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6-7 Elections and
LGR update

10-11 Council
Tax

12-13 Love
where you live



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Letter from the Leader

Dear Residents,

As we welcome spring, I am pleased to introduce the latest edition of the Bulletin. This magazine is an important way for us to keep you informed about council services, local changes and opportunities to get involved in your community.

One of the key features in this edition is our Love Where You Live campaign. This ongoing initiative is all about working together to keep Spelthorne clean, safe and welcoming. We are encouraging residents to report issues such as litter, graffiti, dog fouling, antisocial behaviour, or concerns about illegal houses of multiple occupation. By letting us know about problems in your area, you can help us take action more quickly and effectively. You can read about the campaign on pages 12 and 13.

This spring also brings important developments for local democracy. From 1 April 2027, Surrey's current county, district and borough councils will be replaced by two new unitary councils – East Surrey and West Surrey. As part of this transition, Spelthorne residents will be able to vote on Thursday 7 May to decide who will represent them on the new West Surrey Council. Find out more on pages 6 and 7.

You will also find details about Council Tax for 2026/27 in this edition. This includes a summary of the new Council Tax charges for each band, with a breakdown of where your money goes. We understand that circumstances can change, so I would encourage you to check whether you may be eligible for a Council Tax discount or exemption. Further information is available on pages 10 and 11.

Finally, the Bulletin is your magazine and we are always keen to hear your views. If you have any feedback, suggestions, or ideas for future editions, please email us at communications.marketing@spelthorne.gov.uk.

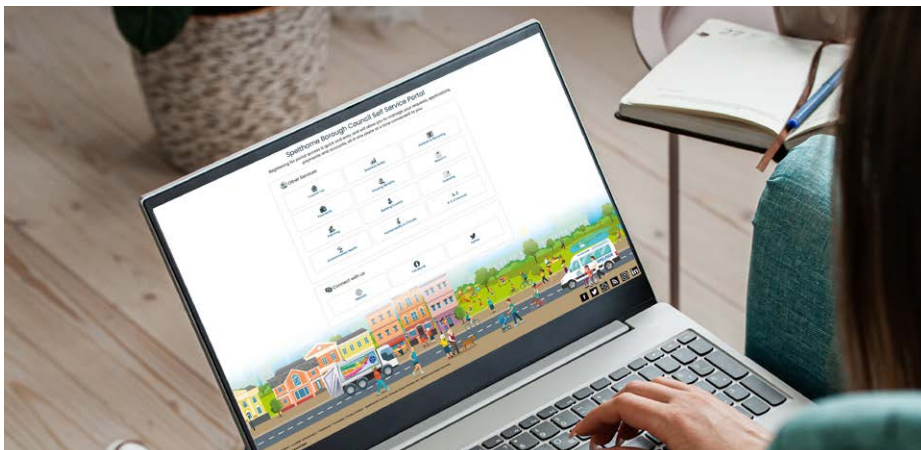
Cllr Joanne Sexton, Leader of the Council

✉ cllr.sexton@spelthorne.gov.uk

Your council, online

Spelthorne Council's customer portal gives residents a simple, convenient way to manage council services online in one secure place. It's available 24/7, allowing you to make payments, submit forms and report issues and track requests at a time that suits you, without needing to contact us directly.

By registering, you can save you details, making future applications quicker and easier, while also viewing a history of past interactions.



Visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/customerportal

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- 📷 @spelthorneboroughcouncil
- 🌐 Spelthorne Borough Council

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www.spelthorne.gov.uk/enews

👤 **Sign up to the Customer Portal:**
www.spelthorne.gov.uk/customerportal

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The Bulletin is available on CD for residents with sight problems. Please email l.king@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 444260.

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MORE INFO

Farewell from the Mayor



As my year as Mayor of Spelthorne comes to an end, I would like to reflect on what has been a rewarding and memorable time and to say a heartfelt thank you to our residents.

It has been a great honour to serve our borough over the past year. I have greatly enjoyed meeting residents, visiting community groups, local businesses and charities, and seeing first-hand the dedication and kindness that make Spelthorne such a special place to live.

I am especially grateful to everyone who supported my nominated charities: Stanwell Community Group, 1st Stanwell Air Scout Group, Families Thriving Together and Spelthorne Museum. Thanks to your generosity, time and enthusiasm, we were able to raise valuable funds and awareness for these organisations, all of which do outstanding work within our community.

The year was marked by many memorable events. Highlights included the Mayor's Civic Service on 29 June at St Mary's Church in Stanwell, which brought together people from across the borough, and the Remembrance Service on 11 November in Stanwell, where we paused to remember and honour those who gave their lives in service to others.

I was delighted to help celebrate the first anniversary of the new Eclipse Leisure Centre on 18 October, a fantastic facility for residents of all ages, and to attend the opening of Sostrene Grene in Staines High Street on 7 November, which added further vitality to our town centre.

Community spirit was very much on display at events such as the Mayor's Quiz Night on 30 October at the Magpie Pub in Sunbury, the Stanwell Scouts sponsored hike on 15 November, and the Christmas wreath-making event on 27 November, all of which brought people together while raising money for good causes.

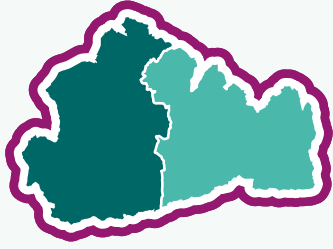
I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the Mayoress, Cllr Susan Doran, and Deputy Mayor Cllr Sandra Dunn, for their constant support throughout the year. I am also grateful to my fellow councillors and to all the staff, past and present, at Spelthorne Council for their professionalism, commitment and hard work behind the scenes.

Finally, I thank all residents, volunteers and local organisations for their kindness and support. As I hand over the chain of office, I do so with great pride in our community and confidence in the future.

Cllr John Doran, Mayor of Spelthorne

✉ mayor@spelthorne.gov.uk ☎ 01784 446275





Future Surrey

2026 West Surrey Elections

Get ready to vote on 7 May

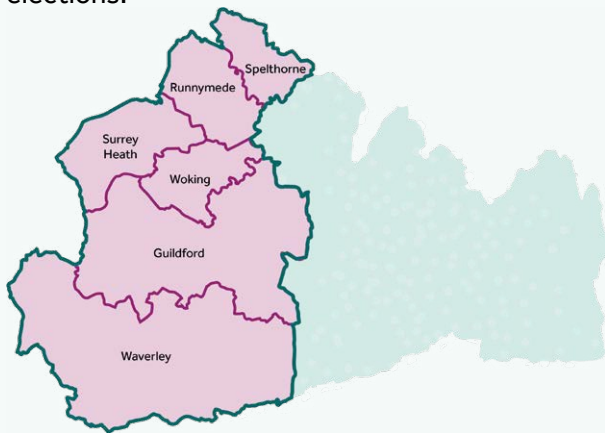
Local government in Surrey is changing to make the system simpler, more connected, and better able to meet local needs. This is called Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation.

Future Surrey is a temporary identity created by all councils in Surrey to help people understand the changes taking place across the county and what they mean for you.

From April 2027, the existing county council and 11 district and borough councils will be replaced with two new unitary councils - East Surrey and West Surrey.

On Thursday 7 May 2026, you will get the opportunity to elect who you want to represent you in your new West Surrey Council.

Make sure you are ready to vote in these important elections.



West Surrey Council

Made up of the geographical areas of:

- Guildford
- Runnymede
- Spelthorne
- Surrey Heath
- Waverley
- Woking

What West Surrey Council will be responsible for

From April 2027, West Surrey Council will provide all the local council services you rely on - education, waste collection, roads, housing, play areas, children's services, adult social care and more.

Your new West Surrey councillors

The councillors elected to West Surrey Council in May 2026 will initially operate as a 'shadow authority'. During this period they will:

- develop budgets and service plans
- agree staffing structures and governance arrangements
- prepare for the transfer of responsibilities from the existing councils
- engage with residents and local partners to shape priorities.

West Surrey Council will formally begin operating on 1 April 2027, when Surrey County Council and the district and borough councils will be dissolved.

- West Surrey Council will have 90 councillors made up of two councillors representing each of its 45 wards. They will serve for five years, until May 2031.
- There will be 14 councillors across 7 wards representing Spelthorne's geographic area.
- Electors will be able to vote for up to two councillors in their ward.
- The two candidates with the highest number of votes will be elected (first past the post).

Details of candidates standing for election in your area will be available on our website www.spelthorne.gov.uk and surreylgrhub.gov.uk by 4pm on Friday 10 April 2026.

Existing county, borough and district councillors

- Your existing councillors will continue to represent you until 31 March 2027.
- There will be no elections for these councils in May 2026, unless a by-election is required in a particular ward.
- For now, nothing changes in the way you receive services. All councils will continue to deliver services as usual.

Are you election ready?



Register to vote

- Elections for councillors to represent you on the new West Surrey Council will take place on **7 May 2026**. You can vote in person, by post or by proxy.
- You must be registered to be able to vote. If you're not already registered, you have until midnight on **20 April 2026** to do so at gov.uk/register-to-vote



Voter ID

- To vote in person you must bring an accepted form of photo ID. These include a passport, a driving licence or a concessionary travel pass, such as an older person's bus pass. You can use expired IDs as long as the photo still looks like you. For a full list of accepted photo ID visit electoralcommission.org.uk/voterid
- If you don't have an accepted form of photo ID, you can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate (VAC) at gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate
- The deadline to apply for a VAC is **5pm on 28 April 2026**.
- If you are voting on behalf of someone else as their proxy, you will need to bring your own photo ID.



Postal and proxy votes

- If you won't be able to get to a polling station on election day, you can apply for a postal vote or proxy vote online at gov.uk/how-to-vote
- Apply as soon as possible to make sure you receive your postal vote pack or proxy vote in good time.
- The deadline to apply for a postal vote is **5pm on Tuesday 21 April 2026**.
- For a proxy vote – when a friend or relative casts your vote for you – you must apply by **5pm on 28 April 2026**.

Key dates

20 April 2026 midnight	Deadline for registering to vote.
21 April 2026 5pm	Deadline to apply for a postal vote.
28 April 2026 5pm	Deadline to apply for a proxy vote and Voter Authority Certificate (if you don't have an accepted form of photo ID).
07 May 2026	Elections for new West Surrey councillors. Polling stations open for voting from 7am to 10pm.
07 May 2026 10pm	Deadline for postal votes to be received.
8 May 2026	Votes counted and successful candidates declared.
May 2026 to March 2027	New West Surrey Council operates as a 'shadow authority' to prepare for the new councils to take on all local services. Residents continue to receive services as normal.
01 April 2027	West Surrey Council takes full responsibility for delivering all local services in its geography. Surrey's 12 existing councils will formally dissolve.

More information

For more about the upcoming changes in Surrey, scan the QR code, visit surreylgrhub.gov.uk or email electoral.services@spelthorne.gov.uk

For more on voting and elections: electoralcommission.org.uk

If you don't have access to the internet, you can call our elections line on **01784 444218**.



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Escalate Arts: get involved, get creative

Escalate Arts is bringing a year-round programme of creative activity to the Library Hub in Staines-upon-Thames and the wider community with opportunities to take part, develop skills, and shape what happens next.

Over the coming months, residents can look forward to a programme of public events, creative clubs, performances and workshops, alongside regular youth-led takeover days where young people reimagine the library as a space for culture, creativity and connection.

Young people aged 13–25 are especially encouraged to get involved through the Youth Collective - a group that meets regularly to plan events, develop ideas and work alongside artists and creative professionals. For those interested in creative careers, the programme also offers Associate Producer opportunities, supporting young people to build skills, gain experience and develop portfolios through real-world projects.

Escalate Arts is open to everyone - whether you want to attend an event, try something new, or help shape future activity. New opportunities are announced throughout the year.

Find out more, see what's coming up, or explore ways to get involved at www.surreycc.gov.uk/escalatearts

Staines 10K

The 2026 Staines 10K, organised by Staines Strollers, Runnymede

Runners and Spelthorne Borough Council, will be held at 9am on Sunday 10 May, starting outside the council offices in Knowle Green.

Proceeds go to local charities. Come along and support the runners.

Visit www.staines10k.co.uk



Spelthorne Cycling for Health Scheme

Relaxed, casual bike rides led by trained volunteers in and around Spelthorne. Aimed at adults who want to get active and stay active, cycle in a social group and explore the local area. Rides take place during the week and are between 6 and 13 miles. All rides go at a gentle pace and are a great way to socialise.

Visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/cyclingforhealth, email leisure@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 446433

Spring art open day

Saturday 28
March,
10am-2pm



For children aged 4-11 years. Come along and make some spring crafts this holiday. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Spaces are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Please try not to bring pushchairs/buggies due to fire safety and space restrictions.

Venue: Spelthorne Resource Centre, Staines Park, Commercial Road, Staines, TW18 2QJ

Cost: £1 per child, 50p siblings

Visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/resourcecentre



Staines Amateur Regatta

Saturday 25 July, 9am - 5pm

Staines Amateur Regatta is an annual event held on the River Thames at Silvery Sands in Laleham. The event dates back to 1851 and features competitors of all ages and abilities from local rowing clubs. Racing takes place from 9am to 5pm.

Come along and watch on the towpath. Admission free for spectators. Catering and bar facilities available.

Visit www.stainesregatta.com



Saturday morning craft club



Saturday 18 April - Saturday 23 May, 10-11am

Take part in art and craft activities, learn new skills and have fun. With guidance from staff, the children will be able to make and create their own masterpieces to take home. For children aged 5-9 years.

Venue: Spelthorne Resource Centre, Staines Park, Commercial Road, Staines, TW18 2QJ

Cost: £28.80 for the term (6 sessions)

Visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/resourcecentre



Surrey Community Games



We're offering six weeks of completely funded training in six different activities from April to June for young people aged 7-14. All sessions are for beginners and fully inclusive to help young people try something new, learn different skills and boost their confidence. Following the training sessions, there will be showcase events in Spelthorne and Runnymede where the participants can show off what they've learnt. Activities on offer include basketball, dance, girls' football, hockey, judo and tennis.

You must live or go to school in Spelthorne to sign up. Registration is open from mid-March.

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

Your Council Tax guide 2026/2027

The community facilities and local services that we all use are funded by Council Tax, Business Rates, government grants and income generating activities. The amount of Council Tax that we pay depends on the 'band' given to our homes, assessed on the value of the property. Spelthorne Borough Council collects all the Council Tax on behalf of Surrey County Council and Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner. Yet, just over 9% (9.30p in every pound) of the Council Tax we collect is actually used to fund Spelthorne Borough Council services, with the balance distributed to the other authorities.

In 2026/27 Spelthorne Borough Council increased its share of the Council Tax by 2.9%, which equates to an additional £6.64 for the year on a band D property. The increase, which is below the current rate of inflation, will help us fund our services for the next year. Some of the services we provide are mandatory e.g. waste collection,

but many of them, especially supporting our vulnerable residents, are discretionary.

Surrey County Council has increased its element of the Council Tax charge by 4.99% and the Police have increased by 4.40%. This combined with the 2.9% increase from Spelthorne Borough Council will mean that residents living in a Band D property, will see their total annual bill increase from £2412.78 to £2526.49.

This Council delivers a wide range of vital services, and we take this responsibility extremely seriously. We remain dedicated to providing high-quality, efficient public services that respond to the needs of our residents and local businesses while ensuring value for money. We are committed to spending public funds carefully and responsibly to deliver services that you and your family can rely on and be proud of, with residents at the centre of every decision we make.

Are you paying more Council Tax than you need to?

Many residents may be entitled to a Council Tax discount or exemption but are not aware they qualify. If your circumstances have changed, or if you have never checked your eligibility, it could be worth taking a few minutes to review your situation.

Discounts and exemptions are available for a wide range of circumstances. You may qualify if you live alone, are a full-time student, or are on a low income. Support is also available where someone in the household has a disability or a long-term health condition, including conditions such

as dementia or Parkinson's disease.

Some properties may qualify for an exemption for a period of time, for example if a home is empty, if someone has moved into residential care, or if the property includes a self-contained annexe used by a dependent relative.

Applying is usually straightforward, and any reduction can make a real difference to household finances, especially at a time when many people are feeling the pressure of rising costs. Even a small change in circumstances could mean you're eligible for support.

For more information, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/counciltax or call **01784 451499**

Support available

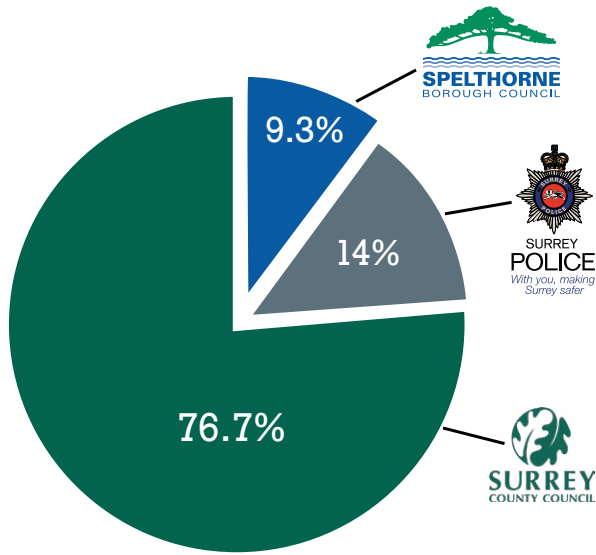
Visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/support to see lots of options for online help. If you'd rather speak to someone,

call our Customer Services team on **01784 451499**. We can help on a wide range of issues including benefits, debt, housing, health and wellbeing.



Where your Council Tax goes:

Your Council Tax pays for services provided by Surrey County Council, Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner and Spelthorne Borough Council.

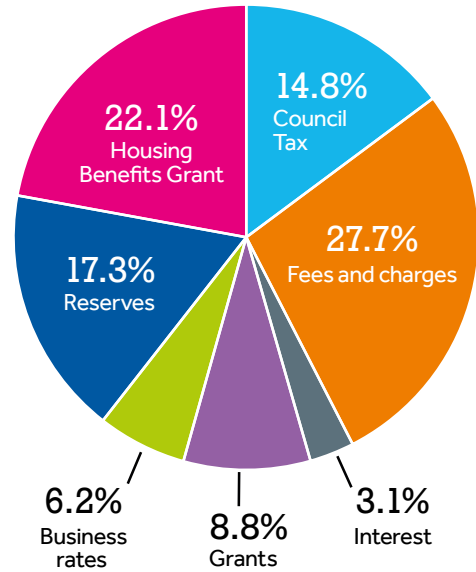


For every £1 of Council Tax:

- Spelthorne Borough Council receives just over 9p.
- Surrey County Council receives just under 77p.
- Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner receives 14p.

Where Spelthorne Borough Council gets its money from:

The Council needs to ensure that services are delivered in a cost-effective way which meets the needs of our residents but at a price the Council can afford. Spelthorne Council is largely funded by seven separate income streams and with this income the Council must fulfil its statutory duties as well as deliver the Council's priorities. The 2026/27 income is £65.5m million.



Council Tax bands

Council Tax is charged at eight different levels, depending on your property value. The breakdown of how much each of the three Council Tax raising bodies retain per Council Tax band for 2026/27 is as follows:

Total	Spelthorne Borough Council	Surrey County Council	Surrey Police
A £1,684.33	£157.00	£1,292.28	£235.05
B £1,965.05	£183.17	£1,507.66	£274.22
C £2,245.77	£209.33	£1,723.04	£313.40
D £2,526.49	£235.50	£1,938.42	£352.57
E £3,087.93	£287.83	£2,369.18	£430.92
F £3,649.38	£340.17	£2,799.94	£509.27
G £4,210.82	£392.50	£3,230.70	£587.62
H £5,052.98	£471.00	£3,876.84	£705.14





**Spot it.
Report it.**



**LOVE
WHERE
YOU LIVE**
Proud of Our Place

Reporting issues such as litter, graffiti, housing concerns or unsafe behaviour helps keep Spelthorne clean, safe and welcoming for everyone.

Small actions make a big difference.



**Spot it.
Report it.**

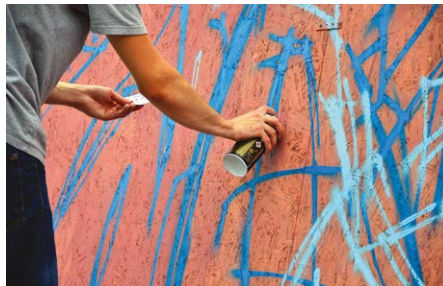


Love Where You Live

Spelthorne is a place we're proud to call home. From our green spaces and riverside walks to our town centres, neighbourhoods and community spirit, there is so much to value about living here. That's why the Council's campaign is called Love Where You Live – because looking after Spelthorne starts with all of us.

Small actions really do make a big difference. When residents take a moment to report things like graffiti, litter, dog fouling, antisocial behaviour, or concerns about illegal houses of multiple occupation, they are helping to protect the places we all share. These reports allow the Council to respond more quickly, target resources effectively, and prevent small problems from becoming bigger ones.

Keeping Spelthorne clean, safe and welcoming isn't just about appearances – it's about pride, wellbeing and community. A tidy street, a well-maintained park, or a neighbourhood free from persistent nuisance can have a positive impact on how we feel about where we live and how connected we are to one another. When everyone plays their part, our borough becomes a better place for residents, visitors and future generations alike.



Our neighbourhoods matter. Every street, green space and local area contributes to the character of Spelthorne. If you spot something that doesn't look right, reporting it helps us take action and shows that you care about your community. Whether it's a one-off issue or an ongoing concern, your information is valuable and can make a real difference.

This is our home. By working together, we can protect what makes Spelthorne special and ensure it remains a place we are proud to

live in. The Love Where You Live campaign is about encouraging responsibility, respect and care for our shared environment – because everyone deserves to live in a place they feel good about.

Reporting issues is quick and easy. Simply scan the QR code below, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/report, or call us on 01784 451499.

Together, we can make a difference. Let's love where we live.





Spot it. Report it.

Small actions make a big difference. Spot it. Report it.

SCAN ME!



Safe, well-managed housing helps communities thrive. If you're concerned about a property in your area, reporting it helps us investigate and take action where needed.



STANWELL BOWLING CLUB OPEN DAY

Saturday 23rd May 2026
1pm - 5pm



Ever thought about taking up lawn bowls or simply looking for a friendly, welcoming club to join? Look no further, Stanwell Bowls Club would be delighted to have you. We are holding an Open Day **Saturday 23rd May 2026**, offering the perfect opportunity to meet members, learn more about the club, and see what we have to offer. You will have a chance to play a few ends with our members to see if Bowls is for you.

All new members pay half price for the first year.

New players of all abilities are warmly encouraged and ladies are especially needed. So come along, make new friends and enjoy a fantastic community sport.

Find us at the Pavillion inside Stanwell Recreation Ground in Oaks Road Stanwell, TW19 7LB.

If you would like further information, please email:

admin@stanwellbowlsclub.com

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*Prices exclude VAT and are available to those with a long-term medical condition and upon declaration.



Home-Start Spelthorne

Home-Start Spelthorne is a family support charity that provides emotional support and practical help for young families living in Spelthorne who are facing challenging times.

Being a parent can be lonely, frustrating and overwhelming. Our home visiting volunteers work alongside families to give compassionate and confidential support. Volunteers are central to what we do, they provide invaluable friendship and emotional and practical support to parents in need.

Our biggest challenge now is recruiting home-visiting volunteers. We need more volunteers so that we can support all the families who need us.

Home-Start was launched in 1996 and will be celebrating our 30th anniversary this year and will be hosting several special events including our annual Picnic in the Park event on 28 July in Staines Park. Look out for more about that.

If you are interested or would like to know more, give us a call on **01784 463200** or visit our website **www.home_startspelthorne.org**



Spelthorne in Bloom 2026

Spelthorne in Bloom celebrates the work of the borough's green-fingered residents and businesses which are helping to make Spelthorne a brighter, greener place to live. The categories for this year's competition are:

- Most attractive local area within the Wards of Spelthorne
- Best commercial garden
- Best kept front garden
- Best hanging basket
- Best community garden
- Best riverside garden
- Best kept allotment
- Best community allotment
- Best war memorial
- Best kept place of worship/public building
- Best kept large pub
- Best kept small pub
- Best environmental planting project
- Best new entrant
- Best kept school garden
- Best in show

Entries open on 30 March and close 26 June. For more information or entry form, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/SIB or call **01784 446254**

Honouring lives lost during the Covid pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic touched every corner of our community and changed many lives forever. Behind the statistics are loved family members, friends, neighbours and colleagues whose absence is still deeply felt across the borough.

To honour the residents who lost their lives during the pandemic, the Council has planted Japanese Rowan memorial trees across several locations, creating peaceful living tributes that will grow and flourish for generations to come.

The trees have been planted in the Council's cemeteries in Ashford, Staines, Stanwell and Sunbury, as well as at St Mary's Church Cemetery in Staines. These locations



were carefully chosen as places of reflection, remembrance and quiet connection, where people can visit, pause and remember those they lost.

Trees have long been a symbol of life, renewal and continuity. As these memorial trees mature, they will provide shade, beauty and habitats for wildlife, while standing as a lasting reminder of the strength and resilience of our community. They also reflect hope for the future, even in the face of profound loss.

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- Wakes



- Mini, Youth & Girls
- FREE Community Touch Rugby
- Men's & Women's

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Free Touch Rugby: Tuesday, 7:30pm

Girls Rugby: Tuesday 7:30pm & Sunday 10am

U16-U18: Tuesday & Thursday, 6:30pm

Mini & Youth: Sunday mornings from 10am

✦ All abilities welcome – new players always encouraged! ✦

Contact us to get involved: info@stainesrugby.com

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Update from the Police Borough Commander

Since my last update, your local safer neighbourhood team have remained focused on what matters most to residents – reducing crime, increasing detections, and keeping people safe.

Thanks to this work, and the support of our community, we have seen an overall 7% reduction in crime across the area. This reflects the use of targeted patrols, better use of intelligence, and close partnership working with local authorities, businesses and community groups. Alongside this reduction, we have improved our overall detection rate to 17%, ensuring offenders are identified and dealt with.

Retail crime has been a key priority. Through dedicated town centre operations, closer collaboration with shop owners, and proactive action against repeat offenders, we have seen a 25% reduction in retail crime. Importantly, this has been matched by a 30% detection rate, helping to protect businesses and support a safer, more welcoming high street.

Burglary is a deeply intrusive offence, and we understand the impact it has



on victims. This has previously seen an increase over the winter period. However patrols in hotspot areas, preventative crime advice, and swift investigative work have contributed to a significant 36% reduction in burglary. We will continue to prioritise this crime to ensure homes remain secure.

While these results are encouraging, we know there is always more to do. We remain committed to visible policing, strong partnerships, and listening to your concerns.

If you have information about crime or want to engage with your local team, please get in touch. Together, we are making a difference.

*Insp Matthew Walton
Borough Commander
Surrey Police*



Daybreak respite care

At Daybreak we offer respite care and support to people in the community with chronic illnesses, physical disabilities, mild dementia or social isolation.

We give carers a well-earned break for five hours on a Tuesday, while their family member receives respite care of the highest standard. We provide a happy and vibrant environment where people can enjoy some company, a home cooked meal and regular musical entertainment. Our provision of care includes blood pressure and sugar monitoring, continence care,



dietary needs, personal care and supervision of prescribed medication. Each guest has an individual care plan.

We are based at St. Peter's Church Hall on the Laleham Road in Staines and are open from 10am – 3pm every Tuesday (excluding Christmas and Easter). The cost is £35 per day which includes a two-course lunch and all refreshments.

For more information, email Sally Kidd at sallykdaybreak@gmail.com or call **077610 47930** (Monday Friday)

CrimeStoppers.

Speak up. Stay safe.



It can sometimes be difficult to come forward with information about a crime. You might have seen or heard something but don't know what to do or feel worried about going to the Police.

You can contact Crimestoppers, an independent charity that gives residents the power to speak up and stop crime, completely anonymously.

Visit www.crimestoppers.uk.org or call **0800 555 111**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Ashford Helping Hands

We are a small group of volunteers giving help to elderly or vulnerable people living in the TW15 Ashford area. We did more than 700 jobs for our clients last year, including transport to medical appointments, shopping and home visits. We would love to help even more people if we could but are always short of volunteers, especially drivers.

Why not join us? Whether you have a lot of time to spare or just a little, you'll be very welcome.

For more information, visit www.ashfordhelpinghands.co.uk or call us on **07754 083502**, weekdays 9am - 11am



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Solar power in Spelthorne: cutting bills, cutting carbon

Solar energy is playing an increasingly important role in Spelthorne's move towards lower energy bills, reduced carbon emissions and greater local resilience. From council buildings to homes and community facilities, solar power is proving to be a smart investment for both people and the planet.

Spelthorne Council has already seen the benefits of solar in action. In 2025, solar panels installed on six council buildings generated more than 77,000 kWh of clean electricity, saving around £24,500 in energy costs. These savings help protect vital local services from rising and unpredictable energy prices, while also supporting the borough's climate commitments. The results show that solar energy delivers both environmental and financial benefits.

Spring is a great time to go solar

For residents and organisations considering solar, spring is one of the best times to act. From March onwards, longer and brighter days mean new systems begin generating more electricity straight away, allowing savings to build quickly. Spring is also a quieter period for installers than the busy summer months, which can mean shorter waiting times.

With energy prices still uncertain, solar offers a reliable way to reduce bills and gain more control over household or organisational energy costs. Adding battery storage can increase savings further by storing clean electricity for use later in the day.

Solar made simple

Getting started with solar doesn't have to be complicated. Panels generally work best on south, east or west-facing roofs with minimal shading, although modern systems can still perform well on flat or partially shaded roofs.

Costs vary depending on system size, but many households recover their investment through energy savings within a few years. Solar can reduce electricity bills, lower carbon emissions, protect against future price rises and may even increase property value. In most cases, domestic rooftop solar does not require planning permission.

Residents should always use a reputable, accredited installer. Look for companies certified by the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) and consider



getting more than one quote, as well as checking reviews and recommendations before going ahead.

Powering communities together

Solar isn't just for individual buildings. Community energy projects allow residents and organisations to work together to generate renewable energy locally, using buildings such as schools, sports clubs and village halls. These projects reduce energy bills for community facilities and ensure financial benefits stay within the local area, with surplus income reinvested into further sustainability projects.

Many schemes use Power Purchase Agreements, allowing solar panels to be installed with no upfront cost. Buildings simply pay a reduced rate for the electricity they use, while installation and maintenance are handled externally. Visit www.surreycommunityenergy.org for details.

Project Spark: supporting larger buildings

To help more large buildings go solar, the Council has launched Project Spark. The scheme offers free, tailored support, including feasibility checks and guidance on planning, grid connections and procurement. Working with partners such as Surrey Community Energy and Wey Valley Solar, Project Spark aims to cut carbon emissions, lower energy bills and deliver long-term benefits for communities across Spelthorne.

PROJECT SPARK
Unlock your roof's power - Join the solar movement

Join Project Spark - A free support service from Spelthorne Borough Council, offering:

- Tailored solar generation modelling
- Roof and site feasibility assessments
- Help with planning and grid connection
- Guidance through procurement and installation
- Access to financing options with no upfront costs

We're working with Surrey Community Energy and Wey Valley Solar, a trusted not-for-profit partner, to make solar simple, affordable, and community-driven. Whether you're curious or ready to go solar, we want to hear from you.

If you are interested, please contact: netzero@spelthorne.gov.uk

Logos for Wey Valley Solar, Surrey, and Spelthorne Borough Council are also present.

To find out more about solar power, visit www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/solar-panels or email netzero@spelthorne.gov.uk



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Spelthorne Business Hub relocates to Knowle Green

From 7 April, the Spelthorne Business Hub will move to the Council offices at Knowle Green.

Funded by Spelthorne Borough Council, the Hub supports local start-ups and small businesses to grow and succeed. By offering high-quality coworking space at below market rates, alongside expert business support, the Council is helping ensure Spelthorne remains a great place to start, run and grow a business.

Hub members benefit from:

- A vibrant business community, ideal for networking and building new contacts
- Coaching, mentoring and training through the Council's Business Growth Service and trusted partners, including SBF, FSB, Surrey Chambers of Commerce, West London Chambers of Commerce and Visit Staines
- A regular programme of



networking events, workshops and seminars focused on business growth.

The Hub operates Monday to Friday, with desks available from £99 per month (excl. VAT). The monthly fee includes:

- Wi-Fi and printing
- Tea and coffee facilities
- On-site parking
- Access to meeting and private rooms
- Business advice and events through the Business Growth Programme



For further information or availability, email info@spelthornebusinesshub.com or call Chris Norrington, Economic Development Manager, on 01784 446208

Ashford Business Improvement District – have your say

Plans are underway to develop a Business Improvement District (BID) in Ashford.

A BID is a business-led initiative that invests in projects and services to enhance the local trading environment. Engagement with town centre businesses has started to gather views and shape a business plan. Businesses will vote on whether to implement the BID at the end of 2026, which could bring benefits such

as improved marketing, events and safety/security measures.



If you own a local business and want to get involved or find out more, email info@ashfordbid.co.uk



Spelthorne Business Awards 2026

The Spelthorne Business Awards return for their landmark 8th and final year in the borough, celebrating the talent and achievements of our diverse local business community.

For almost a decade, the Awards have become a showcase for Spelthorne's entrepreneurial excellence - recognising organisations of all shapes and sizes, from innovative start-ups and solo enterprises to established local employers, creative ventures and high-growth companies.

The 2026 Spelthorne Business Awards remain completely free to enter, with a simple application process suitable for businesses at any stage of their journey. With categories spanning a wide range of sectors, this special final edition will culminate in one outstanding organisation being named Spelthorne Best Business of the Year.

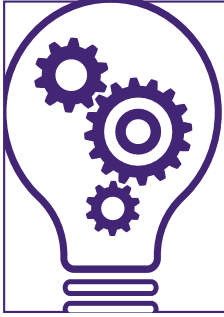
Key Dates:

- Open for Entries: Wednesday 4 March 2026
- Entries close: Midnight, Friday 19 June 2026
- Finalists announced: Friday 31 July 2026
- Awards ceremony: Friday 2 October 2026

This year's ceremony promises to be a memorable celebration, honouring eight years of achievement and bringing together the organisations that have shaped Spelthorne's economic landscape.

Thank you to our headline sponsor, Shepperton Studios, for supporting the Spelthorne Business Awards.

For more information visit, www.spelthornebusinessawards.co.uk



The Spelthorne Business Plan Competition | 2026

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www.sbf.biz

Spelthorne Business Plan Competition 2026

The Spelthorne Business Forum is delighted to announce the launch of the Spelthorne Business Plan Competition 2026, inviting residents across the borough to take that first step towards turning a business idea into reality. If you've ever thought "maybe one day", this is your moment.

The competition is open to any Spelthorne resident with a business idea, no matter how small, simple or early-stage. You don't need to have all the answers – just an idea and the willingness to explore it. The entry process is straightforward and designed to be supportive, practical and encouraging.

Key dates for 2026:

- Entries closes: 16 April 2026
- Dragons' Den Final: June 2026

Finalists will be taken through a

step-by-step programme of training and mentoring, designed to build confidence, strengthen ideas and fully prepare them for pitching at the Dragons' Den Final.

Importantly, every applicant will be offered support and mentoring, helping guide them through the early stages of launching their business, whether or not they reach the final. This is about nurturing potential and giving people the tools they need to move forward.

Participants will also hear directly from previous finalists and winners, who will share their stories, lessons learned and what the competition helped them achieve. Their journeys are proof that great businesses can – and do – start right here in Spelthorne.

If you've been waiting for the right time, this is it. Back yourself. Back your idea.



Ready for your next chapter?

If you're returning to work, considering a career change or looking for a fresh start, our Over 45s Employability Workshops can help you take the next step.

This friendly six-week course is designed to build confidence, highlight your strengths and support your employment journey. Topics include overcoming barriers to work, confidence building, identifying transferable skills, improving CVs and cover letters, and exploring training and development opportunities.

April sessions run on 7, 9, 14, 16 and 21 April, 10am–1.30pm, at Spelthorne Jobs and Skills Hub, 1–2 Friends Walk, Staines-upon-Thames, TW18 4PG.

This is a structured programme, so advance booking and attendance at all sessions is encouraged.

To find out more or book a place, email info@spelthornejobsandskills.com or call 01784 448564. You can also visit www.spelthornejobsandskills.com for details of other support available at the Hub



Supporting local businesses

January marked the launch of Spelthorne Council's Business Growth Service. This new initiative offers tailored support for companies looking to expand, innovate or overcome challenges. Services include one-to-one business advice, access to funding opportunities and guidance on marketing, digital transformation and sustainability.

Whether you are a small business aiming to scale-up or an established firm seeking new ideas, the team can help you achieve your goals.

For full details and to register for support, visit our Business Spelthorne platform for business resources, events and news at www.businessspelthorne.co.uk



Photo: 2025 winners, "Your Story Songbook", founded by sisters Natalie Watson and Louise Duffy.

For more information or to express your interest, email members@sbf.biz

Powering Spelthorne: the impact of your food waste recycling

Over the past year, households across Spelthorne recycled an impressive 2,814.48 tonnes of food waste, generating more than 844,000 kWh of green energy. That's enough power to:

- Run 1.6 million washing machine cycles
- Provide 12,990 electric car charges – the equivalent of more than 2.5 million green driving miles
- Fuel three fully-laden return flights from Heathrow to Tenerife
- Boil the kettle for over 12 million cups of tea

As part of the Government's Simpler Recycling reforms, every household in England will be required to have a weekly food waste collection by April 2026. Spelthorne has been ahead of the curve, offering this service since 2017. However, there is still room to grow – both in the amount of food waste collected and in the number of households taking part.

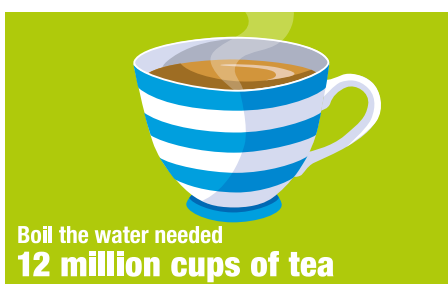
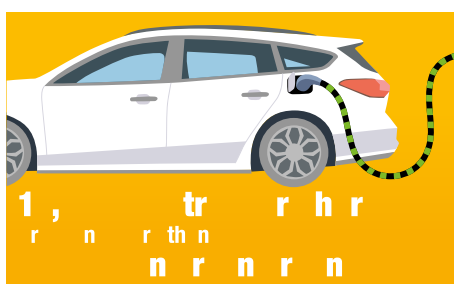
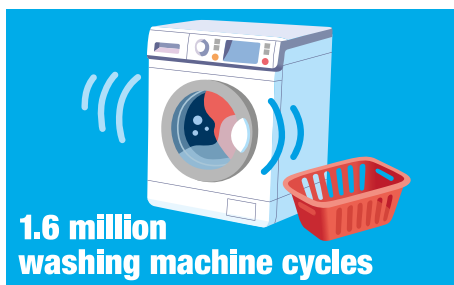
Recycling food waste doesn't just help generate clean, renewable energy. It also costs significantly less to process than general rubbish. By separating food waste at home, residents help reduce waste costs, freeing up money that can be reinvested into the

services that matter most.

We've already made great progress in Spelthorne, but together we can go even further. In some parts of the borough, only around half of households regularly put out their food waste bin, and up to a quarter of the average rubbish bin is still made up of food that could be recycled. A simple habit in the kitchen really can make a big difference – helping to power homes, protect the environment and support our communities.

Since September, Spelthorne's Simpler Recycling Officers have been visiting homes across the borough to talk to residents about food waste recycling. They've been reminding households about the service, delivering bins, sharing useful tips, and answering questions face-to-face.

Your food waste collection is a free weekly service. Food waste bins are available from the Council offices and local community centres. Simply put your food waste bin out alongside your other bins on your usual collection day. You can also leave out carrier bags of textiles or small electrical items with your food waste bin.



For more information, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/food_waste or call 01784 451499

You cut, we collect

Garden Waste
COLLECT ON SERVICE

SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Make light work of garden waste

Our garden waste collection service provides a convenient, low-cost way for residents to dispose of leaves, weeds and cuttings throughout the year.

Fortnightly collections take place from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027, with a break during the winter.

Your garden waste is collected from the kerbside every other week and turned into compost which is then used by local farms. The cost is £80 a year (plus a one-off charge of £35 for the bin). If you don't have much garden waste, you could share a subscription with your neighbour.

New customers can subscribe from the beginning of March for collections to start in April.

For information and to sign up, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/gardenwaste

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Winner of Spelthorne Business Awards 2023