

Epsom and Ewell bow out of FA Vase

10 November 2025



Eastbourne v Epsom and Ewell FC Saturday 8th November. The Salts succumbed to a wonder strike from Eastbourne midfielder Brett Paton early in the second half to bow out of the FA Vase, 1-0 at The Oval ground in Eastbourne in front of a crowd of around 200. Almost to rub “salts” into the wound, Paton said after the game he had not scored for 3 years, which probably shows where the shot would normally end up.

Ben Grummitt started in goal for only his second start of the season, Obasanjo Akinniranye replaced Jason Vincent, who was cup-tied, up front and Ali Fofahan came in for Emmanuel Limpo, who went to the bench. We came into the game in a run of 7 games without a win, so we really needed a good performance to progress to the 3rd round. United have a good recent record at home, although they are only mid-table in their division. Eastbourne had the best of the early exchanges except in the 4th minute where Jason Bloor put Oba through on goal. He ran onto the pass with two defenders bearing down on him. Unfortunately, his shot lacked power and the keeper was able to get down to his right to make a good save.

Apart from that there was little for the keepers to do. There were a lot of fouls and certainly the United players like to yell during each tackle. Murphy-McVey was booked on 13 minutes for pulling back an Eastbourne midfielder and then a few minutes later was subject to a poor challenge which seemed to deserve a yellow card at least, but the ref decided to keep his cards in his pocket, to the angst of Salts co-manager Max Johnson. The referee decided to have a quick chat with Max in order to calm him down. In between, on 15 minutes, Eastbourne had their first real chance with a good move down the left, the ball was quickly moved across the goal before Rhyle Ovenden, Eastbourne’s captain, tried to curl a shot into the top right corner but he put a little too much height on it and it sailed harmlessly over.

Eastbourne’s No.7 was causing trouble down our left but Harry Murphy was generally coping and in most cases blocking any cross before any real danger. Jason Bloor and Luis Oliveira were also running the home defence and it led to a couple of free kicks in dangerous areas but we failed to take advantage. There was a bit of trouble where we allowed a long ball up front to bounce. Aiwone let it bounce over his head and tried to clear it. As he hit it the Eastbourne No.9 attempted to head it and it was unclear from our position if he connected with Aiwone’s boot or the ball. He fell to the ground clutching his head and it started the “normal kerfuffle” with United players screaming for a penalty and maybe a card, but the referee stayed firm and didn’t even give a free kick, just a drop ball back to Grummitt.

After another series of moves around the Eastbourne box Luis was again brought down and this time the referee did bring out the yellow card. McVey hit the wall with the initial shot but Fofahan caught the rebound on the half-volley and a powerful shot was deflected wide. Fofahan then curled the corner onto the bar but it was cleared by the defence. Eastbourne then went down our end and had a couple of corners. Naz then made a clearance off our own line on the 44th minute.

We went into half time all square: Eastbourne United 0-0 Epsom & Ewell FC

Overall, the game was pretty equal with both sides moving the ball well but failing to trouble either keeper really. Eastbourne had the first attack in the second half and the ball fell to Brett Paton who was on the Eastbourne left just outside the box. He looked up and quickly hit a great shot that flew into the top left-hand corner, giving Grummitt no chance in goal. Eastbourne United 1-0 Epsom & Ewell FC.

The Salts didn’t really deserve to go behind but it did take a “worldie” to put Eastbourne in front. We started to move the ball around but got caught a couple of times too. On 52 minutes Luis lost the ball on the halfway line and, being the last man on that side, enabled the Eastbourne attack to get to the byline where a good cross was put in but Grummitt managed to just get his hand on the ball and tip it away from a couple of players coming in at the back. On 58 minutes we made a couple of changes with Conor McShane replacing Brendan and Ryley Merritt replacing Niall as we went in search of the equaliser. On 64 minutes we were given a little lift when Tyano Wilson, who had been causing problems on their right, had started a run through the centre of the pitch but the ball just started to get away from him. McShane took the ball but Wilson lunged in two-footed in an attempt to keep the ball but only made contact with Conor and the referee had little hesitation in showing a red card. Now, following our recent form facing 10 men, it could be said it was a blessing in disguise but we are pleased to say we did really start to cause problems. We forced a few corners and McShane put in some lovely balls. The keeper just managed to get one hand to push the ball away and the second corner found Oba whose shot was deflected across the goal where Naz came in on the far side but his header crashed off the post for the second time.

On 78 minutes Oba found himself in the box and, twisting and turning, found a little space as he went to shoot. He was tackled and he went down. We appealed for a penalty of course and unfortunately, amidst cries of “diving” from the opposition, the referee decided the contact was not enough for a penalty and waved our appeals away. After a couple more half chances we made another couple of subs: Emmanuel Limpo came on for Kionte and Callum O’Keefe for Jason Bloor. On 88 minutes Ethan Nelson-Roberts came on for Antonios Nazareth. The referee showed 6 minutes of injury time which gave us a little hope of just getting an equaliser. On 90+2 Eastbourne nearly put the game out of reach when a slip allowed their forward in and having sent Grummitt in goal one way, he placed the ball towards the other corner only to see it slip by the post. We managed another couple of half chances but failed to trouble the keeper. Eastbourne then moved the ball down their right and succeeded in keeping the ball in the corner wasting valuable minutes. We managed one last foray into the Eastbourne half and won a corner. With Grummitt also getting into the box, it was our final chance but the corner didn’t get past the first defender and was cleared which gave the referee the chance to blow his whistle.

So we bowed out of a cup again to Eastbourne United - Eastbourne United 1-0 Epsom & Ewell FC. After the game our joint managers spoke about their delight in the overall performance and had actually forgotten about the fine goal that separated the sides. Also United officials were kind in their assessment of the game, agreeing it was a good cup tie and very little separated the two sides. Again we feel it is the lack of a striker that cost us. Oba and Ali battled well up front but were beaten by a towering defence. When we played the ball on the ground we did cause trouble.

The end was marred by a few home supporters who decided to have a few unnecessary words with our players as they left the field. It is a shame as you expect people to be gracious in victory as well as defeat. The situation was quickly nipped in the bud by the Eastbourne security and officials. They apologised in the bar after and confirmed that the “supporters” concerned would be dealt with.

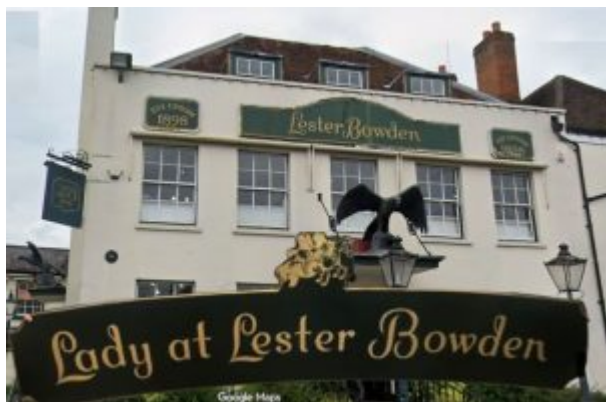
It is a quick turnaround again for our next home game on Tuesday night v Eversley and California at Chalky Lane, KO 7.45. This is probably an early “must win” game to put a bit of space between us and the bottom few clubs.

Epsom and Ewell FC Media



Bit of Epsom history for sale

10 November 2025



A distinctive slice of Epsom’s high street history has surfaced for sale — the original “**Ladies at Lester Bowden**” shop sign, once proudly displayed beneath the old walkway of the famous **Lester Bowden** outfitters in the heart of town. The sign, around seven feet long and built to last, has survived in remarkably good condition thanks to its sheltered position and evokes the golden age of a business synonymous with Epsom’s racing tradition.

For generations, **Lester Bowden** was the name every jockey, trainer and racegoer in Surrey knew. Established in the early 20th century, the gentleman’s outfitters was famed for its bespoke tailoring and equestrian style — a cornerstone of Epsom’s identity as the home of The Derby. In later decades, as fashions evolved, the store expanded to include a dedicated ladies’ section: “Ladies at Lester Bowden,” which served as both a stylish boutique and a symbol of the business’s adaptability.

The building itself has a pedigree even older than the brand. Before Lester Bowden moved in, the site at the corner of the High Street and Spread Eagle Walk was home to one of Epsom’s most historic hostelrys — **The Spread Eagle Inn**. For over two centuries, weary travellers, jockeys, and race patrons found food, drink, and lodging there. The Spread Eagle’s name became woven into Epsom’s folklore — a meeting place during Derby week and a landmark at the heart of town life. It even was home to the Epsom Magistrates during a Court refurbishment.

When **Lester Bowden** took over the premises in the mid-20th century, they carried forward the building’s long association with Epsom’s equestrian and social history. Its large, distinctive frontage, tailor’s fittings and wooden signage became part of the visual fabric of the High Street for decades — until the shop’s closure brought the end of an era.

Now, with this **original shop sign** up for sale, a tangible piece of that story is back in circulation. The seller describes it as “about seven feet long,” heavy, and needing two people to lift — a proper relic of a bygone retail age. Protected from the weather under the old walkway, it remains in fine condition and could easily be restored or displayed as an artefact of Epsom’s retail past.

For heritage enthusiasts, collectors, or anyone with affection for Epsom’s racing roots, this is a rare opportunity to own a genuine link to the town’s layered past — one that spans from coaching inns to couture.

Those interested in the sign can find details through this Gumtree ad, but the real story is larger: it’s a reminder that every piece of Epsom’s architecture tells a tale — and that sometimes, those tales are still for sale.

Sam Jones – Reporter



Leatherhead to be home to 500 Surrey Police Officers

10 November 2025



Surrey Police will get its new East Surrey headquarters after huge plans including hundreds of homes was approved. The force has been on the lookout for a new hub after its Reigate base was forced to close suddenly when dangerous crumbly RAAC concrete that can collapse without warning was found through the old site in 2023. The plans, on the former ERA site in Cleeve Road, Leatherhead, will be built in phases after being approved by Mole Valley District Council’s development committee on Wednesday, November 5.

The first work at the site will be to build a new strategic divisional police headquarters for Surrey Police with 500 officers and staff moving into the building. Stage two will see the existing redundant buildings demolished to make way for a residential block accommodating 40 affordable residential homes that the police said would ideally be for its own staff. Stage three would build out 185 new homes.

Despite being voted through without any formal objections, concerns were raised over the lack of affordable housing in the project and that the council’s affordability targets had been made a mockery. It was admitted that, in the current market, it was practically impossible for new developments to have 40 per cent of the new homes be affordable, and the project be financially viable.

Speaking on behalf of the force, a spokesperson said: “We needed to move out of our Reigate Headquarters in 2023 due to the discovery of RAAC. We are lucky enough to have secured temporary accommodation, but very much a temporary solution in the knowledge that we needed a long-term divisional headquarters.” He said Surrey Police settled on Leatherhead because its gave their teams “good access to the local area and the major road links so officers can fight crime and protect people in the area.”

Better facilities would allow the force to attract and retain staff. He added that while there will be serving officers operating from the base it would not act as a fire type response meaning that, while they could not guarantee there would never be sirens going off, it would be “highly unlikely.”

Chris Caulfield LDRS

ERA Site, Cleeve Road, Leatherhead, Surrey (image Google)

Related reports:

New Surrey police division HQ plans

Surrey police to move to Epsom and Ewell constituency

Battersea stun Sutton & Epsom rugby

10 November 2025



Battersea Ironsides 24 Sutton & Epsom 22. Saturday 8th November.

This fixture has produced last-minute drama since the sides first met in league action two seasons ago. It is certainly not a contest to leave with ten minutes to go in the hope of a swifter journey home or to purchase a pint before the rush. Once again it lived up to its reputation as Battersea Ironsides overhauled a 15-point deficit to secure the win with a long-range penalty with barely a minute left on the clock. The hosts have twice been on the wrong end of denouement drama and on Saturday it was a case of third time lucky as they won 24-22.

Captain Bunting returned to the helm of the good ship Sutton to relieve First Mate McTaggart, who had navigated the parlous seas several leagues under the Premiership with five wins from five, to return below decks to the engine room of the pack. S&E were minus two stalwarts with Messrs Bibby and Jones nursing injuries. The latter had played the last 34 consecutive league matches, a rarity these days.

As for the hosts, they were an unrecognisable team from the corresponding fixture last season. No longer guided by the regal splendour of Charles Stuart at 10, there were only three survivors from the thrilling 19-19 draw. For that matter the Black & Whites only had eight from that match – *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*.

Cameron Baker initiated proceedings on Garratt Green, a surface with deceptive declivities, on a day blessed with glorious sunshine and thankfully with no hint of rain at a venue offering no shelter for the loyal patrons. The first quarter implied that it might be one of those unfortunate afternoons for the Black & Whites. It included balls dropped by usually safe hands, promising openings that came to nought and penalties conceded for unwarranted verbosity with Mr Harry Hopkins that questioned his interpretation of the laws rather than any family connection to FDR's New Deal stalwart.

After ten minutes the hosts took the lead, capitalising on a penalty to establish themselves in the 22, and following admirable control Matt Bell was on hand to cross the whitewash for his first try of the afternoon. Cameron Baker started his perfect kicking afternoon with an impressive conversion from the flank to give the Ironsides a 7-0 lead.

There was a significant area of consolation for the visitors as their forwards were enjoying one of their most impressive scrummaging performances for many a long day. The efficiency of the lineout was not far behind the set scrum in impressing the travelling support. However, it continued to be a frustrating afternoon in terms of points on the board for S&E.

Clinical efficiency in the 22 was sadly lacking but just as the crowd were anticipating the teams turning around with Sutton trailing, the game was transformed. The Rugby Lane men produced their try of the season. Wonderful surges from locks Duey and McTaggart were aided by sumptuous offloads. Prop Dan Johnson maintained continuity to release Josh Rea who sidestepped past the cover and strode home. Bunting levelled the scores with his conversion for 7-7.

Battersea Ironsides, robust and organised in attack and defence, had frustrated Sutton at the breakdown. The hosts were coping admirably with a scrummage that was regularly in reverse and much credit must go to Raphael Arboine who not only gathered the challenging ball back-pedalling but also frequently made yards with his powerful running. S&E, liberated by their opening score, pressed on for further first-half glory.

As the first period entered time added on they went into the lead. The Ironsides conceded a penalty on their 22 which Bunting drilled into the corner. McTaggart soared skywards to secure the lineout possession and the formidable Sam Lennie scored after an impressive catch and drive. The conversion drifted wide but the Black & Whites led 12-7.

There was still five minutes of additional time with a revitalised Sutton eager to add to their account. With the last action of the half the visitors were given an opportunity to extend their advantage. Sutton & Epsom were awarded a penalty a couple of paces within the Battersea half but very central. Freddy Bunting opted to go for goal but his effort fell short and the sides went into the interval with Sutton leading 12-7.

Sutton started the second half brightly, though the flow of the game was interrupted by numerous penalties. After ten minutes they had a most promising position deep in the 22. Once again the lineout was followed by a dominant drive that Battersea bested with determined defence. The ball was transferred from the pack to the backs and Tom Lennard kicked with precision to winger Kyren Ghumra who scored in the corner. For those with a statistical disposition it was a red-letter moment as the winger now had 74 tries in 148 appearances. The challenging kick failed to add to the 17-7 lead.

If Sutton thought it would be one-way traffic for the remainder of the contest they had a stark reminder that Battersea Ironsides were a very dangerous outfit. A sweeping attack appeared to have created a wonderful try. A man, who shall remain nameless, not only finished with power and pace but also intelligently arced around endeavouring to make the conversion simpler. Unfortunately, Garratt Green is not the Parc de Princes and the in-goal area is miserly rather than magnificent, and he went beyond the parameters of play. There was to be no addition to the score.

Five minutes later the visitors were imposing themselves once more on the game. A driving maul in excess of 20 metres from halfway did not bring immediate results but it placed S&E in the right area. Sutton went through their phases and the ball arrived in the hands of Sam Lennie. The Kiwi hooker is a force of nature and with 20 yards to go and multiple defenders he found a most direct route to the line for his second try of the afternoon. Despite the encouraging roars from the Rugby Lane supporters the Bunting conversion high over the pigmy posts was adjudged to have not done the necessary. Sutton & Epsom led 22-7, having secured a bonus point, and were 15 points up with 15 minutes of normal time remaining.

As the game began to meander towards the inevitable, the Ironsides initiated a remarkable recovery in a magnificent seven minutes. Hope and inspiration was provided by winger Will Ford whose fine finish to a sweeping move was improved by a clinical conversion from the extremities by Cameron Baker. The fly-half ran back towards his team declaring the deficit was only eight points as S&E led 22-14.

A couple of minutes later the reinvigorated hosts were celebrating another try. A defensive lapse on halfway was punished as Battersea flooded into the Sutton half. Scrambling defence halted the advance in the 22 but the ball was quickly released for Matt Bell to secure his second score of the afternoon. The reliable Baker boot meant the hosts trailed 21-22 with three minutes to go.

The inevitable occurred as the sands of time were drifting away. Battersea were awarded a penalty. Though it was only just in the Sutton half, Cameron Baker, without hesitation, opted for the posts. His powerful kick was perfectly straight and Battersea Ironsides led 24-22. There was just time for the re-start that failed to travel the allotted distance, and the subsequent scrum to the hosts. Despite going back at a rate of knots and the harrying of Steve Munford, the ball was kicked dead to spark Battersea celebrations of an epic 24-22 win.

Many salutary lessons will hopefully be learned by Sutton but great credit must be given to the spirit of Battersea embodied by Raphael Arboine's performance and the nerveless kicking of Cameron Baker. For Sutton the scrummaging was superb, Sam Lennie was, as usual, immense, and Josh Rea had his best performance to date for the Black & Whites.

Next Saturday is free from league action and Sutton will endeavour to return to winning ways at Rugby Lane on Saturday 22nd November when they host Horsham for the first time in a league encounter.

Sutton & Epsom:

O'Brien, Benson, Scott, Bunting (c), Ghumra, Lennard, Wise, Johnson, Lennie, Mount, McTaggart, Duey, Rea, Tame & Hegarty.

Reps: Boaden, Finney & Munford.

Battersea Ironsides:

Diamond, Ford, Campbell, Bell, McGwire, Baker, Thomas, Chetwynd, Jones, Gomm, Bishop, Wharton, Pender, McCleary & Arboine.

Reps: Chetwynd-Talbot, Singh & Bourke.

John Croysdill

Image: Action of the two sides from an previous fixture. Credit: Robin Kennedy

Vital Surrey bus reduced from hourly to three mornings a week

10 November 2025



People who wait for buses are often left disappointed and that only looks set to continue after the company behind an axed service said it was “not likely” to return. Residents in Horley gathered at what they have dubbed a ‘ghost’ stop in protest to the axing of the hourly 424 bus which served their estate and went between the town centre and Gatwick Airport. It has left them with just a single service – but that just runs three mornings a week.

Councillor Neha Boghani, Green Party member for Horley East and Salfords said: “For Surrey County Council, whose strapline is ‘we leave no-one behind’, to cut buses this savagely without even any public consultation is shameful, and a dereliction of their commitment to serve all residents. Our residents deserve better.” One resident at the bus stop protest said the loss of the route had taken away her social life with another adding the impact had been unbelievable. She said: “There are so many elderly people and people with disabilities living around here and we can’t afford to keep taking taxis.”

Metrobus’s commercial director Nick Hill said the two-way loop the 424 used to run along made it unreliable and the decision was made to simplify the route. The detour through Horley Riverside Gardens Estate was then dropped to make scheduling more reliable and because it was so poorly used – it would only pick up passengers on one in five journeys. He said: “It is not likely that a conventional bus service will return to the area on a frequent basis due to such low demand. Residents in the area do also have other alternatives: much of the area is a short walk to access more frequent bus services.”

The dial-a-ride type service Surrey Connect is to be made available in the area and for Gatwick Airport. A spokesperson for Surrey County Council said they understood the disruptions alterations to bus services can make but that no areas have been left unserved by the cuts. They said: “Residents in the Horley Gardens Estate were previously served by Metrobus service 424, however data showed less than one passenger per journey travelled on most of the 424 journeys, which was unsustainable. This area continues to be served by local bus service 26 three days a week, providing links with Horley Town Centre and Hookwood Tesco, as well as the Surrey Connect service, which operates between 7am to 7pm weekdays and 8am to 6pm on Saturdays, with alternative services available for most passengers within a five-minute walk.”

“These changes form part of a wider review, which has seen the off-peak service 100 rerouted from Park 25 in Redhill, where data showed a usage of less than one passenger per journey, to instead serve residents in Westvale Park, Horley. This has enabled in the region of 4,000 otherwise isolated residents to be served, and initial patronage figures from the bus operator indicate that the number of passengers now travelling in the area have since quadrupled. Residents in Park 25 continue to be served by service 100 in the peak hours and on Sundays, and off-peak service 424 provides an hourly service throughout the day. We will continue to work alongside bus operators to create travel opportunities which encourage greater bus use and will keep the prospect of rerouting an alternative service via Park 25 under review.”

Chris Caulfield LDRS

Image: Cllr Neha Boghani right), Green councillor for Horley East, with residents of the Gardens Estate, south Horley, at the ‘ghost bus stop’ where they used to get on the 424 Metrobus (image Cllr Boghani)

Epsom Station joins app helping visually impaired bus users

10 November 2025



Epsom Station has become one of eight new locations added to a Surrey County Council (SCC) scheme that uses an innovative app to help blind and partially sighted people travel more independently by bus and rail.

Seeing the way through technology

The **Aira Explorer** app connects users by video call to a trained visual interpreter who, using the smartphone’s camera, can describe surroundings, read timetables, or guide the traveller safely between a bus stop and nearby rail station. The service is free to use at designated Surrey locations thanks to SCC’s allocation from the Government’s Bus Service Improvement Fund.

Initially launched in June 2025 at Guildford, Redhill, Staines and Woking bus stations, the trial has now expanded to cover bus stops and interchanges serving Caterham, Dorking, Oxted, Leatherhead, Reigate, Horley, and **Epsom Station and Clocktower**.

Support for independent travel

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth at Surrey County Council, said: “We’re keen to make bus travel accessible for everyone and hope this expansion will support people to travel confidently and independently. We’ve expanded this trial to cover more bus stops and rail interchanges to create better and joined-up journeys for people who are visually impaired.”

He added that the initiative forms part of a wider programme of investment in the county’s bus services, including £6.3 million for ultra-low and zero-emission community transport minibuses, £9 million in bus priority measures to keep services punctual, and £1.4 million to improve passenger information at bus stops.

Backing from rail and disability organisations

Carl Martin, Accessibility Lead at Govia Thameslink Railway, welcomed the expansion:

“We’re really pleased to see the expansion of Aira to further bus stops, as it’s a vital step in making multimodal journeys more seamless for blind and visually impaired customers.”

Clare Burgess, Chief Executive of Sensory Services by Sight for Surrey, called the scheme “great news” for people living with sight or combined sight and hearing loss:

“Travelling alone when you have a sensory impairment can be a daunting prospect, but having the Aira Explorer App at your fingertips makes independent travel so much easier and less stressful.”

Nikki Roberts, Chief Executive of the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People, said:

“It’s fantastic news that the Aira app coverage has now been extended to twelve locations in Surrey. The app will provide our visually impaired members the support they need to feel much more confident when travelling independently.”

A national first for Surrey

When the project began in summer 2025, Surrey County Council became the first local authority in the UK to introduce the app for bus users. It followed the success of a similar partnership between Aira.io and Govia Thameslink Railway to help visually impaired rail passengers navigate station environments.

The trial was originally launched to coincide with Better Transport Week, celebrating initiatives that help connect communities and improve access to public transport.

Ben Curtis from Campaign for Better Transport said at the time:

“Good public transport networks help connect us to the people we love, the things we need and the places that matter. The new Aira app will help ensure that everyone can access and use the county’s buses, building a fairer future for everyone.”

Making travel more inclusive

The Aira Explorer scheme represents one part of Surrey County Council’s wider drive to make sustainable travel options more inclusive and reliable. For residents in Epsom and across the county, it means greater independence, safer journeys, and a more connected community.

More information about the service is available on Surrey County Council’s website.

Sam Jones – Reporter



Related reports:

[Bus station app for visually impaired first in Surrey](#)

Blackhawk Quintet bring West Coast cool to Epsom

10 November 2025



For an increasing number of informed regulars, Epsom Jazz Club has become a nearby haven of quality music attracting national and international talent down to our own corner of Surrey.

For those not yet in the know, it’s worth broaching the growing roster of world-class musicians and singers who’ve walked through the doors at the Comrades Club venue.

It includes Tony Kofi, who blew his sax at Glastonbury this year in the long-running jazz funk outfit Cymande’s latest incarnation, trumpeter Andy Davies who with local guitar star Nigel Price brought along the rest of the amazing Ronnie Scott’s house band (EJC also has jazz lamps on the tables), and Alan Barnes – for whom the cliché ‘luminary’ is, in his case, actually warranted.

Past line-ups of award-winning players also include Hannah Horton, Allison Neale, Emma Rawicz, Karen Sharp and, in a genre that may be said to err sometimes on the side of seniority, the club has carefully promoted some up-and-coming artists, with exciting young vocalists on the bill like Ineza and Annie Majin.

Backdrop set, it is celebrated drummer Matt Skelton breaking new ground in October bringing his Blackhawk Quintet to Epsom – it’s been strictly quartets on the Comrades’ small stage to date – for an evening exploring the work of fellow sticksman Shelly Manne. The show focused on an intense week in the life and career of this West Coast “cool” jazz innovator, band leader, club owner and movie music composer, who in the 1950s and 60s was often pictured nattily dressed at his drums, in jacket and tie, a big smile on his face.

This five-piece is named (deliberately portmanteau, it seems) after a short residency of concerts at San Francisco’s Black Hawk club in the autumn of 1959, recorded with a view to releasing a single live album that became a series of four scintillating records, such was the quantity of quality material, followed by a fifth album in the early 1990s when the whole lot was re-released on CD.

Skelton’s men for the evening were Leon Greening – perhaps my favourite jazz pianist working in the country right now – Mark Crooks, whose tenor sax croons, glides and purrs like Lester Young, Stan Getz or indeed Manne’s tenorman on the Black Hawk records Richie Kamuca; hard-swinging young horn player Jim Davison (once lead trumpet in the National Youth Jazz Orchestra, now leading his own bands and scooping awards); and Jeremy Brown, one of the go-to bassists on the UK scene who’s played at Epsom at least half a dozen times in various line-ups.

It’s a rare treat to hear five musicians on this stage, with two brass-blowing front men. The sound is full and punchy, hitting right to the fore during the energetic thematic heads, and adding that extra bit of variety as the players take their solo turns.

The band took the vocally enthusiastic crowd on a fabulous journey through the recorded sessions, from the mid-tempo bopper *Pullin’ Strings* to the smoothly striding *Eclipse of Spain*, via the hard bop of Benny Golson composition *Step Lightly*.

The night’s focus on the short series of Black Hawk gigs – with occasional forays into other Shelly Manne albums (the grooving, Latin-tinged *The Breeze and I* from *Boss Sounds!*) or pieces by his various collaborators including Henry Mancini (the exquisite ballad *Dreamsville*) – provided a satisfying coherence to the concert you don’t always get.

That satisfaction only deepened with the scholarly asides, stories and nuggets of background about Manne, the gigs and the man’s musical life that Skelton amused us with between numbers.

Oh, and did I mention the drums? Skelton beats them hands down.

Amanda Gregory

Epsom Jazz Club puts on concerts at the Comrades Club, 1 The Parade, Epsom KT18 5BT. The next evening will feature violinist Matt Holborn and his quartet on 27 November, starting 7:30 pm.

Photo by Steven McCormick of Steven McCormick Photography

Free trees for Epsom and Ewell residents

10 November 2025



Surrey residents are being invited to collect free trees later this month, as part of Surrey County Council’s drive to plant 1.2 million trees by 2030 – one for every resident.

A total of 4,000 native trees will be given away at community recycling centres (CRCs) around the county, including Leatherhead – the nearest collection point for Epsom and Ewell.

The giveaway will run from 9am to 4pm on **Friday 28 November**, **Saturday 29 November**, and **Monday 1 December** at seven CRCs: Chertsey, Cranleigh, Dorking, Earlswood, Leatherhead, Shepperton and Witley.

The closest to Epsom and Ewell is Randalls Road, Leatherhead, KT22 0BA. Tel: 01372 375 479

Each visitor can collect one free small or medium-sized native tree, such as crab apple or hazel, along with aftercare guidance. Trees should be planted within seven days of collection.

To manage demand and avoid disappointment, advance booking is essential. Residents can reserve a date and location online through Surrey County Council’s website.

Marisa Heath, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Environment, said: “Our tree giveaways are always popular events, so it’s really important that anyone wishing to attend books in advance. By collecting a free tree, you will be helping us with our ambition to facilitate the planting of 1.2 million trees, one for every resident by 2030. Since our pledge in 2019, 768,332 trees have been planted and we couldn’t have done this without the ongoing support from schools, communities, businesses and residents, and of course the volunteers who have helped with the planting itself.”

She added: “Planting a tree in your garden not only helps us tackle the impact of climate change and improve biodiversity, but you will be part of a Surrey legacy.”

Trees help ease the effects of climate change by storing carbon, preventing flooding, and improving air quality and biodiversity. The county council’s Tree Strategy aims to ensure the “right tree is planted in the right place” and that young trees are properly cared for as they establish.

For more information or to book a collection slot, visit the Surrey County Council website or email trees@surreycc.gov.uk.

Sam Jones – Reporter



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Epsom Hospital braces for flu spike

10 November 2025



Hospitals serving Epsom, St Helier and St George’s are warning of a potentially severe flu season as national data reveals the number of deaths linked to the virus in England more than doubled last winter.

Figures from the UK Health Security Agency show 7,757 flu-related deaths were recorded in 2024-25, compared with 3,555 the previous year. Child deaths rose from 34 to 53 – a 56 per cent increase – while fewer people took up the offer of a flu vaccination.

Last winter, local hospitals faced intense pressure from flu alongside RSV, Covid and norovirus outbreaks, which closed wards and stretched Emergency Departments to capacity. With flu cases now rising again after the school half-term, health leaders fear a repeat.

Chief Nursing Officer for St George’s, Epsom and St Helier hospitals, Elaine Clancy, urged residents to act now. “Last flu season was particularly nasty and we’re very concerned that this year could be even worse – we’re preparing for a spike of flu onto our wards,” she said. “We see people dying every year from flu and sadly thousands more will likely this year. I strongly recommend booking your jab now, as it takes up to 14 days to fully kick in.”

Local mother Amy Clare, from Sutton, knows how dangerous flu can be. Her five-week-old son Jonah was rushed to Epsom Hospital’s Emergency Department with

the virus in December 2022.

“What started as a fever quickly escalated,” said Amy. “When the doctor told us we’d be spending Christmas in hospital, I was devastated. But he was in the best place to get better. The care we received from the moment we walked into A&E was fantastic – the staff immediately knew something wasn’t right and were with us every step of the way.”

Jonah was discharged the day after Christmas but continued to receive daily treatment until the New Year. “The care Jonah received saved his life,” said Amy.

Pregnant women are strongly advised to have the flu jab at any stage of pregnancy. It protects both mother and baby, but uptake remains low — only around one in three expectant mothers in England were vaccinated last year.

Those eligible for a free NHS flu vaccination include:

- everyone aged 65 and over
- people under 65 with long-term health conditions such as diabetes or heart problems
- children aged two and three, and all primary school children
- some secondary school pupils (Years 7 to 11)
- residents in care homes
- carers and those receiving carer’s allowance
- people living with someone who has a weakened immune system
- frontline health and social care workers

People can book or amend their flu vaccination appointment online: Book, change or cancel a free NHS flu vaccination at a pharmacy – NHS.

Sam Jones – Reporter



Tracing the history of poor relief in Epsom and Ewell

10 November 2025



Residents and researchers in the borough now have enhanced access to a fascinating trove of historic records that shed light on how our local community dealt with poverty, welfare and social care from the early nineteenth century onward.

The system of poor relief in England underwent major changes in the 1800s. Under the “Old Poor Law” (before the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act) each parish vestry was responsible for caring for its poor, sick and destitute residents. After 1834, the “New Poor Law” created groupings of parishes into Poor Law Unions, each with a Board of Guardians and a central workhouse.

In Surrey, the Surrey History Centre holds an extensive guide to Poor Law records, including minute books of the county’s Poor Law Unions. For Epsom, the records of the Epsom Poor Law Union from 1836 to 1930 are now indexed and available for consultation.

The minute books of the Epsom Poor Law Union record meetings of the Board of Guardians, who decided whether applicants should receive relief, be admitted to the workhouse, or be “removed” to another parish. They note weekly expenditure, supply orders, the appointment of staff, and the conditions of inmates.

Poor Law records can also include examination papers, bastardy bonds, settlement certificates, removal orders, and workhouse admission and discharge registers. Together they provide a detailed picture of the social realities of life in Victorian and Edwardian Epsom.

Although today a relatively prosperous borough, Epsom’s history includes many households living on the edge of poverty. The Union’s records allow us to trace how local governance responded to hardship, how relief was funded, and how the population’s needs changed across a century.

Behind the official entries lie the human stories: the widowed mother seeking parish relief, the injured labourer, the orphan placed in a workhouse, or the itinerant worker removed from one parish to another. These records reveal the rhythms of ordinary lives and the community’s efforts to care for its own.

The Surrey History Centre’s page *Poor Law records – minute books* offers guidance and shows that indexes to the Epsom minutes (1836-1930) are now online.

Visit:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/culture-and-leisure/history-centre/researchers/guides/poor-law-records/minute-books>

Researchers should first consult the online indexes and then contact the Surrey History Centre to view the original volumes, which may require a visit or advance booking.

Tips for local researchers

- Search by parish as well as by name – many cases are listed under the parish of settlement.
- Note that “removal orders” might show a person being transferred between parishes.
- Combine minute books with census or parish registers for a fuller picture of a family’s circumstances.
- Compare relief volumes across decades to identify periods of local economic stress.

With the indexes now online, there is a fresh opportunity for local historians, schools and community groups to explore Epsom’s welfare legacy. Projects could include exhibitions of anonymised case studies, research into patterns of employment and hardship, or school activities exploring the social history of our borough.

The minute books of the Epsom Poor Law Union open a compelling window onto over a century of social welfare practice. By engaging with these records, we can better understand the changing nature of poverty, relief and governance in Epsom and Ewell – and recover the lives of those who, often in quiet dignity, sought help when times were hard.

If you make a discovery of local interest from these records, *Epsom and Ewell Times* would be pleased to hear from you.

For many more events and projects from the Surrey History Centre [CLICK HERE](#)

Sam Jones – Reporter



Epsom's Famous Turf Set for a Smoother Ride

10 November 2025



Racehorses galloping down Epsom's famous turf could soon enjoy a smoother start, after The Jockey Club won backing to re-route a battered path cutting across the six-furlong chute on the Downs.

The current crossing, used daily by racehorses heading back from morning workouts, has become so uneven it is now seen as a safety risk, with one official saying it's "unbelievably close" to where horses enter the starting stalls.

After years of wear and tear, heavy machinery, and wet weather, the path has been left in "horrible" shape and "uneven".

The Jockey Club says the surface has simply had its day, with horses "almost tripping up" as they head for the start line.

Under the plan approved by Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators on November 3, the existing crossing will be shut for good and replaced by a new route looping neatly around the back of the chute.

The redesign will tidy up the area, improve safety for riders and horses, and, importantly for locals, be fully paid for by The Jockey Club. Officials say there will be no cost to taxpayers and no loss of public access, since the old path was never a legal right of way.

"We would re-grass the section of the racetrack that the path would come up from [...] we are looking at a hardcore base topped up by suitable weather surface," said Clerk of the Course Andrew Cooper. He said the new path should be a permanent, long-lasting solution.

Mr Cooper was enthusiastic about the proposal, describing it as a "definite improvement" both for racing and for the look of the Downs. "You wouldn't have a track disturbing the start at Ascot," said Vice Chair Jim Allen. "We're trying to improve Epsom standing in the international horse racing world."

Officials say communication with Downs users will be key to managing the change, but most agreed it is long overdue.

"Of course, safety is really important," said Cllr Kim Spickett. "But people who live here really, really love the Downs. It's beautiful and they really care about it." The councillor for Cuddington said she approved of the designs and said the whole chute would look aesthetic.

"It's not just about safety," one member said. "It'll make the whole area look smarter and more in keeping with what you'd expect at an international racecourse."

The £10,000-£15,000 project could be completed before next year's Derby Festival, depending on The Jockey Club's budget approval. If all goes to plan, by the time the 2026 Derby rolls around, horses will be cantering to the stalls on a smoother, safer, and smarter stretch of turf.

Emily Dalton LDRS

Image: View of uneven starting chute on Epsom Downs and racecourse. (Credit: Epsom and Ewell Borough Council documents)

Bourne again Christmas lights

10 November 2025



Bourne Hall is delighted to announce the return of its much-loved Christmas Lights Switch-On event, taking place on Saturday 29 November from 4pm until 7.30pm.

This free, family-friendly celebration invites the local community to gather for an evening filled with festive entertainment, seasonal treats, and holiday cheer.

Event highlights include:

Live Music & Performances: Enjoy a lively programme of performances from local musicians and dance schools on the main stage. Special guests include Santa Claus and the cast of this year's Epsom Playhouse Pantomime, Aladdin, bringing a sprinkle of theatrical magic to the festivities.

Market & Craft Stalls: Browse a variety of stalls featuring handmade crafts, unique gifts, and festive products – perfect for early Christmas shopping.

Food & Refreshments: Indulge in delicious seasonal fare from The Flying Saucer Café, offering warm treats and tasty bites throughout the evening.

Santa's Grotto Grand Opening: Be among the first to visit the newly opened Santa's Grotto, where children can meet Father Christmas and experience the joy of the season.

Christmas Lights Switch-On Ceremony: Be there for the magical moment at 5.15pm, when The Deputy Mayor of Epsom & Ewell, Santa and beloved festive

characters illuminate Bourne Hall with a dazzling display of Christmas lights.

Speaking of the upcoming event, Councillor **Clive Woodbridge** (RA Ewell Village), Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Committee, said: “We’re absolutely delighted to welcome back the Christmas Lights Switch-On at Bourne Hall – a cherished tradition that brings our community together in the most magical way. This year’s event promises festive fun for all ages, with music, entertainment, and of course, the grand illumination that marks the start of the holiday season in Ewell. I encourage everyone to come along and share in the joy.”

This outdoor event is free and open to all, promising a heartwarming celebration for families, friends, and neighbours. Attendees are encouraged to dress warmly and arrive early to enjoy the full programme of festivities.

Visit Bourne Hall from 29 November for a whole host of festivities.

Bourne Hall Christmas Lights Switch On

Saturday 29 November, 4pm – 7.30pm. Free event.

A day of festive fun including:

- Live music and performances
- Market and craft stalls
- Food and refreshments
- Santa’s Grotto Grand Opening
- Christmas Lights Switch On 5.15pm – The Deputy Mayor of Epsom & Ewell and Santa switch on the Christmas lights at Bourne Hall.

Santa’s Grotto – Saturday 29 November to Saturday 20 December

Step into the magic of Christmas at Bourne Hall’s enchanting *Santa’s Grotto*!

Please note that Santa’s Grotto is free to visit during the week but Saturday visits cost £1 per person

Grand Opening – Friday 29 November

Celebrate the launch of the grotto with a special evening of festive cheer!

Opening times on Saturday 29th November only:

- 16:00-17:00
- 18:00-19:30
- Entry: £1.00 per person (card payment only, payable at the door) due to the high footfall on this date, there is no pre booking option available, we will operate a first come first serve basis during the two time slots.

Pre-Book Your Visit – Saturdays 6, 13 & 20 December

Reserve your time slot online to guarantee your child’s magical moment with Santa.

Spaces are limited, so book early to avoid disappointment!

Tickets are £1.00 per child and can be booked online by following the links below, please select the link for your desired date, this will take you to the booking page where you can select a ticket for your desired time slot:

Saturday 6 December: [https://sessami.co/events/meetsantabounrehall?utm_medium=website&utm_sou...](https://sessami.co/events/meetsantabounrehall?utm_medium=website&utm_source=social)

Saturday 13 December: [https://sessami.co/events/6529dc6f-1b2e-4c07-bd35-48c0c157cdde?utm_mediu...](https://sessami.co/events/6529dc6f-1b2e-4c07-bd35-48c0c157cdde?utm_medium=social)

Saturday 20 December: [https://sessami.co/events/45c92d02-ab10-48c4-8e69-7836930592d4?utm_mediu...](https://sessami.co/events/45c92d02-ab10-48c4-8e69-7836930592d4?utm_medium=social)

Weekday Visits – Monday to Friday 10:00-16:00

Enjoy the grotto scenery at your leisure with **free entry** during the week.

Take festive photos, soak in the decorations, and write a letter to Santa to post!

Whether you’re booking a weekend visit or popping in during the week, Bourne Hall’s grotto is the perfect way to celebrate the season and make lasting memories.

For more information or to get involved, please contact bhevents@epsom-ewell.gov.uk or visit bournehall.org.

Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell, Surrey KT17 1UF. 020 8393 9571. Bourne Hall is open Monday – Saturday, 10am – 5pm.

<https://www.bournehall.org>

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council



Image: Courtesy Bourne Hall Facebook – Epsom and Ewell Borough Council