EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
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12th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

EPSOM & EWELL TIMES

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Local roadworks taken to task

12 July 2024



Surrey County Council has established a critical new **task force** to reduce the impact of utility roadworks and drive better coordination and communication of works across Surrey's road network.

Utility companies' demands in Surrey are amongst the top five highest in the UK with 88 works starting every day in the last twelve months. In total, over 32,000 utility works have been undertaken across the county during this period, at a cost impact to Surrey residents of £35,424,225.

Made up of representatives from water, energy and telecoms companies, the task force held their inaugural meeting last week and agreed five key areas of focus:

- Better coordination of roadworks across Surrey
- Working collaboratively to minimise disruption for residents
- Improved public communication by utility companies and improved on-site signage prior to works commencing and throughout
- Improved methods of sharing information, including online mapping of planned utility works
- Clearly defined escalation routes so that SCC can quickly hold utility companies to account.

Jonathan Hulley, Deputy Cabinet Member, Strategic Highways at Surrey County Council, said, "*Whilst we recognise that works on the highway carried out by utility companies are necessary, these works are all too often impacting negatively on Surrey road users.*

"*This is a huge source of frustration for our residents, and we need to ensure that utility works are completed quicker, with better traffic management, better coordination, and better resident communication, which is why we have formed this vital task force.*

"*Surrey County Council is working hard to improve over 100 roads as part of our £8.5m highways maintenance programme this Summer to help prevent potholes – the biggest ever surface dressing programme undertaken in the county.*

"*I thank all partners who attended the first meeting of the task force and I look forward to working together to drive real improvements and do all we can to reduce utility congestion on our busy road network*."

The task force will meet monthly to take this work forward.

More information on Surrey County Council's responsibilities and utility companies roadworks is available on the **Surrey County Council website**.

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