

Surrey prison failed IPP prisoner

23 December 2024



Staff at a Surrey prison failed to get medical attention for a prisoner who was reportedly found “naked on all fours, and barking like a dog” before he took his own life. Haydar Jefferies, 51, died in hospital on March 5 2023, after trying to kill himself in his cell at HMP Coldingley, Woking, a few days earlier.

An inquest jury found scores of failures contributed to Mr Jefferies’ death, amounting to neglect. Mr Jefferies’ mental health drastically deteriorated while he was waiting for parole and this was left untreated by staff responsible for his care, according to his family’s lawyers. The 51-year-old pub manager attempted suicide the day before his long-awaited parole hearing.

After being found guilty of an assault offence in 2006, Mr Jefferies served seven years of an Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentence, given to people considered ‘dangerous’ but the offence did not merit a life sentence.

Nearly ten years after his crime, Mr Jefferies was then recalled and sent back to prison in January 2022 on his IPP sentence. The allegation against Mr Jefferies was reportedly not backed up and the police decided no further action would be taken, within three months after being sent back to prison.

But due to the nature of the IPP sentence and the delays in the Parole Board decision-making, Mr Jefferies was forced to stay at the prison despite all charges being dropped nine months prior.

A Ministry of Justice spokesperson said: “Our thoughts remain with Haydar Jeffries’ friends and family. As with all deaths in custody, the Prison and Probation Ombudsman are investigating and we will respond to their report in due course.”

By the end of February 2023, Mr Jefferies was acutely psychotic, found by officers in his cell flushing his head down the toilet, naked on all fours, and barking like a dog.

Despite custodial staff noting major concerns over his mental health, they allegedly failed to seek any medical attention or even notify health care providers, according to the family’s lawyers Hodge Jones & Allen. Custodial staff allegedly failed to place him on constant supervision and/or take him to an external place of safety.

The jury duly found that Mr Jefferies’ IPP status and the delays in his parole hearing materially contributed to the development of his subsequent psychosis, Hodge Jones & Allen solicitors said.

Between his initial release and recall, Mr Jefferies had tried to rebuild his life, setting up his own pub and B&B with his husband, who sadly passed away in 2021.

Zhora Jefferies, Haydar’s mother, said: “After creating a wonderful life in the community, it is devastating to have witnessed how Haydar’s life was completely destroyed by the nature of his IPP sentence and the extensive delays he experienced when waiting to be released from prison.

“We had to watch our beloved son, brother and father succumb to the fear and paranoia that he was suffering with in the final weeks of his life. We, and Haydar himself, were all crying out for help and it was falling on deaf ears.

“Nothing can be done to bring Haydar back but our biggest hope is that lessons can be learned from his experience. Haydar brought so much love to our family and we will always be grateful for the time we had with him.”

A few months into Mr Jefferies’ recall to HMP Bullingdon, in early 2022, it was confirmed the allegations against him were no longer being pursued. But he remained in prison for another year, waiting for authorised release by the Parole Board. An application to determine his release on papers was declined, and various delays led to his parole hearing being rescheduled to March 2023.

Mr Jefferies was then transferred to HMP Coldingley on 28 December 2022. By 12 February 2023, he asked to be segregated for his own safety. The jury reportedly heard evidence from a consultant psychiatrist that after being segregated, Mr Jefferies’ mental health steeply deteriorated.

By around 18 February 2023, he was suffering from a severe psychotic illness which required timely psychiatric assessment, treatment and transfer to a prison with a healthcare wing.

The jury heard that, during his subsequent 10 days in segregation, Haydar made multiple concerning comments to both prison officers and his family symptomatic of his deteriorating ill-health. This included his intensifying delusional beliefs that prison officers were colluding with prisoners to sexually abuse and kill him, and that they were pumping gas into his cell.

Mr Jefferies’ family made numerous phone calls to the prison with serious concerns over his welfare. But none of the calls were appropriately documented in prison records or passed onto the Mental Health Team.

The jury concluded there was a “systematic failure on behalf of the Ministry of Justice” that there was no policy for recording and sharing information from concerned family members, according to Hodge Jones & Partners.

Cormac McDonough, a civil liberties solicitor at Hodge Jones & Allen, who represented the family at the inquest said: “It is extremely rare for a jury to reach a finding of neglect in this context, which demonstrates how fundamentally failed Haydar was while under the care of prison staff at HMP Coldingley.

“It was evident that Haydar was suffering due to the unjust circumstances of his IPP recall and that this contributed to his deteriorating mental state. Staff at the prison failed entirely to recognise his deterioration and to take appropriate steps to keep him safe. His family made repeated attempts to get Haydar the help he patently needed, after receiving multiple distressing phone calls, but no action was taken.”

Epsom led crime gang banded up

23 December 2024



An organised crime group who carried out multiple burglaries, a vicious assault, and stole more than £215,000 worth of high-value cars have been jailed for a total of twenty seven and a half years.

In 2023, police identified a series of residential burglaries which could be linked via a distinctive Audi A8, which was one of just fifteen in the country. The Audi was then seen at a petrol station with a wonky number plate which didn't match its genuine details.

Soon after, a second car suspected of being linked to the series was identified by a distinctive GB sticker on the back. However, the challenge remained to identify the people involved and a complex investigation began which used a variety of tactics to uncover the full extent of their crimes.

Between June and August 2023, members of the group burgled multiple homes and were also linked to other offences including keyless car theft, where vehicles were taken close to the owners' house or from the front drive. Areas targeted included Epsom and Walton-On-Thames in Surrey and Croydon, Chessington, New Malden, Raynes Park and Surbiton in the Metropolitan area.

They would scope out a target vehicle, and either commit a burglary to steal the keys or use illegal devices to gain keyless entry. They would then drive the vehicle away and park it elsewhere for a short time to see if any tracking devices had been activated.

In the meantime, they would identify similar vehicles which were insured, source illegal fake number plates, and fit them to the stolen vehicles to try and evade detection. On some occasions the stolen cars would ultimately end up at 'chop shops', where they were broken up into parts and sold for profit.

During the burglaries at both residential properties and some shops, they caused thousands of pounds worth of damage and on one occasion, three of the men (Harry Mackay, Rico Persechino and Jason Connors) – assaulted the occupier of an address with weapons.

After gathering a body of evidence, on 29 August 2023 police proactively apprehended Rico Persechino and Harry Mackay outside a shop in East Grinstead. Mackay tried to escape by running inside and heading to the staff door but he was swiftly caught. Officers later found a keyless car theft device that he'd tried to discard inside the shop.

The police investigation used a variety of tactics including identifying cloned number plates, tracking vehicles through ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) and matching the suspects' descriptions and clothing to CCTV footage. Often when committing a burglary at a shop, the group brought a large white carrier bag to carry the stolen goods and a comparison of CCTV footage enabled officers to tie offences to them due to the appearance of this same bag each time.

One victim of the group's criminal activities said "The burglary was very distressing for both my partner and myself, and we felt a significant impact after the unwelcome intrusion from these criminals. I was very angry and upset and when I met with detectives the following day, I was close to tears and that's not in my nature. The thought of strangers going through your personal possessions, and the damage they caused to gain access to my property was scary. My partner lost family jewellery that had been passed down through generations. After the robbery I said I wanted to move, and I still might as this has had a long-term effect on me. I'm pleased to see the sentence this group were handed, and I was very impressed with the brilliant work of the police officers and detectives dealing with this case, they gave me faith throughout."

Lead investigator, Detective Inspector Daniel Voller, shared: "This was a sophisticated and organised operation and exposing the full extent of their crimes was only possible thanks to the hard work and diligence of everyone involved, from detectives to intelligence teams.

These thieves had no regard for anyone but themselves and escalated their offending from stealing cars outside homes to breaking inside and committing a serious assault. We have worked relentlessly over many months to prepare a strong case against them and I'm pleased our efforts have resulted in getting them behind bars."

Following a trial at Guildford Crown Court on Monday 9 December, brothers Harry, Frankie and Stevey MacKay appeared along with Jason Connors and Rico Persechino for sentencing.

- Harry Mackay, 34 (DOB 27/04/1990), from Epsom pleaded guilty to Conspiracy to Steal Motor Vehicles, Conspiracy to Burgle and Conspiracy to Commit Robbery and was sentenced to 8 years.
- Frankie Mackay, 35 (DOB 24/05/1989), from Epsom, pleaded guilty to Conspiracy to Steal Motor Vehicles and was sentenced to 39 months.
- Stevey Mackay, 32 (DOB 08/02/1992), from Kingston-Upon-Thames pleaded guilty to Steal Motor Vehicles and was sentenced to 39 months
- Jason Connors, 29 (DOB 25/08/1995) from Croydon pleaded guilty to Conspiracy to Commit Robbery and was sentenced to 5 years and 4 months
- Rico Persechino, 35 (DOB 01/04/1989) from Kingston-Upon-Thames pleaded guilty to Conspiracy to Steal Motor Vehicles, Conspiracy to Burgle and Conspiracy to Commit Robbery and was sentenced to 7.5 years

Custody photos of Epsom brothers Harry and Frankie Mackay

Woking child murder lessons for Surrey's agencies

23 December 2024



Authorities must face serious questions about years of missed chances to prevent Sara Sharif's death.

Sara was murdered aged 10 years old by her father Urfan Sharif and stepmother Beinash Batool. Her uncle Faisal Malik was convicted of causing or allowing her death.

Local authorities are legally responsible for looking after and safeguarding all children, they also have a statutory duty to investigate concerns about welfare. A local child safeguarding practice review will be carried out to examine the missed opportunities and if more could have been done to prevent Sara's death.

Rachael Wardell, Executive Director for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning at Surrey County Council, said: "We are resolute in our commitment to protecting children, and we are determined to play a full and active part in the forthcoming review alongside partner agencies, to thoroughly understand the wider circumstances surrounding Sara's tragic death."

The safeguarding review will bring together the police, social carers, education and health services amongst others to consider the practice of all the agencies

involved with the family to identify any learning. The safeguarding review, led by an independent author, will also look at all professionals who had contact with the family.

Unlike a trial or coroner hearing, the review will not hold individuals or organisations to account but looks at how general system change can prevent or reduce the risk of similar instances.

“The focus of the trial has been on the evidence needed to secure the convictions of those responsible for Sara’s death,” Ms Wardell said. “This means that until the independent safeguarding review concludes, a complete picture cannot be understood or commented upon.”

Her father had multiple and repeated contact with Surrey Police and social services before he was charged with murdering the 10-year-old girl last summer. Just a few months before, Sara’s school referred her to social services but the case was closed within days.

After the guilty verdicts, and opening the safeguarding review, the case will provoke difficult questions whether Sara’s tragic death could have been prevented.

Children’s Commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza said the case highlighted a “profound weaknesses in our child protection system”. She called for a raft of changes including “proper oversight” for children, like Sara, being home schooled.

Dame Rachel said: “There can be no doubt that Sara was failed in the starkest terms by the safety net of services around her. Even before she was born, she was known to social care – and yet she fell off their radar so entirely that by the time she died, she was invisible to them all.

“We can have no more reviews, no more strategies, no more debate. When we say ‘never again’, we have to mean it – let that be Sara’s legacy.”

As Sara started school, her abuse went largely undetected or unactioned. The court heard Sara turned up at school with bruises on her face in June 2022 and again in March 2023, despite attempts to cover them in a hijab.

Although Sara never confided in teacher what was going on, a referral was made to Surrey County Council’s social services after the second incident- only to be shut down within days, the court heard.

By April 2023, Sara was taken out of school and the violence against the 10-year-old girl escalated in the final weeks of her life. Sharif admitted to the court he repeatedly beat her with a cricket bat, metal pole and mobile phone, throttling her and even hit her in the stomach while she lay dying.

Responding to the verdict, Ms Wardell from Surrey County Council said: “Sara’s death is incredibly distressing and we share in the profound horror at the terrible details that have emerged during the trial. We cannot begin to comprehend the suffering that poor Sara endured at the hands of members of her family who should have loved, protected, and cared for her.”

“What is clear from the evidence we’ve heard in court is that the perpetrators went to extreme lengths to conceal the truth from everyone.”

Epsom landlord fined for neglect

23 December 2024



A bedsit landlord who repeatedly ignored warnings to fix flats dubbed “cold”, “damp”, “filthy”, and a “firetrap” has been hit with a court bill approaching £32,000.

Epsom Pars Limited, which runs a 21-room house in multiple occupation (HMO) near Epsom Downs was ordered to pay the fines and costs by Staines Magistrates’ Court after they pleaded guilty to 48 criminal charges.

The case was brought forward by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council after the landlord repeatedly ignored warnings to carry out improvement works to the property.

Councillor Rich Michalowski, executive member for place, planning and regulatory services said: “This case underscores the importance of landlords being held accountable to ensure tenants are living in safe, well-maintained homes.

“Reigate and Banstead enforcement teams, armed with legal powers, will continue to take action against those who fail to meet the legal standards, ensuring that unsafe and unfit housing has no place in our borough.”

The company was ordered to pay fines, costs, and a victim surcharge totalling £31,840. The charges included various forms of disrepair and fire safety offences, the council said.

The prosecution comes on the back of months of exchanges between the landlord and the council.

During that time officers from the private sector housing team were said to have repeatedly warned the landlord against its continued non-compliance that left people living in “cold”, “damp”, “filthy” “firetrap” of a property.

During sentencing, magistrates spoke of the “repeated, unacceptable non-compliance” and noted that the problems identified had put tenants at risk, according to a council statement.

Image RBBC

Epsom College murder inquest

23 December 2024



A coroner has called on the government to tighten gun-licensing laws after the former head of Epsom College and her daughter were murdered.

Emma Pattison, 45, was found dead alongside her seven-year-old daughter, Lettie, in the grounds of the Surrey school on 5 February 2023. Mrs Pattison’s husband, George Pattison, 39, is believed to have shot them at their home before killing himself.

The inquest, which concluded in July, found that George Pattison was legally allowed a shotgun under a firearms licence, but he had lied about his medical history in renewing his application. Richard Travers, senior coroner for Surrey, warned in a Prevention of Future Deaths (PFD) report that “a risk of other deaths will continue to exist” unless gun ownership laws are tightened.

Between 2019 and 2021 George Pattison used an online service to prescribe him “significant amounts” of the drug propranolol to help him with symptoms of anxiety, according to the coroner’s report. This was without the knowledge of his GP.

He was then able to lie to Surrey Police about his mental health condition during safeguarding checks on his gun-licence renewal application in 2022. When he was asked if he had been diagnosed or treated for medical conditions, which included ‘Depression or anxiety’, he responded ‘No’. Although his GP’s details were included in the form, they had no knowledge of George Pattison’s use of online medical services.

Coroner Travers has raised the alarm that online doctors can be used as a loophole for those seeking a gun licence to avoid medical health checks which are meant to be safeguards. These medical checks followed from a PFD report in 2019 where a mother and daughter, Christine and Lucy Lee, were killed after police failed to assess the risk of returning guns back to John Lowe.

He also raised concerns that controlling and coercive behaviour should be considered in gun licensing after a direct plea from Emma Pattison’s family during the hearing. Coroner Travers called for police leaders and the government to explore how licensing authorities could obtain details about an applicant’s history of coercive controlling behaviour.

George Pattison had first gained a licence in 2012, which was then renewed in 2016 and finally 2022. Surrey Police were notified of a domestic violence incident in 2016, where it was alleged that Emma Pattison had assaulted her husband. The issue was investigated and, according to the PFD report, the shotgun certificate was temporarily removed, but later returned.

Coroner Travers highlighted it appeared there was no consideration by Surrey Police “whether this might have been an example of coercive controlling behaviour on the part of Mr Pattison”. But, he added, there was evidence of later domestic abuse or coercive controlling behaviour. This evidence did not seem to be brought to the attention of the Licensing Officer when Mr Pattison applied to renew his licence.

Under current guidance, a GP has to confirm to the police whether an applicant has any relevant medical conditions, including mental health conditions. GPs often have digital markers on patient records if they have a gun licence to help monitor physical and mental health.

The PFD report has been sent to the Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, the health secretary, Wes Streeting, and the chief constable of Surrey police, Tim De Meyer. Coroner Travers has called on the government departments to take action to prevent future deaths. He has also sent it to the National Police Chiefs’ Council and British Medical Association. The authorities have a duty to respond to PFDs within 56 days.

Image - Epsom College: Naveed Barakzai/Maxal Photography. Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.5 Generic license

Surrey Police’s response to national disorder

23 December 2024



Following the tragic events in Southport last week and the subsequent violent disorder we have seen across the country, we are providing our communities with an update on our policing approach.

While at this stage, in Surrey, we have not seen the levels of disorder, protests, or reports of hate crime that have been seen across other parts of the country, this has understandably caused concerns within our communities.

Since we first saw the increase in violent disorder across the country and where specific communities have been targeted, local officers have increased their visibility and engagement where we know that residents, businesses, and faith leaders are feeling vulnerable. Patrols have been increased in key areas across the county so that our communities have a visible presence from us. We recognise that this is a challenging time for all our communities, and we are committed to providing reassurances to those who may be concerned for their safety.

We are already seeing an increase in reports of misinformation and disinformation, which we know can be extremely concerning for our communities. Our officers have a vital role to play in reassuring those who feel concerned, vulnerable or unsafe in our county, and the spreading of this misinformation and disinformation can cause further alarm. We would encourage the public to not only challenge what they read online and consider whether it could be misinformation, but also not to share this further on social media.

If you do see information circulating online about possible disorder, please report these to us so that we can investigate and respond. You can also approach local officers when they are in the area to raise any concerns or ask any questions that you may have. If you would prefer to report information anonymously, you can contact independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. In an emergency, always dial 999.

We are continually reviewing the information we receive around reports of potential disorder or crime. Our policing response will always work alongside our priority of ensuring our communities feel safe and supported by us.

Chief Superintendent Graham Barnett said: “We would like to reassure all our communities that we are prepared should there be disorder in Surrey. We have specialist teams and resources in place to make sure we can continue to protect our communities while we respond to reports of disorder. We will continue to facilitate peaceful protest, but violent disorder will not be tolerated, and we will respond to this robustly. Arrests will be made, and charges will be brought to those responsible.

“I would like to thank our communities for their continued support as we work together to protect the public, provide reassurances around our policing approach, and robustly tackle any disorder we may see in our county.”

Image: TheEssexTech Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

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

23 December 2024



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

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

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

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

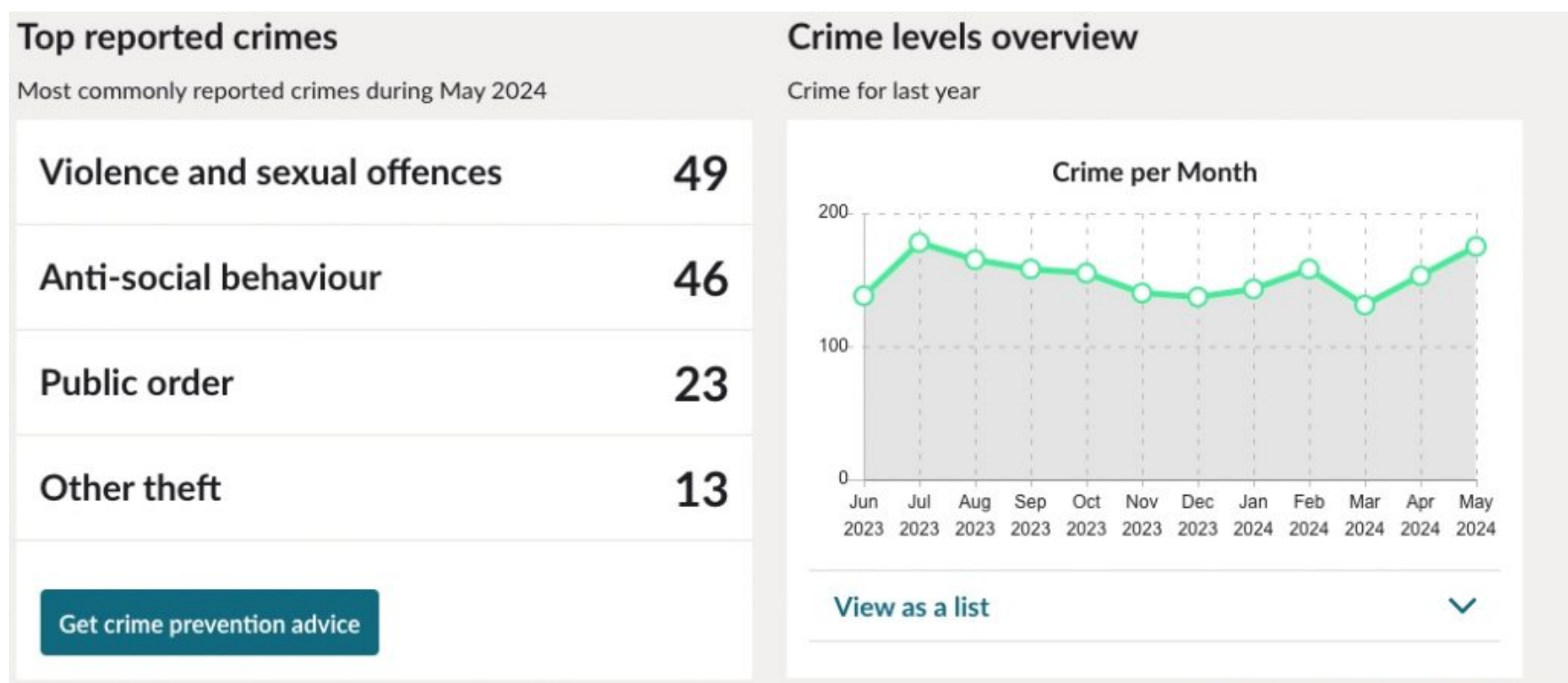
To be clear the photo is genuine, entirely unstaged and fails to show the true extent of the decline in standards and the acceptance of criminality and anti-social behaviour within 300 metres in all directions. And so it is genuinely perplexing why our community fails to confront activities such as those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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

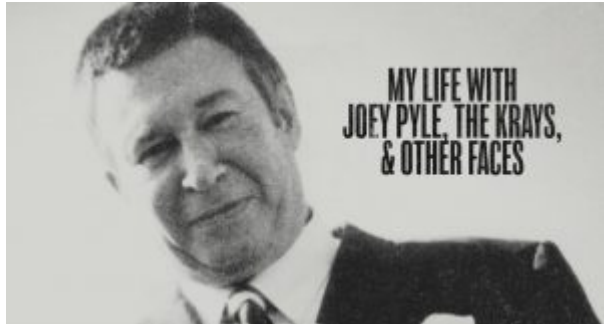
Whilst Epsom is not New York, the problems it faces today would appear to be similar to those of 1980s New York, with graffiti, fly-tipping, vermin, and a general disregard for law and enforcement, which then leads to open drug dealing and finally street violence. As the Mayor of New York at the time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

So the real question becomes can local residents and businesses introduce practical, appropriate and effective solutions to enable and assist our local politicians and enforcement officers in carrying out their duties to us, or is our future already mortgaged to decline, filth and ever increasing criminality and anti-social behaviour?

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

Crime story of an Epsom workhouse baby

23 December 2024



Born 1946 in the Epsom Union Workhouse **Ronnie Field** lived a life of crime. Together with local Epsom author **Martin Knight** he tells his story in **Nefarious - A Life in Crime**. Released in May this year it was Daily Mail Book of the Week and number one in the Amazon True Crime chart.

Ronnie Field was a prolific armed robber, close ally of crime boss Joey Pyle for forty years, friend and fellow prisoner of the Kray twins – he was the last man to stand trial with a Kray brother. Ronnie was also the inaugural prisoner in the notorious Belmarsh Unit – the “super” prison within a prison.

This is the first time Ronnie has told his incredible story. Nefarious is a raw, honest and sometimes humorous account of an abusive childhood, almost inevitable journey into criminality and life sharing the fast lane of armed robbery with the real-life Sweeney and on to the even more dangerous and murky waters of south London’s gangland.

Offering fresh Kray material, unseen photographs and untold stories regarding some of the world’s most infamous gangsters, Nefarious is an incredible first-hand account from one of the last voices of a generation.



Martin Knight was born in the borough of Epsom & Ewell. Martin has had a long career in newspapers, firstly with the Financial Times, and then with various media monitoring agencies he has launched. Martin is also an author of local histories and has co-written autobiographies. He is a shareholder in Early Morning Media Ltd and publisher London Books Ltd. He was a co-founder of and serves the editorial board of the Epsom and Ewell Times.

Nefarious – a Life in Crime can be purchased via Amazon [HERE](#).

Footage of Epsom College murders aftermath not for idle police viewing

23 December 2024



An ex-serving Surrey Police officer has been banned from the profession for gross misconduct after viewing body-worn camera footage of a “significant local and national case” without a legitimate reason.

The Local Democracy Reporting Service understands that the footage was of the moment the headteacher of Epsom College was found dead. Surrey Police have not confirmed which specific footage was viewed, however the date of the footage aligns with the date that officers were called to Epsom College.

Emma Pattison, 45, was found dead alongside her seven-year-old Lettie, in the grounds of the Surrey school, on 5 February 2023. Mrs Pattison’s husband, George Pattison, is believed to have shot them at their home before killing himself.

The former Surrey Police cop, Mr Baseer Ahmed, admitted he watched the body-worn video (BWV) footage of the serious incident on 5 February, but denies he did so without a policing purpose.

The police misconduct hearing panel, held July 1, found Mr Ahmed breached professional standards as he unnecessarily watched footage of the police attending the scene, where the victims were found.

Professional standards state that there must be an express policing purpose to access body-worn camera footage, to ensure it is not accessed unnecessarily.

Mr Ahmed watched some- not all- of the footage on February 7, days after the major incident was reported, and picked up by newspapers. He was not given specific instructions to look at the footage nor carry out any enquiries, according to the misconduct report.

A Staff Officer for Chief Superintendent Budd since 2022, Mr Ahmed’s role included accessing additional information for his Chief Superintendent. Working in West Surrey, the panel noted it was not in this instance appropriate for Mr Ahmed to find out information from other divisions.

The panel found Mr Ahmed did not appear to be watching the video as part of a genuine work activity. For example, he made no notes, did not attempt to discover the location of the incident or tell any senior colleagues about it.

Although admitting he watched part of the video footage, Mr Ahmed has continually denied not having a justifiable policing purpose for accessing the footage. He also denies a breach of the standards and that his conduct amounts to gross misconduct.

The panel was not satisfied and Mr Ahmed was found to have breached standards of professional behaviour, confidentiality, orders and instructions. The report

reads: “It is important to remember the high standards that members of the public rightly expect Police Officers to adhere to, the extremely difficult circumstances being faced by family members in this particular case and the likely effect that unnecessary viewing of the footage would have on them.”

The panel agreed this amounted to gross misconduct and it would harm the public’s view of the police service for watching footage of a major incident without legitimate purpose. This was aggravated by Mr Ahmed acting contrary to national guidance, without any specific instructions and continuing asserting he had valid policing reasons to access the footage.

Mr Ahmed resigned from Surrey Police on December 15, 2023 – 10 months from the incident- with his last day being January 15 this year. If he was still a serving officer, the panel said he would have been dismissed to maintain public confidence in and to uphold high standards in policing

Whilst Mr Ahmed attended the two Pre-hearings, he did not attend the misconduct hearing due to ‘personal reasons’ he cited in an email.

Head of Professional Standards, Superintendent Andy Rundle said: “The public rightly expect that police officers behave at all times with integrity and respect.

“Ex-officer Ahmed breached this trust when he looked at body worn footage of a crime scene, despite having no policing purpose. This behaviour is not acceptable, and a thorough professional standards investigation was launched.”

A full inquest into the deaths of George, Emma and Lettie Pattison is due to take place later this month on July 30.

Surrey police said they are not officially confirming what body worn footage Mr Ahmed viewed due to “other ongoing judicial processes” that have not yet been concluded. The full inquests into the deaths are expected to take place on July 30. Surrey Police confirmed it is the Epsom College incident “off the record”.

Image - Epsom College: Naveed Barakzai/Maxal Photography, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.5 Generic license

Bearing the balls of Derby week in Langley Vale

23 December 2024



Residents of **Langley Vale**, an estate adjacent to the renowned Epsom Racecourse, have expressed growing frustration and concern over repeated incidents of anti-social behavior and vandalism coinciding with the annual **Derby week**. The community’s grievances were vividly shared through a series of social media posts, highlighting a range of disturbances and a perceived lack of adequate police response.

One resident described a troubling encounter with three males, one of whom had a cast, yet lamented the police’s apparent indifference. “This is serious now, not just knock down ginger, but they don’t seem to be taking it seriously. They should be going on site and looking for these culprits. The police should be patrolling this whole area of the downs anyway. They know we get trouble every year; a burnt-out car last year on the downs and theft,” the post read.

Another resident voiced their anger over the disruption Derby week brings to the village, accusing the police of failing to ensure community safety. “The whole village gets held hostage this time of year, and the police don’t do enough at all to make the residents feel safe,” they stated.

The most alarming incident reported involved the shattering of bedroom windows by ball bearings, suspected to have been launched with a catapult, between 10-11 PM. Fortunately, the children’s rooms were spared. The attack occurred at the top of Grosvenor Road, near the bridle path. “Reported it to the police, obviously, but if anyone has had similar treatment or saw anything suspicious, can you let me know or report it to 101,” the resident urged.

Further reports of catapult and ball bearing damage surfaced within the village, including a patio door destroyed within a half-hour span. The resident noted the impressive accuracy of the attack, considering their home’s secluded position next to the woods. They identified a pattern, suggesting the culprits were targeting homes from the bridle path at the top of Rosebery, Grosvenor, and Beaconsfield Roads, areas supposedly under police dispersal orders. “Despite these boys being exactly in the same place three evenings and nights running, no police presence was seen at the top of the village,” the post concluded.

As Derby week continues, Langley Vale residents remain on edge, calling for more proactive measures from law enforcement to protect their community from further disturbances.

Inspector **Kelly Clifton-Sinclair**, Borough Commander for Epsom and Ewell, said: “We are aware of reports of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage in the Langley Vale area. We know that these crimes can have a serious effect on the local community, and I would like to reassure residents that we are investigating all possible lines of enquiry so that we can work to identify those responsible. Since the reports were made to us, we have had officers patrolling the local area, proactively speaking to the local community and those affected, to make sure residents feel safe.

“If you are a victim of crime, or have recently been a victim of crime, please report it to us so that we can investigate it thoroughly. Each report helps us to build our understanding of crime in the area so that we can respond, work to deter crime, and help keep our communities safe. If you have any information that might assist our investigation, please get in touch with us via Messenger quoting PR/ 45240061106.”

Little solace for Guildford from fraud report

23 December 2024



Weak governance and poor scrutiny at Guildford Borough Council created a ‘quick fix culture’ that allowed potentially millions of pounds to be defrauded from the public purse while vulnerable housing tenants suffered, a new report has found.

The council has apologised unreservedly and pledged to adopt every recommendation – of which there are more than 70 – after a Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) review found its practices posed a serious risk to residents.

The report, released on Tuesday May 7, covered how the culture at the council created an environment where housing budgets were able to skyrocket and pushed the authority towards bankruptcy.

It covers a general overview of the stages that lead to an arrest, two council staff members being suspended, and five agency workers having their contracts

terminated.

In February 2022, the council agreed to invest a total of £24.5m to bring its housing stock up to standard and a three-year contract with a value of £5.4m was agreed for testing and inspection. In less than three years that ballooned to £18.9m spent – a £13.5m overspend.

There was an increase in complaints concerning repairs and enhancements from tenants, the review found. This happened while the Housing Surveyor Team was vacant and had no permanent surveyors.

The report read: “This lack of in-house expertise and capacity meant that the council often didn’t inspect and check work and were reliant upon agency staff. There was also incompleteness of data which compounded matters.” It added: “After making initial enquiries, it came to light that there was concern regarding risk to the council and the following matters were raised:

That work may have been ordered when it wasn’t necessary. *That work may have been ordered, invoiced and paid for when it was not completed at all or *Not to a satisfactory standard. *That duplicate invoices may have been submitted and paid for the same work. *That works may have been ordered and undertaken that were not the responsibility of the council.

This triggered a criminal investigation in August 2023 resulting in the suspension of two employees and five agency workers having their contracts terminated.

Whistleblowers first raised the alarm in September 2022 but it was not until 2023 that serious action into how housing budgets of about £5.4m a year had ballooned to more than £17m.

The initial investigation was conducted by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council’s anti-fraud unit before being handed over to the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit of the Police.

The council then ordered a series of reviews, with the results published late on Tuesday, May 7 – although the allegations of potential fraud were outside the review’s scope.

Despite that shortcoming, the review did find there was serious failure to follow due process in the procurement and management of housing maintenance contacts.

The council has now published an in-depth improvement plan, with more than 70 recommendations, to address every finding from the two reports, and, it says, to ensure it provides services that residents and businesses can be proud of.

Leader of the Council, Councillor **Julia McShane**, said: ‘The people of Guildford deserve better from their council and for that we give a heartfelt apology and a commitment to put right the long-standing issues which we have uncovered. We have invited scrutiny and embrace accountability and will not rest until we have a resilient, well managed council of which we can all be proud.’

Deputy leader, Cllr **Tom Hunt**, said: ‘We apologise unreservedly to the residents and taxpayers of Guildford. The SOLACE reports identify serious issues around the council’s governance, operations, and controls. This is unacceptable. We are utterly determined to root out every problem and to put matters right. The people of Guildford deserve nothing less.’

Pedro Wrobel, chief executive of Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils, said: “I recognise everything that the SOLACE reports identify, and accept all the findings in full. This is not okay, and I came here to deal with it. Over the past two and half months, we have been developing a comprehensive Improvement Plan to address the issues at Guildford Borough Council. It addresses every recommendation from these reports and goes further.

“I am delighted with the appointment of the Independent Assurance Panel. It is critical that we make everything open and transparent. We are here to do the right thing, not the easy thing. I am determined to ensure the council is sustainable, delivers excellent value for money, and provides services that our residents and businesses can be proud of.

“We will not do this alone. I look forward to working with partners and our communities and businesses to make Guildford a brilliant place to live, work and do business.”

A police investigation and an employment investigation carried out by an external law firm are continuing, the council said.

The Local Democracy Reporting Service has read through the documents with this being the first of several stories to be written about the findings.

Further stories will look in greater detail at the steps the council is taking, the impact of the merger with Waverley Borough Council and the views of the community and residents.

Related reports:

Police probe abuse of public funds

Good money goes after bad

Avoid ticket scams this summer

23 December 2024



Residents are being warned to be aware of online ticket scams that are catching out eager concert-goers ahead of the summer.

Surrey Trading Standards is pleased to announce the launch of a campaign aimed at curbing event ticket fraud across both counties. With a number of residents falling victim to deceptive practices when purchasing event tickets online, this initiative seeks to protect residents from financial loss and disappointment.

Event **ticket fraud** involves unscrupulous individuals exploiting the high demand for tickets to concerts, sporting events, and other popular attractions. Fraudulent practices include the sale of counterfeit tickets, non-existent tickets, and tickets with inflated prices. Such schemes not only result in financial losses for consumers but also tarnish the reputation of legitimate event organisers and venues.

Surrey Trading Standards has already witnessed online scammers attempting to exploit people wanting to see concerts by Taylor Swift, and the Foo Fighters. Future scams may include Glastonbury and sporting events such as Wimbledon and this summer’s Paris Olympics.

Steve Ruddy, Head of Trading Standards at Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards said: “*Music and sports fans are at risk of huge rises in online ticket fraud. Criminal activity selling fake tickets is becoming more and more prevalent online and we urge people to avoid disappointment by being cautious when purchasing tickets for all sporting and music events.*

“Ticket fraud not only harms consumers financially but also undermines trust in the marketplace. Our campaign aims to empower our residents with the knowledge and resources they need to make informed ticket purchases. By raising awareness, we can create a safer environment for consumers to enjoy live events across Buckinghamshire, Surrey and beyond.”

Tips for purchasing event tickets online

- Only buy direct from legitimate ticket sites
- Always use a debit or credit card when you buy tickets online (not bank transfer). This helps to protect your money should something go wrong

- Be extra cautious when purchasing tickets advertised by individuals on social media Fraudsters use social media to advertise tickets that don't exist. If you're looking for a ticket, always search for it yourself from a trusted source
- Low prices and seemingly great deals are often used to disguise scams. However, if demand for tickets is high or an event is sold out, fraudsters can charge more to trick desperate buyers
- Check the details of the site you are buying from and before entering payment ensure the web address starts with https and that there's a padlock icon in the browser bar
- Check the vendor is a member of the **Society of Ticket Agents and Retailers (STAR)**

Residents are encouraged to report their concerns about event ticket fraud to the **Citizens Advice consumer service** on 0808 223 1133. The helpline takes all enquiries on behalf of Trading Standards across England and Wales and will pass the report to the relevant Trading Standards team.

Alternatively, if you have been a victim and lost money, please report to Action Fraud at **actionfraud.police.uk** or by calling 0300 123 2040.