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Lib Dem Landslide Takes East Surrey

9 May 2026



The Liberal Democrats have won the first ever election for East Surrey Council winning a huge majority on the newly formed authority. The party surged to an early lead as the votes began to trickle in during the Friday, May 8 count and never looked back as seat after seat turned yellow.

When the votes were all counted they won 40 of the 72 seats up for grabs, giving them a huge lead over the second placed Conservatives who managed 10. What had been expected to be a close race with no single party being able to command an outright win soon turned into a landslide with the Lib Dems saying the result offers people a “fresh start” after years of Conservative rule.

The old county council had previously always been under Tory control but in borough elections over the past five years the Liberal Democrats have made significant gains. Today, they said, that the decades-long journey was complete.

Liberal Democrat spokesperson for East Surrey Bridget Kendrick said: “I personally thought we had a very strong chance of taking control and a lot of people underestimated the power of Epsom and Ewell Liberal Democrats but we saw it on the ground day in and day out on the door. We’ve been very clear that this is an incredible opportunity for a fresh start in East Surrey. This is really about a cultural change of transparency.

“Our priority is adult social care and special education, and across Surrey we have been delivering good services and being financially competent. It’s a fresh start for culture and transparency. I’d like to thank everyone who campaigned for so long, for everyone who stood, regardless of parties -for the democratic process. For everyone voting for hope.

“We are going to have our own significant challenges (early estimates suggest the new authority faces an immediate £35m budget shortfall). We need to put people at the forefront of decisions. Turnout was high, it was a good moment for democracy. It’s a good moment for Liberal democrats. We have worked for this moment for decades.”

The new East Surrey Council will sit in shadow for its first year as the old two tier system of Surrey County Council and its 11 boroughs and districts is wound up. East Surrey is the merger of Elmbridge, Reigate and Banstead, Epsom and Ewell, Mole Valley, and Tandridge – and the eastern half of the county council.

West Surrey, which was also won by the Liberal Democrats comprises Runnymede, Spelthorne, Waverley, Guildford, Surrey Heath and the eastern half of the county council.

East Surrey results in full:

Liberal Democrats, 40 seats
Conservative, 10
The Green Party, 8
Reform UK , 5
Residents Associations of Epsom and Ewell, 2
Independent, 2
Ashtead Independent, working with Ashtead Residents, 2
Tattenhams Residents’ Associations , 2
The Molesey Residents Association, 1

Chris Caulfield LDRS

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