

# Climate Change and Sustainability Newsletter



Welcome to the Runnymede Climate Change and Sustainability e-newsletter, and thank you for subscribing. Each quarter, we will be sending you updates on environmental initiatives taking place within the Council and across the borough, alongside information and advice to help you live more sustainably.

For more Council content, please follow us on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn for daily updates.



## Apply to be a Community Environment Champion

There are just a few weeks left to apply to become a Runnymede Community Environment Champion, and be part of the new Environment Champions Network. The network will bring together passionate eco-heroes from across the borough to promote more environmentally conscious communities, expand and improve knowledge transfer between groups, support the resilience and adaptive capacity of communities, and scale up positive impact.

We define an Environment Champion as “A passionate change maker with the ability to drive local environmental action, inspire others as a positive environmental ambassador, and connect with peers to create a healthy and sustainable local environment”. We know that there are many people across our borough that match this definition, and we would love to regularly bring together those people to connect with one another and generate positive change.

To apply to become a Runnymede Environment Champion, simply fill out the short Microsoft Form at the link below giving us a few details about yourself and why you want to become part of the network. Initial applications close on 28 September 2025, so apply now!

[Find out more](#)

[Apply to become a Champion](#)



Runnymede  
Environment  
Champions

## Upgrade your boiler with the Switch Together Scheme

Heat pumps provide an efficient and cost-effective method for heating your home that reduces reliance on fossil fuels using modern technology, while providing year round comfort in your home. Switch Together is a group-buying scheme designed to make the upgrade from traditional boilers to energy-efficient heat pumps easier and more affordable by pooling together interested homeowners allowing installers to offer competitive bids. The scheme is open to any residents across Surrey that own their property and are interested in upgrading to efficient, eco-friendly heating with professional installation at a competitive price.

To take part in the scheme, simply register through Switch Together by 31 October 2025. You can then expect to receive a free, no obligation personal offer tailored to your home estimating the cost for your heat pump installation, factoring in group savings and government grants.

[Learn more](#)

[Register now](#)

## Funded energy upgrades for low-income households

The Warm Homes Local Grant is a government-funded scheme that helps low-income households in England improve energy efficiency and switch to low-carbon heating. The scheme is managed by Surrey County Council on behalf of 11 boroughs and districts across Surrey, with funding provided by the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).

This is a fully government funded grant, where eligible homeowners are not expected to make any contributions to the cost. The grant allows residents to receive a range of retrofitting measures, from energy performance upgrades such as various forms of insulation or window and door upgrades to low carbon heating, making your home more comfortable and lowering energy bills. Landlords can also receive full funding for one property where tenants meet low-

income criteria, but for any additional properties, must contribute a minimum of 50% of the upgrade costs, with no limit on the number of properties that can be upgraded.

Click the link below to find out more and check your eligibility, and if you have any questions or need support, contact [energy@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:energy@surreycc.gov.uk).

[Find out if you are eligible and apply to the Warm Homes Local Grant](#)

## Peregrine falcon rescued from Surrey Towers

A young peregrine falcon that became trapped on the roof of Surrey Towers in Addlestone is now thriving, thanks to the swift actions of Runnymede's control room team and an expert bird specialist. The chick, unable to return to his nest, was first spotted on CCTV by one of the Council's experienced control centre operators, alerting her colleague who quickly contacted a trusted bird specialist she knew personally.

Working alongside the housing team, the control room arranged safe access to the roof, allowing the specialist to recover the stranded falcon. He was then cared for off-site before being successfully returned to the area several weeks later. Since his return, the young falcon has been seen regularly on CCTV near its original nest, often alongside his parents — a promising sign he has been successfully reintroduced to his natural environment.

 [Peregrine Falcon chick rescue](#)

## Join the Big Community Switch

Take part in the Big Community Switch in Surrey to discover if you could reduce your energy bills. By join this free group buying scheme, you can to access a simple, hassle-free energy offer that could save you money. By coming together as a community, residents can engage with trusted energy suppliers and take an important step towards managing their energy costs effectively with options for 100% renewable energy. Register for free by 31 October 2025 to receive a no obligation offer.



[Discover more](#)

[Register for free now](#)

## Funding awarded to tackle chewing gum on streets

A £25,000 grant from the Chewing Gum Task Force, administered by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, will help the Council to clean up gum and reduce gum littering. Runnymede is one of 52 across the country that have successfully applied to the Chewing Gum Task Force, now in its fourth year, for funds to clean gum off pavements and prevent it from being littered again. Estimates suggest the annual clean-up cost of chewing gum for councils in the UK is around £7 million and, according to Keep Britain Tidy, around 77% of England's streets and 99% of retail sites are stained with gum.

This work will see targeted cleaning in key areas such as Guildford Street in Chertsey, Station Road in Addlestone and Egham High Street - places where gum staining has long affected the look and feel of our town centres. We are also bringing in additional cleaning teams to boost capacity and accelerate the rollout across key public spaces. As part of the campaign, new gum removal equipment is being introduced, and grounds maintenance staff are receiving specialist training to ensure the work is carried out effectively and safely. A low-impact, eco-friendly steam method will be used to remove gum without damaging paving surfaces, including sensitive historic stonework. Monitoring and evaluation carried out by Behaviour Change – a not-for-profit social enterprise - has shown that in areas that benefitted from the first and second year of funding, a reduced rate of gum littering of up to 80% was seen in the first two months.



## **Together for Surrey Sustainable Living Hub**

Surrey County Council and the University of Surrey's Institute for Sustainability have created Together for Surrey, a new website designed to inspire individuals, communities and businesses to make meaningful changes that will help them save money, improve their health, enhance wellbeing and protect our countryside for generations to come. The Together for Surrey platform offers sustainable tips and information in one central place and signposts to further support in ten key areas including energy, garden/biodiversity, home, transport, waste, and wellbeing.

Users can create a 'To Do List' which brings together their favourite tips and insights available on the platform in a single, convenient place. This can then be saved by the user and shared with others to amplify the potential impact of the site. Community partners are encouraged to generate content, ensuring the platform stays relevant to the local area and up to date with the latest local news, events, and opportunities across the county to benefit all.

**Visit the Together for Surrey Sustainable Living Hub Website**

If you have any suggestions or comments related to all-things climate change and sustainability in Runnymede, get in touch with the Council's Climate Change Team at [climatechange@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:climatechange@runnymede.gov.uk).

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