

**Spelthorne Borough Council  
Summer Bulletin 2020**

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## Letter from the leader

Dear Residents,

I am writing my first letter to you as Leader of the Council, having been elected by my fellow councillors in June. I am very proud to be given this opportunity and look forward to working on behalf of all the residents.

The last few months have certainly been a very frightening and difficult time and my thoughts go out to everyone who has lost a friend or family member to coronavirus. We can only hope that we are past the worst and can start to look to a more optimistic future.

One positive to come from the pandemic is the way residents joined together to support each other. It has been truly inspirational to see so many volunteers helping others, delivering food parcels and shopping, collecting prescriptions and various other kind deeds. I think many of us also know our neighbours a bit better now, thanks to the weekly 'clap for carers.'

I would like to thank the Council's staff for working flat-out during the pandemic. Many have worked very long hours and taken on new roles to support residents and ensure the smooth running of our services. There is more about this later.

It seems the virus will be with us for some time to come but I hope you still manage to have an enjoyable summer. Please stay safe.

Cllr John Boughtflower, Leader of the Council

## A new Mayor for Spelthorne

Cllr Colin Barnard was elected as the new Mayor for Spelthorne at the Annual Council Meeting held on Thursday 18 June. Cllr Tony Harman was elected as Deputy Mayor. Cllr Barnard was first elected to the Council to represent Shepperton Town in 2015. Over the last five years he has served on various committees and held Cabinet positions with responsibility for Corporate Management and Planning and Economic Development. In 2019 he was elected as Deputy Mayor.

Cllr Barnard has lived in Shepperton for 18 years. He is very active in the local community and a member of the Shepperton Arora Rotary Club. He sings in the church choir, is a keen musician and enjoys researching family history. He has a love of the River Thames and all things nautical and enjoys spending time sailing his boat in local waters and overseas. His wife Barbara will join him as Mayoress for his year in office.

The Mayor's charities for 2020/21 are:

River Ash Girl Guiding: building girls' confidence and raising their aspirations by giving them the chance to discover their full potential and encouraging them to be a powerful force for good

Shooting Star Children's Hospices: a leading children's hospice charity caring for babies, children and young people with life-limiting conditions, and their families

Spelthorne District Scouts: building and developing young people's confidence, sense of adventure and outdoor skills, as well as encouraging them to explore their beliefs and attitudes

After being sworn in as Mayor, Cllr Barnard said: "I am honoured and proud to accept the office of Mayor for 2020/2021 and I should like to thank all the councillors for the honour they have bestowed upon me."

## Spelthorne scoops award

Spelthorne Borough Council was honoured at the iESE Awards in March, winning the bronze award in Efficiency and Effectiveness for its business improvement programme.

Like all local authorities, Spelthorne has been affected by increased financial pressures over the past few years. To address these, the Council introduced a business improvement programme known as 'Root and Branch' to look at a variety of methods to improve efficiency, while seeking to avoid job losses and protect frontline services. Examples of improvements made include new property management methods and finance procedures, changing the method for making court payments and consolidation of print work.

A spokesperson said: "This programme has shown Spelthorne's commitment to its staff. We have developed a new culture of innovation and action where staff ideas are invited, evaluated and acted upon and this has made them feel more empowered and able to trigger positive change for their departments. With over 200 projects completed already under the Root and Branch programme, the project has already proven its worth."

## Electoral registration update

As you are probably aware, the Police and Crime Commissioner elections that were scheduled for 7 May 2020 were postponed and will now be held on 6 May 2021 together with the Surrey County Council Elections.

This year there are national changes to the way in which the annual canvass of electors is undertaken.

The aim is to streamline the process in order to make it easier for residents whilst still ensuring completeness and accuracy of the register. In the next few weeks, you will be sent a communication by the Electoral Services team to update your registration. Please respond as quickly as possible if asked to do so. To help us reduce costs, please use the automated telephone or online response options if you can.

Full details of how to use these services will be included in our communication. The revised Electoral Register will be published on 1 December 2020 and this will be used for the elections scheduled for 2021. The Electoral Register also proves where you live and credit agencies use it to help them make decisions on applications for mortgages, bank accounts, loans, mobile phone contracts and other credit facilities.

## New electric vehicles for Spelthorne

A new fleet of electric vehicles has been introduced as part of Spelthorne Borough Council's plan to improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions.

The introduction of electric vehicles to the authority's fleet is the latest step in Spelthorne's drive to reduce its carbon emissions, having already achieved a reduction in energy use of almost 40% over the past decade.

The newly unveiled vehicles include two Nissan Leaf electric cars which will be used as pool cars by staff based at Knowle Green and two Nissan electric vans for the Neighbourhood Services operations team. This follows the successful introduction of two electric bicycles in March.

A spokesperson said: "We want to take a leading role in improving air quality and an obvious place to start is with the Council's own fleet of vehicles. Whenever possible, we are aiming to phase-out petrol and diesel vehicles and make the Council's vans, cars and lorries carbon neutral in the years ahead."

## Fly-tipping

Fly-tipping is on the increase in the Borough. Dumping waste is a criminal offence and, depending on where the case is heard, can result in a heavy fine and/or imprisonment. We treat this problem very seriously and will prosecute anyone who is caught fly-tipping. If you see somebody fly-tipping, make a note of:

- the date, time and place
- how many people are involved and what they look like
- what has been tipped – how much and what it looks like
- the details of any vehicles involved including the make, colour and registration number if possible

Then report it to us. Never approach anyone you see fly-tipping.

Don't forget, if you pay someone such as a builder, gardener, or 'man-with-a-van' to take your waste away, you can be held liable and fined if they illegally dump your rubbish. To avoid a potential fine, check they have a waste carrier's licence. Ask to see the original licence, not a copy, and keep a note of the name of the person/business and their vehicle.

You can check if someone has a waste carrier's licence by calling the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506.

## Recycling banks

There are a number of recycling banks around the Borough which take a variety of materials including textiles, electrical items and general recycling. If a bank is full, please find another one. Do not leave items by the side (this is classed as fly-tipping).

## Pedal to the metal

As part of our plan to improve the Borough's biodiversity, Spelthorne Council has been planting native wildflower seeds along the roadside on Renfree way in Shepperton and Stanwell Moor Road. The process involves mechanically imbedding the seed directly into the ground.

The species we have chosen include a mix of white campion, common knapweed, oxeye daisy and yellow rattle. Once they start to flower later in the year, these areas will provide pollinating insects such as bees and butterflies with a valuable food source, whilst also delivering a lovely splash of colour for road users.

## Interview with our refuse collectors

Our bins crews are often taken for granted but they have worked tirelessly to keep rubbish and recycling collections running as normal during the Coronavirus crisis. We received lots of cards, emails and comments from residents who wanted to thank them for their service, so we thought we would introduce you to one of our collection crews and join them for the day to find out what being a refuse and recycling collector is like.

The team: Crew 5

Ben, 21 Loader

Alan, 32 Driver

Dexter, 47 Loader

How long have you worked for Spelthorne Borough Council?

Ben: "Dexter's the veteran of the group, he's been here for six years. I've worked for the council for almost four years while Alan only started a year and a half ago."

How did you get into the waste sector?

Alan: "Ben and I both started working through an agency and ended up working here full-time. Dexter on the other hand wanted to do something that got him out of the house and this seemed like a good idea at the time!"

What time does your day start and end for you?

Alan: "Our round starts at 6am so we have to be at the depot before then to get logged in, collect the day's paperwork and make sure the truck is working before we can hit the road. We usually finish around 1-2pm."

Do your routes change?

Dexter: "We collect from set areas each day but the route we take can vary a lot so we won't necessarily reach a particular road at the same time every week!"

What do you enjoy most about the job?

Ben: "The guys I work with, we are a tight crew and all get on together really well."

What is the strangest thing that you have found in someone's bin?

Dexter: "We see a lot of rats in the bins, they can really make you jump when they leap out. But it's just part of the job!"

Finally, what advice would you like to give to residents?

Dexter: "Stop putting gravel and Hoover dust in your recycling bins! Give your bins a rinse out every so often, it keeps them clean and makes our job a lot nicer! There's actually a food waste service that you can use, that stops your rubbish bin getting smelly."

Alan: "If you can, put the handles of your bin facing the road, it makes moving them a lot easier for us. The same goes for overloading it, it still needs to be able to roll! We've had bins before where none of us could shift them and they just end up getting left."

Ben: "Yes, Hoover dust, that's not good! Bag it and put it in the rubbish. We also see loads of packaging in the recycling bins - cardboard is fine but polystyrene and bubble wrap isn't recyclable, it needs to go in your rubbish bin. And, I'd also say please put your bins out on time!"

## The silent solution in emergencies

Domestic abuse can affect anyone regardless of ethnicity, age, gender, sexuality or social background. If you are suffering from physical, sexual, psychological or financial abuse, or are being threatened, intimidated or stalked by a current or previous partner or close family member, it's likely you're a victim of domestic abuse.

The recent lockdown will have made life a lot harder for people who are experiencing domestic abuse and victims may be afraid to contact police for fear of the abuser hearing their call. The Silent Solution is a police system used to filter out large numbers of accidental or hoax 999 calls. It also exists to help people who are unable to speak, but who genuinely need police assistance.

If you need police assistance but can't talk, dial 999, listen and respond to the questions and instructions, including by coughing or tapping the handset if possible, or if using a mobile phone, once prompted by the automated Silent Solution system, press 55. This alerts police to the fact it is a genuine emergency and not a pocket dial or hoax call.

For information, visit the Surrey Police website. In an emergency dial 999.

## Mental health support

Coronavirus has affected all our lives. Things have changed immensely over the past few months and many of us have been feeling vulnerable or overwhelmed as a result. Those of us already living with mental health problems have faced extra challenges too.

Seeking help is often the first step towards getting and staying well, but it can be hard to know how to start or where to turn to. It's common to feel unsure, and to wonder whether you should try to handle things on your own. But it's always ok to ask for help – even if you're not sure you are experiencing a specific mental health problem.

There are lots of support options available, including your GP, trained therapists, friends and family, peers, charities, your employer, school or college. You might find some options more suitable for you than others, or more easily available. There's no wrong order to try things in – different things work for different people at different times.

For more information on getting help, visit the Mind website at [www.mindorg.uk](http://www.mindorg.uk)

## Spelthorne Rentstart

For over 20 years, Spelthorne Rentstart has been assisting single people and childless couples gain access to accommodation in the private rented sector.

They can help those aged 18+ who are:

- homeless or potentially homeless, or have a compelling need to move
- without sufficient resources for a deposit
- on low wages or on benefit
- capable of taking financial responsibility for a tenancy
- able to manage and cope with running rented accommodation
- ineligible for local authority housing

They also run a lottery funded project which provides additional support and advice for people with more complex issues such as drug abuse, mental health problems, disability, domestic abuse and criminal records.

For more information, email [info@spelthornerentstart.org.uk](mailto:info@spelthornerentstart.org.uk) or call 01784 446422

## Staines Parochial Charity

Staines Parochial Charity plan to allocate their annual financial awards in the autumn to people affected by poor health, disability, low income or homelessness. To be eligible for an award of up to £400, you must have lived in the parish of Staines for at least two years (or in the case of charities, been active in the parish of Staines for at least two years).

To request an application form, email [chris55bannister@aol.com](mailto:chris55bannister@aol.com)

## Working together to tackle coronavirus

Spelthorne Borough Council worked tirelessly to support residents and local businesses throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

We closed our offices in March in response to Covid-19 and rapidly moved to a virtual footing, successfully adapting our services to ensure vulnerable residents had access to the support they needed while also maintaining 'business as usual' across our services.

Senior managers took part in daily conference calls to coordinate the Council's response to the crisis and these calls are still taking place as the Council remains on an emergency footing. Regular engagement with regional and local resilience forums also ensured a coordinated approach to this unprecedented situation.

Covid-19 presented a number challenges for the Council. Staff were redeployed, with roughly a quarter of our workforce volunteering to take on new roles. We established our community hub 'Support4Spelthorne', made welfare calls to our

residents and reassigned staff to assist the customer services team in helping residents with financial and housing advice.

On 21 May a virtual extraordinary council meeting was held on the Council's response to the coronavirus crisis. The report can be viewed on our news page [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/ECM-21-May](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/ECM-21-May).

A summary of actions taken by the Borough up to the time of going to press included:

### Support4Spelthorne

Our community hub 'Support4Spelthorne' was rapidly set-up to provide food parcels and welfare calls for vulnerable residents. We contacted over 14,000 residents - those who were identified as being in the most vulnerable 'category A' by the government and those in 'category B' who we identified as also needing support. As a result of these checks, we were able to facilitate delivery of prescriptions to over 300 households and over 400 comfort packs to residents. The team at Spelthorne successfully made contact with 99.8% of shielded residents in the Borough, the highest rate in the County.

The Council worked with the NHS and A2Dominion Housing Group to ensure patients had somewhere to live and a support network in place after leaving hospital. We also identified local rough sleepers and placed them into accommodation where possible.

### Financial assistance

We offered help and advice to residents who were claiming benefits for the first time and also encouraged residents to contact us if they were having problems paying their Council Tax or other bills from the Council.

### Working with food banks

We worked alongside the Borough's local food banks who distributed over 228,000 meals in the first two months of the crisis. The Council offered both financial assistance and equipment to our food banks and community groups and coordinated major donations from McDonald's, Primark, BP and London Irish.

### Meals on Wheels

At the height of the crisis we delivered over 1,000 meals on wheels per week to residents who needed the service. Our Spelride drivers were redeployed to help with this.

### Volunteering

Our staff assisted Voluntary Support North Surrey which recruited over 900 local volunteers and responded to over 1,000 requests for help with tasks such as shopping and prescription delivery.

### Supporting businesses

We paid out over £12.5m in Business Grants to almost 1,000 businesses. We want to reassure businesses that this is not a loan and you do not have to pay the money back.

### Community safety

Our Community Safety team continued to respond to complaints regarding anti-social behaviour and worked closely with Surrey Police to ensure the safety of residents.

### Environmental Health

Our Environmental Health team made over 1,100 checks to ensure businesses were complying with social distancing advice and closure guidelines. We also continued to carry out inspections of takeaway restaurants to ensure hygiene standards were being maintained.

### Customer Services

Our Customer Services team took over 2,000 calls a week (up 78% on previous year) from residents needing advice on various issues.

### Staff redeployment

Around 420 staff are normally based at Knowle Green, the Depot and other Council sites. Almost two thirds of these staff worked in teams which provided a critical service during the crisis. The remaining staff were redeployed into new roles such as making welfare calls, delivering food parcels and taking calls from residents.

Kelly Walker, who normally works in the Council's Planning department, was redeployed to help make welfare calls to residents. She reflected: "The biggest challenge was working out what each individual needed to make the situation better for them - whether it be a food parcel, help with collecting prescriptions or just a bit of a chat if they were lonely.

"Being able to reassure someone who was about to run out of food was a real privilege, you could hear the relief in their voice. It was good to know you could make a real difference.

“Some of the calls were quite emotional at times but I really enjoyed being part of a team effort and doing something so positive.”

The redeployment strategy played a key role in the Council providing support to residents who most needed it.

### Community wellbeing

We supported residents who have been victims of domestic abuse (cases increased by 27% in the Borough) and placed 13 local rough sleepers into accommodation.

### Parks and open spaces

750 acres of parks and open spaces have remained open, clean and safe and the team have continued to prepare floral displays which have been installed on lamp columns across the Borough for Spelthorne in Bloom.

### Keeping streets clean

We continued to provide a full rubbish/recycling collection service. Every week, our staff collected, on average, 1,256 tonnes of waste and recycling. We also cleared away 629 fly tips. Our ground maintenance and street cleaning teams continued to work through the crisis, ensuring parks, cemeteries and streets were well maintained and safe for the community.

### Parking charges

All of our car parks, apart from Elmsleigh and Tothill, remained open and free parking was introduced for NHS, Police and social care staff.

### Thank you

A number of Spelthorne businesses supported us by either donating money, food, resources or time to help the community and we would like to take the time to thank them for their support. We would also like to thank the residents who sent letters, emails and messages of support thanking our staff for their hard work during the crisis.

## Delivering housing for Spelthorne

One of the key aims of Spelthorne Council's exciting and innovative residential development programme is to deliver more than 400 affordable and keyworker homes over the next five years.

Construction work is already underway to build 25 affordable rented apartments at Knowle Green in Staines after the Council freed up part of its office space to make

way for the development. The new homes will be a mix of one, two and three bed properties and work is currently expected to be completed in December 2020. Progress to build emergency accommodation for families on the Fordbridge Road in Ashford, and a hostel for single homeless people on the Kingston Road in Ashford, is well underway. Both projects are expected to be completed by April next year.

Development of Ceaser Court with a mix of 55 private and affordable homes on the former Benwell House on Green Street in Sunbury is also on track, with completion currently planned for November 2020. A second phase of this project will see an additional 36 units added in the summer of 2021, a number of which will be affordable (subject to planning permission).

Following the purchase of a site owned by Ashford and St Peter's Hospital, the Council has submitted a planning application to build 127 homes and apartments on Victory Close in Ashford. An agreement was recently signed giving the NHS priority to use these properties for key workers. Any homes not needed by the NHS will be offered to other key workers in Spelthorne.

Finally, having identified a need for more rental homes to be built in the Borough, the Council submitted a planning application in April for the development of 140 flats, flexible commercial and retail space, associated landscaping and parking at Thameside House on South Street in Staines-upon-Thames. If the application is approved, work on the scheme will start at the end of 2020 and take up to two years to complete.

## Waterfront hotel development announced for Staines-upon-Thames

Spelthorne Borough Council has announced that the Arora Group has been awarded the contract to develop Bridge Street Car Park and Hanover House in Staines-upon-Thames for a hotel-led mixed use development.

This landmark development is set to enhance the river frontage at one of the main gateways into Staines-upon-Thames, providing a 4 star hotel with over 300 guest rooms, conferencing/banqueting facilities, spa, restaurants, bars, leisure and retail facilities together with serviced apartments and residential units.

The development will provide an economic boost for Spelthorne's main town and gives a strong signal that even in these challenging times, businesses like the Arora Group can see the untapped potential of the town and are keen to invest in Spelthorne. It is anticipated that over 350 new jobs will be created, providing new career opportunities for local residents.

The Arora Group is keen to gain the views of local residents and will be holding public consultation sessions before a planning application is submitted.

## Staines-upon-Thames: a masterplan for the town centre

Spelthorne Borough Council has appointed a team led by town planning and urban design experts David Lock Associates to prepare a masterplan for the town centre of Staines-upon-Thames.

The masterplan will examine various opportunities for beneficial change. In addition, it will consider ways to vary the range of activities that take place in the town centre, and look at options for improving access around the town centre particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport. It will also focus on making the town centre a more attractive place, improving existing streets and spaces and capitalising on the town's location on the River.

Underpinning the masterplan will be a delivery strategy setting out how changes can be implemented over the short, medium and long term which will aim to be aspirational but also achievable and deliverable. The masterplan is being prepared in support of the emerging Spelthorne Local Plan and will be used as part of the evidence base for that document.

This is an exciting opportunity for the Council to plan the future of Staines-upon-Thames town centre to create an even more attractive and welcoming place to live and do business. The Council recognises that these are challenging times for our town centres, but through engaging extensively with businesses, residents and stakeholders and working proactively to address issues and opportunities, we will make Staines-upon-Thames an even more vibrant and resilient place for the future.

For more information, visit [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/Staines-Masterplan](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/Staines-Masterplan)

## Greenbelt defence fund

Spelthorne has announced that it will be setting aside a special defence fund of £900,000 to enable it to challenge applications from developers wanting to build in the Green Belt.

The Council has always been fiercely protective of the Borough's Green Belt and is known for taking a stance against aggressive developers looking to build on green spaces. As the planning process currently stands, whilst Spelthorne rules on Planning applications and can refuse those which affect the Green Belt, developers can appeal to the Planning Inspector. Fighting these appeals is not only lengthy, they can also be very expensive.

Thanks to the success of the Council's investment strategy over the last four years, Spelthorne Borough Council is now in a stronger financial position and has generated a significant budget surplus which has enabled this defence fund to be established.

# Spelthorne Local Plan

The Council is developing a new Local Plan which will set out how much development we need in the Borough over for the next 15 years and where it will go. The Local Plan Preferred Options consultation ended on 21 January 2020. This set out the Council's draft policies and possible sites to allocate for development up to 2035.

The next steps in preparing the Plan are:

- publish a summary of the consultation responses
- feed in the information received from the 'Staines Masterplan' document
- decide which sites to take forward
- hold a further public consultation in early in 2021

For more information, visit [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/localplan)

## Firm financial footing

On 6 May Spelthorne Borough Council submitted evidence to the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee on the Borough's Commercial Investments as part of a government inquiry on local authority commercial property investments in England.

The Council understands the demand for public bodies to be open and transparent and welcomed the opportunity to share details of the Council's commercial investment activity.

Since 2014, Spelthorne Borough Council has faced increasing financial pressures as a result of the reduction or complete withdrawal of Government grants. In 2016 we were facing a £5 million budget gap and that year the Council decided to embark on an ambitious but prudent programme of commercial property investments which included the acquisition of the BP Headquarters in Sunbury-on-Thames. The portfolio has continued to grow and now consists of 11 commercial properties in and around the Borough.

The Council now receives more money from these investments than from Council Tax. In 2019/20, the contribution from the commercial property portfolio towards funding key services for the Borough and its residents was £9.5million.

As a result of its robust commercial property investment strategy and despite the current Coronavirus pandemic, Spelthorne Borough Council remains on a firm financial footing. Even taking into account the impact of Covid-19, we anticipate that for 2020/21 the Council will generate a return of £9.8 million from its commercial activity.

At the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 21 May, the potential financial impact of Covid-19 on the Council was outlined. The full report is available to read at [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/ECM-21-May](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/ECM-21-May).

Covid-19 poses the most extreme economic stress test for more than three centuries and has affected us all. The Council's sinking fund (money set aside to cover voids, renovating, defaults etc.) currently stands at approximately £20 million and the Council is confident that these funds are more than sufficient to protect our residents and the services we offer. As a result of the commercial actions, we were able to respond very quickly and positively to the Covid-19 crisis in supporting our vulnerable residents and protecting staff, without awaiting receipt of governmental financial support.

## Heathrow update

The plans for expanding Heathrow face an uncertain future after the Court of Appeal ruled that the expansion plans were unlawful as they did not adequately take into account the commitments made by the Government under the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

What happens next?

The Court of Appeal has told the Government to either draw up a whole new policy document (Airports National Policy Statement - ANPS) or amend the current ANPS to make it compatible with the UK's commitments to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Heathrow responded by saying it would appeal to the Supreme Court. More recently Heathrow has said that their expansion plans will be pushed back by at least two years due to the disruption caused by Coronavirus.

What is Spelthorne doing?

The Council has generally scaled back its collaborative work on Heathrow expansion but involvement in other pieces of work, such as changes to flight paths, is still ongoing.

## New housing in Ashford

FABRICA will soon be launching the next phase of Brooklands Park, a collection of spacious studio, one and two bedroom apartments on Church Road in Ashford. These homes will initially only be available to residents or workers from Spelthorne through shared ownership and offer a unique opportunity to buy a high-end product with well-designed finishes, at an affordable price. Brooklands Park will also be home to a new park for the community and Ashford's new town square. For more details visit [www.fabrica.co.uk/new-homes/](http://www.fabrica.co.uk/new-homes/) or call 0203925 1892.

## Spelthorne Means Business Awards

There is still time to enter the Spelthorne Means Business Awards 2020.

Recent months have been extremely difficult and challenging for local businesses. Many businesses have had to adapt to a new way of life, changing the way they deliver their services and interact with customers, and stepping up to support the local community. So this year, more than ever, it seems fitting that we celebrate their hard work, adaptability and achievements. We are inviting nominations in the following categories:

- Best New Start-up
- Best Business in Staines BID
- Best Corporate Social Responsibility
- Best Small Business
- Exporter of the Year
- Best Franchise of the Year
- Creative/Innovative Business of the Year
- Healthy Business Award
- Best Sustainable Business of the Year
- Independent Business of the Year
- Best Business in Ashford and Stanwell
- Best Business in Shepperton and Charlton
- Best Business in Staines-upon-Thames and Laleham
- Best Business in Sunbury and Halliford
- Best Business in Spelthorne

The deadline for entries is 31 August. For more information and to enter visit [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/SMBA](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/SMBA)

## Capture Spelthorne 2020 Photography competition

The deadline for this year's Capture Spelthorne photography competition has been extended to 29 August. We are looking for photographs which tell a story about Spelthorne in the following categories:

**My Spelthorne:** we are looking for inspirational photos that paint a picture of life during lockdown. It could be rainbow posters or social distancing queues, people doing good deeds for one another or the Thursday 8pm community clapping.

**Spelthorne through the seasons:** spring, summer, autumn or winter - we are keen to receive photographs which depict the Borough in any of the seasons.

**'Spelthorne means business':** Spelthorne is a vibrant place to do business and we are looking for photos which showcase this side of the Borough.

**Places that make you feel good:** what's your favourite 'feel-good' place in the Borough?

**Under 16s:** we can accept entries from under 16s for any of the above categories

For terms and conditions and details on how to enter the competition, visit [www.spelthorne.gov.uk.capture](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk.capture)

## The Spelthorne Business Plan Competition 2020

Thank you to everyone who entered this year's Spelthorne Business Plan competition. Unfortunately we had to postpone the final which was due to take place in June due to Coronavirus but are working to find a new date and will be in touch with everyone who entered soon.

## Recognising the Armed Forces Community

The Armed Forces Community is made up of serving members of the Armed Forces, ex-servicemen and women, reservists, and their respective families.

Royal British Legion and Combat Stress data suggests that Spelthorne has the third highest ex-service population of the boroughs in Surrey, yet because there is no obligation to register as having served (and quite rightly so) the information we have about this group and the issues they experience are limited. What we do know is that the vast majority of those who have served do not need additional support, but where and when they do, we want and need to do more to help and to ensure that no one who has served their country is disadvantaged as a result.

The Spelthorne Armed Forces Partnership was established for this reason. In the first six months and against a backdrop of the global pandemic we have:

- Increased support for the Armed Forces Community, launching a dedicated page on our website ([www.spelthorne.gov.uk/afc](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/afc)) signposting people to services that provide help and support on a range of issues
- Recognised and remembered: We organised VE Day commemorations working in partnership with the Royal British Legion, local faith groups, Visit Staines, Spelthorne Museum and Spelthorne Young Voices choir to bring the community together
- We are launching a Facebook group to give those who have served and their families a platform to connect, share experiences and support one another
- And we are also establishing a monthly drop-in at Fordbridge Fire Station for ex-service men and women to meet up and have a brew and a banter. The sessions will be held on the fourth Tuesday of every month and will commence once safe to do so.

Over 50 members of our staff have also undertaken training delivered by Forces Connect South East to raise awareness of the types of issues members of the Armed Forces experience and we have introduced a Reservist Policy to ensure that members of staff who want to serve as reservists are supported to do so.

To find out more about these initiatives and the partnership visit [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/afc](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/afc)

## Remembering the 'Forgotten Army' Commemorating VJ Day: 15 August 2020

Throughout 2020 we have been marking the 75th anniversary of key events that led to the end of the Second World War. Back in May the community got behind our online commemorations and community tributes to mark VE Day. However, after peace was declared in Europe, the War raged on in the Far East for another three months until allied forces dropped atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and Japan surrendered.

The 75th anniversary of VJ Day (Victory over Japan) is recognised on 15 August and commemorates the end of the Second World War. An estimated 71,000 soldiers from Britain and the Commonwealth lost their lives in the war against Japan, including more than 12,000 prisoners of war who died in Japanese captivity. The Burma Star was awarded to those who had served in operations in the Burma Campaign from 11 December 1941 to the end of the war and a memorial to them is positioned in St Peters Church, Staines-upon-Thames.

At the time of writing, the impact of coronavirus has put paid to national and local plans to mark the occasion, but we will remember them.

To find out how we are commemorating this key moment in our history please visit [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/spelthorneremembers](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/spelthorneremembers)

## A new Leisure Centre for Spelthorne

Thank you to everyone who took part in our Leisure Centre consultation which ran from 28 February to 10 April 2020, including a public exhibition on 28 and 29 February at the existing Spelthorne Leisure Centre.

We received a total of 517 responses, with the feedback showing that the vast majority of respondents (96%) would like to see the Council build a new leisure centre. 97% of respondents supported the proposed location, whilst 92% said the suggested range of facilities would meet their needs. 15% of respondents said they would like to see larger studios for fitness classes, whilst a smaller number of comments and suggestions were received on a number of other issues including energy efficiency, the swimming pool, squash courts, changing rooms, accessibility for disabled users, external lighting and walkways, and the cost of using the facilities.

The Council is now looking to refine the scheme based on some of the feedback received from the consultation process. When this work is complete, a report will be presented to the Council's Cabinet for a decision on when to submit a planning

application. Assuming this is determined before the end of this year, it is possible that construction works could start before mid-2021. To read the full consultation report visit [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/leisurecentreconsultation](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/leisurecentreconsultation)

## Grants for sports clubs

### Sport England Grants

Whether you're a small club in need of new equipment, an organisation looking to send your members on a coaching course, or a multi-millionpound facility used by world-class athletes, Sport England has a variety of grants to help. For full information visit [www.sportengland.org/how-we-canhelp/our-funds](http://www.sportengland.org/how-we-canhelp/our-funds).

### Surrey Playing Fields

Surrey Playing Fields work with organisations to ensure that there are high quality facilities for sport and play in the county. As part of this they offer grants of up to £1000 to individuals and clubs. These can be used for equipment for initial start-ups or new activities within established clubs/organisations, for courses for coaches and to improve opportunities of participation. They also offer some financial support of up to £250 to young sports people who compete at elite level. Applicants should be between 10 and 23 years of age. For more information visit [www.surreyplayingfields.co.uk](http://www.surreyplayingfields.co.uk).

### Spelthorne Sports Council

Spelthorne Sports Council is a forum for representatives of sports clubs. Its role involves awarding grants to local clubs and individuals. Talented athletes can apply for assistance with things like specialist equipment and competition costs. Sports Council member clubs can apply for grants to help purchase club equipment and fund coaching qualifications.

Visit [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sportscouncil](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/sportscouncil).

## Stay In Work Out

Sport England have launched Stay In Work Out, giving tips and advice on how to keep or get active in and around your home. The campaign encourages people to move more by making small changes, starting slowly and building up gradually. The activity ideas can be used indoors or outdoors and are suitable for children and adults of all ages, pregnant women and those with a disability or long-term health condition. For more information visit [www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout](http://www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout)

## Craft challenges

Our talented staff at the Spelthorne Resource Centre have set some wonderfully inventive craft challenges using materials readily found at home. Share your craft pictures and you could win a prize.

Visit the Facebook page [@spelthorneresourcecentre](https://www.facebook.com/spelthorneresourcecentre) for details.

## Free family orienteering

We are inviting families to join our free Xplorer orienteering sessions on the following dates:

Tuesday 28 July  
Staines Park, Commercial Road

Thursday 6 August  
Long Lane Recreation Ground, Stanwell

Friday 14 August  
Kenyngton Recreation Ground, Sunbury-on-Thames

Wednesday 19 August  
Orchard Meadow, Sunbury Walled Garden and Sunbury Park

Monday 24 August  
Ashford Recreation Ground, Clockhouse Lane

For more information, visit [www.xplorer.org.uk](http://www.xplorer.org.uk), email [leisure@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:leisure@spelthorne.gov.uk) or call 01784 446433.