



Epsom company among Surrey businesses backed by £20m Start Up Loans funding

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An Epsom-based craft distillery is among more than 1,500 Surrey businesses to have benefited from over £20 million in Start Up Loans funding since the national scheme began in 2012. The distillery is located in Capel.

Silhouette Stills, whose registered address is in Rosebery Road, Epsom, operates a craft distillery in Capel producing small-batch gin and moonshine. Companies House records list Phillip Anthony Reed as the company’s active director. (Companies House)

The business, established in 2025, received an initial Start Up Loan of £12,000 in April last year, followed by a further £5,000 loan to support its development.

According to the British Business Bank, Silhouette Stills has already received recognition in The Gin Guide, including two gold awards and a bronze award for its London Dry gin, as well as being named New Distillery of the Year 2026.

Phillip Reed said: “The financing from the Start Up Loans programme has been completely essential to helping get Silhouette Stills started. It’s because of the financing we’re in a position to produce our small batch moonshine, and to do so at the top quality we want for customers. We’re delighted to have won awards already as a young business and look forward to the future with confidence.”

Across Surrey, the highest number of loans has been made in Elmbridge, with 241. Guildford follows with 219, while Reigate and Banstead has received 203.

Epsom and Ewell businesses have received 106 loans in total, equivalent to 127 loans per 100,000 residents. That places the borough seventh in Surrey by the number of loans per head among the local authorities listed.

Blair McDougall, Minister for Small Business and Economic Transformation, said: “Surrey is home to a thriving community of entrepreneurs and through Start Up Loans, we are ensuring they have access to the finance they need to reach their full potential.

“This is an impressive milestone for the programme, which has supported entrepreneurs across the region, boosting local businesses, job opportunities and the economy.”

Almost four in ten Surrey Start Up Loans have gone to female business leaders, while 18 per cent were made to ethnic-minority business owners, the British Business Bank said.

Louise McCoy, Managing Director of Start Up Loans Products at the British Business Bank, said the £20 million milestone reflected the programme’s role in helping people establish or grow businesses.

She said: “We are delighted that Start Up Loans has been able to support Surrey business owners with £20m of financing, and are proud to support business owners with mentoring and other support as well.”

The Start Up Loans programme offers personal loans of up to £25,000 for business purposes, alongside mentoring and support. Eligibility for a first loan has recently been extended to businesses that have been trading for up to 60 months.

Start Up Loans Surrey lending data

Local authority	Population	Volume of loans	Loans per 100,000 people
Elmbridge	141,926	241	170
Tandridge	90,586	142	157
Woking	105,679	159	150
Waverley	134,284	202	150
Guildford	151,359	219	145
Reigate and Banstead	159,134	203	128
Epsom and Ewell	83,288	106	127

Local authority	Population	Volume of loans	Loans per 100,000 people
Runnymede	92,118	116	126
Surrey Heath	94,492	116	123
Mole Valley	88,709	102	115
Spelthorne	107,074	110	103

For more information about the scheme, visit the Start Up Loans website.

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Sam Jones - Reporter



Photo: Phil Reed in his distillery