**Overview**

Guildford Borough is located in south west Surrey, and borders Hampshire in the west, and Surrey boroughs of Mole Valley, Surrey Heath, Waverley and Woking. It is Surrey’s most populous borough with an estimated population of 146,845 in 2016. The Borough is the second largest district in the county in terms of area, covering approximately 104 square miles (269 square kilometres).   
  
The two principal urban areas are the town of Guildford and the urban area of Ash and Tongham in the west of the borough. Approximately half of the borough’s population live in the town of Guildford. Outside of the urban areas, 89% of the borough is designated as green belt. The southern part lies within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the borough also contains special protection areas, special areas of conservation, sites of special scientific interest and non-statutory designations of sites of nature conservation importance and local nature reserves.

Guildford town centre has a thriving commercial centre both day and night. The night-time economy is vibrant and has a far reaching reputation drawing visitors from all over the South East. Alcohol and drug use can cause health and safety concerns and anti-social behaviour (ASB). ASB occurring from the night-time economy is a challenge for all local key partners and residents.

**Significant demographic information**

* Guildford borough has a population of 146,645. 17% of which were under 15, 27% were over 65, and 56% were between 16 and 64.
* Crime within Guildford is consistently average for Surrey.
* Guildford has a lower than average population density for Surrey (5.46 people per hectare).
* Residents are largely healthy, with above average life expectancy. The key areas of relative deprivation are in Westborough and Stoke areas of Guildford and in Worplesdon (IMD 2016).
* 0.6% of the economically active population of Guildford are unemployed

**Current Local Issues**

* **The Guildford borough Local Plan: Strategies and Sites was adopted by the borough on April 25th 2019. T**he independent Planning Inspector's final report and other examination information about the Local Plan can be viewed at the [Local Plan: strategy and sites (2015 - 2034) web page.](http://www.guildford.gov.uk/newlocalplan/examination)
* Congestion within the centre of Guildford and along the A3 continues to be a local issue. The borough council has developed a Town Centre Masterplan to guide the Council’s projects. <https://www.guildford.gov.uk/tcmp>. The County and Borough Council are also working with Highways England to improve congestion along the A3, and have submitted bids to the M3 Local Enterprise Partnership to support the aims in the plan above <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/policies-plans-consultations/major-transport-projects/guildford-major-transport-schemes>
* Guildford Borough Council have developed a Project Aspire to work with the borough’s diverse range of communities to strengthen the community fabric, focusing efforts on the less advantaged communities. <https://www.guildford.gov.uk/projectaspire>

**The local political structure**

MP’s representing Guildford Borough (Parliamentary elections May 2017):

* Anne Milton (Guildford)
* Sir Paul Beresford (Mole Valley, including 5 Guildford Borough wards)
* Michael Gove (Surrey Heath, including Ash Village)
* Jonathan Lord (Woking, including 2 Guildford Borough wards)

**Surrey County Council**

There are 81 members of Surrey County Council. Following the elections in May 2017, 61 are Conservative, 9 Liberal Democrats, 9 Residents’ Association/Independents, 1 Labour and 1 Green. The Leader is Tim Oliver, who leads a [Cabinet of 10 members](https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=120).

There are [10 county councillors](https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1) representing the area of Guildford.

[**Guildford Borough Council**](http://www.guildford.gov.uk/home)

There are [48 members of Guildford Borough Council](http://www2.guildford.gov.uk/councilmeetings/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1). Following the elections in May 2019, there is No Overall Control. The Conservative party has 9 seats, Liberal Democrats 17, Residents for Guildford and Villages (R4GV) 15, Guildford Greenbelt Group 4, Labour 2, Green Party 1. The Leader is Caroline Reeves (Liberal Democrat), who leads an [Executive of 10 members](http://www2.guildford.gov.uk/councilmeetings/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=132).

Guildford Borough Council’s Corporate Plan 2015 -2020 sets out the ambition for Guildford to be a town and rural borough that is the most desirable place to live, work and visit in South East England. The aim is for Guildford to be a centre for education, healthcare, innovative and cutting-edge businesses, high quality retail and wellbeing; a county town set in a vibrant rural environment, which balances the needs of urban and rural communities alike and which is known for our outstanding urban planning and design, and with infrastructure that will properly cope with the needs of residents and businesses.

**Guildford Joint Committee**

The Joint Committee ([Guildford Joint Committee](https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=751)) aims to improve outcomes and value for money for residents by strengthening local democracy and improving partnership work within the borough. It is made up of the 10 county councillors and 10 borough councillors; the chairmanship rotates between the county council and borough council – for 2019/20 the Chairman is Borough Councillor Paul Spooner and the Vice-chairman is County Councillor Keith Taylor.

**Parish Councils**

There are 24 parishes within the Borough of Guildford and 23 have [**Parish Councils**](http://www.guildford.gov.uk/parishdatabase). The central 'Guildford Town' area of the borough comprises the town centre and immediately surrounding areas, including: Bellfields, Boxgrove, Onslow Village, Park Barn, Stoughton, Westborough, and the (former) villages of Burpham, and Merrow.

**Local Services**

**Children and Young People**

There are four youth centres in the Guildford area that are focused on the areas of highest deprivation (Indices of Multiple Deprivation June 2016). Find out more: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/family-information-service/support-and-advice-for-parents-and-carers/young-people-information-for-families/youth-centres-and-projects/youth-centres-and-projects-in-guildford>

* Ash Youth and Community Centre, Ash Hill Road, Ash, Aldershot GU12 5DN
* Bellfields Youth Centre, Hazel Avenue, Guildford GU1 1NS
* Discovery Youth Centre, 7 Ward Street, Guildford GU1 4LH
* Park Barn Community Centre, Park Barn Drive, Guildford GU2 8E

**Vulnerable Adults**

The Adult Social Care locality and reablement teams are based in Guildford Borough Council offices at Millmead, alongside Guildford Borough Council staff and the Neighbourhoods Police Team.

Guildford Borough Council run two social centres for residents over 55 years. Find out more: <https://www.guildford.gov.uk/socialcentres>

* Park Barn Social Centre
* Shawfield Social Centre

**Schools in Guildford borough**

* Infant Schools (Entry age 4 years +): 12

(6 Voluntary Aided, 4 Community, 2 Voluntary Controlled)

* Junior Schools (Entry age 7 years +): 4

(1 Voluntary Aided, 1 Foundation, 1 Academy, 1 Community)

* Primary Schools: 15

(5 Academy, 5 Voluntary Aided, 3 Community, 1 Foundation, 1 Free)

* Secondary Schools: 7

(4 Academy, 1 Voluntary Aided, 1 Community)

* Special Schools: 6

(3 Pupil Referral Units, 2 Academy, 1 Community)

**Fire Stations**

The main fire station in Guildford is based along Ladymead in Guildford town. It has three fire engines and one arial ladder platform. Find out more: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/surrey-fire-and-rescue/how-to-locate-and-contact-surrey-fire-and-rescue/fire-stations-in-surrey-and-their-action-plans/guildford-fire-station>

**Partnership activity**

**1. Public Service Board (PSB)**

This partnership is led by Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council. It takes a formalised approach to joint working in the borough. Less formal arrangements are in place with other key partners such as Surrey Police, the University of Surrey and the Royal Surrey County Hospital Trust.

**2. Health and Well-being Board**

This partnership is led by Guildford Borough Council. Membership includes public health, clinical commissioning groups, statutory authorities, voluntary sector and local councillors.

**3. Project Aspire**

[Project Aspire](https://www.guildford.gov.uk/projectaspire) is a Guildford Borough Council programme about providing leadership, encouragement and support to all communities to build upon the talents and energy seen every day to build true communities where neighbours can rely on one another. It seeks to empower all our communities to take an active role in the decisions that affect their lives.