

Arrests from Epsom's April disorder

5 May 2026



Surrey Police have confirmed that **10 people have now been arrested** as part of an ongoing investigation into violent disorder in Epsom town centre earlier this month.

The arrests relate to incidents on **Wednesday 15 April and Monday 20 April**, when protests escalated into disorder in the town centre.

In a detailed update published on 5 May by Surrey Police, officers set out the ages and home areas of those arrested, showing a mix of local individuals and others from outside the immediate area.

The arrests were carried out over several days:

On 17 April, an 18-year-old man from Banstead was arrested on suspicion of public order offences.

On 20 April, a 23-year-old man from Richmond-upon-Thames was arrested on suspicion of public order offences and was further arrested on suspicion of criminal damage.

On 21 April:

- a 21-year-old man from Epsom was arrested on suspicion of public order offences
- a 20-year-old man of no fixed address was arrested on suspicion of public order offences
- a 15-year-old boy from Purley was arrested on suspicion of public order offences and further arrested on suspicion of criminal damage

On 23 April:

- a 12-year-old boy from Epsom was arrested on suspicion of public order offences
- a 12-year-old girl from Epsom was arrested on suspicion of public order offences
- an 11-year-old boy from Epsom was arrested on suspicion of public order offences

On 24 April, a 16-year-old boy from Leatherhead was arrested on suspicion of public order offences.

On 27 April, a 20-year-old man from Epsom was arrested on suspicion of public order offences.

Police confirmed that **all 10 individuals have been released on bail with conditions**, and that enquiries are continuing.

The latest update follows an earlier statement on 23 April in which five arrests were initially confirmed. At that stage, those detained were identified as a 15-year-old boy from Purley, an 18-year-old man from Banstead, a 20-year-old man of no fixed address, a 21-year-old man from Epsom, and a 23-year-old man from Richmond-upon-Thames.

Detective Chief Superintendent Jon Groenen said: "Whilst we support the right to lawful protest, we will investigate those suspected of committing criminal offences and causing damage, disruption, and disorder.

"We continue to review footage to identify those responsible and will take appropriate action against them."

The investigation remains ongoing, with officers continuing to examine CCTV, social media and body-worn video footage.

Sam Jones - Reporter



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Cleaning up crime hotspot in Epsom

5 May 2026



Last weekend, volunteers from Rotary, local residents' groups and community organisations gathered behind Epsom Centre to clean a small alleyway that has become a hotspot for litter and anti-social behaviour after dark.

The clean up may have taken place in daylight, but the focus was firmly on what happens at night.

Figures from the police crime map reveal a worrying pattern. Between January and August 2025 alone, **at least 50 crimes** of all types were reported on or near this small stretch of road, including 6 violence and sexual offences, plus vehicle crime, anti-social behaviour, drug offences and public order incidents. The exact locations are harder to detail, so this is an area on the map. The problem is not isolated. In October 2025, the area saw a spike of **9 crimes in a single month**, 3 of which were linked to violence or sexual offences. Reported crimes continue into January and February 2026, showing the issue has not gone away.

According to residents living in Oaks Square, these figures may only scratch the surface. Many of the publicly recorded cases end with the same outcome: "There is insufficient evidence to bring anyone to justice at this time. The investigation may be reopened if more information becomes available." This highlights that useful CCTV coverage is patchy, and it is hard for police to gain convictions.

"Keeping in groups, leaving no one behind, and avoiding the fenced alleys and the car parks at certain times is easy to achieve by staying in the High St and walking the extra 200 meters the cut throughs save. Peak trouble in these areas is as you might expect after dark 10:00 pm until 04:00 am in summer and 8:00 pm to 08:00 am in winter".

Clean spaces change behaviour.

Clive, Maria and Chris, speaking on behalf of Rotary, said: "We're here to tidy up an area just off the High Street. Working with Rotary and other groups, we've found all sorts. The issue here is that people throw rubbish over the fence onto the railway and it just builds up."

Sharine, from Central Epsom, said it was her first time joining, "I didn't expect this level of mess or to hear about crime linked to the area. Seeing it first-hand is surprising. It makes me want to raise awareness and look for real solutions."

Steve McCormick, (RA EEBC Woodcote and Langley Vale) Residents' Association county councillor and Rotary member, explained the wider impact: "When an area looks neglected, it attracts more problems. When it is clean and tidy, people take more pride in it. Criminals tend to stay away. If a place looks looked after, you get less anti-social behaviour."

Much of the litter appears to be carelessly thrown away, sometimes even from car windows or over fences. Organisers say this reflects a wider throwaway culture.

"It's frustrating," one volunteer said. "You clean an area and shortly after it can be messy again."

In Austria, even small waste offences can lead to fines of around £80. A minor mistake might include leaving a bin bag outside a container instead of placing it inside, or putting rubbish in the wrong bin. Dumping rubbish in public spaces or beside containers can result in fines ranging from around £630 to £31,000. The idea is simple. If you cannot keep the environment clean and safe, you pay the price. Experience shows that people learn very quickly when clear rules and consequences are in place.

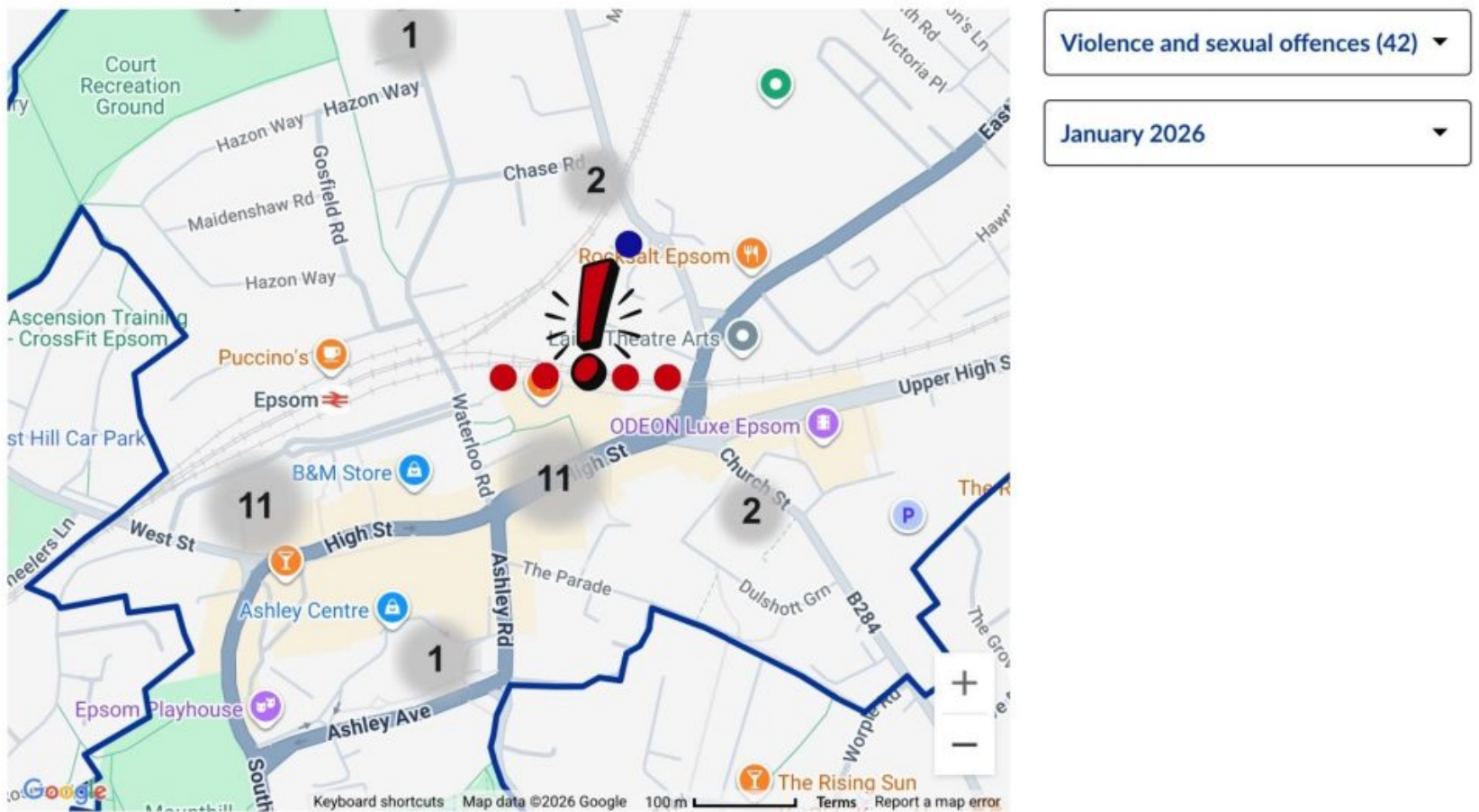
Another approach comes from Sweden, where "plogging" has become a popular trend. Plogging combines jogging or walking with picking up litter, turning exercise into a practical way to care for the environment. The term comes from the Swedish words plocka upp, meaning pick up and jogga, meaning jog, and the movement began around 2016. Founded by Erik Ahlström, plogging encourages people to stay active while helping reduce pollution.

A small effort with a bigger message: This clean-up focused on one small road behind Epsom Centre, but organisers say it is just the beginning. Future efforts will aim to tackle and highlight other areas identified on crime maps. The group completed the clean-up in less than an hour, but the aim is long-term change. "By focusing on litter in areas highlighted by crime data, especially those active at night, we hope to reduce anti-social behaviour and improve safety by letting everyone know where to avoid and when, whilst making the less well motivated people aware that we care.

Organisers say that "now Keep Epsom and Ewell Tidy has shut we do need to help each other to keep the town clean". Anyone can take part and make a difference: "It's an easy thing to do. You feel better after helping, you meet people, and together you can create change." If you would like to get involved in future clean-ups or community projects, contact your local Rotary group and help create a safer, cleaner Epsom.

Romy Sustar





Police confirm a female’s report of Epsom gang-rape was false

5 May 2026



In a statement issued by Surrey Police the report by a female of being the victim of rape by several men in Epsom on Saturday 11th April near the Methodist Church, was without foundation. This is the Surrey Police statement in full:

“This is an update in relation to a report of a rape in Epsom which we received in the early hours on Saturday, 11 April.

A thorough investigation, including an extensive examination of CCTV footage of the woman’s movements, house to house enquiries, interviewing witnesses and forensic tests, has been carried out. Through this examination of all evidence, we can conclude that no sexual offence occurred on this occasion, and we are closing the investigation.

What has become clear is that a woman in her 20s during a night out in Epsom, sustained an accidental head injury prior to making a confused report.

The woman involved has given us permission to share this information with you and she continues to be supported by relevant services.

To be clear, we take every report of sexual offending seriously, and any such report is treated with sensitivity. To do this, it is imperative that the appropriate time is allowed to complete a thorough investigation and support is given to the complainant to progress enquiries at their own pace. This limits what information we are able to release publicly.

At the early stages of this investigation, we issued an appeal for any witnesses or information that could help us progress our enquiries and identify any potential suspects. There was a lack of information in our initial appeal particularly regarding potential persons of interest. This was because the descriptions given were vague and limited. We recognise this caused concern amongst the community. We are now confident that there was no offence, and there were no suspects.

Our local officers will maintain a visible presence in Epsom over the coming days so please speak to them if you have any concerns or questions.”

Sam Jones - Reporter

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Epsom and the Perils of Instant Judgement

5 May 2026



Epsom has, in recent days, found itself at the centre of a story that has travelled far beyond the town. What began as a serious and distressing report rapidly became something else: a test of how a modern community processes information in the age of instant communication, social media amplification, and deeply ingrained expectations of immediacy.

The latest position from Surrey Police is clear and must be the starting point for any responsible reflection: “To date, we have not found any evidence of the offence as reported but the investigation is ongoing.” That is neither a conclusion nor an exoneration of any set of facts. It is a statement of where the evidence presently stands.

Yet in the vacuum between allegation and verification, something else has taken hold.

Within hours of the initial report, narratives began to form. Some were expressions of genuine concern for a potential victim. Others moved swiftly into assumption: about what had happened, who may have been responsible, and what it meant for the safety and character of the town. From there, the escalation was almost predictable. Social media posts became assertions; assertions became “facts”; and “facts” became rallying cries.

Now, as the evidential position has shifted, a further turn is visible. Claims are being circulated that the police are engaged in a “cover-up”, often tied to the same earlier unsubstantiated assertions about those supposedly responsible. Calls for renewed protest have followed.

This is the cycle we must confront.

The combination of smartphones, social platforms, and the 24-hour expectation of updates has created a culture in which the absence of immediate answers is often treated as suspicious in itself. The slower, methodical process of investigation—gathering CCTV, interviewing witnesses, testing forensic evidence—sits uneasily alongside a public appetite for instant certainty. Where that certainty is not provided, it is too often manufactured.

This is not a criticism of concern. Communities are right to react when confronted with reports of serious crime. Nor is it a denial that the initial report was capable of causing profound alarm. But it is a warning about what follows when concern is overtaken by conjecture, and conjecture hardens into belief.

There are, however, questions that can properly be asked—calmly and without accusation. In particular, whether the sequence of communication in the early stages of the investigation may have inadvertently contributed to the intensity of the reaction. An initial appeal for witnesses, issued before a full review of available CCTV and other material, is entirely understandable in policing terms. But in a case of this gravity, it can also set in motion a chain of public response that is difficult to moderate once underway.

That is not to suggest fault, but to recognise reality: that in the current media environment, every official statement carries not only informational weight but social consequence.

There are lessons here, and they are not confined to any one institution.

For the public, it is a reminder that not everything that is widely shared is true, and that the speed with which information travels is no guarantee of its reliability. For those who seek to exploit events—whether for ideological, political or simply opportunistic reasons—it exposes the ease with which division can be stirred before facts are known. For public authorities, it underlines the delicate balance between transparency and timing.

And for the media, including this publication, it reinforces the obligation to distinguish carefully between what is known,

what is alleged, and what is simply being said.

Epsom is not accustomed to finding itself at the centre of such a storm. That in itself may have contributed to the intensity of the response. But it is precisely because such incidents are rare that they demand the greatest care in how they are handled—by all of us.

The investigation continues. That must remain the focus. In the meantime, restraint, patience, and a commitment to evidence over assumption are not signs of indifference. They are the foundations of a community determined to remain both fair and united in the face of uncertainty.



Surrey Police update on alleged sexual assault in Epsom

5 May 2026



Surrey Police have issued a further update following last weekend's reported incident in Epsom, stating that officers have not found evidence to support the offence as initially described, while confirming that enquiries remain ongoing.

In a statement published on the Surrey Police website, Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing Sarah Grahame said:

“Over the past week, there has been widespread speculation and commentary regarding this report. We are aware of the strength of feeling this has created, and of the frustration caused by our limited public comment on the matter.

During this time, we have been investigating in depth to establish the sequence of events and to clarify the circumstances surrounding the reported incident. We have reviewed an extensive amount of CCTV footage from the area. We have also been interviewing potential witnesses, carrying out forensics investigations and conducting house-to-house enquiries.

To date, we have not found any evidence of the offence as reported but the investigation is ongoing.

There has been much speculation about the non-release of a description of any suspects, especially regarding the ethnicity. No descriptions have been released as the information about the incident and potential suspects is so limited. To address the specific commentary, there is no evidence that asylum seekers or immigrants were involved.

If you have any information or any CCTV, dashcam, or helmet camera footage, please contact us online, or via 101 quoting PR/45260041426.

We appreciate that you want information. We will continue to tell you as much as we can, to engage with you, to reassure you and to address concerns. We ask for space and time to work through the investigation.

There will be an increased police presence in Epsom over the weekend.” (Surrey Police)

The update follows a week of heightened concern in the town and significant public reaction. National media have also reported the same position from Surrey Police, including the finding that there is currently no evidence of the offence as reported, alongside confirmation that the investigation continues. (The Times)

Police are continuing to appeal for information from anyone who may have been in the area or who holds relevant footage.

Sam Jones - Reporter

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Church service following sex attack in Epsom

5 May 2026



A service held at Epsom Methodist Church has brought together faith leaders, politicians and residents in a symbolic call for unity following recent events that have unsettled the town.

The “Hope for Epsom” gathering, led by Superintendent Minister Reverend Catherine Hutton, was attended by community figures including Deputy Mayor Lucie McIntyre and Epsom and Ewell MP Helen Maguire, alongside members of the local congregation.

At the heart of the service was a simple but powerful act. Attendees were invited to build a “future of hope” by placing stones one by one, each contribution representing collective strength and resilience. Reverend Hutton urged those present to see the community as something shaped by every individual, with unity and compassion at its core.

She concluded by quoting Dr Martin Luther King Jr: “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

The gathering comes in the immediate aftermath of a serious sexual assault investigation and subsequent protests in the town centre, which saw a significant police presence and disruption to local life.

As reported by Surrey Live, Epsom’s MP Helen Maguire said she supported peaceful protest but warned that “those who are turning to disruption and intimidation cannot be allowed to do so.” She added that individuals coming from outside the area “to spread division and cause disruption” should “take it elsewhere.”

Police have confirmed that the victim is being supported by specialist officers, while urging the public not to speculate as investigations continue. East Surrey Chief Superintendent Mark Chapman said the case is complex and that officers are working to gather evidence and bring those responsible to justice.

Despite the message of hope inside the church, a sense of unease remains more widely. With national media attention and visible policing in the town centre, many residents are looking for reassurance that the incident is isolated and that Epsom remains a safe community.

The church service captured both strands of the town’s current mood: a determination to stand together, and a quiet but pressing call for answers.

Sam Jones and Romy Sustar

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You Are Not Alone, Epsom Stands Against Rape

5 May 2026



It’s a sunny Wednesday afternoon in Epsom, and it feels as though spring has finally arrived. People have gathered on the streets, perhaps 1,200 or more, women and men, brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, friends, young and old, from all walks of life.

They are here because of what happened last Saturday. By now, everyone knows: a woman in her 20s was followed after leaving Labyrinth nightclub and attacked outside Epsom Methodist Church in the early hours of the morning. The story has reached national headlines, BBC, *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian*: **Woman in Her 20s Gang-Raped in Front of a**



Church with CCTV Cameras.

I ask one of the people in the crowd what's going on: "We are here today because a young girl was raped on Saturday night, and the police are not telling us who was responsible. There is a perception that it could be immigrants, but the police need to tell us who has done it. Without that, speculation grows, and it could be one of our own. I don't want to protest against people who haven't done anything wrong, but we have to come together as a community because nobody is telling us what is going on. That's why we are here."

I speak to a mother and her daughter, I want to know what they feel about the assault: "Our feeling is that the police need to be transparent about who is responsible, so that women and girls can feel safer, so that we know who we are dealing with. We haven't been told. We need descriptions. The police say that information available is limited. No arrests have been made. It is reported that four men attacked a young woman for two hours. If cameras are everywhere, why have there been no arrests? Why is there said to be no information, when people believe suspects may still be walking freely in Epsom?"

Some believe the police have accused the gathering of disorder in a public space. Many here ask: "What about the victim? Isn't rape a disorder?"

More police officers arrive. Eggs are thrown. Emotions are high. People care. Voices rise: "Who raped her?" The crowd chants in support of the victim, while the young police woman responds to my questions with a single phrase: "no comment."

Meanwhile a voice of authority repeats familiar words: "My heart goes out to the young woman at the centre of this deeply distressing incident." It is a statement many here feel they have heard too many times to truly believe.

The Methodist Church will hold a service today, April 16th at 12.30pm. All are welcome. *Epsom and Ewell Times* will be there.

Epsom and Ewell Times is also launching a weekly series, **Epsom Safety Brief**. If you would like to be involved and share your concerns, please get in touch at: romana.epsomandewelltimes@gmail.com.

To the young woman at the centre of this: the whole town stands with you. You are not alone. Stay strong.

Coming soon:

Epsom Safety Brief is a community-driven series committed to clear, balanced reporting on crime, safety, and accountability. It seeks to highlight what is happening, ask necessary questions, and assess whether meaningful action is being taken to protect residents.

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Epsom shock as police probe serious assault

5 May 2026



Police have launched a major investigation following reports that a young woman was raped by multiple men in Epsom in the early hours of Saturday morning.

The incident is said to have taken place near Epsom Methodist Church on Ashley Road, close to the town centre, between approximately 2am and 4am. The woman, believed to be in her twenties, had reportedly left a nearby nightclub shortly before the attack and is understood to have been followed.

Surrey Police confirmed that the assault involved several suspects and that enquiries are ongoing to establish their identities. At this stage, no full descriptions have been released, and officers are appealing for information from the public.

A senior investigating officer described the incident as extremely distressing and confirmed that the victim is being supported by specially trained officers. Detectives are carrying out extensive enquiries in the area, including reviewing CCTV footage and conducting house-to-house inquiries.

Police are urging anyone who was in the Ashley Road area during the early hours of Saturday morning, or who may have seen anything suspicious, to come forward. Drivers with dashcam footage are also asked to check recordings that may assist the inquiry.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Surrey Police quoting reference **PR/45260041426**, either via the force's online reporting form or by contacting them directly. Information can also be provided anonymously via Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111** or through its website.

Support services are available for anyone affected by sexual violence, including Rape Crisis England & Wales, which operates a 24-hour helpline on **0808 500 2222**.

The seriousness of the allegation, coupled with its location close to the centre of Epsom, has led to heightened concern locally and significant national media attention. Officers have maintained a visible presence in the area while investigations continue.

Sam Jones - Reporter

Epsom and Ewell February crime and safety round-up

5 May 2026



Epsom and Ewell Times does not normally report individual crime incidents. However, as part of a trial we are publishing a monthly round-up of crime and community safety developments affecting the borough, drawing on information released by Surrey Police and local authorities.

Police operation in West Ewell results in three arrests

A police operation targeting antisocial behaviour and suspected drug activity in **West Ewell** led to **three arrests** during February.

Officers from the **Epsom & Ewell Safer Neighbourhood Team**, supported by the East Surrey Neighbourhood Enforcement Team and Special Constabulary, carried out patrols around the **Watersedge estate**. During the evening operation officers conducted **11 stop-searches and two vehicle stops**, while gathering intelligence relating to drug use, drug dealing and antisocial behaviour in the area.

Police said the activity formed part of ongoing efforts to disrupt criminal activity in neighbourhood "hotspot" locations.

(Source: Surrey Police neighbourhood updates)

Missing Epsom man located safe and well

Surrey Police issued an appeal during February to help locate **Lee, a 63-year-old man reported missing from Epsom**.

Police later confirmed that he had been **found safe**, allowing the appeal to be cancelled.

(Source: Surrey Police)

Prolific thief targeting local businesses identified

Surrey Police also reported action against a **prolific offender who targeted businesses across Epsom and neighbouring areas**, including Sutton, Wallington, Cheam and Burgh Heath.

Police said the offender entered several premises and stole items including mobile phones during incidents affecting local traders.

(Source: Surrey Police neighbourhood update)

Safer Epsom & Ewell programme continues

The **Safer Epsom & Ewell** programme — a joint initiative between Surrey Police, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and partner agencies — continued to develop during February.

The scheme focuses on areas including **Epsom town centre, Watersedge and Longmead**, using the Home Office “**Clear, Hold, Build**” approach to tackle organised crime, drug supply, acquisitive crime and antisocial behaviour. (democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk)

The programme combines targeted police enforcement with longer-term work involving the council and community partners to address underlying causes of crime.

(Source: Epsom & Ewell Borough Council / Surrey Police)

Crime trends in the borough

Police data for the area indicates that the **most commonly reported offences locally include violence and sexual offences, shoplifting, criminal damage and vehicle crime**. (surrey.police.uk)

Retail crime and antisocial vehicle use remain key policing priorities, with neighbourhood teams carrying out targeted patrols and working with businesses and community groups to address concerns.

(Source: Surrey Police neighbourhood statistics)

Community engagement and policing events

Neighbourhood officers continued their “**Meet the Beat**” programme during February, providing opportunities for residents to speak directly with police about local issues.

Sessions were held at locations including **Epsom Library at the Ebbisham Centre**, where residents were invited to raise concerns about crime, antisocial behaviour and community safety.

(Source: Surrey Police)

How to contact Surrey Police

- **Emergency (crime in progress or immediate danger): call 999**
- **Non-emergency police matters: call 101**
- **Online reporting and advice:** <https://www.surrey.police.uk/contact/>
- **Crimestoppers (anonymous information): 0800 555 111**

Residents are encouraged to report suspicious activity or information that may assist police investigations.

Sam Jones - Reporter



Related reports:

January crime and safety round-up

Fly-tipping “running out of control” but major incidents disappear in Epsom and Ewell

5 May 2026



Fly-tipping on an industrial scale is at risk of “running out of control” across England, with organised criminal gangs blamed for dumping tens of thousands of tonnes of rubbish in the countryside and urban areas.

Latest government figures show 52,000 large-scale fly-tipping incidents — involving at least a tipper-lorry load — were recorded by councils in England in 2024-25, up sharply from 31,000 before the pandemic.

Campaigners say the crime has become highly organised, lucrative and relatively low-risk for offenders.

A spokesperson for the Chartered Institute of Waste Management said: “Waste crime is at risk of running out of control across the UK. It is evident that waste crime at all levels continues to cause misery and anxiety for local communities and causes real damage to local environments and local economies. These are crooks and cowboy operators, often organised criminal gangs, deliberately profiting from other’s misery, from polluting our environment and exploiting loopholes in the system.”

The Countryside Alliance said: “Fly-tipping is not just an environmental nuisance — it has become a serious and organised crime issue and rural communities are on the frontline... For them it is low-risk and highly profitable... contributing to a criminal market worth an estimated £1 billion a year.”

Epsom and Ewell large-scale incidents fall to zero

Figures analysed by the Epsom and Ewell Times show a striking local trend.

Epsom and Ewell recorded 30 large fly-tipping incidents in 2019-20, falling to 19 in 2020-21 and 14 in 2021-22. Since then, none have been recorded, with zero incidents reported in 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25.

This suggests large-scale dumping in the borough has been eliminated — at least in the official statistics — contrasting with rising national totals.

However, smaller fly-tipping incidents, which make up the majority of cases, are recorded separately and remain a persistent issue across the country.

Who deals with fly-tipping locally

Responsibility for tackling fly-tipping is shared between councils and national regulators.

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council is responsible for clearing illegally dumped waste on public land in the borough, investigating incidents and prosecuting offenders. The Council can also issue fixed penalty notices.

The Environment Agency deals with larger, organised or hazardous waste crime, including illegal waste sites operated by criminal gangs.

Private landowners are responsible for removing waste dumped on their own land, though authorities may investigate and prosecute those responsible.

Tough penalties available — but few offenders caught

Fly-tipping is a criminal offence carrying severe penalties. Courts can impose unlimited fines and prison sentences of up to five years. Vehicles used in dumping can be seized and destroyed, and offenders receive a criminal record.

Councils can also issue fixed penalty notices of up to £1,000.

However, enforcement remains limited. Nationally, only 663 fines exceeding £1,000 have been issued since 2019.

One recent major case saw a prolific offender ordered to pay more than £1.2 million following an Environment Agency investigation.

Criminal gangs and fake waste firms driving problem

Experts say organised crime is increasingly behind large-scale fly-tipping. Criminals often pose as legitimate waste clearance companies, charging households and businesses before dumping waste illegally to avoid disposal costs.

The illegal waste market is estimated to be worth around £1 billion a year.

Local improvement but national concern remains

The disappearance of major fly-tipping incidents in Epsom and Ewell will be welcome news locally. But nationally the problem remains serious, with experts warning illegal dumping continues to expand and new sites regularly appearing.

Residents are urged to use only licensed waste carriers and report fly-tipping to their local council.

Those caught face potentially severe consequences — though many offenders still escape justice.

Sam Jones - Reporter



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January crime and safety round-up

5 May 2026



Epsom and Ewell Times does not normally report individual crime incidents. However, as a trial, we are publishing a monthly round-up of crime and community safety matters with a local connection, drawing on information released by Surrey Police and partner agencies.

Safer Epsom & Ewell partnership - early impact

Surrey Police and Epsom & Ewell Borough Council have continued to roll out the **Safer Epsom & Ewell** partnership during January, aimed at tackling persistent offending, organised crime, antisocial behaviour and theft across the borough.

According to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the initiative has already resulted in more than **150 arrests**, targeting prolific offenders, shoplifting, drug supply and county-lines activity. Police report the disruption of multiple county-lines gangs, seizures of Class A drugs and cash, and the removal of knives from circulation.

The partnership builds on high-visibility policing activity over the Christmas and New Year period and is intended to provide a sustained, joined-up approach to community safety involving the police, the borough council, housing providers and other local partners.

(Source: Surrey Police / Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner)

Witness appeal after approach in Court Recreation Ground, Epsom

Surrey Police have issued an appeal for information following an incident reported on **Monday 26 January** in **Court Recreation Ground, Epsom**.

Police say a **13-year-old girl walking to school** was approached by two men, one of whom reached out towards her. The girl was able to run away and was not injured.

One suspect is described as a **tall white man of slim build with dark hair**, wearing a **dark jumper**. Police have asked anyone who was in the area at the time, or who saw anything suspicious, to contact them.

Robbery in Ash Court, Epsom - police seek witnesses

Earlier in the month, Surrey Police appealed for witnesses following a **robbery in Ash Court, Epsom**, reported late on **Friday 9 January**.

The incident is believed to have taken place between **approximately 11.50pm and 11.56pm**. Officers have asked residents and motorists in the area at the time to check **CCTV, doorbell or dash-cam footage** and contact police if they have information that may assist enquiries.

Police have not released further public details about the victim or property taken.

Missing child appeal cancelled after positive outcome

Surrey Police also confirmed this month that a **13-year-old girl reported missing from Epsom** was later **found safe and well**, and that an earlier public appeal was stood down.

Community engagement - 'Meet the Beat' sessions

Throughout January, Surrey Police neighbourhood teams held a series of **"Meet the Beat"** drop-in sessions across Epsom and Ewell.

The sessions allowed residents to speak directly with local officers about issues such as antisocial behaviour, shoplifting, speeding and general community safety concerns. Locations included areas such as Epsom town centre, Waterloo Road,

Long Grove and local shopping parades.

Further sessions are scheduled into February.

Local policing priorities

Surrey Police have continued to highlight neighbourhood priorities for Epsom and Ewell, including action against **antisocial use of motorbikes and e-bikes**, and a **zero-tolerance approach to retail crime** in the town centre.

Police say this includes targeted patrols, enforcement activity and work with local businesses and CCTV operators.

How to contact Surrey Police

- **In an emergency (immediate danger or a crime in progress):** call **999**
- **Non-emergency matters:** call **101**
- **Online reporting and advice:** use the Surrey Police website reporting tools
- **Crimestoppers (anonymous information):** **0800 555 111**

Residents are encouraged to report concerns, suspicious behaviour or relevant information promptly to assist local policing and community safety.

Sam Jones - Reporter



Surrey Police's AI powered face recognition cameras in the spotlight

5 May 2026



Surrey Police will continue to use AI-powered surveillance vans to scan thousands of people's faces in public locations despite fears over ethnic bias, said councillors calling for their use to be put on hold.

The Home Office is funding the use of new artificial intelligence powered cameras in Surrey to scan the faces of anybody who crosses their path.

On November 26 last year, the police brought the technology to Woking and recorded 7,686 people over a five-hour recording period - to cross reference them against known suspects.

The force has said the system was safe following a 2023 study that found previous bias in the system had been coded out - but more recent testing by the National Physical Laboratory suggests false positives are still happening too frequently among ethnic minorities.

The report read: "At the operational setting used by police, the testing identified that in a limited set of circumstances the algorithm is more likely to incorrectly include some demographic groups in its search results."

The Home Office has said will act on the findings and that a "new algorithm has been procured and independently tested, which can be used at settings with no significant demographic variation in performance.

The new algorithm is due to be operationally tested early next year and will be subject to evaluation."

It has led to calls from Woking Borough Councillors for the system to be mothballed until it has been thoroughly tested - something which Surrey Police has so far refused to do.

Speaking at a Tuesday, December 20, meeting of the borough's communities and housing scrutiny committee, Surrey Police Chief Inspector Andy Hill described the system as having the support of the Home Office and said it was a valuable tool "to keep Surrey safe."

He said: "It's a safe place but if we've got the opportunity to use the latest technology then we want to make sure that we are doing that." Early versions of the software created false alerts at a disproportionate rate among ethnic groups.

In London the Met Police is facing a High Court challenge after an anti-knife crime activist said he was misidentified and threatened with arrest. Surrey Police said it was confident in the system and that people are only arrested under suspicion, it does not mean guilt.

The technology is used in high footfall areas and is said to have a chilling effect on crime with notable falls in the following weeks after its deployment.

Any images that do not match those on its wanted list are instantly deleted. Matched faces are deleted at the end of the day. If the system thinks it has found a face on the police's wanted database officers at the scene are notified and it is up to them how to proceed.

Committee chair Cllr Tom Bonsundy-O'Bryan said: "I have very serious concerns about the proportionality of this. Are the pros, which feels pretty limited in one of the safest town centres in the UK, worth the cost of 7,000 free citizens having their faces scanned by this technology?"

"This doesn't feel like targeted policing, it doesn't feel like proportionate policing. It starts to feel like something more Orwellian in a kind of mass surveillance. With everything that you've said, all the facts about data not being stored, data not being used to train models

"It still feels like an overreach into people's privacy, people's rights fundamentally. Is there a point when it's not proportionate, how many faces should we scan? To me it already feels vastly disproportionate."

Chief Insp Hill said: "We are in the view that it is proportionate and it is appropriate and it is technology available to us. We don't feel like we are reaching into a technology space. The van is funded by the Home Office, it's why we want to continue using it but also keep it under review."

Chris Caulfield LDRS

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