Epsom's Rainbow Leisure Centre Places new operators

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is pleased to confirm that Places Leisure will take over the operation of the Rainbow Leisure Centre in Epsom from 1 October. This follows the Council's announcement in July appointing Places Leisure as the new operator on a 10-year contract, with the option to extend for a further five years.

This marks an exciting new chapter for the Rainbow Leisure Centre with members set to continue benefitting from high-quality leisure, health and wellbeing services.

Places Leisure, part of the PfP Group the UK's leading social enterprise, will be investing its own capital into the leisure centre, upgrading the gym, studios, swimming changing rooms and more.

From 1 October, existing members or anybody looking for a new membership should contact enquiries@pfpleisure.org. More information can be found on their website – Rainbow Leisure Centre | Places Leisure. Places Leisure has been working closely with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and the outgoing operator, GLL. to ensure an efficient and safe handover.

Councillor Clive Woodbridge (RA Ewell Village), Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Committee said:

"The wellbeing of our community is at the heart of everything we do, and our Health and Wellbeing Strategy continues to shape how we support residents to live healthier, happier lives. We're proud to be entering a new era at the Rainbow Leisure Centre, one that embraces a holistic approach to health and fitness, and delivers an inclusive Active Communities programme, alongside activities delivered both at the centre and outside in the wider community.

"Places Leisure is providing a platform where everyone in our borough can thrive – opening up opportunities for residents of all ages, including young people, the elderly and those living with a disability or illness, wherever they may be on their wellbeing journey.

"I'd like to thank Places Leisure and Greenwich Leisure Limited for working together to ensure a smooth transition for members. I'd also like to extend our gratitude to Greenwich Leisure Limited for the positive legacy they leave behind, which we are proud to build upon."

Dan Walker, Business Development Director at Places Leisure, said: "It is clear that the Rainbow Leisure Centre stands at the heart of the community, providing opportunities for local people of all ages and abilities to enjoy being active and to bring people together. We are delighted to be the new operators of the centre, and we thank GLL for the hard work they have put in during their time as operator. We look forward to a successful partnership with Epsom and Ewell Council, local stakeholders, and of course the colleagues who bring the centre to life.

"A thriving community is a community where everyone is welcome in a truly inclusive way, which is why within the first year of our contract we will invest c£4.7million in a series of projects including a new fitness suite, studios and changing facilities to support community engagement. Our commitment will further boost community activities, inspire people of all ages to lead an active and healthy lifestyle, whilst generating over £5million of social value each year."

Places Leisure website - https://www.placesleisure.org/

Places Leisure will also offer a wider range of health and wellbeing-related activities, delivered both inside and outside of the leisure centre, including:

- An Active Communities programme, including exercise referrals for falls prevention, cardiac rehab and weight management; community wellbeing walks, as well as programmes such as 'move through menopause' and Health MOTs, which will support local people in an inclusive way and enable the community to thrive.
- New leisure centre programmes targeted at under 16s and the elderly: including LES Mills exercises classes and Saturday Night Project activities for the under 16s and new EGYM and walking sports to help older adults be more physically active.
- Social value initiatives: such as work placement opportunities including for unemployed and disabled people; leisure industry careers advice and curriculum support; and supporting the local economy by keeping spending within the local supply chain.

Places Leisure will continue to invest in the environmental sustainability of the centre, this will be overseen by an environmental coordinator.

Places Leisure is a social enterprise which is passionate about 'creating active places and healthy people' and improving opportunities for communities to be physically active. It experiences over 30 million visits per annum across the 101 leisure facilities that it operates on behalf of local authorities across the country and supports over 126k children and adults learning to swim each year. https://www.placesleisure.org/

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

Related reports:

Epsom and Ewell will judge change at their leisure Who will pay for Epsom's leisure centre "better deal"?

Gold star at the end of the Rainbow

Pot of gold for Rainbow?

Epsom and Ewell Council CEO contests 'culture of secrecy' claim and outlines fixes

Audit & Scrutiny grills council on transparency

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 30 September 2025, chaired by Cllr **Steven McCormick** (RA Woodcote and Langley), devoted a lengthy section of its meeting to the thorny question of transparency in council decision-making. Crucially, members heard directly from Chief Executive **Jackie King** after councillors had pressed for her attendance over the summer.

Why transparency was on the agenda

The committee had asked for a management paper expanding on the Council's response to Grant Thornton's value-for-money recommendation that the authority "develop a clear approach towards transparency" and be "mindful of requirements to be open and accountable". Officers' paper recapped the auditors' reference to the LGA peer team's concerns about decision-making and the handling of a constitution and delegations update that was "not fully discussed in public meetings".

Senior management defended the lawful use of exempt items, promised clearer public rationales for any confidentiality, and said regular catch-ups with the external auditor were being instituted to ensure that key matters are raised and addressed appropriately.

The CEO's evidence and key claims

Appearing for questions, Ms King told members she had already contacted the LGA peer review lead to verify what was actually said about EEBC's culture.

"They don't recall making the comment to say that there's a culture of secrecy... they were more concerned with transparency from the aspect of clarity... being transparent in a way that everybody understood the processes around decision-making," she said, adding that she would pursue written clarification for members.

On practical changes to reports and meetings, Ms King said officers are splitting reports so that only the genuinely confidential elements are in Part 2 and adding plain-English explanations for why any exemption applies.

"We're going to continue to look at every paper... We've experimented with putting part of the paper in the public section and part in the exempt section... we can also add a section to say, in layman's terms, what that actually means and why we're doing it."

She confirmed that external auditors will review a year's worth of restricted items to provide assurance on whether exemption



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was appropriate.

Ms King also described the new audit dialogue: "We have... scheduled in catch-ups with myself... there'll be a shared part where the Section 151 Officer is in there and possibly the Monitoring Officer... and then I'll get some time on my own... We're promoting that very open dialogue, and I believe I've got my first one... this week."

On training and process controls, she said a decision-making flow-chart is on the staff hub and has been used in training. Controls have been tightened so that decisions are published promptly and responsibility for posting is explicit. "Everybody received training... We clarified... the timing of the publishing of a decision... we put in a step to make it very clear that it's the initiating officer that has to publish it immediately."

Members' challenge

Vice-Chair Cllr **Phil Neale** (RA Cuddington) asked what concrete actions were being taken to address the peer review's concerns and how their effectiveness would be monitored. Ms King responded that improvements would be visible in the content and structure of future public reports, with more part-public and part-exempt handling, and through the fact of regular auditor meetings, which auditors would consider in their conclusions. She also reminded members that actions from the Annual Governance Statement improvement plan had been acknowledged in a peer follow-up and are being tracked via the new performance hub.

When Cllr Neale pressed specifically on the "culture of secrecy" formulation, Ms King reiterated that the LGA lead, checking notes and recollections, did not recognise that phrase as the peer team's finding, recalling instead a specific discussion where a few members "weren't very clear on how we'd come to some decisions" on a major project. She undertook to write to the committee with any further detail.

Cllr **Steve Bridger** (RA Stamford) quizzed officers on how staff and members would be kept up-to-date with transparency expectations and what metrics would demonstrate progress. Ms King pointed to the ongoing training and process updates, but cautioned that some aspects are not easily reduced to KPIs: "You can't really put metrics in for meetings or restricted paper measures."

Cllr James Lawrence (LibDem College), who had pressed for the CEO's attendance earlier in the year, set out why he felt the matter had to come back. He cited the auditors' "significant weakness" conclusion and offered recent examples he felt illustrated shortcomings, including late tabling at the May AGM and confusion over an "urgent" fleet paper. Ms King accepted there had been human-error-type confusion, stressed that officers were learning and clarifying procedures, and distinguished between an "urgent matter" and an "urgent decision".

What the Council's written position says

The officers' background paper to the committee set out a fuller management view. Headline points included:

- Lawful confidentiality is limited and reviewed: reasons for exemption are set out publicly and checked by Legal. Where possible reports are prepared part public and part exempt so debate can remain in open session.
- Clearer public explanations: officers acknowledged that rationales have not always been obvious and pledged clearer lay explanations in future.
- Urgent decisions: management said they try to timetable items for committees or hold extraordinary meetings. If urgency rules must be used, decisions are taken with the chair, published to Members' News, reported to the next committee, and an annual public log comes to Audit & Scrutiny.
- Regular auditor check-ins are now in place after recognising an issue "should have been flagged sooner".

The chair's take and decision

After questioning, Chair Cllr McCormick noted that Audit & Scrutiny had, in effect, put officers "on the stand" and said the improvements on transparency were welcome, with the committee to continue monitoring. Members then received the report unanimously.

What changes residents should expect next

- More public-facing content: reports split so only sensitive details are redacted, alongside plain-English explanations for any exemption.
- Audit follow-through: external auditors to sample the past 12 months of restricted items and give an independent view.
- Structured liaison: routine, documented meetings between the CEO and statutory officers and auditors throughout the year.
- Internal training and controls: a live decision-making flow-chart, refreshed training and clarified responsibilities for immediate publication of decisions.

Jackie King CEO EEBC and Cllr S McCormick at Audit and Scrutiny Committee - Epsom and Ewell Borough Council YouTube channel

Sam Jones - Reporter

Related reports:

Absence of CEO on audit Red Flag causes an outrage. Annual audit of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

"Audit and Scrutiny" under scrutiny

From Epsom to the Big Screen

Dean Puckett Returns Home with His Debut Feature *The Severed Sun* for a Special Screening and Q&A next week Wednesday 8th October!

A special homecoming event is set to light up the screen at Epsom Picturehouse as local filmmaker Dean Puckett returns to share his debut feature film, *The Severed Sun*. Dean, a former student of Glyn High School and UCA Farnham, moved from London to Surrey as a teenager before embarking on a filmmaking career that has taken him to major international festivals. Now, he returns to Epsom for a screening and Q&A celebrating the launch of his haunting British folk horror debut.

Set in an isolated church community gripped by paranoia and superstition after a brutal murder, *The Severed Sun* is a chilling tale of faith, fear, and folklore. The feature marks the first full-length film from Puckett — produced by Rebecca Wolff (Grasp the Nettle Films) and Jude Goldrei (Lunar Lander Films) — and had its world premiere at Fantastic Fest 2024.

Following screenings at Picturehouse cinemas across the UK, this special Epsom event will feature a post-screening Q&A with Dean, who will share insights into the creative process, behind-the-scenes stories, and what it takes to bring a first feature from script to screen.

"I discovered my love for filmmaking in a small cupboard at Glyn High School in Epsom. This was entirely thanks to one exceptional teacher, Mr Ramasami, who believed in me. Despite struggling academically, he saw that I had a flair for visual storytelling. I lived in Worcester Park from the age of 12 and took countless trips to the cinema in Epsom during my youth, so it's incredibly gratifying and moving for me to return now with my own feature film. "

— Dean Puckett, Director of The Severed Sun

"It's a real privilege to work with homegrown talent like Dean and to share his debut feature with the community that helped shape his creative journey. Events like this are not only exciting cinematic moments, they're also a chance to show aspiring filmmakers that it is possible to follow your passion and make something special. Community is at the heart of what we do at Picturehouse, and hosting screenings like this — which bring people together and celebrate local success — is exactly what our cinema is all about."

The screening is a chance not only to experience one of the most distinctive new British films of the year but also to celebrate a hometown success story — and discover what it's really like to turn a dream into a debut.

Event Details:

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Epsom Picturehouse, Epsom Square, Epsom, KT19 8AG

The Severed Sun: followed by a Q&A with Dean Puckett and filmmakers



Tuesday 8 October, 6:30pm



Tickets: www.picturehouses.com/epsom

Image of Dean Puckett

Epsom reserves vs investment

A bid to raid a Epsom and Ewell council's multi-million pound property reserves to pay for crumbling public buildings has been thrown out by councillors.

Epsom and Ewell Borough councillors blocked a move to dip into a £7m 'rainy day' fund to pay for important repairs to community venues.

Opposition councillors argued that money locked away in the 'property income equalisation' (PIE) reserve could be better spent fixing leaky roofs, broken boilers and delayed upgrades at places like Bourne Hall, the playhouse and the Harrier Centre.

Cllr **Alex Coley** (Independent Ruxley) told a Strategy and Resources Committee meeting on September 25: "Why prioritise handing over a well-financed property empire to a new unitary at the cost of the huge burden of deferred works on our crumbling public buildings? Do we want to see our venues sold off or handed over to charitable trusts and then closed soon after because they can't afford much needed repairs?"

Cllr **James Lawrence** (LibDem College) backed the call, saying the council's property income was now more secure and that modestly trimming the reserve could free up £1.5m to plug the gap in the capital budget: "We've come out of COVID uncertainty and we've got secure rental income." He argued the council can safely reduce reserves and use the money to fund the projects residents actually need.

But senior councillors and officers pushed back hard, warning that the reserve was vital to protect the council from sudden losses if tenants went bust or properties stood empty. They said cutting it down to £1m would be "reckless" given the risks tied to £64m of commercial property borrowing.

Council leader, **Hannah Dalton**, (RA SAtoneleigh) said: "You kind of need to take a whole system to view and not just pick bits out." She explained the council is working through the assets and reserves and will continue to work, keeping members updated.

Cllr Dalton said: "We're also waiting to see what the fair funding review could mean for Surrey alone. They're thinking there could be a deficit of 45 million pounds in the county so we're having to look at everything."

Cllr **Neil Dallen** (RA Town) said: "We're in the unusual position of not staring at bankruptcy like other councils — and that's because we've been prudent. We've got reserves to cover things that have gone wrong and things have gone wrong and the reserves have actually been used to satisfy that."

Council finance chiefs also reminded members that a full review of reserves and council-owned assets is already under way, with results due in November.

The Section 151 officer confirmed that if reserves are found to be "over-prudent", some money could be released for other priorities, and that selling off struggling assets remained an option.

An attempt to water down the proposal — including disposing of 70 East Street and using the cash to top up building repairs — was also rejected. In the end, councillors voted to "note but take no action" on the motion.

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council town hall. (Credit: Emily Dalton/LDRS)

Emily Dalton LDRS

Rehabilitation Hub in Leatherhead rehabilitated

Epsom residents are set to benefit from a new integrated musculoskeletal (MSK) facility following a significant investment at Leatherhead Hospital.

The Leach Rehabilitation Hub has undergone a comprehensive transformation, creating a state-of-the-art facility that brings together MSK services into a single, purpose-built clinical space. The new hub features modern treatment areas, an open-plan rehabilitation gym, improved reception and waiting areas, refurbished clinical rooms, and enhanced facilities for both patients and staff.

The Hub will provide more joined-up, patient-centred care for residents across Surrey Downs. By co-locating multidisciplinary teams, the hub enables more efficient, seamless care, particularly for patients with complex needs, while increasing appointment capacity and reducing waiting times. The facility's community-based location ensures that patients can access high-quality rehabilitation closer to home, supporting faster recovery and greater independence.

The transformation of Hub has been made possible thanks to NHS Property Services and through the collaborative efforts of dedicated colleagues across SDHC and the wider NHS. The League of Friends of Leatherhead Hospital, a charity which has played a vital role in supporting the hospital's development over the years, funded the restoration of an important portrait of Mr Leach, whose gift of land made the hospital possible, which will be displayed within the new Hub.

This investment aligns with the NHS Long Term Plan's commitment to shifting care from acute hospitals into community settings, enhancing out-of-hospital care, and supporting people to recover and live independently. The Leach Rehabilitation Hub builds on SDHC's focus of delivering care at the right time, in the right place, and in partnership with the community, and deepens its commitment to neighbourhood working.

Binu Cherian, Chief Operating Officer for Surrey Downs Health & Care said:

"The opening of the Leach Rehabilitation Hub marks a significant step forward in our commitment to delivering outstanding, integrated care for our community. By bringing together teams in a modern, purpose-built environment, we are ensuring that patients across Surrey Downs have access to the highest quality rehabilitation services, closer to home. This achievement is a testament to the dedication and collaboration of our partners, staff, and supporters, and we are proud to see this vision become a reality."

Emma Finegan, Estates Rationalisation Lead for NHS Property Services said:

"It's fantastic to see this facility officially opened, and to celebrate the collaborative working between partners involved in this development. We hope our NHS colleagues and their patients are pleased with the results and that the work carried out enables them to give and receive care in an improved, modernised setting that will serve the local neighbourhood for years to come."

Patients can continue to access initial support for their MSK concerns via their registered GP who can refer on to the relevant teams where necessary. Alternatively, Surrey Downs residents with muscle or joint problems can now self-refer via the GetUBetter app – a local support app helping individuals to self-manage their health concerns at home, work, and on the move. It can be accessed on a Smartphone or via the Web and is provided alongside a patient's NHS care. To find out more and to download the app, visit surreydownshealthandcare.nhs.uk/getubetter-app.

About Surrey Downs Health & Care Partnership

Surrey Downs Health & Care Partnership (SDHCP) is a body consisting of the NHS, local government, community health services, voluntary sector and other providers. Its ambition is to create a health and care system built around the people and communities of Dorking, **Epsom** and East Elmbridge and continues to evolve through system-wide collaboration and co-creation.

See Epsom and Ewell Times rough guide to the various health trusts and authorities for Epsom and Ewell and Surrey.

Stage 2 Examination of Epsom & Ewell's Local Plan opens Tuesday

The Inspector appointed to examine Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's draft Local Plan, C Masters MA (Hons) FRTPI, will open Stage 2 hearings at Epsom Town Hall, The Parade, KT18 5BY, on Tuesday 30 September 2025 at 9.30am.

These hearings test whether the Plan is "sound" — whether it has been positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national planning policy. The hearings are open to the public for observation from the Council Chamber gallery. Only invited participants may speak, but all are welcome to attend and watch the process unfold.

Hearing dates:

- Tue 30 Sept (09:30 start)
- Wed 1 Oct
- Thu 2 Oct
- Fri 3 Oct (10:00 start)
- Tue 7 Oct
- Wed 8 Oct
- Thu 9 Oct
- Fri 10 Oct (reserve day)

The full hearing programme, Inspector's questions and examination library can be found on the Council's Local Plan examination page.

Spotlight on Horton Farm (Site Allocation 35)

Among many proposed sites across the borough, **Horton Farm (SA35)** is by far the largest single allocation, earmarked for around **1,250 homes, a 7-hectare public park and 10 Gypsy & Traveller pitches**. It sits next to Horton Cemetery and near Horton Country Park.

- Clarendon Park Residents' Association (Alex Duval) argue that the Council has not demonstrated the "exceptional circumstances" required to release high-performing Green Belt land. They raise concerns about flooding, sewage, school places and transport, and question why alternative sites for the Traveller pitches were not properly considered.
- **CPRE Surrey (Tim Murphy)** objects to the loss of Green Belt at Horton Farm, urging a stronger focus on brownfield redevelopment and urban densities. Council for the Protection of Rural England.
- Friends of Horton Cemetery (Lionel Blackman) do not oppose Horton Farm outright but call for binding commitments that developer contributions restore the historic cemetery as a garden of rest.
- The Church Commissioners, who own Horton Farm, strongly support the allocation. Their planning consultants argue it is a sustainable and deliverable location, capable of providing affordable and family housing, community facilities and transport links. They accept surface water flooding is a constraint but say it can be managed through design. They oppose the Council's request for 20% biodiversity net gain, though they commit to meeting national standards.
- See our report on an apparent conflict of interest concerning this allocation for the Council's consultant who's employer also represents the Commissioners. Conflict on Epsom's Green Belt plans of another kind?

Other sites

The Inspector will also be examining numerous other proposed development sites across the borough. Horton Farm is singled out here because of its size and prominence, but EET will continue reporting on the full range of allocations and community responses.

Practical note for readers

- Public seating is first-come, so arrive early for 9:30 starts.
- Proceedings are formal but led by the Inspector, not adversarial.
- Key documents, timetables and updates are on the Council's Local Plan examination page.

Sam Jones - Reporter



Related reports:

Epsom & Ewell's Local Plan under the Green microscope
Epsom and Ewell Local Plan Submitted for Examination
Epsom and Ewell Council response to Local Plan criticism
The Local Plan plot thickens after revised NPPF
Council minority vote Local Plan to next stage with Green Belt in
...and many more – search "local plan" in our search box.

Caterham's parochial battle.... a sign of things to come?

Caterham could soon be governed by a single town council after a majority of residents backed the idea - but the proposal has split opinion among councillors and locals.

At the moment, Caterham is split between Caterham on the Hill parish council and Caterham Valley parish council. Parish councils are the ground level tier of government in England which look after parks, community centres, funding events, lobbying on planning and making local voices are heard.

A summer consultation found 77 per cent of 237 respondents supported merging Caterham on the Hill Parish Council and Caterham Valley Parish Council. But councillors pointed out that hardly one per cent of Caterham's population responded to the consultation, at a Strategy and Resources Committee on September 25.

Cllr Michael Cooper said: "We haven't had a consultation at all – less than one per cent took part [...]We need to involve the public properly."



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Others urged looking at the bigger picture. Cllr Jeremy Pursehouse said: "I know the people in the valley and people on the hill look at themselves as completely different species. I hate to disappoint you but everyone else looks at it as Caterham."

The push for the merger comes as Surrey prepares for a major shakeup with new unitary authorities due in 2026 which will replace district and borough councils. Supporters of the town council plan say Caterham needs a stronger, unified voice to stop it being overshadowed in the new system.

Supporters say the merger would give the town a stronger voice, reduce duplication and save resources. Critics argue the consultation was poorly promoted and that fewer than one per cent of residents responded.

Caterham Valley Parish Council chair Tony Pierce, who is also standing in a by-election, said: "One single council representing the residents of Caterham is the optimum way to represent people. Caterham is not two towns but one – residents don't confine their activities to either the Valley or the Hill. A larger council representing all residents will have a strong voice."

Local resident Robin Franklin, from Caterham on the Hill, backed the move but urged councillors to think about younger generations. He said: "A town council gives Caterham a single negotiating voice and a clear chance to prioritise the things young people keep asking for: safer routes to school, better street lighting and cycle parking."

Not everyone is on board. Caterham on the Hill Parish Council said it opposed a merger at this stage, arguing the process was rushed, that residents had not been given enough pros and cons, and that Valley households could face a massive hike in their local council tax bill. It also raised concerns that merging could dilute attention to local issues.

Speaking personally, Cllr Ben Horne said a merger could still bring benefits: "At the moment we've got two sets of meetings and duplication. A town council would carry more weight in seeking funding, modernise our governance and give Caterham the leadership it deserves.

The review panel has recommended pressing ahead with draft proposals. A second consultation – including details of council tax costs – will take place in the future.

If approved, Caterham Town Council would have 15 councillors across five wards, with the first elections due in May 2026.

View down Station Avenue, Caterham. (Credit: Google Street View)

Emily Dalton LDRS

Epsom Racecourse: Preview and Tips for Sunday's Seven-Race Card

It's Epsom Racecourse's season finale Sunday, and the seven-race card card features the Apprentices' Derby Handicap, alongside four other handicaps, a conditions stakes and a novice.

Read on for a full preview of the Epsom card, courtesy of Boyle Sports, who provide all the latest horse racing odds.

The first race of the meeting is a nursery handicap run over seven furlongs (1.45). We have seven runners here, of which the most experienced are Galileo Island and Penhallam, who have been in handicap company for a few runs now. Of those running in a handicap for the first time, Ralph Beckett's Crystal Pier may make the most appeal, already proven over the trip and having run a nice race over course and distance last time. Penhallam might get the better of her with a five-pound claimer aboard, however.

Race two is a juveniles' conditions race over an extended mile (2.20). We have just four runners in this race, but it is a hot contest nonetheless as three of the contenders have previously won a race and the only maiden, Alfaraz, was second on debut at Goodwood. He looks well qualified to improve and win this race under Oisin Murphy. With an entry in the Group One Futurity Stakes later this year, he must be well thought of at home.

Next is a mile and a quarter novice (2.55). This race looks to be between the Gosdens' Gamrai and Alan King's Alcarath as they are the only two of the six with winning or placing form to their names. The latter would have to improve a fair bit, though, in order to get past the former, who won on seasonal reappearance and should be able to defy his penalty easily enough.

The fourth race is the feature Apprentices' Derby Handicap, run over a mile and half (3.30). Pat Phelan's Naasma seeks a hattrick today, having won her last two starts at Windsor, and hasn't been so heavily penalised by the handicapper that she couldn't get involved once more. Give It To Me Oj, a dual-purpose performer, won over course and distance last time out on soft ground,



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and has been sharply raised in the weights as a result. Odin Legacy should have a good chance under George Bass, but Way Of Life looks to have the strongest claims at the weights for Jonathan Portman.

Following is a mile and a quarter handicap (4.05). David O'Meara's 10-year-old Orbaan has been steadily dropping back towards his last winning mark and, now just one pound above it, could get the job done under Tom Marquand here. He was fourth of 12 at this track last time over seven furlongs and it's interesting to see him upped in trip. Richard Hughes' Criminal also looks likely to be there at the sharp end, and is weighted accordingly to being one of only two three-year-olds in the race. Don't forget Kimeko Glory, though, who made a winning start for Brian Toomey and could go well again.

The penultimate race is a handicap over an extended mile (4.40). This is another four-runner race, with half of the field having won their last starts. Jiff's Army won over course and distance a month ago, while Falmouth Lad seeks a hat-trick after successes at Newmarket and Kempton. With Rossa Ryan in the saddle, Jiff's Army looks the most likely to repeat the winning form, while Hot Cash has now come down to what should be a winnable mark and could be very competitive under Tom Marquand.

Finally, we conclude with a seven-furlong handicap (5.15). Kisskodi has won at this track twice this term already, while Ed Walker's Tokyo Joe looks to have come down to a nice mark and could run a big race after some promising performances so far this season, despite not having got a win on the board yet. Course and distance winner Marlay Park should be very competitive also under Paddy Bradley.

Epsom selections - Sunday:

- 1.45 Penhallam
- 2.20 Alfaraz
- 2.55 Gamrai
- 3.30 Way Of Life
- 4.05 Orbaan
- 4.40 Jiff's Army
- 5.15 Marlay Park

Horses racing Image: Credit Paul. CC BY 2.0

Half price Surrey bus journeys for under 20s soar to one million

19,000 young people aged 20 and under are now benefitting from 50% off bus journeys across Surrey.

The Surrey LINK card was developed by Surrey County Council in 2023 to give young people half price travel on all single and return bus journeys within the county.

Each month, 100,000 trips are now made using the card, with students travelling to higher education among the biggest users.

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth at Surrey County Council, said:

"I'm delighted that our scheme to offer half price bus travel to all our young people here in Surrey is proving so beneficial. We know that cost can be a barrier to people using public transport so we hope this significant discount will continue to make bus travel a more viable option, whilst also reducing car journeys across the county.

"This is part of our significant investment in bus travel and our efforts to encourage more people to use Surrey's buses. We're investing in making our buses greener including £32.3m for more ultra-low and zero emission buses and £6.3m for more ultra-low and zero emission community transport minibuses. A further £9m is being invested in bus priority measures to ensure buses turn up on time, and £1.4m in improving information for passengers at bus stops."

Applications for the LINK card can be made at www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreylink.

Surrey County Council



Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity expands into 70 Surrey schools

The Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINs) has begun its second year in Surrey, extending support from 41 to 70 schools.

The programme, a joint initiative by NHS England and the Department for Education, helps schools with early intervention, staff training, and improving communication with families to ensure neurodiverse children are fully included in school life.

From pilot to county-wide programme

The Surrey pilot, delivered between 2024 and June 2025 with Surrey Heartlands ICB, the charity Eikon, and Family Voice Surrey (FVS), worked with 41 schools to strengthen their whole-school SEND approach. A further 29 schools in North East and South West Surrey have now joined.

To mark the expansion, school leaders, governors, and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators gathered at Esher Rugby Club, Walton-on-Thames, alongside partners from Family Voice Surrey, Surrey Heartlands ICB, and the Team Around the Schools Support Hub. Colleagues from Active Surrey, Educational Psychology and Speech and Language Therapy also set out their roles in delivering the next phase.

Focus on inclusion and early support

Jonathan Hulley, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning, said: "This programme represents our collective commitment to inclusion, early support, and meaningful collaboration across education, health, and family services. It places neurodiverse children and their families at the heart of school improvement, and empowers educators with the tools, training, and confidence to create inclusive environments."

The programme emphasises family involvement through its partnership with FVS, ensuring that parent carers play a central role in shaping provision.

Families and schools working together

Kate Goode, Participation Lead at Family Voice Surrey, said: "Working on the PINs programme has been fantastic. It's been a real partnership and an excellent example of co-production with families, Surrey County Council and all the partners. Families have really felt heard and given an opportunity to feel like an equal partner in decision-making."

Barbara Tucker, SENCO at St Peter's Catholic Primary School in Leatherhead, said the pilot "gave us the confidence to reflect, adapt and grow." She highlighted practical changes such as providing noise-cancelling ear defenders at lunchtimes, which improved concentration in class, and the introduction of parent-led coffee mornings and social groups that boosted wellbeing and connection.

Training and support

Each school in the programme will receive up to 30 hours of tailored training. This includes Occupational Therapy and playground audits, Speech and Language support, and Neurodiversity Champion training, with input from parent carers, health professionals, educational psychologists and specialist advisors.



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Background

Around 46,000 children and young people in Surrey have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Earlier this year Surrey County Council approved an additional £4.9 million investment into SEND services.

Sam Jones - Reporter

