



## Surrey leaders review spending review

15 June 2025



### Government Spending Review Falls Short for Surrey Councils and Epsom Hospital, Say Local Leaders

The UK Government's latest Spending Review has drawn a mixed reaction from Surrey leaders, with concerns mounting over local council finances and delays to urgently needed hospital upgrades in the Epsom area.

#### Surrey County Council: Welcome Commitments, Ongoing Pressures

Responding to the Chancellor's announcements, Surrey County Council Leader Cllr Tim Oliver acknowledged "important announcements," including increases in core funding for local government, funding pledges for children's services, and a renewed commitment to reforming Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision.

However, Cllr Oliver warned that the headline increase in "core spending power" rests on councils raising council tax by the full 5%—a move that may place strain on households during a cost-of-living crisis. Even with that assumption, county and unitary authorities across England are projected to face a £2.2 billion funding gap next year.

"Whilst our finances have been transformed to a point where we have delivered stable, balanced budgets year after year," Oliver said, "we are not exempt from the financial challenges faced by councils."

Oliver stressed the urgency of the upcoming *Fair Funding Review*, calling for a "fair and proportionate" outcome to ensure long-term stability for local authorities like Surrey.

Locally, the council has invested an additional £15 million into a three-year SEND recovery plan, begun in September 2023, which is reportedly beginning to bear fruit. But Oliver added that the government's announcements stop short of tackling deeper issues. "Provision and support for children with SEND is a systemic issue... and the current system does not work for families, schools or councils," he said.

#### SEND Deficits and Budget Certainty

Perhaps the sharpest criticism came over the government's silence on the spiralling SEND deficits many councils face. Without intervention, these deficits—currently kept off balance sheet—will be formally accounted for from next April.

"Many local authorities, including Surrey, are facing a continuing increase in demand in comparison with levels of funding received," Oliver said. "Councils will soon start planning their budgets for next year and cannot afford to have this can kicked down the road any longer."

#### Future of Local Government in Surrey

The Spending Review did include a continued commitment to *Local Government Reorganisation* (LGR)—a development welcomed by Surrey County Council. Surrey recently submitted a proposal to transition to two unitary authorities, a move that could reshape local government in the county.

"We have worked hard to form that proposal," said Oliver, "to deliver the best possible outcome for Surrey residents."

#### Local MPs Condemn "Missed Opportunity" for Epsom & St Helier Hospitals

Meanwhile, the Liberal Democrat MPs for Epsom & Ewell, Carshalton & Wallington, and Sutton & Cheam expressed deep disappointment over the absence of additional investment in the long-delayed redevelopment of Epsom & St Helier Hospitals.

Despite a known £150 million repair backlog, the government has only committed £12 million to date, with the timeline for a new specialist emergency hospital now postponed until 2033 under the Labour government. Local MPs Bobby Dean, Helen Maguire, and Luke Taylor said this continued delay threatens the "very future of our hospitals."

"The Government has missed a massive opportunity to deliver real change for Epsom & St Helier Hospitals," they said in a joint statement. "£12 million is simply a drop in the ocean."

The trio highlighted years of cross-party pressure in Westminster, including Prime Minister's Questions and debates, aimed at securing vital upgrades for the "crumbling" estate. "After 14 years of broken promises, the Government has an opportunity to do better," they added.

#### Rising Council Tax on the Horizon

Further national analysis has added to concerns around the financial implications of the Spending Review for local authorities. Paul Johnson, Director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), noted that while English local government fared "perhaps a little bit better than it might have expected," there is a "sting in the tail": council tax bills are now set to rise at their fastest rate of any parliament since 2001–2005.

Chancellor Rachel Reeves confirmed that councils' *core spending power* will rise by 2.6% annually from next year. However, this figure is based on the assumption that councils will impose the full 5% annual increase in council tax—an option many local authorities may feel compelled to take. "We won't be going above that," Reeves said. "That is the council tax policy that we inherited from the previous Government, and that we will be continuing."

Liberal Democrat deputy leader Daisy Cooper described the overall package as a "missed opportunity," warning that council budgets—especially in areas such as social care—remain "very, very stretched." She added: "The Government is now looking to local councils to put up council tax to plug the gap in these particular areas... We cannot wait. This can't be kicked down the road any longer. The Government has got to act now."

For residents of Epsom and Ewell, the message is clear: whether through delays to vital infrastructure or increasing local taxation, the burden of national decisions may be felt most acutely at the community level.

## Drowning in Debt: Epsom MP Demands Thames Water Takeover

15 June 2025



Thames Water should be put into "special administration" rather than given a £3billion bailout, Epsom and Ewell's MP said after the utility company won a major court battle to stave off nationalisation.

In February, the embattled water firm won the right to go ahead with the huge loan despite some of Thames Water's creditors opposing the costly 9.75 per cent interest rate. The decision was then challenged on appeal with the courts this week again finding in favour of Thames Water.

The company, which has overseen record sewage spills amid rising prices for customers - while paying out hundreds of millions of pounds in dividends to shareholders - says the £3billion loan puts them on a "more stable financial foundation". From April, bills will increase by 31 per cent.

Thames Water CEO Chris Weston said they were pleased with the court's decision "decisively refused" the appeal and allowed the loan to go through. He said: "We remain focused on putting Thames Water onto a more stable financial foundation as we seek a long-term solution to our financial resilience.

"Today's news demonstrates further progress. We continue to work closely with our creditors, enabling us to access liquidity to continue to implement our turnaround plan so we can deliver better results for our customers and the environment while seeking to attract new capital into the business.

"As we have previously stated, the Company Plan will not affect customer bills but will provide continued investment in our network to fix pipes, upgrade our sewage treatment works, and maintain high-quality drinking water. We remain of the view that a market led solution is in the best interest of customers, UK taxpayers and the wider economy."

The decision to reject Charlie Maynard, the Liberal Democrat MP for Whitney's appeal has not pleased everyone.

**Helen Maguire**, the Lib Dem MP for Epsom and Ewell, described the bail out as "terrible news" for people "who have been paying the price for a company that is not fit for purpose."

She said: "Thames Water is spending almost a third of my constituents' bills on servicing their mountain of debt, instead of investing in vital infrastructure and stopping gallons of sewage from being pumped into our rivers.

"It is in the Government's power to end this now. Thames Water must be put into special administration and we cannot allow failing water bosses to keep throwing good money after bad, while our regulators sit on their hands and customers' bills go through the roof."

Thames Water's cash flow was set to run dry in March before the loan deal was agreed with speculation growing that it could come under government control. The network is also in need of major repair and modernisation expected to cost in the billions.

Related reports:

[Surrey's LibDem MP majority take on Thames Water](#)

[Thames Water's reputation going down the drain](#)

[Thames Water rebate](#)

[Epsom & Ewell households drowning as water bills rise?](#)

Image credit: By NegativeSpace in Travel (logo added).

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## Parliament's sting in the tail for Epsom and Ewell WASPIs lamented by local MP

15 June 2025



**Helen Maguire**, the Liberal Democrat MP for Epsom & Ewell, has expressed her disappointment after a parliamentary vote on compensating WASPI (Women Against State Pension Inequality) claimants failed to gain cross-party support. Maguire, who voted in favour of the bill, said she was "proud" to back the proposal, which sought to address what she described as a "gross injustice" affecting thousands of women in the constituency and across the UK.

The bill was introduced following an independent report that concluded that many women born in the 1950s had suffered an injustice due to a failure by successive governments to properly inform them of changes to the state pension age. However, the measure failed to secure enough support in Parliament, with Conservative and Labour MPs voting against it or abstaining.

### What is the WASPI Campaign?

The WASPI campaign was formed in 2015 to highlight the plight of women born in the 1950s who were affected by changes to the state pension age. Prior to reforms enacted by the Pensions Acts of 1995 and 2011, women in the UK could retire at 60, while men retired at 65. The government decided to equalise the pension age for men and women, eventually raising it to 66 for both. However, many women argue they were not adequately informed about these changes in time to make necessary financial adjustments.

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) found that the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) failed to communicate the pension changes properly, leading to significant hardship for many women who had planned their retirements based on the previous system.

### Local Impact and Political Response

According to data from the House of Commons Library, 5,420 women in Epsom & Ewell are believed to have been affected by these pension changes. Many have reported financial distress, as they were forced to continue working or adjust to an unexpected delay in receiving their pensions.

Speaking after the vote, Maguire criticised both Labour and Conservative MPs for failing to back the compensation plan. "For years, senior Labour representatives and even the Prime Minister himself pledged to deliver fair compensation to those impacted by changes these women had no control over. They made a conscious



political choice to break that promise and ignore the findings of the independent watchdog," she said.

"For Conservative and Labour MPs to fail to back these women is an immense disappointment. All they are asking for is fairness," Maguire continued. "I, alongside my fellow Liberal Democrat MPs, will continue to stand up for the WASPI women at every turn and keep fighting until they get the justice that they deserve."

## The Wider Debate

The issue of state pension reform has been contentious for years, with successive governments arguing that the changes were necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability of the pension system. The government has so far resisted calls for direct compensation, citing fiscal constraints, but campaigners argue that the lack of proper notification has left many women financially disadvantaged through no fault of their own.

The failure of the bill to progress means that WASPI women and their supporters will need to continue pressing their case in Parliament and beyond. With growing political pressure and the findings of the PHSO still pending further action, the fight for compensation is likely to remain a key issue in the coming months.

For now, Maguire has pledged to keep up the pressure, but with the major parties unwilling to back compensation at this stage, it remains to be seen whether justice will be delivered for the thousands of affected women in Epsom & Ewell and beyond.

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## Epsom and Ewell's MP leads debate on support for Explosive Ordnance Disposers

15 June 2025



**Helen Maguire**, Epsom and Ewell's MP and former British Army Military Police Officer, led a Westminster Hall debate 11th December on government support for the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) community. Drawing on her military experience and recent meetings with EOD specialists, Ms Maguire highlighted the critical importance of supporting this sector, both domestically and globally.

The motion read: "That this House believes that the United Kingdom's capacity in explosive weapons disposal and victim assistance requires utmost government support, particularly at a time of extreme geopolitical unrest."

Ms Maguire emphasised the UK's "enviable global reputation" for expertise in EOD, victim assistance, and the production of demining equipment. She also underscored the extensive humanitarian work supported by the UK, citing the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's (FCDO) Global Mine Action Programme, which has a budget of £14.8 million for 2023-24. This programme tackles landmines, cluster munitions, and explosive remnants of war in countries such as Ukraine, Angola, and Cambodia.

Ms Maguire remarked, "*Explosive weapons are being used in modern conflicts to an extent we haven't seen for generations. The number of civilian casualties has increased by 70% in three years, with Ukraine and the Middle East being major contributors.*" She also noted the challenges faced in Ukraine, where over 150,000 square kilometres of land is contaminated with unexploded ordnance, requiring decades of work to make safe.

### Domestic Challenges and Veterans' Welfare

Highlighting domestic issues, Ms Maguire praised the UK's EOD teams, who handle around 2,300 incidents annually, ranging from unexploded World War II bombs to improvised explosive devices. She also paid tribute to the bravery of EOD personnel, describing their work as a testament to "courage as a decision."

The debate touched on the impact of explosive weapons on civilians and veterans alike. Ms Maguire called for sustained government support for injured veterans, including those with prosthetic limbs. Referring to pioneering research at institutions like Imperial College London, she advocated for better resources and protective equipment, particularly for female deminers.

She stated, "*For those of us who have served, many of us will know people who were killed or injured by explosive ordnance. Supporting veterans and civilians is not just a duty; it is a moral imperative.*"

### The Global Context

Ms Maguire provided an alarming overview of global challenges, noting that "aggressors throughout history have never let the rules of war or international prohibition interrupt a good night's sleep." She stressed the UK's unique position to lead in international donor coordination and post-conflict reconstruction.

Ms Maguire also underscored the economic benefits of mine clearance, which unlocks agricultural land and restores livelihoods. She cited Lebanon as an example, where demining has enabled safer farming and improved access to water.

The MP called for innovation in demining technologies, such as drone-mounted ground-penetrating radar and chemical signature analysis. She also highlighted the need for better coordination in Ukraine, where demining equipment often sits unused due to licensing and training gaps.

### Building Awareness and Collaboration

Ms Maguire announced plans to form an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on explosive weapons, aiming to enhance support for EOD and victim assistance. She extended an invitation to colleagues and stakeholders to join the initiative. Referencing the TV series *Trigger Point*, she suggested its star, Vicky McClure, could help raise awareness about the vital work of EOD teams.

#### Government Minister's response:

The Minister expressed gratitude to the EOD community, stating: "*Our EOD operators are highly trained, and they're world-renowned, equipped to deal with a full range of explosive threats... They deserve our absolute appreciation and thanks from the government, from Parliament, and indeed, the entire country.*"

The Minister highlighted the scale of the UK's EOD operations, mentioning that: "*700 service personnel from the Army, Royal Navy, and RAF deal with 2,300 EOD incidents across the UK annually.*"

The economic and diplomatic significance of EOD was underlined: "*EOD capabilities also have an important economic legacy. They feed our scientific and industrial base, sustain cutting-edge design in robotics and detection technologies, and contribute to international diplomacy and reconstruction.*"

The Minister emphasised evolving threats, such as drone-deployed munitions and advanced IEDs, and committed to ensuring the UK remains prepared: "*We must invest in EOD capabilities to ensure we stay ahead of emerging threats and technologies.*"

He noted that the UK is aiding Ukraine by training personnel and sharing lessons learned. Regarding mine contamination in Ukraine, he stated: "*This is not a problem that will go away today; it will last a generation.*"

The Minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to veterans: "*You have my word that I will support veterans, both legally and with welfare support, particularly those from Northern Ireland.*"

Related report (Westminster Debate)

Grayling's fishy business



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## Nominate heroic businesswomen of Epsom and Ewell

15 June 2025



A new scheme entitled "**MP HEROes**", In Partnership with NatWest and Supported by the Women & Enterprise All-Party Parliamentary Group has been introduced.

A cross-party Parliamentary programme that celebrates local women-owned businesses throughout the UK. MP HEROes enables each MP to highlight the vital contribution of women entrepreneurs to the local economy and beyond, generating positive PR for the business and for the nominating MP.

By nominating a woman business owner in the Epsom and Ewell Constituency, the goal is to create and celebrate local role models and encourage other women to start and grow a business. All HEROes become part of the MPH community, with regular events and workshops both online and in person, which support the business owner and their business.

**Helen Maguire**, Epsom and Ewell's new MP, can nominate a local woman business owner from any sector or industry, the only requirement is they are based in your constituency.

If you wish to suggest someone to Helen Maguire email [helen.maguire.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:helen.maguire.mp@parliament.uk)

*NB There is no closing date, business owners can be nominated throughout the year.*

### Points you may wish to consider when nominating your HERo woman business owner

- established in the area
- provides a useful product or service
- employs local people
- supports the local community

### What happens next

We contact the business to let them know about the Award. It's not a competition, all MP HEROes nominated businesses (one per constituency) are award-winners and welcome within the MPH community. The MPH Award runs across 2-years, currently 2024/25.

### Next steps for MPs

Once the business is confirmed, each MP and their HERo is featured on [www.mpheroes.com](http://www.mpheroes.com) and highlighted throughout the local press and on social media. It's great for the business, the local economy, and an opportunity for MPs to promote their support for local business.

### Celebration and Awards event at Westminster - 3.00pm November 20, 2024

MPs and their HEROes are invited to a celebration event at Parliament during Global Entrepreneurship Week. A Certificate is presented to each HERo and we hope as an MP you're able to pop in during the afternoon to grab a photo with your business HERo. Should you nominate a business in the next year, the next Celebration takes place in spring 2025.

Image: local women led business Oracle PR

## Local MP comes to our defence?

15 June 2025



In a significant development in UK party politics, **Helen Maguire**, the Member of Parliament for Epsom & Ewell, has been appointed to the frontbenches of the Liberal Democrats. On September 19th, Liberal Democrat leader Sir **Ed Davey** announced that Maguire would take up the role of spokesperson for Defence and the Armed Forces. This announcement follows the unveiling of the Lib Dems new 33-member frontbench roster, following the party's success in July's general election, where they secured a record 72 parliamentary seats.

Maguire, a former Army captain in the Royal Military Police, brings extensive real-world experience to her new role. She served in Bosnia on a NATO peacekeeping mission and in Iraq, where she assisted the rebuilding of the Iraqi police force. Maguire took to X (formerly known as Twitter) to express her enthusiasm, stating that she is "delighted and honoured" to take on the role, while also highlighting the need for the UK defence budget to reflect the challenging times we face.

A party spokesperson for Defence and the Armed Forces plays a crucial role in communicating the party's stance on national security, military strategy, and



defence spending. Helen Maguire is likely to become more prominent in debates on these issues in the House of Commons, especially in light of ongoing global conflicts and increasing geopolitical tensions.

In an era of emerging threats, the public will increasingly turn to the main political parties to ensure the military is effectively managed, underpinned by competent, transparent, and realistic governance. As global conflicts and tensions continue to rise, trust in the leadership and oversight of the armed forces will become a central issue in upcoming elections, with national security playing a critical role in shaping the public's confidence and the country's future stability.

Maguire faces a challenging task, especially as the Liberal Democrats work to rebuild public confidence. The party is likely to be cautious to avoid over-promising on policies, mindful of the damage caused when they reneged on their pledge to scrap tuition fees during their coalition government from 2010 to 2015, a decision that deeply hurt their voter base.

As the third-largest political party in the UK, the Liberal Democrats are attempting to position themselves for further growth. With Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer's approval rating dipping in recent Opinion polls and ongoing uncertainty surrounding the direction of the Conservative Party, the Lib Dems may believe that they are poised for future electoral gains. The political winds of British Politics are constantly shifting, and as Helen Maguire takes a substantial step forward into the spotlight, her performance on the frontbench might just determine if the Lib Dems can ride the wave of electoral success, or end up washed out to the fringes at the next general election.

## Epsom pensioners gather less winter fuel pay this St Stephens

15 June 2025



Thousands of pensioners across Epsom, Ewell, Ashtead, and Leatherhead are facing the loss of vital winter fuel payments following cuts by the UK government, sparking fears that many will struggle to keep warm this winter.

**Helen Maguire**, the Liberal Democrat MP for Epsom and Ewell, has urged the government to reconsider its decision, warning that vulnerable pensioners could be left choosing between "heating and eating" during the colder months. Maguire opposed the cuts when they were voted on in the House of Commons on 10th September, but the measures were passed despite her concerns.

The cuts primarily affect pensioners over the age of 80 who are not in receipt of pension credit. Previously, these pensioners were automatically entitled to an additional £300 to help cover their energy bills in the winter. Now, many will lose this support unless they qualify for other benefits.

Data released earlier this week shows that in Epsom and surrounding areas, 5,788 pensioners aged over 80 who do not receive pension credit are at risk of losing their Winter Fuel Payment. In total, 18,261 pensioners in Epsom and Ewell could be affected by the government's decision.

Last winter, over £3.3 million in support was distributed to pensioners in the constituency, with £1,525,800 going to those aged over 80. These figures are expected to fall significantly this year due to the cuts.

"Thousands of pensioners here in Epsom and Ewell are desperately worried about how they will make it through this winter," said Ms Maguire. "These latest figures are deeply concerning. It is not too late for this government to change course, reverse their plans, and protect vulnerable pensioners here in Epsom."

In response, Chancellor **Rachel Reeves** has defended the government's decision, framing it as part of a broader strategy to stabilise public finances. "We are facing challenging economic times, and difficult choices must be made to ensure the sustainability of our public services," Reeves said in a recent statement. "However, we remain committed to supporting those most in need, and we have maintained targeted assistance for the poorest households."

Reeves also pointed to ongoing support measures, including the Energy Price Guarantee, which she says will help alleviate pressure on households most at risk. "We recognise the importance of protecting our pensioners, and our policies are designed to ensure that no one is left behind. But we must also take steps to manage public expenditure responsibly."

Despite this, charities and local advocacy groups have voiced concerns about the potential impact on older residents. Many fear an increase in demand for services such as food banks and emergency heating grants as pensioners struggle to afford rising energy bills without the additional winter fuel support.

As winter approaches, the situation remains uncertain, with many pensioners hoping for a reversal of the cuts or further government action to protect those most affected.

Image: Richard Peter Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 German

## A uniform approach to Epsom's schools

15 June 2025



Epsom and Ewell's new M.P., **Helen Maguire**, has called on local schools to address the growing concern over costly school uniforms, reaching out to 15 headteachers on 5th September. In her letter, Maguire urged schools to avoid placing unnecessary financial pressure on families by requiring expensive branded uniforms and PE kits, reflecting concerns raised by parents in her constituency.

Maguire highlighted the financial burden these branded items can create, stating, "It is important to consider if more costly branded kits are necessary." She emphasised that schools should review their uniform policies, particularly in light of the current cost of living crisis.

Schools are already required to follow statutory guidelines on uniform policy, ensuring that the cost of uniforms does not become a barrier for parents when choosing schools. According to this guidance, schools must ensure uniforms are affordable, minimise the use of branded items, attempt to avoid restrictive single-supplier contracts, and offer second-hand uniforms at reduced prices.

In her communication with headteachers in the local area, Maguire pointed to this statutory guidance and suggested that generic, unbranded items from low-cost retailers should be allowed in school uniform policy.

The available data on the average cost of school uniforms, however, remains up for debate. The Schoolwear Association claims the average cost of compulsory secondary school uniforms and sportswear is £101.19 per pupil. In contrast, research by The Children's Society suggests that parents spend an average of £422 a



year on secondary school uniforms.

An official branded school sports polo top will typically be in the price range of £10 and £15, whereas a pack of two unbranded sports polo shirts from a lower-cost retailer like ASDA can be purchased for around £4-6. In this case, Maguire's suggestion to allow generic, unbranded clothing could offer struggling families much-needed relief amidst a cost of living crisis.

However, there are differing views on the role of uniforms in schools, and Maguire's approach seems to forget the findings of some of the great minds of Sociology. For instance, Stanley Cohen made the argument that reducing visible differences in dress can help lower social tensions among young people. Renowned sociologist, Émile Durkheim believed that uniforms helped in fostering a sense of community and solidarity, while David Brunsma argued that consistent dress codes promote social equality and reduce status competition based on clothing.

While it's entirely reasonable to want to relieve struggling families of unnecessary financial burdens, it's also important to recognise the value of maintaining uniformity in school dress. The potential impact on children's welfare in a school environment ought to be considered when considering such changes.

The **Epsom & Ewell Times** reached out to multiple schools in the local area for comments on Maguire's stance on the cost of school uniforms. As of now there has been no comments, we await a response to these three questions:

1. How are you addressing concerns around the cost of school uniforms and PE kits for families?
2. Are there any plans to introduce or expand the availability of unbranded or second-hand options for your pupils?
3. What measures are in place to ensure that uniform costs do not become a barrier for students attending your school?

As the conversation continues, it remains to be seen whether local schools will adapt their uniform policies to ease the financial strain on families, while still maintaining the sense of unity, equality and school pride that branded uniforms are said to have.

Image: Kindermel under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license.

## Our Health Deserves Better

15 June 2025



I want to take this opportunity to thank those who voted for me at the general election. There is much to do to improve our situation in Epsom & Ewell and I am committed to help achieve this for all the residents of Epsom, Ewell, Ashtead and Leatherhead.

Having visited Epsom Hospital only this week I reflect on the recent statement by Chancellor Rachel Reeves and find it impossible not to feel a deep concern for the future of our local healthcare infrastructure.

The Chancellor's announcement, which hinted at potential cuts to various infrastructure projects, including the ambitious plan to deliver 40 new hospitals, has left many of us in a state of unease. Among the projects at risk is the new emergency care hospital at Sutton, a critical facility that promises to alleviate the pressures on Epsom and St Helier hospitals. As the newly elected Liberal Democrat MP for Epsom & Ewell, I find this prospect deeply troubling.

Our community has been waiting far too long for this vital investment. The new hospital at Sutton is not just another building; it's a beacon of hope for many. It's designed to be a centre of excellence, equipped with state-of-the-art facilities for the most serious emergency cases. Without it, our local healthcare services will continue to struggle with sub-standard conditions at Epsom and St Helier. These facilities, already stretched beyond their limits, cannot continue to bear the brunt of our community's healthcare needs without significant improvements.

The situation is dire. The buildings at Epsom and St Helier are overdeveloped and outdated. They desperately need the relief that the new Sutton hospital would provide. This isn't just about buildings; it's about the quality of care and the well-being of our staff and patients. Our community deserves better, and we cannot afford to wait any longer.

The Chancellor has offered a meeting with the Health Secretary for MPs representing affected constituencies. I eagerly anticipate this opportunity to voice the concerns of Epsom, Ewell, Ashtead, and Leatherhead residents. Our message must be clear and resolute: the Conservative party's economic mismanagement has left our public services in disarray, and we cannot allow their broken promises to cost us our much-needed hospital.

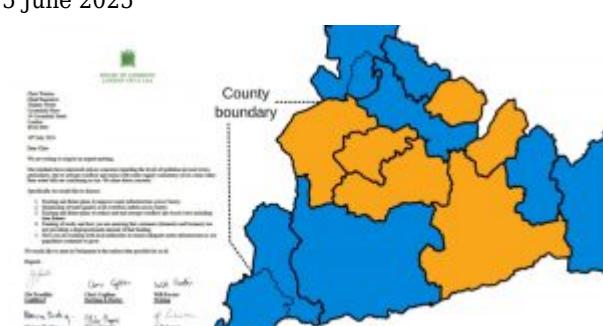
For years, the Conservatives have failed to deliver on their promises, leaving our local health services to languish. The proposed hospital at Sutton represents a crucial lifeline, not just for today but for the future of healthcare in our region. It is a promise of better days, of healthcare services that our community can rely on.

As your MP, I am committed to fighting for this project. We must ensure that the funding for the new Emergency Care Hospital at Sutton is protected. The people of Epsom, Ewell, Ashtead, and Leatherhead deserve nothing less than a healthcare system that meets their needs and supports their well-being. The time for waiting is over. It's time for action, and I will not rest until our community gets the healthcare investment it has been promised and so desperately needs.

Image: Maternity Unit at Epsom Hospital. Left to right; James Blythe CEO; Liz Cullen, Head of Midwifery; Helen Maguire MP

## Surrey's LibDem MP majority take on Thames Water

15 June 2025



Buoyed by having the majority of Surrey County's 11 Parliamentary Constituencies returning Liberal Democrat Party Members of Parliament, the six new lawmakers, including **Epsom and Ewell's Helen Maguire** MP, have joined forces to tackle **Thames Water's** shortcomings. A spokesman said "This is all part of the campaign by the Liberal Democrat Party to get our streams, rivers and coastline, cleaned up and to stop the often illegal dumping of sewage into our water."



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Chris Weston  
Chief Executive  
Thames Water  
Cavendish Place  
14 Cavendish Street  
London  
W1G 9NU

16<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Dear Chris

We are writing to request an urgent meeting.

Our residents have expressed serious concerns regarding the levels of pollution in local rivers, particularly, due to sewage overflow and issues with water supply consistency all at a time when their water bills are continuing to rise. We share these concerns.

Specifically we would like to discuss:

1. Existing and future plans to improve water infrastructure across Surrey.
2. Monitoring of water quality at all overflow outlets across Surrey.
3. Existing and future plans to reduce and end sewage overflow into local rivers including time frames.
4. Funding of works and how you are ensuring that customers (domestic and business) are not providing a disproportionate amount of that funding.
5. How you are working with local authorities to ensure adequate water infrastructure as our population continues to grow.

We would like to meet in Parliament at the earliest date possible for us all.

Regards

Zoë Franklin  
Guildford

Chris Coghlan  
Dorking & Horley

Will Forster  
Woking

Monica Harding  
Esher & Walton

Helen Maguire  
Epsom & Ewell

Al Pinkerton  
Surrey Heath