University of Surrey, said: “There is a common perception that boards are often powerless when it comes to executive pay, particularly when dealing with influential CEOs. What we found is much more nuanced. Independent directors appear willing to step in and adjust compensation structures when they believe shareholders could be exposed to unnecessary risk.”

Shuhui Wang, co-author of the study and Senior Lecturer in Finance at the University of Surrey, said: “Executive compensation has become incredibly complex over the last two decades. Our findings suggest independent directors are not simply approving pay packages without scrutiny. They are making detailed decisions about when faster intervention is needed and when a slower approach makes more sense.”

The researchers argue that inside debt receives far less public attention than share-based rewards, even though it can have a significant influence on corporate decision-making. Used carefully, it may help boards balance risk-taking with long-term stability.

The study also suggests that board independence mattered more than pressure from institutional investors or major shareholders when it came to adjusting executive compensation structures.

Professor Buchanan added: “This matters because executive pay shapes how companies behave. If boards get those incentives wrong, it can affect investment decisions, growth and ultimately shareholder value. Strong independent oversight appears to play an important role in keeping those incentives balanced.”

The study was written by Bonnie Buchanan and Shuhui Wang of the University of Surrey, in collaboration with Tina Yang, Associate Professor of Finance at the Kate Tiedemann School of Business and Finance, University of South Florida.

Sam Jones - Reporter



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## Surrey praises Libraries of Things as Ewell scheme offers test borrowing

18 June 2026



Surrey County Council has hailed its growing network of “Libraries of Things” as a smarter and greener way for residents to borrow useful household items rather than buying them — even as the proposed full service at Ewell remains affected

by unresolved questions over storage and lease arrangements.

In a release issued during Great Big Green Week, SCC said Libraries of Things were now operating in eight libraries and community spaces across the county, including Cranleigh, Dorking, Epsom and Ewell, Godalming, Guildford, Haslemere, Redhill and Woking.

The schemes allow residents to borrow items such as DIY tools, gardening equipment, kitchen items, leisure equipment and other household essentials. SCC said the service helps people save money, reduce waste and support local climate action.

Councillor Mark Nuti, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Health and Communities, said:

“Libraries of Things are a brilliant example of how we can help residents save money while also doing the right thing for the environment. They also show the power of working with local charities and community organisations to deliver practical services that really make a difference to people’s everyday lives.

“By sharing resources locally, we’re reducing waste, supporting our communities and making sustainable choices more accessible to everyone across Surrey.”

The Epsom and Ewell Library of Things website now states: “FULL SERVICE OPENING LATER IN THE YEAR”. It says test borrows are available by email appointment, with pick-up and drop-off on Thursday mornings at 10.30am from a temporary store.

The website describes the scheme as “just like a book library, except for things” and says Epsom and Ewell residents can borrow useful items such as carpet cleaners, DIY tools, gardening equipment and party gear “FREE OF CHARGE” rather than buying them new.

The borrowing process set out online invites users to become a member, browse the inventory, reserve an item, select dates and then collect it from the Bourne Hall Library issue desk with a reservation number and identification. Users must be at least 18 years old, and although the service is free, they may be required to provide valid debit or credit card details to cover loss, damage or non-return. Late return fees may also apply.

The website says the Library of Things is run by volunteers from Epsom and Ewell Climate Action Network, known as eeCAN, in partnership with Ewell Library and supported by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and Epsom Repair Café.

However, the website also confirms that the issue of larger-item storage is not yet resolved. It states: “Large items are currently stored off site. We are in the process of organising storage for large items with access to Bourne Hall car park.” A further note says one week’s notice is required for items listed as large items and kept off-site.

That matches correspondence copied to the Epsom and Ewell Times, which shows that although a limited test system is available, the wider service remains dependent on agreement over storage at Bourne Hall.

As previously reported by Epsom and Ewell Times, the project has been delayed by disagreement over the respective roles of Surrey County Council and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. SCC operates the library service at Bourne Hall, but the land and building are owned by EEBC. That has left the volunteers seeking clarity on who must approve, lease or authorise the external storage needed for larger items.

The latest correspondence suggests the matter will now go before EEBC’s Environment Committee on 23 June.

Cllr **Liz Frost**, an RA councillor for Woodcote and Langley Vale, wrote to William Ward of eeCAN on 10 June saying the lease would need to be considered by the committee. She said that, in preparing the report, officers had to take account of the council’s responsibilities “as both landowner as well as wider operational and site-related matters”.

She warned that the lease proposal would need to include conditions which were “likely to differ” from what the group had previously envisaged and “may have implications for the scheme as currently approved by planning”.

In particular, she said it was expected that any agreed arrangement would require “a smaller and more secure form of storage”, similar to more compact examples put forward as part of the Community Infrastructure Levy application.

Cllr Frost added that no works should be undertaken on site until a formal decision had been made and communicated by the council.

In reply, William Ward, chair and co-founder of eeCAN, asked for an urgent meeting before the committee date so that councillors could be made aware of “all facts and options” before reaching a decision.

He said eeCAN had first asked for a meeting about the lease in December 2025 and had repeatedly sought discussions since March. He argued that “a two way conversation” earlier in the process might have avoided the present difficulty.

Mr Ward said volunteers had been working on the basis that the service would open to the public on Earth Day, 22 April, using a temporary store, with construction of the permanent store by volunteers planned for May. The website now indicates that the project has instead moved to test borrowing by appointment, with the full service still to come.

Mr Ward also said eeCAN had already spent more than £2,000 of an SCC grant on wood for the store to comply with a planning requirement for a green roof.

The group says it has local residents already signed up as members who are asking when they can borrow donated items.

Mr Ward said the approved store was intended not only for current large items but also to allow the service to expand as demand increases. He also referred to an SCC-supported “Borrow a Bike” scheme, saying the larger store had been designed to allow space for occasional-use items and bicycles.

He argued that because the service needs to be “fit for future use”, the decision should now involve the newly elected councillors for the future South East Surrey unitary authority area.

The correspondence also raises a financial concern for eeCAN. Mr Ward said the group's Community Infrastructure Levy bid had been submitted before it knew that planning permission or a lease might be needed. If the current planning permission were now to prove unusable, he said the group would seek a refund of the £83 planning application fee.

The position remains that both councils say they support the Library of Things in principle. In the earlier joint response to Epsom and Ewell Times, Surrey County Council and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council said SCC Libraries enables external providers to operate Library of Things services across the county, while providers are responsible for organising off-site storage for larger items where necessary.

They said Ewell Library is located at Bourne Hall, which SCC leases from EEBC, and that EEBC, as both planning authority and freeholder, is responsible for approving external storage within the grounds.

The councils also said that eeCAN had been advised at an early stage that planning permission and landowner agreement would be required for an external store to house larger items. Planning permission was granted earlier this year and the proposal is expected to be presented to EEBC's Environment Committee on 23 June.

The dispute therefore appears to have shifted from whether the scheme is wanted to what size and type of storage EEBC is prepared to approve, and on what lease terms. In the meantime, the Ewell website shows a partial service is available to residents prepared to book by email and collect by appointment.

For residents keen to borrow rather than buy, the county council's Great Big Green Week message is clear: Libraries of Things are now part of Surrey's environmental offer. For Ewell, the question is whether a test borrowing service can soon become the full service volunteers had hoped to launch earlier in the year.

Sam Jones - Reporter



Related report

Epsom "Library of Things" Delayed by Council Stand-Off

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## Worcester Park Tennis Club Launches Appeal to Save Community Courts

18 June 2026



A historic community sports club on the edge of Epsom and Ewell is making an urgent appeal for support as it seeks to raise funds to save its last remaining tennis courts.

Worcester Park Tennis Club, part of the Worcester Park Athletic Club, says its two courts have reached the end of their operational life and require resurfacing if they are to remain open. Club representatives warn that failure to secure the necessary funding could result in the closure of the courts, which are used by more than 100 junior players each week.

The wider athletic club traces its origins back to 1921, when it was founded by former servicemen returning from the First World War. Club volunteers say the tennis section has served generations of local families and remains one of the few accessible grassroots tennis facilities in the area.

To support the fundraising effort, the club is hosting a **Family & Community Open Day on Sunday 28 June**, from **11am to 3pm**, at **Worcester Park Athletic Club, off Green Lane, KT4 8AJ**.

The event is free to attend and will include coaching taster sessions, tennis games and activities, face painting, refreshments, and a grand raffle. Organisers say the day is intended both as a celebration of community sport and a final push to secure the future of the courts.

Weronika Kalka of Worcester Park Tennis Club told the *Epsom & Ewell Times*:

*"Our courts have almost reached the end of their operational life. Without raising the vital funds required to resurface them, we face the heartbreaking reality of having to close them entirely. Over 100 local juniors rely on these courts every single week, and losing them would mean losing a crucial, accessible grassroots tennis space right on the borders of Epsom and Ewell."*

Alongside inviting local families to attend the open day, the club is appealing to local businesses to contribute prizes for the raffle or to support the fundraising campaign through direct donations.

The club's fundraising campaign emphasises three objectives: preserving the history of the club, improving facilities for current players, and creating opportunities for future generations of young tennis players.

Residents wishing to support the appeal can attend the open day or donate via the club's crowdfunding campaign.

## Event at a Glance

**What:** Worcester Park Tennis Club Family & Community Open Day and Court Fundraiser

**When:** Sunday 28 June, 11am-3pm

**Where:** Worcester Park Athletic Club, off Green Lane, Worcester Park, KT4 8AJ

**Admission:** Free

**Activities:** Coaching sessions, tennis games, face painting, refreshments and grand raffle

For further information, contact [worcesterparktennis@gmail.com](mailto:worcesterparktennis@gmail.com) or follow the club on Instagram at [@worcester\\_park\\_tennis](https://www.instagram.com/worcester_park_tennis).

Sam Jones - Reporter



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## Bourne Hall hosts Summer Festival

18 June 2026



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is pleased to announce that Bourne Hall will host a free Summer Festival on Saturday, 20 June 2026, from 12pm until 5pm.

The free event promises fun for all the family, with live music, food, fairground activities, craft stalls and plenty to enjoy throughout the day.

The main stage will showcase a variety of live music performances, featuring talented local artists and bands. Artists supported by iPlay Collective, a local creative organisation that nurtures emerging performers and champions inclusive access to the arts, will perform across the day. Audiences can expect a lively and varied programme celebrating local talent and a wide range of musical styles, with a DJ host keeping the atmosphere buzzing between sets.

Festival-goers can browse a wide selection of market stalls showcasing unique handcrafted items from local makers and artisan sellers. Visitors will find a diverse range of goods including seated acupressure therapy, hand-turned wooden gifts and homeware, jewellery, laser-engraved cheese and serving boards, handmade woodwork and textiles, locally produced Tropic organic skincare and make-up, daily essentials and health supplements, alongside homemade gifts, keyrings, stickers, prints and cross-stitch items. There will also be handmade natural soaps, stone and crystal candles, as well as stalls supporting good causes, including a dog rescue offering gifts and a tombola. The Rainbow Leisure Centre will also be present, promoting healthy lifestyles and community wellbeing.

In addition to the stalls, several local organisations and venues will be hosting activities throughout the day. These include the Home Improvement Agency, Epsom Playhouse, the Dementia Hub, Bourne Hall Museum and Ewell Library, ensuring there is plenty to explore and engage with for all ages.

For those looking for thrills, the fairground will feature trampolines and teacup rides. There will also be merchandise stalls selling balloon animals and bubbles, adding to the festive atmosphere.

A variety of outdoor food options will be available, including burgers, nachos, ice cream and candyfloss, alongside refreshments from the Flying Saucer Café, which will be open from 9am until 5pm serving hot and cold drinks and treats.

Speaking of the upcoming event, Councillor **Clive Woodbridge**, (RA Ewell Village) Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Committee said:

"The Bourne Hall Summer Festival is a wonderful opportunity for our community to come together and enjoy a full day of free, inclusive entertainment. We're delighted to be showcasing talented local musicians, including artists supported

by iPlay Collective, who play such an important role in nurturing emerging performers.

“Alongside the live music, visitors can explore a fantastic selection of artisan and craft stalls, offering unique handmade goods from local makers – the perfect chance to support independent businesses and discover something special. With great food, creative talent and activities for all ages, the festival really highlights the vibrant community spirit of our borough.”

Event timetable is subject to change.

The Bourne Hall Festival is an annual event with a different theme each year. Previous iterations have included Sustainability, The Herald of Spring and New Beginnings. This year’s festival will run from 12pm to 5pm.

Bourne Hall’s address is Spring Street, Ewell, Surrey, KT17 1UF.

[www.bournehall.org](http://www.bournehall.org)

**Driving Directions:**

Bourne Hall is easily accessible from:

Gatwick via M25 – A217 – A240

Heathrow via M25 – A3

London via A3

Please check your directions at [www.theaa.com/route-planner/index.jsp](http://www.theaa.com/route-planner/index.jsp)

**Parking:**

Local pay & display car parks:

Bourne Hall, Spring street

24 hours Monday to Sunday

High Street, Ewell

24 hours Monday to Sunday

Dorset House, High street, Ewell

24 hours Monday to Sunday

**Train:**

The nearest railway station is Ewell West (5 minutes’ walk) with regular direct rail routes between Guildford and Waterloo. Please plan your journey at [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

**Bus**

Bus number 293, 406, 467, S2 and E16

**Live Music: 12:00 – 17:00**

Enjoy a diverse range of musical genres that will keep you entertained and dancing all day long with a DJ host.

**Market Stalls: 12:00 – 17:00**

Explore a vibrant array of market stalls showcasing local crafts, products, and more. It’s the perfect opportunity to support local businesses and find unique treasures.

**Food Stalls: The Flying Saucer Café 09:00 – 17:00, Food stalls 12:00 – 17:00**

A selection of food will be available, offering a range of tasty treats and refreshments.

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council



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## Epsom’s NESCOL wins ‘Community Hero’ award

18 June 2026



Nescot College in Epsom won the Community Hero award at last night’s [Central South Business Awards 2026](#), after staff

and students impressed the judges with a wide range of voluntary community work. Nescot has been part of the community for 70 years, getting involved in countless initiatives, from cleaning storm debris and transforming a local underpass, to donating expertise, food and funding to those in need.

Students are encouraged to use their skills to make a difference locally. Art & Design students painted an incredible mural to transform a dirty underpass. Plumbing students stepped in to help a local resident who had been scammed after her boiler broke. Media students made a promotional film for a music therapy charity, and Hair & Beauty students ran a pop-up salon for children undergoing cancer treatment at the Royal Marsden.

Other recent projects at the college include supporting Ukrainian refugees to improve their English, partnering with a food bank, and running a summer school with Wates for 40 pupils at risk of leaving education with few prospects – aiming to help them into employment or training.

The college has also partnered with the Royal Society for Blind Children and Dorton College to provide facilities for young people who are blind or visually impaired in Surrey. Nescot was recently awarded Silver in the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme, and students and staff have raised thousands for charity including their two chosen charities – The Royal Marsden and CALM.

Julie Kapsalis MBE, Principal and CEO at Nescot said: “Nescot is at the heart of the community, so it’s important the college has a positive impact on local people, charities and the environment. We aim to empower staff and students to be compassionate, taking on projects that matter to them. We also want to demonstrate to students that their time and skills can be used as a force for good. I’m incredibly proud that we’re now officially a ‘Community Hero’ as I see people’s kindness in action every day.”

The Central South Business Awards celebrate the exceptional achievements of businesses across the region. The annual awards, in association with Business South, acknowledge those businesses and individuals that have gone above and beyond, achieving great results, inspiring others and demonstrating best practice. Entry is open to businesses based in Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Surrey, West Sussex and Dorset.

Nescot offers a wide range of college courses for school leavers and adults, including Animal Care, Business, Computing and IT, Construction, Performing Arts, Travel & Tourism, Childcare, Health & Social Care and Beauty Therapy. To find out more about studying at Nescot call 020 8394 3038, visit [www.nescot.ac.uk](http://www.nescot.ac.uk), or email [adviceteam@nescot.ac.uk](mailto:adviceteam@nescot.ac.uk)

NESCOT



Staff and students from Nescot with the newly painted underpass they worked on.

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## 500 patients buried in Epsom’s asylum cemetery no longer forgotten

18 June 2026



A team of researchers volunteering for the local charity The Friends of Horton Cemetery have reached a milestone in their quest to write the histories of 9000 patients buried in the abandoned privately owned Horton Cemetery. The cemetery, reputed to be the largest asylum cemetery in Europe, is situated at the junction of Hook Road and Horton Lane. The story of Marjorie is the 500th published on the charity’s website

A discarded headstone rescued from a skip more than forty years ago led researchers to uncover the poignant story of a young woman buried at Horton Cemetery — and reconnect her memory with living family members.

Before the cemetery was sold by the NHS in 1983 to a property speculator, notices appeared in the local press informing relatives that they could reclaim the headstones of loved ones buried there. Families were warned that any memorials left behind would be destroyed.

At the time, an electrical engineer working on a project within the former Epsom hospital cluster discovered one such stone which had been thrown into a skip. Appalled at what he later described as a “blatant disregard” for somebody’s final resting place, he rescued the memorial and took it home for safekeeping.

Today, the headstone remains carefully preserved, with the hope that one day it may be returned to the cemetery where it

was originally intended to stand in perpetuity.

The inscription reads simply:

Marjorie Young  
14th September 1948  
Aged 27 years  
R.I.P.

As researchers from the Friends of Horton Cemetery began investigating Marjorie's life, they were astonished to discover that a relative was still alive and able to shed light on her tragic story.

The relative, whose mother was Marjorie's first cousin, said: "Your message is a welcome bolt from the blue. I can't believe that after all these years somebody is interested in Marjorie. I didn't know her but my mother so often talked about her. My mother died in 2015 but she still had nightmares about the life Marjorie led."

His words underline one of the central aims of the Friends of Horton Cemetery — ensuring that those buried in the former asylum cemetery are not forgotten.

Research into burial records revealed another heartbreaking detail. The cemetery register records that Marjorie was buried in grave 2892b alongside a "stillborn female child". Marjorie was buried with a stillborn child who researchers believe belonged to an unknown patient.

Such practices were sadly not uncommon. Before changes introduced during the 1980s, hospitals frequently arranged the burial of stillborn babies with little or no consultation with grieving parents. Often, infants were buried in existing graves within institutional cemeteries.

### **A Family Marked by Tragedy**

Marjorie's father, Charles Young, was born in 1894 to Harry Young and Ellen Fanny Young, née Chesterman. According to family recollections, Ellen gave birth to as many as 23 children, though only a handful survived infancy.

The family experienced repeated tragedy. In 1905, Charles's younger sister Minnie died after suffering an epileptic seizure during the night. An inquest heard that Minnie sometimes endured as many as thirteen fits a day. Researchers later discovered that Marjorie herself also suffered from epilepsy.

Charles married Ethel Mary Davis at St Augustine's Church in 1920.

### **A Childhood of Fear and Isolation**

Born on 10 June 1921, Marjorie was an only child. Family testimony has painted a troubling picture of her upbringing. Her cousin recalled stories passed down by his mother: "Marjorie was very clever and wanted to study. She was an only child so welcomed the company of my mother. As time went on it became clear to my mother that Marjorie was terrified, the reason being that her parents went out every night and left her alone in the dark. Neighbours talked of Marjorie standing at the window looking out in the dark.

"Eventually poor Marjorie had a breakdown and was admitted to hospital and my mother never saw her again."

Public records relating to Marjorie are scarce. In the 1939 Register, compiled at the outbreak of the Second World War, she was living in Lambeth and working as a civil servant for His Majesty's Office of Works, the government department responsible for public buildings.

The next surviving record appears nine years later.

On 14 September 1948, Marjorie died at Long Grove Hospital aged just 27. Her death certificate records broncho-pneumonia and exhaustion caused by epilepsy. She was buried at Horton Cemetery on 21 September 1948.

### **Someone Cared Enough to Remember**

Researchers believe one detail about Marjorie's story is especially important. She had a headstone.

At Horton Cemetery, where thousands were buried in unmarked graves, memorial stones were rare. Someone cared enough to arrange and pay for a marker. Someone completed the paperwork and ensured her resting place was acknowledged. It is also possible that family members attended her funeral.

For her surviving relative, the rediscovery of the headstone has brought comfort. "It is wonderful to hear that her gravestone survives and that has led to her being your 500th story. If only I could tell my mother. She would have been so pleased to know that somebody still cares about Marjorie.

"I think you've done a wonderful job and somehow righted some of the wrongs."

Today, the rescued headstone stands not only for Marjorie Young, but symbolically for the estimated 9,000 forgotten souls buried within Horton Cemetery.

Perhaps one day it will stand there once again.

More research stories can be found on the Horton Cemetery website at [Horton Cemetery](#)

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The Friends of Horton Cemetery seek to restore the cemetery to community ownership. The case for a compulsory purchase order was blocked by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. The charity now pins its hopes on a fresh approach

from the East Surrey Unitary Council. The charity has the support of Epsom and Ewell's MP Helen Maguire, who is engaging with the Ministry of Justice on the issue.

Theresa Keneflick-Conway

Related reports:

Friends of Horton Cemetery influence law reform

Epsom and Ewell's MP champion's Friends of Horton Cemetery mission on "Time to Talk Day"

Epsom's Horton Cemetery gets attention of two kinds

Petition to reclaim Horton Cemetery from property speculator

Local community gathered at Horton Cemetery

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## Epsom "Library of Things" Delayed by Council Stand-Off

18 June 2026



A volunteer-led scheme to open a "Library of Things" in Ewell has been delayed for months amid a stand-off between Surrey County Council (SCC) and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) over who has the authority to approve a key lease.

The project, led by the Epsom and Ewell Climate Action Network (eeCAN), aims to allow residents to borrow household tools and equipment rather than buy them—an initiative already operating successfully in other parts of Surrey. However, despite securing planning permission for an external storage unit at Bourne Hall in early April, the scheme remains unable to open to the public.

At the heart of the delay is confusion between the roles of the county and borough councils. SCC operates the library service within Bourne Hall and has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with eeCAN covering the delivery of the service. But the land and building are owned by EEBC, meaning any lease for the external storage facility must be agreed with the borough.

In correspondence seen by the Epsom and Ewell Times, a senior SCC officer states that the county council "would not be a contracting party nor is there a requirement for a formal approach from us," adding that any lease should be agreed directly with EEBC.

However, EEBC's Head of Property and Regeneration takes a different view. He explains that under his delegated authority he can only progress matters involving Surrey County Council, which he describes as the legal occupier of the Bourne Hall library space. He also cites legal obligations requiring any new lease to be openly marketed to ensure "Best Value," rather than agreed directly with a single organisation.

The result is an impasse: SCC says it is not required to initiate the lease, while EEBC says it cannot proceed in the way requested. Meanwhile, the community group finds itself unable to move forward.

William Ward, Chair and Co-founder of eeCAN, describes mounting frustration. Writing to both councils, he points to months of correspondence since December and says the group now has "many local residents who have already signed up... asking why the opening has been delayed and when they can borrow the donated items they need."

The delays have already forced the postponement of the scheme's planned launch around Earth Day, with construction of the storage unit also on hold pending agreement of the lease.

The situation also raises questions about consistency across Surrey. Ward notes that similar "Library of Things" schemes elsewhere in the county do not appear to have encountered the same requirement for formal inter-council processes, suggesting potential differences in how local authorities interpret their responsibilities.

For observers, the episode offers a practical illustration of the challenges inherent in Surrey's two-tier system of local government. Responsibilities for a single site are split between county and borough, with separate legal, operational and property roles. While each authority's position may be individually justifiable, the combined effect can be delay, duplication and uncertainty for community groups trying to deliver local services.

The issue comes at a time when Surrey is preparing to replace its current structure with unitary authorities. Proponents of reform argue that merging responsibilities into a single tier could reduce exactly this kind of confusion. Critics, however, warn that large new authorities risk becoming more remote from local needs.

In the case of the Bourne Hall Library of Things, the immediate concern is more practical. Without resolution between the

two councils, a project intended to promote sustainability, reduce household costs and strengthen community engagement remains on hold, it has been claimed.

Surrey County Council and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council joined forces in issuing a response to these claims. A spokesperson said:

*“Surrey County Council (SCC) Libraries enables external providers to operate a “Library of Things” service across the county. Under the agreed arrangements, all “Library of Things” providers are responsible for organising off-site storage for larger items, while smaller items may be stored within library buildings where space allows.*

*“Ewell Library is located at Bourne Hall, which Surrey County Council leases from Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (EEBC). As both the planning authority and freeholder of Bourne Hall, EEBC is responsible for approving any external storage within the grounds.*

*“Epsom and Ewell Climate Action Network was advised at an early stage that planning permission and landowner agreement would be required for an external store to house larger items. Planning permission was granted earlier this year, and the proposal will be presented to the next meeting of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council’s Environment Committee which is scheduled to take place on 23 June. Committee agreement is required before volunteers can manage the store.*

*“Both councils look forward to welcoming a new “Library of Things” to Ewell, building on the success already seen at Dorking, Godalming, Guildford and Haslemere Libraries, supporting residents to share resources and reduce waste.”*

Sam Jones - Reporter

