

● Surbiton acrobatic star Katie Hardwick has died at the age of 38. She vowed shed become a trapeze artist when she was just six. Full story on p4

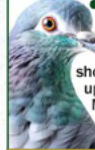


A proposal to extend the hours of a seldom-used 'ambulance bay' outside the 39-flat Moray House retirement complex in Church Hill Road, near St Mark's church, has been rejected. It would have stopped other vehicles parking there at any time, instead of the current Mon-Fri, 8am-6.30pm ban, but councillors on Surbiton's neighbourhood committee questioned why it was there in the first place, and asked for clarification on whether it was needed.

Bay watch



● Yet another stonking year for Surbiton High's sixth-formers, with 28% of all A-level grades at A*, seven students bound for Cambridge and three for Oxford. An impressive 81% of the class of 2024 are going on to Russell Group or Times Top Ten universities.



● A brazen pigeon moved in to Sainsbury's, making the Victoria Road supermarket its home for a week, and dining on crumbs in the bakery section. "It gave me a shock on Saturday morning when it fluttered up before me... and it was there again on Monday," said shopper Louella Gwillim. A pest firm finally evicted the tenant. Any longer and it'd have got a Nectar card.

It's Strictly Chris

Comic Chris McCausland becomes the first blind contestant on Strictly Come Dancing when the 22nd series of the hit BBC dance show starts next week. Chris, 47, who's lived round the corner from Surbiton station since 1996, when he studied at Kingston Uni, admits: "If anyone out there is thinking 'How the hell's he going to do that?' then rest assured, I'm thinking the same!"



The stand-up says he can't dance, doesn't dance and hasn't danced, but he's had encouragement from his psychologist wife of 12 years Patricia, and daughter Sophie.

He loves Surbiton, calling himself "just a Scouser in a Royal borough"; and jokes: "I'm doing my little bit to bring down the property prices."

Appearing on Strictly will, he hopes, help break down disability barriers (though he admits there's a risk all he might break down is scenery). "My kind of ambition is to make people forget I'm blind," he said, adding that one thing he really dislikes about any kind of performing is that it invariably takes place in overheated, airless rooms.

Perhaps he can get tips from fellow Surbitonian and Strictly star Erin Boag? **Tim Harrison**

Festival arrives in town

The Surbiton Festival on Sat, Sept 28, 10am-4pm, includes a midday parade through town from St Andrew's Sq, led by Surbiton Royal British Legion Youth Marching Band, classic cars and motorbikes.

Ninety stalls will line Victoria & St Andrew's roads, with food, drink and live music in the square and Claremont Gdns. Line-up: surbitonfestival.co.uk/music2024 Don't miss the teddy bears picnic in Claremont Gdns; a focus of younger children's activities.

● A middle rail has been added to the pond-dipping platform in the restored



Fishponds after a toddler fell in... but mum Liza Ateh fears the extra strut is not enough to prevent further accidents.

Son Lian was with his grandad in the park off Hollyfield Road. "My father turned away for a split second and Lian fell through the gap," she said.

Grandad, 65, who jumped in to rescue, was in shock and refuses to return there.

Liza, of Alpha Road, said her lad only had minor bruising, although both were covered in mud from head to foot. "It needs some kind of protective mesh, especially when it's slippery," said Liza.

Pond reopening ceremony on p6.

Langleys was 'just too big'

The sudden closure of Langleys brasserie dismayed regulars... but why did it shut after more than a decade?

Mine host Bevan Hoogewerf told The Good Life: "Langleys was so good for so long, but by May this year it was dead. The problem? It was too big; it was a monster!"

He said that, economically, the eatery at the corner of Ewell and Langley roads never fully recovered from Covid's impact.

So what next? Bamanoosh, the diner opposite, is understood to be moving in, retaining its Persian cuisine at the current Ewell Road address, then reviving Langleys with a Mediterranean menu.

Bevan, 48, now runs Thames Ditton's busy Old Cranleighs sports club. The South African's CV includes owner of The Trust at Weston Green, banqueting manager at Simpson's in the Strand, and catering chief at Coombe Hill golf club.

The 1886 building at the corner of Ewell and Langley roads was once Bell's, where Eric Clapton bought his first guitar. Before that, in 1919, it was Waitrose's 13th UK branch. As a restaurant it was Liberty Bell, Victoriana and L'Esperance before Langleys.



● A first glimpse into Bosco's lounge, near to reopening after a bold refurb at the bijou St Mark's Hill hotel.

Parking hours alter

Parking restrictions are being beefed up in St Andrew's Square, with only permit holders allowed Mon-Sat, 8am-6.30pm, rather than Mon-Fri 10am-4pm as before. Plans for a bike hangar opposite No6 have been shelved and an alternative nearby location sought.

80-year-old bailed ahead of murder trial

The murder trial of Alan Sharp, 80, of Raeburn Avenue, accused of strangling wife Jenny, also 80, on July 19, has been fixed for March 31 next year. Judge Mark Lucraft KC granted Sharp conditional bail and ordered him to appear at the Old Bailey for a plea hearing in October. Sharp's three adult sons were in court to hear their father confirm his identity from Wandsworth prison via videolink. A post-mortem revealed that Jenny died from manual compression of the neck.

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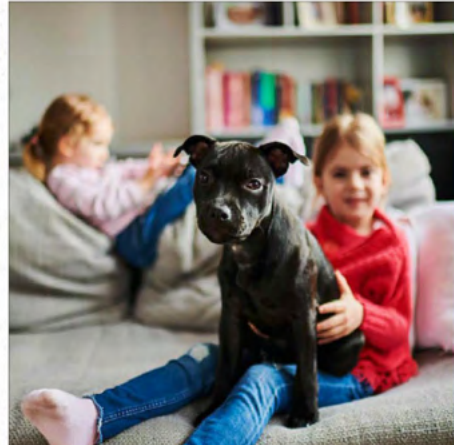
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● Every picture tells a story, although this one requires a leap of imagination. It seems to represent the end of an eventful night out; a half-smoked Havana cigar sitting alongside the dregs of a McDonald's milkshake. Thanks to reader Peter Parker, who took the snap by a low wall in St James' Road.



● The former Polish deli by the Brighton Road railway bridge is to become the Monte Bianco Italian cafe, with pavement tables.



Dim sum to dhansak

After a decade of dim sum, Naturally Chinese has turned Indian, vying with East India, Red Rose, Delhi by Nature and Joy in the town's curry quarter. Koyal is a joint venture by the owners of Bib Gourmand-rated Dastaan in Ewell and Moksha in Kingston Road, New Malden. They'd repainted the premises at the corner of Brighton and Balalava roads before the ink was dry on the 20-year lease! Wallakers handled the letting, at £45,000 annual rent for a 2,500sq ft eatery seating 135, with a private room used by, among others, Chelsea footballers. Naturally Chinese, with its gluten-free USP, lasted 11 years, but owner Amie Lee's dream of turning it into a franchise foundered on a lack of investors. Koyal is Hindi for cuckoo, which is the logo. Dastaan chef Nand Kishor will run the kitchen. It should be open by the time you read this.

Tim Harrison



Green-fingered Vic Choules was an exhibitor at Esher & Molesey Garden Society's show held at St Nicholas, Thames Ditton. Vic, of Cleaveland Road, regularly supplies the French Table in Maple Road with veg from his Lynwood Road, Thames Ditton, allotment. Here he is with a Jaune Gros de Paris pumpkin, grown from (whisper it) a Lidl seedling!



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A French guide

General manager Christophe Vitalien (right) and The French Table team are, says owner Sarah Guignard, thrilled to be included in the 2024 Good Food Guide. The guide says that any restaurant which can tempt people out in the grim chills of February, as can the much-vaunted eatery in Maple Road, really does have something going for it. Perhaps its warmth of service and hospitality, rated Very Good, has something to do with it. "Our wines are reliably abuzz with the French Table's satisfied customers," concludes the website's critics.



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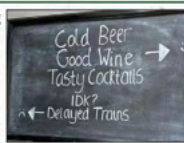
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● A 'New British Butcher Shop' is promised at the Ewell Road premises which for four years has been Iraqi Adam Ameen's Kamran Halal, selling goat, venison, geese etc.

● An alluring choice from the Surbiton Flyer: delayed trains one way, or cold beer tother!



● A new £20,000 kitchen at St Mary's community hall will benefit regular hirers. Ditton's councillor Nicky Darby, who championed the bid for community funding, cut the ribbon at the hall behind the Long Ditton church on Sept 1. It's also available for events. To book, call 020 8339 0008 or visit stmaryslongditton.org.uk/community-hall



● Hope the food 'quality' is better than the sign! Thanks to Tony Dale for spotting this in Tolworth



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Editor: **Tim Harrison**

Set up at the start of 2012, the community paper for Surbiton, Tolworth, Berrylands & Long Ditton appears regularly from March to December. We deliver to 12,300 homes. Issues are also on our website. We're always delighted to hear from you, whether it's about editorial or advertising, or joining our band of loyal volunteers who help us deliver.

Email thegoodlifesurbiton@gmail.com Between issues. Join nearly 9,000 locals who follow us on Instagram (just scan the QR code) and Facebook @thegoodlifesurbiton or visit our website: thegoodlifesurbiton.co.uk

This paper is also available at Michael's shoe repairs; Shoes at Last; the cornerHOUSE arts centre, and direct by post (see above).





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Scare in square

It'll be renamed St Andrew's **Scare** for a friends' group Halloween event on Oct 31, after a busy summer of litter picking and gardening.

Quizzers gather

Join a quiz night on Sat, Oct 5, at Long Ditton village hall, Ewell Road, opposite Long Ditton rec. 6.30pm. Call Joanne Hall 020 8398 5637 to book. £10 each. Max eight per team.

Bid for new house

Permission is sought for a detached home with carport on the site of a demolished garage by St Anne's House, Cockcrow Hill, Long Ditton. Elmbridge Council will determine.

Walk for man van

Surbiton freemasons helped sponsor Nigel Feltham, 63, as he raised £2,500 for a prostate-testing 'man van' by walking 120km in four days.

Meeting dates

Surbiton neighbourhood committee meets Tue, Sept 10, then on Thu, Oct 10. 7.30pm, Glenmore House, The Crescent. Planning, traffic and community issues on the agenda.

Chilly bird chat

Surbiton Birdwatchers' free meeting on Sept 17 is Chris Collins' talk on Birds of Arctic Russia. 7.30pm at St Matthew's School, Langley Road.

Stopwatch

The clock on St Andrew's church, Maple Road, went on strike in last month's heat... stuck at 1.53.



Church open day

St Matthew's church, built in 1875 and listed, will be part of the heritage open day scheme from 10am-4pm on Sat, Sept 14, with talks, organ music, tours, banner-making, cake & cippas.

From top to toe

He broke a toe on holiday, but ex-Tolworth librarian Matthew Bowman hobbled to the cornerHOUSE to talk to the historical society on the Bow Street Runners. Next up: Tue, Oct 1, 7.30pm, it's the early British army.

A snip at £30,000

The Fellowship Barber Shop in Maple Road is recruiting. Salary up to £30k plus benefits. Email CV to info@thefellowshipbarbershop.co.uk

Oh, give us a sign

An advertising hoarding can go up on Long Ditton village hall, say planners. But the sign, by the recreation ground, can't be lit up.

Get on yer bike!

Dr Bike's free 10-minute once-overs are outside Surbiton station on Thu, Sept 19, 4-7pm; adjusting brakes, indexing gears and lubricating. Police will also offer security marking.

Charge point plea

Kingston Council wants residents to suggest which lampposts would be most usefully adapted to include electric vehicle charging points.

SURBITON LIFE

by David Cox



As the new intake began to arrive, two teachers were assigned to spot any signs of Competitive Dad Syndrome

Deep breath, then telephone

Got the exam blues? Help is at hand. Follow Rim Bouilla's lead. The Surbiton student topped her class in her first year at uni, having landed a place through Clearing, the post-results application process. Rim, 18, of the Seething Wells campus in Portsmouth Road, rang Kingston University's free Clearing hotline (0800 0483 334, open until Oct 21) after a pal's tip-off. She enrolled on a new computer science and AI course and did the uni's future skills module, aimed at boosting career prospects. "The operator was supportive and helped me work through all my options," said Rim, a video gaming fan with dreams of developing her own software. "I've been amazed what a friendly place university can be." Universities UK chief Vivienne Stern advised: "Take a deep breath! Take your time, take advice and pick up the phone."

Born and raised in Tunisia, Rim has fallen in love with Surbiton's leafy riverside. Lecturer Graeme Jones called her a shining example of determination.



Rim Bouilla

"She's proven a highly capable student; diligent in her studies and an inspiring mentor," he said. Now embarking on her second year, Rim is a student ambassador, helps at open days and advises undecided pupils. And if you're weighing up options after GCSE results, some timely news. Kingston College, with its bold new frontage and enhanced facilities, has just wowed Ofsted, which graded every facet either Good or Outstanding. "It's a glowing tribute to the remarkable work done by our wonderful staff, students and governors," said chuffed chief executive Peter Mayhew-Smith, pledging: "We'll build on this to develop even further."

Student Personal Development and Behaviour & Attitudes were both declared Outstanding after a gruelling four-day inspection by 15 officials. "Staff at all levels care very much about their learners and apprentices, and provide them with excellent support, including counselling and mental health," Ofsted's inspection report concluded. Students "feel safe and know who to turn to if they have a concern".

Ofsted also praised the strong links the college has with employers, and extolled the calibre of work placements organised by Kingston College. It offers full-time courses, apprenticeships, access, undergraduate and adult education. For details about its open days visit stcg.ac.uk/events/category/179-open-events

After Hampton Court garden festival, three Mini Cooper planters, marking 60 years since the car's Monte Carlo win, sprung up by Fishponds Park, near the site of the garage where the marque was born.



The 281 now runs to Tolworth station, with a revised timetable allowing for longer journey times due to Surbiton's 20mph limit. When this old bus plied the route in 1973 you got to Hounslow in 50 minutes. Now it's 90... on a good day.



Squire's boss Martin Bredy, left, thanked Long Ditton garden centre customers for raising £1,793.19 for the Princess Alice Hospice. Group chair Sarah Squire added that partnerships with local charities were vital to community life.

Lola wins gold for her dad

Lola Anderson won gold at Paris, then was tearful recalling how, as a 14-year-old at Surbiton High, she'd scribbled in her diary her dreams of Olympic rowing glory.

Instantly embarrassed, she tore the page out and binned it... but her dad found it, kept it, then gave it back to her seven years on, after he'd been diagnosed with terminal cancer. He died two months later.

That scrumpled page propelled Lola, 26, to a gold medal as a quarter of the women's quadruple skulls, pipping the Netherlands at the line. "It's overwhelming," she said. Princess Anne did the honours.

Lola began rowing at the Surbiton Crescent school in Year 8, then continued at uni. Post-graduation, she returned to Surbiton High as a rowing coach. "Lola's journey from young rower to Olympic champ epitomises her commitment and passion for the sport," said Surbiton High.



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Background image of various house silhouettes in different colors.

Matthew James



A stunning force of grace

Trapeze artist, circus skills teacher and aerial performer Katie Hardwick has died at 38; cruelly struck down by a rare, aggressive form of adrenal cancer that affects one in a million.

Katie, who also made her name as a magazine cover model, performed around the world; her long blonde hair adding an extra wow factor to gravity-defying displays on ropes and silks.

She founded Circus Suburbia in 2010 in the garden of her home in Surbiton Crescent, opposite Surbiton High School, supplying event packages and coaching beginners. It was, she said, "not so much an agency as a group of performing friends who provide entertainment".

She could conjure up troupes of acrobats for parties or corporate launches, and in 2015 helped break the Guinness world record for aerial synchronised silk performing.

Katie regularly entertained local audiences at the Lamb pub, Rose

theatre, Bental centre and Surbiton Festival.

Born in Kingston Hospital, Katie was six when she informed parents John and Sally that she would be a trapeze artist... and never wavered from that unconventional career choice.

While at Maple Infants she did ballet classes, and continued honing acrobatic skills through St Andrew's & St Mark's Juniors, Tolworth Girls' and college in Falmouth, where she studied creative writing when not dangling from the ceiling.

Kate Evans, humanist celebrant and fellow stiltwalker, led tributes at a ceremony at Pembroke Lodge, Richmond Park, on the last day of July; one of many students of Katie's patient tuition. "She was a stunning force of grace, a community builder, an ally to many, an inspiration to us all," she said.

The eldest of six, Katie mastered stilts, human pyramids, juggling, trapeze, hula hoops and aerialist acts suspended from silk ribbons, then passed on that mastery to others.

She embraced risk. Holidays often involved perilous rock climbs (with practice at Tolworth's White Spider centre), but it was aerial circus which carried most potential danger. A major right knee injury in 2016 necessitated surgery, but sheer grit carried her to a full recovery.

Her earliest recorded stunt – still in nappies – was balancing on her father's head, but it was as a six-year-old at Glastonbury that she first experienced trapeze; paving the way to circus training and a teenage act called Starfix with her pal Leyla, creating flowing mid-air silk displays. She rarely missed Glastonbury in subsequent decades.

When festival founder Sir Michael Eavis heard about Katie's cancer battle he insisted the family attend this year as his guests. Katie was there on a mobility scooter, barely a week before her death. The family will scatter her ashes at Glastonbury Tor, near the festival site which meant so much to her.

At her life celebration, dad John said Glastonbury proved to Katie that there were alternatives to standard career paths, and led her into the world of creativity, art and storytelling. "She showed us all how to live a full life; how to be beautiful, kind and generous, making such a difference to so many." Rosie Hardwick, speaking for all five siblings, said her big sis had demonstrated what it meant to be an incredible human.

Katie's striking, angular face and blue



Left: Prach Photography
Portrait: Jennie Scott
Below: Tangle Photography



eyes were in demand by modelling agencies and arty photographers. She appeared in films and videos, performed on stage, including in *The Great Gatsby*, and lives on forever as the face of photographer Kirsty Mitchell's *Wonderland* project.

At the service celebrating her life, friends spoke of a beautiful soul, now flying in higher realms. In Katie's memory the family invites donations to a bursary fund (gofundme.com/f/help-katie-fight-acc) to support young performers of the future. She leaves parents John and Sally, brothers and sisters Will, Maggie, Rosie, Linus and Finlay, and four little nephews and nieces who she adored. **Tim Harrison**

● Katherine Hardwick, b September 23 1985, d July 9 2024

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M&S commits to Surbiton

In a move which commits Marks & Sparks to Surbiton for the next two decades, the firm has pumped half a million pounds into a top-to-toe revamp of its cramped food shop in the heart of town.

Gutted and refitted in a six-week blitz, the new-look Simply Food at 78 Victoria Road is one of the first M&S 'convenience stores' to be tackled. Eighty London branches will get a refurb, but the 67 least profitable outlets will be axed in the next three years. Among them is Redhill, where traders reckon the closure will rip the heart out of the town.

Surbiton's new store has 23 staff, and a dedicated flower section, which is in direct competition with nearby Simon Smith Flowers.

Manager Pedro Magalhaes cut the ribbon and thanked customers for their patience while work was going on. The 2,500sq ft foodhall stocks a wider range of products.

Childrens Yoga
Stories, music, movement and mindful games!

All tills are self-service (although staff will assist if needed), and the bakery has been hoiked upstairs to free room on the shop floor.

Murals include the clocktower and 'Berrylands lawn tennis club', which doesn't exist. Maybe there wasn't room for 'Surbiton Racket & Fitness Club'?

To save energy, fridge doors slide and LED lighting is on timers. Fridges are narrower so aisles are wider. Hours: Mon-Sat 7am-9pm, Sun 8am-9pm.

Book your classes at www.hannah.yoga/bookings

Caring local club

Look out for this man at the Surbiton Festival on Sept 28: Surbiton Rotary Club president David Twaite. He and his volunteers support good causes, and will be at a stall at the station end of Victoria Road, 10am-4pm to tell you about them. "We're a friendly group, committed to improving lives in our community and abroad," he said. "We also work with groups who improve our green spaces to make our neighbourhood more pleasant." The club supports groups like the Surbiton Club for the Blind, Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness and Alfriston Day Centre, and appeals such as ShelterBox and Aquabox. It also works with Friends of Fishponds Park and Queen's Prom Friends. Coming up in December is the Christmas Collection with Santa Claus chugging round the streets in a vintage sleigh, belting out carols and festive numbers. Could you be one of Santa's helpers? For more on the charity visit surbitonrotary.org.uk or email surbitonrotary@gmail.com.



Good Life editor Tim Harrison and sidekick Jane Grove had a parley in the parlour with the mayor, Cllr Liz Green, and a guided tour of the Royal borough's artefacts. You can too on Sat, Sept 14, during Open House. Sign up at openhouse.org.uk/listings/6960

The borough's first lady hosts a quiz night to support her mayoral charity, Habitats & Heritage, at Kingston Guildhall, on Fri, Oct 11, 7.30pm. £15 per person, up to six in a team. "If you are an individual or have fewer than six, email mayors.office@kingston.gov.uk and we'll place you with others," said Cllr Liz Green. There'll be a welcoming glass of fizz, a raffle and a bar. Bring your own nibbles. Booking deadline Fri, Oct 4. To reserve a place, see the Upcoming Events section at kingston.gov.uk/mayor/mayors-events-civic-functions

Join a historic 'pub crawl' when mayor's attendant Brian Sullivan leads a walk on Sun, Sept 15 to discover Surbiton's history via hostelrys - The Coronation Hall at the start and The Victoria (pictured) at the end. You also get a rare peek inside the Coronation clocktower. Tickets £20 (over 18s only). Meet 12.45pm at Surbiton station. Tour ends 3pm. Free drinks included. It's in aid of the mayor's charity this year; local environment group Habitats & Heritage. Book under Upcoming Events at kingston.gov.uk/mayor/mayors-events-civic-functions



Two locks are better than one, says Cllr Ian Manders. Kingston Council works with the police to put stickers (right) on cycle stands, urging cyclists to double lock through frame and wheels - one front, one back. "I hope it has some effect," he told the Surbiton neighbourhood committee. Stickers' QR codes link to more security tips and bike parking info. "Using two locks slows thieves down and makes your bike less of a target," said the Met police. "Use two quality locks; at least one of which is a D-lock. Thieves are less likely to carry multiple tools."



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Restored ponds are vibrant

Dragonflies wheeled over Fishponds' interlocking pools as a £150,000 restoration was opened by mayor Cllr Liz Green, who lopped a bramble stem in two; a natural alternative to ribbon. The winged insects have been around for 300 million



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years, council biodiversity guru Elliot Newton told a rapt audience in the bank holiday sun. Though delayed by bad weather, the relining and reconfiguration will encourage wildlife. Given time, the ponds will fill to old levels. The mayor urged people to join friends' groups, such as those of Fishponds, "to keep our open spaces special". Elliot then led pond-dips for close-up study of newts.

● Ditton Dragons, skippered by Good Life deliverer Desiree Harris, won Kingston Dragon Boat Festival's mixed race for the third time on the trot, paddling 200 metres at Canbury Gardens in 44.29 secs. "See the cup, be the cup, get the cup," bellowed Desiree to the seven other women and eight men who beat 14 teams. The Dragons, parents of Long Ditton infant and juniors, celebrated raising over £1,000 for the schools at their Plough and Harrow 'HQ'.



● To combat the effects of increasing rainfall due to climate change, five miles of new channels off the Thames will prevent flooding downstream through Surbiton and Kingston.

The aim is to take excess water away, stopping the river bursting its banks, destroying infrastructure and homes. Extra gates in Sunbury, Molesey and Teddington weirs (which are the last on the Thames) will ease flow, while the riverbed will be lowered beyond Walton to increase capacity.

Construction will be from late 2026 to early 2032, with the flood channels operational from 2033. New wildlife habitats and green community spaces will also be created in the River Thames Scheme. Visit riverthamescheme.org.uk/about-the-scheme/why for a short video on how it will work.

● If your home or business has previously been affected by Thames flooding, Surrey County Council would like to hear about your experience, to build a fuller picture.

To find out more visit riverthamescheme.org.uk/media-centre/news/share-your-flooding-experience

Mayor Cllr Liz Green had a close encounter with bullocks at Tolworth Court Farm Fields to mark transforming the 42 hectare site off Kingston Road into one of London's leading nature reserves.

Having cattle there for the first time in half a century for the Wild Tolworth Rewilding Project was a taster of what is to come in terms of conservation grazing, to promote ecological recovery and create new habitats for wildlife.

Guided tours were led by council biodiversity officer Elliot Newton.



Talking bullocks



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● Good Life deliverer Helen Regan wants to thank the couple who found her purse in Alexandra rec and returned it to her bank. "I was in a mad panic," said Helen. "They didn't leave a name." Was it you? Email thegoodlifedurbiton@gmail.com



● Ed Stacey-Clear, Toni Izard and Steve Lucas press apples at Surbiton farmers' market, selling juice by the bottle and cup. Have fruit you don't need? Don't waste it. Abundance Kingston will harvest. www.ttkingston.org/contact



● A community open day at Edith Gardens focuses on wellbeing and rewilding on Sat, Sept 14, 11am-2pm. The site off Raeburn Avenue is a thriving nature reserve managed by Surbiton-based Citizen Zoo. Go to eventbrite.co.uk, search for Edith Gardens, Surbiton.



● If you're over 4ft, you need limbo skills to negotiate the foliage of this Victoria rec lime tree, overhanging Balaclava Road's pavement. It may yet become an Olympic sport.

● Turn your back for five minutes, and shop windows are plastered in tacky circus, wrestling or funfair posters; the culprit seemingly operating with impunity. Who is the fly-by-night? We can reveal he's from Manchester and travels down every week or two to place posters with hooks, tape and dexterity, often via the gap where repeat opening causes doors to sag. He takes pictures, to prove it's done, and is paid per unlawful act, regardless of the work required to remove them.

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SCOPE

Scope's hope: new job creation



Yes, it's another charity shop, but Scope insists it's raising the bar. Step-free, wide-aisled, it opened in the old Barclays bank, Victoria Road, with the disability equality charity aiming to train disabled staff to then get retail jobs.

Charity chair and ribbon-cutter Sir Robin Millar said: "Disabled people have a right to work." Scope has 155 shops, renting Surbiton's on a 5-year lease.

Such was the opening-day crush that Scope chief exec Ruth Blazye murmured: "Looks like we'll need a bigger till!" She agreed eyes would roll at yet another charity shop arriving, but claimed: "A town with five or six becomes a destination, benefiting local pubs and cafes. It's a 'halo' effect."

Surbiton residents brought in stock ahead of the launch.

"That hasn't happened with other openings," she said. The shop at 82a Victoria Road has a double changing room with seat and handrails, and a turntable... to listen to LPs before you buy! Regular donors can use a touchscreen so the charity can claim gift aid. It makes the process of donating goods quicker.

Stock includes new items donated by big clothing labels, and a range designed by affiliated disabled artists. Volunteers welcome, especially Duke of Edinburgh award students, those from diverse backgrounds and those with disabilities. Visit scope.org.uk

Tim Harrison



● Cecile Stearn swam the Channel for SwimTayka, to help vulnerable children swim. Ex-Surbitonian Cecile was in a six-person relay, reaching France in 15hrs, 19mins. "It was hard without a wetsuit in 16° water," she said. The team raised £15,000. Donate by searching for Cecile at justgiving.com

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● The sinking feeling you get when you turn up to your special event and someone else is wearing your outfit? Monster Raving Loony candidate A. Gent Chinnners (for avoidance of doubt, he's on the left) came to Surbiton's general election count in bar just like mayor and returning officer Liz Green's, who sportingly agreed to a snap with her sartorial lookalike.

Farewell to Alison

There was a special farewell at Tolworth Girls' for a teacher who'd been on the staff for more than 40 years, and who'd been a pupil at the school before that.

Alison Head (née Worsfield) had a big send-off. "There were so many touching moments, and it was heart-warming to see old and new staff members, ex-pupils, and parents who turned up to celebrate Alison's time with us," said headteacher Jolande Botha-Smith.

"She's been more than a teacher; she's been a mentor, guide and an inspiration to her students and colleagues throughout her time with us. "While we are sad to see her go, we are excited for her as she embarks on the next chapter of her journey."

Alison, 63, began as a teaching assistant at the school in 1983, and taught home economics before taking on other teaching roles and responsibilities including head of year, head of sixth form and senior assistant head as part of the senior leadership team.

In her time at the school off Fullers Way North she taught students aged 11-18. She said it had been "interesting, varied, sometimes challenging and absorbing" and she'll miss the community, people and students.



Jolande Botha-Smith, Alison Head and ex-head Siobhan Lowe

● A bereavement course runs on Tuesday afternoons at St Matthew's church, Oct 22-Dec 3; suitable for all faiths and none, and those recently bereaved or in the distant past. "It's a combination of filmed talks with facilitated discussions," said lay pastoral minister Susan Kang.

"The sharing of experiences makes this powerful. Many finish with the hope that it's possible to rebuild lives and adjust to a 'new normal!'"

The last, optional, session explores grief through the lens of Christian faith. Reserve a place by Tues, Oct 15. To book or for details, call Susan on 07745 795395 or email susan.kang10@gmail.com

● Half the K3s from Esher now terminate at Kingston Hospital; half continue to Roehampton's Asda as before. It's playing havoc with the spacing between buses, and is making bus 'convoys' far more frequent.

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Surbiton's MP and LibDem leader Ed Davey beamed from ear to ear in his Berrylands Road HQ. "If I'm honest, I'm dead on my feet," he admitted ahead of a family holiday. Little wonder. At times, his six-week general election campaign resembled a mini-series of Gladiators.

From biking down hills to paddleboarding on Windermere, riding rollercoasters to flying down waterslides on an inflatable doughnut, he spent more time in trunks than in a suit. But it worked.

His Kingston & Surbiton majority rose from 10,489 to 17,235, while the LibDem MP count shot up from a dozen in 2019 to an impressive 72.

Privately, his dream had been to beat ex-leader Paddy Ashdown's 1997 net gain of 28 seats. "So to get 72 was way ahead of even my stretch target," he said. "When I went to bed on the eve of the poll I said to [wife] Emily that if we have a really good night we'll get between 45 and 55. But everything went right, including comfortably making all our gains against the SNP in Scotland."

Ed, who cast his own vote alongside Emily at

Surbiton Hill Methodist church, finished the night at the Chessington count in jubilant mood. So big were the unexpected gains that he'd never clapped eyes on two of his new parliamentary colleagues!

The Liberal Democrat Party (a phrase Ed uses so often he truncates it to one syllable) now has a talent pool allowing shadows in each department, and the unheard-of luxury of backbenchers.

"And I get two questions to the prime minister every week. Before I had one every five weeks. We get three select committee chairs, a seat on the intelligence and security committee... I've sort of lost track of everything else!"

Pitching ahead, he said that the gap between the second and third parties hadn't been smaller in a century, so the long-term aim is to narrow that further. "I won't get ahead of myself, but I don't think this is the high watermark. I think we can finish the job; we have a massive base to build on."

He attributes much of his success to the fact that once-blue Kingston Council has become a LibDem stronghold. "The only reason I'm MP here is that we took control of the council in 1994; it's founded on local government success," he said.

He places the NHS, care and cost of living at the top of his agenda. "And sewage; the Thames and Hogsmill. We'll keep on about all those issues until we get progress," he pledged, adding that a model of 'mutual benefit' water ownership should be the target, with environment and public health prioritised over profit, and overseen by a beefier regulator.

Another area where Sir Ed feels the redrawn political map can spell change is the railways. Most of what can be termed 'South Western Railway' constituencies' had Tory MPs. "We've now got a huge number of LibDem MPs," he said, adding that the refreshed make-up of the cross-party railway campaign group can create real progress. "The South Western Railway 'region' has historically been underinvested in.



Ed Davey at LibDem HQ in Berrylands believes that he can 'finish the job'

"We should get a slice of the cake."

Does he welcome Labour's aim of renationalisation? There's a pause. "The real issue isn't ownership, and never has been; it's been the overall strategic rail authority, to make sure investment is in the right places. It needs to be arms-length from the Department for Transport."

He is passionate about pushing for further improvements to Surbiton railway station, including resurrecting the mothballed ground-floor Glenbuck Road ticket office and its lift. When his calls for a feasibility study into its reuse were rebuffed on cost grounds, he reworded it as a plea for a 'scoping study'... and that was agreed and funded! The hope is that by this autumn access to this neglected alternative station lift will be restored.

He looks forward to working with new LibDem MP Monica Harding, who represents neighbouring Long Ditton.

Ed, who gets his bus pass next year, is (it's a relief to report) a big fan of this newspaper. "I'm really pleased you exist; we need more people to take an interest in what's happening locally," he said.

Tim Harrison

● **Meet Long Ditton MP Monica Harding, next issue**

Kingston & Surbiton	
Ed Davey Lib Dem	25,870
Helen Edward Con	8,635
Eunice O'Dame Lab	6,561
Mark Fox Reform	4,787
Debojyoti Das Green	3,009
Yvonne Tracey KIRG	1,177
All Abdulla Workers	395
A. Gent Chinnors Loony	230
Majority: 17,235	



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● Linda Davies, right, who chaired Surbiton's historical society for 22 years until 2018, has died at 74. The West Molesey resident joined in 1970 after being invited to a meeting by a colleague at the Milk Marketing Board in Thames Ditton, where she worked. A memorial service will be held in the autumn.



● The next BookBox at St Mary's hall, Long Ditton, is Wed, Sept 18, 8pm. Bashir Sakhawarz talks on one woman's life in Afghanistan. Then on Wed, Oct 16, 8pm, Matthew Taylor speaks on enslaved African-Americans who won their freedom. The **Escape from the Taliban** and **Black Redcoats** books are at Regency bookshop.
● stmaryslongditton.org.uk/events



Offensive graffiti near the alley linking the high street and St Philip's Road car park has been removed after a campaign by Conservative Cllr Ian George. "It seems that the only way the council will act is by public shaming," he said. "Surbiton deserves better."



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Charity Number: 1167428

Cabin shop is open

A ribbon-cutting and cups of tea marked the opening of a wellbeing hub shop at the Fircroft Trust. The spruced-up Portakabin in the drive of the centre in Ditton Road sells arts and crafts made by the charity's talented clients, volunteers and trustees. It opens Mon, Wed & Thu, 10am to 1pm.

The shop, run by the charity which supports adults with learning disabilities and mental health issues, sells items made by the trust's Craft Shed and Man Shed projects; from jewellery, hand-painted wine glasses and shopping bags to woven baskets,

soap dishes, candle holders, essential oils, bird houses and bug hotels. Profits are ploughed back into the trust's work.

Hub manager Gaja Malinowska said the centre's clients enjoyed involvement in the whole process, from making products to serving happy customers.



Des Gubby and Gaja Malinowska

Private clinic expands as new staff are recruited

A private clinic in Tolworth is expanding its services. Dr Amina Albeyatti, whose speciality is children and family, has joined the Lambert GP practice and sports clinic at 380 Ewell Road. It offers in-house scanning (including pregnancy scans), X-rays and blood testing. "We take the pressure off the NHS and help patients who don't want to wait for diagnostic results," explained founder Bruno Pereira.

With five-star Google reviews for physio and massage, bookings are already being taken for next year.

But vacancies are currently available after two more physios were recruited. For rapid doctor appointments (£49.99) visit lambertmedicalpractice.co.uk



Hub has river views



TownSq hub manager Ryan Gough, left, will give tours

Location, location, location. River views, 62 workstations, a boardroom, five stand-alone offices, two Zoom pods, fast wi-fi, admin support, a kitchen, a cafe, showers: Kirstie Allsopp would be impressed. Town Square, a workspace and enterprise hub, is open by the river below John Lewis. It helps freelancers and start-ups to grow businesses. Trial rate: £1 a day for five days.

The TownSq team, running the hub for Kingston Council, also offers mentoring and workshops. It's open 24/7 so work can span time zones. Mayor Liz Green cut the ribbon. Email Ryan Gough at ryan@townsq.co.uk or visit townsqkingston.co.uk



Meet the new rector

After a year's interregnum, a new vicar takes charge at St Matthew's. The Rev Caroline Kramer, currently the minister at a church in North Carolina, will be made team rector of Tolworth, Hook & Surbiton by the Bishop of Southwark on October 30.

Dave Farris of the parochial church council announced the news to applause at a morning service. She fills the vacancy left by the Rev Helen Hancock, who left after a decade's service to join St John's, Churt, in the Surrey Hills.

Caroline has local roots. "I grew up just down the road in Ewell," she said. She was ordained deacon in Guildford Cathedral, and has previously worked in Oxford and Florida.

American husband Chris is also a priest. They have four grown-up children. "We're at an ideal point to return to the UK, and intend to stay put!" she said. "I feel grateful to be called to St Matthew's." The Kramers move into the Kingsdowne Road vicarage in October.



● The biggest model railway exhibition in the South East, Tolworth Showtrain, chuffs into Tolworth Recreation Centre on Nov 9 & 10, with 23 working layouts, 20 stalls, and the chance to have a go yourself. tolworthshowtrain.co.uk



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TOLWORTH GIRLS SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM

YEAR 7 OPEN EVENING

Wednesday 2 October 2024

5.30pm – 8.00pm

Speeches will take place at 5.40pm; 6.30pm & 7.20pm

Seats are allocated on a first come first served basis. Once full, families will need to wait for the next available time slot. Anyone arriving for the 7.20pm speech will need to take a tour prior to this, as no tours will commence following this speech.

You are warmly invited to our Year 7 Open Evening. We are immensely proud of our students and their achievements and would be delighted to showcase our school to you.

SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING

Tuesday 15 October 2024

5.30pm – 7.30pm

You are warmly invited to our Sixth Form Open Event. We take great pride in our students' accomplishments and would be thrilled to give you a glimpse of our school.

During the evening, there will be a subject fair held in the Sixth Form Study Area. **Speeches by the Sixth Form Team are scheduled for 5.45pm and 6.45pm in the Hall.** Anyone arriving for the 6.45pm speech will need to take a tour prior to this, as no tours will commence following this speech.

JOIN US!



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What's on at the Surbiton Royal British Legion

Our members' social club in Hollyfield Road, Surbiton, is open 7 days a week. **Come and have a look around!** We have 2 bars, a café, 4 full-size snooker tables and a function suite available for hire. There are bingo sessions, race nights, ballroom dancing and yoga classes, pub quizzes, WeightWatchers workshops, meat and money raffles and more. Live sport is shown on a big screen and we hold regular events throughout the year. **Why not join our club?** There's lots going on!



▼ September ▼

Friday 13 > Race night
Saturday 28 > See us at the Surbiton Festival
Saturday 28 > Michael Jackson Tribute

▼ October ▼

Friday 18 > The Bierkeller Boys
Saturday 19 > See us at Surbiton Farmers Market
Saturday 26 > All Sounds Halloween Disco

▼ November ▼

Sunday 10 > Armistice Sunday
Saturday 16 > Tina Turner Tribute
Saturday 30 > Off the Record (local band plays 50s-70s music)

Members' tickets always cheaper than non-member tickets. Join SRBL and have access to these events and more.



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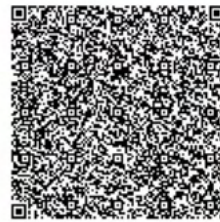
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● One-liner wizard Tim Vine hired volunteers from Surbiton's cornerHOUSE as extras for a film version of his Plastic Elvis stage show. Interior scenes were shot at Clownfish studio, Chessington; exteriors on a golf course. Where the film will appear is still a mystery. Tim's been busy shopping. He said: "I went to a record shop. I said: 'What have you got by 'The Doors'? He said: 'A bucket of sand and a fire blanket.'"



Arty critter trail

Surbiton artist Steve Chapman has entranced Queen's Prom strollers with an art trail, discreetly positioning tiny painted tiles of local wildlife. Steve, of Maple Road, had a stall at August's farmers' market, giving out guides to The Creatures of Seething, and selling surreal cards, prints and tiles. Squeals of glee have testified to young promenaders' joy this summer at discovering the painted creatures, ranging from swans and ducks to crows and eels.



You can follow the trail from Ginger Bees cafe to the Queen's Prom mural... but you have to look carefully as many are at child height. "The river's a special place to me, so I thought I'd use some little tiles to celebrate the wildlife spotted in the area," he said. "Of course, street art is transient, so some tiles disappear mysteriously! But I try to maintain and replace." Instagram @stevox

● Solve-Along-A-Murder-She-Wrote is back at the cornerHOUSE, Douglas Road, with an interactive screening of Paint Me a Murder. Jessica Fletcher is invited to a remote island, but soon there's



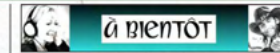
a murder that only she (or you!) can solve. Tickets for Fri, Sept 20, 7.30pm, £17 via ticketsource.co.uk/the-cornerhouseevents

Belles & tenors

Tenors Un Limited team up with the Berrylands Belles in a concert for Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness on Fri, Sept 27 at 7.30pm. Hear opera, pop and musical theatre songs at Christ Church Surbiton Hill in Christ Church Road. £16 (£8, U18s) from tenorsunlimited.com/tour



● Surbiton author Sheena Evans, left, will be at the cornerHOUSE, Douglas Road, on Tue, Sept 24, 7.30pm, to discuss her blog of remarkable medical pioneer Janet Vaughan. Tickets £8 at ticketsource.co.uk/the-cornerhouseevents



● Faites attention! French music comes to the cornerHOUSE. The next event is on Sat, Sept 28 when Alistair Sherwood and Catherine Cunningham – the duo À Bientôt – perform Gallic-inspired music with poetic lyrics, vibrant guitar, including some flourishes of flamenco. Tickets via abientotmusic.com

Jem Sharples, below right, of Queens Drive, who raised neighbours' spirits in lockdown by singing to them in the street, launched Tenors Un Limited at Christ Church 20 years ago. "Paul Martin and I will be supported by Bec Gresson and her Berrylands Belles – my wife Becky is in the choir – with songs ranging from Nessun Dorma to Freddie Mercury's Barcelona," said Jem.



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“Your View Matters”

Supplementary Consultation for the River Thames Scheme

The River Thames Scheme (RTS) is a partnership between the Environment Agency (EA) and Surrey County Council (SCC) and local borough partners.

The RTS is a national infrastructure project to enhance green space while reducing flood risk and aims to achieve this using a landscaped based approach. The scheme's blue infrastructure will reduce water levels across the area, by creating a channel in two sections helping to better protect homes and businesses from the potential of flooding, compared with today.

Climate change means extreme weather moving forward will be more likely and the



worry for local communities is increased frequency of flooding as a result. By creating a flood alleviation channel in two sections, one in Runnymede and the other in Spelthorne, the RTS will reduce the flood risk to 11,000 homes and 1,600 businesses.

In relation to the green infrastructure, the scheme design also proposes to improve access to green open spaces offering active travel options and creating an extensive nature recovery network spanning the length of the channel and beyond. This will support biodiversity and health and wellbeing benefits by improving access to nature.

The RTS carried out a statutory consultation in early 2024. This consultation resulted in a high number of responses, representing a broad spectrum of interests and issues. Since then, we have been carefully considering all the feedback we received during this period and developing the scheme in advance of submitting the application for development consent in 2025.

It is vital we get all aspects of the design, construction and operation of the scheme right to ensure we can minimise its impacts and maximise its benefits to our communities.

As part of statutory consultation, we consulted on our developing proposals for

the scheme's design in relation to Ferris Meadow Lake. We set out that we would be continuing to appraise the design in relation to Ferris Meadow Lake and would consider consultation feedback.

As part of our commitment to further engagement on Ferris Meadow Lake, we are undertaking supplementary consultation now the appraisal work has been completed. This includes publicising the options appraisal work that has been undertaken.

We would now like to hear your views on the preferred option for the design proposal at Ferris Meadow Lake.

Supplementary Consultation will run from Tuesday 3 September to Monday 7 October 2024. For more information and to find out about how you can get involved.

River Thames Scheme



www.riverthamesscheme.org.uk

Find out more on our website



● Chelsea Women head coach Sonia Bompastor, 44, starts her WSL season on Fri, Sept 20, at Kingsmeadow, against Aston Villa, aiming to do what illustrious predecessor Emma Hayes couldn't; win the Champions League. "We have all the quality in this squad to win it," she said, adding that one of her (few) character faults is: "I can be a bad loser!" Having won in Europe with Lyon as player and manager, she believes she has what it takes to triumph.



● Five Brazilians play for Corinthian-Casuals, with Rafael Barbosa (right) already scoring. The Tolworth club has long links with football giants Sport Club Corinthians Paulista in São Paulo.



Hockey stars

The world's top hockey players, including many Paris Olympians, descend on Surbiton Hockey Club for a major Euro Hockey League event. "We're delighted," said club captain Sian Craze. "It's a chance for everyone to watch some of the best hockey talent in the world following the Olympics."

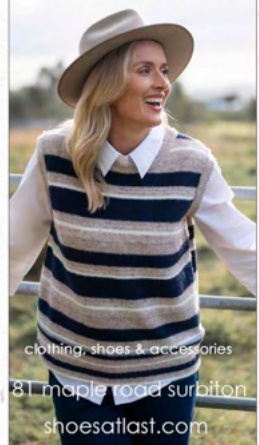


The Sugden Road, Long Ditton, club welcomes 16 teams from 11 countries. Tickets for Oct 3-6: surbitonhc.com/news-events/men-s-ehl-ko16 Surbiton's hockey stars featured prominently in the recent Olympics with 11 (including the seven above) travelling to Paris. Gareth Furlong (second from right) was joint top scorer for the men with three goals, having only made his GB debut in June, while six of nine goals scored by the women were contributed by Surbiton players – three by forward Hannah French. Both men's and women's teams were knocked out in the quarter-finals.

● Racial Decca rugby club is now Surbiton Decca; its logo incorporating Surbiton's coat of arms. Founded in 1959 for Decca staff (shortly before the label turned down The Beatles), it offers walking, touch and social grassroots rugby. Roland Goldstack, president, calls it "a reboot." New? Keen? Aim for the flag on Saturday mornings by the Elmbridge Ave/Raeburn Ave roundabout. surbitonrugby.co.uk

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