

Surrey County Update

Lightwater, West End and Bisley Division

By Cllr Rebecca Jennings-Evans

Plans submitted for short breaks centres for adults with support needs

New purpose-built accommodation is being planned to give adults with learning disabilities or autism a change from their daily routine and their families a break from their caring responsibilities. Surrey County Council has submitted plans for two new short breaks centres – in Woking and Banstead – each featuring ensuite bedrooms, activity spaces and landscaped gardens. Concept images show how the centres could look. The accommodation will be part of Surrey's short breaks service for adults who have learning disabilities or autism, or both. The service provides supportive places where they can make new friends, connect with their communities and gain new skills. While they're enjoying new experiences and activities at a welcoming location, family carers are able to recharge their batteries and take some time away from their caring roles.

Half price bus fares for under 20s

Young people aged 5 – 20 are now entitled to 50% off bus fares on all single and return journeys across Surrey by showing Surrey County Council's new 'LINK' card. The card is free of charge and young people (or parents/carers on their behalf) can apply online at www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreylink

County Council to drive nature recovery in Surrey

Surrey County Council has been awarded over £250,000 to produce a 'nature recovery plan' for Surrey which will map out actions with landowners, local communities and others to help restore nature across the county. Known as a Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Surrey County Council is [one of 48 local authorities](#) to be given responsibility for this work by DEFRA, which will address the current nature crisis across England. The strategy will focus on measures needed to reverse biodiversity loss, reconnect habitats, and protect wildlife. It will also consider other environmental benefits including flood regulation, water quality, resilience to wildfires, carbon sequestration and improved access to green space for health and wellbeing.

Changing Futures

Surrey has secured an additional £1.1m until March 2025 to continue to support its most vulnerable adults experiencing homelessness, substance use, mental health and neuro-divergent challenges, domestic abuse and/or contact with the criminal justice system, to make positive life changes while making sure they do not fall through gaps between services.

“Bridge the Gap” is a relational model of long-term specialist community outreach provided by trauma-informed specialists commissioned locally through an alliance of Surrey Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Organisations and is one of several interrelated projects funded by the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities and the National Lottery under the Changing Future Programme. The aims of the programme include achieving improved outcomes for people experiencing multiple disadvantage at individual, system and service level.

An evaluation of the Changing Futures Programme to date identifies positive outcomes for individuals and an excellent potential return in investment. Experts by experience in partnership with the Changing Futures Programme Team are delighted with the accomplishments to date and will continue to seek long term sustainable funding for this pioneering programme.

Multi-million pound transformation for Surrey libraries

A multi-million investment into Surrey’s libraries has been approved by Cabinet to modernise services and create flexible, innovative and inclusive spaces. The work is part of the library strategy focused on ensuring that Surrey libraries deliver a service that is fit for the future and accessible to all. The first phase of this work will focus on 5 key libraries with completion expected by the end of 2024. For **Epsom, Woking and Redhill** this means the creation of flagship facilities and for **Staines and Weybridge** the creation of community ‘Hubs’.

Read the full press release on the [Surrey News website](#)

Free emotional wellbeing and mental health support guide

Public Health’s ‘First Steps’ booklet and [online resource](#), is for anyone aged 18 years or above who is looking to take the first steps to improve mental well-being for themselves, their friends or family members. There is also information for [young people](#) too. ‘First Steps’ provides a range of advice, information, and self-help techniques that can help support emotional well-being; as well as details of local and national organisations that can provide support.

For paper copies of the booklet, please email healthandwellbeing@surreycc.gov.uk with a contact name, delivery address and how many you require (boxes have 96, but you can order smaller amounts).

If you would like this information in large print, Braille, Easyread, on CD or in another language please contact us on:

- Telephone: 0300 200 1005
- SMS: 07527 182861
- Email: contactcentre.adults@surreycc.gov.uk

Local Issues

1. Meetings with Lightwater Society and subsequent inclusion to the Lightwater Society in an ex officio role, advising the Society, along with Cllr Kevin Thompson.
2. Aiding families with EHP and SEN concerns.
3. Dealing with grass cutting complaints.
4. Continuing road improvements work within the village.
5. Working on Active transport solutions in the village in particular placement of a cycle rack.
6. Supported Lightwater Library with a Your Fund Surrey Small Project Grant – to aid with renovations and lighting replacement.
7. Meeting with local residents