

Local roadworks taken to task

12 July 2024



Surrey County Council has established a critical new **task force** to reduce the impact of utility roadworks and drive better coordination and communication of works across Surrey's road network.

Utility companies' demands in Surrey are amongst the top five highest in the UK with 88 works starting every day in the last twelve months. In total, over 32,000 utility works have been undertaken across the county during this period, at a cost impact to Surrey residents of £35,424,225.

Made up of representatives from water, energy and telecoms companies, the task force held their inaugural meeting last week and agreed five key areas of focus:

- Better coordination of roadworks across Surrey
- Working collaboratively to minimise disruption for residents
- Improved public communication by utility companies and improved on-site signage prior to works commencing and throughout
- Improved methods of sharing information, including online mapping of planned utility works
- Clearly defined escalation routes so that SCC can quickly hold utility companies to account.

Jonathan Hulley, Deputy Cabinet Member, Strategic Highways at Surrey County Council, said, "Whilst we recognise that works on the highway carried out by utility companies are necessary, these works are all too often impacting negatively on Surrey road users.

"This is a huge source of frustration for our residents, and we need to ensure that utility works are completed quicker, with better traffic management, better coordination, and better resident communication, which is why we have formed this vital task force.

"Surrey County Council is working hard to improve over 100 roads as part of our £8.5m highways maintenance programme this Summer to help prevent potholes - the biggest ever surface dressing programme undertaken in the county.

"I thank all partners who attended the first meeting of the task force and I look forward to working together to drive real improvements and do all we can to reduce utility congestion on our busy road network."

The task force will meet monthly to take this work forward.

More information on Surrey County Council's responsibilities and utility companies roadworks is available on the **Surrey County Council website**.

Image: Credit Geof Sheppard Licence

No more German supermarkets in Epsom

12 July 2024



Plans for an Aldi store have been rejected again over fears the increased traffic would have a severe impact on road safety.

[The site is a few hundred yards away from another German owned supermarket Lidl in Upper High Street.]

A proposal to create the budget supermarket on the vacant former Dairy Crest site in Alexandra Road was refused a second time at an Epsom and Ewell council meeting on July 10.

The application was first thrown out in 2015 following concerns about the site's location, level of car parking and traffic, and the effect on the character of the neighbourhood.

The new application for the £5m development in Epsom includes car parking, some landscaping but plans for residential units have been scrapped.

Councillor Jan Mason (Residents' Association/Ruxley Ward) said the supermarket giant should "do far better" on the design of the building if it "wants to come to a lovely area such as Epsom".

Although Aldi said it had "refined" its proposals, carefully designing an "attractive, bespoke Aldi food store" which would "respect the surrounding area", councillors were still concerned about its location.

Despite Surrey Highways advising the development "would be unlikely to result in a severe impact" on local traffic, councillors remained sceptical. Speaking before the debate, Ward Cllr Julie Morris (Lib Dem/College Ward) said there would be a "huge" impact on local residents who already feel the surrounding residential roads are a "rat run".

"The one thing you can't put in a spreadsheet is common sense," Cllr Chris Watson (Residents Association/ Ewell Court Road) said. He argued that regardless of "clever" data from the county council, "common sense" says it is a busy junction which could result in queuing traffic.

Agreeing with him, other councillors said the "already challenging junction" is "fraught with danger". It was agreed it was in the interests of residents, motorists, pedestrians and children crossing to go to school that councillors had to reject the application.

However, Cllr Clive Woodridge (Residents' Association/ Ewell Village Ward) argued it was not viable to refuse the application on traffic and road concerns. He said Surrey Highway experts have judged the development acceptable and this could not be easily defended at appeal.

But Cllr Mason called the development a ticking "time bomb", which could lead to a fatal collision if plans goes ahead.

Speaking to the committee, local resident Leah said: "The council has had feedback multiple times that local residents don't want a food store here." She cited Aldi's own research from its application that 58-61% of local residents objected to the proposal.

Around 91 letters were sent opposing the scheme, arguing it was an 'unacceptable location' for a food store at a busy junction. Concerns were raised that traffic would be exacerbated, a pedestrian crossing would be dangerous and the brownfield site should be saved for affordable housing.

Aldi superstore. (Credit: Marques Thomas/Unsplash)

Teen suicide risk underestimated by CAMHs

12 July 2024



An "underestimation" of suicide risk and significant mental health 'failings' contributed to the death of a vulnerable teenager, a Senior Coroner has found.

Locket Williams, described by their family as "a lovely person with a huge character", was just 15 years old when they tragically killed themselves in September 2021.

Senior Coroner Richard Travers concluded that there were a number of key failures by Surrey and Borders Partnership (SABP) NHS Foundation Trust's Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) which contributed to the death of the vulnerable teenager, who goes by they/them pronouns. The three-week inquest concluded Friday 31 May.

Locket's older sister, Emily, said: "Hearing the coroner recognize what we have believed for three long years—that failures by CAMHS contributed to Locket's death and ultimately meant Locket lost all hope—is heartbreaking.

"We're thankful for the Coroner's respect for Locket's identity, which was so important to them, and we sincerely hope this process will help prevent more tragic deaths like Locket's in the future."

Described by their family as "vibrant" with a "massive heart", Locket "brought colour to everything they participated in" their family said.

They had a long history of mental health difficulties, resulting in self-harming behaviours and three previous suicide

attempts throughout within seven months of 2021.

Evidence heard at the inquest highlighted “illogical conclusions” that Locket was deemed “low risk” by clinicians, despite their ongoing suicidal ideation and three suicide attempts in close succession, the family’s lawyers said.

Coroner Travers found that Locket’s high risk of suicide was “underestimated” by clinicians, as there was an “insufficient account” of Locket’s long-running risk, which meant Locket did not receive the treatment they needed.

Commenting on the Coroner’s findings, the family’s solicitor, Elle Gauld from Simpson Millar’s public law team, said: “Given Locket’s three suicide attempts and deteriorating mental health, CAMHS’ approach repeatedly defied logic and palpable evidence of suicidality, bypassing the patient’s express wishes and placing an unrealistic burden on a family already in crisis. Treatment was not commenced in a timely manner”

Long waiting lists for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and a shortage of therapists meant that, although clinicians all agreed CBT was necessary, Locket remained at home. Without access to the required support and treatment, their mental health continued to deteriorate, the lawyers for the family said.

Coroner Travers said there was a ‘failure’ to assess the likelihood Locket could be kept safe while waiting eight months for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (‘CBT’), a treatment she was ready and willing to engage in.

Failures in communication between social services and CAMHS were also identified, leading to crucial information being missed in Locket’s assessment and care. CAMHS failed to attend Core Groups meetings held by social services to protect Locket, as a vulnerable child.

Locket was passed from service to service, with no continuous care from the same clinicians or who was responsible for Locket’s care, lawyers said.

Speaking of the family’s loss, Locket’s mother, Hazel Williams, said: “We hope the lessons learned from their death highlight the urgent need for change and prevent future tragedies. We are grateful for the thoroughness of this inquest and the potential for positive changes in managing mental health services for young people.”

SABP has 56 days to respond to the senior coroner’s findings. Coroner Tavers has asked the NHS Trust to report whether there is now a system in place to ensure that young people referred to CAMHS are seen and treated promptly, and that clinicians are acting in accordance with the Trust’s guidelines.

A Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust spokesperson said: “We are extremely saddened by the tragic death of Locket Williams and our deepest sympathies go to their family and friends.

“We are carefully reflecting on the Coroner’s findings and the questions we have been asked and will respond within the given timeframe.”

Image: Locket. (Credit: Simpson Millar law firm) Coroners Court in background - Google

Poor road conditions a real test for learners

12 July 2024



A driving instructor said he’s on a “one man crusade” to fix the roads around Redhill Aerodrome Driving Test Centre. Martin Pitchley, 57, said he was “shocked” at the road conditions in Redhill, Surrey.

Unreadable road markings, overgrown hedges blocking speed signs and poor road conditions were some of the issues raised by the driving instructor.

“It’s not very fair for students taking their test with all these problems with the road which is caused by poor road management by the [county] council,” Martin said.

Emailing Surrey County Council (SCC) on June 3, Martin said nothing has been done to fix the issue.

A SCC highways maintenance officer said the vegetation covering road signs will be removed as part of the rural cut back of Earlswood and Reigate South on July 19 . Fixing chevrons and replacing speed signs have also been requested on a list of works to be done.

Students who are just about to take their driving test come out of the centre not knowing what the speed limit is on that road, according to Martin. He claims a speed sign had been knocked over and lying down in a hedge for over six months.

Outside the driving test centre is the 40mph Kings Mill Lane, but Martin says there is no signage until a good few hundred yards up the road.

He said: "It's not fair to be giving students tuition and telling them there should be a speed limit here but there's not one, or it's knocked down.

"It's an unsafe speed for that road" he added, "It's got so many sharp bends, and big lorries yet students are expected to drive 40 mph up there.

"It's like a one-man crusade really. It's not really fair for the students going up to the test centre and taking their test with all these problems with the road."

Not only worried for his driving students, Martin said he was concerned for the general public including pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

"They are very severe and dangerous [roads] for any motorists, either for a learner or a full-time experienced driver," he said. "They have to drive up these roads and find there's a big steep dip in the roads or uneven roads that will make them steer awkwardly or crash their car."

According to Crash Map data, seven 'slight' accidents and two 'serious' incidents with vehicles have occurred on Kings Mill Lane between 2018-2022.

Martin said the county council has had enough time to fix the issues with the road and wants to see change. He said: "I just want this issue to be resolved so students can go up to their driving test, get a fair test, and members of the public are not going to get hit by a speeding car."

A SCC spokesperson said: "We appreciate the concerns raised and our Highways officers have been in communication with the individual to talk through the issues.

"The grass verges in question will be cut as part of our twice per annum rural cuts - information on where and when these take place are available on our website.

"Requests to replace speed signs in the area have been raised, however these need to be prioritised against other requests across the county and officers will review this as soon as they can."

Image: Driving instructor Martin Pitchley, Credit: Road Rules Driving.

Tree falls on van in Ewell Village

12 July 2024



On Saturday a tree close to the bus stop, opposite the entrance to Bourne Hall in Ewell Village fell across the road onto a passing red Mercedes van shattering its windscreen.

Surrey Police were quickly in attendance and a female police officer used a broom to sweep debris from the road to make the road as safe as possible for passing traffic.

After approximately 30 minutes, contractors arrived on site to remove the fallen tree. No one is believed to have been injured by the tree falling across the pavement.

A few months ago, a similar incident occurred when a large tree inside the entrance gates to Bourne Hall fell causing major damage to walling which has had to undergo major restoration.

Whilst Saturday's incident required Surrey Police's involvement, it is not believed that any of the other emergency services were called upon. Two trees falling within only a few metres of each other within such a short space of time in a busy village suggests that people were lucky to escape serious injury. Does more need to be done in the Borough to ensure trees overhanging public spaces do not pose a danger to anyone?

Ivy can choke a tree if allowed to climb it and dead branches will then fall to the ground below. Ivy can, however be easily dealt with by removing a section of it from the base of a tree so that the ivy above dies and loosens its grip on the tree.

The tree that fell across the pavement and road onto the top of a red Mercedes van on Saturday was visibly covered in ivy.

Epsom and Ewell's new MP and new Party

12 July 2024



The 2024 general election count for Epsom & Ewell was held last night at the Epsom Downs racecourse from 10pm to the early hours today.

This year's election introduced new boundaries for the constituency of Epsom and Ewell, with the addition of wards from Ashted and Leatherhead.

With the vote closing at 10pm, the official ballot count revealed a voter turnout of 70%. (2019: 81,138. 73.3%)

Mrs **Jackie King**, Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's CEO and Returning Officer, revealed the official result at about 06:15 with the results as follows:

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT: Helen Maguire:

- Votes 20,674
- Share 37.9%
- Share change +13.7
- 2019: 13,946 (23.5%)

CONSERVATIVE: Mhairi Fraser:

- Votes 16,988
- Share 31.2%
- Share change -22.4
- 2019: 31,819 (53.5%)

LABOUR: Mark Todd:

- Votes 8,325
- Share 15.3%
- Share change -1.5
- 2019: 10,226 (17.2%)

REFORM UK: Mayuran Senthilnathan:

- Votes 5,795
- Share 10.6%
- Share change +10.6

GREEN: Stephen McKenna:

- Votes 1,745
- Share 3.2%
- Share change -0.1
- 2019: 2,047 (3.5%)

TRUE and FAIR: Gina Miller:

- Votes 845
- Share 1.6%
- Share change +1.6

Social Democratic Party: Damon Young:

- Votes 153
- Share 0.3%
- Share change +0.3

Each candidate was accompanied by a fairly large cohort, all working endlessly to keep up with a general sense of how well their party was doing nationally. While the rest of the UK's election results unfolded on TV screens, mixed reactions were circulating. However, it was the Labour corner with the most cheers throughout, with a landslide exit poll for the Labour party unfolding into a reality. The announcement of a Labour government was issued around 4:55 am.

Helen Maguire (Liberal Democrat) said a priority for Epsom and Ewell was getting the new hospital built that had been promised for 10 years. On the election campaign she said "There are so many pollsters saying different things it has been difficult for voters to know what has been going on. It brings up the question whether we should have polls during election campaigns. If we had proportional representation we wouldn't need polls anyway."

Responding to the result **Stephen McKenna** of the Green Party said "With a super-majority is it less likely that the new Government will work with other parties to get proportional representation and introduce the Green policies the country needs. We hope the new MP preserves the Green Belt and makes sure we have a housing policy that works for everyone and sorts out the NHS locally."

Mayuran Senthilnathan of Reform UK said "The first past the post system does not serve the interests of this country so I hope the constituents of Epsom and Ewell get behind a campaign for proportional representation."

Gina Miller of True and Fair said of the future of Epsom and Ewell "I hope the Green Belt is preserved and Epsom and Ewell becomes a place where health and well-being come first". On the national picture she said "I think the share of the vote for Reform UK is quite terrifying. The centre parties need to start listening to people and delivering for them." On her local campaign experience Gina Miller said she was shocked by the negative campaigning that had gone on. She called for regulation of campaign literature and tactical voting websites. "The bullying is something I never thought I would experience".

Editorial:

Democracy at work? Or strange mathematics?

May our hustings make up your mind?

12 July 2024



Epsom and Ewell Times staged a six election candidate Parliamentary hustings at the Adrian Mann Theatre, **NESCOT** in Ewell on Wednesday 26th June. With every seat in the 230 seat theatre occupied, **Gina Miller** (True and Fair), **Mark Todd** (Labour), **Mhairi Fraser** (Conservative), **Stephen McKenna** (Green), **Helen Maguire** (Liberal Democrat) and **Mayuran Senthilnathan** (Reform) took the stage, with **Lionel Blackman** in the Chair.

Questions on Brexit, local government financing, arming Israel, where to build houses, crime, tactical voting and proportional representation and others were asked by a lively audience. Many voters from the new southerly Ashted and Leatherhead areas of the Epsom and Ewell constituency came along.

Below is a recording of the hustings. After introductions the hustings get going after 06:50.

The Epsom and Ewell Times is indebted to NESCOT CEO **Julie Kapsalis** and **Louise Gaskin** of the Creative and Media Department of NESCOT, who worked so hard to make a success of this once in a Parliament event. Special thanks to **Charlie McCarthy** of NESCOT who edited the video recording.

Top image credit Steven McCormick photography.

[Please note that in error the introducer muddled the Labour candidate Mark Todd with a former Labour MP of the same name.]

Related reports:

Epsom and Ewell Parliament candidates interviewed

Conservative who promises to serve "with integrity"

Mark my words for Labour candidate

Lib Dems' Helen Maguire - "Getting Things Done"

The Green promises

Reform candidate for Epsom and Ewell

A True and Fair view of the world

Sick "jokes" end trainee PC's career

12 July 2024



A **Surrey** trainee police officer, who 'joked' he would rape a domestic abuse victim, has been sacked from Surrey Police.

PC **Samuel Wilton**, a trainee officer since 2023, admitted gross misconduct at an accelerated hearing on June 26.

Fellow officers reported PC Wilton 'joking' that "if she [a woman] was a domestic violence victim I would still rape her" on a night out in Five and Lime Bar in Guildford on January 5.

Comments made by the trainee officer included: "If they were single, I would break her in half". He also said: "If there was a Domestic Violence (DV) victim who was fit, I would rape her" then adding: "If the DV victim was fit and dead, I would still rape her".

The training group, for which PC Wilton was part, had received training about professional behaviour and standards expected in the police force on the very same day that he made the comments.

PC Wilton was then placed on restricted duties. Still in police training, PC Wilton was never on front line duties.

Allegations against PC Wilton were proven in the hearing, and he was found to have breached the Standards of Professional Behaviour amounting to gross misconduct. "I am absolutely disgusted with myself," PC Wilton said during the hearing, as he told inspectors about his life-long ambition to be in the force. He added: "I will never forgive myself of a lifetime of focus for a moment of madness."

PC Wilton assured the hearing that he has "grown as a person", reflecting 'daily' on his comments. PC Wilton also said he has taken reading courses he has taken on sex and gender equality to educate himself.

"I am more than this incident and this mistake," PC Wilton told the hearing as he asked for a second chance. He added: "In my naivety and thoughtlessness, I have contributed to the [misogynistic and abusive culture] that the police try to eradicate."

However Peter Gardner, Assistant Chief Constable for Surrey, concluded: "For the public interest you should cease public duty immediately." He stressed that, although the incident amounted to gross misconduct, there is no evidence or allegation that PC Milton is a threat to the public.

The hearing heard that, drunkenness was "no defence" for his behaviour, as agreed by both investigation officers and PC Wilton, who said he never intended to offend anyone.

The misconduct hearing noted the trainee officer does not regularly drink to excess and so 'could not have foreseen' his conduct.

The panel concluded that the incident could damage the police's reputation and make the public think less of the police.

Recent high-profile incidents such as Hampshire police officers sending discriminatory whatsapp messages were highlighted as part of a perceived 'culture of misogyny' within the police. Investigating officers said they wanted to send a very clear message of "there is no place for you in the police service" if misconduct is found.

The misconduct hearing concluded that "anything less than a dismissal would not achieve the purpose of misconduct proceedings" and "fail to maintain public confidence and the police's reputation".

Acknowledging PC Wilton's regret, lifetime ambition to be in the force and commitment to the civic duty, Assistant Chief Cons said in his closing remarks: "Please don't let this determine the rest of your life".

Numerous character references were given to the hearing from PC Wilton's former colleagues, mostly female, including those from his time in the RAF. One female colleague said the comments were "completely out of character" for PC Wilton, with others praising his 'teamwork', 'professionalism' and 'emotional intelligence'.



Deputy Chief Constable Nev Kemp said in a statement to the press after the meeting: “The comments made by PC Wilton are deeply offensive and disgraceful for any police officer to make, whether on or off duty and simply cannot be condoned.

“I am pleased that his colleagues reported his behaviour without delay. This demonstrates that this standard of behaviour is not tolerated in Surrey Police, and I commend them for taking the immediate action that they did.

“Fortunately, PC Wilton has never carried out any frontline duties or come into contact with members of the public as a police officer. His conduct on that night falls far short of the high standards and example expected of our officers and staff in order to maintain the trust and confidence of our local communities.”

PC Wilton will have five working days to lodge an appeal against his dismissal.

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

Justice Stops Oil

12 July 2024



A Surrey campaigner is “over the moon” after a landmark legal decision found that planning permission given to drill for oil at Horse Hill is unlawful.

The Supreme Court has found that the environmental impact of burning fossil fuels must be taken into account when granting planning permission.

Sarah Finch has been fighting Surrey County Council’s decision to approve UK Oil and Gas’s oil drilling site in Horse Hill, south of Reigate, for years – having first brought the case to the High Court in 2019.

On Thursday (June 20) the Supreme Court ruled, by three judges to two, that planning permission for fossil fuel production should not be granted unless the climate impact of the project – specifically downstream greenhouse gas emissions from the combustion of the fuel – have been fully assessed.

It means Surrey County Council’s decision to grant planning permission for oil production was unlawful, her lawyers said at the end of the five-year battle.

Mrs Finch said: “I am absolutely over the moon to have won this important case. The Weald Action Group always believed it was wrong to allow oil production without assessing its full climate impacts, and the Supreme Court has shown we were right.

“This is a welcome step towards a safer, fairer future. The oil and gas companies may act like business-as-usual is still an option, but it will be very hard for planning authorities to permit new fossil fuel developments – in the Weald, the North Sea or anywhere else – when their true climate impact is clear for all to see.

“I thank the Weald Action Group, Friends of the Earth and everyone who has been part of our long journey through the courts. And I thank my lawyers for their commitment and hard work.”

The Court found the council’s reasons for refusing to assess the impact of burning the fuel was inadequate, her lawyers said, adding that it made the “common sense point” that combustion emissions were unavoidable and no other controls could be relied upon to reduce their impact.

They added that for similar reasons, the court also dismissed an argument that refining the oil somehow excused a failure to assess its impact at the earliest possible stage.

The decision means planning authorities in England and Wales must now assess the total climate impact of any proposed fossil fuel developments.

Stephen Sanderson UKOG’s chief executive said: “The court’s rather perplexing retrospective ruling, which is counter to all prior judgements, further underscores why the company’s focus over the past few years has shifted away from oil and gas and firmly towards creating and delivering strategic underground hydrogen storage, an essential element of the UK’s future low carbon energy system.

“These projects have the potential to create far greater sustainable value for the company and the UK than any small onshore field such as Horse Hill. They also have the added benefit of making a positive contribution to Net Zero.

“However, although Horse Hill is a small part of our portfolio, it still has a role to play in both the company’s and UK’s future transitional energy mix and thus we look forward to working closely with the local planning authority to rectify this retrospective change to EIA requirements.”

The proposed expansion at Horse Hill Developments would have created five drilling cellars, four hydrocarbon production

wells, four gas-to-power generators, a process, storage and tanker loading area, seven 1,300-barrel oil tanks, and a 37-metre drill rig to allow large-scale production of up to 3.3 million tonnes of crude oil for sale and use as transport fuel for 20 years, Mrs Finch's lawyers Leigh Day said.

UKCOG has said it plans to work closely with Surrey County Council to "promptly rectify the situation", either via an amendment to the original 2018 planning applications or a new retrospective planning submission, for which there is recent planning precedent within Surrey.

A spokesperson for Surrey County Council said: "The long awaited judgement of the Supreme Court in the case of R (on the application of Finch on behalf of the Weald Action Group) v Surrey County Council and others has found that the Environmental Impact Assessment undertaken for the planning application at Horse Hill to extract petroleum did not assess the effect on climate of the combustion of the oil to be produced.

"Council officers at the time of the planning application assessment believed that they acted in compliance with the law. The judgement makes it clear that local planning authorities must have regard to downstream emissions. The council was unsuccessful in defending its decision.

"The planning permission remains to be determined in due course."

Image: Redhill climate campaigner Sarah Finch at Horse Hill rally 5 Nov 2021. Credit Denise Laura Baker

Computer's gift of a Trojan Horse?

12 July 2024



The computer won the Derby! On the eve of yesterday's famous Epsom flat race Epsom and Ewell Times published winner tips Los Angeles from Royal Ascot Odds and first to cross the finishing line **City of Troy** from a super-computer. What other gifts for humanity might be brought by AI?

An Epsom and Ewell Times reader put £50 on both tips and came away with a £100 profit thanks to the brain-power of a super-computer. He said "One swallow does not make a summer. So, I won't be inclined to follow computer tips every time but thanks for this one"

No Royal could be spotted on Epsom Downs this Derby Day but our own leading citizen Mayor **Steve Bridger** and Mayoress Carol Bridger took centre stage in the Royal Box of The Queen's Stand. Another Epsom and Ewell highlight was **Helin Konyar** a Ukraine scholar of the local **Laine Theatre Arts** leading the National Anthem just before the Derby stakes. The King and Queen attended Oaks Day on Friday.



Students of Epsom's Laine Theatre Arts. Helin Konyar front row centre in yellow dress.

City Of Troy (3-1 Favourite) banished the memory of his disappointing run in the QIPCO 2000 Guineas with a breathtaking performance to clinch victory in the 245th Betfred Derby at Epsom Downs today.

The colt, sired by Justify, secured a record-extending 10th win in this prestigious Classic for his trainer Aidan O'Brien, while jockey Ryan Moore celebrated his fourth Derby triumph.

City Of Troy, racing on the inside, was settled towards the rear among the 16 runners as stablemates Euphoric and Los Angeles led the field.

Rounding Tattenham Corner, City Of Troy began to make an impressive move, surging to the front in the final quarter mile. He maintained his momentum, finishing strongly to fend off Ambiente Friendly by two and three-quarter lengths, with Los Angeles trailing three and a quarter lengths behind in third.



The Derby jockeys. Epsom Racecourse 1st June 2024 c. Epsom and Ewell Times

"It was hard to know what would happen today, but I was very sure we still had the best horse before the race," Ryan Moore said to ITV Racing. "Newmarket... it didn't happen. I can't pretend that we knew it would happen [today], but we do know that he has a big engine, he showed himself to be a brilliant two-year-old. The Guineas... we got a few things wrong. But it's great that he could come back today. He's still a little bit immature, that's the first time he's run around a bend, hopefully there's plenty more to work with."

Moore reflected on the race's turning point, stating, "We did a few things wrong at Newmarket, today we rectified it and put it right."

On the sensation of guiding City Of Troy through the final stages, Moore said, "He was going to win very easily. With the

loose horse in front of him, he was still a bit unsure, and then he galloped out strong. He quickened well and then kind of waited, you have to be delighted with what he has done today.”

“I had to find a little bit of room. The race kind of opened up, loose horse in there, he travelled well into the straight, and he picked up and went to the front very easily and very quickly,” Moore recounted. “Then I felt he was still a little bit inexperienced, with the loose horse in front of him he wasn’t quite sure what to do – he was pricking his ears, then he changed his leads near the line and went on again. I’m just delighted that a horse who showed so much as a two-year-old – he was very good at two – and the Guineas, we got a few things wrong on the day and it’s great that Aidan’s got him back and brought him here today. He didn’t lose faith in the horse, stuck to the plan and it has paid off. We believed that if he turned up like we thought he would, he’d be too good for them, and he was.

“I was always happy where I was. It’s never going to be 100% smooth with a field that size, where we were, but I was able to pick a path. He took me there early and easily, and the race was over and he was in control of it a fair way out.

“He’s special – he won the Dewhurst, won a Group Two as early as July, won the Dewhurst, then to come here, and it’s the first time he’s been round a bend, and obviously it’s a big step up in trip. We thought he was the sort of horse, and once again Aidan’s brought him here, he’s turned up and it all worked out great,” Moore concluded to ITV Racing.

Epsom Downs witnessed a remarkable performance today, marking yet another chapter in the illustrious careers of City Of Troy, Aidan O’Brien, and Ryan Moore.

Bearing the balls of Derby week in Langley Vale

12 July 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.”

BBC Question Time Came to Epsom

12 July 2024



Last night, **Epsom College** played host to BBC's **Question Time**, with **Fiona Bruce** at the helm. She opened the programme by highlighting Epsom's famed salts and rich horse racing heritage.

Epsom and Ewell Times will be staging a local "Question Time" for the Epsom and Ewell Parliamentary Candidates at the Adrian Mann Theatre, NESCOL, Reigate Road in Ewell at 7pm on Wednesday 26th June. All welcome.

The Panel included **Damian Hinds** MP the Conservative School Minister, **Wes Streeting** MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, **Nigel Farage**, Reform UK President, **Rose Hudson-Wilkin**, Bishop of Dover and **Piers Morgan**, TV Presenter and Former Newspaper Editor.

Here is a summary of some of the questions and responses:

Question: "Is the idea of bringing back national service anything more than a political stunt?"

Damian Hinds: Defended the idea, suggesting it would broaden opportunities and foster a cohesive society, though Bruce noted criticism from senior military figures.

Wes Streeting: Highlighted existing opportunities like local cadets and questioned the government's track record over the past 14 years.

Rose Hudson-Wilkin: Cautioned against backdoor conscription, referencing existing youth programs.

Piers Morgan: Supported the idea for its potential to instill responsibility, but emphasized the need to address broader issues affecting young people.

Nigel Farage: Dismissed the policy as a focus group driven stunt, pointing out its limited scope.

Question: "Labour claims to reduce (NHS) waiting lists by extending working hours and asking doctors to work on weekends. Where will you find the staff?"

Wes Streeting: Explained plans for voluntary extra shifts, while acknowledging current pay and working condition issues.

Damian Hinds: Agreed on the need for more doctors and better technology, but noted industrial action worsened the backlog.

Piers Morgan: Criticized the system's inability to cope with population growth and increased life expectancy.

Nigel Farage: Called for a rethink of NHS funding.

Rose Hudson-Wilkin: Highlighted the delay in developing a workforce plan.

Question: "Regardless of people coming over on small boats, legal immigration is out of control. What is the solution?"

Nigel Farage: Blamed Labour for opening the door to high migration and called for using Brexit powers to control it.

Rose Hudson-Wilkin: Advocated for addressing global issues causing migration and warned against political scapegoating.

Damian Hinds: Emphasized the need to welcome contributing migrants but acknowledged current numbers were too high.

Piers Morgan: Warned about the rhetoric used in discussing migrants and criticized the lack of control postBrexit.

Question: "Is it morally right to impose a tax on parents' aspirations for their children?"

Wes Streeting: Defended Labour's plan to remove tax exemptions for private schools, arguing for better funding for state schools.

Piers Morgan: Condemned the policy as envy driven and harmful to aspirations.

Damian Hinds: Questioned the impact and minimal revenue from the tax.

Rose Hudson-Wilkin: Called for equitable resourcing of all schools.

Nigel Farage: Suggested more scholarships for working class children instead of taxing private schools.
The heated debate at Epsom College will be a night to remember for those lucky to get in and everyone at Epsom College who watched it.

Maraam Nusair

6 out of 11 Conservative MPs leaving Surrey

12 July 2024



Michael Gove MP for Surrey Heath has brought the total Conservative MP retirees in Surrey to **SIX** out of the **ELEVEN** all present Conservative held **Surrey** constituencies.

On 5th February **Kwasi Kwarteng** the Conservative MP for Spelthorne announced he will not stand at the upcoming General Election.

With Paul Beresford MP for Mole Valley, Dominic Raab MP for Esher and Walton, Crispin Blunt MP for Reigate and Banstead and our own **Chris Grayling** MP for **Epsom and Ewell**, all having confirmed they are not going to run, this leaves 5 Surrey Conservative MPs still standing.

One can expect Jeremy Hunt MP for South-West Surrey, who serves in the Cabinet, to seek re-election. Jonathan Lord MP for Woking, Ben Spencer MP for Runnymede and Weybridge, Angela Richardson MP for Guildford and Claire Coutinho MP for East Surrey are assumed to be still up for the fight.

Epsom and Ewell Conservatives have already put in place their new prospective Parliamentary Candidate, **Mhairi Fraser**, an anti-corruption lawyer.

She will be challenged by **Helen Maguire** of the Liberal Democrats, **Gina Miller** of the True and Fair Party and **Steve Mckenna** of the Green Party and **Mark Todd** for Labour. It is understood a Reform Party candidate will stand but despite asking one of the Party's street canvassers to get in touch with Epsom and Ewell Times, we have heard nothing to confirm.

Related Reports:

Surrey's Tory MPs exiting the County

Conservatives adopt new contender for Parliament

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Grayling bids farewell....

12 July 2024



With the date of the General Election confirmed to be the 4th of July 2024 Epsom and Ewell's Member of Parliament since 7th June 2001, **Chris Grayling**, who is not standing for Parliament this time, writes to his constituents.

Dear constituent

As you will know, the Prime Minister has called a general election for 4th July. All Parliamentary activity is now ceasing and there will be no new debates or Parliamentary motions before the election.

I am not standing for re-election and so cease to be an MP when Parliament is dissolved on 29th May. I will, though, remain responsible for urgent constituency case work in Epsom and Ewell until polling day and until my successor is elected.

As the campaign has now started, I will no longer be responding to emails about party or policy issues. However if you have an urgent personal problem which requires my help during the campaign period, please feel free to raise it with me at chris.grayling.mp@parliament.uk, which will remain operational until polling day.

Once Parliament has been dissolved my constituency data records will be destroyed, as is required legally. If you contact me for help with an urgent matter please let me know at the same time if you are happy for your issue and data to be passed on to my successor if the your case is still outstanding at the time of the election.

It has been a great honour to represent this constituency, and I send my good wishes to everyone locally for the future.

With best wishes

Chris Grayling

Banstead Fire Station to close?

12 July 2024



The Fire Brigade Union (FBU) has vehemently opposed the closure of Banstead Fire Station, claiming potential increases in response times could be “detrimental” to public safety.

Banstead Fire Station could move into Godstone under new proposals by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service.

“We emphasise that the closure of Banstead Fire Station could have severe consequences, as a typical house fire can double in intensity every minute,” said Karl Jones, FBU Secretary in a letter to Chief Fire Officer Dan Quin. Karl called on the service to seek an alternative location as the public should “not be exposed to potential greater response times”

The average response time to critical incidents in Reigate and Banstead is seven minutes and 23 seconds. It would increase to eight minutes and three seconds if the move goes ahead, the draft plan said.

Across England and Wales, the average response time to primary fires was 9 minutes and 13 seconds, according to the most recent Home Office data. This was an increase from the previous year - with the largest component was drive time,

Moving Banstead Fire Station nine miles down the road would mean the average response time would still be under the service’s 10 minute response standard for critical emergencies.

Under the reforms, the response time could put Banstead from 9th ‘place’ in terms of response times in Surrey, to joint 17th according to 2023 data from a Freedom of Information (FOI) request.

“I’m not convinced of the average response times with the geography of the area,” said Mark Johnston, Lib Dem parliamentary candidate for Reigate and Banstead. He said the response times are only averaged across the borough as a whole and did not take into account new developments in the area.

Moving the crew and equipment from Banstead to Godstone will provide better positioning of cover for the whole of the county, according to the Service. Response times for Tandridge is currently eight minutes and 42 seconds, which would be cut by 10 seconds under the plans.

Specialist software is used to calculate response times by using ‘normal road speeds’, which is equal to or slightly below the speed limit to reflect traffic and other impacts. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service said: “We are confident that when our crews are driving to an incident, also on blue lights, that our estimated response times accurate.”

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service said it is made aware of new developments in Surrey and is consulted on them in relation

to access and hydrants. The service also said it reviews any current, new or emerging risks on an annual basis.

A Service spokesperson said: “We will still ensure that we can respond to emergencies in the Banstead area swiftly and with the appropriate resources and equipment when needed. We will also ensure that we continue to work with communities in Banstead to prevent these emergencies in the first place.”

Housed in the former police house, Banstead fire station is ‘not fit for purpose’, the service said. Crews cannot train on the site and have to visit other fire stations instead. Owned by Surrey Police, the lease on the station also ends in 2025. Surrey Police said the site has been “decommissioned” and has been on the disposal list since 2015.

Despite some members of the public labelling the proposals as a ‘cost-cutting’ exercise, the service added it will invest around £800,000 to ensure Godstone Fire Station is fit for this increase in people and equipment.

After extensive work, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service claim that there is no other appropriate location in Banstead. The new ambulance site at the Horseshoe in Banstead was ruled out due to emergency response times as the site is closer to Epsom, which already has sufficient fire and rescue cover and low response times.

Other sites included: The former Dormers Care Home, the former depot at Beech Grove and the detached playing field adjacent to Marden Lodge School in Caterham. However, these options were rejected due to unsuitable leases and access issues.

Taking a staged approach, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service hope to implement the accepted changes gradually throughout 2025-2030. and review them throughout the process.

Related reports:

[Auto fire alarms need a 999 before fire service respond in Surrey](#)

[Not such a rosy report on Surrey Fire Service](#)

Image - Banstead Fire Station - credit Google street view

Cyclist death prompts A217 review

12 July 2024



The death of a “fit and active” cyclist has prompted a coroner to raise concerns over paths near a main road in Tadworth.

A man named John Bass died after falling from his bike following an incident involving a van on the A217 at Tadworth in December 2022.

Encroaching mud, twigs and grass more than halved the width of the popular cycle path which poses a risk of further fatalities, a coroner said at Mr Bass’s inquest.

The 80-year-old was considered a “fit and active cyclist”. While the footpath from which Mr Bass fell was 1.4 metres wide, due to encroaching mud, grass, twigs and acorns on the pavement space, the space where he was able to cycle was reduced to only 0.6 metres wide.

Weeks before his death, a highways inspector visited the path and did not consider the narrowing of pathway as a safety concern.

Assistant Coroner Krestina Hayes found in a Prevention of Future Death Report: “There is a risk to future pavement users if clear guidance is not provided to inspectors to identify safety concerns regarding vegetation growth on footpaths.”

The report, published May 14, 2024, also expressed concerns that the frequency of the yearly road inspections should be reviewed.

Speaking at the inquest, Mr Bass’ family advised the footpath by the Tadworth Road is used regularly by cyclists to avoid the vehicles on the busy road, where the speed limit is up to 40mph.

As the highway authority, Surrey County Council (SCC) is responsible for maintaining public highways. Although there is reference to trees and vegetation in SCC, there is no clear guidance on encroachment on pavements.

Inspected yearly, the stretch of highway was examined by car on November 14, and on foot on 22 November. No safety defects were found to meet intervention level by SCC. The family said the pavement was cleared shortly after the accident.

A spokesperson for SCC said: “Our deepest sympathies remain with John’s family and friends, and we will respond to the Coroner’s report following careful consideration of the concerns raised.”



SCC has been given until 3 July to respond to the report.

Image: A217 Road, Near Tadworth, Banstead. (Photo Google)