

OUR CROYDON

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Croydon is ready

Bold new town centre vision launched to bring new homes, jobs and growth.



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New £1k fines for fly-tippers

Cleaner Croydon campaign cracks down on fly-tippers and fraudsters.



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Our culture

From Costa Del Croydon to PrideFest, we've got a sensational summer ahead.



GLAD ALL OVER!

Souvenir pull-out: when the Eagles brought the FA Cup home on P15

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Welcome to our Croydon



Jason Perry,
Executive Mayor
of Croydon

Dear Resident

It's been a busy few months since our last edition and much to look forward to as we head into summer.

In a major milestone for our town and our borough, I welcomed residents, businesses, investors and partners to Croydon as we launched our bold new vision for the town centre, backed by the Croydon Growth Plan.

The first of its kind in London, the plan sets out how we will unleash Croydon's potential, with our town centre regeneration as the catalyst - unlocking jobs, building homes and creating opportunities for all. We have already secured an initial £30m of investment, with works such as the Wellesley Road crossing getting under way this summer. The change that residents have been waiting for is happening now and my message to investors was clear: Croydon is ready - are you?

There is much to enjoy in Croydon this summer, from our beautiful 127 parks and playgrounds (p7) to holiday clubs for children (p12) and a jam-packed cultural programme of festivals and fun for residents of all ages (p21). There is also a look back at some of the fantastic community celebrations in Croydon this spring, from VE Day celebrations (p26) to Crystal Palace Football Club's historic 'FA Cup' victory parade (p15). Enjoy your pull-out-and-keep picture special!

Throughout the summer, we will be working to make sure you can enjoy everything on offer, by keeping our borough clean and safe (p5).

That means working with you, and with all our partners like the Police - you can meet our new borough commander (p30), and I very much looking forward to working with him.

Finally, you may have heard that the Government is minded to appoint commissioners at Croydon Council, owing to our Council's financial challenges. Whilst Croydon Council needs a solution to its historic debt, we do not agree that bringing in commissioners is the right plan for Croydon.

We have made huge strides in improving our Council and this has been recognised by a huge range of partners, from our auditors to Ofsted, and we have done this whilst making more savings than any other Council in London. At the time of writing, we await more details about the Government's plan but I can assure you that if they send in commissioners to make swingeing cuts to services, or increase Council Tax, I will oppose them all the way. I will keep you updated, and you can find information on our webpage croydon.gov.uk/intervention

Have a fantastic summer, stay safe and well.

Jason Perry
Executive Mayor of Croydon

Croydon is ready

The Executive Mayor of Croydon has launched a new Growth Plan and Town Centre Vision, unveiling a bold new strategy to drive regeneration, attract investment and deliver exciting developments across the borough.

At the heart of the Growth Plan is the Town Centre Vision, and an initial £30m of improvements, designed to attract new visitors, residents, businesses and investors.

The new investment will see improvements to roads, pavements and key public spaces across the town centre, and also improve wayfinding while celebrating our rich heritage.

The Executive Mayor launched the new Growth Plan and Town Centre Vision at Boxpark in May, receiving a positive response from businesses, developers and community groups.

Andrew Brown, chief executive of Croydon BME Forum, said: "What excites me about Croydon is the diverse amount of people, the places, opportunities and food - those kind of things. Just to hear the Executive Mayor say that he's creating 15,000 new houses in Croydon - that means more opportunities and chances for people."

Jason Perry, Executive Mayor of Croydon, said: "Now is the time for Croydon to fulfil its promise as one of London's most exciting growth boroughs. This vision sets out a bold, deliverable plan - one that will attract new homes, businesses, visitors and investment.

"With infrastructure in place, more than £30m of secured funding, and a clear spatial framework, we are giving the market confidence. Backed by a strong track record on planning and collaboration, Croydon is ready - and open for business."



Executive Mayor Jason Perry and panellists (l-r) Penny Cameron of Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield (URW), Ben McLoughlin of BOXPARK and Jane Groom of London Communications Agency



Louise Cooper COO of BRIT School (centre) and Clare Woodcock Consultant Director at Mott McDonald

Wellesley Road works start as part of £30m town centre regeneration

Engineering works are due to start this summer to create a new street-level pedestrian crossing in Wellesley Road - improving the connection between Croydon town centre and East Croydon.

Croydon Council has secured £30m of funding to make improvements in the area. The Wellesley Road crossing is the first project to be delivered within that programme and will bring a boost to businesses by linking East Croydon to the town centre shops.

The pedestrian crossing will replace the public underpass beneath Wellesley Road, which was closed last year following fire damage caused by antisocial behaviour.



The underpass will remain closed permanently and will form part of the construction of the pedestrian crossing. People can use the nearby crossings until the new street-level crossing is completed.

Construction is due to start in July and it is expected to be ready for use in time for the Christmas shopping period.

The council is working with partners, such as Transport for London (TfL) and London Trams. The designs are subject to technical approvals from TfL, owing to it being on a key transport route.

This scheme is part of a new £30m investment programme which will see improvements to key connections and public spaces across the town centre, and also improve wayfinding while celebrating our rich heritage.

The first phase of improvements, supported by more than £30m of funding, will include:

- New street-level crossing in Wellesley Road, linking East Croydon to the town centre
- Upgrade of public realm in Dingwall Road and George Street
- A programme of improvements and initiatives to activate, celebrate and boost the vitality of Surrey Street
- A two-year programme of events and installations in the town centre
- Improvements to the area around the historic Croydon Minster
- New East Croydon pedestrian link bridge
- Improvements to the public realm in North End
- New heritage trail highlighting architecture and landmarks
- New greenery between College Green and Fairfield Halls

Visit the council website and search Town Centre Vision to find out more.

croydon.gov.uk

Grant fund scores community goals

A community grant fund from Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield (URW) with Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) is providing £1,000 grants to 27 grassroots organisations.

The funding aims to empower young people and help residents facing homelessness and displacement, including refugees and asylum seekers among others.

Access to Football, delivered by BME TV Charitable Foundation, was among those awarded funding. The project provided football sessions led by UEFA B-qualified coaches, alongside mental wellbeing support and career guidance.

Amir said: "The football sessions helped me meet people and stay active, but the biggest thing for me was the career support. I now know I want to work in customer care and I'm taking steps to make that happen."

Successful projects were offered mentoring sessions with URW in areas such as marketing, finance, legal matters and health and safety. They can apply for up to £5,000 extra funding to strengthen their impact.

The next round of £1,000 grants will open in autumn - contact CVA at **020 8253 7070** or cva@cvalive.org.uk



CLEANER CROYDON

WORKING TOGETHER
FOR A CLEANER BOROUGH

Our Cleaner Croydon campaign is all about working together to keep our borough looking its best – a priority for the Executive Mayor of Croydon, Jason Perry. From investing in our services to providing free graffiti removal kits for businesses, we want to encourage and help people to do their bit. But at the same time, we're taking tough action on those who break the law and blight our borough by dumping litter, fly-tips or abandoned cars. The council has been cracking down on antisocial behaviour, with tough action on criminals from fly-tippers to fraudsters.

More money for grass cutting

New £1k fines for fly-tippers

Fines for fly-tippers have increased from £400 to £1k in a crackdown on those who dump rubbish illegally in our borough.

In 2024 the council cleared more than 56,000 fly-tips – costing more than £1m.

And we're introducing a new team to recoup the costs of environmental crimes – so residents don't foot the bill.

In spring Croydon Council started a new season of grass cutting that will see 1.1 million square metres of highway verges, 850,000 square metres of housing land and 190 areas of parks and open spaces, cut regularly until October.

Grass is scheduled to be cut every six weeks along highways, open spaces and parks, and every five weeks on council housing land.

This is part of our improvements to the service that includes £1.5m investment in new equipment and extra resources from contractors.

We'll also keep you updated on how the grass cutting is going throughout the year.

Residents in council homes have helped to shape the service for cutting on estates. We'll keep them involved in monitoring performance and appointing the long-term contractor.

Until last year, the council had been working with old data that did

not reflect all the council-owned green and open spaces in the borough. Now we've invested in new technology to digitally map all council-owned parks and green spaces. We are looking to expand this technology and deliver a fully interactive system for real-time reporting – so the service can better plan the schedule across the borough.

To support pollinators and wildlife, we're working with Friends of groups to leave selected environmental areas within parks uncut throughout the year.

This year, highway verges – which cover the equivalent of 160 Selhurst Park football pitches – will all be

maintained, except for some grass verges, such as where the rare Lizard Orchid flowered last year.

Jason Perry, Executive Mayor of Croydon, said: "I know how important maintaining our parks and open spaces is to residents. I am pleased we have been able to invest in an improved programme of grass cutting this year and we have a great team maintaining our green spaces.

"Residents can already see the improvements, and it will mean a better experience for everyone visiting Croydon's open spaces this summer."



Blue badge fraudsters busted!

This was the first car we lifted for Blue Badge fraud - BUT it was by no means the last.

Over just three weeks in May we confiscated 17 badges, issued 15 Penalty Charge Notices and towed 17 vehicles due to Blue Badge misuse. This is part of the council's new campaign to combat Blue Badge fraud.

Blue Badges provide essential support for genuine badge holders, making it easier for them to visit shops, meet friends and family and attend medical appointments.

Fraudulent misuse of a Blue Badge takes away valuable parking spaces from those who truly need them - making the lives of those with mobility issues much harder.

Using stolen, counterfeit, cancelled, or badges belonging to a deceased person, is a criminal offence and will not be tolerated in Croydon.

When caught, people are being fined, having their cars taken away and taken to court.

We're also continuing to tackle abandoned vehicles, following reports from residents of cars being abandoned, left in states of disrepair or being illegally sold on our streets. We will warn the owners, before removing them - and they often end up being crushed.

Report antisocial behaviour on the [Love Clean Streets app](#).



We're towing cars for Blue Badge fraud

Blitz squad launches free graffiti clean kits for businesses

The council's blitz squad has started offering free graffiti clean kits for businesses as part of their blitz clean programme in district and town centres.

The new kits include cleaning sprays and wipes along with a scraper and a brush to help businesses keep their fronts looking their best.

Our blitz cleans are part of our Cleaner Croydon campaign - helping to restore pride in district and town centres across the borough.

So far this year our blitz squad has visited Addiscombe, South Norwood, Beulah Road, and Purley. Over the next three months they will be visiting Coulsdon, Crystal Palace and Selsdon.

Each blitz clean is tailored to the local area. We start each blitz clean with a walkabout with residents and businesses to understand the issues they are experiencing.

Our blitz squad carries out a range of targeted activity, from tackling fly-tipping to removing graffiti, deep cleansing, street repairs, providing trading standards advice for businesses and enforcing against illegal parking.

We also support small businesses to remove and prevent graffiti and fly-tipping on their property. Alongside offering businesses graffiti cleaning kits, we help with clearing stickers and graffiti on shop shutters.

If you are a business and would like a graffiti cleaning kit, visit news.croydon.gov.uk/cleaner-croydon for details.

Follow us on social media for regular updates on the blitz cleans happening across Croydon.



Graffiti cleaning kit now available



Executive Mayor of Croydon Jason Perry meeting Katan Patel, who has run Purley Bon Bon for 40 years. Katan was the first to sign up to the business blitz clean pledge!

OUR PARKS



Ashburton Park

Love our parks

The summer months are the perfect time to enjoy Croydon's beautiful 127 parks and open spaces.

We're investing in them, with a new and improved grass cutting schedule, a £600k programme of investment in playgrounds, and improvements to tennis courts and sports pitches.

We're also celebrating a major investment in Ashburton Park to mark its centenary.

If you're heading to one of Croydon's public spaces, help us keep the parks looking their best by using the

bins or taking your rubbish home with you. If the bin is full, don't leave your rubbish behind.

Find out more about Croydon's parks and green spaces, and how you can get involved, from volunteering opportunities to guided walks, at

croydon.gov.uk

Which parks will you visit this summer?

Over £1.5m investment for Ashburton Park

127

Parks and open spaces to enjoy this summer.



Ashburton Park pond 1938

Ashburton Park in Addiscombe has been awarded over £1.5m in grant funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The funding will support the exciting 100 Years of Ashburton Park restoration and improvement programme. Upgrades to the park will highlight its historic and ecological features - making sure it stays as a treasured community space for generations to come.

Upgrades include restoration of the park's historic wetland, a new bandstand to replace the existing tea kiosk, creation of a community garden and improvements to pathways and lighting.

A series of heritage-focused activities, including a community archaeology project and guided heritage walks and audio trails are also part of the plans. There will be community events to celebrate Ashburton Park's centenary this summer - visit our website for more information.

A huge thanks to the local community, Friends of Ashburton Park and the Oasis community hub team for their help in developing the plans.

Andy Gill, Oasis Youth and Innovation Lead, said:

“

This investment is a demonstration of how working with local people can bring about lasting change, improving the life chances of our young people at a time when support is most needed.

”

100 years

Restoring pride and honouring the heritage of Ashburton Park.



The new Purley Way Playing Fields playground, near Croydon Airport, is flying high with an aeroplane theme



Jumping for joy at Selsdon Recreation Ground's new playground

Our playgrounds get a glow up

£600k

Programme of investment in playgrounds and improvements.

More playgrounds across Croydon have had an upgrade thanks to the council's playground investment programme.

Wandle Park and Wilford Road Recreation Ground are the latest to benefit from new play equipment bringing them back to life for our local communities.

The £600k programme sees four or five playgrounds upgraded every year and it's been great to see families and young people enjoying them.



Executive Mayor of Croydon Jason Perry opens the newly refurbished Wilford Road Recreation Ground playground in Selhurst, with two-and-a-half-year-old Aamna Qureshi and her dad Abbas.



Beware wildfires with BBQs

A summer BBQ is a great way to enjoy the warmer weather – but make sure you are fire safe.

Like most of London, BBQs are not allowed in Croydon's parks and public spaces. They are a fire hazard which puts people, homes, and wildlife in danger.

If you're BBQing at home, please do so safely in a garden, not on balconies.

For more information about how to BBQ safely, without inviting the fire brigade, visit:

london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/cooking/bbqs/



Garden waste

RECYCLING service

Sign up today!



Selsdon bright-eyed and bushy-tailed at 100

It is 100 years since the first homes were built in Selsdon - and the much-loved district centre has benefited from a birthday makeover.

New maps, signposts and shop signs direct people towards the high street and green spaces, with blue plaques on shopfronts celebrating local history.

During spring, Selsdon Library hosted the '100 years of Selsdon' centenary exhibition.

Curated by councillors, Selsdon Residents' Association and Friends of Littleheath Woods, the exhibition charted its history from when the first planning permission was granted for homes in the village in 1925.

Ian Leggatt, Selsdon Residents' Association committee member

and chairman of Friends of Littleheath Woods, said: "To research and document Selsdon's gestation and growth and celebrate its 100th birthday with the centenary exhibition has been a joy to carry out.

"Selsdon still retains its village feel, even after coming into being as a thriving and numerous community 100 years ago.

"With a very active residents association, cherished and cared for green spaces, together with a huge number of volunteers across many social activities, I am fortunate to live in Selsdon."



£14m investment in Croydon's roads

This year Croydon Council is investing more than £14m in maintaining roads, pavements, bridges, drains, signs and lampposts, as well as on flood prevention.

The £14.5m maintenance plan will improve the borough's transport network which includes 726 kilometres of carriageways, 1,235 kilometres of footways, and 62 highway-maintained structures and bridges.

We know that roadworks can be frustrating. But did you know that you can find out who is responsible for them and how long they will take? Go to [one.network](#) and search for the roadworks you want information on.

Help us by reporting any defects on our roads on the [Love Clean Streets app](#).

Planning crackdown protects local character

Croydon Council's enforcement teams have been ramping up action against unauthorised developments and to protect the character of neighbourhoods and town centres across Croydon.

Council officers visited 21 addresses believed to be unauthorised Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Thornton Heath, Norbury, New Addington, Central Croydon, Addiscombe and Purley. They confirmed several breaches and the council is taking action against offenders.

Croydon's Local Plan Review sets out new policies to ensure that all new homes and developments are well-designed and boost the unique character of Croydon's town centres and suburbs.

Planning enforcement helps to make sure that developers who build without planning consent, are held to account.

Croydon has accelerated investigations into unauthorised developments and has more than halved the number of active cases since 2021.

The number of live enforcement investigations has fallen from its peak of 2,089 in October 2021, during the Covid-19 pandemic, to 711 cases in January 2025 - a 66% reduction.

During that period, 2,485 investigations have been completed. In some cases, negotiation with landowners has resulted in quick action. In other cases, enforcement notices and court action have been required, which can take longer.

Spotlight on: HORIZONS, Croydon's Fostering Hubs

When Croydon foster carers voiced a desire for more opportunities to connect with one another and feel part of a community, we listened!

Horizons Hubs are three new community-based fostering hubs designed to strengthen the invaluable support networks for foster families across the borough.

“

The real benefit is to the children because they get to meet other foster children in the hub. They don't feel alone—they feel part of something, part of a community.

~ **Debbie Seddon, Hub Leader**

”

THE AIM: To create extended family-style communities where foster carers, their children, and the young people they care for can connect, share, and learn together.

Much like an extended family, **Horizons Hubs** allow foster carers to lean on each other for advice, emotional support, and even practical help such as planned respite and crisis assistance.

Children benefit too, forming bonds with peers who understand their experiences, and enjoying regular social outings and sleepovers.



The name Horizons Hub was chosen by Croydon's Children in Care Council, young people with lived experience in the care system. It reflects their vision of looking forward with hope and building brighter futures.

“

We plan really good activities, we've been go-karting, we've been out for meals, which has been great fun for the Hub members ~ **Susan Simpson, Hub Leader**

”



We know that fostering can seem like a daunting task but with initiatives like Horizons and a professional fee of up to £604 per week, per child, we hope that Croydon residents can feel supported every step of the way.

We need more foster carers.

Contact us today:

0300 222 2112

iwanttofooster@croydon.gov.uk
croydon.gov.uk/fostering

CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk



Summer fun and support for children and families

School is nearly out – and this summer Croydon Council is once again supporting children and young people with free Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) clubs.

With over 50 providers running activities at more than 60 locations, there's something for everyone—right on your doorstep.

From sports and drama to robotics and outdoor adventures, the summer is packed with fun, enriching experiences to keep children active, engaged, and well-fed.

Many clubs are open to all, but families receiving benefits-related free school meals can access free places using the email or text sent by HolidayActivities on 30 June.

These places include a daily activity, a nutritious meal, and time to socialise with others in a safe and supportive environment.

Inclusive and SEND-friendly options are available - families are encouraged to check individual programme listings or contact providers directly for more information.

Spaces are limited and must be booked in advance.

If you're not sure whether you're eligible for free places this summer, please speak to your child's school.



Photography by Lee Townsend

Staying safe and well this summer

In Croydon we're proud to be home to more children and young people than anywhere else in London.

We hope they all have an amazing summer - but we know this can also be a challenging time for some of them, and their families.

The change of daily routines, increased isolation from being away from friends, waiting for exam results and other pressures can contribute to them feeling anxious or worried. They can struggle with their mental health and emotions during this time.

There's always someone they can talk to, who will listen and help them safely navigate through whatever they choose to do.

These local organisations can offer them a range of support:

Young Croydon - croydon.gov.uk/young-croydon

Croydon Drop In - croydondropin.org.uk

Kooth - kooth.com

P4YE - p4ye.co.uk

TOP TIPS:

1. Talk to someone you trust
2. Be active and connect with friends
3. Eat healthy and look after yourself

New approach to youth engagement

We're changing our approach to youth engagement in Croydon.

We want to reach more children and young people; provide better support, particularly for older children and young adults and those at risk; and make sure we hear our young people's voices.

To do this, the council will work more closely with partners - like voluntary, community, and faith sector organisations who are based in our communities and know them well.

A review last year found that our youth engagement service was not providing residents with best value for money. In one year, only 75 children accessed our youth services that are open to all.

The council consulted young people who used the service, parents, staff and partners. We found that a more coordinated approach with other organisations would achieve better outcomes - especially for young people at risk.

We will achieve this by providing early help, community safety initiatives and commissioning partners to deliver targeted, engagement work with those at risk.

A new family hub for older children and young adults will open at the Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Centre in South Norwood this year. This will help to expand our network of local services for families across Croydon.

The council is also investing £200k in grant funding from the Home Office and the London Violence Reduction Unit to deliver initiatives over the coming year to help young people stay safe.

Free summer fun with Croydon's Family Hubs

From cricket coaching to cinema club,
we've got lots going on

Scan the QR code or visit www.croydon.gov.uk
for more information



SCAN ME



CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk

'Care, compassion and warmth' at Calleydown

Calleydown Shortbreak Children's Home has successfully kept its 'good' rating after an Ofsted report said staff "show care, compassion and warmth" towards children in their care.

Calleydown is a Croydon Council-run residential home in New Addington that provides short breaks for children and young people who have severe learning difficulties.

An Ofsted inspection was carried out in February, and the report highlights how "parents say that children like coming to the home and see it as a 'sleepover' to socialise and meet their friends in a safe space."

The report added: "Children are safeguarded effectively. Staff

have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures. Children are given individualised support in line with their needs and wishes."

Calleydown is a facility that provides service users with an adapted garden, sensory room, a ball and soft playroom, and a computer suite for the children to use.

The home was commended for meeting all the requirements from the previous Ofsted inspection and report in March 2023.



Calleydown Shortbreak Children's Home

ADVERTISEMENT

Summer Toy Bonanza!

At Croydon's Household Reuse and Recycling Centres

Good condition toys which have been donated to the HRRCs throughout the year will be available to residents for free*

***(up to four toys per resident)**



**Tuesday 15 July
10am-4pm**

Factory Lane Waste and Recycling Centre, Factory Lane, Croydon CR0 3RL



**Thursday 17 July
10am-4pm**

Fishers Farm Household Reuse and Recycling Centre, North Downs Road, New Addington, Croydon CR0 0LB

OUR SOUVENIR CPFC PULL-OUT

GLAD ALL OVER



Thousands of fans lined the streets of South Norwood to see Crystal Palace Football Club (CPFC) bring the FA cup home when a victory parade marked their historic win at Wembley.

Around 35,000 people packed the pavements in SE25 to welcome the Eagles home and celebrate the win, turning the area into a sea of red and blue.

The winning team toured Whitehorse Lane, Park Road and Holmesdale Road, in an open top bus, before arriving at Selhurst Park for a party on the pitch.

CPFC planned the route and the event at the stadium, and council officers worked with the club and the police to facilitate the parade, from safety measures to road closures and clean ups.

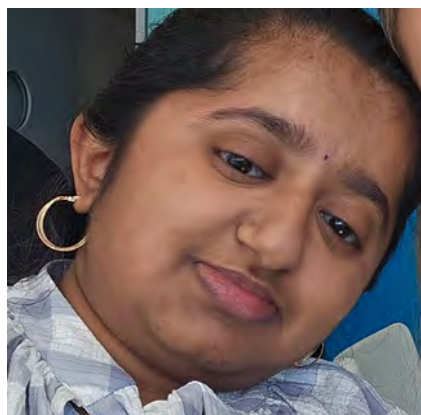


Photography by © Glenn Foster





SEND SPECIAL FEATURE



'It gives you the tools you need to help be as independent as you can'

Meet Niveda, she's a YouTuber, works for Croydon Libraries and has a degree in human nutrition.

Niveda is one of thousands of people to have benefited from the council's free Independent Travel Training - tailored training for children and young people aged 5 to 16 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The training helps them gain confidence to travel to and from places on their own.

Niveda was at secondary school, about to head off to university when her SENDCO teacher asked if she'd consider trying the training.

Niveda said: "We started slowly and over time did different routes. We also travelled at different times of the day so I could experience busier times."

"I learnt that the busyness of rush hour commuting was high risk because of my condition. The training gave me the confidence to say no to situations where I didn't feel safe, like packed buses, and to just get off a bus if I felt uncomfortable. It also taught me to avoid travelling at peak times."

When asked how she would describe what she got from the training, Niveda said: "It helped me see that I could prove myself!"

“

It gave me the skills to handle myself in situations, and it worked – I went on to go to university on my own! And it didn't stop there; I'm now a confident traveller and have recently got back from a trip to Geneva!

”

When asked what advice she'd give to someone considering travel training for themselves or a young person, she said: "It's a good opportunity - a stepping stone - for gaining confidence and becoming independent, especially when thinking about moving onto secondary school, college, university, apprenticeships - whatever you want to do! It gives you the tools you need to help be as independent as you can."

If you are a young person with SEND looking to move to a new school, college or university, or know someone who is, visit our website and search Independent Travel.

croydon.gov.uk



ADVERTISE IN OUR CROYDON

Our Croydon newsletter is delivered to 172,000 homes across Croydon with extra copies in council buildings. If you would like to advertise in Our Croydon, or find out more information, please email ourcroydon@croydon.gov.uk

OUR ADVERTISING RATES ARE:

Size	Dimensions	Rate
Full page	215mm wide x 281mm high	£2,500
Back cover	215mm wide x 281mm high	£2,750
Half page	215mm wide x 138.5mm high	£1,300
Quarter page	105mm wide x 138.5mm high	£700



LIBRARY STORIES

Croydon Libraries

Book Nook brings library services to communities

The West Wickham and Shirley Baptist Church (WWSBC) Hub is now home to its own book collection. As part of the council's library outreach work, The Book Nook has been fully stocked and is welcoming guests!

Croydon's library outreach service is part of the borough's new libraries model - designed to help more people enjoy library services.

The Book Nook is a new addition to WWSBC Hub, where visitors will find not only books but reading groups and games clubs. The Book Nook will host regular story times for families with children aged under five, and other creative activity sessions for children and adults. Children will also be able to take part in this year's Summer Reading Challenge at the Nook.

Anne Harden, a regular at the Shared Reading group, said: "Socialising is so important to me. To be able to come to The Book Nook, have a cup of tea and join friends at the Shared Reading group means such a lot."

WWSBC Hub is a hive of activity with a coffee shop, children's soft play, exercise classes and an art group. The Food Pantry provides food at a low cost for anyone in need, and the Baby Bank is open to those on a low income, stocking everything from clothing to cots.

Rev Jon Hills, senior minister at WWSBC, said: "West Wickham and Shirley Baptist Church is passionate about helping to build a better community, and that's how The Hub was born."



The Book Nook group

Whether you're popping in for a coffee, grabbing a book, meeting friends or picking up bits from our food pantry or baby bank, everyone is welcome."

wwsbc.org.uk/hub

The Hub really appreciates donations of food and baby items.

libraries.croydon.gov.uk

New chapter with community bases

It's the start of a new chapter for four former Croydon library buildings – as the council announces the local partners who will run them as community bases.

Asian Resource Centre Croydon (ARCC) will move into Broad Green. The new hub will offer a flexible, welcoming space for learning and wellbeing through services and activities for the local community.

The Bradmore Green Community Hub will become a non-profit Community Interest Company (CIC), providing a range of activities and services, including room hire, library outreach, tutoring and neo-natal classes.

It will also host a new term time preschool for 0-4 years, called Meadows and run by Bluebells Pre-School.

The Story Sanctuary at Sanderstead will be a creative health and wellbeing hub where all are welcome to come together to make, share, rest, laugh and reconnect. Working with local residents and creative and voluntary organisations, activities at the hub will include arts and writing, music, games, gardening, and a library outreach service including Rhymetime.

In Shirley, Play Place will provide youth and community services alongside library services, with new opportunities for residents of all ages to enjoy.

Enjoy our Summer Reading Challenge!

Croydon Libraries, in partnership with The Reading Agency, are excited about this year's Summer Reading Challenge.

The theme: Story Garden - Adventures in Nature and the Great Outdoors, invites children to dive into a world of imagination through reading.

The Summer Reading Challenge is free and available at all Croydon libraries from Saturday 5 July. Children who join Story Garden can read new books and take part in free activities, exploring the connection between storytelling and nature.

This year's challenge features artwork by award-winning illustrator Dapo Adeola. His incredible illustrations bring the Story Garden to life, filled with magical creatures, plants, and flowers to spark children's imaginations.

libraries.croydon.gov.uk

OUR HEALTH

Get creative, it's good for your health

Creative activities like dance, music and crafts will help you feel happier and can even improve your health, Croydon's health chief has confirmed.

The latest report from Croydon's director of public health encourages residents to make time for visual and performing art, singing, cooking and activities in nature, such as gardening and walks.

Croydon's year as London Borough of Culture 2023 offered residents more opportunities to get involved in creative activities, and most people who attended said it was good for their mental health.

There are many arts and culture events and activities running across the borough for all ages - from Rhymetime in our libraries, to Museum of Croydon exhibitions and activities, and Croydon PrideFest and other summer events.

While taking part in a creative writing group delivered by Croydon resident Maureen Lishomwa, Mary from New Addington said: "The writing has given me extra confidence to use my voice. It has also given me the chance to do something for myself while caring. Now, instead



Photograph by Rachel Adams

of just sitting and watching the television with them, which I don't even really like, I can do my writing. I've never done anything for myself before. So, it's really helped to change a lot in my life."



Read the director of public health's report in full

croydon.gov.uk/dph-report

Find more information about creative health in Croydon at

culturecroydon.com

or contact your closest library or search local listings websites to find creative activities.



Photograph by Culture Croydon

ADVERTISEMENT

MORE WAYS TO MOVE IN CROYDON

Choose to move at your local leisure centre and you'll also support the health and wellbeing of communities across Croydon. Whether you're interested in visiting a few times a month, or looking to enjoy activities more than once a week, get the access you need at a price that works for you.

Book an activity at your local centre, or start your membership online.

better.org.uk/croydon

Better is a registered trademark and trading name of GLL (Greenwich Leisure Limited), a charitable social enterprise and registered society under the Co-operative & Community Benefit & Societies Act 2014 registration no. 27793R. Registered office: Middlegate House, The Royal Arsenal, London, SE18 6SX. Inland Revenue Charity no: XR43398



CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk

BETTER

Serving aces - we've got free places

Free tennis sessions for all

If you have been inspired by Wimbledon, the summer months are a great time to pick up your racket and visit one of Croydon's refurbished tennis courts.

Purley Sports Club runs a range of lessons for adults and children at a range of levels. The council and Better are working with the club to provide free coaching sessions over the summer at the following locations:

- Trumble Gardens, Thornton Heath
Sundays 10-11am (supported by Barclays)
- Shirley Church Recreation Ground - Wednesdays 5-6pm
- Purley Beeches Wood - Saturdays 2-3pm

A Barclays Big Tennis Weekender is also being held on Saturday 26 July at Trumble Gardens, Thornton Heath, where residents will have the chance to try out the game for free with coaches on hand to help. It is being organised in partnership with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and Purley Sports Club. Further details can be found by contacting

tennis@purleysportsclub.co.uk

Residents can benefit from 32 courts across 14 Croydon parks being refurbished last year, using investment from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) Parks Tennis Project. Renovations included resurfacing, repainting, new fencing, nets, gates and a booking system to ensure the courts can be protected and enjoyed by residents for years to come.



Photography by Glenn Foster

There are a number of free tennis court sessions available to book each week throughout the borough here:

clubspark.lta.org.uk/CroydonParksTennis/Bookacourt

Sign up to be a Barclays Free Park Tennis activator

If you enjoy playing tennis and would like to help your community to discover the sport - sign up to become a Barclays Free Park Tennis activator. Free training will be provided through the LTA.

Find out more on the LTA website lta.org.uk

or email: tennis@purleysportsclub.co.uk

Celebrating sporting success at GLL Sports awards



Erin O'Flaherty is ranked fourth in the UK in wheelchair racing

Talented athletes were celebrated at Croydon's GLL Sport Foundation awards at Ashburton Hall, where it was announced who will receive financial support.

The Foundation will be supporting 111 local athletes this year, with grants totalling £77,650. Funding helps with essential costs such as travel, coaching, equipment and competition fees, so they can compete nationally and internationally.

Erin O'Flaherty, a wheelchair racer from Addiscombe, will be supported for the second year. Erin, who has cerebral palsy, only tried wheelchair racing for the first time four years ago, yet is now ranked fourth in the UK and in the top 10 worldwide.

The 20-year-old said: "Wheelchair racing gives me a sense of freedom that I'd never had before," she explained. Living with a disability can be difficult - people assume you can't do things.

"Wheelchair racing is an expensive sport. I gave up my job as an early-years educator at the beginning of the year to concentrate on my sporting career, so I am very grateful for the GSF award."

OUR CULTURE



Celebrating love, diversity and community at PrideFest 2025

Croydon PrideFest 2025 is set to return to Wandle Park on Saturday 19 July, promising a day filled with vibrant performances, delicious food, and a lively parade.

This year's event is proudly sponsored by Superdrug, supporting a celebration of inclusivity and community. Attendees can look forward to incredible live performances, including headline act The Cheeky Girls!

Identical twins Gabriela and Monica burst onto the UK music scene in 2002 with their unforgettable audition on Popstars: The Rivals.

Joining the line-up are The X Factor winner Louisa Johnson and BootyLuv, whose biggest hits include Boogie 2nite, Shine and Don't Mess With My Man.

More performers are yet to be announced, including a diverse mix of top drag artists, local singers, dancers, and community groups. The festival will also feature community stalls and a wide range of food and drink vendors.

Celebrations begin with a parade which sets off at 12 noon from outside Marks & Spencer on North End, making its way through the town centre to Wandle Park.

PrideFest begins at 1pm with a full lineup of entertainment running until 9pm, followed by after-parties at select town centre venues to be announced.

Tickets are free but must be registered in advance via the Eventbrite website. For more information and to register, visit:

croydonpride.org.uk

Forge: Industries of Croydon

An exhibition exploring how industry has shaped Croydon

Croydon has a rich industrial past that has shaped the town and borough we see today. From its rural roots to its factories and power stations, Croydon has been making products for centuries.

Opening from 18 July, Forge: Industries of Croydon celebrates the people, places and innovations of industry in the borough, past and present.

Along with an overview of iconic factories such as Trojan, Bourjois and Philips, the exhibition explores three fascinating areas of local industry - textile cleaning and dyeing, beer brewing and metal working. Explore Gillet and Johnson's fascinating bell foundry, creators of the largest tuned bell in the world, or the 350-year history of beer brewing on High Street.

At the core of the display are images of Addington Forge, taken by local photographer Lee Williams. Dating back to 1740, the blacksmiths' forge is still in full use and William's photographs reveal behind-the-scenes of this traditional industry.

There will be a range of events suitable for everyone at the free exhibition, which is open Wednesday to Friday, first floor, Croydon Clocktower.

museumofcroydon.com



Costa Del Croydon

The ultimate summer escape in Croydon town centre is back! From Friday 1 August, Costa Del Croydon will once again bring seaside fun to Centrale's rooftop, creating an unforgettable summer experience for everyone who lives and works in Croydon.

Following the first city beach last year, which welcomed over 30,000 visitors, Costa Del Croydon is returning with even more to offer. There will be the splash zone, mini go-karts, trampolines and bingo and a whole host of daily activities for all the family.

New for 2025 is a dedicated 'quiet space' for those who want to escape the hustle and bustle; a new toddler paddling zone; new vendors, as well as activities every day.

Open seven days a week with two sessions daily: 11:30am – 3:00pm and 3:30pm – 7:30pm, featuring a mix of free and paid activities. Free tickets are available to book weekly, with space for walk-ups daily.

For more information and to book your free ticket visit:

centraleandwhitgift.co.uk



Photography by Glenn Foster



Croydon gets creative with the National Gallery

Residents showed off their artistic skills at the National Gallery's Art Road Trip, which came to Croydon over the May bank holiday weekend.

Popping up in New Addington, Croydon town centre and Thornton Heath, the gallery's mobile art studio brought free art activities and hands-on workshops, inspired by some of their well-known paintings.

Croydon marked the final pit stop on their UK-wide tour, to celebrate the National Gallery's bicentenary year.

In July 2023, John Constable's famous painting The Cornfield came to Thornton Heath Library, giving residents a unique opportunity to see the original painting up close.

The National Gallery will return in 2026 with Art On Your Doorstep, which will see life-size replicas of artworks exhibited in unexpected locations across Croydon!

The events continue an ongoing partnership between Croydon Council and The National Gallery.

SAVE THE DATE

Summer Festivals

Croydon Carnival: check website for dates

A celebration of West Croydon's unique diversity of food, religion and culture will be celebrated. Organised by London Road Business Association, in collaboration with the council, London South Bank University (LSBU), FM Conway and other partners, enjoy live music and performances, delicious food from around the world and activities for all the family.

croydoncarnival.com

Croydon Food and Music Festival: 31 August, 12-7pm.

This fantastic festival, the largest in Croydon, returns after a hiatus in 2023. Take part and you'll be supporting your local food and drink traders. Croydon Council is supporting South Croydon Business Association, who run the festival, through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

croydonfoodfestival.co.uk

Open House: 13-21 September

Every year, buildings and other iconic sites open to the public, so residents can explore and learn about their history and architecture for free. Tours of the town hall and design-led activities for families are on offer. Bookings open at midday on Wednesday 20 August. Visit the website to register.

open-city.org.uk/open-house-festival

OUR CULTURE

Celebrating Croydon's renowned composer

We are all familiar with this face in Croydon but do you know who it belongs to?

It is composer and conductor, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor who grew up and lived most of his life in the borough. Born on 15 August 1875, the son of a Sierra Leonean doctor and English mother, he was an extraordinarily gifted young musician who entered the Royal College of Music aged just 15. He went on to be one of the most well-known and successful composers of his time.

Read on to find out more about him and how we plan to mark his 150th anniversary in August.



The life of Croydon composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, though tragically short, was one of outstanding achievement.

Born in Holborn in 1875, during his first year he came to Croydon which would be home for the remainder of his life.

With his father returning to Africa, Samuel was gifted a small violin. Croydon's Joseph Beckwith recognised Samuel's competence and became his violin and music mentor.

Samuel enrolled as a student of violin and piano at the Royal College of Music in 1890, later dropping the violin for composition. In 1895 he was appointed a teacher at the Croydon Conservatoire of Music.

In an 1896 collaboration with American poet Paul Laurence Dunbar Samuel's contribution was *Hiawatha Sketches for Violin and Pianoforte*. From this arose *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* which is among Samuel's most appreciated pieces.

By 1900, *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* had gained vogue in America. He first visited America in 1904 and was received at the White House by President Roosevelt.

By 1905 he was professor of theory and harmony at the Crystal Palace School of Art and Music and in 1910 was appointed professor and sub-conductor at the Guildhall School of Music, London. He also became the first President of the Croydon Stagers.



Samuel Coleridge Taylor mural at Centrale by artist Bareface



In 1899 Samuel married vocalist Miss Jessie Sarah Fleetwood Walmisley at Holy Trinity Church, Selhurst. Their son, Hiawatha, was born in 1900, and their daughter Gwendoline, the future conductor and composer Avril Coleridge-Taylor in 1903.

In August 1912, Samuel collapsed at West Croydon Station. He was nursed at home by Jessie. Although not thought to be in danger, pneumonia set in and he died aged 37 on 1 September. He was buried in Bandon Hill Cemetery.

*By John Hickman and Carole Roberts,
Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society*

Anniversary celebrations start on Coleridge-Taylor's birthday, Friday 15 August.

Over the weekend of 16-17 August, North End will come alive with the sound of street music. Musicians of all styles, from string quartets to steel pan, will be taking part in a two-day free anniversary party. There will be plenty of hands-on activities for both adults and children too. Join us and make some noise for Samuel Coleridge-Taylor!

The 150th anniversary event is supported by URW.
Check www.culturecroydon.com for full event programme.

Share your home, make a difference

Croydon Shared Lives is a life-changing programme which allows adults with care and support needs to live independently within a supportive, family-like environment. Carers go beyond traditional caregiving, opening their homes to those who need their help.

Residents are matched to a carer who understands them and can help them with daily activities. It can be a long-term or short-term arrangement. The care provided is always personalised, allowing residents to thrive and live life to the fullest while creating deep bonds that benefit both parties.



Sylvia and Francis

Meet Frances and Sylvia

Frances has been a dedicated Shared Lives carer for over 14 years. She joined the scheme during a difficult time in her own life, following the loss of both her son, who had a severe disability, and her husband. Croydon Shared Lives gave her a new purpose.

"Without Croydon Shared Lives, I could have been sitting in the corner," Frances admits. "But here, we do everything together. You get a family, you get friends, and your own space."

Sylvia, who lives with Frances, has also flourished under her care, gaining new levels of independence and freedom. Frances said: "Sylvia now has her own front door key and goes on walks by herself. The scheme has really helped her to grow."

Sylvia adds, "With the support of my carer, I love going to Butlins, going up to Scotland." Their relationship is filled with cherished memories, from holiday trips to the simple joy of grabbing coffee together.

Has Frances and Sylvia's story inspired you to become a Croydon Shared Lives carer?

Shared Lives is more than just a job, it is about creating a loving, supportive environment. Carers enjoy a regular income, professional support, full training and flexibility.

The application process is simple. You'll receive ongoing support, so you'll never be alone. You can choose to offer long-term or short-term care, based on what works best for you and your household and it's a positive way to make a meaningful difference.

If you are interested in becoming a Shared Lives carer, you can contact us:

Visit: croydon.gov.uk/sharedlives

Email: sharedlives@croydon.gov.uk

Call: 020 8726 6000 ext. 44109

Community podcast launch

A new podcast series has been launched by young people at All Heads Recognized, a community-focused education provider in South Norwood.

In each episode of Turning the Page, AHR students talk to guests from all walks of life, from community leaders to athletes. The students discuss the big topics that matter to them, like current affairs and growing up in Croydon.

The podcast is part of the council's regeneration programme for South Norwood, funded by the Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund and delivered by the council regeneration team.



Season 1 of Turning the Page is available to listen to on Spotify. Follow @allheadsrecognized on Instagram for updates.

OUR COMMUNITY

Historic drinking trough returned to Croydon

An animal drinking trough installed in the borough in 1889, then stolen in 2019 has been reinstated by Croydon Council after it was recovered by Kent Police.

Located on the corner of Coombe Lane and Oaks Road near Addington Hills, the drinking trough was originally a gift from James Spurrier Wright, a local Croydon benefactor, in the nineteenth century. In recent years it has been used as a planter for flowers.

The theft from Coombe Lane was one of several that took place across South London between September and December 2019.

It was recovered by Kent Police following a search warrant where a male suspect was arrested. The case is ongoing as an active investigation.



Work with us

Whether you're just beginning your career or are looking for something new, we have lots of different career options and roles on offer.

We work alongside many great partners, community organisations and resident groups – join us and make a difference in Croydon's communities. Meet Bethany Richards, senior library assistant (Outreach).



Bethany Richards

“

My job is really creative. I get to do everything from running craft workshops to singing sessions. I've built friendships with our regular library users but also get to welcome lots of new faces, including children who come along to choose their first books to read. I didn't know local authorities had roles like this...and I love it.”

”

Why choose Croydon Council?

- **An inclusive workplace:** We value diversity and inclusion. We want to be a workforce that represents our communities, where you can be yourself at work. We've maintained a 0% gender pay gap since 2022.
- **Proud to be Croydon:** Over 60% of our staff live in the borough.
- **Total reward package:** We offer competitive salaries and employee benefits, including membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), shopping discounts, and much more. We're also a London Living Wage employer.
- **Work/life balance:** We understand the importance of balance and offer roles with flexible, hybrid working options. We offer good parental leave and paid volunteering days; as well as special leave to support you when you might need it most.
- **Growing talent:** We take training and development seriously and offer on the job training and access to our diversity talent development programmes.
- **Changing for the better:** We're working to transform how we do things, to provide the best possible services to our residents. Our transformation is a chance to be part of the future council, putting customers first, investing in digital channels and restoring pride.

Apply today

Take a look at our current vacancies.
Visit: croydon.gov.uk/jobs
or scan the QR code.



Croydon commemorates

VE DAY

Have you spotted our stunning new artwork in the town centre?

To commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day, Croydon Courageous has been replicated and displayed on Croydon High Street.

Painted in 1946 by Norman Partridge, this large-scale artwork captures the aftermath of bombing raids across Croydon.

It is a powerful piece of Croydon's history and a striking reminder of the resilience, sacrifice and unity that defined our borough during the Second World War.

Through detailed and moving scenes, Partridge pays tribute to those who kept us going – from air raid wardens and emergency services to ordinary residents who faced extraordinary circumstances.

This public display of Croydon Courageous is a chance to honour Croydon's wartime spirit and reflect on what it means for our present and future.

Thanks to Museum of Croydon, Croydon Archives, Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society, and Phil Reed.

Across Croydon, residents came together at street parties and events to mark the anniversary (pictured right, residents at our Extra Care home in Frylands Court).



Executive Mayor of Croydon Jason Perry with pupils from Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School



Residents at Frylands Court VE Day party

Meet our new Civic Mayor



Councillor Richard Chatterjee - new Civic Mayor

Croydon's new Civic Mayor was appointed at a special mayor making ceremony in May.

Councillor Richard Chatterjee grew up in Croydon and was an NHS hospital pharmacist for 16 years before working in the civil service for 23 years. He has been a public sector trade union activist since 1990.

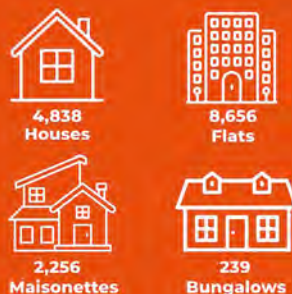
A Shirley ward councillor since 2002, he has held various roles, including the RE committee SACRE, the Fairtrade committee, Autism Partnership Board, and serving as Deputy Civic Mayor in 2024-2025.

He is a member of Woodside Baptist Church and was a founding trustee of Woodside Bereavement Service (WBS), serving for 20 years. WBS is one of his chosen charities to support this year, alongside Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association (CNCA).

The Civic Mayor will perform ceremonial and public duties during his year in office. This is a different role to that of the Executive Mayor who is elected by the residents of Croydon every four years to lead the council.

The new Deputy Civic Mayor is Councillor Mohammed Islam, who has lived in his ward Selhurst, for 22 years with his wife, Farhana, and four children. He works as an Approved Driving Instructor and is a founding member of the British Bangladeshi Society of Croydon (BBSC).

OUR HOMES



Improving our homes

Croydon Council is responsible for just under 16,000 homes across Croydon, including flats, houses, maisonettes and bungalows. This makes us landlord to 15,989 tenants and leaseholders.

From Shrublands Estate to Stanley Gardens, Regina Road to Tollers, we're here to make sure our residents' homes are safe, well maintained and somewhere to feel proud of.

When tenants pay us rent, the money goes into a separate housing budget called the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This money can only be used to manage and maintain council homes, so it goes towards repairs, safety checks and looking after shared spaces.

Milestone in our campaign to improve council homes

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has now lifted the regulatory notice on Croydon Council, after seeing progress in housing standards, repairs, maintenance, involving our residents, and customer care.

This is a major milestone in our work to improve council homes - a priority for the Executive Mayor of Croydon, Jason Perry, in his Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26.

Croydon has invested over

£30M

in 2024/25 to upgrade council homes, installing new kitchens, bathrooms, windows, lifts, and boilers.

If you're a council tenant and would like to get involved in improving housing services contact

Email: residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk

Call: 020 8726 6000
ext. 44524



Estate action days

Our estate action days are all about our communities. We come together with residents and get jobs like cutting back overgrown plants and cleaning signage done.

We know there's still work to do to make our council homes places all tenants feel proud to live in. But by having our residents at the heart of all we do, we are improving standards across Croydon.

Why did the RSH place restrictions on Croydon?

In 2021, after concerns about the conditions at the Regina Road estate and other housing services, we referred ourselves to the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH).

This resulted in the RSH issuing a regulatory notice. We agreed to a voluntary undertaking, which meant we committed to improving housing services, including better safety, repairs, and communication with residents.

What have we done to improve homes and housing services?

Since then, we've worked closely with our independent Housing Improvement Board, which includes residents and housing professionals, to address these concerns and rebuild trust with our residents. The board has helped us to make sure that we meet residents' needs, and keep on improving.

Martin Wheatley, chair of the Housing Improvement Board, said: "The Regulator's decision to end the formal intervention is a well-deserved recognition of the hard work from all involved. We look forward to continued progress, ensuring Croydon becomes an even better landlord."



Image by Common Projects

Zodiac House: a step forward in temporary housing solutions

There are over 8,600 households on the waiting list for homes in Croydon, with more than 400 new homelessness applications each month.

Like many other areas across the country, we face increasing pressure to find housing solutions. Last year, we spent over £12m on temporary accommodation, much of it in hotels that didn't offer the privacy or stability that people need.

To help address some of these challenges, we've recently turned Zodiac House, an empty office building made famous by tv series Peep Show, into 73 temporary homes for residents. By repurposing an unused building, we've been able to provide safer and more stable living conditions, helping reduce the need for costly hotels and overcrowded shared spaces.

We worked with Common Projects to transform Zodiac House into self-contained flats, offering more suitable housing at a lower cost.

Zodiac House is now one of 20 developments featured in Architects Journal's 'Good Homes for All' campaign, which highlights some of the best housing projects in the UK. This recognition shows how we're making better use of space to help tackle housing challenges in Croydon.

This is just one step in our work to provide more affordable homes, improve housing quality, and reduce reliance on expensive temporary accommodation.



Photograph by Agnese Sanvito

Wraparound support helping rough sleepers

Organisations in Croydon's Town Centre Taskforce are supporting rough sleepers to have a more stable life.

The taskforce is a Croydon partnership with the council, police, businesses and community support organisations working with residents to make our town centre cleaner, safer and healthier for everyone.

Change Grow Live (CGL), the council's drugs and alcohol treatment service, regularly walks around the town centre speaking to people on the streets, listening to them and offering advice about health and care services. They have supported some people into housing, where they work alongside them to improve their lives.

CGL also runs a mobile service on a specially adapted double-decker bus for homeless people and rough sleepers, which also has a dentist and barber onboard.

Croydon Reach, another taskforce partner, engages with and helps rough sleepers. They provide comprehensive support with the aim of getting people settled for longer.

Suzanne Morgan, deputy service manager for Change Grow Live Croydon's rough sleeper's team, said: "We're pleased to offer this wraparound service to support homeless people and rough sleepers so that they can get the health and care they need. They often do not access these important services which can be a lifeline to getting them off the streets and into a better life."



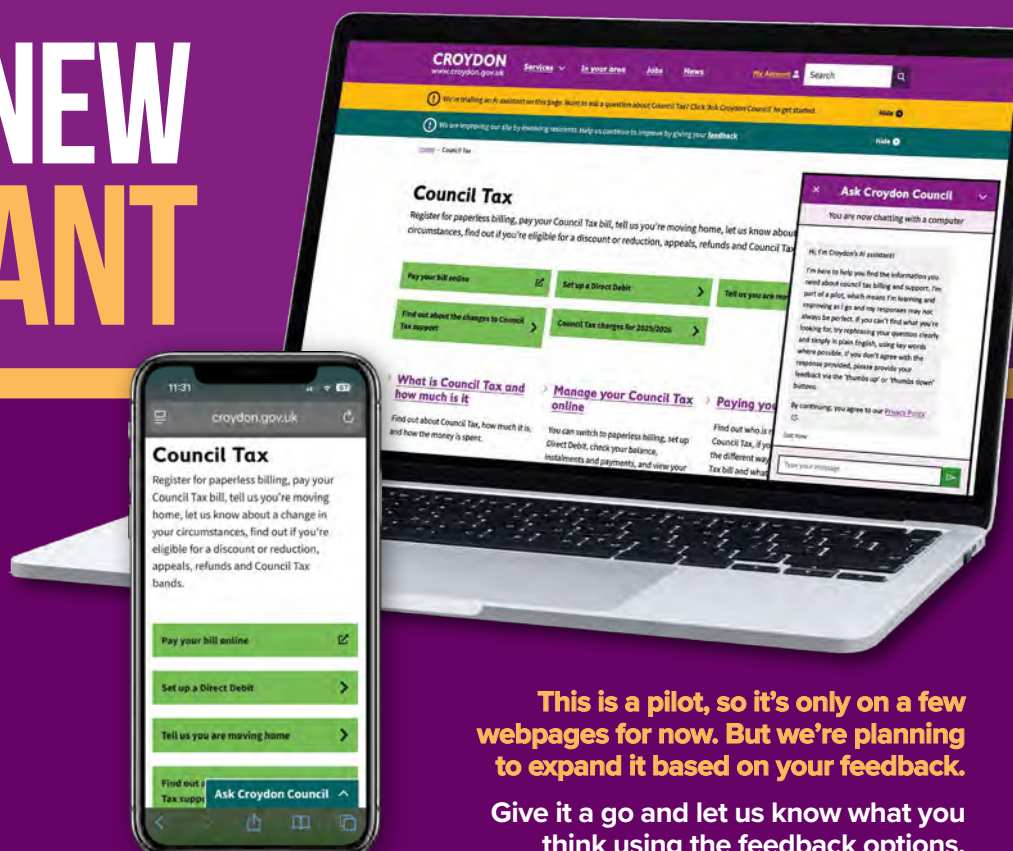
The Change Grow Live team with British Transport Police

ADVERTISEMENT

MEET OUR NEW AI ASSISTANT

We're testing an **AI Assistant** on our council tax billing and support pages to help you find answers quickly, any time, day or night.

- Easy to use
- Available 24/7
- Helps you find what you need, fast
- Our contact centre is still here if you need extra help



This is a pilot, so it's only on a few webpages for now. But we're planning to expand it based on your feedback.

Give it a go and let us know what you think using the feedback options.

Survivors' voices help to tackle violence against women and girls

SAFER CROYDON
WORKING TOGETHER
FOR A SAFER BOROUGH

A panel of women who are survivors of domestic violence, or other forms of gender-based violence, are working with Croydon Council to help address violence against women and girls (VAWG).

The Expert by Experience Panel gives survivors a platform to make sure Croydon's work to tackle gender-based violence and abuse is led by people with lived experience.

Thirteen women volunteered and met for the first time this week.

Survivor and panel member Karen Kelly said: "It is really important to have the voices of victims and survivors on the panels where decisions are being made because unless you have been through it, you will never completely understand it."

She added: "The more we can get a voice out there for women and girls who are victims of

abuse, whether that's domestic violence or other violence, the smaller the circle of opportunity for the perpetrators becomes."

Violence against women and girls harms many residents every year. The council provides support through the Family Justice Service (FJS), which handles 1,500 referrals a year. The FJS also trains more than 200 practitioners a year in how to identify domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Croydon launched its first delivery plan to tackle violence against women and girls this year - read the report by visiting our website and searching VAWG.

croydon.gov.uk



Executive Mayor Jason Perry, Kristian Aspinall, director of community safety, members of the the Expert by Experience panel, and the staff leading on the VAWG project

Introducing DCS Nick Blackburn – our new Borough Commander



I appreciate the opportunity to introduce myself to Croydon residents in the second edition of this new publication.

I should also take the chance to congratulate any Crystal Palace supporters on their FA Cup win and to acknowledge the success of the Victory Parade on 26 May, both from the perspective of the police and the public.

Although I have been a detective for the majority of my 26-year-career - spending most of my time in specialist crime - I sought out the opportunity to return to a frontline uniform role and was pleased to be posted to South Area, covering the London boroughs of Croydon, Bromley and Sutton. I have spent much of the last 13 years targeting serious and organised crime - in particular, commercial armed robbery, gun crime and multi-kilo class A drugs supply. I see my skills as transferable - selecting the right approach to solve issues locally and working with partners and communities to do so. I will of course, maintain strong relationships within specialist crime to draw on those resources when required.

While there are undoubtedly challenges ahead in terms of resourcing, there are also huge opportunities to exploit. Examples include using technology effectively through facial recognition or building relationships to tackle the crimes that matter most to residents and businesses. Although policing demand is high in Croydon, I am pleased to say that we have some of the best performing teams for both responding to calls and getting on the front foot to police proactively. I am asking my teams to target the 'high harm' offenders - those who commit a disproportionate amount of our crime. An example of this is our work leading the way in response to retail crime, targeting prolific offenders and seeking to identify the outlets for stolen goods.

I look forward to communicating with residents regularly and lastly, request your continued support in tackling crime together - I very much see this as 'Our Croydon'.

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