

YourCroydon

ISSUE 23 - NOVEMBER 2008

'A place to be proud of'



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COUNCIL**
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United in fight against crime

We've all been shocked by the seemingly casual attitude a significant minority of youngsters take toward carrying and using knives.

Gang-related violence is an emerging trend across London and unfortunately there have been some particularly nasty incidents in Croydon. Although isolated, they have hit headlines locally and further afield.

Aside from the pain and anguish caused to victims and their parents, as people get to hear what's been happening so their fear of crime rises and the town's reputation is damaged. And, in consequence, few believe that a measurement of crime reports confirms Croydon is actually the 10th safest borough in the capital.

While steps to address the situation have been quietly undertaken by the police and council for some time, I am delighted that intensified, coordinated action is now under way to target violent teenagers and make Croydon "safe for all".

The police are stepping up enforcement and the council is being even more proactive in trying to stop the problem before it takes root. We are developing a range of early intervention schemes to steer youths onto the straight and narrow before they get sucked into a life of gang violence.

I am also pleased to acknowledge that Councillor Tony Newman, the opposition leader, is fully behind the measures the council and police are taking. The issue of youth violence is too important to indulge in party politics.

The message we want to make sure everyone hears is that we are warning young miscreants that if they are looking to cause trouble they had better not come to Croydon. If they do, they will be caught and punished – and will ruin their future life.

However, if they choose to make a positive contribution to society, as do the majority of youngsters in our borough, then we will ensure there is plenty of support for them to succeed.

Mike Fisher
Leader of the Council

Local charities get online boost

Website allows residents to keep an eye on their council accounts

Charities stand to benefit as residents use a new online facility to check their account information.

The Mayor of Croydon's nominated charities will receive a 10p donation for every Croydon resident that registers on the council's service at <https://myaccount.croydon.gov.uk>

And the donations, from site operator Gandlake, will continue for the rest of the year.

Already proving popular, more than 5,000 residents have registered for the services.

Registering enables residents to look at their account balance, check payments and instalment plans, see how the account or benefit is calculated and find the answer to straightforward questions, avoiding the possibility of queues at council offices or on the phone. The service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

As use of the secure site increases, and fewer residents require face-to-face appointments, the council's resources will be directed at more complicated enquiries.

Fewer personal appointments will, in turn, help to keep council tax bills down.

In the coming months, these services will be developed to enable customers to report a change of address, agree a payment arrangement, or apply for a discount.

Graham Cadle, director of customer services, said: "Gandlake provides an important service to residents in Croydon.

"More and more of our community are registering to access valuable local service information.

"We already have 5,000 registrations and this latest incentive should boost those figures and raise important funds for charity."

After the gold rush

Croydon youth football and basketball teams turn in winning performances

It wasn't only Team GB that collected gold at major sporting events this year.

Two teams from Croydon walked away with top honours from this year's Festival of Sports, run by Summer Uni London and hosted by Brixton Recreation Centre.

Croydon Summer Uni competed against Summer Unis from across the capital in a range of sporting activities.

The aim of the event was to encourage and develop new skills in young people and provide them with the experience of participating in a large competitive sporting environment.

The event also served to promote Summer Unis and to help integration with their local communities.

Students enrolled onto Croydon Summer Uni's Pro Football Camp and Pro Basketball Camp courses took part in the Festival of Sports, as shown in Niki Sianni's photograph.

This was the first time the borough has been represented in the event as part of the Croydon Summer Uni programme.

The Croydon team won gold medals in the football and basketball competitions, as well as trophies for Best Team and Best Players.



Schools' proposals for publication

Four-month consultation period ends with flurry of activity

Final proposals for Croydon Council's plans for transforming secondary schooling in the borough are due to be published in early November.

The publication follows the end of the initial public consultation for Croydon Schools for the Future: The Secondary Review, which concluded at the end of September.

The four-month consultation has been one of the most extensive carried out by the council, and included:

- eight public meetings, with 1,093 attendees;
- 1,298 resident responses via post, email or text;
- collaboration with neighbouring local

authorities, including Lambeth, Sutton, Bromley and Surrey;

- individual schools' governors meetings, a parents' forum and meetings with groups of governors.

The focus now is to ensure that the final proposals meet the public's aspirations for a high-quality secondary education system.

It had originally been intended to present the revised proposals to the council's cabinet in late October but an extremely high volume of feedback, particularly in the last few days of the consultation, forced a short deferral.

The consultation period proved highly productive, and the views of thousands of parents, teachers, pupils and other residents have been received and will play a crucial role in helping to shape the plans for the future of secondary education in Croydon.

Remembering the fallen

Your chance to pay respects to those who have given their lives for the country

Remembrance Sunday this year falls on 9 November and the borough's principal memorial service will take place in Fairfield.

Everybody attending is asked to be seated by 10.45 for the 11am start.

The service will be followed by a parade from Fairfield, past the Town Hall, to the formal wreath-laying at the cenotaph in Katharine Street.



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

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

Some road closures will be introduced and Katharine Street itself will be closed to traffic from the morning into the early afternoon.

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**.

Your Croydon, your place

A reminder to give your views

It is not too late for the 5,000 Croydon residents who have received a questionnaire about the borough to make their voice heard.



At the end of September, a survey was sent to a random sample of households in Croydon to ask about their views of the borough and local public services.

As part of the national Place Survey scheme, the council and the local strategic partnership will be judged by government on the basis of what local residents say.

Reminders will be sent to those who have yet to complete the survey and it is essential that as many people as possible take this opportunity to tell us what they think is important for Croydon.

If you have received a questionnaire or a reminder, please take the time to get involved, as you will be making a real difference to the future of Croydon.

Community caring

Croydon's vulnerable to benefit from innovative predictions project

People in Croydon are to benefit from an exciting project designed to protect the vulnerable by predicting who will be likely to need to call upon social care support

The project will develop a statistical model predicting those borough residents who are likely to need to call upon social care support, and allowing the delivery of timely information tailored to individuals.

It is believed that this is the first time that these type of predictions have been attempted anywhere in the world.

This is an innovative approach to a problem often cited by people who use services, and their families and carers, who have said: "If we'd known then what we know now".

It is hoped to be able to give people the information they need at the time they will be able to make best use of it, avoiding unnecessary worry.

Those who lose their independence through age and ill health are most likely to benefit from the more relevant personalised service.

Crime Reduction Strategy published

Council and its partners outline plans to make Croydon safer

Youth crime, safer neighbourhoods and violent crime are among the priorities of Croydon Council's Crime Reduction Strategy 2008-09.

Produced by the Safer Croydon Partnership, the strategy builds on the success of recent years, which has seen crime fall consistently year on year in the borough.

Croydon is ranked as the 10th safest London borough.

It is acknowledged that there is still much to do, and the measures identified in the strategy will help maintain progress toward making Croydon a safer place to live and work in, and to visit.

The strategy summary can be found at www.croydon.gov.uk/crimestrategy

If I were in charge...

Special day gives young people a unique chance to influence the way things are done

Croydon should have a noticeably younger feel about it on Friday, 7 November.

That's because the borough is taking part in the 11 Million Takeover Day, a national event aimed at giving young people the opportunity to "take over" for the day and have their opinions and ideas heard.

In Croydon, a team of young people keen on seeing other youngsters take over local businesses and organisations has worked on coordinating the day.

It is hoped that local businesses and organisations that take young people, aged 13 to 18, on placements for the day will let them help in making decisions that affect the organisation.



The benefit to the young people is that the businesses and organisations will gain a better understanding of youngsters, who will, in turn, learn about the processes and decisions that affect them, such as Haling Manor pupil Omoyeni Adefioye (pictured), who recently shadowed Croydon Council's chief executive, Jon Rouse.

The young people will also gain an insight into a possible career and get hands-on experience of leadership and decision making.

For the businesses taking part, the day will offer access to fresh ideas and creativity; better links with service users and the community; and let them see how young people experience the services they provide.

Under new management

New recycling contract to run until 2022

A new era has begun for the borough's three reuse and recycling centres with the awarding of a new management contract.

Croydon Council has announced that waste and recycling contractor Environmental Waste Controls (EWC) will run the centres – in Waddon, South Croydon and New Addington – for the next 14 years.

EWC has been set the objective of minimising the amount of waste sent to landfill and maximising the volume of materials sent either for reuse or recycling.

To meet the tough new targets, EWC will be introducing new recycling bins for the following types of household waste at each of the centres:

- Rigid plastics (children's toys and garden furniture)
- Sheet glass
- Cooking oil
- Video tapes
- CDs
- Low-grade wood (MDF and chipboard)
- Household batteries



A treasure trove of delights

Displays, activities and taster sessions on library's big day

A packed programme of events has been lined up by The Friends of Croydon Libraries for a Discover Your Library Day in the Central Library on Saturday, 8 November.

Displays at the Katharine Street centre will include: a local studies exhibition, Victorian Croydon, National Year of Reading, Discover Your Library, Homework Help Clubs and Bookstart.

A range of activities will include a book sale between 9am and 4pm in the Clocktower's court area; two sessions of interactive family storytelling, with Pauline Stewart, at 2pm and 3pm in the museum's activities room; and one-hour ancestry online taster sessions in the local studies library beginning at 11am and 2.30pm.

The ICT training room, on Level 2, will host a Nextstep drop-in advice session on learning and work between 11am and 2pm; and Easy

PC taster sessions for all abilities from 2.30 to 4pm.

The children's library will host Family Rhymetime, rhymes and songs for all the family, at 10.30am; Family Storytime at 11.30am; a Homework Help Club from 2 to 5pm; and all-day treasure trail.

And, on Levels 1, 2 and 3, there will be all-day taster sessions on using a range of online services, including: Oxford Art Online, NewsUK, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography and British Standards.



Blooming Croydon blossoms in awards

Borough's greenery and environmental policies recognised by judges of prestigious competitions

Croydon's fantastic parks, floral displays, well-kept gardens and attractive pubs and restaurants have helped the borough to a clutch of awards, both in the London in Bloom, and the Britain in Bloom competitions.

In the capital's competition, the awards won were:

- A silver gilt award and overall winner of the Large City category
- 2nd in the Public Parks and Open Spaces category, for Coombe Wood
- 2nd in the Floral Display category
- Albury Court/Bramley Hill Residents' Association, Ashwood Gardens Sheltered Accommodation Community Garden, and Beech & Cedar House residents' community garden scooped prizes in the Neighbourhood 0 - 300 category
- Laxton Court Residents' Association, and Gillet and Garnet community garden won prizes in the Neighbourhood 301 - 1000 category
- Tamnag Thai Restaurant, Crystal Palace, picked up first prize in the pub and restaurant category

Judging for the competition took place in July, when the London in Bloom team was shown around the borough to assess floral displays, community, business and school involvement, landscaping, nature conservation and environment protection.

They were impressed by the council's lead on providing green waste recycling, minimal use of pesticides and the 510 new planters around the borough.

Coombe Wood was described as "exemplary", and Haling Grove, Chaldon Gardens and Happy Valley were picked out for special mention.



Also commented on were the council's initiative and promotion materials, and the borough was told to "keep up the good work".

The borough's work was also honoured in the annual Britain in Bloom competition, in which Croydon scooped a silver medal representing the capital in the Large City category following its success in the same category in last year's London in Bloom competition.

London's greenest borough pitched its charms against Belfast and overall winner Sheffield.

The Britain in Bloom judging took place in August when the borough was marked on criteria similar to those applied for London in Bloom.

The judges were impressed by the borough's cleanliness, its "first class" community work and nature projects. The quality of its natural areas, including Riddlesdown Common and South Norwood Country Park, were also highlighted.



These accolades build upon an impressive track record of improving the borough's parks, gardens and countryside sites.

In 2007, Croydon won the London in Bloom silver gilt award and came third for its floral displays, and this year three of Croydon's green spaces – Wettren Tree Garden, Happy Valley and Coombe Wood – have won national Green Flag awards, which credits them with being some of the best parks in the country.



A Croydon that is



Operation Safe for All is under way to intensify efforts to reduce the impact of youth violence in the borough

While, in overall terms, the police and council are winning the fight against crime, it is still necessary to confront the actions of a small number of young people who are intent on violence.

They are causing pain. They are causing fear. And they are damaging Croydon's reputation.

As a community, Croydon has suffered the loss of three young people by stabbing in as many months – a terrible waste of youthful potential. No one in the borough should tolerate this lawlessness or, indeed, any criminal activity.

The plan that has been embarked on is all-encompassing and provides a mix of stronger enforcement and targeted prevention.

It places a strong emphasis on communications with the community because it is by sharing knowledge that the cycle of violence can be broken and would-be perpetrators stopped in their tracks.

What's already happening includes:

- more police on the streets, with a focus on the gateways to the town centre and school transport routes;
- greater use of all our available powers, including safeguarding legislation, injunctions, Asbos, dispersal orders and stricter licensing control;
- a crackdown on truancy and antisocial behaviour, with greater use of mobile cameras;
- insistence on greater parental responsibility, with resort to enforcement where necessary;
- extra training for those working with young people to help identify and support those most vulnerable to gang influence and youth violence;
- establishing a new "Turnaround Centre", to ensure that young people intent on violence have the chance to make a different, positive choice for their lives.

Council resources, including neighbourhood enforcement officers and mobile response units, are being deployed to support the police tactics.

And, in a proactive move to stop the problem of youth crime before it has a chance to take root, there is a renewed focus on early intervention and diversion schemes.

Young people intent on trouble will now have a choice.

They can take advantage of what's on offer – education, training, personal support, positive activities – or pay the consequences.

But if they choose to carry a weapon or take part in violent behaviour in Croydon, there is a high chance that they will be caught – and the council and police will be doing all they can to ensure stiff punishment.

Where young people do commit crimes and are given community service, the council will be lobbying to ensure that more of that community service takes place visibly on Friday and Saturday evenings, cutting into the offenders' leisure time and ensuring they are not free to cause further trouble.

In pushing forward in this way, the council and police have close support from the probation service, Crown Prosecution Service, courts service, Youth Offending Team and the business community, which is concerned that the borough's economy is suffering from the perception of crime and concerns about safety.

However, the authorities in Croydon are not naïve. It is understood that the violence will not stop overnight. There will be inevitable setbacks.

But the intentions are clear – there will be no relenting until youth crime is substantially reduced, and until Croydon is regarded by resident, worker and visitor alike as a safe destination.

Cabinet member for safety and cohesion, Councillor

The plan that has been embarked on is all-encompassing and provides a mix of stronger enforcement and targeted prevention

Safe for All

Steve O'Connell says: "Tackling youth violence and knife crime is the top corporate priority for the council.

"Operation Safe for All includes carefully considered measures to address the immediate problem and long-term steps to prevent young people getting involved in criminality."



The Gap Croydon Council's Gangs Advisory Project will be holding two workshops during November at Jurys Inn, Wellesley Road, Croydon.

- Wednesday, 5 November, 6.30pm
- Saturday, 8 November, 11am

The free workshops, run in partnership with other agencies, will cover issues such as gangs, weapons, peer pressure and antisocial behaviour.

The overall aim being to help parents and carers develop their parenting skills and to reduce the risk of young people offending.

Any parent, carer or concerned family member can attend. Bookings must be made in advance by contacting the Gap team on **020 8404 5831**.

Popping out to help

During November, Croydon Council's Pop Service will be visiting a number of venues, including those listed below. For details of additional dates and venues, visit www.croydonpop.org.uk, check with your local service provider, call **020 8654 4440** or email info@croydonpop.org.uk



DATE	TIME	SERVICE	VENUE	SERVICE PROVIDER
Tue 4 Nov	10am-11.30	Bus/Table	Ashburton Memorial House Stroud Green House, Addiscombe, CR0 7BD	Age Concern
Wed 5 Nov	10am -2pm	Bus	North End, Croydon	Age Concern, pharmacist
Sat 8 Nov	10am-noon	Bus/Table	Chelsham House, Bethlem Royal Hospital, Monks Orchard Road, Beckenham BR3 3BX	Alzheimer's Society, Crossroads, Croydon Hearing Resource Centre
Mon 10 Nov	1.30pm-3.30pm	Bus/Table	Southsea Court, 1 – 41 Eastney Court, West Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association CR0 3TB	Age Concern, pension service
Wed 19 Nov	10am-noon	Bus/Table	Leigh Court, 116 Arnham Drive New Addington CR0 0EX	Age Concern, health visitor
Thurs 20 Nov	10am -2pm	Bus	North End, Croydon	Age Concern, health visitor, pharmacist
Tues 25 Nov	10am-noon	Bus/Table	Purvis House, Cromwell Road West Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association CR0 2JN	Age Concern, health visitor, pension service
Wed 26 Nov	10am-2pm	Bus	Central Parade, New Addington	Age Concern, health visitor
Fri 28 Nov	10am-2pm	Bus	Mayday University Hospital, London Road, Croydon CR7 7YF	Sensory impairment team

The Numbers

Guy Fawkes' barrels of gunpowder beneath House of Lords

36

Minimum age for buying or handling fireworks

18

Number of fireworks that can be lit safely at once

1

Reduction in fireworks complaints in Croydon in 2007

24.9%



There is no enjoyment in queuing at Mayday Hospital's accident and emergency department and burns clinic

Don't get burnt

Fireworks bought on the cheap can carry a high cost

With the credit crunch putting an ever-tightening stranglehold on domestic budgets, the impending fireworks season is probably a pressure many households could do without.

Under those circumstances, handing over cash to the illicit trader selling cheap fireworks from the back of a van might appear to be the less costly alternative to going to a licensed seller.

On the face of it, the cut-price fireworks may seem a good deal, a bargain, an opportunity not to miss – but are they?

Those fireworks could well be a menace to the community.

The regulations regarding the sale and storage of fireworks have been around for a while now, but white-van man offering unregulated fireworks to anyone who wishes to buy them undermines the rules and takes away the public's protection.

Fireworks designed to be let off in strictly prescribed exclusion zones find their way to small back gardens, local greens and alleyways.

The potential for serious, possibly fatal, injuries is multiplied, and it could well be an innocent passer-by or a child that suffers.

Monitoring and controlling the sale of fireworks, the council's trading standards officers often appear to be the bad guys in this matter, seemingly taking away people's fun and enjoyment.

There is no enjoyment, however, in queuing at Mayday Hospital's accident and emergency department and



burns clinic because those cheap fireworks were unsafe and inappropriate for the area in which they were used.

Trading standards officers ensure: correct storage by licensed retailers; that only fireworks which meet set standards in production, performance and instruction are sold; and that the law on underage sales is upheld.

The law prohibits the sale of fireworks from the back of a van, as the person responsible is unlikely to be traceable when things go wrong.

If you know or have information regarding the sale of fireworks from a vehicle or an illegal source, the council's trading standards department would like to hear about it.

Information can be sent to trading.standards@croydon.gov.uk

Alternatively, you can call **020 8407 1310**

Opening the door to home ownership

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

If you are a Croydon resident or a key worker in the borough, come along to the low-cost home ownership open day to find out how you can 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 Clocktower, Katharine Street, on Wednesday, 19 November, between 12.30 and 7.30 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.

The various schemes available for council tenants, and through housing associations, will feature in presentations in the Braithwaite Hall throughout the afternoon and evening.

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.

And Croydon Council tenants can take advantage of the Assisted Private Purchase Scheme, which gives a grant of between £20,000 and £40,000 to help buy a property on the open market.

Also available will be Social HomeBuy, which allows a secure tenant to purchase their council property with a discount of £16,000 and a grant of up to £4,000 toward the costs of buying.

If you have further questions about the open day, or have any special requirements, contact the housing specialist team at Croydon Council on telephone/typetalk **020 8726 6100**.

Induction loops for people with a hearing impairment will be available during the presentations. Croydon Clocktower is wheelchair accessible.

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



**Free independent
financial and legal
advice will be
available**

croydon's ecocitizens revealed

It's official – Croydon is an eco-friendly borough, and we can now name the people responsible

Back at the beginning of what we'll call summer, although there wasn't much evidence of the seasonal weather we might have hoped for, the council launched its Croydon Ecocitizen campaign.

Conceived to recognise the environmental changes being brought about by individuals, groups and schools, the campaign quickly caught the imagination of borough residents and nominations for the various awards started to roll in.

Well, the waiting is over, and, as is usually said on such occasions, without further ado here are . . .

THE WINNERS

Recycler of the year

Grace Onions takes that extra step to recycle more.

There are boxes in her front garden where neighbours can leave spent batteries, waxed beverage cartons, ink cartridges and water filters. And, when they're full, Grace takes the boxes to a council recycling centre.

She is a mine of information and advice on what can be recycled where, including waste electronic equipment.

Grace is a keen composter and allotment holder, an advocate of Fairtrade and organic food, and removes litter from local woodlands.

She is a real inspiration to others to others, helping them to live a more sustainable life by offering assistance in very practical ways.



Natural Croydon

The borough is blessed with many wonderful parks, wooded areas and gardens, and we have seen the tremendous effort put into this year's Britain in Bloom competition.

A driving force behind care for many of our best wildlife areas is **Croydon BTCV**. Its volunteers carry out practical conservation throughout the borough.

The special project nominated for this year was the transformation of the sterile space around its new offices in Conduit Lane into a wildlife wonderland.

Nest boxes and a rainwater butt have been installed and locally harvested wood used to make garden structures.



Best environmental 'message/campaign'

Having information about the environment is one thing – whether people act on that information to make changes to their everyday habits is a different matter altogether.

Friends of the Earth has an international reputation for environmental campaigning, but locally it is down to individuals to take action. Over the past year, Croydon has seen a new group rapidly grow in membership and profile.

The group has actively campaigned – and received much media coverage – on the issues of the Climate Change Bill, aviation, plastic bag use, arranging public meetings with local MPs and hosting information stalls at events.

The campaign
caught the
imagination
of borough
residents



Primary school

Children at **Kingsley Primary** have taken a lead, through their school council, in environmental issues and are now developing a market garden initiative.

They have addressed graffiti and litter issues in and around the school and have participated in many green initiatives, including hatching eggs into trout that were reintroduced to the river Wandle this Easter.

The school received a prize of £350 toward its environmental projects.

Favourite Croydon 'green' project

The congregation of **St Mary the Blessed Virgin**, Addington, could be forgiven for being content with worshipping nicely each Sunday.

However, they weren't willing to rest on their laurels, or the yew or other thriving trees in the churchyard. St Mary's is reducing the carbon footprint of its buildings, grounds and congregation and is inspiring many local people, and other places of worship, to do the same.

An impressive list of initiatives includes their own organic, fairly traded carrier bag, green tips in the parish newsletter, an eco garden, travel audits and giving talks.

Low-carbon household

Our winner in this category shows the way for many Croydon households.

Jeremy Rickard has installed loft insulation, double-glazed throughout, and added cavity wall insulation to the modern extension of his Victorian house.

He has solar water panels and has switched to green electricity. He has low-energy light bulbs and LED spotlights throughout the house and always buys the most energy-efficient appliances and equipment – and avoids keeping them on standby.



Secondary school

In February, Purley's **Thomas More School** became an "eco-school".

As part of the initiative, all the school's PCs turn off automatically every evening; the student environment group chose new bins for "litter hot-spots" and new benches, made of recycled plastic, have been installed. They have planted saplings around the site and started an organic vegetable garden.

Students have been lobbying MPs to take notice of Defra's recommendations on school waste and making recycling easier for schools.

The school received a prize of £500 toward its environmental projects.

The Croydon Ecocitizen 2008

When it came to picking an individual to be recognised as Croydon Ecocitizen 2008, **Dulcie Bartolo** stood out.

A teacher at St Joseph's College, Beulah Hill, Dulcie has worked tirelessly on the achievement of a bronze eco-school award and has now set her sights on silver.

This year will see a big investment in energy conservation measures that begin to establish this as a sustainable school. The school recycles its ICT equipment and printer cartridges and has a travel plan.

Dulcie set up Sparks (St. Joseph's Paper and Recycling Klub) for year 7 to 9 pupils, which helps the school recycle paper, and to earn points for educational visits to a paper mill. And Sparks plans to produce a regular environment and sustainability newsletter.

Dulcie was presented with a self-winding eco watch, donated by Citizen Watches.

Ecocitizen 2009

Will you have a good story to tell for next year? If so, email details to sustainability@croydon.gov.uk or write to Ecocitizen, Environment and sustainability team, 18th floor, Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon CR9 3BT

Students have been lobbying MPs to take notice of Defra's recommendations on school waste and making recycling easier for schools

Celebrate safely – winter tips

For many local people, winter is a time for festive fun. Many of us get time off to spend with our families, but extra time spent in the home can lead to more fires.

Make home safety a priority this winter by following the London Fire Brigade's tips:

- Fit a smoke alarm. You can get one for less than £5 from many DIY stores, electrical shops or supermarkets. Be sure to buy alarms that comply with the British Standard and check them every week to ensure they work. Ideally, you should fit an alarm in every room except the kitchen and bathroom.
- It's fun to celebrate with candles or fireworks, but both can be dangerous. Don't leave candles unattended or put them near curtains or inflammable materials. Ensure your fireworks conform to British Standards, and read the instructions carefully.
- One in three accidental fires starts in the kitchen. If you're cooking or holding a dinner party, make sure you never leave cookers unattended. If you have a party, tell your guests how to find door or window keys so they can leave in the event of a fire.
- Never place cards, stockings, decorations or gifts near an open fire and tidy wrapping paper away once gifts have been opened. Your Christmas lights should conform to British Standard regulations and you should not leave them switched on for long periods.

If you're concerned about fire in your home, be safe and contact the London Fire Brigade to arrange a free home fire-safety check.

The brigade can fit free smoke alarms if necessary. Call 0800 028 4428 for more information



Operation Wallacea is a series of biological and social science expedition projects



Students go wild for biodiversity

Swapping sedate Old Coulsdon for the wilds of Indonesia paid off for a group of A level biology students

A remote Indonesian rainforest was the destination of a group of Coulsdon College students taking part in a biodiversity expedition.

The A level biology students, led by teacher Andy Hawkins, spent their summer taking part in Operation Wallacea.

The Lambusango forests expedition was designed with specific wildlife conservation aims in mind – from the impacts of conservation on the local communities to implementing and assessing conservation management programmes.

The students worked as general surveyors with the scientists, gathering data to monitor biodiversity and to protect the habitat from destruction due to illegal logging.

For the most part, the students stayed with local families, but, on occasion, slept overnight in the jungle to carry out their surveys.

Senthuran Kumarasingam, who is now at Roehampton University studying biomedical science, said: "This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to contribute to the



local economy, learn a different way of life and help our environment.

"I loved the people and picked up many different skills. In fact, I enjoyed the visit so much that I'm planning to go back as an individual volunteer.

"This was a wonderful experience."

Most of the students have now progressed to university to continue their studies.

Operation Wallacea is a series of biological and social science expedition projects operating in remote locations across the world.

These expeditions are designed with specific wildlife conservation aims in mind – from identifying areas needing protection, through to implementing and assessing conservation management programmes.

It's a Lotto fun

Two more playgrounds benefit from Lottery-funded upgrades

Playtime at South Norwood Country Park and Coulsdon Memorial Ground will soon be more fun, thanks to £280,000 from the Big Lottery.

The improvements are part of an £884,076 grant to improve play projects across the borough.

Additionally, the council has invested £450,000 from capital funds and £195,000 from Section 106 funding, required when new development creates a need for community facilities.

The work at South Norwood Country Park playground was due to be completed for the October half-term break, while the Coulsdon project is expected to be completed early next year.

The council has 55 playgrounds and is keen to make them as appealing as possible to ensure children enjoy outdoor fun in a safe environment – all playgrounds are completely enclosed to keep dogs out, and safety surfacing has been installed.

In the past year, 12 have been upgraded and seen modular play equipment installed. Modular play allows children to enjoy lots of different activities on one item – such as a climbing frame, which encourages them to be sociable and to play together.

Inclusive play is also a part of all new plans, with any current upgrades including facilities for disabled children.

Youngsters have given the thumbs-up to the colourful Zingo Bubbles equipment which sees them climbing, swinging and enjoying lots of challenging play.

And climbing frames and spinners are also helping children improve their strength and coordination as part of their leisure time.

The more familiar see-saws, slides and roundabouts are still popular and have benefitted from a make-over.

Attractive graphics have also been added to make play time more challenging and fun.

To find out more about Croydon's playground services, visit www.croydon.gov.uk or call 020 8726 6900.

These parks have already benefitted from play project improvements:

Ashburton Playing Field
Higher Drive Recreation Ground, Kenley
King George's Field, Selhurst
Milne Park, New Addington
Norbury Park
Purley Way Playing Field
Rotary Field, Purley
Rowdown Fields, New Addington
Selsdon Recreation Ground
South Croydon Recreation Ground
Thornton Heath Recreation Ground
Waddon Ponds

The Numbers

Children's playgrounds in the borough

55

Upgraded over the past year

12

Big Lottery cash injection for upgrades

£280,000

Inclusive play is also a part of all new plans, with any current upgrades including facilities for disabled children



The council has 55 playgrounds and is keen to make them as appealing as possible to ensure children enjoy outdoor fun in a safe environment – all playgrounds are completely enclosed to keep dogs out and safety surfacing has been installed

Keeping the borough ticking over

The dog teams patrol parks, green spaces and urban areas, assisting the police in dealing with antisocial behaviour and also with park sweeps for weapons and other contraband.

Mobile enforcement units

Croydon's unique mobile enforcement units work to combat crime and antisocial behaviour and also help the witness support service, run by the council's community safety services team

The team numbers 18 uniformed officers, and they are backed by 24 German shepherd dogs, with men and dogs working to help keep the borough safe 24 hours a day.

The dog teams patrol parks, green spaces and urban areas, assisting the police in dealing with antisocial behaviour, and also with park sweeps for weapons and other contraband.

Additionally, they will respond to incidents relating to council properties across the borough, such as intruders on premises and other criminal and antisocial acts in or around the buildings.

Units have also detained burglars caught red-handed in the act, and provides a support service for witnesses who fear intimidation by giving them a direct link to the team.



Allders – continuing to serve Croydon

For many years, the Allders department store has been one of the largest, and best known, shops on the Croydon retail scene.

As with any large organisation, the work undertaken within the store is more far-reaching than the core business of serving customers.

Dan Webster-Salter is one of a team of nine, whose main responsibility is the security and safety of Allders' property, employees and customers.

The team helps to foster a high level of security awareness within the store and is also there to help if there are incidents requiring qualified first aiders.

Dan said: "Our main aim is to ensure Allders is a safe environment to work in or visit.

"We're often required to assist shoppers, from helping with lost and found items, to reuniting those who have been separated from family or friends, and from offering general advice to giving directions to shoppers who are looking for a particular department."



24 hours a day; seven days a week; 52 weeks of every year – keeping all of Croydon's cogs and wheels turning is a full-time job.

Doing that job are thousands of Croydon Council and commercial employees, all working for the good of the borough's residents, businesses and visitors.

In this third part of the feature, we look at some of the jobs, and one or two of the people that do them – the jobs that keep the borough ticking over and offer its council taxpayers outstanding value for money.

Upholding standards

The council's trading standards department operates almost around the clock and the team ensures that those who shop, work or live here have a safe and fair trading environment.

The small team of 15 professional officers carries out a multitude of tasks – from ensuring alcohol, fireworks and tobacco aren't sold to the under-aged on a Friday night, to early-morning bread testing on a Saturday.

Traditionally, members of this team have tested the accuracy of petrol pumps and shop scales and ensured that toys sold are safe and goods correctly described.

Increasingly, their work involves internet sales and tackling rogue traders who prey on vulnerable home owners.

Trading standards team manager Alan Phillips said: "Trading standards officers have powers to seize goods and documents and to prosecute offenders.

"If prosecuted, traders risk an unlimited fine and imprisonment, with a maximum sentence of 10 years for trade mark offences."

The team also aims to ensure Croydon's shops and internet businesses remain counterfeit-free.

Additionally, it investigates residents' consumer complaints and provides outreach surgeries for vulnerable residents who require consumer advice.

Business advice and support is also given, particularly to new, small businesses, and officers work in partnership with the borough's police during the fireworks season to tackle related problems and antisocial behaviour.

The Numbers

Alliders security team members

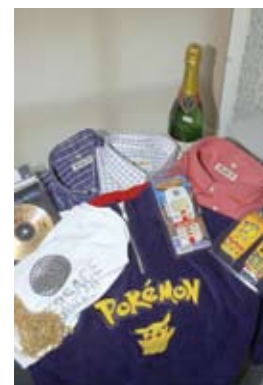
9

German shepherd dogs working for council

24

Council's trading standards officers

15



MPA

Metropolitan Police Authority

POLICING IN CROYDON

How are your local police performing?

The Metropolitan Police Authority regularly monitors how well London's police are performing to ensure our communities receive the most efficient and effective service.

For the sixth consecutive year crime in London is falling and detection rates rising. Total recorded crime for 2007/08 is at a ten year low.

How did Croydon perform during 2007/08?



Total recorded crime in Croydon is down 2.9% – that's 923 fewer crimes.

Priorities for 2008/09

Croydon will be focusing on:

- Reducing youth violence by 5.4%
- Reducing knife crime by 7.2%
- Reducing gun crime by 5%
- Reducing robbery by 1.1%
- Reducing residential burglary by 1.1%

Have your say

Are the police focusing on areas that are important to you? Make your voice heard by taking part in the consultation for the 2010/11 London wide policing priorities. Log on to the MPA website to participate www.mpa.gov.uk/reports/policingplans.htm

Find out more about policing in your borough at www.mpa.gov.uk/partnerships or call the MPA on 020 7202 0202

Teenage kicks and summer fun



It stopped me from getting bored



The youngsters involved in the summer projects displayed good, positive attitudes and a willingness to take part

Borough's young people learn that the six-week summer break doesn't have to be boring

It was an action-packed summer break for the dozens of Croydon youngsters who took part in the council's youth service summer programme.

Teenagers from 13 to 19 years of age took part in an impressive range of fun activities, giving them the chance to meet people, make new friends and visit interesting places.

The activities they took part in included film-making, dancing, song-writing, TV techniques, play writing, sailing, Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions, go-karting, cooking, debating, table-tennis, bowling, karaoke, health awareness, music workshops, costume making, decks, basketball, lyric writing, assault course, ice-skating, football, creative arts, theatre, 4x4 driving, horse riding, talent shows – and more.

Here's what some of the young people said about this year's activities:

Disability Project and Waddon Youth Club joint residential

Ashley, 19, pictured (left) on the zip wire, said: "I loved the camping this year.

"I got to do loads of cool stuff and as I'm getting older I'm starting to help out with younger members.

"I hope to become a volunteer at the youth club."



New Forest trip

There were times when the rain stopped!

Sir Philip Game Youth Centre

Rebecca, 12, said: "I really liked it when the fire brigade came.

"We got to squirt the hose and try on the uniforms.

"It stopped me from getting bored over the summer and just sitting around at home."



Kent rare breeds centre visit

Tayub, 16, pictured with guinea pigs, said: "I liked seeing the animals at the farm."



Avon Tyrell Activity Centre trip

Cold and wet, but still having fun!

Working on the allotment

Shuban, 14, pictured raking the allotment during the summer scheme, said "I liked working at the allotment.

"We got to see how things grow, and even got to take some of the food home."



The Croydon youth service operates through a range of centres and projects across the borough, and further afield.

It offers interesting activities for young people during the holiday periods, giving them new experiences, helping them to develop new friendships and to discuss issues about life, home, school and work.

The service's youth workers are informal educators, using fun activities to engage with young people to challenge them, engage them in discussion and support them in choices about their lives.

In stark contrast to the often negative image of youth portrayed by local and national press, the youngsters involved in the summer projects displayed good, positive attitudes and a willingness to take part.

This snap-shot of young people participating in constructive activity, having fun with their friends, undertaking challenging activities, developing new relationships and learning about life has been repeated across the borough, across the south east and across the country.



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www.croydon.gov.uk



Building on the success, earlier this year, of consultation events for older people and carers, the physical and sensory impairment partnership group held an open space event during October at Fairfield.

An independent life

People with disabilities to benefit from council's new strategy

This year's International Day of Disabled People falls on 3 December – and Croydon is marking the day with the production of the first draft of its new physical disability and sensory impairment (PDSI) strategy.

Since the first strategy for adults with physical and sensory impairments was launched in 2005, a number of national and local changes have taken place, requiring a new vision for the future.

Building on the success, earlier this year, of consultation events for older people and carers, the physical and sensory impairment partnership group held an open space event during October at Fairfield.

This gave people with physical and/or sensory impairments the opportunity to tell the council what was important to them in maximising their independence.



The event also involved carers, health and social care partners, and voluntary and independent organisations working in the borough.

The issues raised ranged from how self-directed support would affect them, to advice on how to get involved in the implementation and monitoring of the government's independent living strategy.

A follow-up day will be held in November to help prioritise the exciting and challenging ideas shared during the October event, which will form the basis of the new PDSI strategy. For details, contact: Trevor Mosses on **020 8726 6500**.

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The changing face of North End

Local photographer Frazer Ashford turns his lens – and his memory – on the town centre’s principal shopping street



North End runs right through the heart of the shopping centre of our town.

This shot was taken looking south from West Croydon, toward High Street and South Croydon, on what was obviously a very quiet day! I guess that it may well have been early on a Sunday morning, although with modern shopping habits, North End is rarely seen as quiet as this nowadays.

Back then, cars were still allowed to drive along the road – although even they seem to have disappeared for this picture.

Looking at the shops, I notice that C&A is still on the eastern (left) side of the street, next to Marks & Spencer. In time, the shop outgrew this site and moved to a position on the opposite side of the road, before finally closing down altogether, the site being swallowed as part of the Centrale development.

And – a point I’ve raised while assessing other pictures in this series – look how much more greenery there is in the road now.

Another point of interest is the domed building in the centre of the image. This was an early cinema that



had closed down years before. Interestingly, the dome survives to this day and has remained a distinctive part of the Croydon skyline.

Although it cannot be seen in my picture, opposite that building was another cinema, the Odeon, which I would often visit. I had a school friend who lived in a flat above it and I thought that it was the coolest place to live – above a cinema!

That cinema, too, was demolished, and standing now on part of the site is Chapel Walk, one of the entrances to the Whitgift Shopping Centre, and the McDonald’s restaurant.

Apart from that, although it is difficult to see in this picture, most of the shops were still small, privately owned businesses, long before the multiple chain stores moved in.

North End has changed a lot since those days, and I don’t think that I am referring only to the loss of traffic, now routed via Wellesley Road.

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


This shot was taken looking south from West Croydon, toward High Street and South Croydon, on what was obviously a very quiet day! I guess that it may well have been early on a Sunday morning, although with modern shopping habits, North End is rarely seen as quiet as this nowadays

Dates for your diary

Council

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

Meeting

 Monday, 1 December

Deadline

Monday, 17 November

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

 4 November

Scrutiny and overview

Deadline

27 October

Cabinet Member

Cllr Dudley Mead (housing)

18 November

Children, learning and leisure

10 November

Cllr Steve Hollands (culture and sport)

2 December

Community services

24 November

Cllr Phil Thomas (environment and highways)

To submit a question (maximum number of words: 50) to the cabinet member detailed above, 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)

Meeting

12 November

Group

Thornton Heath, Bensham Manor and West Thornton

venue

St Andrew's Church Hall, Brook Road, Thornton Heath

19 November

Coulsdon East and Coulsdon West

Woodcote High School, Meadow Rise, Coulsdon



November

Norbury and Upper Norwood

Salvation Army Hall, Westow Street

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 62811**.

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: Tuesday, 25 November; Wednesday, 28 January; Wednesday, 18 March; Thursday, 7 May.

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; Neighbourhood Partnership meetings are not webcast live. They can be viewed at www.croydon.ukcouncil.net/site/webcasts.php

What's On

www.croydon.gov.uk/leisure

Croydon Clocktower, Katharine Street, Croydon

Ticket office: tel:020 8253 1030

Email: ticketoffice@croydon.gov.uk

Text: 07771 837121

November 08

Live events at the Clocktower

John Hegley: Beyond Our Kennel

Friday 7 November - 8pm to 9.45

In John Hegley's own words this will be an evening of "poems, sung, drawn and sauntered, with a token hamster and fig roll fun ..."

£12 (£9 concessions)



Have Box Will Travel

Wednesday 12 November - 7.30 to 9pm

Charlie Dark, poet, writer, producer and DJ, tells the semi-autobiographical story of a boy growing up in pursuit of a dream. Touching yet very funny with a wicked, funky soundtrack.

£10 (£7.50 concession;
£5 for 14 to 19 year olds)

Handa's Surprise

Saturday 22 November, 10.30-11am,
11.30am-noon, 1.30-2pm & 2.30-3pm

A combination of puppetry, traditional instruments and African songs with the sights, sounds and rich colours of Kenya.

£5.80 (£4.80 concessions)



DAVID LEAN – NOVEMBER 2008

Partition (15)

Jar City (15)

Couscous (15)

Then She Found Me (15)

Burn After Reading (15)

This Happy Breed (Re) (U)

Brideshead Revisited (12A)

Of Time and The City (12A)

Before the Rains (12A)

Easy Virtue (PG)

Quiet Chaos (15)

Young at Heart (PG)

Five Children and It (U)

Space Chimps (U)

Journey to the Centre of
the Earth (PG)

Racing Stripes (U)



New Art Club: The Visible Men

Wednesday 26 November - 7.30 to
8.45pm

The Visible Men is a mix of dance, some clever chat and original rib-tickling gags, plus a few subtle surprises. New Art Club takes your expectations and gently smacks them on the cheek with something completely unexpected.

£10 (£7.50 concessions;
£5 for 14 to 19 year olds)

EXHIBITION

Frames of Mind: Creativity in Mental
Healthcare

Until Saturday 31 January 2009

11am to 5pm (Closed Sundays and bank
holidays)

Discover historic artworks of international renown from the collections of Bethlem Royal Hospital, the original 'Bedlam', alongside contemporary artworks created by artists supported by the Bethlem Gallery.

FREE Exhibition Gallery

Guided walks in November

Sunday 2 November

Morning walk on Mitcham
Common

Saturday 15 November

Finicky fungus, Whyteleafe to
Sanderstead countryside

11am, Whitgift Field, end of
Tandridge Gardens;
two- to three-hour walk

Sunday 23 November

Come coppicing in Happy Valley

Call the countryside warden on
07775 824811 for details and to
book your place.

Learn about the ancient form of
woodland management known as
coppicing. There will be a short talk
and tour, followed by a practical
demonstration and a chance to
have a go yourself. Come just for
the talk or stay all day.

For further information of the listed 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



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