

# 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 20 November 2025

#### Government confirms new East and West councils for Surrey

The government has announced its decision on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Surrey.

Surrey will move to two new unitary councils – East Surrey and West Surrey. This means the current two-tier system – where county, and district and borough councils share responsibilities – will be replaced by a simpler and more efficient structure. In a unitary model, one council is responsible for all services in an area.

Elections to the new shadow authorities will take place in May 2026. These elected members will help set up the new councils and operate in a “shadow” capacity until vesting day.

On 31 March 2027, Surrey County Council and the 11 District and Borough Councils in Surrey will be dissolved. From 1 April 2027 (vesting day), the new unitary councils will officially take over.

Surrey County Council is committed to working with government and partners across Surrey, including new unitary authorities once in place, to establish a strategic authority for the area.

Further information about the [decision on Local Government Reorganisation in Surrey](#) is available online.

#### Warm Welcome winter support for residents

Surrey County Council and partners are continuing support for residents facing the cost-of-living crisis and fuel poverty this winter.

The Warm Welcome scheme offers local spaces where residents can come to:

- warm up
- get a hot drink for free
- get energy advice and debt support
- enjoy some social interaction
- benefit in some settings from additional services such as free meals and activities

Further information about the [Warm Welcome scheme](#), including details of venues taking part is available online.

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## Getting back to work after brain injury

Headway Surrey has launched a new programme for brain injured clients, called 'Be Ready'. This free programme is aimed at getting people back to work or into education or volunteering. They can help with understanding goals, rebuilding confidence and skills, work preparation and support with employers.

Work can bring independence, purpose and confidence. Headway Surrey will work with people at their own pace to make sure they feel ready, supported and positive about the next step.

- **Telephone:** 01483 454433
- **Telephone (via Relay UK):** 18001 01483 454433
- **Email:** [enquiries@headwaysurrey.org](mailto:enquiries@headwaysurrey.org)
- **Website:** [www.headwaysurrey.org](http://www.headwaysurrey.org)

## Surrey Welfare Rights Unit Impact Report 2024-2025 published

The [Surrey Welfare Rights Unit Impact Report 2024-2025](#) highlights major changes to benefits, including Universal Credit migration and campaigns to protect disability payments during this period.

Demand for advice rose sharply, especially from people with disabilities and health conditions. The team delivered high-quality support, trained hundreds of advisers, and launched the Work Wise project to help disabled people into work. Their advice generated over £3.3 million in financial outcomes and significant public value.

## Free sessions from East Surrey Domestic Abuse Service

### 16 days of activism against gender-based violence

As part of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, East Surrey Domestic Abuse Service is holding some free events:

- Brave conversations around masculinity
- Safe at work: empowering employers to respond to domestic abuse
- Candlelit walk of remembrance
- Empower her

Booking is essential and more information on [East Surrey Domestic Abuse Service's events](#) and how to book can be found online.

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## Connection support group for friends, family and colleagues

East Surrey Domestic Abuse Service also offers a monthly online group facilitated by a trained counsellor to discuss worries or fears as well as practical advice.

For further information, please contact:

- **Email:** [connection@esdas.org.uk](mailto:connection@esdas.org.uk)

## South East Smokefree Alliance campaign launches soon

The [South East Smokefree Alliance](#) campaign 'Quit Smoking, Feel Better', will be running from 26 December 2025 to 8 February 2026. The campaign focuses on quitting smoking for mental health purposes.

## Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan 2025-2028 published

The Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board has published its strategic plan for the next three-year 2025-2028.

The strategic plan sets out:

- the vision of the board, and the outcomes it would like to achieve for the people of Surrey to live a life free from abuse or neglect
- the aims and objectives for a three-year period
- how the board will work towards these objectives in the form of an annual business plan

The [Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan 2025-2028](#) is available online.

## New helpline launched to report anti-Muslim hate

The [British Muslim Trust](#) has launched a helpline to be used to support victims of anti-Muslim hate to help them report their experiences in a safe environment.

The helpline is available via multiple channels and can be accessed via:

- **Telephone:** 0808 172 3524: free of charge from any phone, between 10am and 3pm
- **SMS, WhatsApp, and live chat:** victims can use these [British Muslim Trust services](#) at any time, and a member of the team will provide follow-up on the following day
- **Email:** [support@britishmuslimtrust.co.uk](mailto:support@britishmuslimtrust.co.uk)
- **Website:** [www.britishmuslimtrust.co.uk/report-hate](http://www.britishmuslimtrust.co.uk/report-hate)

All calls are handled by Muslim staff to ensure there is a cultural and religious understanding of the context of these incidents.

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## Specialist trauma-informed outreach service

In partnership with 12 charity providers, the Bridge the Gap outreach service helps people in Surrey who are experiencing multiple disadvantage, a combination of three or more complexities including physical and mental health issues, homelessness, substance use, domestic abuse, or involvement with the criminal justice system.

Part of the government's Changing Futures programme and co-produced with residents with lived experience, the service offers personalised one to one support from trained practitioners. Support is available Monday to Friday from 10am to 8pm and Saturday and Sunday from 9am to 12pm.

The support offer is bespoke to the individual, however, examples of help may include substance use, housing, healthcare, finances, daily living, harm reduction and facilitation with referrals to other services.

Further [information about Bridge the Gap and to make a referral](#) is available online. Alternatively, please contact Surrey County Council's Changing Futures team:

- **Email:** [Changing.Futures@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:Changing.Futures@surreycc.gov.uk)

## Latest updates from Steady On Your Feet

The [Steady On Your Feet Version 2 platform](#) is now live. It offers a major upgrade to improve accessibility and user experience for older adults aiming to reduce their risk of falls. Developed from user feedback, the new version features a cleaner design, a simplified self-assessment process, and refreshed content to help users create personalised action plans. It also includes updated local links and improved imagery.

## First Community launches Neighbourhood Navigation Service in east Surrey

First Community has launched a new [Neighbourhood Navigation Service](#) to help adults in east Surrey improve their health and wellbeing by connecting them to local, non-medical support.

The service offers social prescribing, enabling GP's and other healthcare professionals to refer people aged 18 and over to a team of neighbourhood navigators. These navigators work with individuals to understand their needs and link them to local groups, activities, and services that can address issues such as loneliness, financial pressures, stress, isolation, or drug/alcohol abuse.

The navigators use the [Joy platform](#) to signpost people to local services and to manage referrals. Community organisations are encouraged to [register on Joy](#), so they can be easily found and connected with residents in need.

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To access the service, east Surrey residents should speak to their GP or other healthcare professional to make a referral. They can also self-refer to activities of their choice via Joy.

The service is being introduced to east Surrey GP practices in phases, and the team will be liaising with practices directly to support them with making referrals. Further information about the [Neighbourhood Navigation Service](#) is available online.

## Healthwatch Surrey Insight Bulletin published

The [Healthwatch Surrey November 2025 Insight Bulletin](#) focuses on thanks and praise for GP practices and the value of kindness and respect, confusion and mismanagement of complaints handling. They also spotlight on accessible information and reasonable adjustments, the need for recognition and support for carers, the digital divide and homebased healthcare.

Reports published since their last bulletin include:

- [What we're hearing about accessible information and reasonable adjustments](#)
- [The digital divide](#)
- [Home is where the care is? Experiences of people receiving care in their home](#)

## Volunteering for wellbeing campaign targets young people

Surrey's Public Health team is launching a campaign to encourage young people under 25 to consider volunteering. Volunteering is a simple thing we can all do to help feel more connected, learn new skills and gain experience. It can also provide opportunities to improve our mental wellbeing and practice all the Five Ways to Wellbeing:

- connect
- keep learning
- be active
- take notice
- give

A [volunteering toolkit](#) with social media messages and assets is available to download from Khub. Please support this campaign by sharing the messages on your channels as appropriate.

If you have any queries, please contact Surrey County Council's Public Health team:

- **Email:** [sophie.matthews@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:sophie.matthews@surreycc.gov.uk)

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## Free Stand up to Harassment training available

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust is providing free 30-minute [anti-harassment training webinars](#), designed to equip the public and professionals with practical, safe techniques to recognise and respond to harassment when they witness it. This training is ideal for anyone who lives, works or socialises in Surrey and wants to promote safer, more inclusive spaces for everyone. The session will:

- identify harassment in various settings
- use the “5Ds” of bystander intervention to act safely without putting yourself at risk
- support colleagues, friends or community members who may be targeted

Further information about the [anti-harassment training webinars](#) and how to book a place is available online.

## Smoke Free Generation Grant Award Scheme offering grants

Surrey County Council is offering grants of up to £7,000 to voluntary, community, and social enterprise organisations, not-for-profit organisations and housing providers through the [Smokefree Generation Grant Award Scheme](#).

This funding will help create a smokefree Surrey by supporting adults to stop smoking by strengthening [Surrey’s local stop smoking services](#). It will do so through raising awareness of the health risks of smoking, promoting the free support available, increasing referrals and sign-ups, boosting quit outcomes, and encouraging greater community involvement through targeted outreach, education, and the promotion of smokefree environments.

Applications are being reviewed on a rolling basis. The final deadline for submission is 9am on 28 November 2025.

Please contact Surrey County Council with any questions regarding the Surrey Smokefree Generation Grant Award Scheme:

- **Email:** [bethany.turnbull@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:bethany.turnbull@surreycc.gov.uk)

## Latest news from Mary Frances Trust

### Support Men’s Mental Health this ‘Movember’

‘Movember’ is the perfect time to focus on men’s mental health. Mary Frances Trust is proud to offer two men’s peer support groups designed to provide a safe space to talk, share experiences, and support one another.

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- **Men's Peer Support Group:** every second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 8pm to 9.30pm online
- **Men's Pit Stop Peer Support Group:** at Leatherhead Community Hub every Thursday from 7.30pm to 8.30pm

Further [information about Mary Frances Trust](#) is available online. Alternatively, please contact:

- **Telephone:** 01372 375400
- **Textphone (via Relay UK):** 18001 01372 375400
- **Email:** [info@maryfrancestrust.org.uk](mailto:info@maryfrancestrust.org.uk)

## Nature Nurtures Programme

Mary Frances Trust runs free nature-based group activities for adults (16+) in Surrey Downs to support mental and emotional wellbeing.

The activities currently running are:

- **Everyone's Garden: hands-on gardening sessions to nurture a local park** on Wednesdays from 10am to 2.30pm in the Tadworth area
- **Nature's Palette: Creative art inspired by the outdoors** on Thursdays from 11am to 1pm in the Cobham area
- **Move and Breathe: Gently exploring a healthier lifestyle** on Wednesdays from 10.30am to 12.30pm in the Epsom area and on Thursdays from 10.30am to 12.30pm in the Tadworth area

Further information about the [Nature Nurtures Programme](#) and to register activities is available online. Alternatively, please contact:

- **Email:** [naturenurtures@maryfrancestrust.org.uk](mailto:naturenurtures@maryfrancestrust.org.uk)

## Visit the Epsom Safe Haven

Safe Havens offer a welcoming, supportive space for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis. A new short video provides a [guided tour of Epsom Safe Haven](#) and shares how the team supports people in times of need.

## Community Connections' Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Support Group

Community Connections offer a range of groups and activities which are available in multiple locations across Surrey, as well as online. For example, the online Compulsive Disorder (OCD) Support Group aimed at individuals with mild to moderate OCD, provides a safe space to explore personal experiences, share coping strategies and how to manage OCD in daily life and takes place as follows:

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- **When:** bi-weekly on Wednesdays, starting on Wednesday 10 December 2025
- **Time:** 11am to 12pm

[Registration for the OCD Support Group](#) is online.

For more information on dates, times and locations of all available groups, please see the full [Community Connections activity timetable](#). Alternatively, please contact:

- **Telephone:** 01276 409415
- **Text (SMS):** 07919 541424
- **Email:** [groups.cc@catalystsupport.org.uk](mailto:groups.cc@catalystsupport.org.uk)

## Information support groups from Oakleaf

Oakleaf is delivering a variety of new support groups and services which are being run to support individuals in the Surrey area. The groups include:

- a **parent and carer support group:** for those supporting a young person aged 18 to 30 years old experiencing mental ill health and possible suicidal ideation
- **'Open Door':** a weekly drop-in for young people, aged 18 to 30 years old, facing mental health challenges
- a **face-to-face peer support group:** for individuals and groups affected by gambling related harms

In addition to these new groups, Oakleaf continues to provide a wide range of wellbeing activities. Details of the [Oakleaf wellbeing activities](#) can be found online.

## Submitting an article for the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Partnerships Information and Engagement Team Briefing

If you would like us to include an article on behalf of your organisation in the next edition, please email: [asc.engagement@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:asc.engagement@surreycc.gov.uk)

Please note that we are unable to include attachments when we circulate the briefing, so please ensure that any documents that you wish to reference are uploaded to your own organisation's website or a partner website.

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## **Sharing the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Partnerships Information and Engagement Team Briefing**

If you would like to share the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Partnerships Information and Engagement Team Briefing with other professionals, the latest edition is available from:

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