EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

Ignorance of ULEZ is no bliss for Surrey drivers

9 November 2026



Surrey County Council has stood by its decision not to allow ULEZ signs in the county, despite data showing tens of thousands of Surrey motorists have been hit with fines for breaking the zone's rules.

More than £15 million in penalties has been charged to addresses in Surrey for breaching the terms of London's Ultra Low Emission Zone, figures obtained through a freedom of information request have revealed.

The ULEZ, which imposes a £12.50 daily charge on high polluting vehicles that enter its boundaries, was first implemented in central London in 2019, but has since grown to cover almost the entirety of Greater London.

Surrey County Council vehemently opposed the 2023 expansion into the outer London suburbs, and refused to install ULEZ signage on Surrey's roads.

But tens of thousands of Surrey drivers have received penalty charge notices (PCNs) for not paying ULEZ charges almost every year of its existence, hitting a peak of 76,305 fines handed out in 2024.

The council's transport lead Councillor Matt Furniss (Conservative: Pilgrims) told the Local Democracy Reporting Service the council's stance on refusing ULEZ signage and cameras in Surrey would remain "unchanged" as no measures to mitigate its impact on motorists had been agreed.

He said: "Many other local authorities also refrained from entering into this agreement. This situation remains unchanged as sadly none of the mitigation measures put forward to support Surrey residents have been put in place by the Mayor of London or Transport for London (TfL)."

A scrappage scheme to replace older, non-compliant cars was offered to London residents by Mayor Sadiq Khan, but this was not extended to people living in the home counties – many of whom commute by car into the capital.

Councillor Furniss added: "We continue to urge the Mayor and TfL to do what is right and extend the scrappage scheme outside of London for those that are impacted, provide exemption for key workers, and provide more and better bus routes between Surrey and London."

The figures, which came from a freedom of information request to TfL, showed that £15.513 million in fines to drivers for not paying ULEZ charges have been issued to addresses in Surrey since the scheme started in 2019.

TfL's data revealed Surrey accounts for around three percent of all ULEZ penalties issued across this time period.

Fines are typically issued at £180, but this is reduced to £90 if it is paid within 14 days. However, if the PCN is still unpaid 28 days after it was issued, then a £270 charge certificate can be sent out.

In addition, tens of thousands of Surrey motorists have appealed fines imposed upon them for this reason – with more than two thirds being successful at the first appeal stage according to TfL data.

When a motorist receives a PCN, they can first appeal directly to TfL itself – and the figures showed that 43,664 appeals reached this stage from Surrey since 2019, of which 29,931 were accepted – meaning the fine was cancelled.

If an appeal is rejected at this stage, there remains the option to pursue it further at a tribunal.

A total of 2,049 Surrey appeals reached this stage over the same period, although 1,107 of these were refused. Some appeals listed at both stages remain pending.

Sadiq Khan has vigorously defended the ULEZ scheme as a vital measure to reduce dangerous levels of pollution in the capital – with recent air quality studies suggesting it has been successful to this end.

However, critics say it is punitive to lower income households, and that many motorists in the home counties who frequently drive into London were given no say over its introduction.

A TfL spokesperson said: "Those outside the London boundary are also benefitting from cleaner air, with drivers outside the capital shifting to vehicles that meet the standards.

"The ULEZ is not about making money. It is generating ever smaller net revenues as it matures, with the most recent data showing that more than 97 per cent of vehicles seen driving in the zone are compliant."

Any income raised by ULEZ charges is invested into improving TfL's public transport network, some of which stretches into Surrey.

The spokesperson added: "We worked with councils on the boundaries of London ahead of the expansion of ULEZ and rely on their cooperation to put up ULEZ warning signages on the approach to the zone.

"There is extensive signage on the boundary itself and to raise awareness, we launched a multi-channel campaign

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

targeting Londoners and home counties drivers, including radio ads, ahead of the expansion and welcomed their views on our consultation."

James Moules Local Democracy Reporter

.

Related reports:

Signs of Surrey resistance to ULEZ continue – 5 September 2023

A sign of no signs to come on ULEZ? – 2 February 2023

M25 diversion cost me £12.50 ULEZ charge – 5 February 2024

Conservative Mayoral hopeful seeks ULEZ review – 7 September 2026

ULEZ will come to Epsom and Ewell borders – 19 January 2023

Yet more on ULEZ.... – 10 August 2022

Image: ULEZ signs on A3 near New Malden Google Street view

From bikes to bytes: eeCAN puts climate action into practice

9 November 2026



An aubergine and tomatoes in Deirdre's Wisley allotment.

Epsom and Ewell's local climate action network is stepping up a mixture of practical recycling, sustainable transport, food, gardening and community projects as the latest national figures underline both the progress made in cutting Britain's carbon emissions and the distance still to travel.

The Epsom and Ewell Climate Action Network – eeCAN – says its trustees applied to the Charity Commission for charitable status on 10 September, a move which, if successful, could help the volunteer organisation develop and fund its growing portfolio of local projects.

Founded in 2024, eeCAN describes its purpose as delivering practical community-led projects addressing climate change, restoring nature and strengthening local resilience. Its activities now range from a Library of Things at Bourne Hall and home energy surveys to community growing, environmental exhibitions, repair projects and the reuse of bicycles and electronic equipment.

Bikes and unwanted technology get a second life

A centrepiece of eeCAN's October programme is a combined **Bike and Tech Amnesty at Epsom Methodist Church Scout Hall, Ashley Road, on Saturday 24 October from 9am to 5pm**.

Residents are being invited to bring unwanted bicycles, mobile phones, tablets, laptops and other suitable small electronic devices for reuse or recycling.

The scheme follows eeCAN's first Bike Amnesty in November 2025, when more than 65 bicycles were donated. The bikes were refurbished through Active Surrey and redistributed within the Surrey community. This year Active Surrey will again handle bikes, while Relove Technology is to deal with electronic devices, including secure removal of personal data before suitable equipment is refurbished and reused.

The emphasis on reuse rather than simply disposal comes against a stubborn national waste picture.

The latest Defra figures, published last month, show that England generated **21.9 million tonnes of household waste in 2024**, of which 9.6 million tonnes was recycled. England's household recycling rate stood at **43.8%**, compared with 44% the previous year. Across the UK the rate was 44.5%.

Electronic waste is separately regulated. Environment Agency statistics record electrical and electronic equipment placed on the market and waste electrical equipment collected, with the national dataset most recently updated in September with figures through the second quarter of 2026.

Schemes such as eeCAN's therefore sit at the smaller, local end of a much larger national attempt to keep usable products in circulation rather than turning them prematurely into waste.

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

Transport moves up the climate agenda

Transport is also the subject of eeCAN's next Climate Conversation, run in partnership with Epsom and Ewell U3A. A session on **"Transport and Integrated and Sustainable Travel"** is scheduled for Monday 12 October at Birchgrove Lower Mill Apartments.

The topic is particularly relevant because transport remains the largest single source of UK territorial greenhouse gas emissions.

Government provisional figures for 2025 put total UK net greenhouse gas emissions at **366.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent**, around 54% below their 1990 level. But domestic transport moved in the opposite direction during the year: its emissions rose by 2.3% to 112.9 million tonnes and represented approximately **31% of the UK total**.

Cars and vans also continue to dominate personal travel. The Department for Transport's newly published National Travel Survey for 2025 found that they accounted for **58% of all trips and 76% of the distance travelled** in England.

Walking accounted for 29% of journeys and cycling for 2%. Taken together with other active modes, active travel represented 31% of trips. The survey recorded an average 15 cycling trips and 57 cycling miles per person during the year.

The Department has cautioned against reading too much into some year-on-year changes, particularly walking figures, because the introduction of a digital travel diary appears to have affected the recording of shorter journeys.

A summer which broke the record

The unusually hot summer referred to by eeCAN's October newsletter was not simply a local impression.

The Met Office says **summer 2026 was provisionally the hottest UK summer since records began in 1884**, with a mean temperature of 16.5C. It estimated that human-induced climate change had made a summer mean temperature of that level around **130 times more likely**.

That gives a broader context to another strand of eeCAN's work.

Trustee and volunteer Deirdre has been taking part in allotment masterclasses at RHS Wisley, with lessons intended to contribute towards eeCAN's longer-term ambition for a community growing space in Epsom and Ewell.

The group's newsletter describes the practical effects of this summer's prolonged heat on the plots: seedlings wilting, greenhouse plants overheating and volunteers establishing watering rotas, while some heat-loving crops, including tomatoes and aubergines, flourished.

The project is as much about acquiring and sharing growing skills as producing food, with eeCAN hoping eventually to establish a community garden in the borough.

Food, students and the next generation

Food and its environmental impact were also prominent when eeCAN attended the Epsom Eco Fair at the Methodist Church on 26 September.

Chair Will and trustee Kristine gave talks on diets intended to be sustainable both for people and the planet. Among those attending the fair were Epsom and Ewell Mayor Cllr Lucie McIntyre and Epsom and Ewell MP Helen Maguire, according to eeCAN.

Earlier in September volunteers attended the University for the Creative Arts Freshers' Fair in Epsom, seeking student involvement, including contributions towards the group's planned **"Water is Life"** community art exhibition in 2027.

The exhibition will follow this year's "Living Rivers" project, which involved more than 500 exhibits from schools, colleges and community art groups.

Small projects against a very large target

Community projects cannot by themselves determine whether national carbon targets are achieved. The scale of the challenge is evident from the Government's figures: even after a 54% reduction since 1990, Britain emitted an estimated **367 million tonnes of greenhouse gases in 2025**.

But eeCAN's programme concentrates largely on areas where households can exercise some direct influence – how people travel, what they buy and discard, how much energy homes consume and whether rarely used goods can be borrowed, repaired or passed on rather than replaced.

Its Bourne Hall Library of Things, for example, allows residents to borrow equipment such as carpet cleaners, pressure washers, hedge trimmers, wallpaper strippers and gazebos without charge rather than each household buying its own. The organisation also supports home energy surveys; its partner scheme says more than 2,000 such surveys have so far been carried out across Surrey.

The network is now seeking volunteers for the Library of Things, its weekly repair service, Eco Schools liaison, nature and community gardening and the 2027 art exhibition.

For a group only established in 2024, the October newsletter suggests eeCAN is moving from climate campaigning in the abstract towards a collection of practical projects in which residents can participate directly.

Whether charitable status follows will be a matter for the Charity Commission. In the meantime, the success of initiatives such as the 24 October Bike and Tech Amnesty will provide a more immediate measure of how far Epsom and Ewell

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

residents are prepared to turn environmental concern into discarded laptops, unwanted bicycles – and practical action.

Sam Jones – Reporter



.

Related reports:

- Epsom and Ewell Climate Action Network launches with community events and initiatives – 20 November 2025 Epsom and Ewell Times
- Epsom “Library of Things” Delayed by Council Stand-Off – 11 May 2026 Epsom and Ewell Times
- Ewell’s Library of Things finally to become a thing? – 1 July 2026 Epsom and Ewell Times
- Surrey praises Libraries of Things as Ewell scheme offers test borrowing Epsom and Ewell Times
- Epsom and Ewell lags Surrey’s recycling front-runners, new tracker shows – 7 May 2026 Epsom and Ewell Times
- EEBC reports air quality milestone and revised carbon emissions figures – 23 January 2026 Epsom and Ewell Times
- Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Green Guide – 14 November 2025 Epsom and Ewell Times

---

Surrey campaigners seek independent appeal rights over new flight paths

9 November 2026



Surrey countryside campaigners have joined a national call for residents to be given an independent right of appeal when changes are proposed to flight paths over their homes.

CPRE Surrey is among 22 community and environmental organisations that have signed a letter delivered to 10 Downing Street warning that the Government’s aviation reforms could leave the Civil Aviation Authority as both the regulator making decisions on airspace changes and the body answering complaints about those decisions.

The letter, addressed to Prime Minister Andy Burnham, calls for the Civil Aviation (Consumer Protection and Regulatory Reform) Bill to be amended to establish an independent airspace ombudsman.

Campaigners say this would give residents somewhere outside the CAA to seek a review of decisions capable of concentrating aircraft noise over homes, schools and previously quieter areas.

The proposed legislation arrives as the Government begins the most extensive redesign of British airspace for decades. Although the Bill does not itself draw new flight paths or change airport operating hours, it would strengthen the machinery through which approved airspace changes can be implemented.

Its significance for Surrey arises particularly from the planned redesign of the highly congested airspace over London and the South East, involving Heathrow, Gatwick and other airports.

What the Bill would change

The Civil Aviation (Consumer Protection and Regulatory Reform) Bill is a wider aviation measure covering passenger rights, enforcement of consumer law, airport slots, safety regulation and airspace modernisation.

It completed its stages in the House of Lords on 20th July and received its formal first reading in the House of Commons

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

on 1st September. A date for its Commons second reading has yet to be announced.

Under existing legislation, the Transport Secretary can direct an airport, air navigation provider or another organisation involved in airspace change to prepare and progress a proposal. Clause 4 of the new Bill would extend that power so a direction could also require an airspace change already approved by the CAA to be implemented.

The Government's explanatory notes say this would make the direction-making power available at every stage of the process, including putting an approved design into operation and implementing alterations identified by a subsequent review.

The Government argues that Britain's underlying airspace design has changed little since the 1950s and is increasingly unsuitable for modern aircraft and present-day traffic levels. It says redesigning routes could permit more direct journeys and improved climb and descent profiles, cutting delays, fuel use and emissions.

The Bill would also allow the CAA to make detailed rules covering aviation safety and operations. However, these general rule-making provisions are distinct from the CAA's function of deciding individual airspace change proposals. The measure does not expressly abolish consultation on individual proposals or create new flight paths by itself.

A new "guiding mind" for UK airspace

The broader reform centres on the new UK Airspace Design Service, known as UKADS. It is being provided by NATS En Route Ltd, the monopoly provider of en-route air traffic control services.

In its June 2025 announcement, the Government described UKADS as a single "guiding mind" capable of producing a coordinated design instead of relying upon airports to develop overlapping proposals separately.

The Government said UK airspace handled around 200,000 flights annually in the 1950s, compared with 2.47 million in 2024. Without modernisation, it estimated that one flight in five could experience disruption or delay by 2040.

The first priority for UKADS is the London airspace "cluster". This includes the routes serving Gatwick and Heathrow and would also encompass airspace alterations needed for a third runway at Heathrow.

For Surrey residents, modernisation could therefore determine not merely how many aircraft use the region's airports but where arriving and departing aircraft fly, at what heights and how noise is distributed.

Modern satellite navigation allows aircraft to follow routes much more accurately. That can reduce the total population affected by noise but may also concentrate flights over a narrower corridor, leaving households directly beneath it exposed more frequently.

How the public is consulted

Individual permanent flight-path changes must normally follow the CAA's CAP 1616 airspace change process. A proposal is generally sponsored by an airport or air navigation service provider, although UKADS will now take a coordinating role in the London region.

Depending on the scale and likely effects of a proposal, the process includes development of design options, environmental assessment, engagement and public consultation. Consultation responses and other documents are published through the CAA's Airspace Change Portal.

The portal allows residents to search by postcode or place name for proposals near them. The CAA says CAP 1616 is intended to provide a transparent, impartial and evidence-based assessment taking account of everyone affected.

When making a decision, the CAA must give priority to safety and then consider matters including efficient use of airspace, the needs of aircraft operators, environmental guidance and the interests of people on the ground.

The Government's revised 2026 air-navigation guidance also sets expectations for engagement and consultation with affected communities and for the assessment of noise and other environmental consequences.

Consultation, however, is not the same as a right of appeal. It allows people to comment before a decision is made but does not necessarily provide an independent tribunal to reconsider the eventual decision.

Existing routes of challenge are limited

Anyone may ask the Transport Secretary to "call in" an airspace proposal and decide it in place of the CAA. But the request must normally be made during a four-week window and satisfy restricted criteria.

According to the CAA's call-in guidance, a proposal must be of strategic national importance, have a potentially significant effect on UK economic growth, or meet a specified test involving both aircraft noise and its effects on health and quality of life.

The noise test requires a net increase of at least 10,000 people exposed to 54 decibels or more during the relevant 16-hour daytime period. Even if a proposal qualifies, the Secretary of State is not obliged to take it over.

Otherwise, a dissatisfied community may be left to pursue a complaint about whether the proper process was followed or consider judicial review. Judicial review is generally concerned with the lawfulness of a decision, rather than providing a complete reconsideration of whether a different route would have been fairer or less damaging. It can also be costly and procedurally demanding.

The Bill preserves an appeal against a ministerial direction for the person or organisation directed to carry out an airspace change. That is not an equivalent appeal for residents affected on the ground.

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

It is this gap that CPRE Surrey and the other signatories want an ombudsman to fill.

“Decisions made over their heads”

CPRE Surrey Chair Jennet Eyre said: “This Bill risks giving communities the worst of both worlds: more decisions made over their heads, with no independent way to review them.

“Residents deserve a process that is transparent, accountable and genuinely fair. If there can be independent oversight for passengers, consumers and proposed for the Clean Water Bill then there must also be independent oversight for the communities living under flight paths.”

The campaigners say they are not opposed to airspace modernisation or aviation but believe the interests of the industry should not override the health, sleep and quality of life of affected communities.

Ms Eyre added: “Families on the ground should not be left to live with increased noise, sleep disruption, health impacts or loss of amenity from concentrated flight paths without a clear, independent way to challenge how those decisions are made.”

The Government maintains that modernisation can produce “quicker, quieter and cleaner” flights and says future airspace designs will remain subject to environmental assessment and community engagement.

The central dispute is consequently not whether the public will be consulted at all. It is what residents can do after consultation if they believe their evidence has been disregarded, the effects have been underestimated or the burden of aircraft noise has been distributed unfairly.

CPRE Surrey is now urging MPs to amend the Bill during its Commons stages to provide an independent review mechanism outside the CAA. Whether ministers accept that argument may determine how much confidence communities place in the consultations that accompany the coming redesign of the skies above Surrey.

Sam Jones – Reporter



.

Related reports

Redesigning the Surrey skyways? – 2nd June 2025

Gatwick expansion update – 22nd September 2024

Gatwick Airport Expansion – 2nd March 2024

Gatwick 2nd runway sneaking in? – 20th December 2023

Gatwick expansion plans revealed – 4th August 2023

Gatwick to get 2nd runway? – 13th July 2023

Free bus travel for children across England this August

9 November 2026



Children aged five to 15 in England will be able to travel free on local buses throughout August as part of a Government summer cost-of-living support package.

The free travel offer will run from 1 August to 31 August and is intended to help families reduce the cost of summer holiday journeys to parks, museums, beaches, cinemas, theatres and other attractions.

The Department for Transport says the scheme will apply to local bus services in England. Families are already able to benefit from free travel for children under five across the main bus operators.

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

Roads Minister Simon Lightwood visited Bath on Thursday 9 July to meet local leaders and bus companies ahead of the scheme's launch.

The measure forms part of the Government's "Great British Summer Savings" scheme, which also includes temporary reductions aimed at cutting the cost of children's meals, cinema and theatre tickets, and admission to family attractions such as theme parks, adventure centres and soft play venues.

Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander said:

"Great British Summer Savings means more people can be excited about getting out and about this summer, whether it's seeing the Roman Baths, learning something new at the Science Museum, or falling asleep on the bus ride home after a day riding rollercoasters at Alton Towers.

"I know that the cost of living is a concern for households across the UK, which is why we're cutting the cost of the day-to-day, with free bus travel for children this summer and the £3 bus fare cap helping more families make the most of the small plans that make life enjoyable."

The Government says the free children's travel offer comes alongside the extension of the £3 bus fare cap until March 2027, and follows the first rail fare freeze in 30 years.

Ministers say they are also investing £3 billion nationally to improve bus services and support local leaders and operators in delivering more reliable services.

Helen Godwin, Mayor of the West of England, said:

"I am so excited that Kids Go Free is back again. We know what a massive impact this has had for families in the West, helping kids explore the best of the West and putting money back in parents' pockets.

"I am thrilled that the Government has seen how successful our scheme has been, and that Kids Go Free is going national for August. This will give West Country families the chance to explore even further."

VisitEngland Director Andrew Stokes said:

"It's fantastic to see free bus travel for children as the summer holidays get underway, supporting families to get out and explore the outstanding attractions and destinations across England in a stress-free and environmentally friendly way.

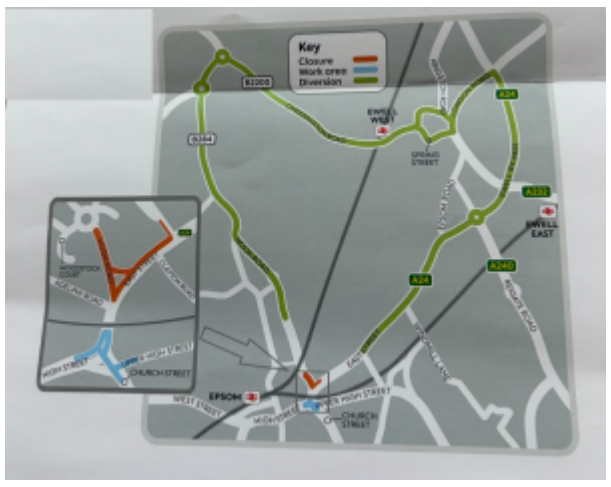
"Whether enjoying a trip to our stunning seaside destinations, beautiful countryside or our vibrant city attractions, there is so much to discover during the summer across England. I know our tourism and hospitality businesses will be very pleased to see you."

Editor's note:

The free bus travel scheme applies to children aged five to 15 in England during August 2026. It should be checked locally whether any particular operator or route is excluded before travel.

Six months of disruption ahead as major gas and traffic works set to hit central Epsom

9 November 2026



Businesses and residents voice concerns over diversion routes as SGN and Surrey County Council prepare for large-scale works at the East Street/Hook Road/Upper High Street junction

Central Epsom is facing up to six months of roadworks and traffic disruption following the announcement of a major joint gas infrastructure and traffic signal project by Southern Gas Networks (SGN) and Surrey County Council (SCC) Highways.

What's happening, and when

According to letters sent to residents and businesses this month, the works are being carried out to support new housing development in the area and to maintain the safety and reliability of the local gas network. SGN's contractor, JDT Utilities, will lay new gas mains in East Street and Hook Road, while SCC replaces the traffic signal system on High Street, Upper High Street and Church Street.

A clarifying email from SGN, seen by this publication, sets out the works in more detail than the resident letters managed to convey. The project will run in two phases:

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

- **Phase One** (planned duration: four weeks) will see SCC install a new urban traffic light system, with new light heads on Church Street, High Street and Upper High Street. Within this footprint, SGN will impose a lane closure — not a full closure — on East Street, to allow open-cut installation of two new mains running from outside The Big Yellow Storage on East Street through to Hook Road.
- **Phase Two** will follow, with Hook Road closed between Woodstock Court and East Street while SGN continues its open-cut works down towards the multi-storey car park entrance and Woodstock Court.

The resident letters state that engineering work is scheduled to begin on 18 July, with SCC's signal works starting on 23 July within the same traffic management setup. Go Epsom, the town's Business Improvement District, gives a fuller picture of the timeline, stating that works will run from 23 July through to 24 December — a span of roughly five months, and notably longer than the "completed by the end of the year" assurance given in SGN's own letter.

During the works, the multi-storey car park will remain open and accessible via Hook Road under traffic management, and a signed diversion route will be in place. SGN says access will be maintained for residents and businesses throughout.

Residents question the diversion plan

The announcement has prompted concern from residents about the adequacy of the traffic management plan. One resident, responding to the letter, said the accompanying diversion map was difficult to interpret and that the colour-coding "does not make a lot of sense," while the flyer gave no indication of where traffic would be diverted to rejoin the A24 on the far side of Epsom, nor any information on bus route changes.

The resident warned that Epsom's narrow residential streets are already prone to rat-running, and questioned whether roads such as Downs Hill Road and Worple Road — both narrow, and in the case of Worple Road affected by potholes — could safely absorb diverted traffic, including HGVs, without vehicles being forced onto pavements. They suggested a 20mph limit should be considered on any residential road used as part of the diversion, particularly given the number of children walking to and from school in the area.

The resident also raised concern about the six-month duration of the works and its potential impact on trade in Epsom High Street, and said they would be unable to attend either of SGN's public drop-in sessions this week.

Businesses seek pause over Christmas trading period

Go Epsom has echoed concerns about the scale and length of the disruption. In a message to local businesses, it confirmed the works are expected to run from 23 July to 24 December, warning of "knock on effects with diversions, parking bay suspensions and road closures." The BID says it is asking SGN and SCC to pause works over the November/December trading period, recognising the importance of the pre-Christmas period to town centre traders.

Businesses affected by the works may be eligible for support through SGN's small business compensation scheme, details of which are available at sgn.co.uk.

Have your say

SGN is holding two public drop-in sessions this week for residents and businesses to raise questions directly with the engineering team, at the rear offices of 29 East Street:

- Wednesday 1 July, 4pm–7pm
- Thursday 2 July, 2pm–4pm

Project updates are expected to be published at sgn.co.uk/our-gas-works/major-planned-projects, and anyone with concerns about disabled access or specific needs during the closures is asked to contact SGN's customer service team on 0800 912 1700.

Lionel Blackman

Guildford clean air zone rejected

9 November 2026



A clean air zone will not be coming to Guildford after councillors accepted a report saying the costs would outweigh the benefits of such a scheme.

Guildford Borough Council's cabinet was presented with a report into measures to stem the level of harmful air pollution in the town.

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

The possibility of a clean air zone for Guildford was raised in a draft air quality action plan, although it sparked concerns over its potential economic impact on the town.

Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith said: “A clean air zone scored highly as a measure capable of delivering air quality improvements within a relatively short timeframe.

“However, it was recognised that introducing a clean air zone would have significant implications for residents, businesses, and visitors, and therefore a detailed economic feasibility assessment was commissioned before any decision could be made.”

Clean air zones have become increasingly common in cities and towns across Britain over the past few years, many of which see high-polluting vehicles charged a small fee for entering the area.

However, some schemes opt for traffic control measures instead of charges on motorists.

The London Ultra Low Emission Zone is one of the best known examples, which sees vehicles that do not meet emission standards billed £12.50 to drive within its borders.

A feasibility study into a possible Guildford clean air zone found that such a measure could bring significant costs, and instead recommended targeted interventions in pollution hotspots and incentives for active travel.

It was considered by the council’s overview and scrutiny committee earlier this month, where report lead Dr Margarethe Theseira told councillors: “The reason a clean air zone or low emission zone is not proportionate to local need is that the air quality is very much concentrated on one site, at Park Street.

“And so it made a broader scheme disproportionate in scale and cost. There are alternative measures you can do to improve air quality at Park Street.”

The research found that Park Street saw especially high levels of pollution as vehicles are forced to drive uphill before being held at traffic lights.

Better traffic management and engineering solutions were floated as options to alleviate nitrogen dioxide spikes in the area rather than a blanket clean air zone for the entire town.

Councillor Rehorst-Smith said: “The study concludes that a clean air zone would not be a proportionate or economically justified intervention for addressing the air quality issues identified.

“Instead, the study implements a package of targeted measures focused on promoting active and sustainable travel, improving traffic management, and delivering local mitigation measures.”

Guildford Borough Council’s cabinet resolved to note the conclusions and recommendations of the feasibility report.

Councillors also agreed to report its findings to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and report back on a revised draft Air Quality Action Plan within six months.

James Moules Local Democracy Reporter

Park Street Guildford (Credit: Google Maps)

.

.

.

.

Link road to Leatherhead recycling centre disruption

9 November 2026



The critical link road to Leatherhead Recycling Centre is likely to be subjected to weeks of “inevitable” disruption while “long awaited” repairs take place.

It comes as the costs more than double as the details of all the work needed to fix the pothole-filled road, that has seen a spike in the number of insurance claims and complaints, became clear.

The original budget had been just over £300,000, Mole Valley District Council’s June cabinet heard, but that has now

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

leapt to £700,000.

The road is owned by the district council with third party access rights to Surrey County Council and Thames Water – which Mole Valley expects will help with the costs.

The county council has already agreed but Thames Water has yet to make its decision.

The project, will widen the road to allow for easier movement, a full resurface, and improved drainage to stop problems with standing water that plague the road.

Councillor Keira Vyvyan-Robinson (Liberal Democrat: Leatherhead North) said: “Everyone who uses the recycling centre will be fully aware of the condition of the road, largely caused by the heavy use by heavy vehicles, but the result is that there are significant potholes, often standing water and the result of that is an increased number of insurance claims and complaints.”

She added: “It’s an investment that I hope residents across Mole Valley will welcome.”

It is likely that any work carried out will be done by Surrey Highways before the end of the financial year.

It is expected to last for six to eight weeks – with a traffic management plan, understood to be temporary traffic lights in place while it is carried out, once given full council approval.

Cllr Keira Vyvyan-Robinson: “Given the very poor state of the road, given the increasing complaints, the recommendations (which will still need to be approved by council) is to proceed.

“It is inevitable that there will probably be a certain level of disruption.”

Cllr Andrew Matthews (Liberal Democrat: Bookham East and Eastwick) Park said: “It’s been long awaited, it’s going to make the access road up and down to the tip but also for the other users of that road, much safer and easier. ”

Chris Caulfield Local Democracy Reporter

Related reports:

Leatherhead ruined recycling road repair

North Leatherhead Access Road (image Google)

Epsom rail passengers urged to travel only if essential as extreme heat disrupts services

9 November 2026



Rail passengers using Epsom station are being urged to avoid all but essential journeys on Wednesday and Thursday as extreme heat is expected to bring disruption across Surrey’s rail network.

Southern, which runs services through Epsom towards London Victoria, Sutton and Dorking, has warned that it will operate a reduced timetable as trains are required to run more slowly in the exceptional temperatures.

The warning also applies to South Western Railway services from Epsom towards Wimbledon and London Waterloo. SWR has told passengers to check before travelling on Tuesday and to make journeys on Wednesday and Thursday only where absolutely necessary, warning that services may be altered or cancelled at short notice.

The Met Office has issued a rare Red Extreme Heat Warning covering much of southern and central England. Conditions are expected to be most severe on Wednesday 24 June and Thursday 25 June, with very high daytime temperatures and little overnight relief.

Southern’s parent company Govia Thameslink Railway said fewer trains would operate across its Southern, Thameslink and Great Northern networks, with journeys taking longer and trains likely to be busier.

Passengers are being advised to consider postponing trips until later in the week, or to travel earlier or later in the day where possible.

South Western Railway has issued similar advice for its network, including routes serving Surrey. Its current travel notice says that hot weather may lead to short-notice timetable changes and cancellations between Tuesday and Thursday.

The disruption is linked to the effect of extreme heat on railway infrastructure. Steel rails expand in high temperatures and can buckle, while overhead wires, signalling equipment and train systems can also be affected.

Network Rail says rails in direct sunshine can be substantially hotter than the surrounding air temperature. It may

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

therefore impose temporary speed restrictions during the hottest parts of the day to reduce the risk of track damage and keep services operating safely.

Jenny Saunders, Customer Service Director for Southern, Thameslink, Great Northern and Gatwick Express, said passengers should think carefully before travelling.

She said: “With such extreme temperatures forecast, we have to run fewer trains, more slowly to keep services safe.

“I’d really urge our customers to think about what’s best for them and to travel only if absolutely necessary on Wednesday and Thursday.”

Passengers who do need to use trains are advised to allow extra time, carry plenty of drinking water, use sunscreen and wear a hat. They should also have a backup plan in case their service is delayed or cancelled.

Southern has said that passengers with tickets dated Tuesday 23, Wednesday 24 or Thursday 25 June who decide not to travel may be eligible for a full refund from their point of purchase.

SWR also advises customers to carry water, avoid standing on exposed platforms in the middle of the day where possible, and leave the train at the next station if they feel unwell so that assistance can be arranged.

Epsom passengers should check the Southern and South Western Railway journey planners shortly before setting out, as the position may change during the day.

Southern, Thameslink and Gatwick Express passengers can check updates through the operator’s website or National Rail Enquiries. South Western Railway passengers can check its live journey planner and service updates online.

The advice is likely to affect commuters, visitors travelling into London, and passengers heading towards Surrey’s towns and leisure destinations during what is expected to be one of the hottest periods of the year.

Sam Jones – Reporter



Surrey County Council launches new home charging option for EV drivers

9 November 2026



Surrey County Council has launched a new option for residents without off-street parking to be able to charge their EVs from home by having a cable gully installed. The cable gullies allow residents to run an EV charging cable across the pavement, safely, to be able to benefit from cheaper home charging rates.

In partnership with Kerbo Charge, the cable gullies were initially trialled in 2024 and, following the successful application for funding from the Department for Transport Electric Vehicles Pavement Channel Grant, the process is now being offered to all eligible Surrey residents.

When it’s time to charge, residents insert their EV charging cable into the channel and the specially-designed lid closes behind like a zip — keeping pavements trip-free. Kerbo Charge is designed and manufactured in the UK and flexes to fit the shape of our pavements.

Residents who are interested first need to complete an initial assessment with Kerbo Charge, to check the suitability of their property, by visiting the Kerbo Charge website. Once this check is complete, residents can apply through the Surrey County Council website, paying a £499 fee.

The total cost would normally be over £1,000 per household, but funding from central government means the cost to residents is reduced to £499.

Aviation, Maritime and Decarbonisation Minister, Keir Mather said: “Charging availability is one of the biggest barriers to switching. Backed by over £250,000 in Government funding, drivers in Surrey without access to off street parking will now be able to save over 50% on the cost of installing cross-pavement charging solutions. “We’re making it easier and more affordable than ever to make the switch by investing £600 million to speed up the roll out of chargers across the country, and our Electric Car Grant has already helped over 120,000 drivers save up to £3,750 on a new EV.”

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth Cllr Matt Furniss, said: "EV charging needs to be accessible for all Surrey residents, not just those with a driveway. I'm delighted we've been able to launch this scheme to help people access home charging for their EVs. Alongside the 500 on-street EV chargepoints we've installed across Surrey, we're making EV ownership a real option for more people – helping to make Surrey a greener, cleaner place."

Kerbo Charge Co-Founder Michael Goulden, said: "Congratulations to Surrey County Council! We're delighted to be working closely together – this is simply about offering more choice to residents about how they charge their car and removing barriers to EV adoption. We're looking forward to seeing lots of residents making the move from petrol/diesel to electric in the months ahead."

Guildford resident Torkil, pictured, has been using his Kerbo Charge for two years and says: "Given my town centre location, I made the move to electric only after careful evaluation of how I was going to manage charging…. I am happy that Surrey County Council listened to suggestions from those of us who live with on street parking, and now that I can charge at home I feel very confident to stay with electric and help reduce air pollution in Surrey"

For those who are not eligible for the scheme, either because they are unable to park outside their property or they are unable to install a home chargepoint, in partnership with Connect Kerb, Surrey County Council has installed over 500 on-street chargepoints across Surrey.

These are mostly 7kwh chargepoints installed on roads with little to no on-street parking, designed for local residents to be able to charge overnight near their home. A new initiative to install 3kwh lamp post chargepoints is set to significantly increase accessibility to EV charging across Surrey. With 100 installed already, and 1000 planned in total, these chargepoints will be fitted in suitable lamp columns that are adjacent to a suitable on-street parking space.

If you would like to suggest a chargepoint is installed near you, you can register your suggestion on our EV suggestions map.

A Kerbo Charge cross-pavement channel install in Guildford, Surrey.

SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Box Hill's Zig Zag Road Leads to Straight Ban on Antisocial Riding

9 November 2026



Motorcyclists near Box Hill are being targeted despite the "vast majority" who visit the Surrey beauty spot being "considerate people who behave respectfully". A Public Spaces Protection Order is being introduced around the National Trust site following efforts from residents in Mickleham and Westhumble over what they said was excessive noise and acts of anti-social behaviour. Mole Valley District Council then carried out consultation on whether to make certain behaviour an offence within the defined area.

This includes, revving engines, keeping engines idling, speeding, stunts, driving in a convoy, exhaust popping or backfiring, racing, for sudden or rapid acceleration. The area covered includes the world famous Zig Zag road and the roundabout near Denbies wine estate.

The decision was taken by the council's March executive committee after 603 people, 62 per cent of those who took part in the consultation, backed the measures – compared with 29 per cent who were against and nine per cent who were undecided. It will remain in place for three years unless renewed with the council estimating it will come into effect this summer once necessary signage is installed.

Councillor Caroline Joseph (Liberal Democrat: Fetcham) said: "The consultation revealed a polarised view about whether a PSPO should be introduced ranging from citing behaviour that it disrupts residents' lives and threatening safety to viewing it as unenforceable and being harmful to local businesses and long-standing biker traditions. "Motorcycle riding at Boxhill and the surrounding area dates back to at least the 1920s from early racing and trials, and the Surrey Hills area remains a popular destination. "It is important to recognise that the vast majority of motorcyclists in this area are considerate people who behave respectfully."

Bike groups are concerned it will impact their long-standing enjoyment of the area and groups. She added: "It's not aimed at spoiling those traditions but it's meant to encourage less antisocial behaviour by those who don't respect the traditional activity of bikers in the area. "The purpose of the order is only to prohibit the behaviours that cause a public nuisance."

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

"The introduction of the PSPO will benefit visitors to the local area and those residents and businesses whose quality of life has been affected by vehicle noise all while not affecting responsible and considerate drivers and riders who use Mole Valley's roads." The council said it was open to extending the order's coverage but would require further consultation – which would need to be done outside the upcoming election period.

Chris Caulfield LDRS

Zig Zag Road (image Google)

Surrey University designs new long-life battery

9 November 2026



A new battery design that could significantly extend the range of electric vehicles and the lifespan of portable electronics has been developed by researchers at the University of Surrey's Advanced Technology Institute (ATI).

In a study published in ACS Applied Energy Materials, researchers introduce a novel lithium-ion battery anode that delivers some of the highest energy storage capacities reported for silicon–carbon nanotube systems, while maintaining stability over hundreds of charge cycles.

Lithium-ion batteries power much of modern technology – from smartphones and wearables to electric vehicles. Graphite, the most commonly used anode material, is stable but limited in the amount of energy it can store. Silicon, on the other hand, offers far greater capacity, but it expands during charging, causing it to crack and degrade over time.

To overcome this, the research team developed a new "Vertically Integrated Silicon–Carbon Nanotube" (VISiCNT) structure. The design grows dense forests of carbon nanotubes directly onto copper foil and coats them with a thin layer of silicon, creating a flexible, conductive scaffold that can absorb expansion while maintaining performance.

The resulting anode can store a very large amount of energy for its weight. In laboratory tests, it stored more than 3500 milliampere-hours per gram – close to the maximum possible for silicon and far higher than the graphite (370 mAh/g) used in today's batteries. It also demonstrated improved stability and performance over repeated charge cycles.

Dr Muhammad Ahmad, Research Fellow at the University of Surrey's ATI and lead author of the study, said:

"There's been a growing push for battery innovation, as many of today's technologies are limited by how much energy batteries can store. Our VISiCNT design offers a practical route to harness silicon's huge storage capability without sacrificing cycle life.

"This is a much-needed breakthrough, delivering very high capacity, fast charging and long-term durability, while bringing us closer to batteries that can power electric vehicles and everyday devices for much longer on a single charge."

A key advantage of the new approach is that the carbon nanotubes are grown directly onto copper – the material already used in commercial batteries – using a scalable manufacturing process. This could make it easier to integrate the technology into existing industrial production lines.

Professor Ravi Silva, Principal Investigator and Director of the ATI, said:

"This work is an important step towards bringing CNT-silicon anodes out of the lab and into real-world manufacturing. We can grow carbon nanotube structures directly onto copper foil at speed and tailor the silicon layer for stability, meaning this approach could be integrated into existing battery production lines with minimal disruption. The technology has clear potential not just for electric vehicles, but also for grid storage and smaller batteries used in microelectronics.

"We are very proud to present yet another CNT technology following our initial research in delivering the world's darkest material, VANTA-Black via the university spin-out Surrey NanoSystems Ltd., which is showing real-world impact of fundamental research funded by UKRI."

As demand for energy storage grows, batteries will need to store more energy, charge faster and last longer to support the UK's transition to Net Zero. The VISiCNT design offers a promising route to meeting these challenges and could be key to powering next-generation electric vehicles and phones.

Surrey University

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

Related reports:

Surrey battery leads

Surrey Uni leads microbe recyling of lithium batteries

Ewell school goes safe streets ahead

9 November 2026



Danetree Primary School in Ewell is set to benefit from a School Street from May 2026, aimed at reducing air pollution and improving road safety during the busiest times of the day.

Danetree Road, Danetree Close, Oakhurst Road and a portion of Chessington Road will be open to pedestrians, cyclists and wheelers only between 8:00am and 9:00am and 2.30pm to 3.45pm, Monday to Friday during school term time. Exemptions will apply for residents, carers, school transport and blue badge holders accessing the school.

The move follows the successful rollout of the county's first School Street at Farnham Heath End School in April 2025, where there has already been a 62 per cent reduction in cars entering and exiting the road. In the week before the scheme was introduced, 1,227 vehicles were recorded turning in or out of Bullers Road at school drop-off and pick-up times, compared to 470 once the scheme was in place.

Potters Gate Church of England Primary School in Farnham was the second school to benefit from the School Streets programme.

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth, said: "By restricting motor vehicle access during peak times of the day, we can create safer, healthier and more pleasant environments for everyone walking, cycling and scooting to school. I'm delighted with the positive results we have already seen in Farnham and am pleased we are able to roll the scheme out further. School Streets are a key part of our overall programme to improve road safety, promote more sustainable school travel and reduce air pollution around schools. We're investing £3m to improve road safety and encourage more walking, cycling and wheeling. We're also continuing to deliver Feet First walking training and Bikeability cycling training to provide lifelong road safety skills for Surrey's school children."

For more information about School Streets in Surrey, visit the county council's website.

Surrey County Council

Photo: Danetree Road. Danetree Road, West Ewell, just outside of Danetree Junior School Tony Grant. Licence details

---

New moped bays introduced to tackle pavement parking in Epsom High Street

9 November 2026



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council have established new moped-only parking spaces outside the Town Hall in a bid to combat pavement parking on Epsom High Street.

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

The issue of delivery riders mounting kerbs outside fast-food restaurants has been a cause of significant concern for residents and visitors in recent years. Vehicles blocking pavements create serious safety risks for pedestrians, particularly wheelchair users, those with visual impairments, and parents with prams and pushchairs.

The bays are the latest measure in the council's multi-agency approach to the problem. Motions have been successfully passed at both Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and Surrey County Council calling for dedicated motorcycle parking at all new retail and takeaway developments, the introduction of "round-table" discussions with delivery apps such as Uber Eats and Deliveroo, and stronger enforcement of parking regulations.

The Epsom Business Improvement District (Go Epsom) is also working directly with restaurants and delivery riders to promote the use of these dedicated bays as a faster and legal alternative to pavement parking.

The local initiative coincides with a significant national policy shift. On 8 January 2026, the Department for Transport responded to a long-awaited consultation, announcing new powers for local authorities to tackle pavement parking more effectively.

Unlike the previous street-by-street approach, which was often slow and costly to implement, the new secondary legislation will allow councils to enforce against "unnecessary obstruction" more easily.

Councillor **Steven McCormick**, (RA Woodcote and Langley) Chair of the Planning Committee and a member of Surrey County Council's Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee, said:

"Pavements are for people, not for motorised shortcuts. We've heard from residents who have been forced into the road because the footway is entirely blocked. We are committed to making the High Street safe for everyone. The new moped bays that Epsom & Ewell have provided will mean there is no longer any excuse for this unacceptable and inconsiderate parking."

"I also welcome the announcement of new powers from the Department for Transport. As soon as this national legislation is fully enacted, I will be pushing Surrey County Council to implement a new Traffic Regulation Order specifically designed to curb pavement parking across the borough.

"This TRO will provide the 'teeth' that enforcement officers have lacked, allowing them to issue civil penalties."

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

Related reports:

Problem Pavement Parking Powers Promised

Pavement Parking: Epsom & Ewell MP Speaks Out

Epsom High St in need of more love?

Bikes that blight the blind

Battle of the skies above Surrey

9 November 2026



Air pollution, noise, and climate change are three of the reasons Surrey Heath Borough Council is objecting to plans to increase weekend flights at Farnborough Airport. The business travel hub has a cap on weekends and is looking to increase that as part of a wider push to get to 50,000 annual flights. The airport has also seen an increase in demand despite only 2.6 people travelling per flight, the February planning committee heard.

The application, part of a neighbouring authority consultation, wants to increase weekend and bank holiday flights from its current limit of 8,900 to 13,500. As it stands there are about 30,000 flights using the airport, which sits 1.5km from the border of Surrey Heath, but it has a limit of 50,000 a year. If the application is approved by neighbouring Rushmoor Borough Council, airport chiefs expect it to reach its capacity by 2033. If it is rejected, that pushes the target date back to 2045.

Officers told the meeting: "The climate change manager has raised doubts about whether projections, which rely on the

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

ISSN 2753-2771

suggested level of uptake, are sufficiently robust. The council therefore raises objections on the noise, but also on the potential impact on air pollution, potential impact on biodiversity, potential impact on climate change, and that the economic benefits to this borough do not outweigh the harm."

Councillor David Whitcroft (Liberal Democrat; Mytchett and Deepcut) said the airport was currently turning away weekend flights and felt the weekend slots would be used primarily for wealthy leisure travellers – with the borough paying for the impact. The meeting heard that about 70 per cent of aeroplanes landing at the airport come in over the borough, and that it misses out on any direct economic benefits. He said: "The current level is 8900, and that level has been met. So if this application were to go through, the weekend impact on residents particularly in Mytchett, Deepcut and Bisley would be immediate and dramatic. Weekend flights would go up by 50 per cent. Why does it need to go up on weekends for a business airport designed to relieve traffic from the bigger airports, because it has seen an increase in leisure travel. Should people be able to avoid what they consider to be the inconvenience of mass commercial flying in order to create noise and air pollution simply because they can afford it."

The plans were universally objected to by all members. The final decision rests with Rushmoor Borough Council at a yet-to-be-set date.

Chris Caulfield LDRS Farnborough Airport (image SHBC)

Old trains rolled back into service

9 November 2026



Old style 1980s rolling stock that had been taken out of service to much fanfare, including a huge ticket-only retirement party, are still being used to cover shortages across South Western Railways services.

The train operator made a big song and dance about the retirement of its old iconic Class 455 trains, even charging £45 a ticket for its supposed last ever journey – with the money going to charity.

The LDRS understands old rolling stock is still being used to cover shortfall when the new trains are unable to get off the blocks, notably on the Hampton Court to Waterloo route.

In December last year some 9,000 enthusiasts tried to buy tickets for the 400 spaces on the celebrated final service from Waterloo. Demand was so high a second train was put on. The day was supposed to mark the last rides of the Class 455 as they were finally phased out and replaced with modern Class 701 Arterio – the ones with the odd half table ledges.

Thousands gathered to say their goodbyes to the 'iconic' SWR trains that have, and continue, to serve Surrey for decades. The ceremony for the 'red train' involved a nine-hour round trip from Waterloo across the SWR network.

South Western Railways celebrated with a story titled 'Train enthusiasts bid farewell to iconic red trains after almost 43 years of service' – except they are still in service. Among the passengers was social media train fan Francis Bourgeois.

South Western trains said the December 'farewell' event was to celebrate the life of the Class 455, first introduced in the 1980s ahead of their removal from timetabled services and that it was always planned to keep some of them back as a contingency.

A spokesperson for SWR said: "The Class 455 fleet of trains was withdrawn from our timetable at the end of 2025. A small number were retained for resilience purposes, to cover any eventuality that may affect the trains we use on our suburban network."

Chris Caulfield LDRS

The 17.54 from Hampton Court to London Waterloo on Thursday January 29 was the old retired train brought back into service (LDRS)

Problem Pavement Parking Powers Promised

9 November 2026

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771



The Government has announced plans to give councils across England new legal powers to tackle pavement parking, following years of concern from disability groups, parents, and local campaigners about blocked pavements forcing people into the road.

In a statement issued on 8 January, the Department for Transport said the changes are intended to make it easier for local authorities to restrict pavement parking across wider areas, rather than relying on street-by-street restrictions that can be slow and complex to introduce.

The Department said blocked pavements create serious barriers for wheelchair users, parents with pushchairs, blind or partially sighted people, and older residents, limiting independence and making everyday journeys less safe. Ministers say the new approach will allow councils to act where pavement parking causes the greatest local problems, while retaining flexibility where limited pavement parking may still be considered acceptable.

Local Transport Minister Lilian Greenwood said clear pavements are essential for people to move around safely and independently, and that councils will be given the power to “crack down on problem pavement parking” while taking account of local conditions. National organisations including Guide Dogs and the RAC welcomed the announcement, calling for consistent enforcement and proportionate use of the new powers.

Surrey County Council: details awaited

Responding to questions from Epsom and Ewell Times, Surrey County Council said it welcomed the announcement but stressed that it is too early to comment on how it might operate in practice.

A Surrey County Council spokesperson said the authority is “looking forward to finding out more about new powers allowing local authorities to tackle antisocial pavement parking,” but added that further detail is needed on what exactly is proposed and what the powers will entail once introduced. The council said it would be happy to revisit the issue once more information is shared by the Department for Transport.

The Government has said that guidance on how councils should use the new powers will be published later in 2026.

Local MP claims campaign success

The announcement was welcomed by Epsom and Ewell MP **Helen Maguire**, who described it as a significant step forward following sustained local and parliamentary campaigning.

Ms Maguire said she had raised pavement parking repeatedly in Parliament, including through a Westminster Hall debate, an Early Day Motion, written questions to ministers, and local campaigning with residents. She said pavement parking makes streets unsafe and inaccessible, and that no one should be forced into the road when walking to school or the shops.

Following the announcement, the Minister for Local Transport wrote directly to Ms Maguire, thanking her for her advocacy and citing her work in highlighting the challenges caused by pavement parking.

What powers already exist?

At present, pavement parking outside London is not subject to a general nationwide ban. Enforcement relies on a patchwork of existing powers, which can be limited or difficult to apply.

Yellow line parking restrictions, for example, apply from the centre of the carriageway to the highway boundary, which usually includes the pavement. However, these restrictions only apply during the signed controlled hours and do not always prevent vehicles from mounting the pavement if enforcement is not prioritised.

Councils can also act where a vehicle causes an obstruction of the highway, an offence under existing road traffic legislation. In practice, enforcement is often reserved for cases where access is completely blocked, such as preventing wheelchair passage or emergency access. This can leave many partially obstructed pavements unaddressed.

Local authorities may also introduce specific Traffic Regulation Orders banning pavement parking on individual streets or sections of road, but this process can be time-consuming, requires consultation and signage, and is rarely applied borough-wide.

The Government has said the new powers are intended to move away from this piecemeal approach, allowing councils to introduce area-wide pavement parking restrictions more easily, while still permitting exemptions where pavements are wide enough and pedestrian access is not compromised.

What happens next?

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY

EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

The Department for Transport says further guidance will be published later this year, setting out how councils can use the new powers in a proportionate and locally appropriate way. Until then, councils such as Surrey County Council say they are unable to comment on how enforcement might change on the ground.

For residents in Epsom and Ewell, the announcement signals political momentum on an issue that has generated long-standing concern, particularly with food delivery mopeds in the Epsom High Street area, but any practical change to enforcement will depend on the detail of the legislation and how quickly local authorities choose to act once the new framework is in place.

Sam Jones – Reporter



Image: Delivery moped on pavement in Epsom

Related reports:

Pavement Parking: Epsom & Ewell MP Speaks Out

Leatherhead ruined recycling road repair

9 November 2026



A crumbling, pothole-ridden road that has been the source of countless insurance claims could be given a new lease of life. The North Leatherhead Access Road leading into the Surrey County Council recycling centre off Randalls Road has been slowly destroyed by years of heavy goods vehicles entering and leaving the site. Now, Mole Valley District Council has agreed to spend £60,000 to begin the process of repairing the heavily rutted road. The task is made more complicated as the road is co-owned by Surrey County Council and Thames Water, and it is hoped the initial work, from an overall £300,000 budget, will determine not just what needs to be done, but who pays for it.

Presenting the item to the November meeting of Mole Valley District's cabinet was **Councillor Keira Vyvyan-Robinson**. She said: "Anybody who uses the recycling centre on a regular basis will be very familiar with the problems that road has. Obviously, it is heavily used by very heavy vehicles and over a period of time that heavy use has resulted in a lot of problems with the carriageway, with rutting in the verges and the channel blocks. That has resulted in increased insurance claims and also increased complaints. In February 2024, it was agreed that we would allocate just over £300,000 in order to improve that road. It is a complicated project because Mole Valley District Council owns about half of the road, the majority of the balance of it is the responsibility of Surrey County Council and Thames Water, so it's necessary to liaise with them and reach agreements with them over the work that needs to be carried out. This budget is to start the full design and to get the proper costing, because at the moment it's a provisional figure of about 300,000. The drawdown will enable us to finalise that, submit the planning application and reach the legal agreement with Thames Water and Surrey County Council over how much they will contribute towards the costs. For anybody who uses it, it's quite plain that we can't do nothing, as it's such a detrimental situation at the moment and it will only get worse if we don't."

Cllr Gerry Sevenoaks, Independent member for Ashtead Park and chair of the council's scrutiny committee, said: "As a user of that road I know it very well. It's dangerous, especially if you are going down there and two refuse carts are coming the other way. I say 'let's get on with it'."

Cllr Caroline Joseph (Liberal Democrat, Fetcham) added: "There is a huge strength of feeling locally. It's such a small thing but it makes such a huge difference to people. If we can get this moving it will be a very positive thing to Leatherhead, Fetcham, Bookham, Ashtead, everyone locally."

Chris Caulfield LDRS

Image: North Leatherhead Access Road (image Google)

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY