

**Spelthorne Borough Council
Spring Bulletin 2023**

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Letter from the Leader of the Council

Dear Residents,

I hope you are keeping well and looking forward to the spring with its lighter evenings and, fingers crossed, some nicer weather.

You will soon be receiving your Council Tax bills through the post. As you will see from the article on page 8, we collect Council Tax on behalf of Surrey County Council and the Police, as well as ourselves. The Spelthorne element of the bill represents just under 10% of the overall bill, or £4.15 per week based on a band D property. I hope you will agree that Spelthorne's services represent excellent value for money.

Due to changes made by Government, residents will need to show photographic ID at the polling station to vote in this year's local elections on Thursday 4 May. Make sure you are ready by checking if you have an accepted form of ID. Don't worry if you don't have ID, you can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate and we have full details on pages 4 and 5.

The historic Walled Garden in Sunbury Park is one of the Borough's best assets with its peaceful atmosphere and beautifully maintained lawns and borders. It has won dozens of national awards in recent years thanks to the care of our talented gardeners, and on page 17 you can learn more about the work that goes into the upkeep of this special place.

We have lots of information on page 15 about events taking place in Spelthorne in spring and early summer. The King's Coronation in May promises to be a spectacular event and to mark the occasion we are hosting our own Coronation party at Lammas Park in Staines-upon-Thames on Saturday 6 May.

I hope you can come along with your family and friends.

Cllr John Boughtflower, Leader of the Council

Join the team at Spelthorne

Would you like to work for Spelthorne Borough Council? We are a highly performing local authority working hard to deliver the best services for our residents. Spelthorne is one of the 11 borough councils in Surrey which, together with Surrey County Council, provide local government services to over one million people.

The Council has a wide range of responsibilities and provides services such as planning, environmental health, licensing, elections, Council Tax collection, leisure and recreation, parks and open spaces, car parks, housing, community centres and refuse collections. We are a small and friendly council with a lot to offer including flexible working and competitive salaries and leave entitlements.

For information on our vacancies, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/jobs.

Your views

Thank you to all the readers who took the time to complete our survey about the Bulletin in the last edition of the magazine. Your feedback was extremely helpful and we are trying to incorporate as many of your suggestions as possible over the coming months. Congratulations to Mr Wheatley from Shepperton who won the gift card.

Visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/bulletinsurvey.

Farewell from the Mayor

It has been a great honour to represent Spelthorne as Mayor during the past year.

I really enjoyed visiting the different areas in Spelthorne and getting to know more about all the towns and villages that make up the Borough, not just where I personally live. It was also very interesting to learn more about Surrey in general by attending events further afield and meeting the mayors from other parts of the county.

During the year, I had the honour to be invited to visit several schools. They cater for pupils of all abilities, and it made me very proud to see how the needs of all children in Spelthorne are being met. The pupils and made me feel very welcome and it was great fun to join in their activities.

As well as visiting schools, I visited a number of care homes and saw how residents who are less able are having their needs met and living full lives despite not being able to live in their own homes any longer.

I spent time with the Air Cadets and Scout groups and thoroughly enjoyed watching and taking part in their activities. Even though it sometimes made me feel old, it brought back many happy memories!

In October I was invited to our twin town, Melun in France, for the annual Brie Cheese Festival. I had the opportunity to meet some of their residents, as well as some from Stuttgart in Germany which is also twinned with Melun, and it was very interesting to talk about our lives and how they are in many ways the same, and in others different.

More recently, I visited some of our shopping areas and spoke with the retailers and residents about their experiences of living and working in the Borough. We have lots of excellent businesses, both big and small, of which we can be proud. They are a real asset to the Borough. All in all, it has been a great honour and a wonderful year representing Spelthorne and meeting the residents. Thank you for your support.

Cllr Susan Doran, Mayor of Spelthorne

Mayor's charity afternoon tea

The Mayor of Spelthorne, Cllr Susan Doran, is hosting an afternoon tea on Friday 21 April from 1.30pm - 3pm at Squire's Garden Centre, Halliford Rd, Upper Halliford, Shepperton, TW17 8SG. Tickets £20 each. The event includes a spring flower presentation on how to make a hanging basket. All the money raised will go to the Mayor's Charity Fund.

For tickets, please contact the Mayor's office by calling 01784 446275, email mayor@spelthorne.gov.uk or book online at spelthorne.bookinglive.com/home/mayoral-events

You will need photo ID to vote at the local elections in May

For the first time, residents in Spelthorne will need to show photographic ID at the polling station to vote in this year's local elections on Thursday 4 May.

Make sure you are ready by checking if you have an accepted form of ID. These include:

- Passport (UK or European Economic Area (EEA) or Commonwealth)
- Drivers' licence (UK, EEA or Commonwealth)
- Blue Badge
- Older Person's Bus Pass
- Disabled Person's Bus Pass
- Oyster 60+ Card
- Freedom Pass
- PASS Card
- Biometric immigration document
- MOD Form 90
- National identity card issued by an EEA state

The ID must be in its original format, not photocopied or photographed. If you do not have one of these forms of ID, you can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate online voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk or by completing a paper form.

The full list of accepted ID is available on the Electoral Commission's website at electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID along with more information about the new requirement and how to apply for the free ID.

The requirement to show photo ID at the polling station was introduced by the UK Government's Elections Act which was passed last year and comes into effect for the first time this May.

All residents need to be registered to vote. If you are not already registered, it only takes five minutes to register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote. Voters wishing to apply to their council for free ID should first make sure they are registered to vote.

Frequently Asked Questions

At which elections will I need to show photo ID?

From May, voters will need to show photo ID before voting in local council elections in England, Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales, and in any parliamentary by-elections. From 5 October, voters will need photo ID at UK parliamentary general elections.

What will happen if I go to the polling station without accepted ID?

If a voter arrives at a polling station with no accepted photo identification, they will not be issued with a ballot paper and will need to return with an accepted form of photo ID.

Who decided which forms of ID are acceptable?

The law specifies the types of documents that are accepted forms of ID. These have been decided by the UK Government. You need to show the ID in its original format. Photocopies/photographs of ID will not be accepted.

What if I don't want to show ID to vote?

If a voter would prefer not to show ID at a polling station, they can apply to vote by post or proxy. Photo ID isn't required to apply or vote by post or proxy. Though, their proxy will be required to show their photo ID at the polling station. For the local elections in May, the deadline for applying for a postal vote is 18 April and 25 April for proxy voting.

What are you doing for those without ID?

We are working to ensure that anyone without an accepted form of ID is aware of the free ID available and understands how to apply for it. The Electoral Commission is running a national public awareness campaign which we are supporting.

What will the Voter Authority Certificate / free ID application process look like?

Voters can apply for free voter ID online at voter-authoritycertificate.service.gov.uk/ or by completing and posting a paper form to their local council's electoral services team. Some local authorities may accept applications in person. Voters will need to provide a photograph, their date of birth and National Insurance number as part of the application.

Anyone who needs voter ID to vote in the May 2023 elections must apply by 5pm on Tuesday 25 April.

What information is included on the Voter Authority Certificate / free ID?

The free ID will show a voter's full name and photograph, the issuing local council, a reference number allocated by the council, the date of issue and a recommended renewal date.

How does this impact voting by post or proxy?

Voters will not need to show photo ID to apply to vote by post or proxy (but the proxy will need to show their photo ID at the polling station). For the May 2023 local elections, the deadline to apply for a postal vote is 18 April and the deadline for proxy is 25 April.

Will voter ID put people off voting?

We are working to ensure people are aware of the change, understand which forms of ID are accepted, and for those without, how and when to

apply for free ID. Our aim is to support those who wish to vote to do so successfully and with confidence.

Use RingGo for quick, easy parking

Spelthorne Council has announced the introduction of cashless parking in all council owned car parks with the UK's leading provider, RingGo. This means you can pay for parking using your smartphone. There's no need to search for loose change or queue up to use the parking machine. The current payment options of cash, contactless and chip and pin will still be available.

The free RingGo app can be downloaded onto smartphones via the App Store or Google Play. Once downloaded, drivers register their details, enter the location code shown on the signage and how long they want to park for, and confirm to pay.

The parking attendants can see that you're parked with RingGo by checking your vehicle registration number on their handheld devices, so you don't need to display a ticket. And if you decide to stay a little longer, you can extend your parking session remotely via the app. If you're not a smartphone user, you can call 020 3046 0010 to pay for your parking through RingGo.

If you preregister online at <https://ringgo.co.uk> it makes your first call to park much quicker.

You can also choose to add RingGo's handy text receipts and reminders, confirming your session and alerting you when your parking is due to run out. There's a small charge for each of these messages but you can opt in or out at any time.

For more information, visit <https://ringgo.co.uk>.

Who do I contact?

In Surrey we have a two-tier local government system which means that some services are looked after by the borough council (Spelthorne Council) and some are the responsibility of the district council (Surrey County Council). This list may help you decide who to contact about a particular topic.

Spelthorne Borough Council	Surrey County Council
Planning and building control	Roads (including drains on roads)
Housing and housing benefits	Potholes
Pavement cleaning	Pavement repair
Council tax and business rates	Footpaths and on street parking
Rubbish and recycling	Bus passes
Parks and leisure	Disabled parking badges
Trees in parks	Trees on pavements/road
Environmental health and food safety	Education and libraries
Car parks	Social services
Elections	Verge cutting
Fly tipping	Birth/death/marriage registration
Licensing	Street lighting
Community centres and meals on wheels	Trading standards
Leisure centres	Fire and rescue
www.spelthorne.gov.uk 01784 451499 customer.services@spelthorne.gov.uk	www.surreycc.gov.uk 03456 009 009 contact.centre@surreycc.gov.uk

Council Tax 2023/2024

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 under 10p.
- Surrey County Council receives just over 76p.
- Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner receives just over 14p.

Council Tax bands

Council Tax is charged at eight different levels, (bands A to H) depending on your property value. The table shows the Council Tax breakdown and the total chargeable for 2023/24.

Band	Total £s	Spelthorne Borough Council £s	Surrey County Council £s	Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner £s
A	1467.86	144.09	1116.72	207.05
B	1712.50	168.11	1302.84	241.55
C	1957.14	192.12	1488.96	276.06
D	2201.79	216.14	1675.08	310.57
E	2691.08	264.17	2047.32	379.59
F	3180.36	312.20	2419.56	448.60
G	3669.65	360.23	2791.80	517.62
H	4403.58	432.28	3350.16	621.14

Spelthorne recognised for supporting businesses

Spelthorne Council's work supporting the Borough's businesses was recognised at the Federation of Small Businesses Awards in October where it was named All-England winner of the Future Ready category for the work the Council is doing to help businesses prepare for the changing business environment.

Spelthorne was also regional winner of the All Round Small Business Friendly category and shortlisted in the Covid-19 Support and Recovery category for the help given during the pandemic.

For more information about support for local businesses, email e.development@spelthorne.gov.uk or visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/support-for-businesses.

Spelthorne Business Hub

Run by Spelthorne Borough Council in partnership with CoTribe, Spelthorne's Business Hub in Sunbury-on-Thames provides a creative working space with a vibrant and friendly atmosphere for local businesses.

The Hub offers serviced office facilities with a choice of hot desks and permanent desks. Various packages are available with prices starting from £99 per month, which include:

- 24/7 access
- free workshops and seminars
- access to mentors
- access to meeting room and break-out spaces
- membership to the Spelthorne Business Forum
- excellent networking opportunities
- superfast wi-fi
- parking
- tea and coffee for your team and visitors

For more information about the Spelthorne Business Hub, visit www.spelthornebusinesshub.com.

Free social media training

We are offering a programme of social media training (five two-hour sessions over 5 weeks) for businesses at the Spelthorne Business Hub at 33 Hanworth Road, Sunbury-on-Thames, TW16 5DB.

For more information and to register interest, email e.development@spelthorne.gov.uk

Spelthorne Business Awards

The 2023 Spelthorne Business Awards open for entries in April with a range of categories to suit all types and size of business.

To enter, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/SBA.

The Spelthorne Business Plan Competition 2023

Are you a budding entrepreneur with dreams of starting your own business? Kwasi Kwarteng MP is hosting the 9th Spelthorne Business Plan Competition in partnership with Spelthorne Borough Council. If you have a great business idea but need some help to get things off the ground, this is an opportunity to give your idea the boost it needs, with a prize of £3,500.

The six best entries will be asked to present their business idea to a panel of expert judges at a Dragons' Den style final hosted at BP in Sunbury on 29 June. Each of the finalists will be given support to perfect their pitch.

Entries are welcome from individuals or teams of up to four people. For full details and to enter visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/businesscomp or search @Spelthorne Business Plan Competition on Facebook. The competition is open to Spelthorne residents aged 16 and over. The deadline for entries is 27 April.

For more information or help with the application process, email karen.porter@parliament.uk

LGA Peer Review

Spelthorne Borough Council undertook a peer review challenge exercise in November last year and invited an experienced team of senior staff and councillors from other authorities to spend time at Spelthorne to see how we work and share learnings. The peer challenge focused on six themes:

- local priorities and outcomes
- organisation and place leadership
- governance and culture
- financial planning and management
- capacity for improvement
- sustainable delivery of affordable housing

The team conducted more than 40 meetings with over 125 people including staff, councillors and external stakeholders and partners.

In their feedback, they commended the Council on its strong Performance, including its excellent response to the Covid-19 pandemic, outstanding support for vulnerable residents, caring staff culture and strong teamwork.

They identified twelve opportunities for improvements including the need for a clearer political direction and improved relationships between staff and councillors. The report was discussed at the February Council meeting and an action plan has been developed to address the recommendations.

To read the full report, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/corporatepeerchallenge2022

Help to take that next step

Located in the Elmsleigh Centre in Staines-upon-Thames, the Spelthorne Youth Hub is dedicated to finding employment and skills opportunities for young people aged 16 to 24.

It brings together stakeholders from across the Borough including the Council, Brooklands College, DWP, A2 Dominion, Association of Learning Providers in Surrey, Transfer to Transform and local businesses to provide a service for younger residents looking to make their way in Life.

Designed to help young people gain the essential skills they need to find employment and develop life skills, the Youth Hub can help with finding jobs and work experience, volunteering opportunities, CV writing, and securing funding for training.

And following the success of the Youth Hub, the Council is pleased to announce that a new service, the Job and Skills Hub, has been created to tackle the barriers that people of all ages face when trying to find work after redundancy or long periods of unemployment. We are looking forward to launching an exciting programme of activities in 2023 including the Better Futures programme which will introduce job seekers to local employers.

The Job and Skills hub is located in the Elmsleigh Centre and open from 10am - 4pm on Weekdays. Whatever your age, situation, skills or background, drop-in and see us if you need help to find your next opportunity.

For more details, visit www.spelthorneyouthhub.com or call 07770 481773.

Spelthorne Rent Assure

Spelthorne Council is committed to decreasing the number of families living in temporary accommodation by working with local landlords to provide tenants with a home in the Borough. Under the Spelthorne Rent Assure scheme, the Council guarantees to pay a fair market rate, monthly in advance directly to the landlord themselves, for up to two years. It is a completely free service with no agency fees or commission involved.

We are interested in all types and size of property. They can be furnished or unfurnished. We'll inspect the property to ensure it meets the necessary legal and health and safety standards. A free comprehensive inventory of the contents, fixtures and fittings will also be provided, which is then

agreed by both parties. We will arrange viewings and if you are happy with the proposed tenant, will draw up the agreements.

We conduct right-to-rent and background checks on all tenants before they are approved. Any issues that may arise during the tenancy are between you and your tenant, but we offer ongoing support to both parties and tenants receive training on managing finances and tenant/landlord responsibilities.

If you are a landlord and are interested to find out more about Spelthorne Rent Assure, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sra, email sra@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 448611.

Specsavers Surrey Youth Games

Is your child aged 7-16 and interested in giving a new activity a try? Then why not come along to the Specsavers Surrey Youth Games free taster sessions.

There are lots of activities on offer, including girls' tag rugby, Go Tri, judo, swimming, dance, street basketball, boccia, non-contact boxing and tennis. Aimed at beginners, the free weekly sessions start in April and run for between 4 and 7 weeks, depending on the activity.

All the children who come along to the sessions will also experience a celebratory festival in Guildford on Saturday 17 June, together with their new friends. Sessions are open to children who live or go to school in Spelthorne, with a focus on activities based in areas of need.

To register and for more information about the taster sessions, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/surreyyouthgames or call 01784 446443.

Spelthorne Boccia Club

Spelthorne Boccia Club takes place at Spelthorne Leisure Centre on Thursday evenings from 6pm-6.55pm for people aged 16+ with disabilities (children aged 14+ can also come along with an adult carer).

The club operates on a pay-and-play basis so there is no need to book. Sessions cost £3. Boccia is a target ball sport which tests both muscle control and accuracy. From a seated position (ideal for wheelchair users) players propel balls to land close to a white marker ball – the jack. If you're unable to grasp and propel a ball, a ramp can be used.

For more information, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/boccia or call 01784 446443.

Dynamo Ukraine

Spelthorne's Dynamo Ukraine club provide free sports and healthy lifestyle opportunities to Ukrainian young people and allows them to converse in Ukrainian while learning English from our sport coaches. The club is held on Saturdays from 12.30pm to 2.30pm at either Spelthorne or Sunbury Leisure Centre.

There is a variety of activities on offer such as volleyball, trampolining, gymnastics, badminton and squash. The club started in summer 2022 and has grown to around 40 participants. Sport England funding has recently been secured to support the club until June 2023.

To register interest, please email leisure@spelthorne.gov.uk

Spelthorne Parasports Club

Aimed at young people with disabilities aged 5-25 and their siblings, Spelthorne Parasports Club provides opportunities to play a wide range of sports as well as offering sport specific coaching for those interested in developing their skills.

The sessions are overseen by enthusiastic volunteers although parents/guardians are encouraged to stay on-site during the sessions. The club meets on the first and third Saturday of the month (term-time) from 10.15–11.45am at Spelthorne Leisure Centre. Sessions cost £3 (siblings £2) and the first session is free. No need to book, come along and join in.

For more information, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/parasportsclub

Sunbury Ferry

The multi-award winning Sunbury Ferry which runs between Sunbury-on-Thames and Walton reopens at Easter with services running on weekends and public holidays between 10am and 5pm.

Visit www.sunburyferry.co.uk.

Xplorer – family orienteering

Xplorer is the perfect outdoor activity for families, offering a friendly navigation challenge that is educational and fun. The aim is to find markers that are located around the park using a simple map. The events are free and take place in some of our local parks during school holidays. Check the website for more details.

For more information, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/xplorer or contact Leisure Services on 01784 446433.

The Coronation Big Lunch

6 - 8 May

The Coronation Big Lunch brings neighbours and communities together to share friendship, food and fun. Be part of history and join millions across the UK with a Coronation Big Lunch celebration in your community!

Visit www.edenprojectcommunities.com to sign-up to receive your Coronation Big Lunch pack for all you need to get started, fun ideas, top tips, practical advice and loads more.

Coronation Celebration

Join us at Lammas Park in Staines-upon-Thames for our wonderfully regal Coronation Celebration on Saturday 6 May from 11am-4pm.

- music
- face painting
- children's entertainment
- arts and crafts

Bring the family, grab a picnic and rug and we'll provide the entertainment. See you there.

The Big Help Out

The Big Help Out will be held on Monday 8 May and is being organised by The Together Coalition and a wide range of partners such as The Scouts, the Royal Voluntary Service and faith groups from across the United Kingdom.

The Big Help Out will highlight the positive impact volunteering has on communities across the nation. In tribute to His Majesty The King's public

service, The Big Help Out will encourage people to try volunteering for themselves and join the work being undertaken to support their local areas.

The aim of The Big Help Out is to use volunteering to bring communities together and create a lasting volunteering legacy from the Coronation weekend.

For more information, visit thebighelpout.org.uk.

Make the most of your leisure time

Being active is one of the most important things you can do for your health. Helping to improve your mental health, manage your weight, reduce the risk of disease, strengthen bones and muscles, and improving your ability to do everyday activities.

Whatever your level of physical activity, there are lots of things you can do to make a difference. The most important thing is to get moving in a way that works for you.

Our Spelthorne Leisure Directory contains a huge range of clubs, social groups and sporting activities to help you get active and make the most of your leisure time. You can explore the directory online at www.spelthorne.gov.uk/leisuredirectory

If you would you like to advertise your club, activity or group for free in the Spelthorne Leisure Directory, visit our website and complete the online form.

Anyone for tennis?

Visit our community tennis page at www.spelthorne.gov.uk/communitytenniscoaching to find low cost tennis coaching sessions across the Borough.

Our outdoor courts are also free to use for casual play at Ashford Recreation Ground, Bishop Duppas Park in Shepperton, Cedars Park in Sunbury, Lammas Park in Staines, Staines Park and Stanwell Recreation Ground.

Visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/tenniscourts.

Staines-upon-Thames Day 2023

Sunday 25 June

With three performance areas, craft market, bands, bar and street food, fairground, rowing races, canoe taster sessions and boat trips, Staines-upon-Thames Day is one of the liveliest and busiest events in the Spelthorne calendar.

For more information, visit stainesuponthamesday.co.uk.

Shepperton Village Fair

Join us for this fantastic family event on Saturday 10 June. Held close to the Thames on Manor Park, the Fair kicks off with a large procession through the High Street, followed by spectacular arena displays, fairground rides, stalls, competitions, a huge marquee and the famous Great Nauticalia Raft Race.

For more information, visit shepperton-fair.org.

A look at Sunbury Walled Garden

The historic Walled Garden in Sunbury Park was built in the early 18th century as part of Sunbury Park House. Walled gardens were a particular feature of the larger Georgian houses and were used for growing fruit and vegetables for the wealthy owner of the house.

The Garden is known for its huge variety of plants and trees, one of which, a Persian Lilac, is extremely rare. It also boasts a beautiful Victorian rose garden and an intricate weaving of dwarf hedges known as a knot garden.

In 2022, the Sunbury Walled Garden was awarded Green Flag status for the 12th year running and named overall winner in its category at the South & South East in Bloom Awards.

We spoke to Parks Maintenance Supervisor, James Weedon, who knows Sunbury Walled Garden better than anyone else, and this is what he had to say:

How long have you worked for the Council?

I joined the Council 16 years ago as a Litter Picker. Since then, I have worked in different roles including refuse collection, grounds maintenance and as Parks Maintenance Supervisor since 2019, spending much of my

time here in the Walled Garden. My team is responsible for planting, maintaining hanging baskets across the Borough and floral displays for events. I also look after the trees in the Borough and helped organise the planting of the 851 trees which represented the soldiers from Spelthorne lost in WW1.

What's your favourite part of the garden?

I really love the rose beds at the back of the garden. In 2019 we undertook a major project for that area and planted over 500 new roses with 10 different species.

Which season do you enjoy most in the garden?

I enjoy all the seasons, but I love spring as everything is waking up, and summer when everything comes alive and blooms. The colours and scents are pretty special.

What's your favourite flower?

I think it has to be the Big Series Begonias (*Begonia x benaratensis*) which are really bright and bold. I use them as seasonal bedding and they can grow up to 2ft tall.

What would you recommend visitors look out for?

Last year we installed beetle hotels/bug boxes and will look to introduce more flowers to encourage pollinators into the garden. Also look out for the bird and bat boxes.

Does the garden attract much wildlife?

We get lots of squirrels and a variety of birds including robins, black birds, song thrushes and parakeets, and you can often hear a woodpecker. There is a bird box on the Embroidery Gallery which had a camera installed and showed a nesting family.

What are you planting this year?

We are looking forward to planting 40 new Clematis with the British Clematis Society in March, and between November and December we'll be planting more roses in the front beds by the stone fountain, which will bloom the following summer.

Planning your visit

Location: Thames Street, Sunbury-on-Thames, TW16 6AB

Opening times: Seven days a week, from 8am - 5pm

The Sunbury Gallery and Cafe, home to the Sunbury Millennium Embroidery, is open Tuesday - Sunday from 10.30am to 4pm (last orders in the Cafe 3.45pm). Closed Mondays (including Bank Holidays).

For more information, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/walledgarden.

Spelthorne Community Fund

The Spelthorne Community Fund is a new addition in the family of funds managed by the Community Foundation for Surrey in partnership with local communities. It is dedicated to Spelthorne and provides support for local projects which tackle need and disadvantage across the Borough.

The Spelthorne Community Fund is a long-term fund which residents and local businesses can donate to now, or leave a legacy to in the future. It brings together local donors and stakeholders who are passionate about their local community and together can make a difference to the area in which they live. With your help we can help build a stronger community by supporting local causes that can make an impact and will empower Spelthorne to help itself now and in the future.

The Fund awards grants to charities and community groups in Spelthorne with a focus on youth development and community support and development. The Spelthorne Community Fund recently awarded a grant to Get2getherlocally CIC (Hilary's Hut) to support the start-up costs of the group. Coming out of the midst of the pandemic, Get2getherlocally was established in 2021 to provide community activities for Spelthorne residents using businesses and resources.

A particular area of focus has been to combat loneliness in society by running activities in the community which develop friendships with neighbours and provide opportunities for positive mental health by keeping busy and getting out and about. Get2getherlocally is specifically aimed at providing activities free of charge in the community by obtaining grants, sponsorship and donations.

To donate to the fund or find out how to apply for funding, visit www.cfsurrey.org.uk/fund/spelthorne.

Home-Start Spelthorne

With the Covid-19 lockdowns and now the cost-of-living crisis, young families are struggling more than ever. Home-Start Spelthorne is looking

for new home visiting volunteers who can visit a family once a week to provide practical and emotional support.

Volunteers must have parenting experience and be able to offer 2-3 hours of their time per week. Full training is provided, and volunteers will be well supported by the Home-Start team.

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

Hilary's Hut

Hilary's Hut is a free social meet up group for over 45s. We meet on the first Wednesday of every month from 10am-12pm at Christ Church Hall in Staines-upon-Thames (the entrance is on Kenilworth Gardens, TW18 1DR, and free parking is available in the Church car park).

Come along for fun and friendship, café, board games, jigsaws, chair aerobics, newspapers/books, quizzes, IT help, knit and stitch corners and more!

For more information, visit www.get2getherlocally.org, email info@get2getherlocally.org or call Nichola on 07980 204628.

Do something rewarding in 2023

Giving your time through volunteering is a great way to have new experiences, try new activities and learn new skills - all while making a difference to your community.

Voluntary Support North Surrey has lots of short and longer-term volunteering opportunities, with roles ranging from befrienders and drivers to walk and cycle leaders, marketing and fundraising volunteers, to opportunities in theatres and museums. There really is something for everyone!

One volunteer, Charlotte, said: "I'm really enjoying meeting so many interesting and lovely people. They're not people I would have otherwise met, even though they live just down the road from me. It's the people who keep you coming back."

For more information, email elaine@voluntarysupport.org.uk or phone 01784 465536. Visit <https://voluntarysupport.org.uk/volunteering/volunteer-now> to view current opportunities.

Cancer support

Cancer support group meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at Shepperton Medical Practice. The group members support each other in a friendly and informal atmosphere and guest speakers are also invited from time-to-time. Tea and coffee is provided.

The group is independent from the medical practice and is open to all cancer patients, carers and close family. Please come and join us irrespective of where you live. For more information, email Andy at andyanderson66aa@gmail.com

Lifeline alarms

Spelthorne Borough Council's partner, Mole Valley Life, has a range of digital lifeline alarms and devices to help people to live independently in their own homes.

Whether it be through the touch of a button on one of their lifeline alarms, the wearing of a TrustID assistance band or their wellbeing calls, the Mole Valley Life team are available to support Spelthorne residents 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

They also offer smartwatches which have GPS tracking, connect to a support centre and monitor health data such as heart rate, activity and sleep. The data collected can be used to predict health trends, including the risk of falling. The device is waterproof and connects to an app which displays the data collected.

For more information, contact Mole Valley Life by email at mvlife@molevalley.gov.uk, visit <https://molevalleylife.co.uk/independent> or call 01372 204500.

OPAL

If you are caring for someone with a condition such as dementia, sight loss or immobility, you may be interested to know that two of the Council's Community Centres run groups for people with support needs. Our aim is

to offer social interaction and stimulating activities, while you get some time to yourself knowing that your loved one is being well looked after.

Daily OPAL groups run from 9.30am - 3.30pm at the Fordbridge Centre in Ashford and the Greeno Centre in Shepperton. There is a daily charge of £40 to attend the group which can be paid privately or as part of a social care package if eligible.

For more information, email independentliving@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 446389.

Community Centres

Our Community Centres provide a wide range of activities including yoga, pilates, quizzes, art, bridge, computer classes, singing, bingo, dancing, book club and language classes. Some also offer hairdressing, chiropody and beautician services. They are great places to have a bite to eat, meet new people or try some activities.

For information about opening hours, costs and your nearest centre, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/communitycentres, email independentliving@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 446389.

Meals on Wheels

If you are struggling to prepare meals for any reason, our Meals on Wheels service can help:

- Delivered to your home on your chosen days
- Hot meals with main course and pudding
- Dietary requirements catered for
- Option to order a sandwich to eat later
- Can be ordered for short or long periods of time

Visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/MOW, email m.wheels@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 444265.

Disabled Facilities Grant

Disabled Facilities Grant Disabled Facilities Grants are available to help fund the cost of aids and adaptations to enable disabled people to live independently in their own home. The type of adaptations which can be funded include:

- widening doors
- level access showers
- stair lifts
- installing ramps
- providing or improving access to rooms

For more information, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/DFG, email dfg@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 448607.

Elmsleigh Centre opens Changing Places facility

The Elmsleigh Centre in Staines-upon-Thames has installed a fully accessible Changing Places toilet facility for visitors with complex needs. Changing Places toilets include a hoist, an adult size changing bench and generous space for a disabled person and up to two carers.

Spelthorne Council applied for a funding grant for £40,000 from central Government which covered the cost of installing the new facility which is located on the first floor of the Elmsleigh Centre and accessed via the lift by Costa Coffee.

For more information about Changing Places, including a map of facilities, visit www.changing-places.org.

Join the Great British Spring Clean

Keep Britain Tidy's 'Great British Spring Clean,' is running across the country from 17 March - 2 April. The campaign is about demonstrating that you love where you live - whether that's by 'pledging to pick' while you're walking the dog or taking the kids to school, hosting a clean-up or joining someone else's event.

If you would like to arrange your own clean-up event, the Council can help you with equipment and removing the rubbish.

For more information, visit www.keepbritaintidy.org.

Get growing

We have some allotment availability across the Borough, so why not consider renting a plot to grow your own fresh produce. Growing your own fruit and vegetables helps to cut your carbon footprint, as well as making fantastic habitats for a range of wildlife.

Allotments are also a great way to meet like-minded people and keep fit and healthy. Visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/allotments or call 01784 451499.

Green grants for business

LoCase offers grants to help small/medium-sized businesses which are working to improve their green credentials by introducing new eco products, processes or services, or reducing their environmental impact with energy efficiency measures such as LED lighting, solar panels and heat pumps. For more information visit, <https://sbf.biz/locase-funding-expanded-to-20000>

Greener Spelthorne

During the last year, Spelthorne Council has made significant progress in addressing the Climate Emergency. The Council's Climate Change Strategy was adopted in September and can be viewed on our website. It is divided into nine sections including finance and transport, with the aim of getting the Council to Net Zero by 2030.

The Council ran its first Carbon Literacy training session and 23 members of senior staff including the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executives are now certificated as Carbon Literate. This training gives staff an understanding of the causes and effects of climate change as well as the knowledge and motivation to reduce carbon emissions in their personal and work lives. The training will be rolled out to all staff who will be asked to make two pledges about how they will reduce carbon emission at work to help to lower the Council's emissions.

We have been continuing to address energy consumption and usage, with solar panels installed across all three of our main operations buildings, saving the up to 6 tonnes of carbon each year.

With the cost-of-living crisis, energy efficiency and reducing energy costs has never been more important, as not only does this carry a cost saving benefit, it also reduces our carbon footprint. The Council works with Action Surrey to help residents access government grants and provide free impartial energy advice. Last year 64 energy efficiency measures such as insulation and solar panels were installed for residents in Spelthorne which has saved an estimated 45.9 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year.

Our Economic Development team has been supporting businesses through this crisis with 1-2-1 workshops, which have proved very effective. Over the

course of these workshops, £96K worth of savings has already been identified and advice given as to how businesses can reduce their energy bills.

Electric vehicles and their associated infrastructure remain a high priority for the Council, with an electric vehicle strategy being developed internally. For information on the current availability of electric charging points in Spelthorne, visit zap-map.com.

Staines Market

Have you had a look at Staines Market recently? It sells a wide range of items including fruit and vegetables, meat and fish, clothes, flowers, food stalls, sweets, jewellery, handbags, toys, accessories and luggage - and shopping locally is good for the environment. The market is based in the high street and operates on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

For more information about the market, email neighbourhoodservices@spelthorne.gov.uk or call 01784 446411

Spelthorne in Bloom 2023

Spelthorne in Bloom will soon be open for entries. The competition 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:

- Best kept front garden
- Best hanging basket
- Best community garden
- Best riverside garden
- Best kept 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
- Schools in bloom - best school garden, tallest sunflower and best edible garden
- Best in show

Entries open on 24 April and close 23 June. Come and visit our stand at the Elmsleigh Centre in Staines-upon-Thames on 29 April or visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/SIB for more information/entry form.

Too Good To Go

Fancy a treat but don't want to splash out on a takeaway? Too Good To Go is a free app which allows you to purchase unsold food from top eateries at the end of service, to prevent it from being thrown away. This means you get high-quality food at a great price and do some good for the planet.

You could get a 'magic bag' filled with a range of food worth £8.57 for as little as £2.95. Visit www.toogoodtogo.co.uk.

Tired of going to the tip?

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 2023 to 31 March 2024, 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. If you don't have much garden waste, you can share a subscription with your neighbour.

The cost is £64 a year (plus a one-off charge of £28 for the brown bin). New customers can subscribe from the beginning of March for collections to start in April.

Please be sure to put the right things in:

Yes please

- ✓ grass cuttings
- ✓ hedge trimming
- ✓ garden prunings
- ✓ leaves
- ✓ small twigs
- ✓ dead plants
- ✓ branches - no thicker than 7cm (3")
- ✓ weeds

No thanks

- X plastic bags
- X flower pots
- X seed trays
- X kitchen / food waste
- X pet litter or waste
- X cardboard, paper, glass, metal
- X wood / timber or sawdust
- X soil, stones or gravel

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

Bonfire advice

We often receive complaints regarding smoke and smells from bonfires. Smoke can ruin people's enjoyment of their garden and stop them from opening their windows or hanging out washing.

Bonfires can also be harmful to the environment. Repeated bonfires may be considered a statutory nuisance and you should never burn commercial waste, plastic or rubber. Materials such as paper and cardboard should be put in the recycling bin.

We offer a collection scheme for garden waste, or it can be taken to the tip or composted at home - visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/gardenwaste for more details.

For more information about bonfires, visit www.spelthorne.gov.uk/bonfires.

Recycle right

There are a few items which our refuse teams often find in recycling, bins which should in fact go into the rubbish because they cannot be processed into a reusable form or their parts are difficult to separate.

Pizza boxes

The card on pizza boxes tends to get greasy and have bits of uneaten food stuck to it. Paper doesn't get heated when it's recycled so the grease and oil doesn't burn off and spreads through the whole batch.

Takeaway drinks cups

Takeaway cups are usually made from card and a plastic film, laminated together. The plastic is very hard to separate and can clog up the recycling machinery.

Cartons and tetra paks

Food and drink cartons are made from card, metal foil and plastic film, all laminated together, and it's very difficult and expensive to separate them. Tetra paks are accepted at Shepperton Recycling Centre.