



Epsom UCA alum praised by Taiwan President

26 April 2024



Leo Tsao graduated from UCA in 2017 with a BA (Hons) in Fashion Atelier.

He has just won season 16 of **RuPaul's Drag Race** as his banana-themed glamazon Nymphia Wind.

Chip Harris, Programme Director in Fashion at UCA, who taught Leo for the entirety of the course and helped manage his final collection, said: "Leo developed a great range of skills on the course and as a very conceptual thinker, he was always ambitious and individual in his approach. Leo's graduate collection epitomised this, which demonstrated an exceptional technical and creative skillset that was also selected to show at Graduate Fashion Week.

"I am not surprised to see his ascension within the RuPaul's Drag Race universe, and it is good to see that he used his skills to showcase amazing costumes, styling and visual narratives."

UCA President & Vice-Chancellor, **Professor Jane Roscoe**, added: "The whole of UCA, and especially our School of Fashion and Textiles, is celebrating the unique and incredible talent of Nymphia, and her victory in RuPaul's Drag Race. As 'America's Next Drag Superstar', we are so excited to see what she does next!"



Among the high-profile people congratulating Nymphia on her win, was the **President of Taiwan, Tsai Ing-wen**, who said: "Congratulations to you, Nymphia Wind, for being so accomplished in the difficult art form of drag, and for being the first Taiwanese to take the stage and win on RuPaul's Drag Race. Right after being crowned queen, you said 'Taiwan, this is for you'. Taiwan thanks you for living fearlessly."

Top Image: Nymphia Wind in her finale outfit. Credit: Entertainment Weekly/Mettie Ostrowski

Left image: Leo Tsao, pictured for his final collection shoot at UCA in 2017.

Surrey County Council's new CEO defends "unlawful" email

26 April 2024



Surrey County Council's soon to be in post Chief Executive and current Wiltshire Council's CEO has insisted that an email he sent to staff in November 2022, which was recently judged unlawful, was to correct a GMB (General, Municipal and Boilermakers) Union lie.

Terence Herbert, who is preparing to leave his Chief Executive role to transfer to Surrey County Council, has gone on the record to speak about the events surrounding the case.

GMB, the union for Wiltshire Council staff, claims the email intended to deter its traffic wardens from voting for industrial action. The vote was part of a long-running dispute in which Wiltshire Council is seeking to remove contractual out-of-hours pay enhancement.

Written by Mr Herbert, the email claimed that GMB's representation of the proposals as a "10% pay cut" was "really misleading", and urged staff to "consider carefully" whether further strikes would support a resolution.

Bristol Employment Tribunal ruled that the correspondence broke industrial relations law.

The leader of the council, Richard Clewer, has reported that £21,395 was spent on defending the case.

Wiltshire Council is currently seeking legal advice as to whether there are grounds to appeal the decision.

Mr Herbert said: "We entered into all of our negotiations in good faith and professionally, with all three of our recognised unions - UNISON, Unite and the GMB. Unfortunately, from the outset, GMB's behaviour and actions were in sharp contrast to that of UNISON and Unite, and they seemed to have set their course not to agree."

He described the pay policies which Wiltshire Council is seeking to change as "historical" and "no longer fit for purpose." Mr Herbert said it was "very hard to justify" - to residents and staff who do not receive the same entitlement - policies that amounts to "£800,000 per year in extra payments."

He noted: "The only other way that you can make those savings are through redundancies and the position that I took from the outset, and it's one that I stand by now and do not regret, is that I didn't want to make people redundant." He added: "There are considerably more requirements on local government than there were before, but there isn't the money. Therefore, we have to make savings."

Following negotiations, the council offered a four-year pay protection for concerned staff, which was accepted by UNISON and Unite the Union, but rejected by GMB.

Regarding his email, Mr Terence said: "There had been a number of announcements or media statements made by GMB in the run up to another ballot. In those statements, they had said that we had reneged on a promise to offer lifetime pay protection. We were very clear that that was a lie, that we had never offered lifetime pay protection."

Referencing his staff, he also said: "I didn't intend for them to feel threatened, I intended for them to be informed. I genuinely believed that what I was doing was informing my staff."

"Whenever you see an organisation like GMB openly misrepresenting what has happened, you think that there is a duty for you to correct the record, and that's what I was doing."

Reflecting on the impact of the case, Mr Herbert concluded: "It is stressful, it takes a personal toll, but at the end of the day, I go home and try to switch off. But the personal attacks, which then lead to offensive comments, as a direct result of inflammatory, incorrect statements that have been made by supposedly professional organisations, that takes a toll."

When approached for comment, a spokesperson for GMB said: "The findings of the tribunal are clear that his arguments are unconvincing. For him to attack the findings of the tribunal is disingenuous and I'm sure residents of Wiltshire will find it equally concerning."

Jessica Moriarty

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Image credit: Wiltshire Council

Antiques Roadshow's poor sign of value?

26 April 2024



In my article of 30 July 2023, I reported on the sale of a 4-inch high Japanese cloisonne vase at auction after it had been purchased for only a couple of pounds in an Epsom High Street charity shop.

Readers may recall that the charity shop find referred to sold for many thousands of pounds, so when I discovered that one of my own charity shop finds was identical to a bronze wild boar that featured in an episode of the BBC's Antiques Roadshow TV programme, I became very excited.

Upon discovering that my **porcine** statuette was Roman and potentially worth ten thousand pounds, I positioned it away from Dobby, my cat on a much higher shelf so it would not get knocked over and damaged.

The Antiques Roadshow expert advised the young man who dug up his bronze Roman wild boar as a child to report his find, but who should anyone in Surrey report similar finds to?

Dr Simon Maslin FSA AClfA is the Finds Liaison Officer for Surrey who works on behalf of the Portable Antiquities Scheme for Surrey County Council at the Surrey History Centre in Woking, Surrey.

The role of Dr Maslin is to identify archaeological finds in England and Wales, but this does not include charity shop finds with no secure provenance like my bronze boar.

Dr Maslin is unable to consider finds unless they are archaeological items found (not bought) locally and he cannot provide assistance with valuations.



The items considered therefore include my metal detecting finds eg the medieval cruciform pendants shown in the photo because Dr Maslin is the point of contact for items that people may find when metal detecting, gardening or out walking etc which may be part of the local archaeological record. He is also the person to contact for any finds which need reporting under the 1996 Treasure Act.

If Dr Simon Maslin had appeared on the BBC's Antiques Roadshow TV programme, he would have been quick to tell the millions of people watching at home that the bronze boar identical to the one I found in a charity shop was not Roman and that it was in fact of far eastern origin, most probably Javanese and a modern reproduction that is only worth a few pounds - not ten thousand pounds as claimed by the Antiques Roadshow expert (pigs may fly).

If nothing else, my miniature, bronze Javanese wild boar figure has become a conversation piece that has enabled me to



write this article about who to contact when real Roman artifacts are dug up in a garden.

My bronze wild boar has now been returned to its original position on a lower shelf, as I no longer live in fear of Dobby the cat knocking it over.

The Portable Antiquities Scheme website and database can be accessed through the British Museum's website at www.finds.org.uk.

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26 April 2024



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Police post taken down before election

26 April 2024



The Surrey Police and Crime Commission social media team were made to remove a graphic from Twitter, now X and Facebook after a complaint it could influence the May 2 elections.

The post was made during the run up to the election when public bodies are supposed to remain completely impartial to avoid favouring any one candidate or using taxpayer money to look to influence voters.

The message said it had re-opened funding for local services that promote community safety, support children and young people and help reduce reoffending in Surrey. It was accompanied by an image that showed more than £2m had been provided to support local services in the last financial year.

The complainant, the Liberal Democrat Councillor for Bagshot and North Windlesham Richard Wilson, felt this was a breach of pre-election publicity rules.

Writing to the Monitoring Officer, he said: "Any reasonable person would conclude that the post, in particular its use of the graphics, is likely to improve the electorate's opinion of the incumbent PCC (Police and Crime Commissioner). This constitutes a breach of the guidance and, therefore, of the rules laid out in the Acts.

"It would be possible to direct readers to the funding website without publicising the £2m which has already been provided. This piece of information is wholly unnecessary and its purpose is clearly to promote the PCC. This is a use of public resources to influence an election."

After receiving the complaint, Alison Bolton, chief executive and monitoring officer of the Police and Crime Commission, told the communication team to delete the images but felt the text was fine to be republished - and did not merit an apology.

Media policies had been reviewed ahead of the pre-election period and the use of social media and their website has been "significantly" limited, she added.

The posts were scheduled, she said, as the funding process opened on April 1 and they wanted to give organisations the greatest amount of time possible to apply. She said: "Your view that the posts are "likely to improve the electorate's opinion of the incumbent PCC" is arguably a subjective one. I can assure you that the posts were made in good faith by comms colleagues with the intention of promoting a funding opportunity and not, as you suggest, to "promote the PCC. "We had purposefully not made reference to the incumbent PCC or included any images of her.

"That said, I recognise that the aim of promoting the funds could have been achieved with a simpler post and as such, I have asked my colleagues to remove the posts that include the 'graphic'. We will re-issue the link, but I don't believe that issuing an apology is necessary."

A spokesperson for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner said it restricted its output to some "business-as-usual work" in line with pre-election guidelines.

They said: "On April 3, the Communications Team posted a message on social media highlighting the process for which organisations and services can apply to our funding streams which opened for the new financial year two days earlier on April 1.

"These streams provide vital support for some of the most vulnerable people in our communities including victims of crime, young people and domestic abuse survivors as well as funding important projects that enhance community safety across Surrey.



"Allocating these funds and commissioning these important services is a significant role that the OPCC undertakes and we wanted to give local organisations the greatest amount of time possible to apply. The message posted did not name or reference the current PCC or contain any image of her. However the message did have an accompanying graphic which highlighted the amount of funding the office had provided to support local services during the last financial year.

"The post was created in good faith with the intention of promoting the funding opportunity and was not designed to promote the current Commissioner. However upon review by the OPCC Monitoring Officer, the decision was taken to remove the graphic and replace it with one that had removed the reference to the amount of funding given last year to avoid any inference during the pre-election period.

"The current commissioner was not aware and did not have any involvement in the creation of the original message."

The elections for the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner take place countywide on Thursday May 2. Counting takes place the following day with the results expected around 2pm.

The vote takes place across Surrey with the count taking place the following day with the result expected to be announced between 3pm and 4pm.

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Excellence in aging for LGBTQ+

26 April 2024



More can be done to make sure LGBTQ+ adults age with dignity and their needs are met in the UK, say researchers from the **University of Surrey**. Together with Tonic Housing, the UK's first LGBTQ+ affirmative retirement community, researchers from Surrey are launching The Life House Project - a participatory theatre-based initiative to explore the unique housing and care needs of the LGBTQ+ community in London.

Many LGBTQ+ individuals face anxieties about housing and care as they age. The Life House Project aims to address these concerns by providing a platform for older adults to share their experiences and explore solutions collaboratively.

Through seven workshops and one-on-one interviews, the project will create a space for participants to use creative expression through theatre, scriptwriting, and poetry. This approach will help participants tell their stories and highlight their specific needs and desired forms of support.

Dr **Georgia Bowers**, Lecturer and Programme Leader of Applied and Contemporary Theatre BA (Hons) at the Guildford School of Acting and lead researcher, said:

"We are particularly interested in how creative methods can support LGBTQ+ older adults to not only share their own experiences but also become advocates for themselves and the wider LGBTQ+ community. By communicating their concerns and aspirations through theatre and creative expression, we hope to ignite a conversation that leads to a more inclusive future for individuals in terms of housing and care."

Dr **Richard Green**, Surrey Future Fellow at the University of Surrey, said:

"We are excited about the potential of theatre and creative expression to empower LGBTQ+ older adults to share their stories and advocate for better care and housing options."

"This project goes beyond simply collecting data; it's about creating a space for authentic expression and collaboration. By working together with participants to explore their needs through creative mediums, we aim to amplify their voices and create a lasting impact on how LGBTQ+ care is approached."

Professor **Andrew King**, Head of Sociology and Co-Director of Surrey's Centre of Excellence on Ageing at the University of Surrey, said:

"The Life House Project can make a significant contribution to creating more inclusive and supportive housing and care environments for LGBTQ+ people. It provides a new interdisciplinary and creative approach to highlight often hidden inequalities and issues and we hope it will influence policy changes and inspire service providers to create spaces where individuals can truly feel safe, valued, and supported as they age."



A celebratory event will also be held on Monday 24 June, to coincide with London Pride week. This event will showcase a project film documenting the journey of The Life House Project and its impact on participants. The event will also serve as an opportunity to connect the project's findings with the broader LGBTQ+ community and discuss potential solutions for creating more inclusive and supportive housing and care environments.

Bob Green OBE, Head of Operations at Tonic Housing said:

"Tonic is very excited to take part in the University of Surrey's Life House Research Project. The use of theatre and drama to examine the themes of housing and care in later life has piqued the interest of many residents and it has attracted other older LGBT people from outside Tonic.

"We are particularly interested to learn about residents' experience of living in the UK's first LGBT+ Retirement Community as well as how housing and care services for older LGBT people can be improved.

"Some older LGBT people have had terrible experiences in the past but having worked with University of Surrey researchers, we value their inclusive approach and supportive attitude, so we look forward to exploring challenging incidents safely and positively."

Leatherhead residents call for more policing

26 April 2024



A serious assault that left a man fighting for his life has left a community in shock - with some saying there aren't enough police officers and others calling for greater CCTV provision.

On Sunday night (April 21) a man was attacked near a Leatherhead nursery by up to four teenagers.

Surrey Police has said an 18-year-old man and a 17-year-old boy have been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder with enquiries ongoing to identify and locate two other people.

Surrey Police say they do not anticipate a wider risk to the public at this time.

The violent attack, in Cleeve Road, comes on the eve of the May 2 Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner elections. with people able to cast their vote on how crime is tackled and to make sure the police provide a good service.

The Local Democracy Service visited the town to get people's views on whether they felt safe, and if they planned to vote in the upcoming ballot.

If the 2021 election is a fair guide then the candidates have their work cut out to get their message to the public with the winning candidate getting 155,116 total votes, out of a Surrey population of 1.19 million,

As a percentage that figure is low but overall it makes them the individual with the highest single vote total in the county, more than any MP.

Leatherhead is one of the main towns in Mole Valley and lies near the M25. This good connectivity has brought its own issues, particularly transient crime.

One shopper in the town felt the area was no different to anywhere else, saying: "It's the same as in most towns. You get young kids. There was a robbery the other day at Leatherhead Station which is worrying, especially if you get a train on your own."

She added that she wasn't aware that elections for the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner were due to take place on May 2.

After the Cleeve Road attack, residents took to social media calling for better CCTV, an issue that has taken greater prominence after it emerged that 77 public-space cameras in Mole Valley were left unmonitored when Reigate Police Station closed due to dangerous RAAC.

Jen Royal said she wouldn't be voting in the elections as she was unaware of who was running or what they stood for, but was not happy with the direction of travel the force was going.

She said: "Policing on the whole....People call them out and it doesn't matter if it's small crimes or big crimes and they don't appear to get a lot of response."

One shopper who has lived in Leatherhead for 50 years was more aware of the four candidates standing for the position.

She told the LDRS: "It's not safe to go out in the evening. That's why I take a stick".



She says the area has changed a lot in that time with many of the smaller shops disappearing, adding "it's like a ghost town...you never see any police officers."

"We used to see them walking down the road and quite a few cars going by, but now nothing. It's a shame. There should be more police on the streets."

Asked if she had heard of the upcoming elections, she said she already voted before suddenly opening her bag saying "thank you for reminding me, I need to post it, I'm carrying it here in my bag."

The Sunday assault happened at night in the north of the town and the victim was taken to hospital and is in serious condition.

According to the most recent published data there were 41 crimes reported in February in Leatherhead, including 11 instances of violence and sexual offences, eight for anti-social behaviour and six for public disorder.

Olive Lee was on her way to the Fairfield Centre in Leatherhead, somewhere she sees as a real asset to the town and where she visits regularly. Some of the people the LDRS spoke with wished north Leatherhead had similar facilities for younger people.

Olive said: "Some of my friends in the centre are worried about going out in the evening but I like Leatherhead as a place."

"I moved in with my daughter about six or seven years ago, I had retired to Cornwall, or so I thought, and I am quite happy here as a place. But I don't go out in the evening."

She said she was undecided about voting though as the polling station was too far from home, though she admitted it was an important election.

Olive added: "I think it makes a difference, who is running the police, but I don't know too much about the candidates."

The Police and Crime Commissioner is responsible for holding the Chief Constable and Surrey Police to account - on the public's behalf. They are also tasked with overseeing how crime is tackled and ensuring Surrey Police provides a good service.

All British, Irish or EU citizens, as well as qualifying Commonwealth citizens with permission to enter or stay in the UK, can vote so long as they are over 18 and registered in Surrey can vote, unless legally excluded.

The general feeling in the town is one where it feels safe, particularly compared with London, but Leatherhead is not without its issues.

A woman said: "It feels safe in the town and you don't hear about too many of these things bar a few very serious incidents and they are very few and far between."

"I don't know about the Police and Crime Commissioner elections but I will vote, I just need to find out (about the candidates and what they stand for).

"Another worry is always anti-social behaviour but I don't see it. If you come in in the evening it's fine."

The vote takes place across Surrey with the count taking place the following day with the result expected to be announced between 3pm and 4pm.

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Jen Royal Leatherhead (Image Chris Caulfield)

Prairie dogs 'cock a snoop' at planning

26 April 2024



Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's Planning Committee grappled 18th April with the prairie dogs enclosure at Hobbledown Farm in Epsom.

The proprietors of this animal amusement park had established the enclosure without prior permission and were seeking retrospective permission from the Council.

There were several other developments on the site for which retrospective permission was being sought. A number of residents of the adjacent Clarendon Park housing estate objected, being particularly fearful of an increased risk of



flooding arising from these unauthorised developments.

The debate began with Councillors complaining of insufficient time to process numerous emails supplied to the committee just minutes before the meeting started.

Cllr **Kate Chinn** (Labour Court) protested "I really wouldn't want to consider these applications this evening. I can't even say if the information is relevant to the application or not. It was too much information and it came too late." Later she accepted assurances that the emails did not materially change the application.

Cllr **Julian Freeman** (Lib Dem College) declined to read the emails in question stating: "I made a specific point of not going through all the email exchange, because it doesn't form part of the papers for this meeting. I can understand that there is ambiguity, and there are questions to be asked and answered, and the place to do that is here and now, not by an email exchange."

Cllr **Jan Mason** (RA Ruxley) gave her opinion "I've got a question. And probably everyone sitting here will agree, I hope, but I'm heartily fed up. I want to know how many retrospective blooming applications we've had to sit here and go through, only to be told "it's already there, they've done it". So why do we bother to have a planning committee?"

The Chairman, Cllr **Humphrey Reynolds** (RA West Ewell) responded that her question was not a matter for the Planning Committee.

Later in a further forthright statement Councillor Mason said: "I don't think there's anything we can do. This firm knew perfectly well what they were going to do. And they've cocked a snook at us. It's our land. It is on the green belt. They've made it like Disney World. That's what they want. And I'm just angry that we keep doing these little bits of drip, drip, drip. So in the end they get what they want. We'll all say, "Oh we can't pull it down". Me, I'd pull everything down that they've put in."

The applications had come before the committee in February and been deferred for more information about flood risks. The ward Councillor for Horton, Cllr **Kieran Persand** (Conservative) was invited to speak. He argued: "I do not believe any substantial additional information or clarity has been provided. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out strict tests to protect people and property from flooding, which all local planning authorities are expected to follow. Where these tests are not met new developments should not be allowed. One of these tests the NPPF requires is the application of a "sequential test". Where the test is not performed or not met, development should not be allowed."

A local resident, **Alexander Duval**, was invited to address the meeting and he said: "As the majority of committee members and planning officers will be aware, the residents of Clarendon Park have objected to a significant number of the planning applications submitted by Hobbledown over recent years. The majority of these have been retrospective: build first, get permission later. Numerous compelling planning reasons have been put forward by residents for refusing planning permission. Where the developments have not complied with national planning guidance, local planning policies and precedents set by case law. Despite this, all planning applications have been recommended for approval by officers. The residents, those directly affected by the applications, are at a loss as to why this should be the case. Hobbledown is located within the green belt. According to national planning guidance and local development policies, this is supposed to afford protection against development and seems to elsewhere, but not on this site."

There was controversy as to whether Mr Duval's several other written objections had been made available to Councillors to consider. Cllr **Bernie Muir** (Conservative Horton) "The planning committee should, when considering an application, take into account all views on material and planning considerations that are expressed in a way that is openly heard and fairly considered. I'm really worried about this process. This happened last time. Mr. Duval repeatedly asked where his comments were on the website, and they weren't there. They were posted by the council on the day of the meeting. Twelve minutes [the time allotted to Mr Duval to speak at the meeting] is not the same as articulating point by point. You've presumed that every councillor here has received something from Alex Duval."

She added: "To be told something is being received, but it is not uploaded to the website, so we can't see it. That's not acceptable."

Discussions continued long into the night with references to planning policies, flood risk assessments, conditions and other details.

The marathon three and a half hour meeting concluded with a series of votes. Generally, permissions were granted across the board of hitherto unauthorised changes at Hobbledown, some on the casting vote of the Chair.

Image: PictureWendy

The Bucknill plan stops here....

26 April 2024



A plan to cram 5 three-bedroomed houses on a single bungalow plot in Bucknills Close, Epsom did not meet Councillors' approval.

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's Planning Committee met 18th April and refused an application by Nuro Homes Ltd despite their agent's plea to the meeting to allow it.

Plain speaking Cllr **Jan Mason** (RA Ruxley) gave her reasons for refusal and her own strong sentiments on the application in saying to her committee colleagues: "Right, here we go again. Same old "Back Land". Call it what you like: "Development". And as my grandma would say, trying to put a pint into a half pint pot.... They could have designed it so that they weren't in Outer Hebrides with their bins to try and take to the front. Ridiculous." [A reference to challenges to the Council collection of domestic refuse.]

She added: "I think this is not well thought out, any of this. And I put it down to the fact that you're trying to cram too much in. It makes money. We all know the story. I'm not convinced about the flooding,, if there's slight flooding around, this will get it. It's just all too much. So I'm sorry, but as far as I'm concerned, this is ill designed. So for my part, I'm not happy."

During the meeting it was argued that children would use the short-cut the development would create. Cllr **Neil Dallen** (RA Town) was for refusal on the grounds of highway safety and the distance that residents would have to take their bins for collection. Commenting on a varied application he said "It's fine moving the bins another few yards towards the road, but there is still a huge distance for those to go. The waste manager has said it's unacceptable."

Cllr. **Clive Woodbridge** (RA Ewell Village) observed: "If we were proposing a refusal on highways grounds, we have to take into account that we're flying solo because Surrey County Council aren't behind us on this, and they are the highway authority."

Cllr. **Kate Chinn** (Labour Court) was concerned about routine refusal of new housing developments and said: "It is providing for homes for people in Epsom and Ewell and we know how dire the housing situation is in the borough. I don't think any committee with a response to its residents can continue to refuse every single application that comes in front of it."

The application was refused by five votes to four, the Chair Cllr. **Humphrey Reynolds** (RA West Ewell) not voting.

Epsom's flat season springs into action

26 April 2024



The Flat racing season gets underway at Epsom on Tuesday with the Spring Meeting - a competitive six-race card to kick off the new campaign at the Surrey track.

Racing gets underway at 2.10 with a 13-runner handicap before rounding off at 5.05 with another big field handicap, this time with 11 set to head to post.

The opener (2.10) gets the new season underway and it's set to be a fast and furious 5f sprint. Last year's winner of this race, Lihou, is back to defend his crown having returned to the turf after some less than impressive outings on the all-weather over the winter. The chief threat to the reigning champion could come from Glory Hunter, who won in the mud over this distance at Thirsk a fortnight ago.

Race two on the card (2.40) is the Blue Riband Trial Stakes, seen by many as a trial for the Epsom Derby later this year. Chief Little Rock doesn't hold a Derby entry but sets the standard in the Trial on Tuesday, having finished second in both the Beresford Stakes at the Curragh and the Autumn Stakes at Newmarket. Arabic Legend is worth keeping an eye on as well, second in a listed race at Salisbury last season before switching to a new yard having disappointed in the Autumn Stakes.



The third race of the afternoon (3.20) is a class two handicap over the 1m2f trip around Epsom and the preference is for Qitaal, trained by Charlie Johnston, who returned to racing after two years off to score at Doncaster and can defy a 7lb hike in the weights here to make it two wins from his last two runs.

Race four (3.55) sees 13 runners head to the start for the 1m4f handicap in class three and Sussex trainer Gary Moore sends Champagne Piaff to Epsom – and with a very eye catching jockey booking to boot with one of the world's best Flat jockeys, Ryan Moore, set to get the ride. He is very much of interest in this one, but could find stern competition from Splendent, who is back at his optimum trip having previously ran over two miles and not found it to his liking.

The penultimate race on the card (4.30) is a novice stakes over the extended one mile trip and the selection is for the Harry Charlton-trained Midair, second of nine in a Goodwood maiden and subsequently only narrowly beaten at Kempton in the final strides last time out.

Finally, the Epsom card comes to a close (5.05) with the 1m handicap for three-year-old's and the preference here is for Mr Baloo, who secured a third career win at Kempton last time out and a winner of a Nursery contest at Epsom back in October last year so track experience could come to the fore.

*Epsom selections - Tuesday (via **Punchestown odds**)*

- 2.10 - Lihou
- 2.40 - Chief Little Rock
- 3.20 - Qitaal
- 3.55 - Champagne Piaff
- 4.30 - Midair
- 5.05 - Mr Baloo

Image: David Jones Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic license

Animal health benefits human health

26 April 2024



Ensuring animals are treated well throughout their lives and using sustainable farming practices are at the heart of an ambitious partnership to control the spread of infectious diseases and improve animal welfare. The University of Surrey's School of Biosciences and School of Veterinary Medicine have joined the European Partnership on Animal Health and Welfare. The University is set to receive over £2 million from the Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme.

Along with helping to prevent and control diseases in terrestrial and aquatic animals, the partnership will also encourage the careful use of medicines and develop methods to maintain high welfare standards. The partnership involves 90 members from 24 countries, and the initiative's total funding is €360 million.

Professor Roberto La Ragione, the Surrey Principal Investigator and Head of the School of Biosciences at the University of Surrey, said:

"With the rising numbers of diseases in animals that are spreading to humans, the scientific community is waking up to the fact that animal health and welfare are inextricably linked to our own."

"I'm proud that our University is joining colleagues from across the country and Europe, so that we can not only share and tackle these issues at a large scale, but also find sustainable solutions that improve the wellbeing of the animals that we share this planet with."

The European Partnership on Animal Health and Welfare aims to support a food system that is fair, healthy, and environmentally friendly. Its goals align with the European Green Deal and the related Farm to Fork strategy, which focuses on sustainable food production.

Professor Kamalan Jeevaratnam, Head of the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Surrey, said:

"Our University has a long-standing commitment to the One Health, One Medicine ethos, and we are excited to share our expertise and learn from our partners. This collaboration underscores the UK's significant role in advancing the wellbeing of humans, animals, and our natural environment for a better future."

Nathalie Vanderheijden of the University of Ghent, coordinator of the EUP AH&W, sums up the partnership as follows:

"Our partnership is a new, open initiative, bringing together EC funding, national/regional funders and research-



performing organisations to concentrate efforts on developments with high societal, economic and policy impact. Belgium, with its current presidency of the European Council for six months, appreciates the potential of unity in driving change!"

Speaking of the Partnership EFSA's, Chief Scientist Carlos Das Neves said:

"We are pleased to announce that EFSA will be a full partner of the European Partnership Animal Health & Welfare. This is the first time that we will be a beneficiary in a research partnership under Horizon Europe, which will enable a smoother transition from research to regulatory science. We are prepared and committed to bring our expertise to the table, together with the best experts in Europe, for the benefit of animal health and welfare."

The European Partnership on Animal Health and Welfare started on the 1st of January 2024 and held its kick-off meeting on the 26th and 27th of February 2024 in Brussels. All partners signed the Grant Agreement on the 29th of March 2024.

Image: Marie Anna Lee

Epsom and Ewell braces for M25 closure traffic

26 April 2024



Greater chaos has been avoided by the **Epsom and Ewell Times** correcting the **Highway Authority**'s belief you could turn off the *northbound* A3 to go *south* at the Hook Junction. "Thank you for your email of 19 April 2024 in relation to the M25 junction 10/A3 Wisley interchange improvement project and specifically regarding the error in the M25 weekend closure diversion route published on our webpage. I'd like to apologise for this error and to also thank you for bringing it to our attention. This has now been corrected...." wrote Chris Davis, the Project Support Officer.

The Highways Authority has announced the closure of a section of the M25 motorway between junctions 9 (A243 Leatherhead) and 10 (A3 Wisley) from 9pm Friday, May 10, to 6am Monday, May 13, 2024. This closure is necessary for the installation of a new bridge.

Travellers are advised to avoid unnecessary journeys during this period, with the authority expressing gratitude to drivers who complied with similar closures in the past. A 19-mile diversion route has been planned, utilizing the A3 and the A240. Drivers are urged to follow this diversion and not rely on their SatNav systems.

For clockwise diversion, except for over-height vehicles, drivers are advised to leave the M25 at junction 8 onto the A217 (Reigate), then follow signs for London, Sutton, and Kingston on the A217 and A240. At the Esso roundabout, they should turn right onto the A24 (A240) towards Kingston, then left onto the A3 towards Portsmouth and Guildford. After 9½ miles, they can rejoin the M25 at junction 10.

Fortunately, the works at the Tolworth roundabout have all but completed for traffic. The northbound A240 has four lanes to filter at the junction approach.

For anticlockwise diversion, except for over-height vehicles, drivers should leave the M25 at junction 10 and join the A3 towards London. After 9½ miles, they should turn right onto the A240 towards Epsom and Reigate, then follow signs for Reigate and the M25 on the A240 and A217. After 3½ miles, they can rejoin the M25 at junction 8.

Drivers using the signed diversion route will not incur any Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) charges that may usually apply in London. However, over-height vehicles must follow a different diversion route to avoid a low bridge.

The Highways Authority also announced plans for three more weekend closures of the M25 this year, with no closures scheduled for June. The remaining closures will occur between July and the end of 2024, with dates to be announced following the May closure.

Plan your local Epsom and Ewell lunch dates with relatives accordingly...

Related reports:

[M25 diversion cost me £12.50 ULEZ charge](#)

[Going South this weekend?](#)

Epsom and Ewell FC escaping relegation zone?

26 April 2024



Epsom & Ewell FC 2-1 Abbey Rangers. Combined Counties League - Premier Division. Saturday 20th April 2024.

A 2-1 victory over Abbey Rangers marked the end of our brief tenure at the Reg Madgwick Stadium on Saturday and at the same time gained a measure of revenge over our opponents after we lost by the same scoreline over there in November. This win also ended any mathematical hopes they had of reaching the playoffs.

After our superb win over Fleet Town on Tuesday, I felt that this match was a bit of a "freebie" as a Salts win over Guildford City in our final match would have guaranteed safety anyway. However, this result means that we now only require a draw to confirm our survival, and by the time we take the field at the Spectrum next week, it's even possible that other results may have assured our safety. Indeed, had Sheerwater not secured a last minute winner over Cobham this same afternoon, we would be celebrating already!

Maybe unsurprisingly we made only the one change to our line up with Carl Oblitey coming in for the absent Nick Wilson and we stuck with the recent formation of playing three at the back, which was a brave policy playing against a solid and physical Abbey team, but by and large it worked.

Chances were few and far between in the opening exchanges. Jaevon Dyer shot at goal from 20 yards, but it was a fairly easy save for Sam Grey in the Abbey goal. At the other end Dan O'Donovan had one excursion out of his area to clear a break, but we were soon back on the attack and a great pass from Ethan Nelson-Roberts set Will Kendall down the left, although his first time low cross was just out of reach of the incoming Oblitey.

Our opponents probably had more of the ball than we did in the opening half, but we looked solid at the back as they rarely threatened, apart from a decent move on the left that ended with a strike at goal from George Frith that was headed away from goal by Reece Tierney. You could tell from Frith's reaction that he knew the shot was on target, yet within a minute we were the team celebrating after a pass came in from the left towards Oblitey, but before he had a chance to control it, a defender knocked it away, but only into the path of Will Kendall, and although he was at quite an acute angle on our left, his powerful shot from 12 yards went across Grey and into the net off the far post to give us a 36th minute lead.

In response O'Donovan was alert to punch a delivery clear, while at the other end Kendall fell in the penalty area after a coming together between him and Dale Burnham, but nothing was given, which I think was the right call. Then in injury time a break on the right wing resulted in the ball being swept across goal, but fortunately Ross Murdoch, who had scored a hat trick at Camberley a week previously, skied the chance from a good position. Moments later we had a rather generous free kick on the edge of the area, but Adam Green hit the delivery into the defensive wall. We went in at the break a goal ahead.

It was hard to say that we really deserved to be ahead at the break, but we were certainly as dangerous as our playoff chasing opponents and we fashioned a few chances during the second half too. Oblitey saw his long strike deflected, which took all the power off it, while next to try his luck was Green with a free kick from thirty yards after Luke Taylor was fouled, but the shot went just over the bar. Burnham became the second Abbey player in the book for the foul, joining his team mate, former Salt Daryl Cooper-Smith in the first half, but in the 55th minute Dyer collected the ball out on the left and then sent in a superb strike towards the top corner, only for Grey to produce a stunning save to keep his side in the match.

His reward for this great save was precisely nothing as we extended our lead six minutes later when a delivery in from the left was headed out by a defender under pressure from Kendall only for it to fall to Miller, who cut onto his left foot and thumped the ball into the top corner with his so called weaker left foot from 18 yards. It was a goal deserving of winning any match and at 2-0 it certainly looked as though we would be picking up another three points here. However, we received a reminder of our situation just three minutes later when a ball in over our defence was collected and finished past O'Donovan by Ferrey Danso to reduce the scoreline. The goal means that we haven't kept a clean sheet since our goalless draw on 16th December at Colliers Wood United!

At 2-1 up things were a little nervy for a while. Brazier picked up a yellow card for a late foul out on the touchline as we started to get pushed back a little. A tactical substitution was made with Jerry Antwi coming on at the back for Taylor as we reverted to four at the back and we started to look a bit more comfortable again. In fact we nearly scored a third goal in the final minute of normal time when Miller attempted to replicate his earlier strike, but this time he cleared the bar by about a foot.

As time started to run out the visitors pushed forward in the hope of an equaliser and won a free kick right on the edge of our penalty area, but it was deflected wide from a corner, only for O'Donovan to drop the fairly easy catch from the subsequent set piece which led to a little bit of panic in the six yard box before the ball was cleared. Finally, after around seven minutes injury time, which was about the right amount, the final whistle blew and Salts fans could relax again.

It's been a horrible season, but whilst we are not completely safe just yet, the odds are a lot more in our favour than they were seven days ago! One more match remains. See you at the Spectrum!

Epsom & Ewell: Dan O'Donovan, Ethan Brazier, Ethan Nelson-Roberts (c), Adam Green, Reece Tierney, Luke Taylor, Luke Miller, Thompson Adeyemi, Will Kendall, Carl Oblitey, Jaevon Dyer



Subs: Jerry Antwi for Taylor (71)

Report Source: www.eefconline.co.uk

Surrey's next Police and Crime Commissioner will be?

26 April 2024



2nd May 2024 four candidates hope to get your vote for the £73,000 per annum post of Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The core functions of a PCC is to secure the maintenance of an efficient and effective police force within their area, and to hold the chief constable to account for the delivery of the police and crime plan.

Four candidates are vying for the position and here are their responses to Epsom and Ewell Times' request to provide statements for your consideration.



Kate Chinn - Labour

The Conservatives have lost control of crime in Epsom and Ewell', says Kate Chinn, Labour's candidate for Surrey's police and crime commissioner.

'Under the present Conservative commissioner, the record in Surrey is one of utter failure', added Cllr Chinn, Labour leader on Epsom and Ewell Council.

[Read more.....](#)

I was born and raised in Surrey and live with my wife and two daughters in Epsom & Ewell. We don't believe that 75% of women and girls feel safe after dark, like the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner says.

Since 2018 I've been a borough councillor. I'm also a member of the Surrey Police & Crime Panel and my local Community Safety Partnership. I've been a senior police manager and I'm currently an independent adviser on policing. I also founded a local charity to help people living in deprivation in our borough. We focus on helping vulnerable children.

[Read more](#)



Alex Coley - Independent



Paul Kennedy - Liberal Democrat

I came a strong 2nd in the last PCC elections with over 112,000 votes across Surrey; and with Epsom & Ewell constituency now a Liberal Democrat target for the general election, I've already spoken to many of you with our inspirational (ex-military police) parliamentary candidate Helen Maguire.

You've told us you want action on antisocial behaviour, drugs, shoplifting, burglaries and vehicle crime. You're fed up with paying the highest council tax in the country for policing yet feeling less safe.

[Read More](#)



I want to be re-elected as your Police and Crime Commissioner to continue building on the improvements I have driven within Surrey Police.

Since you elected me 3 years ago, I've worked hard to keep Surrey safe, helping secure more police officers for our county than ever before and investing in projects to support communities. I have spoken with many of you and prioritised championing your voice and concerns.

Read more.....



Lisa Townsend - Conservative

The 2021 election produced the following result:

Party	Candidate	1st round		2nd round	
		Total	Of round	Transfers	Total
Conservative	Lisa Townsend	112,260	32.69%	42,856	155,116
Liberal Democrats	Paul Kennedy	69,412	20.21%	42,803	112,215
Zero Tolerance Policing ex Chief	Kevin Hurley	59,554	17.34%		
Independent	David Munro	53,103	15.46%		
Labour	Howard Kaye	40,597	11.82%		
Turnout		343,375			
Rejected ballots		8,449	2.46		
Total votes		334,926			
Registered electors					
Conservative win					

Related Reports:

Epsom and Ewell candidates dominate Police Commissioner election

Epsom's Earth health doctor checks GMC

26 April 2024



Epsom residents led by Dr. **Kristine Damberg** converged Thursday 18th April on the General Medical Council (GMC) headquarters in Central London, decrying what they perceive as the regulator's lackluster response to the urgent health risks posed by climate change. The demonstration, organized by the **Planetary Health Coalition**, aimed to spotlight the pressing need for action on climate-related health issues affecting the community.



Dr Damberg protesting outside General Medical Council.

Dr. **Kristine Damberg**, Senior Simulation Practitioner and ESTH Sustainability Champion based at **Epsom Hospital**, voiced concerns about the immediate health impacts of climate change in the area. She lamented the rise in climate-related ailments among patients, including heat-related illnesses during the 2022 heatwave. Dr. Damberg emphasized the gravity of the situation, citing staggering statistics: "In the UK, 29-43,000 people die unnecessarily every year because of air pollution."

Adding: "Even in a relatively affluent area like Epsom we are seeing these impacts on patients presenting to GP surgeries and hospitals. In the 2022 heatwave there were 3000 excess deaths in the UK and on the wards at Epsom Hospital the temperature was consistently above 30 degrees. It was extremely challenging for staff to work and keep already vulnerable patients safe at these extreme temperatures."

She stressed the imperative for proactive measures, echoing The Lancet's designation of climate change as the most significant global health threat of the 21st century. "We need to act now to protect our community."

However, the GMC's recent efforts to incorporate sustainability into medical ethics guidelines have fallen short, according to Dr. **Rammina Yassaie**, a medic and ethicist. She criticized the optional nature of these additions, stating, "Practising climate-conscious medicine should be a clear duty of a doctor." She called for more robust guidance from the regulator to address the climate crisis head-on.

Epsom resident **Warren Bunce** echoed these sentiments, expressing disappointment in the GMC's perceived inaction. "The General Medical Council's silence on climate change is a betrayal of public health," he asserted. He called for stronger support for healthcare professionals in Epsom and beyond to confront the health consequences of a warming planet.



Protestors also raised concerns about the GMC's financial ties to fossil fuel industries. Dr. Christelle Blunden, a GP from Southampton, highlighted the disconnect between the GMC's ethical standards and its investments. "Doctors want their money out of ecologically destructive industries," Dr. Blunden stated. She emphasized the need for regulatory bodies to lead by example in addressing the climate crisis.

The protest occurred amidst growing legal restrictions on climate activism, with the recent conviction of Dr. Sarah Benn, a GP from Birmingham, serving as a stark reminder of the risks faced by healthcare workers advocating for environmental causes. Dr. Benn's case underscored broader concerns about the erosion of protest rights in the UK, prompting calls for greater protection for activists.

Related reports:

Climate Justice. A generation thing?

Job insecurity upsetting collegiate life

26 April 2024



Nearly 92 per cent of voters in a Surrey University College Union (UCU) indicative survey supported holding a vote of no confidence in the Vice Chancellor, with a further 96 per in favour of a vote for the executive board.

Surrey UCU has been campaigning against 'compulsory' redundancies and financial severance elicited by the University of Surrey in an all-staff emergency meeting on March 6. Vice Chancellor Professor Max Lu (VC) announced the university would have to cut staff and assets as part of cost-saving exercises.

A UCU open letter dated April 11 alleged the university was trying to turn a "£10m deficit" into a "£10m surplus". A spokesperson claimed staff feel they have been "coerced" into redundancy, or "feeling that their hand has been forced".

An academic, who wished to remain anonymous, said: "It's extremely distracting and upsetting [...] Commitment to the university falls and commitment to your work falls. You invest a lot of time into your institution and when your institution doesn't value you back, you question why."

Speaking about her department, she said: "It's horrible. Morale is very low" and people feel "very insecure about their jobs".

High inflation, soaring energy bills and overall cost of living pressures were cited by the VC as reasons why the university needed to reduce its expenditure. Sector-wide problems within Higher Education such as "devaluing domestic tuition fees" and declining numbers of international students "due to external factors" were also highlighted in a letter by the VC

However, the UCU argued that poor financial management in "historical borrowing and significant spending on multi-million-pound projects" undermined the VC's claim. Recent developments include the Surrey Institute for People-Centred AI (opened in 2021) and launching a new medical school with an intake for 2024.

Over 90 per cent of the university's income was borrowed externally, coming second in the UK in 2021/22. Gross debt increased by £16.6m in 2022/23 to £296.5m compared to 2021/22, as the University entered into a new £20m term loan used to support the purchase of a building on campus, this was partially offset as a result of scheduled repayments.

Soaring from 0.1 per cent interest rates in December 2021, to 5.25 in 2023, the university now has to pay back around 4.5 per cent interest in its loans (2024).

"It's a reckless [...] way of living," the academic said, "to borrow, borrow, borrow with the hope that you will make that money back."

Rather than trying to "play with the big boys" and be a Russell Group university or UCL, the academic said, "Surrey needs to play to its strengths" as a small, safe university in Guildford which looks after its students.

Fewer Surrey UCU members voted to start formal industrial action (75.3%) than those in favour of a no confidence motion. Academic staff explained striking would mean taking teaching away from university students, who were not at fault.

The union is meeting on April 22 to discuss the next steps and has invited MP Angela Richardson and parliamentary candidates to attend.

A spokesperson from the University of Surrey said: "Our University is not immune to the unprecedented financial pressures facing the UK's higher education sector - including high inflation, high energy costs, the sustained devaluation of tuition fees and the recent decline in international student numbers. We're taking a focused and nuanced approach to tackling these sector-wide challenges at Surrey, with our approach designed to minimise the impact on our people and our core mission. We are looking at a variety of measures to increase income and save on costs including offering



voluntary severance to some colleagues. We are hoping to avoid compulsory redundancies."