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FOOTIE FAN STRANGLED

Polish hospital worker killed after cup clash

A football fan was strangled just hours after watching the Champions League final and died in the hospital where he worked.

Police found Przemyslaw Lepkowski in Eastbourne Road, on the Merton side of Tooting, shortly after 1am on Sunday, May 20.

Paramedics treated the 24-year-old Polish man, who had suffered a cardiac arrest, and tried to resuscitate him at the scene and on the way to St George's Hospital, Tooting.

Mr Lepkowski, who was from Croydon and worked in the hospital's domestic department, spent two days in intensive care but died of his injuries on Monday evening.

EXCLUSIVE

by HANNAH WILLIAMSON

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A postmortem examination gave his cause of death as strangulation.

His father, Wojciech, who also works at the hospital, said a colleague phoned him to ask if his son was at home.

He said: "I checked his room and said no, he was going with friends to watch the Chelsea and Bayern Munich game.

"He said 'Your son is in A&E'. I took a car and went straight away."

Mr Lepkowski's mother Jolanta was in Poland at the time of the incident, but flew back to be at her son's bedside before his life support machine was turned off.

"The pair described their son as a friendly and popular boy who loved playing football with colleagues every Saturday in Mitcham.

Mrs Lepkowski said: "When he was in intensive care, lots of friends were coming to see him and say goodbye."

Mr Lepkowski said: "I know every father says 'My son is the best', but trust me, he was the best. He was a very hard worker."

Daniel Janik, 29, of Eastbourne Road, has been charged with murder.

He was due to appear at South Western Magistrates' Court yesterday.

'The best': Przemyslaw Lepkowski was in intensive care for two days but died of his injuries

SAVE ST HELIER

Fight: Our campaign

NHS axe evidence 'in doubt'

NHS experts have raised concerns over evidence being presented to justify closing the A&E and maternity services at St Helier Hospital.

A panel working on behalf of NHS South West London's Better Services, Better Value (BSBV) recommended earlier this month that St Helier lose its A&E and maternity as part of a cost-cutting shake-up of hospitals in south-west London.

But the National Clinical Advisory Team (NCAT), which conducts an independent clinical review whenever a major shake-up of NHS services is proposed, has allegedly raised concerns about NHS South West London's predictions that sufficient alternative services would be in place to ensure three A&E and maternity units could cope with demand, and the affect it could have on patient outcomes.

Recently A&E and maternity departments at St Helier have seen a rise in the number of people visiting.

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Driven mad: Sean Lynch claims the officer acted illegally. He has since had his fine revoked

'Traffic officer blocked me in – then fined me'

by LAUREN MAY
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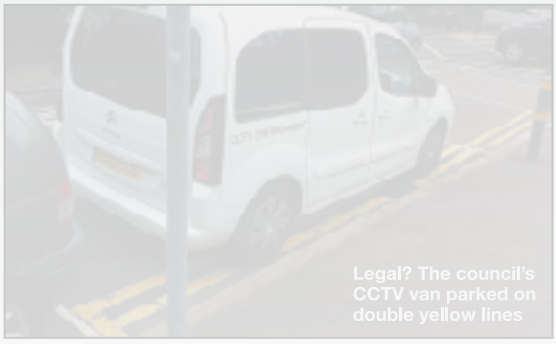
A driver claims he was blocked in a yellow box junction by a council CCTV van parked on double yellows – which then ticketed him.

Sean Lynch, 37, from Keswick Avenue in Merton Park, was driving in rush-hour traffic on Monday, May 14, across the junction at Dorset Road and Kingswood Road when he claims he was forced to stop in a 'yellow boxed' junction because the parking officer was "blocking his way" and came to a standstill for less than a minute.

The traffic officer then photographed Mr Lynch, while parked on double yellows, and issued him with a £70 fine, which he said would arrive by post.

Mr Lynch said: "There's usually enough space for two vehicles in the entrance to the road but because the camera van was actually parked on double yellows blocking it I had nowhere to go and couldn't pull fully into the road."

Mr Lynch approached the traffic officer, who simply told him to take it up with the council.



Legal? The council's CCTV van parked on double yellow lines

He added: "He was creating the blockage and then taking photos of people who were getting caught up in the problem.

"Even when there were no vehicles there he made it very difficult for the van to manoeuvre through these roads."

After reviewing the footage, the council revoked the ticket saying Mr Lynch had been blocked by another vehicle approaching from the opposite direction, but maintained the council vehicle was legally park in an area that can also be used by the disabled and for loading and unloading for 20 minutes.

Mr Lynch said: "Had I not contacted the Wimbledon Guardian I probably would have got a ticket. I'm glad they have seen sense."

The covert nature of the CCTV van has raised further concerns about the revenue boosting methods of Merton Council.

Join our fight for fair parking

Today we call on readers to help us promote a just and transparent system of parking enforcement in Merton.

Over the past year, the Wimbledon Guardian has received more complaints about parking and traffic enforcement than any other issue.

We want you to help us highlight these issues so we can hold the council to account.

Send your gripes to newsdesk@wimbledonguardian.co.uk.

Our catalogue of complaints

- October 2011– We received a deluge of complaints about Merton Council's decision to install a bus lane in Hartfield Road, Wimbledon – which councillors and residents have alleged is nothing more than a revenue-raising "cash cow" which has generated nearly half a million pounds in six months
- September 2011– Dozens of Cannon Hill Lane residents were fined for parking on what was technically a dropped kerb, to help wheelchair users, but which was unmarked and barely an inch lower than the pavement;
- May 2011 – Merton Council refused to quash a parking ticket handed out to a doctor who parked in Haydon's Road, Wimbledon, while on an emergency call, despite having a doctors' badge on his windscreen
- May 2011– a husband and wife were both fined £100 for parking on their residential road in Mitcham when the council put in new traffic restrictions outside Beecholme Primary School. The wife's parking ticket was quashed because it was deemed to be unfair, but the husband's was upheld despite having parked in exactly the same place on the same day.
- April 2011 – The council was accused of putting a "stealth tax" on visitors' parking permits by charging a new £25 administration fee for all new applicants.
- October 2010 – Merton Council was criticised by a parking tickets watchdog for using "underhand tactics" when a resident was ticketed after one minute by traffic wardens in Raynes Park hidden in an unmarked car described as an "old banger".

Sports film given red carpet treatment

Olympic champions, students and volunteers flocked to the red carpet for the world premiere of a new film featuring former England footballer John Scales and former Great Britain tennis No 1 Greg Rusedski.

Common Ground, voiced by Sky Sport's Jackie Beltrao, explores the history of sport on Wimbledon Common and how the town became the birthplace of so many sports and breeding ground for sporting champions.

Among those attending the premiere at Wimbledon Odeon last Thursday were celebrities Ainslie Harriet, Andrew Castle and Alex Best as well as a host of past and present British Olympians.

The film was produced over 14 months by the True Volunteer Foundation to inspire more people to take part in sport ahead of this year's Olympic Games.

Film fans: Eduardo and Jacquie Beltrao, John and Lisa Scales, chairman of True Volunteer Foundation Michael Padmanthan and Councillor Stephen Alambritis Joshua Tucker

Sponsors of the project included Wimbledon Film and Television Studios, Merton Council and the Merton Chamber of Commerce.

Diana Sterck, of Merton Chamber of Commerce said: "The project is a lasting legacy because of the Olympics coming to London – to not only promote Wimbledon's heritage (and that SW19 is not just about tennis) but will encourage people to get involved in sport and learn more about their heritage."

The film will be available on DVD with an accompanying book free of charge to all schools.

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