

*USEFUL DOCUMENTS*

**for organising a Play Street in Croydon**

**March 2016**

croydon logo

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**With thanks to London Play for use of the photos and to Playing Out for Useful Material**

## Consultation letter to neighbours

**XXX ROAD PLAY STREET**

Play Streets is a nation-wide initiative that encourages residents to close their road temporarily for a few hours once a month so that children can play in the road and neighbours can come together.

We are excited to be proposing a pilot Play Street in Limes Road for 2 hours on three days between August-October. We hope hosting a Play Street will enable residents to get to know each other and enable community building in and around Limes Road.

**When would it be?**

The 3 pilot dates are:

DATES.

If the pilot is successful, we would like hold further 3 Play Street dates in 2015/2016 on the last Sunday of each month (weather permitting).

**What would happen? Will cars still have access?**

Croydon Council is encouraging communities to host Play Streets, and will drop off a ‘road closed’ sign for the entrance of the street. We would then have a volunteer marshal at the entrance. Limes Road already has a barrier at one end.

The Play Street would last for 2 hours. We want to reassure you that this is not going to stop you from having car access to your house. Anyone wanting to park on, or make deliveries to, the street will be asked to drive in and out at walking speed, escorted by a volunteer marshal from the street.

**Who can come?**

Residents of all ages are encouraged to come out, socialise and play, as are friends and relatives. **Parents will be responsible for their children’s safety and behaviour as normal**. We hope becoming a Play Street will build a sense of community and belonging, which in turn will make our street a safer and friendlier place.

**What happens next?**

We welcome your thoughts and feedback, would love people to volunteer to be marshals, and we are happy to chat through any concerns or objections you may have. If you would like to have a meeting organised, please just get in touch. You can contact XX by email ([XXX@gmail.com](mailto:XXX@gmail.com)), by phone (XXXX) or by knocking at No. XX. Then, on DATE, we will formally ask Croydon Council to designate us a Play Street for the 3 pilot afternoons. For details on Play Streets you can contact Children and Families Partnership ([020 8726 6000](tel:020%208726%206000) Ex. 63371 or [cfp@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:cfp@croydon.gov.uk). For more information, you can visit <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/healthsocial/families/ccfpartnership/playstreets>

Best wishes

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| XXXX |  | XXXX |

Number XX Number XX

**Guidance Notes for drivers using a street while a play street session is occurring**

1. Drivers must wait until children and adults have been cleared from the street by stewards.

2. A steward will inform a driver when they can move off.

3. A steward will escort vehicles in and out - walking in front of the vehicles. They must drive at a walking pace a maximum of 5mph.

4. Vehicles/Drivers must drive with due care and attention at all times, with special consideration that there are children playing in the street.

5. Visitors/delivery drivers have the same obligations. It is your duty as a resident within the street to inform anyone leaving your property of their obligations so that they don't just drive off without first informing a steward and allowing children to be cleared from street etc.

6. Through drivers are not permitted access to the street while a Temporary Play Event session is happening.

**Risk Assessment for A Play Street**

**Street name:**

**Date**:

**Named Organiser(s):**

| **Hazard** | **Risk/s** | **Actions to reduce risk** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Moving vehicles and cyclists | Injury to volunteers when setting up road closure, or to children when playing | 1. Parents to be explicitly informed they are responsible for their children’s safety during the Play Street. 2. All volunteers to wear high visibility jackets. 3. Road closure points to be clearly marked with traffic cones and appropriate signage. 4. Road closure notices and door to door leafleting prior to event to warn neighbours in advance of the road closure. 5. Children to be asked to stay out of the road until ALL road closure points in place. 6. Volunteers to alert each other and ensure there are no children in the road if a vehicle needs to pass through the road closure, before removing the barrier. 7. Cars passing through the barrier to access their property to be slowly led to a parking spot by a steward. 8. Full steward briefing by event organisers to cover every point of the risk assessment. |
| Children going beyond the barriers | Injury to children | 1. Parents to be explicitly informed they are responsible for their children’s safety during the Play Street. 2. Volunteer stewards to remind children to stay inside the closure. If a child arrives unaccompanied, stewards to try to find out if their parent or guardian knows where they are. 3. Two volunteers to be on duty at all times, to watch for hazards (including children close to the barriers). 4. Volunteer stewards to follow agreed procedure if a child goes beyond the barrier (one volunteer to remove children from the road while the other brings child back) – to be covered in stewards briefings. |
| Parked cars | Damage to cars/injury to children from scooters colliding with cars etc. | 1. Parents to be explicitly informed they are responsible for their children’s safety during the Play Street. 2. Road closure notices and door to door leafleting prior to event to warn neighbours in advance of the road closure. 3. Volunteers to warn children who are playing too close to park cars, and encourage play at the end of the street where no cars are parked. |
| Children playing different games | Injury to children or damage to toys (e.g. if a child is hit by a ball or trips over a toy) | 1. Parents to be explicitly informed they are still responsible for their children’s actions and safety. 2. Volunteer stewards to encourage children to use the full space and be aware of smaller children. 3. Volunteer stewards to be trained in first aid for cuts and sprains. |
| Passing members of the public | Injury to children  Injury to passing member of the public (e.g. from tripping over a toy) | 1. Parents to be explicitly informed they are responsible for their children’s safety during the Play Street. 2. Volunteer stewards to be aware of people entering the street. 3. Barriers and signage to be placed prominently to alert members of the public. |
| Angry drivers | Injury to volunteer steward or children | 1. Eventuality to be covered in training and briefings for volunteer stewards. 2. Official road closure barriers and signage to be used. Volunteer stewards to have leaflets on hand that explain the Play Streets scheme and have contact details for the Council. 3. If a driver becomes confrontational, volunteer stewards to move children from the road and allow the driver to pass though the barrier. |
| Rubbish in the road | Injury or illness to children if they pick up/fall on dangerous rubbish | 1. Parents to be explicitly informed they are responsible for their children’s safety during the Play Street. 2. Volunteer stewards/parents to remove hazardous rubbish (e.g. broken glass) from the street. 3. Volunteer stewards to be trained in first aid for cuts and sprains. |
| Rain / Heat / Ice | Injury to children or volunteer stewards caused by:   * slipping on ice or water * heatstroke. | 1. Parents to be explicitly informed they are responsible for their children’s safety during the Play Street. 2. Volunteer stewards to assess weather conditions in their briefing – decide if the Play Street will go ahead, and what precautions should be taken. If a child arrives unaccompanied, stewards to try to find out if their parent or guardian knows where they are (especially if the child appears inappropriately dressed for the weather). 3. Volunteer stewards to carry water and dress appropriately. |
| Anything particular about your street? Steep hill / street off busy main road…? |  |  |

Playing Out steward sign-up sheet  **[street name]**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **email** | **Mobile number** |
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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** |  | **Slot 1 (e.g. 3.30-4.30)** | **Slot 2 (e.g. 4.30-5.30)** |
| Week 1 | 1 |  |  |
|  | 2 |  |  |
|  | 3 |  |  |
|  | 4 |  |  |
| Week 2 | 1 |  |  |
|  | 2 |  |  |
|  | 3 |  |  |
|  | 4 |  |  |
| Week 3 | 1 |  |  |
|  | 2 |  |  |
|  | 3 |  |  |
|  | 4 |  |  |

(copy table for further dates…)

Street Organiser:

Mobile:

Local Authority Contact:

Children and Families Partnership

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | |
| Telephone | 020 8726 6400 Ext. 63371 |
| Email | [cfp@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:cfp@croydon.gov.uk) |
| Address | London Borough of Croydon Bernard Weatherill House 8 Mint Walk Croydon CR0 1EA |
|  |  |



 

**Croydon Play Street**

## Information for Steward

INFORMATION FOR STEWARDS

Whilst stewarding, I understand that it is my responsibility to:

**STAY VISIBLE, ALERT AND SAFE.** Always wear your high-viz jacket.

Be in view of oncoming traffic, the closure area and other stewards.

**KEEP CHILDREN WITHIN THE CLOSURE.** Remind them to stay on pavements outside the closure. If a child arrives unaccompanied, try to find out if their parent or guardian knows where they are.

**DIVERT TRAFFIC**. Drivers approaching the street may be curious or confused. Briefly explain what is happening, how long it lasts, suggest an alternative route and politely answer any questions. Have leaflets on hand and enough knowledge of nearby streets to re-direct them.

**GUIDE DRIVERS NEEDING ACCESS**. Residents or tradespeople may need access or want to leave. Agree with your organiser who will watch out for imminent departures and how this will be manager.

1. **Vehicles trying to turn INTO the road**.

Explain to drivers what is happening, how long it lasts and, as

a legal road closure you are only admitting emergency vehicles, residents or tradespeople needing access, who must agree to **drive at snails pace behind you.**

If they agree, call out **“CAR COMING”** use a whistle and ensure the road is clear of children and objects.

Your co-steward then moves the barrier to allow the vehicle to pass and remains at the closure point. Ensure the barriers are stewarded while vehicles are moving.

Walk **ahead** of the vehicle to its parking place, ensure its engine is off before calling **“SAFE TO PLAY”** and returning to the barrier

1. **Vehicles trying to LEAVE the road.**

Talk to the driver and agree with them which way they will be going. If they are going out through your barrier, continue with the following; if not, let the other stewards know they need to take over.

Explain that **you will walk ahead of them** to ensure the road stays clear.

If they agree, call out **“CAR COMING”**, use a whistle and ensure the road is clear of children and objects.

Your co-steward remains at the closure point. Moves the barrier for the vehicle to pass and repositions it. Then call out **“SAFE TO PLAY”.**

**If a driver becomes difficult or challenges your authority,** remain calm, courteous yet assertive. This is rare but is a serious area of risk so be prepared. The main thing is **to reassert the closure’s legal status and temporary nature.** If a driver becomes confrontational, your co-steward should quietly alert the organiser and/or nearby parents to ensure children’s safety. Offer the Council contact (on back) if drivers want to talk to an official.

In general, informally talking with adults about their childhood play memories can build common ground and increase co-operation.

**ENSURE YOUR REPLACEMENT HAS READ AND UNDERSTOOD** this information leaflet, if you are stewarding in shifts.

**LOOK AFTER YOURSELF.**  Dress sensibly and keep hydrated while stewarding.

**Any doubts or questions, talk to your Organiser.**

## Polite Notice — Temporary Road Closure for ‘Playing Out’.

The council has approved the closure of this road between the times of \_\_\_\_\_and\_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for children to play safely in the street. The road will be fully closed to through traffic with stewarded access only for residents and deliveries – you may want to consider parking elsewhere if you need to use your car during this time.

Thank you.



**Playing out sessions are temporary road closures to let children play safely and freely intheir street.**

Neighbours discuss the idea first and then apply to their local council, consulting with everybody living inthe street. Some streets apply for permission to do a one-off playing out session for a couple of hours. Others do it weekly or monthly if their council allows.

On the day, the organisers close the road using ‘Road Closed’ signs. People living in the street can still drive in and out, guided by neighbours volunteering as stewards. Through traffic is redirected. Parents and carers are responsible for their children as on any other day. For more information or for support getting this started in your street, please contact:

**www.playingout.net**

## 10 Good Reasons for Street Play

1. Children need and have a right to play. It is vital

for their **physical, emotional and social development**.

2. Children need to experience **free play**, when they

follow their own ideas and interests.

3. Children like to play **near home** where they don’t

need to rely on adults to take them anywhere.

4. Children need space to play **energetically**. City

gardens are usually too small and many children

don’t have **independent access** toparks.

5. Playing in the street increases **community**

**cohesion** and a sense of **collective responsibility**

for children’s wellbeing and safety.

6. Children develop **friendships** outside school and

across age groups.

7. Through dealing with situations independently,

children can learn valuable **social skills**.

8. Playing in the street allows for **‘semi-supervised’**

**play** while parents get on with their normal life.

9. The street is the “starting point for all journeys”

(Tim Gill, 2007) and street play is a step towards

greater **independent mobility** – to visit friends, go

to the park or walk to school.

10. Streets constitute the vast majority of **public**

**space** in the city and should be for everyone, not

just cars!



# Frequently Asked Questions

### Why do children need to play in the street when there are parks nearby?

Parks are great for family outings and for older children who can get there independently but for younger children, it usually involves a special trip, organised and supervised by adults. This means that, unlike a generation ago, children are simply not getting enough everyday active play time.  Street play is very different. Firstly, it is literally on the doorstep so children can play ‘semi-supervised’ whilst parents get on with other things. This allows for more unstructured, child-led play. Secondly, children playing together on their street helps to build a sense of community and belonging, which in turn makes your street a safer and friendlier place.

### Why can’t children just play in their own back gardens?

In cities, if you have a garden at all, the space is limited and the experience isolated. Street play is a way for children to meet and form friendships with other children on their street, who they may not come across normally (they may be at different schools or of different ages). It also provides more space and freedom to move. Big-rope skipping, hopscotch, roller-skating, cycling and scooting are all generally impossible to do in a tiny back garden!

### This is a major inconvenience for me as a car driver, why should I let it happen?

It really shouldn’t be a major inconvenience as residents can still drive in and out during the session if they need to, just at walking speed to make it safe for everyone. For those not living on the street, it will usually only mean a tiny addition to journey times – we have no specific right to drive down a particular street. Most sessions only last an hour or two and take place before rush hour and at weekends. If you do have concerns, do talk to the organisers about them and hopefully you can reach a solution. You may well find it easier than normal to park on the street, since only residents will be allowed in and out during the sessions.

### Will you still let visitors/deliveries through?

Yes. Stewards will ensure that all drivers wanting to drive down the road are aware that through traffic is not allowed but if a delivery needs to be made or someone is visiting, the steward will escort the driver at walking pace to their destination.

### This is going to have a negative impact on my business, why should I let it happen?

As part of the application process, everyone within the closure area should be consulted. If you are outside the closure area, talk to the organisers about your concerns in an open neighbourly way – there is usually a way around things if you really need access to parking for your customers, although please remember there is no right to parking on a public highway, even for residents. There is strong support for children’s right to play out amongst parents and grandparents in particular, so you might even find that by being accommodating or offering support you improve your business image and get new customers!

### Aren’t roads just for cars?

The idea that residential streets are just ‘roads’ i.e. places simply to drive and park cars has crept up on us gradually and has now become an accepted fact. Up until the 1970s, street play was common. 71% of adults played out in the street or neighbourhood as children, compared to only 21% of children today (Playday poll, 2007)

The street is our main public space in the city and the place where a sense of community can be created. Playing Out is partly about challenging the perception that residential streets are nothing but highways and demonstrating their possibilities as social spaces for everyone.

### Why do you need to close the road? We just played out as kids.

Times have changed. Streets are much more traffic dominated and it is no longer normal to see children out playing as it used to be. Having to organise an official road closure in order to use the street in this way is not an ideal situation and is not a long-term solution. In some very quiet steets a road closure might not be necessary in order for children to safely play in the road. However, the danger from fast-moving traffic is one of the main reasons that children don’t play outside nowadays. In many residential streets, cars – both parked and moving – dominate to such an extent that play becomes impossible. In this instance, closing the road to through traffic and having stewards in place provides the reassurance parents need to allow their children to play out while still allowing residents car access. Playing out sessions can be a first step towards changing attitudes about the place of cars in residential streets. Ideally, our streets would be spaces where cars and people of all ages can coexist happily. This is the long-term goal of Playing Out.

### Won’t a playing out session bring lots of children to my street from elsewhere?

Each playing out session is organised by residents and only publicised through flyers and posters on their own street and, sometimes, immediately neighbouring streets. They are for the children to have a chance to play right outside their front doors and not designed to be public ‘events’. However, it should be remembered that the street is a public space, so it is not possible or desirable to try to exclude people coming in from outside. It is very unlikely that you would have more than a few families joining in from other streets as the main ‘draw’ for children and parents (as opposed to going to the park) is having direct access to your own house and toys, and getting to know your neighbours.

### I’m worried that the noise made by children playing outside will disturb me.

Our experience is that streets are quieter during playing out sessions than when open to traffic, to the extent you are more likely to hear birdsong! Some people would say the sound of children playing is a wonderful thing and something we no longer hear enough of. In cities we all need to live alongside each other and tolerate a reasonable amount of noise from other people’s activities. Even those who don’t drive have to live with traffic noise. Children cannot be contained within houses, cars and designated ‘play areas’. The city is theirs too and it is their right to use the space in the way they need to. Often, playing out sessions are only an hour or two long and take place once a week at most. If there is a persistent problem with neighbours complaining about children making an unreasonable amount of noise, it may be appropriate to organise a street meeting to discuss it and try to reach a solution everyone is happy with.

### I am nervous about my car being damaged.

If you are very nervous about damage to your car, you may wish to park it elsewhere during playing out sessions. However, we have heard of very few incidents of damage in the hundreds of sessions that have taken place and would not expect the level of risk to be much greater than if children were scooting, skating or cycling on the pavement past parked cars. Parents are responsible for their children during playing out sessions but any adult who sees a child causing damage should talk to them or their parents about it. The organisers and stewards will do their best to ensure that children play safely and responsibly.

### Who is going to pay if my property gets damaged?

In terms of damage to property (including cars), the liability situation is no different with a road closure than under normal circumstances i.e. people take responsibility for their own actions. Parents will have ultimate responsibility for their own children. And residents will need to resolve any issues between each other and their insurers.

### I don’t like the idea of children playing unsupervised. Who will make sure they don’t get up to mischief?

‘Getting up to mischief’ is a part of childhood we all remember, but so is being told off by adults other than our own parents! It is made very clear that parents are responsible for their own children during sessions, but if any adult sees children playing out on the street seriously misbehaving or causing damage or injury they should take responsibility to speak to them or their parents about it in a reasonable way. Being kept in check by other adults in our community is an important learning experience.

### Won’t it encourage children to think the road is a safe place to play under normal circumstances?

We have had many conversations with parents about this and there is a strong agreement that even young children can understand the difference between an event with a road closure and normal circumstances. Playing out sessions are a good opportunity for parents to talk to their children about road safety and the danger of traffic but also to observe what streets could be like if traffic was less dominant and begin to think about ways to slow cars on their street.

### I haven’t got young children and this idea makes me feel excluded from my own street.

We need to remember that for the vast majority of the time, children may feel excluded from this space right outside their homes. A playing out session is just a very small way to redress the balance. Organisers should make sure that residents of all ages feel welcome to be out on the street and sessions don’t just feel like family events. Equally, no one should feel any obligation to ‘join in’ if they don’t want to. At some sessions, older residents or those without children have helped to steward or just enjoyed sitting out, meeting neighbours and sharing memories about their own childhood play experiences. Parents may assume that those without young children won’t be interested in being involved, so do make it clear to them if you want to be. Your support will certainly be welcome!

### What other benefits are there to playing out?

As well as safer streets, another key factor in enabling street play is parental permission. Parents feel anxious about allowing children to play on the street for all sorts of reasons and often feel unsure about the cultural acceptability of letting kids play out on the street. Playing out sessions are a chance for parents to get together and support each others’ desire to let children play out.

**CROYDON COUNCIL**

**APPLICATION FOR ROAD CLOSURE FOR A PLAY STREET**

This application can only be used for an order to close a road for the purposes of a Play Street. The Council reserves the right to cancel a road closure order. You are strongly recommended to take out Public Liability Insurance for the duration of your road closure.

**ORGANISER DETAILS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| NAME |  |
| ADDRESS |  |
| TELEPHONE NUMBER |  |
| EMAIL ADDRESS |  |

**DETAILS OF ROAD TO BE CLOSED**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Road(s) |  |
| Precise location of closure ie. outside property numbers or road junctions |  |
| Day of week |  |
| Time of closure |  |
| IF this is to be a regular closure state frequency |  |
| Alternative route for vehicles during the closure (if applicable) |  |
| Ward |  |
| Comments |  |

Please attach a summary of the consultation you have undertaken.

I confirm that

* I am at least 18 years of age
* The information I have provided is correct
* I have read the Croydon Play Streets Guide
* If the Order to close the road is granted I will comply with the Council’s signage and barrier requirements

Signature …………………………………………………………………………………

Date ………………………………………………………………………………………..

**Please return you completed form to:**

Children and Families Partnership

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | |
|  |  |
| Email | [cfp@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:cfp@croydon.gov.uk) |
| Address | London Borough of Croydon Bernard Weatherill House 8 Mint Walk Croydon CR0 1EA |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date received** | **Signature of approval** |
|  |  |

**For office use only**