

# Surrey getting greener?

30 December 2023



Following its declaration of a climate emergency in 2019, **Surrey County Council** has been on a mission to combat climate change and significantly slash carbon emissions. The council aims to achieve net-zero status for its own operations by 2030 and is rallying for county-wide support to hit the same target by 2050.

## *Organizational Emission Reductions:*

In a comprehensive effort to curtail its carbon footprint, Surrey County Council has assessed key areas within its operations. Notable accomplishments include:

- 7% of the council's vehicle fleet is now comprised of low-carbon alternatives.
- The council has scrutinized 83 buildings across the county to gauge their potential for low-carbon integration.
- Over 3,300 staff members have undergone climate change awareness training, reinforcing the commitment to sustainability.
- 83,000 low-energy streetlights have been installed throughout the county, contributing to substantial energy savings.
- £2.8 million has been saved in the council's annual energy bill through dedicated efforts in energy efficiency.

## *Empowering Residents and Businesses:*

Surrey County Council has not limited its endeavors to internal initiatives but has actively engaged residents and businesses in the fight against climate change. Highlights of these collaborative efforts include:

- Facilitating the planting of an impressive 470,000 trees, contributing to enhanced biodiversity and carbon sequestration.
- The introduction of 31 electric buses now operational in the county, marking a significant stride in public transportation electrification.
- Hosting 13,000 electric vehicle charging sessions across the county, promoting the transition to cleaner transportation options.
- 88 Eco-Schools have been awarded green flag status, recognizing their commitment to sustainable practices.
- A collective effort has resulted in saving an estimated 20,000 tonnes of carbon emissions.
- Addressing fuel poverty, the council has treated 1,350 homes, ensuring they are energy-efficient and economically sustainable.
- Over £1.9 million in grants have been awarded to support small to medium-sized businesses, yielding an annual saving of £821,000 through improved energy efficiency measures.

For those eager to delve deeper into Surrey's climate change initiatives, a wealth of information is available on the council's dedicated climate change webpage.

Related reports:

[Draft advice may lead to energy savings](#)

[Surrey schools fly their green flags](#)

[Local action to tackle global climate crisis](#)

Image courtesy SCC

# Gatwick 2nd runway sneaking in?

30 December 2023



Gatwick Airport is polling residents about changes it wants to its multi-billion pound expansion plans.

The bid is due to be examined by planning inspectors during a six-month hearing, expected to conclude in June 2024. These last minute tweaks by the airport will be submitted it says after the public has its say.

The Campaign Against Gatwick Noise Emissions (CAGNE) said: “These are not minor changes to the application for a new runway and Sussex Gatwick. CAGNE feel they should consult all who have already registered an interest with the Planning Inspectorate. This added consultation would appear to be a way for the airport to implement changes that could be sneaked through due to people believing that they have already passed judgement on the plans for a new runway.

“We do not accept that a reed bed will deal with the flooding issues that a new runway will create with significant increases in new construction field side and with a new highway and the ever-increasing heavier rainfall predictions by the Met office.”

The airport is proposing three separate changes.

It will be for the Planning Inspectorate to decide if the changes can be made to the application and included in the examination. The consultation will close at 11:59pm on January 21 2024.

Tim Norwood, Chief Planning Officer, London Gatwick, said: "Our engagement with the public and stakeholders to date has been invaluable in helping us shape our Northern Runway plans. However, since the submission of our DCO application we have identified a number of small improvements we would like to make to our proposal. "We are therefore asking for views on three discrete changes to our plans and would welcome any feedback people may want to make."

## Gatwick expansion plans revealed

## Gatwick to get 2nd runway?

## Classic growth versus environment dilemma

## Report against airport expansion

Image: Gatwick Plans (Image PINS / Gatwick)

## 30 December 2023



**Surrey County Council** has been awarded £745,000 of funding through the Local Energy Advice Demonstrator (LEAD) project, to trial new and innovative approaches to tackle residential energy emissions, help residents save money, conserve energy and make homes more energy efficient.

The LEAD project is funded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and is one of the UK's largest energy-based collaborations between a local authority and community groups. The project will run until March 2025 and consist of in-person energy advice and a One Stop Shop.

In-person energy advice will support around 3,000 residents by using thermal imaging surveys, providing basic remedial measures for obvious problems like draughts and heat loss, and signposting to support to help reduce their energy use and bills. Community groups will provide energy surveys to eligible residents which includes those who live in houses with Energy Performance Certificate ratings of D or worse, do not have gas central heating, or may have obstacles to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

The One Stop Shop is an online platform which will help residents to create an energy efficiency and retrofit plan for their home, based on building type, budget, and potential grants and reductions in cost of technology. This will be delivered by Surrey Climate Commission.

If 5% of the homes receiving in-person energy advice embark on a deep retrofit with the assistance of the One Stop Shop and any available funding, it is estimated to make cumulative savings of around £320,000 every year for Surrey residents. Alongside this the project will deliver carbon reductions of 1,280t CO<sub>2</sub>e every year across the life of the measures installed.

**Marisa Heath, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Environment said:** *"This is a fantastic opportunity to build collaboration between the local authority and Surrey's community groups, working together to upgrade housing stock and reduce residential emissions. The project is a great example of how implementing a net zero strategy can be hugely beneficial to residents, and actually help them to save money, make their homes healthier and more modern, and simultaneously tackle climate change."*

*"Approximately 300,000 homes in Surrey have energy performance ratings of D or worse, meaning that thousands of residents live in homes which are poorly insulated, and liable to damp or mould. Residential energy accounts for over 30% of Surrey's carbon emissions, a figure which could be significantly lowered through improved energy performance, and reduced energy use."*

For more information about the LEAD project, visit the **Surrey County Council website**. To check eligibility for a free home energy survey, visit the **Zero Carbon Guildford website**.

## Climate Justice. A generation thing?

30 December 2023



With **Epsom Hospital** Doctor and mother of four **Kristine Damberg** in the lead, **Mothers' Rebellion for Climate Justice**, a global grassroots organization, orchestrated coordinated actions across the UK and 30 countries on six continents on Saturday, November 18, to mark **World Children's Day**. In response to the escalating threat posed by the climate crisis to children worldwide, the movement held fifteen impactful "Circles" across the UK, drawing attention to the urgent need for action. Dr Damberg was joined by Epsom mother Lisa Davies and several other Epsom residents, including children.

They joined the action that started at the UN Green for a symbolic march to Parliament Square where they formed a Mothers' Rebellion Circle with speeches, songs and children's activities.

As part of World Children's Day, which falls on November 20 and commemorates the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Mothers Rebellion staged non-violent public protests. The focus was on the severe risks children face due to the impacts of global heating, including floods, heatwaves, droughts, storms, ecocide, and violent conflicts.



Particularly emphasized was the disproportionate burden borne by children in the Global South due to resource-intensive practices by the Global North.

Operating under the banner of Climate Justice, Mothers' Rebellion called for respect for the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, demanding that those in power take decisive actions to address the escalating climate emergency. The movement condemned structural violence against children and highlighted the exacerbating factors such as poverty, economic and social inequalities, food insecurity, and forced displacement.

A recent Unicef analysis revealed that at least 43 million children were displaced over the past six years due to extreme weather events. Healthcare professionals, including Dr. Camilla Kingdon, president of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, warned that climate change poses an existential threat to children's health and well-being, with tangible impacts already witnessed, including air pollution and extreme weather effects.

Mothers' Rebellion members, including Dr. Kristine Damberg, stressed the urgency of meaningful climate action. Damberg highlighted the need for cleaner air, more green spaces, healthier food, and reduced strain on healthcare systems, emphasizing the tangible benefits for both current and future generations.

Expressing deep concern for the future, mothers and allies globally urged countries to incorporate children's right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment into national legislation. They called for just measures to implement these rights and emphasized the historical role of mothers and caregivers in protecting and nurturing the vulnerable.

Elizabeth Cripps, Senior Lecturer in Political Theory, and Lisa Davies, a mother of three, shared their perspectives on the collective need for change, stressing the importance of a united effort in the face of a climate crisis threatening the overall future of children.

UNICEF acknowledged the voices of children and young people, stating, "From climate change, education, and mental health, to ending racism and discrimination, children are raising their voices on the issues that matter to their generation."

Mothers' Rebellion for Climate Justice concluded its global actions with a resolute stance: "In the face of the climate crisis and its impact on children, we refuse to look away."

For more information, visit [mothersrebellion.com](https://mothersrebellion.com).

Image: Dr Kristine Damberg, Credit Andrea Domeniconi

---

## Thames Water left human waste to fester

30 December 2023



Thames Water has been accused of backtracking on a goodwill gesture after subjecting Camberley residents to a "disgusting" summer of stench caused by raw, untreated, human waste left to fester in the heat.

Last summer Camberley experienced a "persistent and intolerable" rancid odour the seeped from sewage works operated by Thames Water, a full meeting of Surrey Heath Borough Council heard.

Following a series of meetings, with councillors and MP Michael Gove, Thames Water spoke of its desire to make a financial contribution to a local community project to acknowledge the impact on residents over a five month period, according to a motion that was backed unanimously by councillors.

Introducing the motion was Councillor Jonathan Quin, leader of the Labour group and ward member for St Michaels. He said: "Disgusting sewage odour... plagued Camberley for over a five month periods from May to September. The odour caused by the Camberley sewage works run by Thames Water can not be described as anything minor. It was so awfully disgusting and strong that many residents...could not open their windows or hang their washing outside during the summer.

"The distress and impact caused to mental health... has been shocking." He added: "Thames Water agreed to meet with councillors and the MP to discuss possible compensation to make up for missing five months going outside."

The meeting heard that a children's playground in St Michaels was suggested as a goodwill gesture and that there had been a "meeting of minds" with the utility firm, with the only thing remaining being the exact amount of money Thames Water would put forward.

He said: "Rather than agreeing to meet us in person again, Thames Water has since backtracked on its decision to make a contribution. I'm absolutely disgusted and disappointed at the disregard shown."

Cllr Lisa Finan-Cooke (LD, Watchetts) told of how the problem began after Thames Water started shipping in human waste into Camberley that led to more than 11,000 complaints to flood in.

She said: “Between February and April more and more sludge was imported on to the site, and let’s be honest what we are talking about was raw human sewage which was just stored in vast open tanks to just fester away, and as the weather warmed up, the sludge began to produce an unbearable odour.”

She added: “That’s five months of people feeling sick in their own homes, of not wanting to open their windows, of not letting their children out to play in their gardens, not being able to hang their washing out to dry, cancelled birthday parties and family events. The site wasn’t sufficiently resourced to process the sludge in the first place.”

The Wednesday, October 25 meeting noted the problems caused by Thames Water and called on the private utility firm “in the strongest possible terms” to honour its previous commitment to make a financial contribution to a community project.

It was also agreed to write Thames Water and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to express dissatisfaction over the importation of sludge to Camberley.

Camberley Sewage Treatment Works (Image Google)

## Ewell “no new oil” pensioner punished

30 December 2023



**Judit Murray**, a 69 year old resident of Ewell, was today sentenced to a 12 month community order with 60 hours of community service at Westminster Magistrates Court.

Ms Murray and her co-defendants, Sol Bourne and Daniel Knorr, who received the same sentence, were found guilty of aggravated trespass at a previous hearing for their memorable protest at Lord’s cricket ground on 28/6/23.

The Just Stop Oil stopped play during the match between England and Australia on June 28, as security and ground staff cleaned up orange powder that was thrown on the pitch and ensured the ground was not damaged.

The three were found guilty after a trial and appeared on 24th October to be sentenced.

Ms Murray said after the hearing “I have seven beautiful grandchildren who deserve the best possible life, so when the country’s top professional, Dr Camilla Kingdon, President, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health ‘the climate crisis poses an existential threat to the health and well-being of all children’ I am morally and duty-bound to act.”

“Climate change is no longer tomorrow’s problem, it is today’s. The travesty of justice is that I was forced to defend my actions whilst the real criminals; the prevaricating politicians and fossil fuel profiteers, remain unaccountable.”

“My protest interrupted a cricket game for four minutes, a sport you simply won’t be able to play in storms, floods or fifty degree heat.”

I am no ‘dangerous radical’, those who are, to quote the UN Secretary General, are ‘the countries that are increasing the production of fossil fuels’. Like our own. They should have been in the dock today, not me.’

## A bridge closed too far?

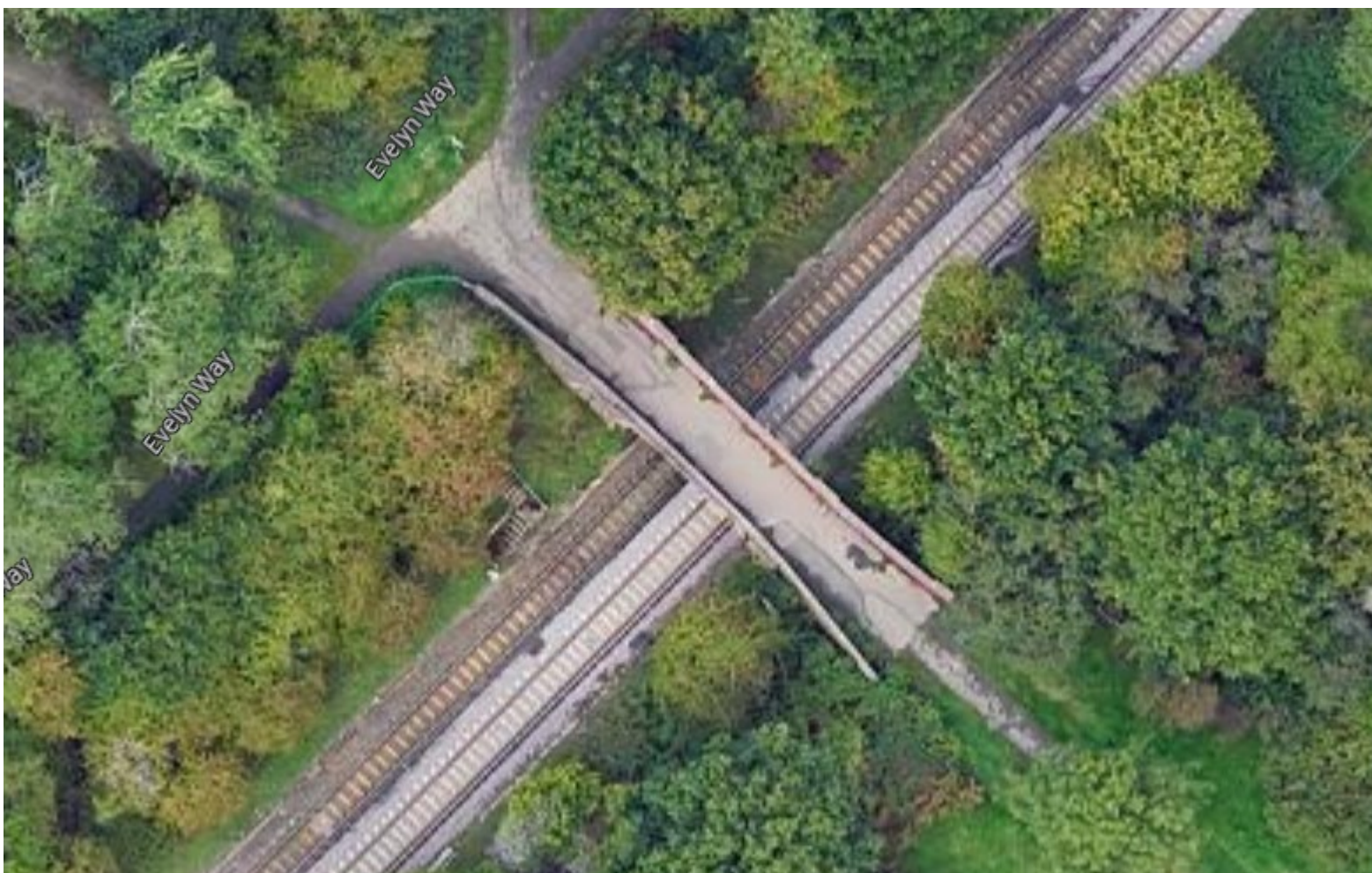
30 December 2023





In a saga that has left many residents scratching their heads, a seemingly routine footbridge closure in Epsom has morphed into an unexpected and prolonged headache. The bridge, over the railway line connecting **Castle Road** to **Epsom Common**, which was initially shut down at the end of February, has confounded locals with its persistent downtime, offering more questions than answers.

Initially, the bridge's closure seemed to be prompted by some mysterious "movement," which had caught the attention of passersby and authorities alike. However, the reasons behind this decision were left shrouded in mystery.



Castle Road bridge to Epsom Common - Google Earth

A brief flurry of activity was seen shortly after the initial closure, with residents hopeful that the issue would be resolved. But this optimism was short-lived. Fast forward to late July, and the mystery deepened as news surfaced that the bridge had been closed due to the discovery of an electricity cable. Many were left puzzled as to why such a discovery had not been anticipated in the first place, leaving the community without their bridge connection.

Since August, the situation appeared to be inching towards a resolution, as services crossing the railway were reportedly lifted and temporarily attached to the bridge's parapet. Work was ongoing, although without any obvious sense of urgency. In late September, Surrey County Council dropped a bombshell, renewing the closure order for an additional six months, prolonging the ordeal for beleaguered locals.

**Chris Grayling** MP, brought some semblance of hope when he announced that Network Rail expected the bridge to finally reopen in November. However, skepticism lingered, and residents continued to endure the inconvenience of the ongoing closure.

The closure's ramifications have rippled through the community, prompting discussions between the **Epsom Common Association** and **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council**, although the influence of both parties on the situation remains in doubt. Notably, the footpath diversions on the bridge's north side have proven problematic, especially as they traverse areas that traditionally transform into quagmires during the winter months.

In an effort to mitigate these challenges, the community proposed an extension of rubber mats to cover all unpaved sections of the diversion route. Though the Council has been in contact with contractors to address this issue, it offers little comfort to those who rely on the bridge for daily crossings.

Adding a twist to this already puzzling tale, Cllr **Steven McCormick** (RA Woodcote and Langley Vale) has stated "Following excavations on site, the understanding of how dire the condition of the bridge has started to come to light. Due to the extent of the movement of the bridge and the size of the cracks visible only beneath the surface, it was deemed not safe to excavate further with machinery."



Engineers were brought to the site to investigate the matter further, and their conclusion was nothing short of alarming – the bridge, it appears, is in such a precarious state that it must be demolished and replaced. This revelation has shaken the community, as further ground investigations are planned to determine suitable foundations for the new bridge.

In light of this troubling development, it seems that the footbridge will remain inaccessible until further notice, casting a shadow of uncertainty over the community’s daily routines.

Image courtesy Epsom Common Association

## Chalk Pit debate deferred by late abatement

30 December 2023



The Environment Committee of **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council** 17th October was to discuss a motion proposed at a Full Council meeting on July 25, 2023, regarding a noise nuisance issue at the Chalk Pit site in College Road, Epsom. The motion had suggested that the Council should install professional noise measurement equipment at the site for a minimum of three months and respond to any noise regulation breaches with noise abatement orders. Councillor **Bernie Muir** (Conservative Horton) had introduced the motion at Full Council.

However, the Chair of the Committee, Cllr John Beckett (RA Auriol) announced: ““Members, as you are aware, I made the decision to withdraw this item from the agenda this evening in light of the recent enforcement activity last week. This activity resulted in an abatement notice being served to an operator at the Chalk Pit. I am very conscious of the members’ and the public’s interests in this matter. I am keen to ensure that the proposed motion is debated with full consideration of the circumstances, including the impact of the recently served abatement notice. Therefore, I propose that this item is deferred and considered at the next meeting of this committee in January.”

There were no objections and Cllr Beckett added that there will be “No further debate, questions, or statements will take place regarding the Chalk Pit until the meeting on the 9th (January).

The Councillors had received an officer’s report written before the abatement notice was served and that report is summarised here:

The report provided background information about the Chalk Pit, explaining its historical use and current industrial activities. It highlighted the various sources of noise on the site, such as equipment, machinery, road vehicle arrivals and departures, and more. The site was in close proximity to residential properties, and complaints about noise had increased since 2021.

Surrey County Council has jurisdiction over waste processing at the site, while other activities are regulated by the Borough Council. A planning application was submitted by Skip It, including changes and enclosure construction to control noise emissions. The Environment Agency and local authorities regulate noise and dust issues, depending on the source.

The report described the council’s actions in response to noise complaints, including extensive monitoring and investigation. Despite clear evidence of audible noise, the council’s officers believed they lacked sufficient evidence to issue an abatement notice, citing the complexity of the issue and the need for unequivocal evidence.

The report noted that residents had the option to pursue their own civil legal action under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 if they wished to explore this further.

The council had taken some enforcement actions, including Community Protection Warning Notices, but no abatement notices had been issued due to the lack of evidence.

The report presented three options for the committee to consider:

1. Close the investigation with no further action due to insufficient evidence.
2. Keep the issue under review and seek funding for enforcement action if sufficient evidence emerges.
3. Recommend allocating funding to hire external noise consultants to conduct a fresh investigation based on recent complaints and site changes.

Option 3 would require additional funding from sources like reserves and would only be pursued in the event of substantial and substantiated complaints about noise nuisance. Officers asked Councillors “In deciding whether to support renewed investigations on top of those that have already taken place, Members are asked to consider the likelihood of whether renewed investigation would ultimately lead to successful enforcement action and, by extension,

whether it would be an effective use of limited Council resources.”

Related reports:

Will the dust ever settle on Chalk Pit conflict?

---

## The cost of Surrey’s failed ULEZ challenge

30 December 2023



Surrey County Council spent £150,000 on a failed court challenge to the ULEZ expansion.

The county council together with the London boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Harrow and Hillingdon launched a legal challenge to the expansion of the zone, taking it to the High Court.

Objecting to the plans for the zone’s expansions, district and borough councils along the border called for a scrappage scheme to be extended to Surrey residents, and for delaying the date of the expansion.

The expansion of the zone, which aims to cut harmful pollution in London, meant it reached down to the borders of Surrey, leading to concerns about residents travelling over the border for work, school or medical appointments.

Entering the zone in a non-compliant car, usually petrol cars registered before 2005 and diesel cars registered before September 2015, costs drivers £12.50 per day. But a ruling in July determined there was no legal impediment to the expansion, which came in to force in August.

Speaking at the time of the High Court’s decision, the county council’s leader, Councillor Tim Oliver (Conservative, Weybridge), said while the council respected the court decision, it was “incredibly disappointing”.

He added: “This has always been about protecting Surrey residents, many of whom will now be significantly socially and financially impacted by the Mayor’s decision as they go about essential, everyday journeys, without any mitigation in place to minimise this.

“Our concerns, which have never been addressed by The Mayor despite our continued efforts, forced these legal proceedings to ensure we did all we possibly could to have the voice of our residents heard.”

A TfL spokesperson said: “Following the conclusion of the judicial review, the court ordered the claimants to pay our legal costs and to pay £280,000 on account, which has been received. We will be seeking the remainder of our costs in accordance with the order”.

A county council spokesperson confirmed a £44,000 payment had been agreed for the further contribution last week rather than the full £56,000 as requested by TfL.

Surrey County Council has confirmed its total costs for the challenge come to £139,528.20. This figure includes a £100,000 contribution to TfL costs and a £39,528.20 contribution to the five councils’ total costs.

TfL’s costs will be split between the five councils which brought the challenge.

Related reports:

Signs of Surrey resistance to ULEZ continue

London Mayor confirms drive of ULEZ to Epsom border. ULEZ explainer.

High Court gives ULEZ the green light to Epsom’s borders

ULEZ court challenge begins

Image: copyright Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd

---

## Preparing for Winter with true grit

30 December 2023





A total of 38 brand new gritting vehicles are now available to help keep Surrey moving during the colder months.

The new vehicles operate more efficiently, have state-of-the art technology on board and produce less carbon emissions. They will grit Surrey's roads before and during severe weather, using the 10,141 tonnes of salt stored at our four Surrey depots. Winter arrangements typically begin in October and run until the end of March although this period can be extended depending on weather conditions.

Children from Surrey schools are being invited to name the new fleet with winning entries to be announced later this month.

**Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth said,** *"We're committed to keeping drivers safe here in Surrey and investing in our roads.*

*"When temperatures plummet, our highways teams across the county will be ready to work around the clock to keep traffic moving on our primary routes using our new, efficient gritters.*

*"I'm delighted that our school children are getting involved in naming the new gritters and look forward to seeing their suggestions."*

**Ed Jennings, Lead Operations Manager for Ringway said,** *"We are ready and prepared for winter, with a team of experienced gritter drivers – many of whom have delivered the service for over ten years.*

*"Our investment in 38 brand new gritters is a demonstration of our commitment to Surrey and enables us to continue our drive towards a greener future. Our Immediate Response Centre will continue to support communities 24/7 and will work closely with the Met Office throughout the season.*

## Going South this weekend?

30 December 2023



Please note, there will be a full closure of the A3 in both directions from 9pm on Friday 13 October to 5.30am on Monday 16 October. The closure will be in place northbound from the B2215 (Ripley) to M25 junction 10, and southbound from M25 junction 10 to the A247 at Burntcommon. This is to facilitate National Highways bridge beam installation works as part of the M25 Junction 10 project.

The diversion will be via A247, A246, A24 and M25 junction 9. Please see the following diversion map. The diversion route agreed between National Highways and Surrey Officers is the most appropriate and direct route suitable for all vehicle sizes and types, with no height or weight restrictions in place. If you are considering alternate routes other than the signed diversion, please consider how viable smaller more local roads may be given the large volume of traffic which will be displaced from the A3.

Some sections of the Surrey road network may become heavily congested at times over the course of the weekend. Please plan your travel arrangements carefully using real-time data sources where available to inform your route choices.

If you have any questions, please contact National Highways either by email: [M25j10@nationalhighways.co.uk](mailto:M25j10@nationalhighways.co.uk) or call 0300 123 5000 and one of the team will be happy to help.

Thanks to Cllr Steven McCormick (RA Woodcote and Langley) for the information.

## Day travelcards to be scrapped?

30 December 2023



**Surrey County Council** could call on central government to intervene in “discriminatory” plans to scrap day travelcards in to London.

The travelcards mean Surrey residents can travel in to the capital on a single ticket for use on Transport for London (TfL) services including the underground, bus, tram, Docklands Light Railway and London Overground. However their future is in doubt.

If day travelcards are withdrawn, it will mean Surrey residents would need to buy separate tickets for rail travel and TfL journeys. TfL has given notice that it will withdraw from the funding agreement for travel cards, with a mayoral decision on the matter showing the arrangements meant TfL was “effectively under-funded” at a cost of around £40m a year.

A Surrey County Council meeting on Tuesday (October 10) will debate a motion from the councillor responsible for transport, infrastructure and growth calling for London’s mayor to withdraw the proposals.

Councillor **Matt Furniss** (Conservative, Shalford) called the proposal “discriminatory” and will ask the council’s leader to write to Sadiq Khan outlining the impact on Surrey residents, the negative impact on the economy of London and “the need to abandon plans to remove day travelcards”.

His motion will also ask the council’s leader, Cllr **Tim Oliver** (Conservative, Weybridge) to write to the Secretary of State for Transport “urging him to intervene in this matter”.

A TfL spokesperson said central government demands for the organisation to save money and “generate significant amounts of additional revenue” had led to proposals to stop accepting day travelcards on the TfL network.

They said the Mayor had “reluctantly” instructed TfL to give six month’s notice to withdraw from the travelcard agreement, but that the decision was reversible.

The spokesperson said: “This is the first stage in a process and there are no changes to tickets at this time. This is an operational decision that has been taken now to ensure that TfL meets the requirements of its funding agreement, but TfL continues to look for alternative options.”

A Mayoral decision on the plans said an assessment had found that customers travelling from outside London may see prices go up if day travelcards were withdrawn.

It said: “This is because the current travelcard agreement pays an amount to TfL for these tickets that is well below the price of the same tickets sold within London; TfL is effectively under-funded by the travelcard agreement at a total cost of approximately £40m a year.

“As a result, this proposal is estimated to generate approximately £40m per year for TfL, which will form part of the additional revenue mandated by government for TfL to achieve.”

In his motion, Cllr Furniss said: “The proposals to remove day travelcards constitute an unfair, unacceptable and expensive levy on our residents who wish or need to travel to London. The proposals have deliberately targeted the removal of the day travelcard as a method to generate additional income for TfL. It is anticipated by the Mayor’s own consultation that the withdrawal of day travelcards will result in rail operators ceasing to sell Zone 1-6 travelcards.”

Opposition councillors will call for TfL, along with the Department for Transport (DfT) and train operators, to come together to find a solution, and for zone 6 to be expanded to include some Surrey stations.

Cllr **Catherine Powell** (Farnham Residents, Farnham North), leader of the Surrey residents’ association and independent group on the county council, said key stakeholders needed to work together to find alternative funding in order to keep day travelcards.

She told the LDRS: “We need to encourage the use of public transport as part of moving towards net zero, to remove day travelcards would be a retrospective step.”

The TfL spokesperson said: “While this six-month notice-period is now underway, this decision remains reversible and does not therefore mean that day travelcards will be withdrawn. TfL is keen to work collaboratively with the DfT and Rail Delivery Group to discuss options that would allow day travelcards to continue to be provided, while ensuring TfL can meet the requirements of the funding settlement with government.” They said active discussions were ongoing.

The Labour group leader on the county council, Cllr **Robert Evans** (Stanwell and Stanwell Moor), said TfL was “not being funded properly” and couldn’t do everything it wanted to do.

Also calling for more Surrey stations to be included in zone 6, Cllr Evans added: “You can argue why is transport for London giving subsidies to Surrey? Why would expect them to do so?”

Councillors for the Green Party and Labour will put forward a suggested amendment to the motion, removing the call for the transport secretary to intervene.



Cllr **Jonathan Essex** (Redhill East), the Green group leader, said: “We want this situation to actually be resolved by bringing together in an open and transparent way the people who need to resolve it.

“I hope that by putting the amendment to the motion down, we will try to shift this from a political argument into an acceptance that people need to get round the table and actually resolve this.”

The motion will instead call for the leader to write to **Sadiq Khan** and the transport secretary to request a joint meeting with TfL, DfT and train operating companies.

This meeting would “discuss the impact of the current travelcard proposals in Surrey and other areas neighbouring London” and the need to “agree a fair funding settlement to resolve this matter”.

The amendment will request that the negotiations also look to extend zone 6 to areas of Surrey bordering London “to increase Surrey residents’ direct access to contactless TfL fares and so cheaper train travel”.

The meeting will be held at the council’s Reigate headquarters at 10am on Tuesday, October 10.

Image - Epsom Downs station. TheFrog001 CCO 1.0

## Surrey schools fly their green flags

30 December 2023



**Surrey County Council** has been confirmed with the highest number of schools awarded with a **Green Flag** of any local authority in England, with its **88 Eco-Schools**, all of which have a Green Flag status – the highest accreditation in the scheme.

**Eco-Schools** is the largest education programme in the world which helps sustainability become an integral part of school life. Eco-Schools is pupil lead, supports the enrichment of the curriculum and helps unite young people and the wider school community to care more about protecting the environment and making positive changes.

Various projects have been set up across Surrey’s schools and have had a positive impact on the environment. Activities that have taken place include:

- Building new ponds to increase biodiversity.
- Creating allotments to grow vegetables.
- Planting trees to encourage more wildlife and improve air quality.
- Running switch off campaigns to save energy.
- Making signs for bins to make sure people use the correct bins, to help increase recycling.
- Building a greenhouse out of plastic bottles to grow plants.
- Following national campaigns such as Walk to School Week.

The projects have engaged over 50,000 pupils and are already reaping benefits which include:

- Saving a total of 648,330kwh of electricity
- Diverting 111,645 tonnes of waste from landfill
- Creating 8,322 (m2) of natural habitat
- 7,400 pupils participating in walking and cycling initiatives.

**Marisa Heath, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Environment said:** *“This project is so important and very close to my heart because we know informing and educating the young generation will pay dividends in the future to protect our environment. I am so proud that Surrey’s schools are getting behind the green agenda and are encouraging so many young people to play their part to help tackle climate change. We know it’s a joint effort and if everyone plays their part, we really can have a positive impact.*

*“It’s an amazing achievement to be recognised as the highest performing county and hope this also inspires other Surrey schools to find out more and get involved.”*

**Adam Flint, Eco-Schools England Manager from Eco-Schools said:** *“In academic year ‘22/23, schools in Surrey County Council achieved more Eco-Schools Green Flags than any other county council in the country. When it comes to*

enabling young people and schools staff to make positive impacts on our planet, the region is exemplary. The Council has supported their schools in various, showing a great commitment to the future of their pupils and placing faith in them to lead action on climate change and work for a better future for everyone. It's a phenomenal achievement."

More information about Eco-Schools in Surrey, including how to sign up can be found on **here**.

**Sign up to the Greener Matters newsletter** to keep up to date on progress towards the target of making Surrey net zero by 2050 and find out what you can do to help.

Image credit: rawpixel.com

# Pollution around Epsom and Ewell Schools

30 December 2023



Epsom and Ewell Extinction Rebellion embark on a public education drive on Sunday 9th October in Epsom High Street. The climate action group has tabulated the pollution statistics for schools in and around the Borough.

The table below is based on statistics provided by addresspollution.org a United Nations accredited initiative of the Central Office of Public Interest.

Between 10am and 1pm the XR group will have a Doctor’s surgery (with an Intensive Care Unit Doctor) giving real world advice on the health impact of Air Pollution. A Citizens Polling Board so passersby can vote for their favourite Pollution Solutions and an information desk so you can find out the Air Pollution levels at your home and local schools.

In 2020 in a study published by the journal *Science of the Total Environment*, experts from the University of Surrey’s world-renowned Global Centre for Clean Air Research (GCARE) partnered with a local school and the local community in Guildford to investigate the impact cars have on air quality in and around schools during drop-off and pick-up times.

Children face a worrying threefold increase in air pollution during the daily school runs, causing air quality experts to call for restrictions on the use of cars during those periods.

These are the statistics provided by addresspollution.org for local school postcodes year long average figures assessed on 4th October 2023:

School	A i r Pollution Level	UK Ranking Higher is worse	PM2.5 Level mcg/m3 <b>WHO Safe Limit 5 .</b>	PM10 Level mcg/m3 <b>WHO Safe Limit 15 .</b>	NO2 Level mcg/m3 <b>WHO Safe Limit 1 0 .</b>
Auriol School	Very High	8 2 %	12.22	18 .8 9	2 0 .1 7
Beacon School	Significant	5 1 %	1 0 .4 0	1 6 .8 4	1 5 .1 6
Blenheim High	High	7 8 %	1 1 .9 0	1 8 .6 4	1 9 .0 6
Che a m Common	Very High	8 4 %	1 2 .2 8	1 9 .0 7	2 1 .5 0
Cuddington Croft	High	7 0 %	1 1 .1 7	1 7 .8 0	1 8 .8 2
Cuddington School	Very High	8 2 %	1 2 .1 9	1 8 .8 4	2 0 .8 4
Danetree	Very High	8 0 %	1 2 .0 5	1 8 .7 1	1 9 .5 9
Downsend	High	7 2 %	1 1 .4 6	1 8 .0 5	1 8 .3 1
Epsom & Ewell High	Very High	8 3 %	1 2 .1 6	1 8 .8 4	2 1 .2 2
Epsom College	High	6 4 %	1 0 .9 6	1 7 .5 2	1 7 .0 5
Epsom Downs Primary	Significant	5 2 %	1 0 .3 8	1 6 .9 2	1 5 .3 8
Epsom Primary	High	7 8 %	1 1 .7 7	1 8 .4 1	1 9 .8 2
Ewell Castle	High	7 8 %	1 1 .7 9	1 8 .4 9	1 9 .8 7
Ewell Grove	Very High	8 2 %	1 2 .0 1	1 9 .0 2	2 1 .0 2
Glyn	High	7 4 %	1 1 .6 9	1 8 .2 5	1 8 .1 2
Ki ngswoo d House	High	7 3 %	1 1 .4 8	1 8 .0 5	1 8 .6 7



Knollmead Primary	Very High	8 2 %	1 2 .0 2	1 8 .6 6	2 1 .3 4
Linden Bridge	Very High	8 3 %	1 2 .1 5	1 8 .8 2	2 1 .6 0
Malden Parochial	Very High	8 8 %	1 2 .2 1	1 9 .1 1	2 4 .9 6
Mead Infant	Very High	8 2 %	1 2 .2 3	1 8 .8 9	2 0 .1 8
Meadow Primary	Very High	8 0 %	1 2 .0 6	1 8 .7 3	1 9 .8 1
Nescot	High	7 2 %	1 1 .4 2	1 8 .0 2	1 8 .4 0
Nonsuch Primary	Very High	8 1 %	1 2 .0 5	1 8 .7 7	2 0 .4 0
Riverview Primary	Very High	8 1 %	1 2 .1 7	1 8 .7 9	2 0 .2 9
Rosebery	High	6 7 %	1 1 .2 9	1 7 .7 6	1 6 .7 5
Shawley Community	Significant	5 0 %	1 0 .3 8	1 6 .7 9	1 4 .9 8
Southfield Park	High	7 2 %	1 1 .5 4	1 8 .0 7	1 8 .1 0
St Christophers	High	7 0 %	1 1 .4 2	1 7 .9 7	1 7 .6 6
St Clements	High	7 9 %	1 1 .9 4	1 8 .5 9	1 9 .7 0
St Josephs	High	6 8 %	1 1 .3 8	1 7 .8 6	1 6 .9 1
St Martins	High	6 8 %	1 1 .3 1	1 7 .8 2	1 7 .0 6
Stamford Green	High	6 8 %	1 1 .3 3	1 7 .8 0	1 7 .1 4
Wallace Fields	High	6 7 %	1 1 .2 4	1 7 .7 5	1 7 .2 2
West Ewell	Very High	8 1 %	1 2 .1 5	1 8 .7 8	2 0 .1 8

Image: The school run © Robert Ashby cc-by-sa/2.0 Geograph Ireland

# Our Star shines on Epsom Playhouse

30 December 2023



This month **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council** has installed 90 solar panels on the roof of **Epsom Playhouse**. The panels will generate over 32,000 kWh of electricity annually, covering a third of the Playhouse’s current electricity usage and saving more than 6.9 tonnes of carbon each year. The project is part of the council’s **Climate Change Action Plan** which sets an ambitious target for council operations to be carbon neutral by 2035.

The council has already installed solar panels at its Operational Depot which have saved more than 35 tonnes of carbon to-date and currently provide 20% of the site’s energy. Further solar panel installations are in the pipeline, following feasibility studies. Additional carbon-saving measures include installing energy efficient lights in all council buildings, and purchasing energy from a green tariff that guarantees energy is supplied from renewable sources. There are also plans to replace streetlighting throughout the borough with energy efficient LED lights. This will be done in phases, with phase 1 completed by 31st March 2024.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council’s operational carbon footprint has reduced by 13% since 2019 when the council first began to measure it.

Councillor **John Beckett**, Chair of the Environment Committee, said “We’re absolutely committed to tackling climate change at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.

“Climate change is not a standalone single issue for the council or the borough; it runs through a broad range of our activities and behaviours. We’re passionate about working with partners and our residents to lead the way to a more sustainable borough, and the installation of solar panels at Epsom Playhouse is one of a range of initiatives that contributes to this.”

More details about the Council’s Climate Change Action Plan can be found on the council website: <https://epsom-ewell.gov.uk/residents/climate-change>

Image Copyright Epsom and Ewell Times

# ULEZ compliant taxis for Epsom and Ewell

30 December 2023



Taxis in **Epsom and Ewell** will need to be ULEZ-compliant in order to get a licence despite concerns raised from drivers. All licences will be given, providing cabs meet the standards, on July 1st, 2026.

However, from January, 1st 2025, licences will not normally be renewed for diesel vehicles that do not meet Euro 5 standards.

The ULEZ criteria was put to drivers in a consultation by **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council**, with some saying their business would be affected, and one driver saying people may stop going out because of increased taxi fares. The response said: "If you want a ghost of Christmas future take a look at Sutton. Sutton once had small and large nightclubs, a cinema and a range of both independent and chain pubs and restaurants. Epsom isn't booming, but it is starting to recover and is a great place to go out. It won't take much to ruin that."

As a result of the consultation, an additional six months was added to the original timeline, with diesel car licensing planned to change from July 2024, to help drivers "already struggling with the cost of living".

A meeting of the council's licensing and planning policy committee on Tuesday (September 26) agreed the changes, and heard from officers that some drivers were already replacing their cars, having held out to see if the ULEZ expansion would actually come in.

The zone was expanded in August, and now comes up to the border with five districts and boroughs in Surrey, of which one is Epsom and Ewell.

Councillor **Clive Woodbridge** (Residents' Association, Ewell Village) said he welcomed that more time had been given for vehicles to be replaced, and cited supply chain issues after Brexit and the coronavirus pandemic.

He said having spoken to Uber drivers, he understood they had been told their vehicles would have to be electric in the future in order for them to continue to be on the app. He said the biggest change to emissions quality would be moving away from diesel and petrol to electric vehicles. The council would need to provide more electric charging points to achieve these aims, he added.

Cllr Woodbridge said: "I would support this council in doing what it can to accelerate the move towards electric."

One respondent warned about the impact on Epsom's "reasonable" nightlife if the cost of new vehicles was passed on to passengers and that people would "go out less or not at all".

While another responded with concerns about his limousine business, saying their Chrysler limousine was ULEZ compliant, while their Lincoln car was not. They said: "I'm a small business and heavily rely on being able to trade to pay my mortgage, childcare fees and every other bill I have which is quite substantial. If the policy excluded me from trading it would have a detrimental impact on me and my family's life."

"We are a service in high demand, so it would also have an impact on the public who want to use our service for their special occasions."

An officers' report into the policy said they had not been able to find any special exemption for limousines in Transport for London guidelines. They said there wasn't justification for a blanket exemption for such cars and recommended they be looked at on a case-by-case basis when making a licensing decision.

On the timeline for the changes, officers said: "If the new standards are implemented too quickly it could result in significant hardship for the licensed trade, and if substantial numbers of licence holders leave the trade as a result of too fast an implementation, then this could affect service provisions, ultimately creating a risk to public safety."

From January 1, 2025 the council will not renew licences for diesel vehicles not meeting or exceeding Euro 5 emission standards, and from From July 1, 2026 licences, including renewals, will only be granted to vehicles which meet the Petrol Euro 4 and Diesel Euro 6 standards, with some exceptions.

Specially adapted vehicles for wheelchairs users will be exempt, and those being used for home to school transport with a county council contract will get a one-year extension to both phases.

The policy was unanimously agreed by the committee, and will go to full council for agreement.

Related reports:

[Stretching Epsom taxi ULEZ exemption](#)

[Emissions a taxing issue for Council](#)

Image Google street view Epsom Station taxis