

# **Briefing for local stakeholders with an interest in social care, health and communities**

Adults, Wellbeing and Health Partnerships  
Information and Engagement Team



## **Monthly briefing Information correct as of 21 November 2024**

### **Surrey County Council's adult social care service rated 'good' by the Care Quality Commission**

Surrey County Council's adult social care service has been rated 'good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) which praised a focus on supporting people to lead independent lives in their own homes and communities.

Following an inspection which gathered feedback from residents, carers, staff, partners and providers, the social care regulator highlighted a number of strengths including the county council's preventative work to delay or reduce people's need for care and support. This often involves working with health and voluntary sector partners to keep people independent for longer in their local communities.

Assessors also found a consistent person-centred approach to supporting people with care needs, whose wishes and goals were put at the heart of care assessments and planning. Staff displayed empathy, respect and a 'can-do' attitude.

The CQC concluded that 'evidence shows a good standard' for the county council's adult social care provision, with an overall score of 70 per cent.

Further details about the [CQC inspection](#) is available online.

The full [Surrey County Council assessment report](#) is available from the CQC website.

### **Continuing support for Surrey's residents who are financially challenged Household Support Fund**

Surrey County Council welcomes the extension of the [Household Support Fund](#) by the Government, after 86,000 Surrey households were supported by the fund last year.

In addition to the Household Support Fund, the council will continue to support residents with financial help, support and information. The council has, alongside partners, established a priority focus on 21 key neighbourhoods identified as having the highest levels of disadvantage, aligning with the organisation's aim to enable as many people as possible to access the right support.

### **Warm Welcome venues return to Surrey**

**Warm Welcome venues are open to all residents this winter free of charge.**

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There are currently over 80 Warm Welcome venues across Surrey in a variety of community spaces including community and church halls, libraries and leisure centres. People can enjoy a hot drink and receive energy advice and much more.

Details of [Warm Welcome venues](#) across Surrey can be found online. Please promote the following link to the people you support:

[www.surreycc.gov.uk/warmwelcome](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/warmwelcome)

## **Helping people to navigate financial and welfare support**

Surrey County Council has rounded up all the tips and contact details to support those struggling this winter as part of an [online Welfare Hub](#). Whether over 60, a family, a person with a disability or health condition, out of work, a carer or simply looking to cut back on everyday energy bills, there is information for everyone. There is a financial support section, welfare section and health and wellbeing section.

Please promote the following link to the people you support:

[www.surreycc.gov.uk/welfare](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/welfare)

Additionally, Surrey County Council has launched a [financial and welfare support chat bot tool](#) which helps people to navigate the support available to them.

Complementing the wealth of information already available on the council's website, the chat bot tool asks relevant questions to direct people to tailored support for them, signposting them to where they can follow up or apply for support. The tool covers information on food banks, Warm Welcomes, energy advice and grants, council tax relief and housing benefit support, benefits and how to get help with debt.

For those not online, text Hello Support 6 to 07577 716 833.

## **New digital support for unpaid carers**

Surrey County Council and the NHS have launched a new initiative in partnership with Mobilise, an online carers' community with a successful track record in supporting unpaid carers. The two-year pilot, funded by a central government grant bid, aims to enhance support for unpaid carers in Surrey by providing easy access to digital information, advice and various support resources, complementing the existing [carers' offer of services](#).

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The service is designed for carers who are reluctant to contact adult social care or who find traditional support services challenging to access. In addition to providing advice and information, carers will have access to an online community where they can share experiences, ask questions and seek support from peers. The initiative will help manage the volume of requests for support coming into social care teams by offering early intervention support. It may be particularly useful when working with families who are difficult to engage with.

Further information about [Mobilise Surrey](#) is available online.

## **Home equipment finder – giving the gift of independence**

Surrey County Council's [Home equipment finder](#) is a free online catalogue that gives suggestions for hundreds of products for people who need a little extra assistance in and around the home.

People can search by health need, by the room they require help in, or look for specific types of products. There's everything from smart alarms and sensors to simple TV remote controls, smart fridges to smart entry devices, and robot vacuum cleaners to robot pet therapy.

This Christmas, Surrey County Council is taking to social media to encourage people to avoid the usual, predictable gifts of socks and bath salts for older relatives. Instead, they are suggesting they 'give the gift of independence' by searching for ideas to make their loved one's lives that little bit easier.

Please promote the Home equipment finder to anyone who would find it useful using the following link: [www.surreycc.gov.uk/homeequipmentfinder](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/homeequipmentfinder)

## **Launch of Waythrough**

In 2023, Humankind and Richmond Fellowship announced the decision to merge to form a new national charity to better support people facing multiple disadvantage. The organisation legally merged in June 2024, with Aquarius as a subsidiary. In October 2024, they became Waythrough.

The charity merger promises a Waythrough for people dealing with drug and alcohol, mental health and housing challenges, combining shared values, ambitions and decades of experience of supporting people.

Further information about [Waythrough](#) is available online.

## **NHS 10 year plan - ideas for change**

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The 10 Year Health Plan is part of the government's health mission to build a health service fit for the future.

For the 10 Year Health Plan for England to be a success, it needs to draw on the experiences, skills and ideas of patients, carers, staff and members of the public.

An [ideas for change online platform](#) has been created for people to share their suggestions for what needs to change across the health and care system. These could be ideas about how:

the NHS could change to deliver high quality care more effectively and what works well that the NHS should do more

other parts of the health and care system and other organisations in society could change to promote better health and/or improve the way health and care services work together

individuals and communities could do things differently in future to improve people's health.

## **Disability; Inclusion and Accessibility in Surrey Conference**

The Surrey VCSE Alliance is pleased to host the inaugural conference: 'Disability; Inclusion and Accessibility in Surrey' at G Live Guildford on Monday 9 December 2024.

The conference will provide a day of insightful discussion, networking, learning opportunities and workshops. Everyone can learn something at this conference, whether they are a professional in the field or a voluntary, community or charity organisation looking to make events or services more inclusive and accessible for disabled people, or just interested to start learning.

Further details about the [Disability; Inclusion and Accessibility Conference](#), including how to register, is available online.

There is also a limited number of stalls available for any organisation that wants to showcase their services, especially any organisations that can support others to improve their inclusion. Please contact the Surrey VCSE Alliance as follows:

Email: [shelinamatharoo@surreyvcsealliance.org.uk](mailto:shelinamatharoo@surreyvcsealliance.org.uk)

## **Yoga for Mental Wellbeing**

In collaboration with Sport in Mind and Places Leisure, free yoga for mental wellbeing sessions are being held every Wednesday in Elmbridge.



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These are aimed to support individuals managing mental health challenges. All equipment is provided with all abilities welcome.

Details are as follows:

Date: every Wednesday

Time: 12pm to 1pm

Venue: Elmbridge Xcel Leisure Complex, Waterside Drive, Walton-on-Thames, KT12 2JG

For further information, please contact Sport in Mind:

Email: [info@sportinmind.org](mailto:info@sportinmind.org)

Telephone: 0118 947 9762

Textphone (via Relay UK): 18001 0118 947 9762

Website: [www.sportinmind.org](http://www.sportinmind.org)

## **National smart working win for local Occupational Therapy team**

An occupational therapy (OT) team within Surrey County Council has won a national smart working award for the way it handles new requests for support from local residents.

The team which covers Reigate and Banstead ran an innovative pilot programme dubbed 'Smart Working in Occupational Therapy' (SWOT) to both improve the service they offer to people and make better use of resources.

Their efforts were recognised in the Local Government Chronicle Workforce Awards for 2024 at an event held to coincide with a national conference in Liverpool on 5 November 2024.

SWOT is really a catch-all name for a series of three initiatives which have challenged the traditional ways of managing new OT cases. Together, these initiatives have transformed working methods across Reigate and Banstead and improved the service given to residents.

Further information about the [Local Government Chronicle Workforce Awards](#) is available online.

## **Stroke Association – Surrey Peer Support Group**

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The Surrey Peer Support Group provides a welcoming space for stroke survivors, their carers, family members, and friends.

Rooted in friendships, this free group offers a safe and supportive environment to help people regain confidence, explore new activities, learn more about stroke recovery, and practice self-care for those rebuilding their lives after stroke.

The Surrey Peer Support Group takes place as follows:

Date: every first Wednesday of the month

Time: 10:30am – 11:30am

Venue: Ashstead Garden Centre, 6 Pleasure Pit Road, Ashstead, Surrey KT21 1HU

For further information, please contact the Stroke Association:

Email: [surreystrokerecovery@stroke.org.uk](mailto:surreystrokerecovery@stroke.org.uk)

Telephone: 0207 566 1531

Textphone (via Relay UK): 18001 0207 566 1531.

## **Safe Harbour launches in Woking**

A new daytime crisis prevention service has launched in Woking, providing up to six weeks of tailored support to adults (18+) at risk of regular mental health crises. Safe Harbour Woking works with referred clients to reduce the frequency and severity of their mental health crises, and provide them with alternative strategies for de-escalation as well as build resilience.

The service is a one-year pilot, funded by the Surrey County Council Mental Health Investment Fund, to provide better outcomes and experiences for people at risk of mental health crisis and reduce visits to A&E and other blue light services. The Epsom Safe Harbour opened in late summer this year.

Referrals can only be made by the specific bodies highlighted in the new [Safe Harbour leaflet](#).

During November, the Safe Harbour will be open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. By 2 December 2024, this will be extended to include Saturday and Sunday, 9am to 6pm.

Further [information about Safe Harbours](#) is available online.

**Royal Institute of Blind People calling all adults with sight loss**

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The Royal Institute of Blind People (RNIB) wants to hear people's experiences of getting around, personal safety, employment, family, and relationships.

To help the RNIB improve the support available to blind and partially sighted people across the UK, they are encouraging them to complete the [RNIB survey](#) which is open until 20 December 2024.

Queries can be sent to:

Email: [research@rnib.org.uk](mailto:research@rnib.org.uk)

For those unable to complete an online survey and have not already registered to get involved, please contact the RNIB Helpline:

Telephone: 0303 123 9999

Textphone (via Relay UK): 18001 0303 123 9999.

## **Update from Mary Frances Trust**

As part of Community Connections, Mary Frances Trust delivers online and face-to-face wellbeing groups and courses for adults aged 16+ in Surrey Downs (Banstead, Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell and Mole Valley).

### **Men's Wellbeing Matters**

As part of "Men's Wellbeing Matters", a project designed to support men's mental health, Mary Frances Trust offers the following men-specific groups:

Online Men's Peer Support Group: held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, 8pm to 9:30pm on Zoom

Men's Pit Stop: every Thursday, 7:30pm to 8:30pm at the Leatherhead Hub

Football: every Tuesday and Friday (excluding bank holidays), 1pm to 2pm at the Leatherhead Leisure Centre, The Mole Barn.

### **Carers Peer Support Group**

Mary Frances Trust also delivers an online Carers Peer Support Group for unpaid adult carers looking after people with long term conditions (either physical or mental). This is a wellbeing group offering a safe space to talk about strategies to support your own mental health while having a caring responsibility. The group is monthly on the first Tuesday of the month, 7:30pm to 8:30pm on Zoom.

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To access any of Mary Frances Trust's groups, [register as a Mary Frances Trust client](#) online and then contact Mary Frances Trust as follows:

Email: [info@maryfrancestrust.org.uk](mailto:info@maryfrancestrust.org.uk)

Telephone: 01372 375 400

Text (SMS): 07929 024 722.

## **New Young Carers training available**

'Our Shoes – Young Carers' training has been developed in collaboration with young people who have personal experience of being a carer. This course is designed to provide professionals with an understanding of the challenges faced by young carers and to enhance their knowledge and skills in working with and supporting this group of carers.

By completing this training, professionals will be better equipped to identify young carers, improve outcomes for these individuals and foster a more supportive environment.

To find out more about this training course and upcoming training dates, please contact Surrey County Council:

Email: [ourshoe@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:ourshoe@surreycc.gov.uk)

## **Surrey Domestic Abuse Helpline**

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone and affects people of all genders, ages, ethnicities, abilities and income levels and it can happen in any relationship. It can take many forms, including psychological and emotional abuse, coercive control, economic and financial abuse, stalking and harassment, physical violence and sexual abuse.

If concerned about a friend, family member or someone you support, seek advice from the [Surrey Domestic Abuse Helpline](#) provided by Your Sanctuary:

Telephone: 01483 776822

Textphone (via Relay UK): 18001 01483 776822

Website: [www.surreyagainstda.info](http://www.surreyagainstda.info)

In an emergency, always call 999.

**Chief Fire Officer Dan Quin and Cllr Kevin Deanus  
become SCAMBassadors**



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Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is proud to announce that Chief Fire Officer Dan Quin and Councillor Kevin Deanus, Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue, and Resilience, have become SCAMBassadors for the Friends Against Scams initiative. This will empower SFRS to raise awareness, support victims of scams, and work with the community to combat fraudulent activities.

Friends Against Scams, run by National Trading Standards and hosted by Surrey County Council is committed to protecting individuals from scams and providing crucial support to those affected. As a SCAMBassador, the pair will use their influence to spread the initiative's message and promote the #NoBlameNoShame approach. This encourages open discussions about scams, reducing the stigma that often prevents victims from seeking help.

Trading Standards and Friends Against Scams are encouraging more people to take action. Staff and members of the public can become SCAMBassadors by completing the

[Friends Against Scams online training](#) or by participating in a [Friends Against Scams webinar](#) hosted by Trading Standards.

Further information about [Friends Against Scams](#) including access to resources is available online.

## **Healthwatch Surrey Insight Bulletin**

The [Healthwatch Surrey Insight Bulletin](#) focuses on the themes raised by local people. This month's bulletin focuses on:

Thanks and praise

Medication confusion

Lack of compassion shown in hospitals

Financial confusion and concerns causing stress for many.

Action for Carers Surrey Impact Report

Action for Carers Surrey has just released their first [Impact Report](#) which looks at how they have helped Surrey's carers over 2023-2024, and the difference they have made.

The report looks at Action for Carers' range of services, and the support they give to carers of all ages.

## **Sight for Surrey's Breaking Down Barriers Workshop**

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The next Sight for Surrey Breaking Down Barriers Workshop is taking place on Wednesday 29 January 2025. Breaking Down Barriers is a workshop for professionals in Surrey to gain an overview, understanding and appreciation of inclusion, accessibility and independence for and with people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, blind, partially sighted and deafblind.

This workshop is designed to inspire and empower people to become a champion for access and inclusion in Surrey, helping to break down the barriers so everyone can embrace an independent life at home, at work and in communities. Tickets cost £30 per person.

Further information about the [Breaking Down Barriers Workshop](#), including how to book a place, is available online.

## **‘Act FAST’ NHS Stroke campaign**

NHS England has launched the latest ‘Act FAST’ campaign. It aims to increase knowledge of the signs of a stroke and encourage people to dial 999 immediately in response to any sign – even if it doesn’t seem like much. Earlier recognition of symptoms and immediate action enables faster access to specialist treatment and the best chance of reducing long-term effects such as disability.

A stroke strikes every five minutes. Every year in the UK, there are around 100,000 strokes, causing 38,000 stroke-related deaths, and it is a leading cause of disability.

Stroke symptoms might be less dramatic, painful or obvious than might be expected. For example, not being able to raise your arm, struggling to smile, or slurred speech.

Whether it is a friend, loved one or even a passer-by, any sign of a stroke is always an emergency, so call 999 immediately if you or someone else experiences a single symptom.

Acting FAST on any sign of a stroke gives patients faster access to specialist treatment that could save their life. Face or Arm or Speech, at the first sign, it’s Time to call 999.

Further information about the [symptoms of a stroke](#) is available online. Alternative contact methods to contact emergency services are as follows:

British Sign Language: [999BSL.co.uk](https://www.999BSL.co.uk)

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Text Relay (via Relay UK): 18000 999.

## **Surrey Wheelchair Service user engagement forum invites attendees**

Surrey Wheelchair Service is holding an online user engagement forum for all wheelchair users across Surrey at 1pm on Wednesday 15 January 2025.

To attend this session, please contact the Surrey Wheelchair Service as follows:

Email: [SurreyCHEO@rosscare.co.uk](mailto:SurreyCHEO@rosscare.co.uk)

Text (SMS): 07949 400 347.

## **The Thriving Communities Commissioning Fund 2025-2028 now open**

The Thriving Communities Commissioning Fund is now open and available to not-for-profit organisations that deliver services in Waverley and meet the scheme's priorities:

Priority one – improving people's health and wellbeing

Priority two – enabling access to information, advice and guidance

Priority three – reducing social isolation and loneliness

Priority four – building stronger, connected communities.

The scheme supports the costs to deliver a specific project or activity for people who have higher needs, are vulnerable and experience disadvantage.

Applications must be received by 4pm on Thursday 28 November 2024.

Further information about the [Thriving Communities Commissioning Fund 2022-2025](#) is available online.

## **Become an antibiotic guardian and help make better use of antibiotics**

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites no longer respond to antimicrobial medicines. As a result, antibiotics and other antimicrobial medicines become ineffective, making infections harder or impossible to treat and increasing the risk of disease spread, severe illness, and death. The overuse and misuse of antibiotics in healthcare, agriculture, and the community is one of the top 10 global threats to our health.

Please consider becoming an [antibiotic guardian](#), where you can make one simple pledge to help make better use of antibiotics. Share the link with residents, friends and family.