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Look who's being sheepish in Happy Valley Page 7

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Do you have what it takes to work for your local authority? Croydon Council is always keen to recruit the best staff across a wide range of disciplines.

If you're looking for a new challenge, pay a visit to www.croydon.gov.uk It could be the best day's work your mouse has ever done.

> CROYDON COUNCIL

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To contact Croydon Council

Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon, CR9 3JS email: contact.thecouncil@croydon.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8726 6000 Council website: www.croydon.gov.uk Community website: www.croydononline.org

To contact the editor

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The next edition of *Your Croydon* will be published on Wednesday 28 May 2008. Commercial advertising is welcome, but inclusion of an advertisement does not indicate council endorsement of any products or services mentioned.



An ear to the ground

I am proud to say that, since we came into power two years ago this month, Croydon Council has been a listening council.

We listened when you said that you wanted more opportunity to recycle more of your household waste. We responded with enhanced kerbside collection services and improved facilities at our three reuse and recycle centres.

We listened when you said that you wanted more council housing. We responded with a building programme that will see more affordable housing coming on stream – something Labour failed to do in all its years in power.

We listened when you said you wanted to feel safe in your homes, and while travelling about the borough. We responded, with our partners in the police, by bringing about a 10% reduction in crime.

The most recent example of our listening to what you've asked for, and then responding to it, will see a major transformation in the way we look after you when you visit Taberner House.

For the first time in more than 16 years, our One Stop reception area is about to undergo a major overhaul and refit. If you've visited it recently, you may well have noticed that it's beginning to look a little past its sell-by date. The décor is no longer at its freshest and the furniture is looking decidedly tired and careworn.

As with omelettes and breaking eggs, it's not possible to provide a great new facility without a

degree of disruption. While the work is being done, we will be providing a temporary One Stop, just a stone's throw from the current location, so that visitors who require it will continue to be given a one-to-one meeting, ensuring they get the service they deserve.

For others, of course, we will continue to offer a great many of our services online, via the council's website. And, if that doesn't appeal, you can always speak to one of the customer service advisers in our call centre.

The timetable that's been laid down for the work sees the new reception area opening in late autumn, at which time visitors will find themselves in spacious, ultra-modern surroundings and being greeted by a member of staff who will assess their needs and make sure that they are dealt with in a quick and efficient manner.

So, here we are, two years into our term of office and we're still listening to what you're saying to us – it's all part of our desire to see first-class public services delivered in ways and at times you want to access them.

luce Fisher

Mike Fisher Leader of the council

<u>News</u>

Uniting to stub it out

Groups join together in battle against smoking-related illness

A partnership bringing together all the local organisations which can help to prevent ill-health caused by smoking has been formed.

The Croydon Tobacco Control Alliance includes representatives from Croydon Council, Croydon PCT, the business community and healthcare professionals with a special interest in tobacco control.

The group aims to prevent people starting to smoke, provide support to those giving up, reduce access to tobacco through enforcement and protect non-smokers from tobacco smoke.

The alliance will be jointly chaired by Dr Tim Crayford, the PCT's director of public health, and Mike Pilgrim, the council's acting director of environment, culture and public protection.

Speaking at the launch, Dr Crayford said: "Many thousands of people working in front line services in the local NHS, the council and, more widely, in the community can help improve people's lives through smoking prevention.

"This new alliance is a golden opportunity for us to engage with this wider workforce in dealing with the country's leading cause of premature death."

Said Mike Pilgrim: "Croydon Council has a key role to play in leading the tobacco control agenda and enforcing the laws which ban smoking in public places and the sale of tobacco to under 18 year olds.

"We're also targeting young people to prevent them starting in the first place by reinforcing no-smoking messages through our healthy schools programme."

Two-fifths of school pupils aged 11-15 nationally have tried smoking at least once, and smoking is much more common among young people in their 20s and early-30s than in older age groups.

The launch builds on Croydon's outstanding reputation for making real improvements to people's lives through partnership working, as highlighted by the recent governmentawarded Beacon.

Learn rules of road safety the Smart way

Thousands of borough children to learn important message through entertaining show

The Smart Brothers are coming to Croydon, and they're bringing their Road Safety Show with them.

Freddie and Eddie Smart are two brothers who are particularly smart when it comes to the important question of road safety.

Like Croydon Council, they are keen that children learn to behave in a safe and sensible manner whenever they cross the road.

Their show covers most aspects of road safety and is aimed at the primary school age group. Being a predominantly visual performance, the road safety messages are engaging and easily understood by pupils who do not have English as their first language.

The Smart Brothers will visit a number of schools, with particular emphasis on those in wards with the highest casualty rates.

The first booking, on 9 May, is for Wolsey Infant and Junior Schools, in King Henry's Drive, New Addington.

It is hoped that almost 7,000 children will see the shows, to be staged at school in Selhurst, Fairfield, Broad Green, New Addington and Fieldway.



Establishing a Link to better services

The setting up of a new group promises to offer more choice for patients and those using social care services.

Local Involvement Networks (Links) are comprised of local people, organisations and groups seeking to improve care services.

The steering group for Croydon's Link recently held its inaugural meeting with the aim of working with the council to find an experienced organisation to carry out its administration tasks. Those tasks – such as providing office space and facilities separate from council and health service offices – will free members to carry on with the principal work of the Link.

The group comprises 12 members: five from health, four from social care, one from a disability group and two individuals. Anybody interested in participating in, and developing, the work of Croydon Link should contact Anne Blythe of the Healthy Croydon Support Unit by calling **020 8760 5773** or emailing **Anne.Blythe@croydon.gov.uk**

Benefits cheat sentenced

Joint investigation reveals swindle amounting to tens of thousands of pounds

The courts are backing Croydon Council's firm stand against fraudsters who cream off illegal benefit funds.

At the end of a recent hearing, a woman was sentenced to nine months' imprisonment, suspended for 18 months, and ordered to perform 200 hours' unpaid work in the community.

She will also have to repay the almost \pounds 30,000 to which she pleaded guilty of obtaining fraudulently. She falsely claimed \pounds 18,460 in income support, \pounds 9,492.03 in housing benefit and council tax benefit of \pounds 2,005.63 – totalling \pounds 29,959.29.

The court heard how the woman, a single mother, made the benefit claims but failed to notify the council and the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) that she had received \pounds 50,000 from her former husband following the sale of a property in 2003.

The money was deposited in a building society account which she also failed to declare.

The fraud came to light when the DWP received information through a datamatching exercise which identified the Nationwide account through Inland Revenue records.

Mr Recorder Judge RJ Merz, sitting at Croydon Crown Court, told the woman that offences of this kind, and involving such amounts, would usually result in an immediate prison sentence but he had considered the mitigating factors, her remorse, previous good character and early guilty plea.

Anyone wishing to report fraud should call the freephone Fraud Line number on 0800 328 9270. Those calling the 24-hour line can do so anonymously.

Professionalism rewarded

Council again recognised as centre of customer service excellence

Front line staff who deal with customer enquiries and problems on a daily basis have been recognised with a professional award as a result of Croydon Council's training expertise.

The council has been an active and successful member of the Institute of Customer Service for six years.

With highly trained customer service advisers to answer enquiries, and investment in the development of staff skills and technical knowledge, the council offers the opportunity to gain external recognition for customer service professionalism through the institute's professional awards scheme.

The council's status as a recognised centre to run the awards scheme for its staff has recently been reconfirmed.

Such reconfirmation happens only after clear demonstration of a high commitment to customer service by the organisation, backed by evidence of improvement to the customer experience.

So far, 115 staff from the council's One Stop,

call centre, housing and library services have achieved a customer service professional award, and 23 more are working toward one.

All staff in these and other front line services are actively encouraged to undertake an award over the next few years.

Part of the council's commitment to customer service includes the plans to offer a new, improved One Stop reception centre at Taberner House. For more information, see the article on page 14.



Back row left to right – Geoff Wellard (director customer services), Phil Auden (membership director, ICS). Front row, left to right – Councillor Sara Bashford (deputy cabinet member for resources and customer services), Councillor Margaret Mead (cabinet member for health and adult social care), Brenda Friend (development manager, customer services).

Sara knows the answers

Recognition for innovative webbased facility that has had council backing

An online tool that makes getting advice about specialist equipment for older and disabled people easier, and that has been championed by Croydon Council, is in line for a top industry award.

Successfully piloted by the council last year, AskSara, the Disabled Living Foundation's online self-assessment tool, has now been short-listed for this year's SustainIT eWell-Being Awards.

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For the pilot, the council worked with the foundation to customise its AskSara (Self Assessment Rapid Access) tool for Croydon's particular needs.

The basic tool is an innovative way for older and disabled people and their families to obtain advice about equipment that can help them in their daily lives.

AskSara asks people to enter information about themselves and their environment. It then provides a detailed report, based on the answers, that offers useful advice and suggests products that might be of help.

Croydon is going beyond the original concept and is developing the tool for specific uses within the council's contact centre.

The announcement of the award winners was expected as this edition of *Your Croydon* was being published.

To learn more about AskSara, visit the council's website at www.croydon.gov.uk/sae

<u>News</u>

Free skills workshops for visually impaired

Advice on self-motivation and how to prepare a CV will help ease path to employment

A series of free two-day workshops aimed at improving the skills and confidence of the blind and visually impaired is to feature in Croydon.

Starting in May and organised by the Royal London Society for the Blind, the innovative project seeks to help blind and partially sighted people into the world of work. The level of unemployment in this group has stood at 75% for many years.

The workshops will concentrate on motivation and vocation.

The motivational workshop will, through discussions and exercises, encourage participants to take steps toward self-development.

This is followed up by a vocational workshop which aims to provide participants with the skills and structure they need to actively seek employment.

For further information, visit the website at **www.rlsb.org.uk/workshops** or contact Simon Smith by email at **simon.smith@rlsb. org.uk** or by calling 020 7471 5576.

Correction

A proof-reading oversight was responsible for an error that appears on page 6 of the leaflet *Building a Croydon to be proud of,* distributed with this year's council tax notification.

Unfortunately, the bullet point item which stated that the council aims to "Open the new Rowdown Primary School in New Addington" omitted the word "extended", which should have appeared between "new" and "Rowdown".

We apologise for any concern this error may have caused.

Paying the easy way

Direct Debit, PayPoint, bank card, cheque, even cash – any can be used to pay your council tax

Paying your council tax has never been easier as Croydon Council offers a range of hasslefree methods, designed to take the effort out of payment.

Setting up a Direct Debit is by far the safest and most convenient method of ensuring your monthly sum arrives on time.

In addition to being cost effective, helping to keep the council tax charge as low as possible, it saves you time and effort as you are spared the monthly chore of having to write a cheque to present, personally at the bank or post office.

Also, it offers you control over the payments as you are free to cancel at any time, and you will be advised, at least 14 days in advance, of any changes.

You can set up a Direct Debit by completing

the form that was enclosed with your council tax bill, by going online to www.croydon.gov. uk/directdebit or by calling 020 8726 7000.

Credit or debit card payment can be arranged by going online to www.croydon.gov.uk/ payments or calling the 24-hour automated service on **0845 606 6683**.

You can pay by cash, cheque or debit card at any post office, or by cash only at any outlet displaying the PayPoint logo. You will need to take along either a letter or payment slip printed with a barcode unique to you.

If you have a swipe card, this can be used to make payment at the post office or PayPoint desk. To find your nearest **PayPoint outlet**, visit www.paypoint.co.uk/locator/

To pay at a bank, by cash or cheque, you must take along your bill and the payment slips. Payments made at banks, post offices and PayPoint take up to five working days to reach the council.



Doing the North End walk

Croydon town centre was recently treated to a visit from four generations of royalty.

But, rather than the upper-class tones of Buckingham Palace, Windsor or Sandringham, the king and his queens in question had a noticeable south London lilt to their voices.

A colourful and eye-catching sight, this particular royal family were members of George Major's family, and each a pearly king, queen or princess in their own right.

In town to promote George's book, the four royal personages, pictured left to right, are: George's daughter Tammy Major; Charmaine Grant, pearly queen of Brixton (granddaughter of George); George Major, pearly king of Peckham and president of The Pearly Kings and Queens Guild; and young Alicia Catchpole (great-grand-daughter of George, in pushchair).



Happily grazing the valley

Wildflower meadows to benefit from sheep and cheerful scheme

Nature's lawn mowers, wearing thick woolly jumpers, have been set to work in Happy Valley in Coulsdon.

Over the next three months, a mixed, 20strong flock of Herdwick and Jacob ewes will be hard at work – though it's doubtful they see it as such – grazing the northern slopes of the 250-acre site.

Croydon Council is working to preserve the area, declared a Site of Special Scientific Interest, in partnership with the Old Surrey Downs Project, a Heritage Lottery project run by the Downlands Countryside Management Project.

The sheep will help to keep down scrubby vegetation and grasses which could otherwise shade out the wildflower-rich chalk grassland.

Wildflower meadows on the thin, chalky soils of Happy Valley are one of the most diverse habitats for wildlife in Britain, supporting many rare plants and insects, including the greater yellow rattle, a plant found in only a few places in Britain.

The slopes of the valley are also home to many types of butterfly.

Grazing is the traditional way of managing these slopes. Since its introduction to Happy

Valley five years ago, the grassland has shown a great improvement and the animals have proved popular with visitors.

Regular walkers in Happy Valley who would like to help with checking the animals, or take part in conservation projects, should contact the Old Surrey Downs project on **01737 733933**. All training is provided.



Barbara steps in as temporary children's department head

Proven education chief takes over until permanent director appointed

Barbara Hughes, a widely respected education consultant and interim manager, will be leading Croydon Council's children, young people and learners department until September.

She is taking over until the council appoints a full-time successor to Peter Wylie who has retired.

The council considers itself fortunate to have attracted a skilled operator with the breadth of education understanding that Barbara can bring while it is recruiting a permanent executive director. Until 2004 Barbara (55) had been executive director with South Tyneside where she led a team that turned around the north-east council's performance following a critical Ofsted inspection.

In her subsequent independent career, she has assisted several major education authorities, including Manchester City Council, where she spent six months leading the city's building schools for the future and academies programme.

Most recently she has been head of business transformation with Reading Borough Council's children's services department.

Improvements to fire safety at Marston Way

Council starts work to prevent repeat of Christmas Day fire

Contractors have moved into Marston Way, Upper Norwood, to improve fire resistance in one of the 1960s-built blocks of flats.

The move follows detailed investigations and discussions with fire safety and building construction experts since the Christmas Day fire that destroyed a neighbouring block.

Croydon Council believes that after being started within a flat, the fire found its way into the cavity between the internal and outside walls before spreading into the roof space.

Although the council has no reason to consider the timber-framed buildings were not constructed in line with regulations of the day, modern fire defence standards have since become more rigorous.

The council and its advisers have drawn up a schedule of works to prevent anything similar happening in the event of another fire.

Primarily, this involves filling the wall cavity with foam that will physically prevent a fire from spreading. The work will have the added value of providing energy-saving insulation.

When work on the first block (2-24 Marston Way) is complete it will review the project with a view to carrying out similar upgrading throughout the estate and at nine other blocks believed to be of a similar construction.

Meanwhile, steady progress is being made to replace the destroyed block. It is hoped that construction work will start in the autumn, with affected tenants being given the opportunity to take up their new homes on the original site by June 2009.



Popping out to help

More services and a marvellous new vehicle to help reach more people



Bearing a striking, Croydon-focused design in bold colours, the Pop Service bus is an unmistakable presence whenever it visits one of the borough's communities.

The Pop (Partnership with Older People) Service took delivery of its new vehicle in February, and, through visits to most parts of the borough, staff have seen many people who might otherwise have missed out on help and benefits they were due.

Launched in May of last year, the Pop Service has been busily providing important information and advice to Croydon's older people in their communities.

Around 4,000 people in Croydon's 24 wards have benefited from Pop Service support so far, thanks to visits to 60 locations, meeting people either in the bus or, if the vehicle is too large for a given situation, by setting up a table service in local community halls or luncheon clubs.

It is anticipated that the service will see more than 5,000 people over the coming year.

The service's dedicated website is updated regularly with news about scheduled visits, and a dedicated telephone line is now also available, on which callers can talk to Pop staff between 9.30am and 4.30pm during the week. Outside those hours, a message can be left.

Croydon folk are now receiving help via the mobile Pop Service on a range of issues, including: understanding benefits and allowances entitlements, blood pressure checks, avoiding falls, hearing difficulties support, exercise advice, managing medicines, eating sensibly, and dealing with forgetfulness.

The most rewarding thing for the Pop Service staff is to talk to, and help, so many Croydon people.

Recently, a satisfied customer received a hearing test, a blood-pressure check and her allowance entitlement was sorted out, all within an hour.

She said: "I'm amazed that, without going anywhere, I can now hear properly again, I have received assurances about my heart rate, and I will be financially better off!"

For more information and advice visit the Pop Service website at www.croydonpop.org.uk

Alternatively, send an email to info@croydonpop. org.uk or call 020 8654 4440.

Where you can visit the Pop Service bus during May

DATE	TIME	VENUE	SERVICE PROVIDER
Tuesday 6 May	10am-4pm	North End, Croydon, CR9 1SX	Deaf Awareness week- Hearing Resource Centre only
Wednesday 7 May	10am-4pm	North End, Croydon, CR9 1SX	Deaf Awareness week- Hearing Resource Centre only
Thursday 8 May	10am-4pm	North End, Croydon, CR9 1SX	Deaf Awareness week- Hearing Resource Centre only
Friday 9 May	10am-4pm	North End, Croydon, CR9 1SX	Deaf Awareness week- Hearing Resource Centre only
Saturday 10 May	10am-4pm	North End, Croydon, CR9 1SX	Deaf Awareness week- Hearing Resource Centre only
Wednesday 14 May	10am-1pm	Elmfield Way shops, 31- 33 Elmfield Way, South Croydon, CR2 0EJ	Age Concern, Health Visitors, Customer Services, Pharmacist
Wednesday 21 May	10am-1pm	Waitrose supermarket, Limpsfield Road, Sanderstead, CR2 9LE	Age Concern, Hearing Resource Centre, Customer Services, Pharmacist



It's now almost all over, bar the voting – and then the hi-tech counting process that will reveal the make-up of the new Greater London Assembly

When the polling stations close at 10pm on 1 May, the ballot papers containing your votes for the London Assembly will start their journey through the counting process.

About six million ballot papers from around London will be processed to get the results for the Mayor of London and the London Assembly contests.

The votes in the London elections are counted electronically.

The London elections have always been counted in this way and are the largest elections in the UK to do so.

The count starts at 9am on 2 May, and will take place at three count centres – Alexandra Palace, Excel and Olympia.

Electronic counting involves scanning each ballot paper to get an electronic image, counting the votes on each paper, and then calculating the results for each contest.

The whole process should take something like 12 hours, depending on turnout.

If the same number of votes were counted manually, it would take about two or three days to complete.

The process of electronic counting consists of:

- registering the ballot boxes;
- scanning the ballot papers;
- verifying the numbers of papers in the boxes against the written ballot box accounts;
- Returning Officer staff adjudicating "doubtful" ballot papers.

Valid votes are counted throughout the process. Once all of the ballot boxes have been through this process, the results are calculated and announced.

CENTRE VIEW

Move into Whitgift Street, Croydon from £51,000*



Tower Homes offers you the chance to purchase a one or two bedroom apartment of your own through our part buy, part rent scheme.

Do ALL of these statements apply to you?

- My total household income is at least £30,500
- I live in Croydon or am on the housing waiting list in Croydon
- . I do not have any outstanding County Court Judgements
- . I would like to know more about Centre View

If the answer is YES, please register your interest.

centreview@lqgroup.org.uk 020 8294 5047

Please ensure that you have completed an application for Housing Options

www.housingoptions.co.uk



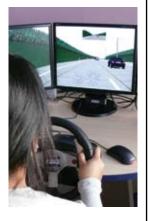
[&]quot;Represents a 35% share in a new 1 betroom apartment valued at £165.000. Proofly for this achieve will be given to local authority and housing association terranta and those on the warhing latin the borough of Creydon. Your home is at risk if you fail to keep up regaritments on a mortgage, next or loan encurred on it. Please make sare you can afford the repayments before you take out a mortgage. All details are correct at time of going to press January 2008

Driving home the message

With three screens, pedals and sound effects, Croydon Council's new driving simulator could save young lives



...the simulator will be taken to schools and colleges across the borough.



The stupidity and danger of drink driving is highlighted in a cutting-edge piece of kit that will give youngsters a realistic taste of getting behind the wheel before they've had even their first driving lesson.

Croydon Council's road safety team has recently taken delivery of the state-of-the-art driving simulator – the XP300 to its friends – and it is hoped it will help bring about a reduction in the number of young road casualties.

Costing £11,000, the simulator produces a range of situations to educate young people of driving age. In addition to drink driving, the interactive modules include hazard perception, motorway driving and emergency braking.

Following a number of horrific accidents and fatalities involving young people in the borough, the simulator shows that driving is not something to be undertaken lightly.

In order to get the message across, the simulator will be taken to schools and colleges across the borough. It will also be a feature at this year's Croydon Motor Show, in June.

Being one of the first authorities to have the XP300, Croydon's road safety team will assess how it is received and have an input into the future development of the software.

One youngster who has taken it out for a test drive is Tina Rekhi, a student at Norbury Manor Business Enterprise College, and member of the Croydon Road Safety Partnership. She said: "I thought it was very realistic and I think it'll be helpful in engaging young people because it's nothing like a video game; you have to be more serious when you're doing it as you're more in control and you have more awareness of what you're doing.

"My friend and I think it would help if this replaced the hazard perception part of the theory test because it's more accurate.

"In the hazard perception test, all you have to do is click on a mouse and that's the test completed.

"With this, you actually use the pedals and look at the hazards around you; it increases awareness.

"I think it'll attract a lot of attention from younger people when it's taken into the Motor Show. All round, it's a beneficial machine and I think it could be really helpful to give young people more of an idea of what driving's really about."





TO KEY WORKERS

SIVE



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Two developments exclusively for sale to key workers looking to take their first step onto the property ladder.

1. ANGEL COURT, CROYDON

Fabulous 1 & 2 bedroom apartments housed within an attractive Georgian style façade, situated in this popular residential area. Prices from £54,750* for a 30% share.

2. QUEENS GATE, CROYDON

Stylish 1 & 2 bedroom apartments, within this prestigious development situated at the edge of the historic Queens Hospital site. Prices from £51,900* for a 30% share.

For further information on any of these developments or to make an appointment to view, please visit:

www.sharedhorizons.org.uk or call 020 8726 8833





A new eco-city is forming around us and we want to encourage and recognise the pioneer ecocitizens who are helping to make it happen.



BRITAIN IN BLOOM – Croydon's entry in this national competition will be boosted by your participation in Croydon Ecocitizen.



croydon ec citizen

Every day in Croydon at least one resident is making a planet-saving choice to change their environmental habits. Let us know who you are so we can say "thank you"!

With new and expanding recycling services and Croydon Council's popular loft and cavity wall insulation offer with British Gas, we expect that this trickle will become a flood and think it is right to applaud these ecocitizens. That's the idea behind a whole new scheme to recognise the commitment to reducing our impact on the environment which Croydon's householders, businesses, schools and organisations are increasingly showing.

How does Ecocitizen work?

Each month in *Your Croydon,* we will focus on a different eco-topic. You can nominate yourself or someone you know for any category at any time until the deadline of **Friday 25 July**.

You are also invited to send us your Green Tip on that month's theme. The Ecocitizen's Judging Panel will award \pounds 75 in vouchers to the best Tip received at EaST by the last day of the month (20 word summary and up to 200 words only please – a photo or picture can be sent too).

IN JUNE – From the end of June the council will be expanding the collection of plastic bottles and cardboard to match the green waste that is now being collected from all households. We are also continuing to expand the existing network of recycling sites for blocks of flats. This month give us your recycling green tip and the prize could be yours.

IN JULY – Have you been using your car less? Tell us how and this month's prize could be yours.

Recycler of the year

Over the next year, with plastic bottles and cardboard and green waste recycling collections becoming available to all house and with 1,000 more recycling sites at blocks of flats, we want to hear if you, or someone you know, makes that extra effort to recycle more than most or has now started to recycle for the first time. You can nominate yourself, someone you know or even your block of flats.



Complete an I Move London pledge online and commit to reducing your car travel. See: www.tfl.gov.uk/ imovelondon

IN SEPTEMBER – enter this month's prize draw by sending us your top energy saving tip. Be ready for next winter with loft or cavity wall insulation. Visit www. keepcroydonwarm.org.uk or call 0845 971 7731 and quote ref. CCCT for the council's offer with British Gas.

So send us your monthly top tip and increase your chance of winning!

Why 'Ecocitizen'?

Over the next few years, Croydon's town centre will begin to be transformed, with stunning new buildings designed to high environmental standards, and a move to more pedestrian-friendly streets. Throughout the borough - and especially in our district centres such as Thornton Heath, Purley, Coulsdon, New Addington and elsewhere - new dwellings, shops and offices are beginning to be built. These are now under the council's forward looking requirements for high standards of sustainable design, including the requirement for at least 10% of the power to come from low-carbon technologies on the development. This new eco-city is forming around us and we want to encourage and recognise the pioneer ecocitizens who are helping to make it happen.

Entries

Entries will be judged according to the sustainability of the project and its outcome, originality and any positive impact on the wider community.

There will be a grand presentation ceremony on Thursday 23 October, 2-4pm in the Arnhem Gallery, Fairfield Halls. Details of the categories can be found on the council website: www.croydon.gov.uk/environment/

Category

Recycler of the year		
Low carbon household		
Favourite Croydon 'green' project		
Natural Croydon		
Best environmental 'message/campaign'		
Primary school		
Secondary school		

The Croydon Ecocitizen 2008



IN THE WORK PLACE

Businesses play an important part in changing our approach to the environment. The council supports **Environmental Business Excellence** (ENVIBE), which will run its next awards programme in summer 2009. For details contact **Debbie Clement on** 020 8760 5536, or visit: www.envibe. co.uk The council will run an internal prize scheme.

crovdon

Nominations

My name	2000
Contact number/email:	
Category	
Name	
Contact number/email	
Reason for nomination	

Please return to: Environment and Sustainability team, 18th floor, Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon CR9 3BT Tel. 020 8760 5791 email: sustainability@croydon.gov.uk

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🗲 Cartridge World

194 Brighton Road, South Croydon CR2 6AF



the cost of your next ink refill at Cartridge World South Croydon Terms and Conditions: Vocchers must be redeement at participating Carridge World stores. Any speed must be made to one tremaction: The

REFILL - NOT LANDFILL

amount will be deducted from your bill. Offer fimited to one voucher per purchase. This voucher cannot be exchanged for cash. This voucher shall even as at all times the property of Castridge World. This effer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. core cases

Local advertising has never been so effective

YourCroydon



YOURCROYDON the magazine for your borough, provides local businesses with the opportunity to target all potential customers in all areas of Croydon

Six good reasons to advertise in YOURCROYDON:

- High production values
- Blanket coverage of the borough
- Official publication of Croydon Council
- Strong editorial environment higher reader uptake
- Bespoke articles and photography
- A longer shelf life your advertisement keeps on working

To advertise, call 020 8760 5644 or email yourcroydon@croydon.gov.uk

One Stop fits all

Changes that will see big improvements for visitors to the council's headquarters are about to get under way



Imagine a Wembley crowd multiplied four times. That's the best part of 400,000 people – and it's the number who use the council's One Stop in Taberner House each year.

No wonder the reception gets congested at peak times and is looking a bit tatty, tired and dated.

Even though the council's headquarters building is likely to be replaced by 2015, we can't afford to let the present arrangements soldier on without a big improvement.

So, our present inefficient and inflexible customer space is set for a makeover.

Not only will we be providing a modern, spacious environment where visitors will be welcome, but the project will also help us understand how best to plan a brand new reception area within purpose-built accommodation.

We'll be making sure many of the new fittings can be taken with us when we move.

To carry out the improvements, there will a short fourmonth period when virtually the whole of the Taberner House ground floor will be a building site.

While the works are taking place, customers needing face-to-face meetings will be able to see someone in temporary accommodation on the other side of The Queen's Gardens in Katharine Street.

Computer links mean inconvenience will be minimised and the short-term arrangements will be clearly signposted.

It's possible that some issues can be sorted out online or by telephone without the hassle of coming into town-centre offices. A limited reception will be maintained to receive expected visitors and deliveries, and redirect anyone who may be lost.

When the newly equipped reception area reopens, public visitors will have exclusive use of a remodelled entrance from the Gardens.

Staff and corporate visitors will enter the building from the south side, where there will be new security turnstiles controlling access to the lifts to all 20 floors.

From late autumn, visitors will find a trip to the council a much more appealing experience with "meeters and greeters" helping people get quick attention.

There will be a professional feel to the place that has been absent for several years and it really will be just a single location where anyone wanting help from the council will be able to get the answers and information they are seeking.

Advantages to customers

- All services in one area
- New triage operation and floor walkers will mean 30% customers will receive immediate attention without having to wait
- <u>Reduced wai</u>ting times
- Clearer signage
- More information about Croydon to make your waiting time more enjoyable and informative
- Modern, customer-friendly surroundings, with improved seating
- Bright, comfortable surroundings
- Speedier access to the advice you need

From September, One Stop visitors will find a trip to the council a much more appealing experience with "meeters and greeters" helping people get guick attention.





Fighting the exil of drugs

It's not just the users who suffer through drug abuse

One-to-one support, counselling, and group work sessions are just some of the weapons at the command of Croydon Community Drug Agency as it helps those with drug-related difficulties.

Drug users and their families can also benefit from a variety of associated services and group work activities, covering topics such as: choosing to change; creative art workshop; family friends and carers; life management; and peer support.

Based in Cherry Orchard Road and funded by Croydon Council's Drug and Alcohol Action Team, the agency runs an outreach service for people who have difficulty getting to the premises.

Natalie Howarth, acting service manager, said: "Our two outreach workers focus on getting clients that are hard to reach into the service."

The service is well used and much needed, receiving an average of 30 to 40 new referrals each month. And it's the community, as well as clients, that benefit. Natalie said: "We provide a safe place where clients can come to get support.

"For example, if they want to reduce their drug intake – so it's controlled – or become completely abstinent, we can help. This will have a positive impact on their friends and family.

"We work closely with the council's Drug and Alcohol Action Team, the police and the probation service, so the whole community benefits."

In addition to central Croydon's, there are groups in Thornton Heath, New Addington and Norbury.

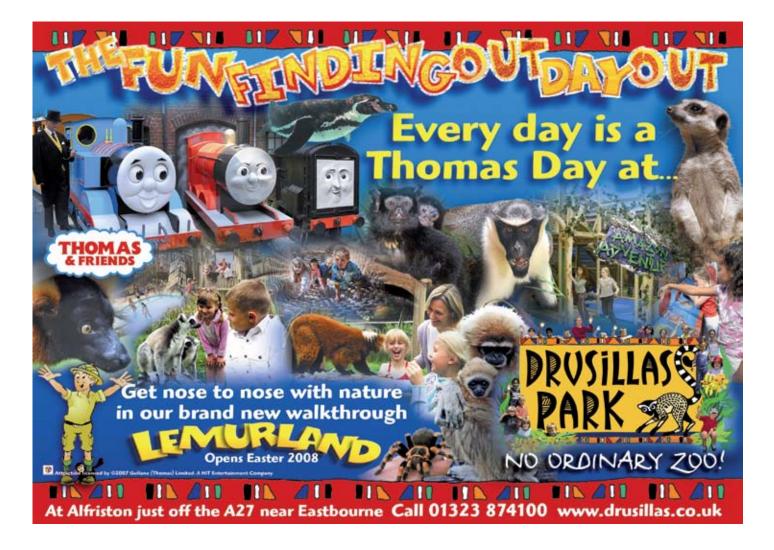
For more information, visit **www.croydononline.org** click on the Community Information link and then type the agency's name into the search field.

Alternatively, email cranstoun@croydoncda.demon. co.uk or call 020 8686 7500.



Our two outreach workers, focus on getting clients that are hard to reach into the service.

Natalie Howarth, acting service manager





Additional services will see the borough taking ever greater steps toward a green future

More people will find it easier than ever to help reduce the volume of waste going to landfill because of the council's programme over the coming year.

An expansion of existing services should see us reaching the target of recycling 28% of household waste by March 2009.

After listening to what you have told us, we plan to provide a truly excellent recycling service that is easier for everybody to use.

Below is a list of the recycling improvements that will soon be available, or may already be so, on a street near you!

New blue box

From 30 June, an extra 75,000 people living in houses and blocks of flats of four properties or fewer will be receiving the council's twin-recyclingbox service.

This means that you will now be able to recycle cardboard, paper and textiles in a new blue box, and plastic bottles, tins, cans and mixed glass in your green box.

The results from the 50,000 properties where this service is already in place have been excellent.

Garden-waste collection

By 31 March, all houses with gardens received two clear plastic sacks for garden-waste collection.

Please remember that this collection is for green plant waste from gardens only, and not food waste or any other garden waste, such as large logs.

The seasonal service winds up at the end of November. After this date, any green garden waste can be taken to the council's reuse and recycling centres at Factory Lane, Purley Oaks and Fishers Farm.

We aim to collect the recycling from your house every fortnight, on the same day as your rubbish collection, to make the service easier to use.

Flats recycling

Between April 2007 and March 2008 we installed more than 300 recycling sites at blocks of flats.

This year, we plan to install up to 1,000 more sites at those blocks that don't yet have a site near them.

If you live in a block of flats and would like a recycling site, please contact us to let us know. You can email **recycle@croydon.gov.uk** or call **020 8726 6200**.

The sites generally consist of three bins that can be situated in, or near, existing bin sheds.

This year, we plan to install up to 1,000 more sites at those blocks that don't yet have a site near them.



IN CROYDON

Neighbourhood recycling sites

The borough has 24 neighbourhood recycling sites at supermarkets, car parks and parks, taking a variety of materials for recycling.

Over the next few months, we will renovate six of the sites, putting in new frames, bins and signs, making the sites more practical and pleasant to use for recycling.

Thank you for recycling; we can only achieve our targets through your continued support by reducing, reusing and recycling as much as you can.

We aim to collect the recycling from your house every fortnight, on the same day as your rubbish collection, to make the service easier to use.



More people will find it easier than ever to help reduce the volume of waste going to landfill because of the council's programme over the coming year I'm 22 years old. I was a victim of crime. Now I organise community safety events. I'm doing my bit to make Croydon safer, are you doing yours?



If you have been a victim of crime, contact Victim Support Croydon on 020 8681 7711



Victim Support Croydon

We can help victims of any crime, from theft to serious assaults, and whether or not they have been reported to the police. We have specialist workers who can support victims of rape and sexual assaults, domestic violence and hate crimes, such as those motivated by racism or homophobia. We also have a service for those bereaved through murder and manslaughter.

Specifically, Victim Support Croydon can:

- Offer emotional support and discuss options
- Liaise with the police or any other criminal justice agencies including the Witness Service, if you have to attend court
- Provide information and help about personal safety
- Provide information about crime prevention
- Provide information and help with claiming criminal injuries compensation
- Provide information and referral on to other appropriate agencies that can help

Our service is confidential and free. Tel: **020 8681 7711** Website: www.victimsupportcroydon.org.uk

R U OK? Victim Support Croydon has an additional service specifically for young victims and their carers.

Tel: 020 8253 4422

Website: www.victimsupportcroydon.org.uk and follow the links to R U OK?

If you thought home ownership was out of reach, a special open day could give you



With property prices never seeming to level out, the prospect of actually owning bricks and mortar can seem always just beyond the grasp of many.

But that doesn't stop them hoping to purchase their own home.

However, the question remains of how to get started.

If you are a Croydon resident or a key worker in Croydon, come along to the low-cost home ownership open day to find out.

The event will provide a one-stop opportunity to shop for a home you can afford.

Many of the housing associations offering low-cost home ownership in Croydon will exhibit details of their new shared-ownership developments.

The open day, organised by Croydon Council and affordable homes specialist Tower Homes, will take place at Croydon Town Hall, Katharine Street, on Friday, 6 June 2008, from 1pm to 8 pm.

Many of the housing associations offering low-cost home ownership in Croydon will exhibit details of their new shared-ownership developments.

Free independent financial and legal advice will also be available on the day.

There will be presentations on the various schemes available through housing associations at 1.15pm, 2.45pm, 4.15pm, 5.45pm and 7.15pm. There will also be presentations for Croydon Council tenants on council-run schemes at 2pm, 3.30pm, 5pm and 6.30pm.

The supply of new-build homebuy (part buy/part rent) properties has increased considerably in the past two years, providing a greater opportunity for people to own their own homes.

Opportunities available for Croydon Council tenants include the assisted private purchase scheme, which gives a grant of between $\pounds 20,000$ and $\pounds 40,000$ to help buy a property on the open market; and social homebuy, which allows a secure tenant to purchase their council property with a discount of $\pounds 16,000$ and a grant of up to $\pounds 4,000$ toward the costs of buying.

If you have further questions about the open day, please contact the housing specialist team at Croydon Council on **020 8726 6100**.

For further information about affordable home ownership opportunities across London, visit **www.housingoptions. co.uk** or telephone **0845 230 8099**.

Genesishomes at Bauhaus Mason's Avenue (off High St, Croydon) Your opportunity to own an affordable home

in a unique, stylish environment.



shop croydon

With thriving independent stores and top high street names including Zara, Topshop and House of Fraser within Centrale and the Whitgift Shopping Centre.



eat croydon

Catering for every taste and budget, Croydon offers a variety of local restaurants, trendy bars and traditional atmospheric pubs.



live croydon

16 one and two bedroom apartments in this iconic development available on a part-buy/part-rent basis.



COLUMN DE LA COLUMN

Champagne launch Saturday 29th March 11am - 4pm

The Croydon Park Hotel 7 Altyre Road, Croydon, Surrey CR9 5AA

For further information and to book an appointment call **0845 600 4663**

Genes'shomes

www.genesishomes.org.uk

rested applicants must be first time buyers, priority will be given to people living in Greyden. Your HOME 6 AT RISK IF YOU FAR TO KEEP UP WITH THE

in bloom

discover a greener borough

Nominations are now open for Croydon in Bloom!

Spread a little summer colour and help the borough to a national title.

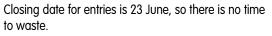
PEGASUS

Enterprise

As, fingers crossed, the sun starts to shine and summer arrives, you will start to see a more colourful borough as preparations are made for the annual competition.

This year, Croydon is representing the capital in Britain in Bloom so we really want to stand out with colourful displays and environmentally aware projects.

There are more categories than ever before, so why not visit the council's website at www.croydon.gov.uk/croydoninbloom to make a nomination?



No matter how small or large your front garden or balcony, no matter where you live, help "discover a greener borough" and make Croydon an even more attractive place in which to live, work and visit.

Entries can be made via the website, or by completing the nomination form below and sending it to: Greenspaces, Freepost SEA 59112, CR9 1WZ (no stamp required)

There are more categories than ever before, so why not visit the council's website at www.croydon.gov.uk/ croydoninbloom to make a nomination?

Britain In Bloom



nomination form

lease cut out and return by Monday 23 June 2 would like to enter or nominate the following		t SEA 59112 CR9 1WZ (no stamp required)	
First name:	Surname:		
Address:			
Postcode: Tel no:	Fax no:	Email:	
1y details (if different from above):			
First name:	st name: Surname:		
Address:			
Postcode: Tel no:	Fax no:	Email:	
The Front Garden Award (best front garden or balcony) The Community Garden Award (best street, square or cul-de-sac) The Business Premises Award The Bloomin' Pub & Restaurant Award	Hotel & Guest House Award Allotment Awards Best School Garden Best Conservation Project Town or District Centre Award The Biodiversity Award	 London in Bloom Certificate of Excellence 2008 RHS Britain in Bloom Theme – Local Roots Pegasus Retirement Homes plc Trophy for Best Hanging Basket 	

LANDSCAPES LTP





David Lindsay

Loan fund targets Croydon businesses

£1m pot to help start-ups and expansions

Businesses within the borough looking for funding either to launch or expand now have another financial avenue open for them to explore.

The £1m Croydon Enterprise loan fund may have been launched only as recently as late last year, but it has already supported a number of local businesses that were unable to obtain conventional finance.

The fund offers loans between \pounds 2,001 and \pounds 50,000 and is available to businesses, or business owners, based in Croydon.

Among the first recipients of support from the fund was David Lindsay who has established a new funeral directors business, DA Lindsay & Sons, based in Lower Addiscombe Road.

David says: "Once I'd applied to the fund for finance, they supported me throughout the process and even paid a consultant to help me prepare a business plan and budgets.

"This really helped me better understand some of the challenges I'd be facing in setting up my own business, as well as how the financials would work."

David had the opportunity to present his request to a loan panel and was delighted when given the funding he required.



Other requests for financial support have come from a range of businesses.

Keith Miller, the senior loan fund manager, said: "We've been able to assist a number of applicants who haven't been able to access the financial support they need.

"That may be either through their lack of experience and track record or the fact that they have a poor credit history.

"We don't see these factors as being barriers to entry to raising finance, and I'd urge anyone to give us a try."

To encourage potential applicants, the loan fund team has organised a series of informal drop-in sessions each Wednesday at venues across the borough.

To find out more call **020 8680 6161** or visit www.croydonenterprise.com

Do you have a good business idea, but are having difficulty raising finance?



The Croydon Enterprise Loan Fund could be the answer...

- Loans from £2001 to £50,000
- Designed for start up and growing businesses
- For businesses, or business owners, based in Croydon

For further details either call the Croydon Enterprise hotline or drop in for an informal chat each Wednesday between 10am – 1pm at the following locations:

- Ist Wednesday 5th Floor, Park House, Park Street, Croydon
- 2nd Wednesday
 The Croydon Enterprise Shop
 18 Church Road, Crystal Palace
- 3rd Wednesday
 5th Floor, Park House, Park Street, Croydon
 4th Wednesday
 - The Octagon Cyber Cafe, New Addington



For further information and online application forms visit: www.croydonenterprise.com Call our hotline on 020 8680 6161



From here to modernity

SNAPPING 400 YEARS OF HISTORY

Frazer Ashford, the Croydon photographer with an international reputation, this month revisits one of Croydon's most historic landmarks.

At the corner of George Street and North End, arguably the very centre of Croydon, are some very special buildings.

The Whitgift Almshouses, or to give them their real name, The Hospital of the Holy Trinity, have occupied that corner in Croydon since they were completed in 1599.

I would guess that the view would have been almost the same had a picture been taken in Elizabethan times.

The Almshouses have not only withstood the ravages of time, but also the attentions of the planners who have plotted their downfall many times in the interests of reconstruction and road widening. The House of Lords finally saved them permanently in 1923.

While the Almshouses have remained virtually unchanged, the roads outside have seen many changes.

North End, once the main thoroughfare through our town, is now pedestrianised, while George Street operates one-way traffic.

Opposite the buildings, Crown Hill, over the years, has been one-way traffic, driving up the hill; one-way traffic, driving down the hill; and then pedestrianised, with a strange red-brick observation platform-cum-seating area blocking the road - which proved just as popular with the town's pigeons as its citizens.

Now, however, it is part of the route for Croydon Tramlink, with the frequent trams rolling across the junction before gliding down the hill.

So, it is ironic that this busy junction, steeped in history, at the very heart of Croydon has become the meeting point for one of our town's oldest buildings and a very modern urban travel innovation.

For more examples of Frazer's work, visit www.frazerashford.com







Council

Meeting

ሞ Annual Council Meeting Monday, 19 May

To submit a question (maximum number of words: 50) for consideration at a full council meeting, email it to **council.questions@croydon.gov.** uk; fax it to **020 8760 5657**; print and complete the form at www.croydon.gov.uk/councilquestion and post it to Questions for the Council, Democratic and Legal Services, Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon CR9 3JS; or call **020 8726 6000 extn 63876**

Scrutiny

Deadlines for the forthcoming scrutiny and overview committee public question sessions. Noon on the relevant deadline date.

Meeting		Deadline	Cabinet Member	
🥶 3 June	Scrutiny and overview	26 May	To be confirmed	
10 June	Community services	2 June	To be confirmed	
24 June	Health and adult social care	16 June	To be confirmed	

Details of cabinet members' attendance, when agreed, will be found at www.croydon.gov.uk/democracy/dande/scrutiny/questions or by contacting the scrutiny team as detailed below.

To submit a question to a cabinet member at a scrutiny sub-committee Q&A session, email it to scrutiny.public.questions@croydon.gov.uk; fax it to 020 8760 5657; post it to Scrutiny Public Questions, Democratic and Legal Services, Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon CR9 3JS; or call 020 8726 6000 extn 62529 or 62315.

Neighbourhood Partnership

Neighbourhood partnership meetings (all start at 7.30pm)

meening	oroup and venue	
7 May	South Norwood & Selhurst	South Norwood Baptist Church, Oliver Avenue, South Norwood
🐖 14 May	Sanderstead, Croham & Selsdon and Ballards	St John the Divine, Upper Selsdon Road, Selsdon
21 May	Addiscombe, Woodside & Ashburton	Ashburton Learning Village, Shirley Road

For information on Neighbourhood Partnerships, visit the website at www.croydononline.org/neighbourhood_partnerships/, email neighbourhood.partnerships@croydon.gov.uk, write to Neighbourhood Partnerships, Democratic and Legal Services, Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon CR9 3JS or call 020 8726 6000 extn 62564 or 62396

Croydon Community Police Consultative Group Partnership

Meetings of the Croydon Community Police Consultative Group are held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall. All are open to the public and begin at 6.30pm. For further information, go to www.croydononline.org/ccpcg

Forthcoming meeting dates are: Thursday, 15 May; Wednesday, 9 July; Wednesday, 17 September; Tuesday, 25 Nov.

Details of all Croydon Council meetings can be found on the council website at www.croydon.gov.uk/meetingsofthecouncil

These meetings are to be transmitted using webcasting. They can be viewed at www.croydon.ukcouncil.net/site/webcasts.php

What's On www.croydon.gov.uk/leisure

May 08

Croydon Clocktower, Katharine Street, Croydon Ticket office: tel:020 8253 1030 Email: ticketoffice@croydon.gov.uk Text:

DAVID LEAN - APRIL

The Other Boleyn Girl 2 Digital Garage 18 La Vie En Rose 2 Digital Happy-Go-Lucky 15 Digital Son of Rambow 2 Closing the Ring 2 Digital Persepolis 2 Digital

Children's and Family Films

The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep pg The Ugly Duckling and Me Underdog Arctic Tale pg The Spiderwick Chronicles pg No Country for Old Men (15) Digital The Diving Bell and the Butterfly (12) Digital The Kite Runner (12) Digital Flashbacks of a Fool (15)

Lust, Caution (18) Digital



Guided walks in May

Thursday 1 May Morning walk on Mitcham Common

Saturday 3 May Morning has broken in Selsdon Wood Nature Reserve

Sunday 4 May International Dawn Chorus Day at South Norwood Lake and grounds.

Thursday 3 May All is blooming at Coombe Wood

Friday ? May Batman on Addington Hills

Saturday 17 May Badger Watch

Sunday 18 May Sunday afternoon walk on Mitcham Common

Wednesday 21 May Secret Places beyond Hamsey Green

Sunday 25 May Dormouse detective

Saturday 31 May Storytime in Wettern Tree Garden

tal Friday 9 May Clare Martin: Here's to Life 7.30pm (on stage 8pm)

A tribute to the life and music of the late jazz singer and pianist, Shirley Horn. £12 (£9 concessions)

Live events at the Clocktower

Thursday 22 May

Miss Coco Peru 8pm - The magnetic Miss Coco Peru performs in Croydon for the first time. £12 (£9 concessions)



Friday 30 May Peggy Seeger

7.30pm (on stage 8pm) A member of the famous musical Seeger family and half-sister to Pete Seeger, Peggy is renowned for her performances of Anglo-American folk music. £12 (£9 concessions)

Other Events

Wednesday 14 May Beautiful Octopus Club

7.30pm (on stage 8pm) A member of the famous musical Seeger family and half-sister to Pete Seeger, Peggy is renowned for her performances of Anglo-American folk music. £12 (£9 concessions)

Saturday 31 May Ignite

8pm - Suitable for ages 12 and over. Hip-hop meets poetry in a fast-paced night of rhythm and rhyme. £5 (no concessions)

For further information of these and other walks and wildlife, go to www.croydon.gov.uk/leisure/events or call the community partnership officer on 020 8726 6900 ext 64952



www.bbk.ac.uk 0845 601 0174

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London's evening university

Choose from over 1000 University of London certificates and short courses taught part-time in the evening.

To book your place at an Open Evening or for a full list of courses visit www.bbk.ac.uk/croydon

> Open Evenings 7 May 2008,

26 June 2008,

4-7.30pm

London's ONLY specialist provider of part-time, evening higher education. Prestigious University of London qualifications. World-class research environment. Ranked number one by students*.

*National Student Survey 2006 and 2007: for overall student satisfaction in London