

# YourCroydon

ISSUE 12 - NOVEMBER 2007

*'A place to be proud of'*



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### To contact Croydon Council

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The next edition of **Your Croydon** will be published on Wednesday 28 November 2007. Commercial advertising is welcome, but inclusion of an advertisement does not indicate council endorsement of any products or services mentioned.

# PayPoint points the way



## Residents offered greater choice of payment facilities

Cash payment for a range of council services has been made easier with the introduction of facilities at shops, garages, newsagents – in fact, anywhere displaying the PayPoint sign

Following the closure of the cash counters in Thornton Heath and New Addington, timed for 18 January, the council is changing the way it collects cash payments. The streamlining of services will also see the cashiers' service in Fell Road closing at the end of next February.

Residents can use their old payment card

at the new outlets or pay as usual at a Post Office.

Payments can also continue to be made by direct debit, standing order, or by the use of a debit or credit card either online, at [www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk), or over the telephone on 020 8726 6100.

For more information about paying by Direct Debit, or if you have any queries about rent payments, telephone 020 8726 6100 and ask to speak to your income officer who can give you details of your account, offer advice about different ways to pay your rent and what to do if you find yourself in financial difficulty.

# Leisure gets inFusion of new management

## Charity promises better use of borough facilities

A registered charity committed to promoting healthy lifestyles has been appointed to manage Croydon Council's leisure facilities for the next 10 years.

Established in 2000, Fusion has expanded considerably and now operates 18 leisure sites in Southwark, Lambeth, Hillingdon and Tunbridge Wells, with an annual turnover exceeding £7.5 million.

Taking over on 1 November, Fusion will be responsible for managing Thornton Heath, South Norwood, New Addington and Purley pools and leisure centres as well as the dry sports hall at Monks Hill.

The contract also envisages the new contractor being involved at the new facilities to be built in New Addington and Waddon – both part of extensive district regeneration schemes and both expected to open by 2010.

**See page 9 for news of the newly reopened South Norwood Leisure Centre.**

# New service is hot stuff

## ... or frozen, if that's what the customer prefers

An improved choice of food, and greater flexibility for customers, are among the benefits of a new meals-on-wheels service beginning in December.

Europe's leading supplier of food to the elderly, *Apetito*, has been awarded the contract to provide Croydon's vulnerable and frail residents with a choice of hot dishes

delivered each day, or a supply of frozen meals.

An extensive range of nutritionally balanced meals – including halal, kosher and African and Caribbean speciality dishes – will be delivered hot at lunch time.

Alternatively, clients can have several frozen meals delivered at once, giving them the freedom to choose the meal they eat each day, and at a time that suits them.

# The countdown begins

## With less than eight weeks to go, the town centre is getting ready for Christmas

Visitors to Croydon's town centre over the past few weeks may have been left wondering what the contractors toiling away amid the foliage of North End's trees were actually doing.

The cherry pickers, safety harnesses, hard hats and what seemed like miles of electric wiring were all playing their part in ensuring Croydon has a dazzling lights display to illuminate the Christmas period.

Financed by the council's partners in the Croydon BID team, the lighting scheme promises to be the most spectacular – and energy efficient – lighting scheme in the south-east.

At 4.30pm on 17 November, the lights will be officially switched on by the Mayor of Croydon, Councillor Derek Millard, ably assisted by ex-EastEnder Lucy Benjamin.

Entertainment on the day starts at 11am and marks the start of six weeks of festive celebrations, including Christmas carol concerts, a visit from Santa and entertainment provided by circus street performers.





# Beat the bogus callers

## Thames Water warns customers to be on guard

One of Croydon's major water suppliers has warned its customers to beware bogus callers pretending to be Thames Water employees.

Following the summer's unseasonal flooding, a number of the company's customers reported that suspicious callers had tried to get into their homes, claiming to be carrying out checks.

Fortunately, those customers were sufficiently wary to keep the callers outside, but Thames Water would like to renew a warning for its customers, and people generally, to be careful who they admit to their homes.

The company offers the following advice for customers visited by callers claiming to be from either Thames Water or "the water board":

- always ask to see photographic ID, check that the photo looks like the caller and that the card is not out of date;
- ask the caller to wait outside while you contact Thames Water on 0845 9200 800 to verify that the caller is a genuine Thames Water employee;
- if you think the caller is bogus, send them away and contact the police immediately;
- register with Thames Water's doorstep password scheme, by calling 0845 9200 800;
- if you are at all unsure, don't open the door.

Further information is available at [www.thameswater.co.uk/boguscallers](http://www.thameswater.co.uk/boguscallers)

# Building good relations

## Council lays foundations of scheme allowing residents and developers to get on with each other

Noise from construction and demolition works can cause considerable disturbance to residents living nearby.

Croydon Council's pollution enforcement team has developed a Code of Practice, adopted by many London boroughs, as guidance for contractors carrying out this type of work.

Under this code, Croydon Council requests that any contractor conducting works likely to affect local residents carries out these works between the hours of 8am and 6pm on

weekdays and 8am and 1pm on Saturdays.

There are three main exceptions to this rule:

- where works are undertaken by emergency services;
- where the highway will be affected; or
- where prior approval is obtained.

For normal household DIY activities, the team asks that people be considerate of each other, and recommends that any noisy DIY works take place at a reasonable time of the day.

**For information on noise from construction works, contact the council's pollution enforcement team on 020 8760 5483.**

# Playing for the big money

## Playtime gets a boost in the borough thanks to major cash injection

The borough's children are set to benefit from a cash injection of £884,076, aimed at developing play opportunities across Croydon.

The funding, from the Big Lottery through the Children's Play Programme, will develop seven play areas, both in isolated and

densely populated parts of the borough that are short of play opportunities.

In addition, two mobile projects will provide an outreach service for communities that otherwise may not have access to play facilities.

The Community Bus will offer a range of activities for youngsters, while the Mobile Toy Library will give young children and families the chance to borrow toys and games they might not otherwise be able to enjoy at home.



# Council holds on to its lollipops

## Negotiations keep school-crossing patrols in-house



School kids across the borough will continue to be escorted across busy roads by lollipop men and women employed by Croydon Council.

Initially, the school-crossing patrols were to be part of the new parking-control package awarded to European company APCOA taking effect on 22 November.

However, after careful consideration, the council decided that it made sense to keep the men and women who help keep the borough's children safe on the journey to and from school in the employ of the council.

As a result of the decision, the school-crossing patrols will now be part of the department for children, young people and learners, having previously been employed by the council's parking services department.

**See page 19, for details of the new APCOA contract.**

# Marketing for Christmas

## North End to host two festive street markets

The run-up to Christmas promises shoppers in Croydon town centre an enhanced range of goods, either to adorn the Yuletide table or to provide gifts that are a little out of the ordinary.

During November and December North End will be home to two quite distinct street markets, one offering products and produce from Italy, the other featuring stalls specialising in eco-friendly goods.

The Italian Market, running from Thursday, 8, to Saturday, 10 November, will be a food-lover's dream with traders selling cured meats, olives, exclusive balsamic vinegars, rich home-produced olive oils and much more.

For those with an eye on the future of the environment, the Green Market, spanning the four days from Thursday, 6, to Sunday, 9 December, is a fresh concept for the Christmas season in a new eco-aware Britain.



# Mental health care set to improve

## New proposals to help adult clients achieve better quality of life

Mental health care in Croydon is set to receive its biggest reorganisation for decades in an effort to improve the variety of day-care services for adults with mental health problems.

The proposals are the work of a joint initiative from Croydon Council and Croydon Primary Care Trust (PCT).

The proposed changes are a result of the need to modernise services in order to:

- be more inclusive
- provide more access for service users, particularly the young population (18-25 age group) and black and Asian communities.
- be more flexible in the terms of the choice of services available
- offer improved assistance to access mainstream opportunities
- encourage service users' independence and help to increase confidence
- be more culturally sensitive

- provide a "safe haven" for some users who may not be ready (or are unable) to access mainstream opportunities.

A new range of interlinked services will help people to realise their personal goals in areas such as employment, education, volunteering, arts and culture, faith and cultural communities, sport and exercise.

Changes in services will take time to put into place and existing services will be maintained or adapted as new ones are introduced, probably from the beginning of the financial year 2008/09.



# Lord Weatherill

## Borough says farewell to former Speaker of the House

Following the memorial service at Westminster Abbey in October, marking the life of Lord Weatherill, a full civic memorial service is to be held at Croydon Parish Church.

Scheduled for 4pm on Sunday, 18 November, the ceremony will serve to remind people of the role played by Bernard "Jack" Weatherill, in the affairs both of the borough, as MP for Croydon North East; and the nation, as Speaker of the House of Commons.

Lord Weatherill died in May, aged 86. The memorial service will be open to members of the public.

# Independents' day

**Non-elected independent members of the public play what is, by many, an unrecognised role in ensuring the council maintains high ethical standards. Here, one talks about the job**

It's all too easy to sit on the sidelines and complain, particularly if the target is an official or public service.

Very few people, however, take positive steps to help a situation they feel could be improved – possibly because they're not sure how to take that first step.

Civil servant Andy Smith, 29, was one of the few not prepared to stand idly by. He felt he could make a contribution, so, in January 2006, he became a non-elected, independent member of Croydon Council's standards committee.

He spoke to *Your Croydon* to explain why he took the post, what it involves and what he feels he helps to achieve.

*There is a popular misconception that, to be involved, you have to be "of a certain age". What is your view?*

Not at all! When I applied, I wondered if age might be an issue. However, going through the selection process, it was clear that what counted was getting the best person for the job – not how old you are.

*What does your role involve?*

Attending committee meetings and giving my views on the papers that come forward. We cover things like how different council departments handle complaints.

There's also a possibility of sitting on disciplinary hearings, should there be an allegation that a councillor has breached the Code of Conduct.

*What opportunities/challenges does your role offer?*

It helps develop analytical skills – you need to be impartial, able to read and digest information, and spot the key questions to ask.

It's important to have an inquisitive mind and to consider all the evidence before you.

It also helps with self-confidence, as meetings are often held in the main council chamber, are open to the public and broadcast on the web!

These are all skills that employers really value.

Officers are always available to offer advice, and there is an induction process.

I'm continuously learning and developing in the role.

*There are five meetings of the standards committee per year. Is fitting it all in something of a juggling act?*

Not really. I try to read the papers before each meeting



but the role does not take up a great deal of time and my employer allows me a certain amount of leave for voluntary work.

*Why do it?*

It's different to my day job, interesting and offers me a different challenge.

I wanted to do some voluntary work to benefit the community where I live. This is part of the council that's outside party politics that can look at and question how things are run.

It offers reassurance that the council's procedures are open and that there would be a fair and impartial hearing if a councillor were alleged to have broken the rules.

Independent members also sign up to the council's Code of Conduct. How does this impact on you?

It means that I have to abide by the standards expected of a councillor. It's not onerous, though – just a sensible set of rules to avoid conflicts of interest or personal misconduct.

*What effect do you feel the committee has on council?*

I'd hope it's a positive one! I think the questions that we ask as a committee help officers improve their systems. Also, the profile of the committee helps keep a clear focus on standards throughout the council – which can only be a good thing!

Are you interested in finding out more about non-elected independent members of the standards committee?

If so, email [julie.belvir@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:julie.belvir@croydon.gov.uk)

Civil servant Andy Smith, 29, was one of the few not prepared to stand idly by. He felt he could make a contribution, so, in January 2006, he became a non-elected, independent member of Croydon Council's standards committee

# Tackling antisocial behaviour in Parkfields

## The work of local residents with a number of agencies has seen a Shirley park undergo a heartening transformation

Antisocial behaviour in Shirley's Parkfields recreation ground has dramatically reduced in the past two years, thanks to multi-agency intervention led by Croydon Council.

Following residents' complaints about graffiti, drug use, litter and teenage drinking when young people use the area in the evenings, a range of successful measures were put in place.

The council's community protection team staged a number of meetings with residents to hear their concerns and then kept them informed of progress; the council's mobile enforcement team makes frequent patrols of the area; and a footpath that enabled incidents of crime was temporarily closed.

Other measures have included working with the council's trading standards department to reduce underage alcohol sales and using street wardens to give a makeover to play equipment that was covered in graffiti.

And, importantly, young people who had been behaving antisocially signed up to acceptable behaviour agreements – an ongoing exercise which has proved successful.

Cheryll Jones-Wright, community safety project manager at Croydon Council said: "Improved communication with everyone concerned has been a key factor to managing the tensions, and raising awareness on both sides.

"Sometimes young people don't realise their behaviour is impacting on others when they're 'having a laugh in the park' and we have made a significant improvement here."



Another benefit has been improved communication with the local community. A happy consequence of the improved link was the granting of a Home Office Taking A Stand award to Spring Park resident Dianna Fraser, (left), recognising her hard work in reducing antisocial behaviour in the neighbourhood.

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# Opening the door to home ownership



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!

There will be a one-stop opportunity to shop for a home you can afford.

## Owning your own home might not be as difficult as you think

Want to purchase a home of your own? Not sure 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!

There will be a one-stop opportunity to shop for a home you can afford.

The open day, organised by Croydon Council and affordable homes specialist Tower Homes, will take place at Croydon Town Hall, Katharine Street, on Monday, 12 November, from 2pm to 7pm.

Many of the housing associations offering low-cost home ownership in Croydon will be present, and independent financial advice will be available.

There will also be presentations on the various schemes available, including those for secure tenants of Croydon Council.

Information on the new Government subsidies enabling residents with household incomes of less than £52,500 (£60,000 for key workers) to buy either new or resale homes through housing associations, via the New Build HomeBuy scheme (part buy/part rent) and other low-cost home-ownership schemes, will be available.

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.



The average annual income required to buy a home of your own through this scheme is in the range of £26,000 to £35,000 – and sometimes less.

Schemes available for secure council tenants include: the council's new scheme, Social HomeBuy, which allows a secure tenant to purchase a share of their council property with a discount of up to £16,000 and an allowance of up to £4,000 toward legal costs; the Assisted Private Purchase Scheme, which gives a grant between £20,000 and £40,000 to buy a property on the open market; and Right to Buy, ie purchasing outright the property occupied by the tenant with a discount of £16,000.

**If you have further questions about the open day, 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](http://www.housingoptions.co.uk) or telephone 0845 2308099.**





# Back in the swim

Councillor Steve Hollands cuts the tape to declare the pool open.

## The extensively upgraded South Norwood Leisure Centre has reopened to the public

An investment of more than £4m by Croydon Council has resulted in a top-quality refurbishment of the popular Portland Road venue.

With the work completed and the doors opened, the refurbishment provides what is, to all intents and purposes, a new pool and changing rooms, and two gym areas.

By resisting the idea of knocking down the shell of the building, the council has delivered a value-for-money package for less than half the cost of a replacement building.

These savings will help toward realising ambitions for another new pool in Waddon, as well as the anticipated fifth pool for the borough in Coulsdon. New Addington's pool is set to be replaced as part of the district centre's regeneration scheme.

Among the new features of the centre are:

- New 50-station gyms – kitted out with the latest state-of-the-art equipment
- New changing rooms
- New lighting and environmentally-friendly mechanical plant
- New disabled access

All of this is contained within a colourful and distinctive new-look building featuring an imposing, illuminated

name column signalling that the venue has undergone a massive change. External landscaping has also been radically overhauled.

**Opening times of the new pool are: 6.30am to 10pm, Monday to Friday; 8am to 5pm, Saturday and Sunday.**

Admission charges match those of the Thornton Heath Leisure Centre.



An investment of more than £4m by Croydon Council has resulted in a top-quality refurbishment of the popular Portland Road venue.



# Rewarding

# excellence

## Once again, residents across the borough have voiced their appreciation of the excellent service they have received from Croydon Council staff

The annual Customer Service Excellence Awards saw a dozen trophies handed to category winners from across the council's departments and contractors, marking the fact that each had gone beyond what might have been expected of them when dealing with the public or handling a problem.

Every nominee received a certificate to mark their achievement.

Held in Fairfield's Arnhem Gallery, the ceremony was attended by the Mayor of Croydon, Councillor Derek Millard, who presented the awards and staff, nominees; senior managers and councillors.

After receiving nominations over the past year from grateful residents across the borough, the judging committee selected a list of 35 individual, and three team finalists to contest a dozen categories.

Jon Rouse, the council's chief executive, said he was delighted by the impact that the professionalism of each of the nominees had had on the perception of the work done by the council and was keen to see that recognition enhanced.

Stressing the need to supply a top-rate service, he said: "We're all here to serve the customer and the

community, whether that's directly, through others or as part of a wider cross-agency team – we're all one team.

"We need to understand what customers really value, and how we can best manage our service delivery to meet complex needs and aspirations.

"I want Croydon to be an organisation renowned for its great customer service, and one where our customers tell us it is."

Mr Rouse announced the launch of a new staff-recognition award scheme.

The Croydon Council Awards will be open to all staff and contractors who deliver service on behalf of the council and will highlight the high levels of service delivery and professionalism exercised.

Nominations from the public will be for the Going the Extra Mile Award and a wider range of categories will be open to individual and team nominations.

Further details and a nomination form will appear in a future edition of *Your Croydon* and can be found by following the link on the council's website at [www.croydon.gov.uk/democracy/feedback/councilawards](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/democracy/feedback/councilawards)

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Category	Winner
Big Thank You Award	Kenneth Simmons
Outstanding Customer Service Working in the Community	Calvin Campbell
Going the Extra Mile	Val Chamberlain
Outstanding Customer Service Team Player	John Sampson
Outstanding Customer Service in the Back Office	Barry Page
Outstanding Customer Service Role Model	Jenny Chambers
Special Recognition Award	Richard Ward
You Only Have to Ask	Vic Davey
Outstanding Customer Service on the Telephone	Nadine Levy
Outstanding Customer Service Face to Face	John Carver
Think Customer Award	Malcolm Davies
Customer Service Excellence Team Award	Benefits Visiting Team

“We need to understand what customers really value, and how we can best manage our service delivery to meet complex needs and aspirations. “I want Croydon to be an organisation renowned for its great customer service, and one where our customers tell us it is.”

Jon Rouse, the council's chief executive

## Personal Charm Nomination

One of the most popular winners at the awards ceremony was Kenneth Simmons, who walked off with the Big Thank You award and proved that the role of parking attendants is not solely to issue penalty charge notices (PCNs).

Kenneth received nominations from members of the public grateful for the way in which he came to their aid and who expressed their delight at realising that parking attendants are ready and willing to do more than simply issue parking tickets.

In one instance, Kenneth changed the wheel of a car after seeing its 83-year-old driver struggling with the wheel brace following a puncture.

John Blackwell, from Purley, said he got the flat tyre in the town's High Street: “My car was on a yellow line and I sensed more trouble when the parking attendant dismounted from his moped.

“He must have seen me looking worried and a bit helpless, he just asked for the jack and wheel brace, took over and changed the wheel quickly and very skilfully.



“What he didn't know was that I'd left hospital after an operation the previous afternoon and could feel blood seeping from the dressing on my leg.

“His friendly attitude was quite unexpected.”

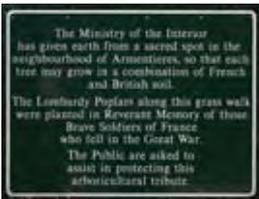
On another occasion, Kenneth helped a motorist in Thornton Heath who had been incorrectly issued with a PCN. Thanks to Kenneth's intervention, the ticket was cancelled, prompting the motorist to write to the

council, saying “I would like to express my sincere thanks to a Croydon Council parking attendant for his help this morning.” He went on to praise Kenneth as being “courteous and most helpful”.

Kenneth said: “Motorists think that we parking attendants are there only to hand out penalty charge notices, but we're really there to offer more than that.

“If we can help people while we're about our daily work, we will, and I'm really grateful that the little that I've done has been recognised.”

“Motorists think that we parking attendants are there only to hand out penalty charge notices, but we're really there to offer more than that.”



# In memory of our neighbours

**Remembrance Sunday is, for most, a time to remember Britain's war-fallen, but there's a small corner of Woodcote dedicated to the memory of French soldiers who died in World War I**

"Aux soldats de France mort glorieusement pendant la Grand Guerre" (To the soldiers of France who died gloriously during the First World War.)



One of Croydon's leafiest, most serene residential roads is home to a remarkable memorial to French soldiers who fell during World War I.

Promenade de Verdun, in Woodcote, is a 660-yard avenue lined along its eastern flank with 81 poplars that were brought to England from Lombardy in northern France. Their majestic figures, stretching away into the distance, lend the avenue a distinctly Gallic air.

But it wasn't just the trees that made the cross-Channel trip. They were accompanied by, and planted in, ten tonnes of soil taken from the battlefield at Armentières, which, like Verdun, was the site of hard-fought, desperate combat.

A 19ft-high obelisk at the southern end of the arrow-straight promenade was erected to honour the fallen French soldiers. Hewn from a single slab of Cornish granite, its inscription reads:

"Aux soldats de France mort glorieusement pendant la Grand Guerre" (To the soldiers of France who died gloriously during the First World War.)

The northern end of the Promenade de Verdun is marked with a signpost declaring: "The Ministry of the Interior has given earth from a sacred spot in the neighbourhood of Armentières so that each tree may grow in a combination of French and British soil. The Lombardy Poplars along this grass walk were planted in the Reverent Memory of those Brave Soldiers of France who fell in the Great War. The Public are asked to assist in protecting this arboricultural tribute."

Sifting of the Lombardy soil after it had been transported to Croydon revealed it to contain a considerable amount of shrapnel and spent shell casings.

## REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 11 NOVEMBER

This year's memorial service takes place in Fairfield. Everybody attending is asked to be seated by 10.45am for the 11am start.

The service will be followed by a formal wreath-laying at the cenotaph in Katharine Street and a march past the Town Hall.

Among those laying wreaths will be the Mayor of Croydon, Councillor Derek Millard; the Royal British Legion, Territorial Army, Metropolitan Police Service, London Fire Brigade, Rotary, St John Ambulance, Air Training Corps, Dunkirk Veterans Association and the Red Cross.

The Fairfield service and the Katharine Street ceremony are open to members of the public.

Any groups that would like to take part in the march or lay a wreath are asked to contact the Mayor's office in Croydon Town Hall by calling 020 8726 6000.



Those ordnance fragments were separated from the soil and donated to the Croydon Museum. Officials at the time feared that the lure of such war souvenirs might prove irresistible to some and the proud trees could be damaged by careless digging and disturbing of the ground around them.

William Webb, a chartered surveyor in Purley who built the "Garden First Estate" at Woodcote, created the road.

Keen to repair deteriorating relations between Britain and France, he erected the Anglo-French memorial, hoping that the gesture would build bridges between the two nations.

His idea enjoyed some success as the Promenade de Verdun received positive coverage in French newspapers, which pointed out that British public opinion was more sympathetic toward France than might have been realised.

The city of Verdun is located between Paris and the border with Germany, and during the Battle of Verdun in 1916 endured a terrible bombardment from the German army in its attempt to reach the French capital.



One of Croydon's leafiest, most serene residential roads is home to a remarkable memorial to French soldiers who fell during World War I.

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Details of speeding vehicles are recorded and information is cross-referenced with the DVLA database. The police send warning letters to drivers telling them that they have been observed speeding and asking them to comply with speed limits in the future.



# Slow down or face the consequences

## Electronic speed-monitoring pilot up and running in the south of the borough

Motorists in Kenley and Sanderstead have probably been aware, over the past month or so, of the roadside presence of fluorescent jackets and electronic displays telling them to slow down.

Some of those motorists might even have received a letter from the police.

All of this activity has come about following the concern expressed by local residents of the speed at which some cars regularly travel along residential side roads.

Taking those concerns on board, Croydon Council has invested £10,000 in equipment and joined forces with the borough's police to introduce the Road Watch scheme in the two wards.

Scheduled to run for three months, the trial makes Croydon the first London borough to test the community-led initiative.

Being completely mobile, the kit can be set up in minutes, making it possible to target a number of problem areas in one day, if necessary.



Local resident volunteers are supported by uniformed police community support officers while undertaking the duties.

Using hand-held laser devices to monitor speeds and roadside tripod-mounted electronic display boards, the volunteers are able to monitor and record the speed of the vehicle and flash up the information to motorists.

Alternatively, the board can be set up to flash a "Slow down" message to oncoming motorists.

Details of speeding vehicles are recorded and information is cross-referenced with the DVLA database. The police send warning letters to drivers telling them that they have been observed speeding and asking them to comply with speed limits in the future.

The police will target drivers found to be continually ignoring the warning messages for speed enforcement.

# Extinguished service

## Arson among youngsters is on the decline thanks to a scheme run by the council and the fire brigade

A partnership initiative of the London Fire Brigade and Croydon Council is working to reduce the number of deliberate fires started in the borough.

And so successful has the partnership been, it's helped to save almost £2m pounds in fire fighting costs.

The Crossfire School and Youth Project was set up in 2003 in response to the high volume of fires in the New Addington area.

Through a range of preventative work with schools and young people through the council's Youth Offending Team and the Youth Inclusion Support Panel, the number of deliberate fires is decreasing.

Each year, more than 10,000 children in the borough's schools are given presentations on a

range of issues including: arson, hoax calling, antisocial behaviour, gangs, drugs, knives, youth courts, fire safety, car crime and joy riding.

Since the project got underway, the number of deliberate fires in the borough has seen a steadily reduced.

With the cost of just one car fire estimated at £5,200, a saving of just under £1m was achieved. Half a million pounds has been saved on dealing with small fires and, with general fires, a saving of £428,000 was made.

Among other things, the project's work also includes working closely with the police, street wardens and police community support officers to tackle the antisocial behaviour related to deliberate fires.

# From here to modernity

## – Croydon over the past 25 years

**In the first of a new photo feature series, a renowned local photographer looks at Croydon, then and now**

Back around 1980, Frazer Ashford was approached to provide images for a publication entitled *Croydon – The Official Guide*, an annual look at Croydon, setting out the benefits of living and working within the borough.

He went on to provide the pictures for several years, and recently came across the original 1981/82 edition.

“Looking through the numerous pictures,” he said, “I became aware that some places had changed dramatically, such as the Whitgift Centre, while others, Woodcote Village Green for example, hadn’t changed at all.”

“However, I felt that the vast majority of places were basically the same, with some minor alterations to the buildings being the only evidence that 25 years had passed.”

To test his theory, Frazer decided to retrace his steps and revisit many of the locations he photographed then, to recreate those images, in their modern settings, by standing on the same spot and using the same lenses.

His theory, however, took something of a blow.

“When I compared the images, I got quite a shock. While fully expecting the extensive rebuilding work and the inevitable progression of the modern office block to provide the biggest changes to the landscape, it proved not to be the case.

“The biggest change was that Croydon has become greener.

“I’m not referring to the great ‘carbon footprint’ debate, but greener in the most literal sense.

“Croydon has more trees, especially in the centre of town. Many of the original buildings are now hidden from view by ever-expanding foliage.

“This would have been the last thing I’d have thought about if I’d been asked about the changes in Croydon over the past 20 or so years.

“Some locations have changed forever – flattened buildings are not often reborn – but I believe it’s the trees that have had the biggest visual impact.

“Now, who would have guessed that?”

For more examples of Frazer’s work, visit [www.frazerashford.com](http://www.frazerashford.com)



“Looking through the numerous pictures,” he said, “I became aware that some places had changed dramatically, such as the Whitgift Centre, while others, Woodcote Village Green for example, hadn’t changed at all.”



Top: The western end of Croydon Flyover then, and (below) as it looks today.





# Squaring up to the challenge of Purley

## Tesco's plans for its store at the junction of the A22 and A23 should put the heart back into the town

Purley is a town with a vision.

This vision started in around 2001, when a variety of groups within the local community, including businesses, churches, residents and councillors, got together to consider the future of Purley town centre.

After much deliberation and consultation with the community, the Purley Town Centre Regeneration Strategy emerged. This strategy envisaged the creation of a new town square, an ambitious road project and a rejuvenated town centre. This vision was adopted by Croydon Council as policy in 2004.

The challenge now is to make the vision a reality.

Tesco has been working with the local community, Croydon Council and Transport for London to do exactly this.

The supermarket has had a store in the centre of Purley

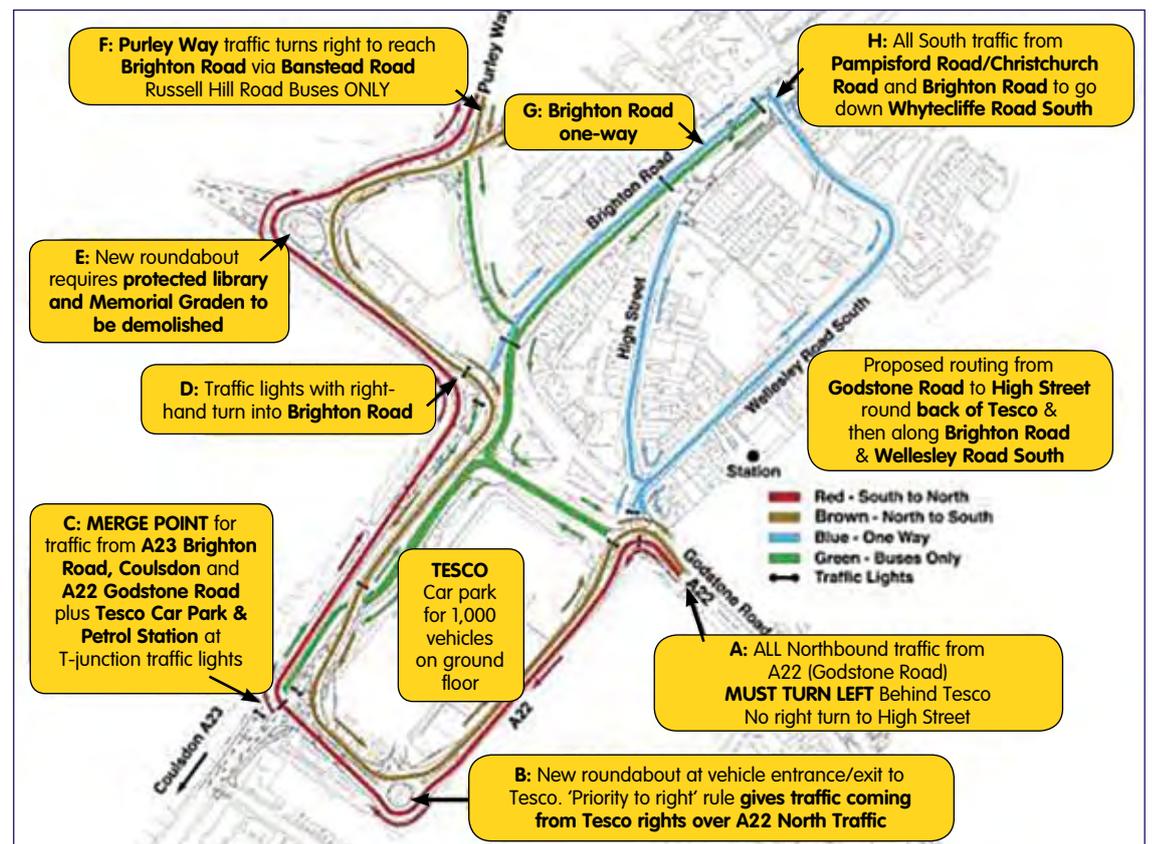
since the early 1990s, but this store is disconnected from the main shopping streets by the gyratory system which brings the A22 and A23 through the heart of Purley.

The Regeneration Strategy envisaged moving these roads behind the Tesco store to leave space for a new public square. The store would then be at the edge of this new square, creating a much stronger link between the store and the main shopping streets.

The vision goes well beyond these basic ingredients, however, as Tesco corporate affairs manager, James Wiggam, said: "The vision presents the opportunity for a step change in Purley that will attract more inward investment and a variety of retailers, but the challenge is to get the details right so that this is delivered."

The vision is for a town where shoppers can drive to the centre and park with ease, or catch a bus right to its heart. It is a vision that facilitates a new vibrancy for Purley that will attract more shoppers who want to stay to catch up with friends over lunch, or meet for a drink after work.

"We want to do something special here and we're exploring new ideas with stakeholders for the store so that it's tailor-made for Purley. It's an exciting project and we're committed to working with the community to deliver the vision."



To take the proposals forward, Tesco has sought to continue to work with those involved in the development of the original vision by inviting them to join a working party.

This working party met over a period of months to work through the practical details to delivering the vision. These meetings have been invaluable in articulating what the key considerations for the scheme should be, and in shaping the plans as they move forward.

The members have reviewed the road scheme to consider how it can best work for the benefit of shoppers, residents and traders; they have looked at different public squares around the country to explore what would work best in Purley.

They have considered how the new Tesco store building should look so that it complements the town, strengthens the identity of the square and serves the wider vision for Purley; they have also explored the different needs and opportunities presented by both the daytime and evening economies in Purley.

The outcome of these meetings was an "aspirations

document", which sets out a clear framework for the final proposals. This document is now the basis for the further work on the proposals for Purley.

This is not the end of the consultation work, however in fact, it is just the beginning.

Tesco will continue to work with TfL and Croydon Council on many of the details of the scheme. Together, they will take this initial consultation work to the wider community to enable the knowledge, vision and ideas of all Purley's residents to shape the proposals.

Key to the challenge is ensuring that the road, new store and square are part of an integrated plan to deliver the whole vision for Purley. This requires a co-ordinated approach and a broad understanding of the pressures, challenges and opportunities presented by the proposals.

James Wiggam said: "We want to do something special here and we're exploring new ideas with stakeholders for the store so that it's tailor-made for Purley. It's an exciting project and we're committed to working with the community to deliver the vision."



# Having your say

## People in Croydon get an online voice to help shape the decisions that affect them

A groundbreaking website has been launched to help local people get involved in decisions that affect them and their communities.

Talk2Croydon gives residents a platform to discuss the full range of public services, whether they are run by the council, the NHS, the police or the voluntary sector.

Listening to people is a priority for the council and the Talk2Croydon site will make it easier for groups and individuals to have their say on matters that concern them, their families and the community in which they live.

As well as being able to voice their opinions and concerns on issues that affect them – knowing that their comments will be viewed by the borough's decision makers – visitors who register to use the site will be able to find out what effect their input has.

By logging on to [www.talk2croydon.co.uk](http://www.talk2croydon.co.uk) they will be able to:

- start a "buzz" – an online discussion or campaign around a particular topic – or add their views to an existing buzz

- link up with Croydon projects that help them take part in improving their community



- network with others who share similar work or concerns.

The site will be a hub for public engagement activities and includes a searchable database of activities, a calendar of events and a skills database.

To make sure it is accessible to everyone, including those parts of Croydon's population who are traditionally hard-to-reach, six local community groups have made valuable contributions to the project.

Those groups represent young people, black and minority ethnic communities, refugees, disabled people, people with learning difficulties, and mental health service users.

The site has been developed by Croydon Voluntary Action and is supported by Croydon Council, Croydon Primary Care Trust and Mayday NHS Trust.

Visit: [www.talk2croydon.co.uk](http://www.talk2croydon.co.uk)

A groundbreaking website has been launched to help local people get involved in decisions that affect them and their communities.





# Pulling the plug on bullying

## All children have the right not to be hurt, but bullying does hurt

Bullying can take many shapes, such as name-calling, hitting, happy-slapping (the filming, on a mobile phone, of somebody being attacked) or stealing personal possessions.

It can take place in a school playground, the classroom or, increasingly, outside of school.

With the growth of mobile phone, internet and wireless technologies, a new form of bullying is becoming more commonplace – cyberbullying. Children can receive nasty messages via either their mobile phone or the internet, or false rumours can be spread about them.

Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can follow children into their private lives and outside school hours – making it even more insidious and hurtful.

And it is concern over the spread of this latest threat that has seen it become the focus of this year's anti-bullying week, running from 19 to 23 November.

### Tips to avoid cyberbullying

- Don't respond to malicious texts or emails
- Save evidence
- Report cyberbullying
- Keep passwords safe
- Don't give out personal details online

Croydon Council is doing what it can to spread the message to every child:

If you're being bullied – remember, bullying is never your fault and it can be stopped. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call an advice line.

Two councillors, Maria Garcia and Robert Askey, have been appointed anti-bullying champions and will be visiting schools during November to publicise the support that is available to pupils.



And, while most schools have an anti-bullying strategy in place, the council is developing an overall plan to make sure there are no gaps in support.

Councillor Garcia said: "It's crucial that children and young people use their mobiles and the internet safely and positively, and that they are aware of the consequences of misuse.

"School staff, parents and young people have to be constantly vigilant and work together to prevent this form of bullying, and tackle it wherever it appears."

### Where can parents and young people get help?

Croydon Education Welfare Service – ask your child's school for details of your Education Welfare Office.

Alternatively, contact Croydon Council's Bullying Helpline on 020 8760 5570.



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### Useful links

Listed are some useful sites and organisations that can offer support, advice and help.

- [www.antibullying.net](http://www.antibullying.net)
- [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)
- [www.bullyingonline.org](http://www.bullyingonline.org)
- [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- [www.cool2talk.org](http://www.cool2talk.org)
- [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

# Council announces new parking deal for Croydon

## Specialist company set to take control of management and enforcement

A major revamp of Purley's multi-storey car park, investment in the borough's parking infrastructure and state-of-the-art ticket machines are just some of the benefits to Croydon of a significant contract due to be signed later this month.

Day-to-day responsibility for parking management and enforcement in Croydon is to pass to the specialist parking company APCOA from 22 November.

Like a number of other London boroughs, Croydon is handing over direct control of its parking portfolio, but will continue to regulate the number of parking tickets issued, the cost of parking charges on the borough's streets and car parks, and the initial stage of the appeals process.

An independent appeals mechanism will remain in place for disputed tickets that cannot be resolved locally.

Emphasis within the new agreement is on the quality of service delivery, while guaranteeing an income to the council over the next seven years.

Key elements are:

- APCOA guaranteeing investment in Croydon's parking infrastructure and systems. This includes investment in 400 new pay-and-display machines; introduction of a new cashless parking payment system; refurbishment and development of the Purley multi-storey car park; and substantial upgrading of the pound facilities at Union Road.
- About 160 staff employed by the council within its parking management division will transfer to APCOA, maintaining the same terms and conditions as at present; 30 positions are expected to be lost.
- APCOA will pay the council a guaranteed concession fee each year for the duration of the seven-year contract term (which could be extended to 12 years for achieving the quality standard and investment agreed in the contract).
- APCOA will receive all income from parking services within the borough; however, penalty charge notices will be paid to Croydon's account in the same way as at present. Permit payment arrangements remain unchanged.

- APCOA will be required to achieve a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), for example making the agreed investment, ensuring that all Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) are managed correctly, as well as ensuring that all equipment is working properly. APCOA's payment will reflect its performance.



Although APCOA will be able to make recommendations regarding the pricing of local on-street parking, any price changes will be introduced only with the council's express consent.

The contract award is based on APCOA sticking with the current level of enforcement. Any increase above present levels will occur only if compliance levels fall and the council approves a tougher approach. APCOA has undertaken to ensure that a greater percentage of parking tickets will actually be paid, through investment in better IT and payment systems.

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# Putting the red into the capital's routes

**Do you know a red route from a beetroot? What's the difference between a traffic warden and a parking attendant? Read on and all will be revealed**

Many road users suffer some confusion as to who is responsible for enforcing parking regulations in Croydon and across the capital.

Contrary to common belief, Croydon Council is not liable for the enforcement of red routes within the borough.

Indeed, no local authority in London has responsibility for the red lines painted along the edge of some of the roads on its patch.

All the capital's red routes are the responsibility of Transport for London (TfL), the body responsible for setting up and managing transport strategies across the 32 boroughs.

There is a similar situation with regard to the enforcement of bus lanes and moving traffic contraventions within Croydon.

The great majority of such enforcement is undertaken by TfL, and the council has only 40 cameras at 45 locations for enforcement purposes.

In total, there are more than 500 cameras within the borough, including those for internal/external security or TfL purposes.

The number of bus-lane contraventions has reduced considerably as compliance has improved significantly.

When Croydon became the first local authority to issue bus-lane penalties, in 1999, an average of 5,000 penalty charge notices were handed out each month. That number has now dropped to such an extent that, in the year from April 2006 to March 2007, only 1,096 were issued.

All right, so you've returned to your car to find one of those ominous yellow and black forms clamped to the windscreen by the wiper arm. The question is: who put it there?

The terms "traffic warden" and "parking attendant" are commonly treated as being interchangeable; in fact, they are not.

Traffic wardens enforce red routes for TfL and PAs enforce all other regulations for the council.

And, if we're being totally correct, under the terms of the Traffic Management Act 2004, PAs should more correctly be described as Civil Enforcement Officers, though, in reality, it will probably be quite a while before that title is used widely. If ever.



In total, there are more than 500 cameras within the borough, including those for internal/external security or TfL purposes.



# Making Croydon's streets safer

## Council-funded Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers join police in fight against crime



Wearing their distinctive fluorescent jackets, Croydon Council's new team of Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers is a highly visible presence on the borough's streets.

The Neos, as they have quickly become known, will form a 29-strong unit and are the latest element in the council's drive to make Croydon a safe place in which to live, work and to visit.

The first 10 Neos are working in the town centre, Waddon, Fairfield, Fieldway and New Addington, and are attached to the relevant police Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs).

A further 19 Neos will be deployed to work with other SNTs around the borough; nine next April, and the remaining 10 by April 2009.

The scheme represents a council investment of £1.2m as part of the local strategic partnership's aim of combating crime, antisocial behaviour and environmental offences.

Having undergone strict training, the Neos are properly equipped to deal with the problems they are likely to face on a daily basis.

They are delivering a high-visibility proactive response to a range of situations, and have powers to investigate incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour, gather evidence, interview witnesses, suspects and perpetrators, and obtain statements with the aim of taking prompt legal action.



The Neos, as they have quickly become known, will form a 29-strong unit and are the latest element in the council's drive to make Croydon a safe place in which to live, work and to visit.

## Helping people make better choices

### With a new bus about to hit the road, Croydon's Pop Project will be reaching even more of the borough's over-55s

Clearer information on the services available to the borough's more senior citizens, and easier access to those services, were the motivations behind the launch of the Partnership with Older People Project.

More easily referred to as the Pop Project, the initiative draws together the services of Croydon Council's welfare benefits and housing advice departments with charities such as Age Concern, the Hearing Resource Centre and the Alzheimer's Society.

With the addition of health visitors, pharmacists and the Active Lifestyles programme, there is now a real Pop team of dedicated professionals looking after senior citizens' needs.

The key to pulling the services together and enabling easier access is a dedicated Pop Bus that goes to all parts of the borough.

Since May, the Pop Bus, which is funded by the Department of Health, has been to 19 of the 24 wards in the borough and has received widespread approval from many satisfied customers.

November will see the delivery of a new, purpose-built Pop Bus that will enable additional services to be provided from inside the vehicle.

With this support, Croydon's senior citizens will be better informed about what is available for them and be in a better position to make informed decisions about their lifestyle requirements.

For more information on the Pop Project, visit the website at [www.cnca.org.uk](http://www.cnca.org.uk) or call 020 8662 1000.



Croydon's senior citizens will be better informed about what is available for them and be in a better position to make informed decisions about their lifestyle requirements.

# Dates for your diary

## Council

Deadlines for public questions for forthcoming full council meetings (all start at 6.30pm) Noon on each relevant deadline date.

### Meeting

### Deadline

 Monday 3 Dec, 2007 (6.30pm)

Monday, 19 Nov, 2007

To submit a question for consideration at a full council meeting, email it to [council.questions@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:council.questions@croydon.gov.uk); fax it to **020 8760 5657**; print and complete the form at [www.croydon.gov.uk/councilquestion](http://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 ext 62327**

## Scrutiny

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

### Meeting

### Deadline

### Cabinet Member

Meeting		Deadline	Cabinet Member
6 Nov	Scrutiny and overview	29 Oct	Cllr Dudley Mead (housing)
20 Nov	Community services	12 Nov	Cllr Phil Thomas (environment and highways)
4 Dec	Children, learning and leisure	26 Nov	Cllr Maria Gatland (children's services and adult learning)

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](mailto: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)

### Meeting

### Group and venue

Meeting	Group and venue	
 14 Nov	Thornton Heath, Bensham Manor and West Thornton	St Andrew's Church, Quadrant Road, Thornton Heath
21 Nov	Coulsdon East and Coulsdon West	Old Coulsdon Congregational Church, Coulsdon Road, Old Coulsdon
 28 Nov	Norbury and Upper Norwood	Norbury Manor Business & Enterprise College, Kensington Av

For information on Neighbourhood Partnerships, visit the website at [www.croydononline.org/neighbourhood\\_partnerships/](http://www.croydononline.org/neighbourhood_partnerships/), email [neighbourhood.partnerships@croydon.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://www.croydononline.org/ccpcg)

**Forthcoming meeting dates are:** Tuesday, 13 November

Details of all Croydon Council meetings can be found on the council website at [www.croydon.gov.uk/meetingsofthecouncil](http://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](http://www.croydon.ukcouncil.net/site/webcasts.php)

# What's On

www.croydon.gov.uk/leisure

# November 07

## Live events at the Clocktower

### Thursday 1 November

#### Mitch Benn

7.30 (on stage 8pm)-9.50pm, with interval  
Nobody takes funny music more seriously than Mitch and his band.  
£12 (£9 concessions)

### Thur 8 & Fri 9 November

#### Welcome to the Institute

1.30-2.40pm, 8-9.10pm  
A satirical swipe at the fag-end of the NHS.  
£10 (£7.50 concessions)  
Sign language interpreted Friday 8pm

### Saturday 10 November

#### The Be(a)st of Taylor Mac

8pm-TBC  
£10 (£7.50 concessions)

### Wed 14 November

#### Malika Booker: Unplanned

8-9pm  
The myths and taboos of getting a bun in the oven (and getting it out again).  
£10 (£7.50 concessions)

### Thur 15 November

#### Busk

7.30-9pm (with interval)  
Technically brilliant hip-hop dance theatre.  
£12 (£9 concessions)

### Fri 16 November

#### Justin Adams & Juldeh Camara

7.30 (on stage 8pm)- 9.50pm, with interval  
One of the world's most eclectic guitarists and a master musician from Gambia join forces. £12 (£9 concessions)

### Wednesday 21 November

#### Tom Crean - Antarctic Explorer

7.30-8.50pm  
Aidan Dooley brings the indomitable Tom Crean, back to life.  
£12 (£9 concessions)

### Friday 23 November

#### Space 50

7.30-9pm  
Niki McCretton marks 50 years of space travel, with this stellar one-woman show.  
£10 (£7.50 concessions)  
Includes post-show discussion.

### Wed 28 November

#### London Mozart Players

3.30-4.45pm - Bach's unaccompanied suites for violin and cello.  
£12 (no concessions), ticket includes tea and cake served after the concert

## Children's Theatre:

### Saturday 24 November - 2-2.50pm

#### Muttnik - The First

Dog in Space  
This enchanting tale is told with dance, music and puppetry and is suitable for children over three years of age.  
£5.80 - (£4.80 concessions)



## Guided Walks

### Thursday 1 November

Mitcham Common midweek meander

### Sunday 4 November

South Norwood fungi foray

### Sunday 11 November

Sunday morning stroll on Mitcham Common

### Sunday 11 November

Happy Valley & Farthing Downs nature trail (part 2)

### Saturday 17 and Sunday

18 November

Community tree planting

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

## Enjoyed a guided walk and are ready for more?

Join the Croydon HF Rambling Club. Members meet on Sundays for 10- to 12-mile walks in Surrey, Sussex or Kent. For more information visit [www.croydonhframblingclub.org.uk](http://www.croydonhframblingclub.org.uk) or ring **020 8680 3425**

## DAVID LEAN - NOVEMBER

Atonement **15**

The Singer **12A**

The Yacoubian Building **15**

And When Did You Last See Your Father? **12A**

Control **15**

Sparkle **15**

Evening **12A**

Once **15**

Not Here To Be Loved **15**

Sicko **12A**

The Counterfeiters **15**

La Vie En Rose **12A**

Bratz **PG**



The Singer

Happily N'Ever After **U**

Hairspray **PG**

Tales from Earthsea **PG**



And when did you last see your father?

QUEENS GATE



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TO KEY  
WORKERS**

[sharedhorizons.org.uk](http://sharedhorizons.org.uk)

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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](http://www.sharedhorizons.org.uk)  
or call 020 8726 8833

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