EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
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Anti-catcalling campaign triggered ‘vitriolic’ backlash

7 September 2025



Surrey’s Police and Crime Commissioner has said the “vitriolic” online abuse she faced after an anti-catcalling trial campaign went viral shows why tackling violence against women and girls must remain a priority.

The ‘Jog On’ pilot, launched in the summer, was led by a female police officer who had been harassed while out running. It aimed to address the harassment many women face in public spaces just going about their lives but it sparked fierce backlash online- with some critics questioning whether it was a good use of police resources.

Ms Townsend, who said she was not directly involved in the campaign, said she received the “most vitriolic messages” on social media and they were the worst she had faced in her time as a PCC.

She told a Police and Crime Panel on September 4: “The fact that this was the most awful sort of language that I’ve had I think tells you why this work is so important.”

One X (formerly Twitter) user asked her whether the campaign was a waste of Surrey Police;s time, given that catcalling was not a criminal offence. Others said it was a total waste of taxpayer’s money.

Townsend has responded on social media and publicly that early intervention and crime prevention are essential parts of policing, explaining that behaviours dismissed as minor – like catcalling and public intimidation – can escalate into more serious offences.

The PCC’s comments come as she set out Surrey’s apparent progress against her Police and Crime Plan which says tackling VAWG is a top priority.

Councillors challenged Surrey Police’s record claiming it is not possible to tell whether violence against women and girls has increased or decreased. The volume of violent domestic abuse crimes reported has decreased by 4 per cent from 7,995 in June 2024 to 7,673 in June 2025. However, the volume of serious sexual offences has increased by 2 per cent from June 2024 to June 2025.

The PCC said: “I hope to see reports of violence against women and girls go up during my term as PCC because we know it is one of the most under-reported crimes in this country, not just in Surrey but right across this country.

“I don’t take an increase in reports as a bad thing. I think everyone that comes forward to talk about an experience that they may not have had the confidence to do before is a good and important thing.

“I don’t expect to see a reduction in reports anytime soon.”

Lisa Townsend, Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner. (Credit: Surrey PCC office)

King Athelstan returns to Kingston

7 September 2025



Podcaster and historian Tom Holland was in Kingston on Thursday 4th September to mark the 1,100th anniversary of the coronation of King Athelstan, regarded as England’s first monarch.

At a ceremony on Platform 1 of Kingston station, Holland unveiled the name “King Athelstan” on one of South Western Railway’s Class 450 trains. The event was staged with Saxon re-enactors, children from King Athelstan Primary School wearing crowns, and a choir from Tiffin School.

The Bishop of Kingston, Martin Gainsborough, offered a blessing for the train. Dignitaries included local MP Sir Ed Davey, the Mayor of Kingston, Cllr Noel Hadjimichael, and representatives from Malmesbury, where Athelstan is buried, and Oldenburg in Germany, twinned with Kingston.

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Remembering England's first king

Athelstan, the grandson of Alfred the Great, was crowned in Kingston in 925 before becoming known as the first ruler of a united England. While less famous than later monarchs such as William the Conqueror or Elizabeth I, a poll run by *The Rest is History* in 2021 saw him voted England's "greatest king".

Kingston played host to the coronation of Athelstan and six other Saxon kings. South Western Railway remains the only operator serving the town, making it a partner in the Kingston 2025 celebrations marking this heritage.

Voices from the ceremony

Tom Holland said: "Who better to have a train named after him than Athelstan, the great Anglo-Saxon king who first set England on track to becoming a united kingdom?"

Peter Williams, Customer and Commercial Director at South Western Railway, added: "As it travels around the network, we hope our train will inspire customers to discover more about Athelstan's reign, and his coronation in Kingston 1,100 years ago."

Sir Ed Davey, MP for Kingston and Surbiton and Leader of the Liberal Democrats, described the event as "a little unusual but absolutely in the spirit of the occasion".

Mayor Noel Hadjimichael called it "a wonderful part of our six-month festival of past, present and future across the royal borough".

Part of Kingston 2025

The naming ceremony formed part of wider Kingston 2025 cultural celebrations. Later in the day, commemorations continued at All Saints Church, the site of Athelstan's coronation.

Pavement Parking: Epsom & Ewell MP Speaks Out

7 September 2025



3rd September Helen Maguire, Liberal Democrat MP for Epsom & Ewell, spotlighted in a Parliament debate a pressing local frustration: pavement parking.

A Daily Struggle on Our Footpaths

Maguire painted a vivid picture of everyday life here in Epsom & Ewell—where pavements are meant to be safe, shared spaces, but too often become obstacles.

According to Guide Dogs UK, four out of five blind or partially sighted people report difficulty walking on pavements at least once a week, and 95% have been forced onto the road because vehicles encroach even slightly. For wheelchair and mobility scooter users, this alarming figure leaps to 99%. Even parents aren't spared: 87% say they've had to step into the road, and 80% would walk their children to school more often if pavements weren't blocked.

Maguire also revealed a telling local anecdote: on one evening alone, a constituent counted 23 mopeds and motorbikes cluttering a pavement, forcing people into traffic and weaving in and out unpredictably. It's these small moments that undermine our sense of safety—and, by extension, our freedom.

The Patchwork of Laws

Here's the head-scratcher: pavement parking is banned in London (for fifty years) and across Scotland unless your council specifically says otherwise. But elsewhere in England, the rule is reversed: it's allowed unless a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is put in place—a long, expensive local process.

Driving onto pavements is already illegal under Section 72 of the Highways Act 1835—but, as Helen pointed out, few people even know the finer points of the law. One survey found just 5% of drivers understand all aspects.

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A Consultation Left Hanging—and Growing Frustration

It's now nearly five years since the government ran a consultation titled *Pavement parking: options for change*, which closed in November 2020. It proposed everything from simplifying the TRO process to introducing a national default ban—but still, there's been no government response or action. Helen called on ministers to act before the consultation's fifth anniversary rolls around this autumn.

Lessons from Closer to Home—and Farther Afield

London and Scotland show what's possible: clearer rules, better enforcement, safer walking spaces. In Scotland, since the Transport Act 2019 came into force, councils have issued thousands of fines—raising almost £1 million in the process, with Edinburgh alone accounting for around £441,000, and showing that civil enforcement works.

Meanwhile, in England, research from Guide Dogs underscores the human cost—injuries, forced urban detours, isolation—and Living Streets found that 65% of drivers admitted to pavement parking, while 43% had done so in the past six months.

What It Means for Epsom & Ewell

For our residents—those with visual impairments, mobility challenges, parents with prams—the pavement should be a path to independence, not a blockade.

Maguire's plea is clear: she wants a national default ban on pavement parking—one that gives the police and councils clarity, hones enforcement, and safeguards community spaces.

What Could Come Next?

- A national ban as the starting point, with councils able to allow exceptions where needed.
- Proper powers for civil enforcement—think PCNs—not just confusing laws in dusty books.
- A public campaign: educating drivers, building understanding, reducing dangerous impromptu parking.
- Local upgrades to pavements: smoother, wider, safer—so more of us feel confident walking around Epsom & Ewell.

Related report:

Epsom High St in need of more love?

Deliveroo drivers outside McDonalds Epsom

Godstone's gasworks fury while sinkhole not fixed

7 September 2025



Godstone residents are up in arms over suddenly announced gasworks on a 'major cut through'', warning the closures could turn traffic into a nightmare and hit local businesses – all while the High Street's massive sinkhole still has not been fixed.

The works, due to be carried out by SGN, are set to start on September 29 and could last around 23 weeks. Water Lane has already been closed since September 1 for similar work.

But people say the timing is crazy. Charlie Mayall, who lives on Tilburstow Hill Road, called the plan "bonkers". "I'm absolutely furious. I'm spitting feathers," He said. "It's adding insult to injury."

"The diversion is going to be at least twice as bad," he said. "Some of the side lanes aren't wide enough for two cars, let alone a lorry."

Things are made worse by claims from councillors that Surrey County Council and Tandridge District Council didn't know about the works — though SGN insists the project has been in the pipeline for some time and agreed with the authorities.

But residents remain unconvinced, claiming the council should have just told SGN to wait. People aren't stupid. We understand the gasworks need to be done but they clearly don't need to be done when the high street is also closed."

Carol Ward, who lives on the high street, said people feel ignored. She said: "It's ridiculous — no consultation, no signs, and no proper accountability. People feel walked over," she said.

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She added that local businesses are already struggling, including the Fox & Hounds pub, which has been around since 1603.

“I feel like I’m living on a building site,” Carol said, explaining the village has already put up with a road collapse in the high street. “I think most people have been very very patient …but there’s a limit to the what people will put up with,”

A Surrey Highways spokesperson said: “We are sympathetic to the concerns of residents… Our Highways Officers are meeting with SGN on September 3 to fully understand the need for their works in Tilburstow Hill Road, their duration and timing. At this stage, only a ‘provisional advanced authority’ has been approved and an official permit has not been granted.”

SGN defended the work, a spokesperson said: “It’s essential we replace these 100-year-old mains to keep gas flowing safely. Delaying the work increases the risk of unexpected interruptions… We’re reviewing with Surrey County Council whether temporary traffic lights could be used instead of full closures.”

SGN says businesses will remain accessible and compensation is available for those affected. Bus services and refuse collections should continue, though residents are advised to check for updates.

Carol Ward on Godstone Green. (Credit: Emily Dalton/LDRS)

Related reports:

Godstone “Sink-hole” residents to return

Surrey sink-hole major incident

Surrey police officer barred for domestic abuse

7 September 2025



A former Surrey Police officer secretly got back with his ex while under investigation for behaviour in their relationship – then tried to persuade her to retract a statement, a misconduct panel has ruled.

The officer, referred to as Officer A in the report, was supposed to stay away from his former partner, Ms A, after concerns were raised about his behaviour. But the hearing in July and August 2025 was told he started seeing her again behind the force’s back and even pushed her to withdraw what she’d told investigators.

The panel said it was a clear attempt to interfere with a witness and undermine a formal investigation to the alleged misconduct.

The panel concluded the officer’s behaviour as gross misconduct because he tried to interfere with a live investigation, secretly rekindling a relationship with a key witness and pressuring her to change her statement.

His harassment, aggressive behaviour and invasive social media posts were judged so serious they risked undermining public confidence in the police.

Further incidents of harassment were also proved by the hearing. Ms A said the former officer showed up to her home uninvited and barged his way in, leaving her with bruises, and confronted her in a pub where he made crude remarks in front of others.

Officer A denied contacting Ms A and asking her to retract her statement to the police. He also refuted barging into Ms A’s home.

Investigators also discovered that Officer A had been posting personal and sexualised material on Pinterest- including symbols from their relationship like a fake boarding pass for her birthday trip, yellow tulips (her favourite flowers) and photos of home-made sexual restraint gear.

While not every allegation was proven, the panel ruled that Officer A had broken police rules on honesty, respect and professional conduct, and said his actions were serious enough to damage confidence in the force.

The report read: “We do note that before these matters the former officer did serve the public well as demonstrated by the service record provided. He undertook a difficult and stressful role that required a lot of hard work to achieve and maintain during his career.

“We thank the officer for that service, however this past record would not allow us to impose a lesser outcome, given the serious nature of our findings.”

In terms of mitigating factors, the panel noted Officer A was emotionally distraught at times during the misconduct

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hearing and was finding matters personally difficult, as confirmed by another officer.

A Surrey Police spokesperson said: “As soon as we were made aware of the allegations involving Officer A, a thorough investigation was carried out by the Force’s Professional Standards Department.

“It was determined that former Officer A would have been dismissed had they still been serving and was placed on the College of Policing Barred List.

“Domestic abuse by any of our officers and staff simply will not be condoned and such allegations against any of our officers or staff are always subject to a thorough investigation by our Professional Standards Department.”

Surrey Police ethics print on wall at Mount Browne HQ. (Credit: Emily Dalton/LDRS)

Surrey expansion of SEN places

7 September 2025



An ‘Outstanding’ Surrey school could open a new satellite site at another primary- around eight miles away.

Surrey County Council has revealed plans to expand a top-rated school for children with severe learning difficulties. Woodlands School, in Leatherhead, could have a second location at Cranmere Primary and Nursery school in Esher – a mere 25-30 minute drive away.

The move would create up to 28 extra places for children with severe learning difficulties and autism, all of whom have an Education, Health Care and Plans (EHCPs).

Currently Woodlands only has room for 83 pupils – though it has been squeezing in an extra 16 thanks to temporary classrooms.

Meanwhile Cranmere Primary, which has been rated ‘Good’ by Ofsted, has been running under capacity for years because of falling birthrates, council documents state. The building can take 630 pupils, but numbers have dipped enough there’s now space to share.

The part of the Cranmere site earmarked for the expansion will need adapting so it can properly meet the needs of Woodlands pupils, according to reports. The work is said to have been planned to take place over the summer holidays, ready for a gradual roll-out of places from October 2025.

Surrey County Council says the set-up makes sense both for families and the budget. Officers say having local specialist places means children do not have to travel far away to school.

By providing places within the state system, the council’s education bill drops and saves money for the taxpayer. Should these pupils be required to attend an education provision in the independent sector, costs would equate to around £1.484m per year every year. This is compared to the average cost for state-maintained specialist places of £644k.

Staff at the new site will be employed directly by Woodlands School and numbers will grow slowly over time, depending on demand.

The council says the move is part of its wider ambition to increase high-quality specialist school places across Surrey as the number of children with EHCPs continues to rise- with a 10 per cent increase expected over the next five years.

The current stage of the consultation will close on Friday 5 September 2025

Outside Woodlands School, Leatherhead. (Credit: Google Street View)

Related reports:

£4.9 million not enough to solve Surrey’s SEND problems?

SENDing Pupils to Epsom’s Mainstream Schools?

Surrey sent on a U-turn on SEND by MPs?

Two new Epsom and Ewell virtual day trips unveiled

7 September 2025

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Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has launched two new inclusive tours, part of their *Virtual Day Trips* series, in partnership with Whistlestop Tours. These tours explore Epsom and Ewell, shining a spotlight on the history and cultural heritage of the borough.

The Virtual Day Trips can be watched online for free – from the comfort of home, a school classroom, or in shared community spaces. They include film and audio, with immersive resource packs and memory boxes also available to bring the tours to life.

The Epsom and Ewell Virtual Day Trips were funded by the Arts, Culture and Heritage UKSPF 2024/25 allocation. They sit alongside the *Nonsuch Formal Gardens* tour produced in 2024.

This project is part of the council's strategy to widen access to local history, allowing people to engage in a way that is comfortable to them.

The tours last around 30 minutes. Highlights include:

- Architectural elements from Nonsuch Palace near the Assembly Rooms in Epsom town centre
- Meeting residents and hearing about their passions, from throwing pottery to playing the bandura, the national instrument of Ukraine
- A rare peek inside the Watch House on Ewell High Street
- Ghost stories from local residents
- A behind-the-scenes tour with the Epsom Beekeepers Association

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

"I have lived in the borough of Epsom & Ewell for many years, and I found these tours completely fascinating. I thoroughly recommend them, whether you are new to the borough, a long-time resident like me, or someone who is interested in the local area – they can be enjoyed by everyone.

These two new inclusive Virtual Day Trips show our commitment to increasing access to our borough's rich history and cultural heritage. They will help people really get to know our fantastic local area."

Virtual Day Trips

Explore here:
Epsom
Ewell

The first Virtual Day Trip produced was Nonsuch Park.

Digital tours are also available on Bloomberg Connects:

- Horton Country Park Local Nature Reserve
- Nonsuch Park

The Virtual Day Trips have been developed by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council in partnership with Whistlestop Arts, Bourne Hall Museum, Ewell Library, Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network, Epsom Beekeepers Association, Parkinson's Choir, Walk & Talk 4 Men – Surrey, Epsom Pots, and local residents.

About Whistlestop Arts
Whistlestop Arts is run by two creatives:

- *Annalees Lim* – a freelance artist with extensive community arts experience, particularly in disability arts and accessible projects. She is also an illustrator and children's activity book author.
- *Luna Russell* – a maker and arts facilitator passionate about the positive impact of the arts. She has managed projects for Chichester Festival Theatre, Chichester Cathedral, Surrey Arts and Horsham District Council, as well as leading community arts programmes.

Whistlestop Arts Virtual Day Trips
Virtual Day Trips are presented by Annalees and Luna, who meet local people and share their stories. Each trip includes films, podcasts and craft activities.

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Full-length films are designed for use in group settings such as care homes and day centres, with built-in pause points for activities. Resource packs are available to enhance the experience.

For more information, visit: Whistlestop Arts – Virtual Day Trips

Luna Russell and Annalees Lim beside Emily Davison statue in Epsom. Credit **Whistlestop Arts**

Epsom racecourse caught short of loos on family day

7 September 2025



The foreground of the image is AI generated and is not intended to be an accurate reflection of events. The background of the image is Epsom Downs © Peter Trimming cc-by-sa/2.0 :: Geograph Britain and Ireland

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Surrey care home concerns

7 September 2025



The death of a 76-year-old man, who was found on the floor with fractured ribs, has led to concerns over safety of the remaining residents at a Surrey care home. Staff at Eastcroft Nursing Home in Woodmansterne Lane, Banstead, were notified that Stephen Lawrence had fallen on December 21, 2022, after his alarm was triggered. He had sustained multiple rib fractures but despite his complaints about abdominal pain and discomfort, was not admitted to St Helier hospital until Christmas Day. That was his only recorded incident at the home despite hospital scans later revealing older fractures, including to the spine, ribs and sternum.

Despite treatment, his condition did not improve and Stephen died on January 5, 2023. An inquest into his death was opened on February 16, 2023. It resumed on June 9, 2025, and concluded on June 13, 2025 with the court commenting on the delay between his fall and admission to hospital. It found the nursing home, which the Care Quality Commission judged as requiring improvement in 2023, was unable to explain how he had sustained the numerous old fractures which had all remained undiagnosed until his admission to hospital. It also found there to be deficient records on Mr Lawrence's condition after his fall.

The court also expressed concerns that Eastcroft Nursing Home's manager provided conflicting accounts over attempts to seek medical attention for Mr Lawrence after his fall – and for suggesting his rib fractures were sustained after he had been transferred to hospital. Coroner Anna Crawford said: "Mr Lawrence sustained significant unexplained injuries whilst he was a resident at Eastcroft Nursing Home. Nursing Home records were deficient in their recording of key events following his unwitnessed fall on December 21 2022. There was a delay in seeking medical advice following the unwitnessed fall on December 21 2022. The Nursing Home manager provided conflicting evidence about efforts to obtain medical advice and did not accept that the acute fractures leading to Mr Lawrence's death occurred whilst he was at the nursing home. In view of all of the above, (I am) concerned that there is an ongoing risk to current residents."

Eastcroft Nursing Home, which declined to comment at this stage, are under duty to respond to the prevention of future deaths report within 56 days. The coroner said: "Your response must contain details of action taken or proposed to be taken, setting out the timetable for such action. Otherwise you must explain why no action is proposed."

Eastcroft Nursing Home in Banstead (Google)

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Epsom rail commuters brace for fare increases

7 September 2025



Commuters travelling from Epsom to London terminals are set to pay significantly more for their journeys next year if government policy on rail fares continues unchanged. The current cost of an annual season ticket from Epsom is **£2,676**, but under the projected **5.8% rise in regulated fares for 2026–27**, that figure would climb by around **£155** to reach approximately **£2,831**.

The increase is tied to the government's formula of linking fares to July's Retail Price Index plus one percent. This comes at a time when services from Epsom to Waterloo remain reduced, with only two trains an hour since the Covid pandemic, despite a growing local population.

Epsom & Ewell's MP, **Helen Maguire**, has condemned the proposed rise. She said: *"It is incomprehensible that once again ordinary people in Epsom & Ewell are facing yet another eye-watering rail fare hike, whilst South Western Railway are struggling to go a day without major disruption. Rail passengers should not be paying more for a service that is not delivering."*

Maguire has launched a **petition** calling for the restoration of train frequency to pre-Covid levels, arguing that local commuters should not face higher costs for fewer services.

Her party colleague, **Paul Kohler MP**, the Liberal Democrat transport spokesperson, added that rising fares were "nothing short of ludicrous" and described the policy as "a slap in the face to ordinary people" at a time when punctuality is at its lowest level in years.

Critics point out that fare hikes of this scale risk pushing more people off the railway at a time when the government is urging a shift to more sustainable modes of transport. Meanwhile, passengers are grappling with frequent cancellations, driver shortages, and the delayed rollout of South Western Railway's Arterio fleet.

The Department for Transport has not yet confirmed the final figures or the exact implementation date, but increases are typically introduced in March. Unless ministers intervene, Epsom's commuters face paying hundreds more pounds next year for a service many feel has been in steady decline.

RNIB blind to the interests of its Epsom residents?

7 September 2025



The future of Swail House in Epsom, a landmark housing estate for visually impaired people, has become the subject of debate as residents and the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) present differing perspectives on redevelopment plans.

Swail House, opened in 1952 and named after Martha Swail, was one of the first estates in the UK designed specifically for blind people. With flats laid out to aid navigation, landscaped grounds, and facilities for social activities, it was hailed as a flagship initiative. Over time it has included social rooms, a restaurant, and a Chelsea Flower Show award-winning garden.

Residents' Concerns

Some residents and supporters have voiced fears that redevelopment will diminish the estate's original character and

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reduce the number of flats for visually impaired tenants. They argue that facilities such as communal spaces, gardens, and the on-site Epsom & Ewell Talking Newspaper (EETN) studio, which has operated from Swail House for over 40 years, are at risk.

Complaints have also been made about the consultation process, with claims that residents' questions have gone unanswered and that accessible formats, such as tactile scale models of proposed buildings, have not been provided.

Russell Bailey, Chair of the Swail House Association for the Visually Impaired, told the *Epsom and Ewell Times*:

"We are very keen for the development to go through. We are not so keen about the way it's being done – i.e. selling off land to pay for the new development – and we are certainly not keen with the fact that there's going to be fewer flats for visually impaired people. If the RNIB were more financially secure, they could have lent money against the value of the property, kept the land, and built more flats.

I don't think residents feel they have had the opportunity to input into how it's going to develop. One real concern is that there will be no communal lounge and no facilities for recording the Epsom newspaper which has been going for many years."

RNIB's Position

The RNIB, however, says it has engaged with tenants and will continue to do so. Kathryn Sherratt, RNIB's Chief Financial Officer, said:

"In March 2025, RNIB submitted an outline planning application to redevelop land at the back of Swail House to build 48 units, and we're currently waiting for a decision on the planning proposal.

RNIB has consulted with tenants on the planning proposal and will continue to share information and consult as the proposals develop, subject to the outcome of the planning decision."

Wider Concerns

Supporters of the estate point out that Swail House is more than just a residential complex. Its natural grounds provide quiet areas for guide dogs and for residents to experience sounds of nature in place of visual cues. Campaigners say this unique environment is at risk if large sections of the site are sold.

Local residents outside Swail House have also raised objections to the design and scale of the proposed development, citing environmental and aesthetic impacts.

Next Steps

The future of Swail House now rests with Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's planning process. Whatever the outcome, the debate highlights tensions between the need to modernise housing stock and preserve the historic vision and facilities that made Swail House a pioneering model for visually impaired people more than 70 years ago.

Image: Swail House aerial – Google Maps.

Prostate cancer vaccine research launched in Surrey

7 September 2025



In September 2025, The Prostate Project, a Guildford-based volunteer-led charity, will launch a £250,000 campaign to raise funds for a prostate cancer research project widely anticipated to be 'game-changing'.

Work has begun to develop a vaccine to prevent the return of prostate cancer in men who have undergone a radical prostatectomy, the surgical removal of the prostate. Cancer vaccines have become an exciting area of research in recent years, and this new treatment could potentially save the lives of more than 1,500 men each year in the UK alone.

The Prostate Project, based at the Stokes Centre for Urology at Royal Surrey County Hospital, has a proven track record of funding research and treatment of prostate cancer, raising more than £11 million since its formation in 1998.

During this time the charity has provided funds for research at the University of Surrey, leading directly to breakthroughs in the diagnosis and treatment of prostate and other urological cancers. The university team is one of the leading groups for immunotherapy research in the UK, and is recognised around the world for its work.

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This latest initiative is part of the charity's longstanding and ongoing support for the work of Dr. Nicola Annels and Dr. Guy Simpson and their team based at the University of Surrey.

A patent has been applied for the vaccine and Dr. Simpson has already proven that it works in the similar treatment of bladder cancer. This new research is required to see if the vaccine works as effectively for prostate cancer patients.

Dr. Guy Simpson, Research Fellow Oncology at the University of Surrey explains:

'The research will focus on a 'prime-boost' vaccine strategy. The new cancer-killing virus, known as HSV5-15 developed by our team at the University of Surrey will be used as an immune 'priming' vaccine along with a prostate specific mRNA vaccine to 'boost' and maintain this immune response against the prostate.

mRNA vaccines have already proven to be revolutionary in preventing COVID, and this technology is promising similarly effective results in treating cancer tumours.

The vaccine trains the body's immune system to recognise cancer cells so any that return after surgery can be hunted down and killed, reducing the risk of the disease coming back. Around 5,000 radical prostatectomies are performed each year in the UK, but between 20% and 50% of men who have their prostates removed will have their cancer return, resulting in them undergoing further radiotherapy and/or hormone therapy.

This treatment is costly, time-consuming and can have unpleasant side effects, and is not always completely successful.'

Prostate Project Chairman, Martin Davies, expands on the fundraising initiative:

'For over 25 years the Prostate Project has been proud to support a team that is quite rightly recognised by their peers for their work in immunology research, and this latest initiative is perhaps the most important yet. We are looking to raise £250,000, a target that we recognise as ambitious but completely achievable, especially given our past record, and the significance of the potential outcome.'

A final word from Dr. Simpson on the timescales for delivery.

'This funding will support the initial 18 month research period, but the more money that we raise will have a significant effect on timescales.

The Prostate Project website www.prostate-project.org.uk features a comprehensive FAQ page with answers to many of the questions about the vaccine and details of how to donate.

Epsom schools celebrate GCSE results

7 September 2025



Epsom schools have been celebrating another strong year of GCSE results, with both Glyn School and Rosebery School reporting exceptional performances from the Class of 2025.

At **Glyn School**, 86% of students achieved grade 4 or above in English and Maths, with 66% reaching grade 5 or above. Disadvantaged pupils also excelled, with 84% attaining grade 4 or better in the core subjects. Among the top performers were Joshua Ellis (eight grade 9s and three grade 8s), William Unsworth (eight grade 9s), and Frederick Browning (eight grade 9s). Twins Hamish and Oscar Donald also secured a string of solid passes, while Chelsea Football Club player Reggie Walsh managed to complete seven GCSEs alongside making his debut for the club's first team.

Students reflected on the hard work behind their achievements, with Nicholas Cooper noting: *"It was hard work but worth it,"* and Joshua Ellis adding: *"I'm really happy with my results, and I want to thank my teachers for helping me achieve them."*

Headteacher Jo Garrod praised the determination of staff and pupils, while James Nicholson, CEO of GLF Schools, described the outcomes across the trust as "a fantastic set of GCSE results."

Meanwhile, at **Rosebery School**, the celebrations were equally jubilant. One in three exam entries was awarded a top grade 9 or 8, and half of all results fell between grades 9 and 7. Ninety-one per cent of students achieved grade 4 or higher in both English and Maths, and more than 80% reached grade 5 or above. In Maths and Science alone, Rosebery girls achieved 128 grade 9s.

Individual highlights included Iris Aryeetey and Eilidh McFarlane, who each achieved ten grade 9s, while twins Grace and Hannah Black amassed a remarkable 15 grade 9s and five grade 8s between them.

The school's overall performance set new records, with an average grade of 6.4 and an Attainment 8 score of 64.

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Headteacher David Lach said the results placed the cohort among the top 5% of schools nationally and praised both staff and pupils for their resilience during what he described as a “tragic and difficult academic year.”

With both schools celebrating record results following last week’s strong A Level outcomes, Epsom students appear to be ending the summer term on a high.

Related reports:

Epsom’s boys’ and girls’ schools celebrate A level results

Photo: Rosebery girls celebrate. Credit: GLF Schools

Local MP speaks out on Epsom Hospital’s bed-blocking

7 September 2025



Epsom & Ewell’s MP, Helen Maguire, has called for urgent action on social care after visiting Epsom Hospital’s accident and emergency department this week.

The Liberal Democrat MP met hospital staff and health professionals to discuss the forthcoming NHS 10 Year Plan. She said her visit underlined the “unimaginable pressures” faced by staff and patients as a result of overcrowding and long waits.

According to figures from Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust, the average stay in A&E at Epsom during 2024/25 was 5 hours and 41 minutes. For patients admitted, the average length of stay rises to nearly 10 days. Some patients with mental health needs remain in the emergency department for extended periods due to difficulties securing appropriate care.

Maguire said she was concerned at the sight of patients being treated in corridor beds — something NHS staff acknowledged as a consequence of space shortages and wider pressures across the system.

Welcoming the government’s forthcoming NHS 10 Year Plan, Maguire argued that improvements in social care were essential to tackle the problem of so-called “bed-blocking” — where patients who are medically fit to be discharged remain in hospital because no suitable care arrangements are available.

“Hospitals like Epsom, in my constituency, face unimaginable pressures as a result of years of mismanagement under the previous Conservative government,” she said. “If this Labour government are serious about ending the bed-blocking crisis and improving patient outcomes, they should listen to the Liberal Democrats and put social care front and centre of the NHS 10 Year Plan. We cannot fix our NHS unless we fix the crisis in social care.”

She also praised the efforts of Epsom and St Helier staff: “I want to pay tribute to all of the wonderful staff at Epsom Hospital, and across the Trust, who work tirelessly to deliver the best possible outcomes for patients under incredibly testing circumstances.”

Local pressures in national context

Epsom and St Helier hospitals have faced longstanding challenges with ageing estates, high demand, and difficulties in discharging patients into community or residential care. The Trust has been working on plans to modernise services, including proposals for a new specialist emergency care hospital in Sutton, while maintaining district services in Epsom and St Helier.

Nationally, the issue of delayed discharges has been identified by successive governments as a major factor behind hospital overcrowding. NHS England data for 2024 showed that more than 12,000 hospital beds across the country were occupied each day by patients who no longer needed acute care, but who could not be discharged safely.

Health experts say shortages of social care staff, funding pressures on local councils, and a rising elderly population have combined to make the problem worse. The government has promised its NHS 10 Year Plan will set out reforms aimed at shifting more care into the community and improving integration between health and social care.

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Epsom’s boys’ and girls’ schools celebrate A level results

7 September 2025



Epsom’s two prominent secondary schools, Rosebery and Glyn, are celebrating outstanding A-level and vocational qualification results, with this year’s achievements marking new highs in performance and student destinations.

At Rosebery School, staff and students are celebrating the school’s best-ever Key Stage 5 results. A-level attainment, vocational outcomes and overall achievement surpassed last year’s record figures, with 36% of entries graded A* or A, 70% awarded between A* and B, and 88% graded A* to C. Vocational entries averaged a Distinction.

Among the highest achievers were Sadie Smith (A* in Maths, Further Maths, Physics and Chemistry – now heading to Durham University to study Mathematics), Bethany Hatton (A* in Biology, Chemistry and Maths – Biochemistry at Warwick University), and Raadhika Wenham (A* in Biology, Chemistry and Psychology – Zoology at the University of Nottingham). Other top performers included Jessica Sheehy, Dasha Botha, Lily Browning, Stacey Boamah, Kate Blackall and Esther Scott, each with two A*s, and Issy Carter, who achieved a Distinction* in both vocational qualifications.

Headteacher David Lach praised the “remarkable resilience, determination, and talent” of the Class of 2025, noting that students leave as “empowered, confident young women ready to make their mark on the world”.

Glyn School also reported a strong year, with nearly half of all grades at A*–B. Standout results included Faris Al-Ugaily (A* in Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics – Chemical Engineering at Imperial College London), Brody Skinner and Lewis Ashworth (both achieving A* in Physics, Further Maths, Maths and the EPQ, with Ashworth progressing to Automotive Engineering at Loughborough University), and Eleanor Weston (A* in Biology, A in Chemistry and Maths – Biomedical Science at Newcastle University). Olivia Buchanan (A* in Geography, A* in Psychology, A in Politics and A* in EPQ) will study Law at the University of Exeter, while Head Boy Donovan Livesey (A* in English Literature, A* in Sociology, A in Media Studies, A* in EPQ) will study Journalism at the University of Sheffield.

Glyn Headteacher Jo Garrod described the results as “a testament to hard work, determination, and the support of our exceptional staff” and said she was delighted to see so many students securing places at their chosen universities, apprenticeships and career pathways.

Both schools are part of the GLF Schools Multi-Academy Trust. Chief Executive James Nicholson congratulated staff, students and families, saying he was “delighted” with the impressive achievements across the board.

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