

Spelthorne Borough Council
Bulletin magazine
Summer issue no. 116

Letter from the Leader of the Council

Dear Residents,

Welcome to the summer edition of our Borough Bulletin. I hope that you will find the time to come along to some of the summer events that are featured. See pages 10 and 11 for the "Dates for your Diary". It's been a busy few months of elections and I would like to thank all those who turned out to vote and also to thank all the people who worked through the night to count and verify the results.

I would like to congratulate Spelthorne Borough Councillors Sinead Mooney, Naz Islam and Alison Griffiths on their election and Tim Evans on re-election as Surrey County Councillors. I know they will diligently serve and represent the interests of the residents of Spelthorne at Surrey County Council. I would also like to welcome a new councillor to the Borough Council, Alex Sapunovas, who joins the Council to represent the Ashford East Ward.

We also had some prestigious visitors from our twin district of Grand Port, Mauritius. Grand Port Chairman Nirmal Domah and Chief Executive Shyam Teeluck spent three days in the Borough which included a very successful civic symposium held in the Council Offices, and we were also very honoured to welcome His Excellency Girish Nunkoo, High Commissioner of Mauritius to Spelthorne for half a day.

I have a reputation for getting things done, so when residents raised their concerns about the street light switch off being rolled out in Spelthorne, I contacted Surrey County Council Leader, Cllr David Hodge. I was delighted when he agreed in principle for street lights in Spelthorne to be switched back on as long as the County, who has responsibility for street lighting, were reimbursed the cost. The County Council has now voted to allow boroughs to pay for street lights to be switched back on and I am pleased to report this has now happened in Spelthorne.

Budget pressures will continue to present challenges for Spelthorne and our colleagues at Surrey County Council over the coming months but please be assured that we will always work hard to protect the services you value most.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to Spelthorne's Chief Executive, Roberto Tambini, who is retiring in September after 37 years in local government, the last 11 years in Spelthorne. He has been very generous with his support, wisdom and friendship during my time in office and those of you who have met him will know that he is a man of enormous charm and integrity. He will be a hard act to follow. We wish him and his wife, Anne, a long and happy retirement.

Have a great summer.

Cllr Ian Harvey, Leader of Spelthorne Borough Council

Message from the Mayor of Spelthorne

When I was elected in May as Mayor of Spelthorne I said that I wanted to involve and celebrate the talents of people across all ages and interests by supporting local events and meeting as many residents as possible. Since becoming Mayor I have been invited to a variety of events. New to Spelthorne were the appointment of a Mayor's Cadet by Staines and Egham Sea Cadets at their Royal Naval Parade, and a Spelthorne and Runnymede Joint Volunteer Awards evening, a wonderful celebration of all those who make life better by helping others. Surrey Youth Games gave 4,500 young people training in their choice of fifteen sports, ending in a weekend competition in which Team Spelthorne came third in the County. I joined the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey to open Shepperton Village Fair, awarding prizes for the Fancy Dress Parade and judging the Raft Race. It was great fun.

The River Thames has been very significant in my life and important for Spelthorne with its nine mile stretch and I planned to celebrate this. My first mayoral and charity event was therefore a River Day on Saturday 24 June. Having arranged the Borough's Magna Carta flotilla in 2015 I was delighted to secure the honour of being permitted to use Gloriana, the prestigious rowbarge built for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The flotilla also included Impossible Dream, adapted for wheelchairs – one of my charities – and Jolly Brit, former tender to the Royal Yacht Britannia, as well as a variety of boats from local skiff and rowing clubs. The crowds at the locks and along the towpath made this an unforgettable event.

Thanks to the support of the businesses in Staines-upon-Thames, we were able to keep Gloriana for Staines-upon-Thames Day on Sunday 25 June, a main attraction not only when moored at Memorial Gardens but also for row-pasts in the afternoon.

Cllr Vivienne Leighton, Mayor of Spelthorne.

Contact the Mayor's office by email mayor@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 446275.

Hassle free letting for landlords

Spelthorne Rent Assure is a scheme available for private landlords who are interested in renting their property through the Council. The scheme is one of the most attractive currently on offer for landlords.

Under the scheme, the Council guarantees to pay landlords directly the full market rent for their property for up to two years. A free inventory check will be carried out at the beginning of the tenancy and there is the reassurance of a six-week repair bond. The Council will find the tenants and, when approved by the landlord, will draw up the agreements free of charge. Ongoing support for both the landlord and the tenant is available for the duration of the tenancy.

Gareth Lewis from Sunbury-on-Thames has been a local landlord for 22 years and was one of the first to join the scheme. Gareth said: "Sian and her daughter are a pleasure to have as tenants.

For me the Spelthorne Rent Assure scheme has been a real success and I've been very reassured by the support offered by the Council's Housing Options team."

Spelthorne Council is looking for more private landlords like Gareth so please get in touch if you are interested in working with the Council.

For more details on the scheme please email sra@spelthorne.gov.uk, call 01784 448611 or visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sra

Recycling changes: new 3 in 1 service

On 12 June we launched our 3 in 1 service collecting your unwanted textiles and small electricals weekly at the same time as your food waste. Look out for our new vehicles driving around the Borough.

Textiles in any condition that are clean and dry will be collected (rips are fine but nothing soiled please). You can include accessories (scarves, gloves, hats, belts and bags), bed linen, clothes, curtains, towels, paired shoes/boots and slippers. All items should be bagged.

80% of the textiles collected are reused and those that cannot be reused are recycled into items like insulation. Reusing and recycling saves the Council (and taxpayers) money. Please do not include carpets, rugs, duvets, pillows, single shoes or soiled materials.

We collect small electrical items such as toasters, kettles, irons, hairdryers, clocks, phones and cameras. They are broken down into their various components and recycled. Please do not mix textiles and electricals in the same bag. Tie bags securely and put next to your food waste bin by 6am on your collection day. Remember that food waste, textiles and electricals are collected on the same day as your rubbish/recycling, but at a different time of day.

If you need a food waste caddy or clear plastic bags for textiles and small electricals you can collect these for free from the Council Offices or Community Centres. If your property does not currently have food waste collections and you would like us to introduce the service, please contact us.

Art competition

Well done to Sia Singh, age 7 from Riverbridge Primary School, for winning the art competition. Her picture highlights how long it can take for waste to decompose if it is not recycled. She will shortly be awarded a prize and certificate. Special mention also goes to

Aarya Thombre, Alicia Rogerson and Anik Inder Singh who received a runner-up prize and certificate. Thank you to everyone who took part.

Surrey County Council consultation

On 23 June Surrey County Council launched a new consultation regarding proposed changes to the Community Recycling Centres, including Charlton Lane in Shepperton. For more information and to respond to the consultation questionnaire, please visit www.surreycc.gov.uk/recyclingcentres call 03456 009 009 or text 07860 053 456.

If you would like to discuss Surrey County Council's proposals further, please contact Surrey County Council and not Spelthorne Borough Council. The consultation closes on Monday 7 August.

Record numbers at Staines 10K

Cllr Vivienne Leighton got runners underway at this year's Staines 10K on Sunday 14 May. The race, organised by Staines Strollers and Runnymede Runners with support from Spelthorne Borough Council, saw 633 runners completing the course – a record number. The winner, Stuart MacDougall finished in a time of 35 minutes and 24 seconds and the fastest woman was Jaydee Peters who completed the course in 39 minutes and 17 seconds, 18th overall.

The event was made possible thanks to a team of dedicated volunteers and the support of the race sponsors. All proceeds from the event will be donated to local charities.

For further details visit www.staines10k.co.uk

Spelthorne Sports Awards 2017

The Spelthorne Sports Awards is a celebration of sport in Spelthorne. We need your nominations to make it a night to remember! There are categories for coaches, teams, individual players and volunteers. The winners will be acknowledged at an awards ceremony at Shepperton Studios on 10 October. The deadline for nominations is Thursday 31 August 2017.

Visit www.surreysportsawards.activesurrey.com to nominate online. For a printed form, please call Leisure Services on 01784 446433.

Specsavers Surrey Youth Games 2017

Team Spelthorne celebrated a very successful weekend at this year's Specsavers Surrey Youth Games at Surrey Sports Park in Guildford on 17 and 18 June. Over 350 local children, aged 7 – 16, enjoyed up to seven weeks of free coaching across 15 different sports in the lead up to the event, with

175 children going on to represent Team Spelthorne.

Spelthorne finished in third place overall for the second consecutive year, winning medals in the following sports:

Gold	Silver	Bronze
Football u9 girls	Tennis u8 mixed	Badminton u11 mixed
Football u11 girls	Hockey u11 boys	Lacrosse u15 mixed
-	Table tennis u12 mixed	-
-	Rugby u12 girls	-

Two individuals also received bronze medals in judo. Thank you to all the volunteers and coaches and many congratulations to Team Spelthorne for a fantastic performance.

Spelthorne Arts Forum

Spelthorne Council held its first Arts Forum in April with over 60 guests from 17 different organisations attending the event. Throughout the evening there were opportunities to find out about funding and development opportunities and meet other local arts organisations. The next Arts Forum is due to take place later in the year.

For information or to sign up to the Spelthorne Arts Mailing list email c.learmonth@spelthorne.gov.uk

Alive 'N' Kicking

Alive 'N' Kicking is a highly successful children's lifestyle weight management service that helps over-weight children and young people and their families to reach and maintain a healthier weight. The service provides age specific programmes for families with children aged between 2 and 19, offering age appropriate messages, activities and behavioural change strategies that will benefit the whole family.

For information, dates and locations email surrey@ank.uk.com, visit www.ank.uk.com or call 01483 600524.

Dates for your diary...

Craft and social evening for adults

Every Wednesday until 2 August, 6-8pm

Come along, relax, have a cup of tea and meet new people at these art workshops for adults. Activities include silk painting, creative card making, key ring and button art. The cost is £6.25 per session. Call 01784 446433 to book a place.

Summer art open day - Saturday 22 July, 10am-2pm

Autumn art open day - Saturday 21 October, 10am-2pm

Bring the family along and have fun making themed crafts at the Resource Centre. For ages 3-11 years (£1 per child/50p siblings). No need to book.

Children's summer craft workshops for children aged 5-11

Stationery corner: Wednesday 2 August, 1.30-4pm. Use your imagination and create your very own hanging stationery tidy.

Dino-mite: Thursday 31 August, 1.30-4pm. Packed with dinosaur themed craft and fabulous fossils.

Each workshop costs £12 per child.

Book online at www.spelthorne.gov.uk/leisurebookings or call 01784 446433.

Sunbury and Shepperton Arts Festival: 15 - 23 July

The Arts Festival is organised by Sunbury and Shepperton Arts Association volunteers. This year's line-up includes talks, tours, theatre, comedy, music, dance and much more! Pick up your guide at Riverside Arts Centre or visit www.ssaa-arts.org

Music in the Parks

Come and enjoy a free afternoon of music in the beautiful surroundings of either The Walled Garden, Thames Street, Sunbury-on-Thames, TW16 6AB or The Lammas Bandstand, Lammas Recreation Ground, Wraysbury Road, Staines-upon-Thames, TW18 4XZ.

All performances start at 2pm and finish at 4pm. A limited number of chairs are available at the Walled Garden or you are welcome to bring your own. For concerts at the Lammas Bandstand you will need to bring your own chairs/picnic blankets.

Walled Garden, Sunbury-on-Thames

Sunday 23 July: Linden Wind Orchestra

Sunday 30 July: Magna Carta Chorus (2pm) and Ivor Game (3pm)

Sunday 6 August: Dale Harris (guitar)

Sunday 20 August: Staines Lammas Band

Sunday 27 August: Jake Fryer and All That Jazz

Lammas Bandstand: Lammas Recreation Ground, Staines-upon-Thames

Sunday 13 August: Saxophany

Visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/whatson call Leisure Services on 01784 446433 or email leisure@spelthorne.gov.uk

Xplorer - free events

Xplorer is the perfect outdoor activity for families, offering a friendly navigation challenge that is educational and fun. The aim is to find a number of markers located around the park using a simple map. Events will be taking place on the following dates:

Wednesday 26 July:	Orchard Meadow, Sunbury-on-Thames
Monday 31 July:	Ashford Recreation Ground, Clockhouse Lane
Tuesday 8 August:	Orchard Meadow, Sunbury-on-Thames
Friday 18 August:	Ashford Recreation Ground, Clockhouse Lane
Thursday 24 August:	Orchard Meadow, Sunbury-on-Thames
Wednesday 30 August:	Ashford Recreation Ground, Clockhouse Lane

All the events are free and take place from 10.30am-12.30pm.

For more information visit www.xplorer.org.uk, email leisure@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 446433.

Spelthorne Sports Week: 7 – 11 August

Spelthorne Borough Council will be working with local sports clubs this summer to offer affordable sports coaching during the summer holidays. Coaching is available for children and young people aged 8 - 16 in a number of different sports.

Date	Sports for children aged 8-12	Sports for children aged 12-16
Monday 7 August	Squash, tennis	
Tuesday 8 August	Tennis, fencing	
Wednesday 9 August	Fencing, squash	Rowing
Thursday 10 August	Table tennis	Fencing
Friday 11 August	Hockey	

The cost is £10 for one day or £40 for the week.

To book visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sportsweek. For further information call 01784 446433.

Sunbury Regatta

Sunbury Regatta is being held on 12 and 13 August at Rivermead Island in Lower Sunbury. Admission and racing starts at 9am. Entertainment starts from midday. Fireworks from 9.15pm.

For more details including full timings and cost of admission visit www.sunburyregatta.com

Get Active 50+

Get Active 50+ helps adults aged 50 and over to become more active. There are a wide variety of sports on offer including swimming, badminton, bowls, cage cricket, dance/yoga/pilates, jogging, touch tennis, table tennis, walking football and walking netball.

For more information visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/getactive50, email leisure@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 446433.

New support services in Spelthorne

Age UK Surrey

Making sure our residents get the best service at the right price, Spelthorne Council is pleased to announce that two well-established organisations have started work in the Borough. From a new base within the Council offices at Knowle Green, Age UK Surrey is delivering a number of services which complement and add to our own frontline services to residents. Age UK Surrey has been commissioned to provide a free Information and Advice service for older people, their families and carers across the Borough. In addition - and new to Spelthorne - a free befriending service offers support for people with specific goals in mind. Paid-for home-based services including Help At Home, handyperson and gardening are also now all under the same roof at Knowle Green.

Information and Advice Service

Covering a wide range of issues including: benefit entitlements, housing, social care and residential care, as well as providing a gateway to other organisations if appropriate. For more details or to make an appointment call 01483 446627, Monday – Friday, 9am-noon and 1-3pm.

Help at Home

This offers help and support in the home such as cleaning and light housework, shopping and errands. There's also a Gardening service and a Handyperson service to provide practical help with small jobs around the home, like putting up grab rails, fitting key safes or fixing a dripping tap. Charges apply. Call 01784 444200.

Making Connections - Runnymede and Spelthorne

This free service provides volunteers who offer befriending and short-term mentoring support to achieve a specific goal and telephone/Skype support. Call 01784 444200.

For more information about these services and the Age UK Surrey Counselling and Feet First Services, visit: www.ageuk.org.uk/surrey

Voluntary Support North Surrey

Supporting Spelthorne's voluntary and community organisations is now being undertaken by Voluntary Support North Surrey (VSNS) – who moved into offices at Staines Library in the spring.

This gives them a base in the Borough where a dedicated Spelthorne team are:-

- promoting voluntary work
- supporting voluntary and community organisations
- being a voice for the voluntary sector
- identifying gaps in provision of services

An independent charity, they work with voluntary and community organisations, statutory agencies and the business community. VSNS offers free membership and a range of services to local voluntary groups including funding advice, help with business planning, marketing, access to training and much more. Voluntary Support North Surrey is a Council for Voluntary Services with integrated Volunteer Centres not only in Staines-upon-Thames but also in Chertsey and Camberley. It is funded by the Borough Councils, Surrey County Council and Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Cllr Tony Harman, Deputy Leader at Spelthorne Council, said: “A thriving voluntary sector depends on the support of an umbrella organisation such as VSNS – who we are pleased to welcome to the Borough to build capacity, offer guidance and improve performance. The volunteer centre plays a vital role in recruiting, placing and supporting the army of volunteers whose contribution to Spelthorne’s charities and community groups cannot be overestimated.”

VSNS Chief Executive Officer Solette Sheppardson, said: “We are delighted to be making a difference by helping voluntary organisations in Spelthorne. Our team is knowledgeable and their experience is already impacting charities and organisations in a positive way enabling a stronger third sector and ultimately improving lives locally. We send out weekly information on volunteering, funding, training available, networking opportunities and charity updates.”

To contact VSNS call 01784 465536. Follow VSNS on Facebook and twitter.

Dementia-Friendly Shepperton

Visitors from the Borough’s twin town in Mauritius stopped off at Shepperton Village Hall to help mark Dementia Awareness Week during a tour of the area on 16 May. The event featured stalls and displays by several organisations whose work is directly related to people who have dementia and their families, as well as a handful of others who can support and enrich their lives.

Shepperton is the first town in the Borough to pledge its commitment to become ‘dementia-friendly’. This involves training for shop staff in how to help customers who might have dementia; better signage to make it easier to get around; social and support groups for patients and carers; practical measures to help make life less stressful. Further events are planned across the Borough.

To find out more please contact Community Connector Nigel Drury by email community.connector@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 448587.

Personal alarms

SPAN (Spelthorne Personal Alarm Network) is an alarm system which helps older or disabled people live independently in their own homes. Individuals are linked to a care centre which can provide help 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. The care centre holds the details for family/friends and will contact someone should the alarm be activated. They can also contact the emergency services if required.

There is a small weekly charge of £4.30.

To contact a member of the SPAN team email span@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 444277.

Meals on wheels

The Spelthorne Meals on Wheels team can deliver hot, tasty and nutritious meals up to seven days a week. The cost of a main meal and pudding is £3.90 and you can add a freshly made sandwich for £1.80.

Visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/mow, email m.wheels@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 444265. A-Z Guide of services for the over-50s.

An updated guide is now available. Pick up a copy from your local community centre or the Council Offices in Knowle Green.

Alternatively visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/A-Z-over50s

Staines café

The café at Staines Community Centre in Thames Street offers a variety of snacks and beverages along with a warm welcome. If you are interested in volunteering to work at the café please pop-in or call 01784 463073.

Care Connections Notice Board

Spelthorne Council produces a monthly newsletter containing updates and information for the elderly and vulnerable residents of any age. There is information about local social and activity groups run by a variety of community organisations and churches. You may be surprised at how much opportunity there is to use your talents, learn new skills and socialise.

Visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/Care-Connections-NB to view the newsletter or contact Nigel Drury to join the mailing list, email community.connector@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 448587.

Spelthorne Community Centres

There are four Community Centres in Spelthorne which offer a range of activities for older people and the wider community. They are open Monday to Friday and located in Ashford, Shepperton Staines-upon-Thames and Sunbury-on-Thames.

Benwell Community Centre, Downside, Sunbury-on-Thames, TW16 6RT

Tel: 01932 784232

email: benwellcentre@spelthorne.gov.uk

Fordbridge Community Centre, Clarendon Road, Ashford, TW15 2PU

Tel: 01784 243880

email: fordbridgecentre@spelthorne.gov.uk

Greeno Community Centre, Glebeland Gardens, Shepperton, TW17 9DH

Tel: 01932 246173

email: greenocentre@spelthorne.gov.uk

Staines Community Centre, Thames Street, TW18 4EA

Tel: 01784 463073

email: stainescommunitycentre@spelthorne.gov.uk

Membership costs £15 a year for those who live in Spelthorne and £23 for non-residents. For more details or to become a member please call 01784 446389.

The Spelthorne Business Plan Competition

The final of the Spelthorne Business Plan Competition was held on 25 May at BP's headquarters in Sunbury-on-Thames. Six finalists pitched in a Dragons' Den style final for a prize of £3,500 and a year's package of business support to help them get their business started. The standard of entry was extremely high and all finalists gave professional and entertaining presentations.

The winners were George Goodger and Adam Wright with their invention Cillguard, a unique product for wheelchair users which prevents their cars from being scratched when transferring in and out of cars. Kwasi Kwarteng MP and Roberto Tambini, Chief Executive at Spelthorne Borough Council, presented their prizes.

Second place and a prize of £1,500 went to Danielle Pauling, Clare Pauling and Amanda Hadley for a family business idea called Grave Angels. Third place and £500 was awarded to Kirsti McCabe for her web based business idea 'The Routine Edit.' The other finalists were also awarded £150.

Congratulations to everyone who took part.

For details on how to enter next year's competition please email spelthornebusinessplancomp@gmail.com

Surrey County Council consultation: Housing Related Support

Surrey County Council has launched an important consultation on the future of Housing Related Support services for older people and those with disabilities. The survey closes on 13 August.

To find out more and give your views visit www.surreysays.co.uk or send an email to housingrelatedsupport@surreycc.gov.uk

Can you support families in Spelthorne?

Home-Start is a support charity which offers friendship and practical support to young families who are experiencing difficult times. Our volunteers visit families in their own homes for a few hours a week to offer confidential, flexible support.

If you would like more information and an application pack for the free volunteer course which starts soon, visit www.home-startspelthorne.org, email home-startspelthorne@tiscali.co.uk or call 01784 463200.

Shop and save with Jisp

Staines-upon-Thames is the first town in the country to pilot a new shopping app called Jisp. With Jisp, information about nearby stores, restaurants and personalised offers are sent to you while you shop. Jisp learns what you are interested in and makes sure you never miss a deal.

You can find, save and compare the products you're looking for, or if you need some inspiration you can 'follow' other people's collections. Say goodbye to bookmarks and lists - it's a new way of shopping.

For more details please visit www.jisp.com or download Jisp from your app store.

Tackling the tippers

Spelthorne's Enforcement Team tackle a range of problems linked to anti-social behaviour including fly-tipping, dog fouling, graffiti, littering and abandoned vehicles. In the last nine months the team has taken action on a large range of issues:

- prosecuted five instances of fly tipping resulting in fines, community service and suspended prison sentences for the offenders
- issued 20 community protection warnings (for persistent unreasonable behaviour)

- removed eight traveller incursions
- dealt with four prosecutions for persistent mooring offences

When fly-tipping appears it creates great concern for residents so Spelthorne Council is pleased to have recently obtained new powers to tackle fly-tipping and abandoned vehicles which allows staff to issue Fixed Penalty Fines of £400.

The Enforcement Team has also been reminding residents that they can help tackle fly-tipping by checking the credentials of anyone offering to dispose of their waste. Responsible waste carriers will have a licence from the Environment Agency – you can check the register at www.gov.uk/accessthe-public-register-for-environmental-information

To report a problem in confidence: email neighbourhoodservices@spelthorne.gov.uk call 01784 446411.

Partnership Action Day

Staff from Surrey Police, Spelthorne Borough Council and Surrey County Council joined together for a 'Partnership Action Day' in Shepperton on Wednesday 17 May.

During the day a number of fly-tips were identified, an abandoned car was removed, four people were reported for vehicle offences and one owner had their car seized for having no insurance.

The next Partnership Action Day will be held in various locations on 18 July. For more details contact Paul Smith, Community Safety Officer, by email p.smith@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 446322.

Hazelwood Centre for sport

The Hazelwood Centre is a world class sporting facility operated by Hazelwood Community Company (HCC), a not for profit company based in Croysdale Avenue in Sunbury-on-Thames. Whilst London Irish RFU team are a key tenant and based at the facility, the majority of the operational timetable is used by the community and local sports clubs.

Hazelwood recently launched a 10 year development plan and the emphasis is on providing facilities for the local community with the following aims:

- To develop, conduct, promote, grow and sustain sport
- To provide the facilities for the playing of sport by all regardless of social, economic and ethnic divisions
- To develop, provide and promote community participation
- To promote Hazelwood as a community based facility and actively engage with Spelthorne residents

If you wish to find out more about what Hazelwood can offer, email admin@hazelwood-centre.co.uk or call 01932 750190.

Shut that window

As the weather gets warmer, residents are being reminded to avoid becoming a victim of crime this summer. Opportunistic burglaries increase when people are trying to cool their homes so check that all your doors and windows have been closed before you leave the house.

When you're at home – and especially overnight - keep yourself safe by only opening upstairs or inaccessible windows. Thefts of garden tools also increase in the summer so don't forget to lock your shed or garage. Register your power tools for free at www.immobilise.com. Registering your identifiable property with Immobilise helps to identify the burglars, recover stolen property and prove offences.

Please contact the Crime Reduction Advisor by email vic.smith@surrey.pnn.police.uk or call 01483 631147 for further advice.

Don't wash raw chicken

Campylobacter is the most common cause of food poisoning in the UK. You can't see it, smell it or even taste it on food, but if it affects you, you won't forget it. There are simple things you can do to stay safe:

- cover raw chicken and store it at the bottom of the fridge so it can't drip onto other foods
- don't wash it - washing chicken spreads germs around your sink and taps; cooking it properly will make it safe
- thoroughly wash all utensils, chopping boards and surfaces with hot soapy water and then rinse in clean water or use a dishwasher. Wash your hands thoroughly too
- make sure the chicken is steaming hot all the way through, with no pink meat and the juices run clear
- when barbequing make sure you don't use the same tongs or dishes for raw meat and cooked food

Conservation volunteers needed

Spelthorne Natural History Society, Egham and Staines Conservation Volunteers and Spelthorne Civic Pride are looking for new members to join their workforces. Working with a conservation group is a great way to help improve your local environment and meet new people. If you're interested in more information or being placed on the mailing list please get in contact:-

Peter Routley

Spelthorne Natural History Society

Email thepeterroulley@gmail.com

Roy Gyngell

Egham and Staines Conservation Volunteers

Email roy.gyngell@btinternet.com

Ray Thorn

Spelthorne Civic Pride

Email rl.thorn@ntlworld.com

A gym with a difference

A new outdoor gym has been installed at Hengrove Park in Ashford providing a range of cardiovascular, strength and toning equipment. Everything is easy to use and there are no membership fees to pay! Some of the equipment can even charge your mobile phone.

Hengrove Park is located in Station Crescent, Ashford, TW15 3HN.

Creating a buzz

Spelthorne Council has been making improvements to the Borough's parks in a bid to improve the environment for pollinating insects.

Pollinating insects include honey bees, bumblebees, solitary bees, wasps, hoverflies, butterflies, moths and beetles. Since the 1950s, the number and variety of pollinators has been in decline, with many species disappearing from large parts of the country.

Staff and volunteers in Spelthorne have been working to create pollinator-friendly areas by planting 450m of hedgerows, 320m² of wildflowers, 3000 bulbs and 750m of wildflower margins to help reverse the decline in these important insects. More work is planned.

If you would like to learn more, please contact Steve Price, Countryside and Commons Officer, email s.price@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 446415.

Need help to resolve a noise dispute?

Do you have a noisy neighbour? Have you complained to your neighbour without result? Is someone complaining about you? If so, why not consider using a mediation charity to help get the problem resolved. Mediation North Surrey can help residents in Spelthorne to work through disputes and stabilise relations with their neighbours without the worry and expense of legal intervention. Over 85% of mediated cases end positively for all involved.

Contact Mediation North Surrey by emailing help@mediate.me.uk or call 0870 7514311 or 01932 596953. Visit www.mediate.me.uk

Out of hours noise service

The Council offers an out-of-hours noise contact number which residents can call if they are being badly affected by noise from things such as parties, intruder alarms, pubs and construction sites. The service is available from 5pm to 8am weekdays and 24-hours during weekends and bank holidays.

If your complaint is not deemed urgent, it will be referred to the Council's Environmental Health Department for them to investigate.

Call the out-of-hours noise contact centre on 01932 425060 or visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/noiseservice for more information.

An antidote to rising energy prices

With energy bills rising significantly this year, it pays to think about how you power your home.

Action Surrey, Spelthorne Council's energy advice service, is set up to advise on which technologies can help cut your energy costs and environmental impact, as well as helping find reliable contractors to install solar panels, insulation and more.

Please visit www.actionsurrey.org or call 0800 783 2503 to find out more.

Spelthorne goes electric

Spelthorne Council has installed electric vehicle charge points in two public car parks in Staines-upon-Thames. Six individual fast charging bays have been installed at Elmsleigh multi-storey car park and a dual slow charger which can charge two cars simultaneously at Tothill multi-storey. The charging bays are free to use and customers simply download an app to get started.

Some facts about plug-in electric vehicles:

- They are exempt from road tax and the London congestion charge
- They have lower running costs and better performance
- The number on the market is increasing and new models are due for release with longer ranges
- The number registered in Spelthorne is over 100
- There are several government grants available for the purchase of Plug-in vehicles and installing charge points at home and in workplaces – see www.gov.uk

- The number of charging points in Surrey is expanding weekly – visit www.zap-map.com for a
- map of charging point locations

For more info on electric vehicles please visit www.travelsmartsurrey.info/driving/electric-vehicles.

Visit <https://open.pod-point.com/> or download the Pod Point app from your app store to get started.

Living next to a watercourse

Do you have a watercourse such as a ditch, stream or river running through or alongside your property? If so, you are probably responsible for its maintenance and in legal terms you are a 'riparian owner'. If you would like to know more, Surrey County Council has published FAQs and a good practice guide for watercourse maintenance – visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/watercourse-maintenance.