County Councillor Community funding

Surrey residents can now apply for cash grants to improve their local area through the Your Councillor Community Fund. Last year the Fund supported over 380 community projects via Surrey County Councillors, totalling £404,330.

This community fund is flexibly designed to help with costs that can range from purchasing sports equipment for local clubs, to the creation of websites, providing financial support to community groups and projects that improve the quality of life in for residents in Surrey.

Each year, Surrey County Council's 81 councillors each allocate £5,000 of funding within their local communities. With their deep understanding of the needs and priorities of their communities they can ensure that the funding is targeted to areas where it is most needed and where it can make the biggest impact. It can be used across a variety of projects that help promote the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of their communities.

Surrey County Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities Denise Turner-Stewart said: "As a council we are committed to working together with communities to improve the lives of people living or working in Surrey. The Your Councillor Community Fund is a great example of how even a small amount of funding can make a big difference in the communities we serve. These initiatives can help to deliver such things as sports for fitness, places to come together, providing facilities that help improve health and wellbeing and in other cases an improved pride in their local areas.

"It embodies our commitment to empowering local residents to have a say and make a real difference in their own communities. By supporting initiatives driven by the passion and dedication of our residents, we aim to create vibrant, inclusive communities where everyone thrives".

The Your Councillor Community Fund is open now and closes in January 2025.

To apply for money from this year's Your Councillor Community Fund you should contact your Epsom and Ewell Councillor. They are:

Epsom Town & Downs Steven McCormick Epsom Town & Downs Residents Association **Steven.McCormick@surreycc.gov.uk**

Epsom West Bernie Muir Epsom West Conservative bernie.muir@surreycc.gov.uk

Ewell John Beckett Ewell Residents Association john.beckett@surreycc.gov.uk

Ewell Court, Auriol & Cuddington Eber Kington Ewell Court, Auriol & Cuddington Residents Association **Eber.Kington@surreycc.gov.uk**

More information can be found here Your Councillor Community Fund - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk).

Examples of projects funded last year include:

£1,493 to help make Spelthorne cleaner and greener by providing group litter picking equipment which can be loaned out to encourage individuals, groups and schools to adopt an area for regular picking and to take a pride in their local environment.

£2,000 towards equipment for the 2023 Shepperton Village Fair, including banners, sail flags, display board and cashless payment devices.

£700 towards replacing a 25-year-old table tennis table used by Leatherhead U3A Table Tennis Group, helping to keep members physically and socially active.

£1,000 towards new uniforms for Godalming Youth Band. The new polo shirts and hoodies are more suitable for events all year round and will be loaned out, much like the instruments, to help keep music-making as accessible as possible.

As well as Your Councillor Community Funding, there is also funding available via Your Fund Surrey for small and large community projects. Visit **www.surreycc.gov.uk/yourfund** to find out more.

Image: Left to right - County Councillors McCormick, Muir, Beckett and Kington

Green view of Mole Valley elections

Dear Editor,

In Mole Valley national issues probably mostly impacted the main parties who lost support. However these local election results will be of little significance in the forthcoming General Election in Epsom and Ewell constituency for several reasons.

Firstly only a small area of Mole Valley falls within the parliamentary constituency of Epsom and Ewell, namely Ashtead and Leatherhead. While these two areas will be very important to our campaign in the General Election there did appear to be some tactical or protest voting in the local elections in

Mole Valley as there was no great change in turnout. In Leatherhead Liberal Democrats were elected with a similar vote compared with 2023 despite their record of supporting development in the Green Belt.

The Green Party targeted resources in the Dorking area of Mole Valley in order to maintain a previous strong showing there. Secondly, as local elections did not take place for the Epsom Borough Council

area the bulk of voters in the Epsom and Ewell constituency were not able to express their choices at the ballot box.

Nevertheless the threat to the Green Belt will be one of the key issues in the General Election in Epsom and Ewell as a whole so voters will have a genuine opportunity to test candidates about this particular matter, which is of great priority for the Green Party, including in Ashtead and Leatherhead where we

will be actively campaigning to galvanise our support there.

Finally, whilst votes were quite well dispersed across different parties in the local elections in Mole Valley there will be even more parties standing in the General Election in Epsom and Ewell including the Green Party. The share of the vote will also probably be quite dispersed as a result in the General Election and in this scenario tactical voting will be of limited benefit. In such circumstances voters will be well advised to vote for policies they believe in, as a surprise result is quite likely.

Stephen McKenna

Prospective Parliamentary Candidate Green Party Epsom and Ewell

Epsom and Ewell was the first Conservative free Council

Dear Editor.

I refer to your article on the May local elections headed "First Surrey Borough with no Conservative Councillors" and which includes the comment that "The result makes it [Woking] the first council in Surrey not to have a single Conservative councillor." However, that is certainly not the case.

From 1937, when the Borough of Epsom and Ewell was created, and until 2003 (66 years), the Conservative Party was only represented on the Borough Council twice (and by a very small number of councillors). Since 2003 the Conservative Party has maintained a constant presence, but never larger than four in number and it is currently languishing at two.

Whilst I don't wish to diminish the historical importance of the Conservative Party's demise in Woking, they have had to face regular failures at the ballot box in Epsom and Ewell ever since George VI became King.

Yours faithfully,

Eber Kington

Residents Association County Councillor Ewell Court, Auriol and Cuddington

[Mr Kington is an Honorary Alderman of the Borough of Epsom and Ewell and served as Borough Councillor for many years.]

Spelthorne in financial trouble

Inspectors have been sent to Spelthorne Borough Council as concern grows over its ability to deal with its extreme debt and borrowing. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has been working with the borough since May 2022 and now the Secretary of State has weighed in over the "authority's extremely high levels of debt and borrowing".

A letter to Spelthorne Borough Council's chief executive, confirming the department's decision to appoint Lesley Seary to carry out a formal inspection of the council over its capital risk was published on Wednesday, May 8.

It read: "As of March 31 2023, Spelthorne's debt was £1.096 billion, which was 87.1 times the council's core spending power and 52.4 times its total service expenditure."

The average borough council has a debt to spending ratio of 5.65.

A July review of the borough's finances also found the council needed "expert independent support" to assist with its "immediate and ongoing financial challenges" and required help to mitigate its risk as well as improve its governance and decision-making culture.

It comes just four months after another Surrey authority, Runnymede Borough Council was served a notice over its finances, and a year after Woking Borough Council declared itself bankrupt.

Concerns over the council's finances date back to a 2017/18 report from accountants KPMG – published in November 2022. It highlighted concerns over the council's investments and set out the auditor's view that Spelthorne Borough Council had acted unlawfully in borrowing and then purchasing three properties.

The Secretary of State has given certain directions to Lesley Seary's inspection. First, she will examine concerns over the council's governance and scrutiny, with particular attention to its financial arrangements and decision making. She is also looking into the council's ability to carry out its new housing strategy, as well as the impact its investment portfolio has had on service delivery.

The inspector, who will have right-of-access to all council premises and documents, will then report her findings to the Secretary of State by August 30. The council has also been told it cannot destroy any documentation or records.

The letter was sent as part of a best value directive from DLUHC. As part of the process the council must publish its response, together with the letters on its website.

The statement from Spelthorne Borough Council read: "Over a year ago, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) asked the professional body for public sector finance, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), to review Spelthorne Borough Council's investment portfolio and borrowing position.

"The authority has now received a letter from the department advising that they have appointed an independent inspector to undertake a review of Spelthorne Borough Council to seek assurance that the Council complying with its Best Value Duty.

"The Secretary of State decided to commission this inspection to provide him with direct, independent assurance that the council has 'arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, with regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness.'

"The government letter outlines concerns around debt relative to size of the Council's budget and governance whilst acknowledging that Spelthorne Borough Council has engaged constructively with the Department since 2022 and already taken action to mitigate risk.

"DLUHC has appointed Lesley Seary as Lead Inspector, who is independent of government, and has asked her to report her findings to the Secretary of State by 30 August 2024."

Leader of Spelthorne Borough Council, Councillor Joanne Sexton welcomed the review and would work with the inspector and her team.

She said: "This administration has taken many decisive and positive steps since the May 2023 election including instigating a full external independent review of our commercial property portfolio. Additionally, we have reduced future borrowing requirements by nearly £200m and are pursuing alternative ways to deliver more affordable housing. We will continue to work with DLUHC in

an open and transparent way and look forward to receiving the findings of the report."

"The rental income received from our commercial property portfolio more than covers the financing costs and provides a significant contribution to support council services, additionally there is a reserve to cover possible income variation in future years."

Spelthorne's neediest lose out on housing

'Crisis point' in local government funding

Relative relief about Epsom and Ewell's debt?

Leader of Spelthorne Borough Council, Ashford East councillor Joanne Sexton, at the council building in Knowle Green, Staines. Credit: Emily Coady-Stemp

Two horse race coming to Epsom?

The Liberal Democrats continue to tighten their grip on Epsom & Ewell's southern flank in Mole Valley, as the Party cements its position in Leatherhead. With two out of three seats in Leatherhead South now in the hands of the Lib Dems, the Conservatives are now down to just two seats in the whole of the Mole Valley district.

According to the Lib Dem PPC the general election stage in the wider Epsom & Ewell constituency is now set for a two horse race between the Liberal Democrat's **Helen Maguire** and the Conservative **Mhairi Fraser**.

Commenting on the recent Mole Valley Council elections results Helen Maguire said, "Each month we are knocking on 1000s of doors and hearing from residents who are understandably upset with the way this government is running this country. They are looking for a change. With the boundary changes, Labour declaring the seat a non-battleground seat and the Liberal Democrats now having more councillors than the Conservatives across the country, we know there is a good chance of change here in Epsom, Ewell, Ashtead & Leatherhead."

Mhairi Fraser, the Conservative Prospective Parliamentary Candidate responded: "Although the results were not what we had hoped or worked hard for, I am incredibly proud of the integrity our local Conservative candidates showed. We ran an honest campaign focusing on what the Conservatives will continue to fight for on behalf of local residents, without resorting to attacking our individual opponents on the doorsteps or in our literature. I wish the new and re-elected councillors well in the term ahead, but the Conservatives will continue to be the loudest voice against the Liberal Democrats' plans to forever destroy our Green Belt, and to plaster tower blocks over the green spaces in our towns."

Mark Todd, Chair of the Epsom and Ewell Labour Party said: ""As a rule of thumb, Epsom town centre and the north of Epsom and Ewell are strong for Labour, as you move South the areas become more Conservative. We were very heartened therefore by the results in Leatherhead at the local elections. It was the first year Leatherhead has been part of the Epsom and Ewell Constituency and we fielded fantastic local candidates who live and work in the area. We got really good feedback on the doorstep and the Labour vote across Leatherhead increased by 73%. A similar swing will see us win the Epsom and Ewell constituency in the upcoming General Election."

The Labour Party is yet to select a Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for the constituency. Epsom and Ewell Times has been informed that National Labour Party managers are conducting due diligence on all prospective MPs. Once they have completed this, they will give the Epsom and Ewell Labour Party a shortlist for local member's consideration.

Local Council elections in Mole Valley in Leatherhead, which will be within the recently changed boundaries of the Parliamentary Constitution of Epsom and Ewell, produced two Liberal Democrat victories on 2nd May. In Leatherhead North **Benjamin Wear** secured 671 votes with the Conservative candidate **Alan Gibbs** trailing with 327 votes. In Leatherhead South **Gareth Parsons** gained 970 votes against Conservative **Tim Hall** getting 714 votes.

Wards in Ashtead also went to the polls and returned independent candidates with healthy majorities.

2019 General Election result:

	Party	Candidate	Votes	%
	Conservative	Chris Grayling	31,819	53.5
	Liberal Democrats	Stephen Gee	13,946	23.5
	Labour	Ed Mayne	10,226	17.2
	Green	Janice Baker	2,047	3.4
	Independent	Clive Woodbridge	1,413	2.4
	Majority			30.0
Turnout			59,451	73.3

Related reports:

Conservatives adopt new contender for Parliament

LibDem PPC awarded Medal by the King

Grayling not to contest a seventh election

Opposition unite against division of opposition

First Surrey Borough with no Conservative Councillors

Background to Image: Gordon Ednie License details. Heads added by Epsom and Ewell Times.

Inclusive sportsmanship in Worcester Park

The annual Linden Bridge Football Festival kicked off with a vibrant display of teamwork, camaraderie, and sheer determination. Organized by **Linden Bridge School**, Worcester Park, and led by enthusiastic pupils, this event brought together 15 special educational needs (SEN) schools and over 100 pupils for a day of spirited competition.

The festival, held at **Wandgas Sports Ground**, exemplified the inclusive spirit that Linden Bridge School stands for. Students of all abilities participated in various football matches, showcasing their skills and passion for the beautiful game. From footgolf to mini-tournaments, the atmosphere was electric as players cheered each other on.

One of the festival's highlights was the unwavering support from local businesses. **MetroRod**, a leading drainage and plumbing company, stepped up as the main sponsor. Their generous contribution ensured that every participant received a commemorative medal, a symbol of their hard work and dedication. In addition, MetroRod provided trophies for all participating schools, recognizing outstanding performances and sportsmanship.

Coach Dom, from **KEY Sports Academy**, played a pivotal role in making the festival a success. His expertise in organizing sports events and passion for nurturing young talent shone through. Coach Dom lent equipment and offered valuable coaching tips. His commitment to empowering young athletes was evident as he encouraged fair play and teamwork.

"The Linden Bridge Football Festival is more than just a tournament," Coach Dom shared. "It's about fostering a love for sports, building confidence, and creating lasting memories. These students inspire us all with their determination and resilience."

The **Surrey Special Schools Sports Association** (SSSSA) includes the Linden Bridge Football Festival as a key event in its annual calendar. Linden Bridge School takes immense pride in being an active member of the association. This year alone, Linden Bridge pupils have participated in 25 SSSSA-organized events across various sports disciplines.

"Our students thrive when given the opportunity to compete," said Mr. **Borja Vidal**, PE Lead at Linden Bridge School. "The festival allows them to showcase their abilities, make friends, and celebrate their achievements. We're grateful to everyone who made this day possible."

The Linden Bridge Football Festival reminded us that sports transcend barriers, bringing people together in the spirit of unity and joy.

With the success of this year's festival, Linden Bridge School is already planning for next year. The goal remains the same: to create an inclusive platform where every student can shine, regardless of their abilities. As the festival becomes a cherished tradition, it reinforces the belief that sports have the power to transform lives.

Bed pressures rushing doctors

Pressure to free up hospital beds can "rush" clinicians to make under-informed decisions and discharge plans, a coroner has found.

A man who tragically died from hypothermia and chronic alcoholism in **Epsom General Hospital** prompted a coroner to raise concerns that demands on beds can put patient safety at risk.

A local man was admitted to hospital three times from October 22 to December 5, 2022. Each time, the underlying cause of his condition was not diagnosed and he was soon after found to be medically fit for discharge. He died on December 12 2022, after being found profoundly hypothermic the previous day.

Coroner **Caroline Topping** found: "Pressure on staff to vacate hospital bed spaces led to inadequate discharge planning and more than minimally contributed to the death."

It was accepted by the Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust that pressure to vacate hospital bed spaces contributed to the inadequacy of discharge planning. The coroner ruled the need to free up a bed space led to the patient's rushed release on December 5, 2022 without an adequate care plan being in place.

Nationally, the NHS faces significant pressures to use beds as efficiently as possible. The Trust said it will never willingly compromise a person's safety by discharging them sooner than it should.

Clinicians and staff discharged the patient without knowing what underlay his deterioration and how his ability to self-care was impacted.

His expressed wish to go home alone was "erroneously" relied on to justify an "unsafe" discharge on the basis he had capacity to make a decision, according to the coroner's prevention of future death report.

An inquest on March 12 2024, heard how the man was suffering from alcohol related brain damage, impacting his mobility and fluctuating confusion. Malnourished, as a result of his chronic alcohol use, his health had declined and he lost a significant amount of weight over the summer.

Continuing to "abuse alcohol", he was self neglecting and his ability to live alone was reduced. He developed hypothermia in an inadequately heated flat and had not been eating properly.

Contrary to NHS policy, the man was not identified as a vulnerable patient. Any adult unable to take care of themselves (e.g. alcohol as a risk factor) is defined as a vulnerable adult.

The coroner found there was a lack of information sharing and investigation in relation to the discharge planning for the patient.

Reportedly unaware of the discharge planning policy, staff made decisions in a vacuum. There was no understanding of the mans's recent history of frequent admissions, his diagnosis or sufficient investigation of his home circumstances.

The man's family was not involved in the discharge planning. Concerns were raised by the family on a number of occasions about his ability to look after himself. No heed was paid to these worries and the man was discharged on December 5 to live at his own

flat without an adequate care plan in place. He died a week later.

The coroner's report states the Trust has already put in place a number of improvements around effective information sharing and recognition of safeguarding issues, including self-neglect.

However, she "remained concerned" that the hospital's discharge policy remains under review, including how families are involved, meaning it has not been possible to access how effective it is.

The coroner wrote to St George's Epsom and St Helier Hospital Group and NHS England to raise her concerns, which also included pressure to vacate beds leading to rushed under informed decision making and ability to prepare 'properly considered' discharge plans, urging them to take action to reduce the risk of future deaths.

A Trust spokesperson said: "We are deeply sorry that we didn't give [the man] the care that he and his family were entitled to expect, and our heartfelt apology and condolences go out to [his] family.

"We took immediate steps to review our discharge process, adding in additional checks, greater contact with families of vulnerable patients and we have also improved safeguarding training for our staff."

Epsom and St Helier Hospital added they will respond fully to the coroner's concerns within the set timeframe, by June 12, 2024.

Rated as 'good' in an inspection in 2019, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) said it has received the coroner's report on the hospital. The CQC said, as always, it will utilise the information during its forthcoming engagement meetings with the Trust.

Making a racket for new padel centre

Leatherhead could soon host international competition after Surrey's first indoor padel centre was approved. Padel is a racket sport of Mexican origin, typically played in doubles, and is like a mix between Tennis and Squash.

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) has said it is committed to investing in the growth of padel and wants to build more courts that can be used throughout the year.

The new facilities, granted planning permission next to Leatherhead Leisure Centre by Mole Valley District Council, are considered critical to sustaining this growth, the LTA said, and would enable more adults and juniors to enjoy, compete and experience the game.

Six new courts will be will be split by cafe area and viewing platform under a large doom next to Leatherhead Leisure Centre. Councillors agreed the benefits sports and recreation would bring to the borough outweighed the harm the 11 metres-tall dome would have on the green belt.

The LTA has also said the courts would be used at both national and international levels. The dome would be shielded to help it blend in to the surrounding area.

Councillor Roger Adams (Liberal Democrat, Bookham West) said: "I'm all for trees being used as screens and the more we can screen buildings the better and certainly this is a very large building, although it is green, it will be nice just to take the the solid lines away by more planting."

Cllr Raj Haque (Liberal Democrat, Fetcham) said: "This proposal is one of the best ones in terms of sporting facilities that will be provided."

Cllr Simon Budd added that he was pleased the dome was going to be green as the white one in Dorking was now discoloured by mould.

The courts include parking for 24 cars and will occupy land used as a boating lake as well as storage for waste containers.

To help spread the game, developers said they would run outreach programs with nearby schools "encourage involvement with the facility" as well as set up a club and hold regular padel lessons.

The land council owned and will be be leased for use as a padel facility and the dome structure will be fully enclosed to prevent significant light spillage.

Image - example of indoor padel centre

Little solace for Guildford from fraud report

Weak governance and poor scrutiny at Guildford Borough Council created a 'quick fix culture' that allowed potentially millions of pounds to be defrauded from the public purse while vulnerable housing tenants suffered, a new report has found.

The council has apologised unreservedly and pledged to adopt every recommendation – of which there are more than 70 – after a Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) review found its practices posed a serious risk to residents.

The report, released on Tuesday May 7, covered how the culture at the council created an environment where housing budgets were able to skyrocket and pushed the authority towards bankruptcy.

It covers a general overview of the stages that lead to an arrest, two council staff members being suspended, and five agency workers having their contracts terminated.

In February 2022, the council agreed to invest a total of £24.5m to bring its housing stock up to standard and a three-year contract with a value of £5.4m was agreed for testing and inspection. In less than three years that ballooned to £18.9m spent - a £13.5m overspend.

There was an increase in complaints concerning repairs and enhancements from tenants, the review found. This happened while the Housing Surveyor Team was vacant and had no permanent surveyors.

The report read: "This lack of in-house expertise and capacity meant that the council often didn't inspect and check work and were reliant upon agency staff. There was also incompleteness of data which compounded matters." It added: "After making initial enquiries, it came to light that there was concern regarding risk to the council and the following matters were raised:

That work may have been ordered when it wasn't necessary. *That work may have been ordered, invoiced and paid for when it was not completed at all or *Not to a satisfactory standard. *That duplicate invoices may have been submitted and paid for the same work. *That works may have been ordered and undertaken that were not the responsibility of the council.

This triggered a criminal investigation in August 2023 resulting in the suspension of two employees and five agency workers having their contracts terminated.

Whistleblowers first raised the alarm in September 2022 but it was not until 2023 that serious action into how housing budgets of about £5.4m a year had ballooned to more than £17m.

The initial investigation was conducted by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council's anti-fraud unit before being handed over to the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit of the Police.

The council then ordered a series of reviews, with the results published late on Tuesday, May 7 – although the allegations of potential fraud were outside the review's scope.

Despite that shortcoming, the review did find there was serious failure to follow due process in the procurement and management of housing maintenance contacts.

The council has now published an in-depth improvement plan, with more than 70 recommendations, to address every finding from the two reports, and, it says, to ensure it provides services that residents and businesses can be proud of.

Leader of the Council, Councillor **Julia McShane**, said: 'The people of Guildford deserve better from their council and for that we give a heartfelt apology and a commitment to put right the long-standing issues which we have uncovered. We have invited scrutiny and embrace accountability and will not rest until we have a resilient, well managed council of which we can all be proud.'

Deputy leader, Cllr **Tom Hunt**, said: 'We apologise unreservedly to the residents and taxpayers of Guildford. The SOLACE reports identify serious issues around the council's governance, operations, and controls. This is unacceptable. We are utterly determined to root out every problem and to put matters right. The people of Guildford deserve nothing less.'

Pedro Wrobel, chief executive of Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils, said: "I recognise everything that the SOLACE reports identify, and accept all the findings in full. This is not okay, and I came here to deal with it. Over the past two and half months, we have been developing a comprehensive Improvement Plan to address the issues at Guildford Borough Council. It addresses every recommendation from these reports and goes further.

"I am delighted with the appointment of the Independent Assurance Panel. It is critical that we make everything open and transparent. We are here to do the right thing, not the easy thing. I am determined to ensure the council is sustainable, delivers

excellent value for money, and provides services that our residents and businesses can be proud of.

"We will not do this alone. I look forward to working with partners and our communities and businesses to make Guildford a brilliant place to live, work and do business."

A police investigation and an employment investigation carried out by an external law firm are continuing, the council said.

The Local Democracy Reporting Service has read through the documents with this being the first of several stories to be written about the findings.

Further stories will look in greater detail at the steps the council is taking, the impact of the merger with Waverley Borough Council and the views of the community and residents.

Related reports:

Police probe abuse of public funds

Good money goes after bad

County lines of trees

Surrey County Council has worked with residents and community groups to plant over 36,000 new trees across the county. The council remains on track to plant 1.2 million trees by 2030, marking one for every resident.

Since the launch of the initiative in 2019, over 510,744 trees have now been planted across the county. This year, 1952 metres of new hedgerows have been planted during this year's tree planting season, offering habitats for wildlife.

A range of community projects have also been undertaken to support our ambitions to improve air quality and biodiversity. These include:

- A group of 180 community members came together to plant over 7300 hedgerow trees at Bocketts Farm to support birds, mammals and other wildlife.
- 42 trees were donated to Bronzefield Women's Prison in Ashford and the tree Planting and Establishment team delivered a workshop to those women who were undertaking horticultural gualifications.
- 2625 native broadleaf trees were planted in The Priory C of E School in Dorking using an experimental planting technique, Miyawaki/Tiny Forest. This technique of dense tree planting restores naturally occurring native species and speeds up natural ecological succession.

The new webpages have also been developed to include an interactive tree map, tree planting advice and tips for how residents can get involved. More details are available **here**.

Marisa Heath, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for the Environment, said, "I'm delighted that we are progressing our ambition to plant 1.2 million new trees in Surrey as we work to both meet net zero targets but also make our county as green and beautiful as possible.

"This is not something we can deliver alone and we will continue to work with our partners and communities to achieve this target. I encourage residents to visit our new **webpages** to find out how they can get involved."

Image credit: rawpixel.com