



Countdown to 2023 begins

“Just a month ago London Mayor Sadiq Khan announced Croydon had won the race to be London Borough of Culture 2023 – a fitting recognition of much hard work by our culture team and the borough’s incredibly talented culture network. It is a wonderful accolade less than six months after we reopened the iconic Fairfield Halls as our newly-restored arts centre, now home to a host of exciting organisations. London Borough of Culture is more than a title – it also brings over a million pounds of funding to support the arts and culture across Croydon, which will make a real difference to everyone locally.

Our Borough of Culture bid won support from Croydon’s very own Stormzy, and it was also great to see him win Best Male Artist at The Brits – just weeks after he returned to his home town for a surprise ‘thank you’ gig at Croydon’s Boxpark.

Councils across the country continue to face tough financial challenges due to cuts in funding from central government – despite the ever-growing demand for our services. However, this year in Croydon we have again held our council tax rise for local services to inflation (1.29p per week band D). Our council budget will deliver value for money, and continue to protect key frontline services, such as looking after children and families, the elderly and frail, and keeping all our libraries and leisure centres open.

Children and young people have always been a priority for us as a council, and in the last three years we have invested significantly in improving our services for children and families. I am pleased to report that thanks to the hard work and dedication of our staff, and this extra support, Ofsted have now have rated our children’s services as ‘good’. However there can be no complacency – we want these vital services to be the best they can be, and we will continue to strive to improve them even further.

For those of you celebrating, have a good Easter. ”



Councillor Tony Newman
Leader of the council
 @cllrtony

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Thousands of New Addington residents have been enjoying the community’s new multi-million pound leisure centre



To keep up-to-date with what’s going on, subscribe to *Your Croydon* and receive a free weekly email that’s full of news and information about your borough. Go to www.croydon.gov.uk/subscribe and visit



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Front cover photography includes: Croydon PrideFest by Louise Sullivan; Croydon Mela; Nadia Rose; Croydon Arts Ball by Nudge Photography; Stormzy by Croydon Boxpark; Jam Bus; London Mozart Players; Savvy Theatre; Loyle Carner; Kinetica Bloco; Run it Back by Talawa and Vallerie Savchitis.

WE DID IT! CROYDON WINS LONDON BOROUGH OF CULTURE 2023

Croydon has been named London Borough of Culture for 2023, fending off competition from across the capital.

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan announced the borough's bid. This is Croydon, had scooped the title and the £1.35m funding award at City Hall last month.

Croydon 2023 will celebrate the borough's creativity, diversity and inclusivity, as a town that always looks to the future, ensuring no community is left behind. It aims to show the rest of London and the world how the arts can empower communities to write their own futures and tell their own stories.

With 10 flagship cultural events and hundreds of community projects, the ambitious programme will involve 20,000 participants, every school, 300 volunteers, audiences of over 250,000 and over 1,500 artists.

Leader of Croydon Council, Councillor Tony Newman, said: "This

award is for all of Croydon and everyone who has worked so hard in our bid.

"From Stormzy to our very own Shaniqua Benjamin, Croydon is the home of talent, the birthplace of punk, grime and more, and we have an exciting future ahead. 2023 will be a celebration of our town's wonderful diversity.

"This is Croydon – and we are incredibly proud."

Croydon's bid was developed by the council's culture team working with cultural organisations and people from across the community.

Malti Patel from Apsara Arts; Lizzie Lambie from FMM Pop Up and Shaniqua Benjamin from Young People's Insight joined councillors and council staff at City Hall for the announcement.



Global grime sensations Stormzy and Nadia Rose were among the thousands who welcomed their home town's London Borough of Culture win.

The pair joined in celebrating the announcement on social media, tweeting their delight at the news.

More information on Croydon 2023, including how to get involved in Croydon's year of culture, will be available in the coming months.

Find out more at www.croydon.gov.uk/thisiscroydon



CUBE BRINGS A NEW DIMENSION TO FAIRFIELD

A brand-new community space, the John Whitgift Foundation Community Cube, has opened at Fairfield Halls.

From dementia choirs to inclusive dance classes, exhibitions, workshops for children and live music, the glass-fronted space will host free community events and activities throughout the year, as well as being available to hire.

The Cube is the latest addition to the newly-refurbished arts centre, which reopened last year following a multi-million pound council-led heritage restoration. It has been sponsored by local education and care charity, John Whitgift Foundation.

Slide (South London Inclusive Dance Experience) are there every Wednesday, hosting three dance classes - for over-55s, adults with learning disabilities and an inclusive session.

Slide artistic director Gemma Coldicott said: "Dance provides a way for people from all walks of life to spend time together and find common ground.

"It cuts through anything that we might usually find awkward or uncomfortable in social interaction - you can just put music



on and enjoy a nice experience together."

Caragh Buxton, mum of a Slide youth company member, said "My daughter absolutely loves Slide, it is the highlight of her week.

"The sessions give her freedom to dance, participate and express herself freely.

"I can honestly say that it has changed her life."

To book a Slide session email gemma@slidedance.org or to find out what's on at Fairfield Halls visit www.fairfield.co.uk

THE MUSEUM FOR CROYDON

By Marie Tulley-Rose, Museum and Archive Manager

What's Your Croydon? is the question the Museum of Croydon is asking across the Clocktower for the whole of 2020.

We want to know what Croydon means to you, how you identify with Croydon and how we can give you a trusted space to examine this.

The museum is on a bit of a journey. We have taken the bold decision this year to totally open up our galleries to

local artists, communities and groups, to stage their own exhibitions and activities, inspired by the museum's collections and our collective heritage.

Last year incredible exhibitions, from Saree Unwrapped by Apsara Arts, to Windrush by All Islands Together and Bold by Mark Goldby, paved the way for communities to lead the retelling of their histories in co-curation with the museum.

So in 2020, we are dedicating the museum's spaces to provide a platform for our communities.

We requested submissions for exhibitions and activities based on the themes of place, people and identity - and were overwhelmed with the response.

We have selected nine temporary exhibitors for the year and potentially beyond!), who will work with us to deliver this innovative and exciting free offer for all our residents.

Our first exhibitions are in place until 2 May, with Roots and Branches by Play for Progress, Croydon Through The Lens Of Charles Harrison Price by CNHSS and Storytellers by Good Wolf.

But we won't stop there and we need everyone who comes to visit (either in person or through our brand new website) to help us answer that all important question - What's Your Croydon?

Check out www.museumofcroydon.com



CROYDONITES FESTIVAL OF NEW THEATRE RETURNS

Forget Edinburgh – the borough’s own mini-fringe festival is now in its fifth year and going from strength to strength.

Croydonites Festival of New Theatre returns 26-29 March for a four-day extravaganza of drama, dance, comedy, film and storytelling.

From the magical Granny Pearl to Instagramming the Apocalypse, there is a myriad of shows for all ages, culminating in a ceilidh fusing folk and hip hop styles.

With tickets starting at £6 – £15 for individual shows, and day passes from £15 – £20, it's affordable – and provides a platform for local emerging artists.

The festival has come a long way since first founded by director Anna Arthur.

Earlier this year, a Croydonites-commissioned show by theatre company Parabolic – who are returning for this year's event – was shortlisted for an OFFIE (Off-West-End-Theatre Award)

Anna feels Croydonites' success is indicative of a wider cultural renaissance in the borough.

The festival receives funding from the council's cultural partnership fund and Arts Council England, and members of Croydon's 500-strong Croydon Culture Network have been quick to support her.

CroydonWrites, for example, is the result of a



partnership with local writer Elizabeth Sheppard, offering residents the opportunity to write published festival reviews with workshops and support.

She said: "There is a lot of generosity in the Croydon arts scene – people are willing to support each other and give their time.

"It feels like a brilliant, brilliant time to be doing stuff in Croydon."

BRINGING FASTER INTERNET TO LIBRARIES

Faster fibre has now been installed across Croydon's libraries improving services – including access to more than six million books and 1,000 online newspapers.

All the libraries' 176 computers – and any personal devices – will now connect to the internet faster than before.

Central Library-user, Patricia Judge, 71, said: "I think it's faster than before and quite sophisticated.

"It's really helping me with my research for a book."

Meanwhile library users have been given a first look at the revised design for Norbury Library.

A new lift will make it easier to access the upstairs space, while new lighting and frameless glass doors will create a brighter, lighter, modern and welcoming environment throughout the building.

Young readers will be excited to see plans for the children's library which is moving into a new vibrant and colourful space.

The work is part of Croydon's major investment in upgrading, improving and modernising all its libraries.



STORMZY RETURNS HOME TO PERFORM “THANK YOU” SHOW FOR FANS

Grime superstar Stormzy surprised his fans with a free pop-up show at Boxpark Croydon.

The Glastonbury headliner caught his social media followers off guard when he unexpectedly announced he'd be doing a free show the next day (Sunday 19 January), at a secret location to be revealed 24 hours later.

Just 30 minutes before doors opened, the secret pop-up location was revealed to be Boxpark Croydon, which saw hundreds of fans excitedly flock to the town centre venue in the hope of gaining entry before the site became full.

A lucky 1,200 people grabbed their spot at the “thank you” show, which saw the megastar perform hits including *Blinded by Your Grace* and *Shut Up*, along with tracks from his recently released second album *Heavy is the Head*.

During his performance the rapper, who grew up in Thornton Heath, said he had returned to his home town to say “thank you” to his loyal fans for their support.

“Croydon, I love you guys,” he said. “The kind of career I’ve had, this is all because of you guys. You lot were the first people to allow me to have a career, my community here in Croydon launched me off the ground.

“A free show is the least I can do for my fans. Don’t feel like this is a favour, this is the least I can do for you. Thank you for allowing me to be the artist I am and for allowing me to be the top of my game.”



©lukeobrien.co.uk – Boxpark-Stormzy

PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION

The council has teamed up with tech-giants including Amazon Web Services, Openreach and the Mayor of London’s Digital Talent Programme to boost Croydon pupils’ career prospects with a new digital skills roadshow.

Aimed at 11-18-year-olds, the roadshow aims to raise awareness and aspirations, as well as demonstrate to young people how future jobs and careers are changing, the different tech and digital skills needed for these careers as well as where, and how, to access tech skills.

More than 200 pupils have benefitted from the workshops in the first month alone, with a total of 10 schools set to benefit throughout the spring.

Roadshow activities include Amazon Alexa workshops, virtual reality sessions and GLA Digital Ambassador talks, allowing young people to hear about the changing tech world, its opportunities and career paths.

Imani Salih, a sixth form student from Woodcote High School, Coulsdon, said: “I wasn’t aware that a large tech company like Amazon would have apprenticeships and I also didn’t know that you can do a degree level apprenticeship.”

Georgia Soper said: “It was informative and made me think of potentially looking into apprenticeships.”

The roadshows are the beginning of a raft of tech initiatives aimed at Croydon students happening later this year.

This includes a free digital careers and skills day for Croydon students aged 13-18. Visit www.croydon.digital/skills to register.



of children currently in primary school will go into jobs that don't exist yet

REIMAGINE CROYDON'S SUBWAYS: WINNERS UNVEILED



An underground plaza boasting a restaurant, cinema and running track; drone racing; and the creation of a subterranean mushroom farm; have been unveiled as the winning concepts in the Reimagine Croydon's Subways competition.

The three innovative ideas beat competition from a variety of creative suggestions put forward as potential ways the six subways located around Croydon town centre, could be revitalised and brought back into use.

More than 40 proposals were submitted across three categories – professionals, non-professionals and under-18s – and a selection were shortlisted for public feedback and to go before the judging panel.

Croydon Lives won the professional category. Created by Abigail Watts-Cherry, the concept sees the subways repurposed into a variety of spaces specific to the area in which they are located.

For example, the subway located next to Fairfield Halls would be transformed into Croydon Performs, a cinema auditorium that could screen locally-made and independent films; Croydon Runs would see the Park Lane gyratory become an underground running track with a marked circuit for people to exercise.

Subterranean Mushroom Farm, submitted by Andrew



Dickinson, won the non-professional category and could see the urban mushroom farm currently at Church Road replicated within a subway.

The initiative would take used coffee grounds collected from town centre retailers and use them to grow oyster mushrooms – Cr'Oysters, which would then be sold to restaurants and cafes around the borough.

Riddlesdown Collegiate student Gemma, 12, won the under-18s category with her Drone Racers concept.

Her idea sees the subway tunnels come to life as the venue for drone races, with LED lights used to mark out a race course within the subway.

Each concept winner received a £500 prize, with the prize fund for the under-18s category able to be donated to a charity, school or a community group fund of the winner's choice.

Croydon's Talents, a mural made up of the images of Croydon's most successful musicians, artists, rappers and spoken word artists was the competition runner-up and will receive a £100 prize.



A BUDGET FOR A FAIRER FUTURE

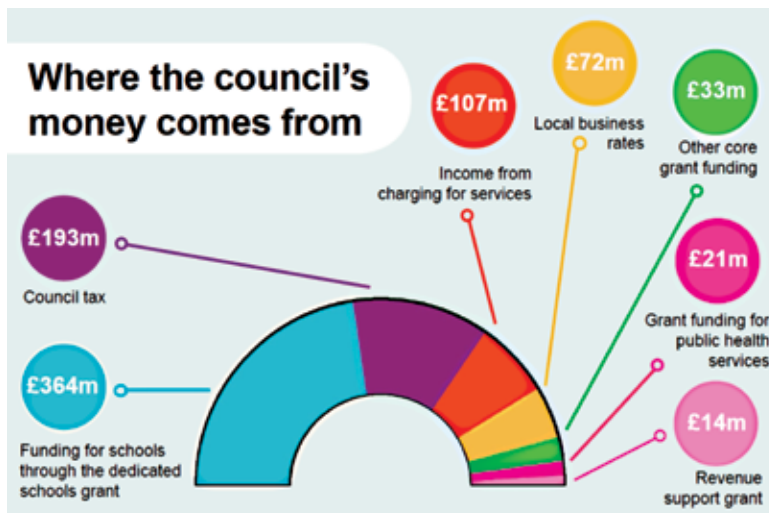
Croydon Council's budget for 2020/21 will prioritise caring for the most vulnerable residents and protecting vital local services to build a fairer, stronger and more sustainable borough.

The council unanimously backed the proposals, including a 1.99% increase in its part of council tax and a total increase of 3.92%.

This year's council tax increase means householders in an average Band D property will pay an extra £1.29 per week. Some of that money goes directly to help care for Croydon's older residents, while 22p will go to the Greater London Authority, whose responsibilities include policing, fire services and Transport for London. It also includes the government's 2% adult social care levy, which is being implemented to ensure the older people and the most vulnerable continue to get the help they need.

Like councils across the country, Croydon is having to balance increasing demand for its services with a decade of underfunding from government.

Where the council's money comes from



The council's spend

Where does the money go?



Against a backdrop of over 70% cuts in central government grants, over the last 10 years the council has found savings of more than £200m through careful financial management, developing innovative new ways of delivering services and strengthening partnership work.

The creation of the One Croydon Alliance, with community organisations and the local NHS, has been helping our over 65's stay healthier and independent for longer.

And through preventative, targeted, early intervention work in Croydon's neighbourhoods, the council and its partners are supporting children and families who need help at the earliest opportunity, delivering services in the right place, at the right time.

BOOST FOR LOCAL DEMOCRACY IN CROYDON

More people will shape local decision-making following radical changes to the council's constitution and structure for the first time in a generation.

Croydon Council has approved the recommendations of an independent review, commissioned to boost participation and promote fairness and transparency.

The council will combine the best of the leader and cabinet model with the committee system, giving backbench councillors greater opportunity to contribute.

Other initiatives include giving the public and councillors more time to speak at council meetings; making it easier to search for information on the council website, and new neighbourhood forums.

Croydon's Independent Review of Governance was carried out by a cross-party panel of councillors led by independent chair Dame Moira Gibb.

More than a thousand residents, 60 current and retired councillors from different political parties, local MPs and eight strategic partners took part in the consultation.

The new structure will be written into the council constitution this summer with full implementation in 2021.

'GOOD' OFSTED RATING FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Croydon's services for children and families have been rated 'good' by Ofsted - just two years after the borough launched a major improvement drive.

Ofsted published Croydon's new rating this week (16 March), following a full inspection in February this year.

They reported that Croydon's services for children had 'improved dramatically' and had transformed since the borough's 'inadequate' rating in September 2017.

Inspectors found 'services for children in need of help and protection are now good, and services for children in care and care leavers are improving well.'

Families who need help receive it at an early stage and social workers work hard to keep them together.

The 'vast majority' of children and young people who are at risk of harm are swiftly identified and given the right support by the council and all its partners.

Meanwhile social workers show a strong understanding of the children they work with, 'feel valued' and 'enjoy working in the borough'.

Croydon is home to 94,000 children under-18 – more than anywhere else in London – and the council looks after around 800 children in care.



Cllr Fleming (centre) with young people from the Choose Your Future campaign

Since 2017, the council has invested an additional £10million in children's services each year and significantly increased the number of social workers, to ensure they are spending more time with children and families.

Councillor Alisa Fleming, cabinet member for children, families and learning, said: "Children and young people are our absolute priority and we have put them at the heart of everything we do."

"This is great news and a real achievement, but it's not the end – we want to keep on getting better until we offer all our children and families the best."

Ofsted said Croydon is 'fully aware' of areas for improvement and 'demonstrates a relentless determination to deliver high-quality services to all children in Croydon.'

Read the report in full at www.reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/3066

FOSTERING ENRICHING LIVES

There are many myths surrounding who can be a foster carer - often people believe their situation disqualifies them when nothing could be further from the truth.

Croydon needs foster carers from different backgrounds, genders, ages and faiths to meet the needs of its community.

Safia, a single foster carer of Islamic faith, found her life was enriched when she decided to give it a try.

She said: "In Islam, fostering is a highly rewardable act and great importance is given to the proper care and upbringing of children, especially those that are vulnerable."

"The main practical consideration specific to my faith was joint-living arrangements with unrelated males in our female only-household."

"However, I was told that I would be

asked about the age range of children and young people I was willing to foster.

"I was invited to attend an information session and training, where I was able to find out more and meet others in the same position"

"When I learned that a high proportion of children that are in care in Croydon are Muslim, I decided to be open and not restrict the age and sex of the children and young people I would foster."

"My daughter and I have learned so much, not just about how to support children and young people with their specific needs but also about their cultures."



Safia

"Most surprising for my family is my newly-acquired, extensive knowledge of football and in particular Manchester City."

"The prospect of having a child or young person who is a total stranger, may be daunting. However, if you feel you can provide a caring, safe home to a vulnerable child or young person, you may find that fostering is right for you."

If you are interested in becoming a foster carer in Croydon, visit croydon.gov.uk/fostering or email iwanttofooster@croydon.gov.uk

CROYDON INVESTS IN MORE COUNCIL HOMES

Another 24 local households on Croydon's housing waiting list will get a new council home built by Brick By Brick in the coming weeks.

The 24 one- and two-bedroom homes at Longheath Gardens in Addiscombe are due for completion by the end of March and each one will go to borough residents in priority housing need. Thanks to a £100,000 grant per property from the Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority, the council has bought them with ring-fenced Housing Revenue Account funding.

The 24 properties had been due to be provided for those on the council housing list as affordable rented flats run by **Croydon Affordable Homes**.

The £3.6m purchase was approved at

January's cabinet meeting.

The first three council tenants moved into newly-completed Brick By Brick council homes in December at Flora Court in Thornton Heath.

Brick By Brick was set up to build good-quality homes on council land, including around half as affordable homes.

Its contractors are building dozens of other housing developments across the borough.

Many more are planned, including over 300 council homes in New Addington.



CHANCE FOR LOCALS TO DEVELOP AFFORDABLE HOMES

Shrublands residents keen on knowing more about - or delivering - new homes on their estate are invited to an event on 28 March.

Between 11am and 3pm at Shirley Community Centre in Shrublands Avenue, Croydon Council will detail how locals can club together with the chance to develop 10-15 affordable homes on a nearby old council-owned garage block.

Called community-led homes, the project is where community groups – with or without housebuilding experience – bid for the chance to design and develop their own homes.

Bidding opens at the end of March and lasts 12 weeks.

Once the council chooses the winner from a shortlist later this year, the homes can be built subject to planning approval.

The successful bidders will get support from the council and Brick By Brick, the council-created developer.

Once the homes are built, they will be owned and managed by the winning group.

The garages earmarked for development are next to an all-weather games pitch and green open space, neither of which will be removed.

The 28 March event will also discuss estate improvements, including parking and infrastructure.

Last August the council chose

Croydon's first community-led affordable homes scheme.

Crystal Palace Community Land Trust will submit a planning application later this year.

To attend on 28 March, sign up via www.shapingshrublands.co.uk

For more information on bidding for community-led homes, contact Zohra Chiheb on communityledhousing@croydon.gov.uk



CASH BOOST FOR HOMELESS HUB

A 24-hour, 365-day homeless hub set up by Croydon Council to get rough sleepers permanently off the streets has received a major funding boost.

The Somewhere Safe To Stay hub opened before Christmas to house rough sleepers, assess their needs and find them long-term accommodation to end their homelessness for good.

Rough sleepers arrive at the hub via referrals from local specialists including the council's Gateway service and partners Croydon Reach and Crisis.

They get same-day assessments of their financial, medical and housing needs, followed by help into accommodation.

This includes supported housing, council homes, private rented properties and housing association tenancies.

In its first eight weeks alone, the hub had helped 49 rough sleepers off the streets, and found long-term homes for 15.

Ahead of a formal launch in January, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government confirmed the council's Gateway service will receive £1.218m in 2020/21 for its ongoing homelessness prevention and intervention work, including the hub.

This follows a combined £1.2m grant received for 2019/20.

The launch was attended by former rough sleepers, council representatives, hub staff, community partners and special guest Roy Hodgson, the Crystal Palace Football Club manager and former England coach.

The club works with the council on homelessness prevention

work by hosting an emergency cold weather shelter at its Selhurst Park stadium.

Delivered for the council by specialist homelessness charity Evolve Housing + Support, the hub includes shared sleeping quarters, female-only shared bedrooms, a private room and a kitchen.

CASE STUDY

Chelsea McCarthy was living in Crystal Palace with her partner until the relationship ended and she found herself homeless and suffering from depression.

The 37-year-old was referred to the hub on 6 January, and by 16 January she was referred to housing provider Changing Lives, who found her a shared house in Thornton Heath on a minimum one-year contract.

Chelsea said: "I love the staff – they're really good and they like helping people.

"I have made some friends and feel much happier; it is the start of my new life."





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PLANS FOR NEW MULTI-MILLION POUND PUBLIC SPACE TAKE SHAPE

Hundreds of people have been helping to shape plans for the Fair Field – a new multi-million pound public space coming to Croydon's town centre.

The ambitious scheme is the next phase of development in the town's emerging cultural quarter and will provide a stunning setting for Croydon's newly-refurbished iconic arts centre, Fairfield Halls.

The Fair Field will be a lively civic space, improve links through the town centre and become a destination for communities, new residents and visitors alike.

Design-enthusiasts of all ages flocked to a series of free public events throughout February, facilitated by brutalist architecture expert and Croydon author John Grindrod, and Croydon's TURF Projects.

Historically known as the Fair Field, then later College Green and Fairfield Gardens, the site was Croydon's venue for social activity and entertainment, hosting fairs and performances until the

arrival of the railways in the 1860s.

It was developed into a public space in the 1960s.

The new scheme, funded and delivered by Croydon Council, will return the site to its much-valued use as a civic space for communities and visitors to enjoy.

A multi-disciplinary team of world-class architects, landscape architects, designers, public art experts, engineers and other specialists were selected following a competitive bidding process last year.

Early ideas for the Fair Field include a naturally-filtered 'water mirror' – a shallow pool with springs reflecting Croydon's skyline – surrounded by greenery.

When dry, the space could play host to performances, screenings or markets.

Meanwhile public art gateways and

lighting installations would light up the area, welcoming visitors to the new public space and the Fairfield Halls.

Together with new landscaping linking to The Queen's Gardens and East Croydon Station, Fair Field will help to join up some of the town centre's main public spaces.

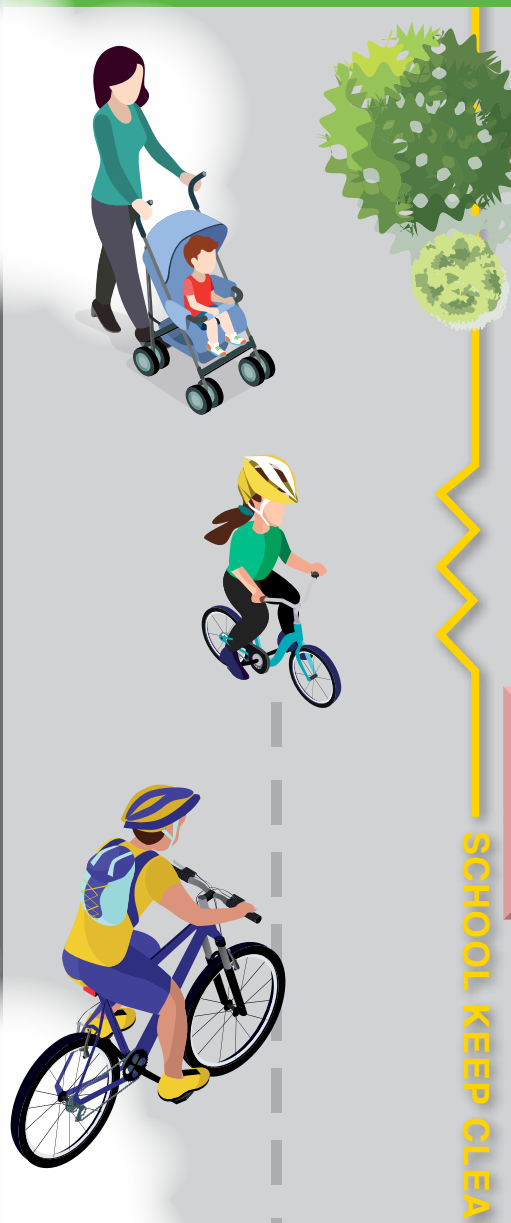
Plans are due to go to the council's planning committee in spring, with work starting on site in 2021.



A NEW MULTI-MILLION POUND PUBLIC SPACE COMING TO CROYDON'S TOWN CENTRE



THOUSANDS BENEFIT FROM SAFER, HEALTHIER JOURNEYS TO SCHOOL



SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR

More pupils than ever have safer and healthier journeys to school as the council brings in more School Street schemes.

The initiative, which bans non-essential journeys on roads nearest schools during the school-run, has now expanded to Cypress Primary School; Winterbourne Junior Girls, Boys and Nursery; Fairchildes Primary and Meridian High School, meaning 17 schools and 9,510 pupils benefit from the scheme.

Croydon led the way introducing three School Streets back in 2017 with the initiative going from strength to strength.

Consultations are set to begin in April on bringing the scheme to up to 10 more schools, benefitting thousands more pupils.

School Streets make it easier and safer for children to walk to school as well as improving air quality outside the school gates for pupils, parents, staff and the local community.

Tanya Braun, head of policy and communications, Living Streets said: "Roads around schools at drop off and pick up times are often dominated by cars - contributing to dangerous levels of congestion, road danger and dirty air. "Air pollution is harmful to everyone but for children it's especially bad as they absorb and retain pollutants for longer.

"It's fantastic news that more children in Croydon will be able to benefit from a safer, cleaner and much more enjoyable walk to school."

The next round of consultations will begin in April for 10 roads.

- Oasis Academy Ryelands, Oakley and Sandown Road
- Keston Primary School, Keston Avenue
- Kingsley Primary Academy, Thomson Crescent and Chapman Road
- Downsview Primary School, Marston Way
- Ridgeway Primary School, Southcote Road
- Harris Primary Academy Hailing Park, Haling Road
- St. Joseph's Catholic Junior School, Woodend
- Ecclesbourne Primary School, Attlee Close
- St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary, Dickenson's Lane
- Christ Church CofE Primary School, Montpelier Road



BLAZING A TRAIL TO MEET THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

People from across Croydon are representing the views of their community as the borough develops ambitious plans to make itself greener.

More than 70 people have been taking part in Croydon's new citizen's assembly, set up by the council to help identify the scale of the climate change challenge and possible solutions.

Assembly members were selected by an independent research company to represent Croydon's diverse communities and their opinions and priorities.

Assembly views have been fed to the Croydon Climate Crisis Commission, who will produce options to reduce the borough's carbon footprint and help the council become

carbon-neutral by 2030.

The commission will be led by Miatta Fahnbulleh, the chief executive of the New Economics Foundation.

She said: "Councils across the country will have to grapple with how to respond to the climate emergency and it's great that Croydon want to blaze a trail for how to work with the local community to develop an ambitious response."



JOIN IN THE GREAT BRITISH SPRING CLEAN

Community heroes across Croydon will join others throughout the country in cleaning up their home borough for the Great British Spring Clean, taking place from Friday 20 March.

Street Champions collected 70 bags of rubbish when they came together recently to help clear a community garden at Laxton Court.

Their efforts were so appreciated they were treated to a warming bowl of vegetable soup made by the residents that live there, using food grown in their communal garden.

Croydon has nearly 400 Street Champions who are helped by the council to organise litter picks throughout the year.

Earlier this year, the Street Champions' hard work won national recognition during the Great British Spring Clean.

To find out more about the Street Champions work or how to volunteer with them email champions@croydon.gov.uk



NEW BIKE STORAGE TO BOOST CYCLING

More than 300 spaces in new secure cycle storage areas are coming to Croydon to encourage greener travel.

The new Bikehangars by Cyclehoop are the size of a single parking space but house up to six bicycles.

They will be installed around the borough, along with some individual bike stands, by the end of March.

The facilities are funded through a £166,000 grant from Transport for London, boosting the council's own investment in cycle parking and storage.

Tom Price, of Whitworth Road, said: "I'm very glad the Bikehangar is here.

"It's saved me a lot of time and effort carrying a bike up three flights of stairs.

Cyclists can register for a space in a Bikehangar online and for a small annual fee, will be given a key to access the hangar.



GREEN PARKING PERMIT SCHEME EXPANDED

All of Croydon's drivers with greener vehicles will benefit from cheaper parking permits across the borough.



A scheme to reward residents with greener vehicles began last year and is now expanding to cover all permit types.

The charges are based on how much CO2 a vehicle produces per kilometre travelled, with a surcharge for older diesel vehicles which produce more pollutants that are harmful to health.

From April 5 the scheme will include all permit types including business, charity, doctor and carer.

Existing permits will remain valid with the new tariff applied when it is renewed.

More information is available at www.croydon.gov.uk/transportandstreets/parking/parking-permits

LOVE LONDON ROAD, LOVE CLEAN AIR

Pollution-busting plants and a zero-emissions delivery service are among a raft of initiatives about to make London Road a healthier, happier place to walk and shop.

Love London Road, Love Clean Air is a £695,000 project, joint-funded by the council and Greater London Authority (GLA), to tackle pollution and improve air quality on this important stretch of road.

Plans include a new Business Low Emission Neighbourhood programme, with a zero-emissions delivery service set up for businesses between West Croydon Station and Thornton Heath Pond.

The project also involves new landscaping, with pollution-absorbing ferns and lichens set to be planted along the route.

And businesses will be offered grants to make environmentally-friendly improvements, such as initiatives that encourage staff to use more sustainable methods of travel to work.

Love London Road, Love Clean Air is among many projects coming to the area this year. Stay up-to-date with the latest information and announcements, and find out how to get involved by visiting www.croydon.gov.uk



DISCOVERING A WORLD ONLINE

Residents of all ages are receiving help and support to get online, as the council joins forces with Croydon-based IT support company, RedDoor IT, to run digital inclusion workshops at libraries.

In each 2-hour session, volunteers from RedDoor teach residents how to use the internet safely, create an email account and start sending emails, shop and bank online, and use social media to stay in touch with family and friends.

After attending a session, Dr Vernon Williams used his new email account to send this feedback:

"Thanks very much for a most helpful talk with clear information on general knowledge on computers and especially on setting up a new email address. Also the excellent support given by support staff. Very good support in that senior citizens are given this level of free courses by Croydon Council."

To book a space and for more information, residents can visit or call their local library or go to www.croydon.gov.uk/smartcity

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THE BIG CONVERSATION

The Big Conversation asks what we want Croydon to be like by 2030.

"I have a young family and we NEED to pass on a better world to them and their generation."

Anonymous survey response

Jobs and the economy

This topic got people talking about how we need to be ready with the skills and infrastructure to power a successful local economy.

"Croydon is undergoing major transformation. This is great news for Croydonians. It's not enough to make sure Croydon residents can apply for these jobs, we also need to make sure they have the right skills to be successful."

Adhnan Ahmed,
Job brokerage manager
at Croydon Works



"The planet is changing and we can all make a difference."

Anonymous survey response

Creating a sustainable Croydon

Croydon has declared a climate emergency and we've been hearing about why this is so important for our borough.

Caring for each other

It's good to talk, and this topic has had people talking about ways we can support each other and our communities.

Safe and secure communities

We've been hearing about the importance of communities in making places feel safe, and how we all have a part to play.

"I think you [the police] build trust through us [the community]."

Cloeme Martelly,
Croydon resident



"I would welcome young people coming to my police stations and telling them [police officers] how it is."

Craig Knight, Chief Inspector,
Metropolitan Police

"Croydon does need more foster carers who are there because they want to help young people."

Mercy Ayesha Alohan-Eke,
foster care leaver



"It's not an easy job but a brilliant, life changing and rewarding thing I've ever done."

Andrew Ng, foster carer

HOW CAN I JOIN IN?

- Have a conversation with your friends, family or community group – download the discussion guide or see some of the videos online for inspiration
- Complete the survey online or pick up a paper copy from your local library

- Email us at bigconversation@croydon.gov.uk
- Be social on **Twitter**, **Instagram** and **Facebook** using **#bigconversationcroydon**
- **Get involved by 31 March**

Bigconversation.croydon.gov.uk



£1.2M AWARDED TO CROYDON FOR WORK TO REDUCE YOUTH VIOLENCE

More than 1,400 school pupils are set to benefit from £1.2m investment which will spearhead Croydon's work to reduce youth violence in the borough.

Croydon successfully bid for the money, from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime's (MOPAC) Young Londoner's Fund.

This has led to the launch of a three-year school-based programme that will see teachers trained to identify young people challenged by the transition from primary to secondary school (years 6 and 7) and by leaving school (year 11).

Ten Croydon schools and colleges are involved in the programme, which also offers trauma-informed training, mental health support and diversionary activities for young people, creating alliances between schools, and support for parents.

The diversionary activities will involve young people gaining experience in a range of employment, environmental,

sport, digital and arts projects, which aim to help address the impact of adverse childhood experiences by empowering young people and helping to encourage behaviour change.

Community groups will lead the activities and they will be co-ordinated by Croydon Voluntary Action, with support from Croydon Council.

TACKLING VIOLENCE AND BUILDING TRUST



Thanks for taking a moment to read the latest updates from South Area police team.

I wanted to tell you about some of the work we have been doing and some planned work that I hope will reassure you that we are listening to what matters to you.

Across Croydon and particularly around our town centre, police are being told that we are not visible enough to the community and that we are not tackling crime and disorder on our streets.

Since last September, we have been undertaking an initiative around West Croydon and the town centre, using officers in uniform and plain clothes to target violence and drug dealing on our streets.

We have made over 220 arrests but most importantly, we are placing long-term court orders on those who persist in causing problems, to prevent them entering Croydon's town centre.

We have eight of these orders so far and plans for more.

These ensure the most problematic people cannot come into our town or if they do, they will get arrested for ignoring the court orders.

But I know that's not enough in itself. We are launching a brand new team, led by yours truly, which will focus officers and staff from across London on suppressing violent crime and disorder on our streets. It's early days but we have already made over 100 arrests, taken 25 knives and weapons off our streets including CS spray, knives and batons, as well as seizing drugs and money connected with crime.

As this work progresses, you will see more police in our town centres and where evidence suggests violence or disorder occurs on our streets. We will work alongside Croydon Council and other partners to put all our collected efforts into making a difference and making you feel safer.

Look out for how you can have your say on what we do, follow us on Twitter, Facebook or Nextdoor so you get to know what's happening and don't forget to tell us if you think you can help.

You can supply information anonymously on Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. Police as always can be contacted online, via 101 for routine calls or in an emergency using 999.

As we hopefully get some spring weather, stay safe, seek advice if you're worried and don't forget that Croydon is a great borough so let's all be proud of our community and make what difference we can, together.

Craig Knight

Chief Inspector 240237
Neighbourhoods and Partnership
South Area Basic Command Unit

YOUNG MAYORS REFLECT ON THEIR TIME IN OFFICE



William and Shea

With elections for their successors fast approaching and candidates across Croydon preparing for the campaign trail, we caught up with the borough's first ever Young Mayor and his deputy to reflect on their time in office.

Young Mayor William Awomoyi and Deputy Young Mayor Shea Williams have blazed a trail, launching a fund for young people's projects to support their peers; organising a jobs fair; representing Croydon at community meetings and more.

William said: "The opportunity to go to the Houses of Parliament was a real high point because I was able to speak to other young people trying to enact positive social changes in communities across the country.

"To have that opportunity and the prestige to debate in the Commons was a great moment.

And they both had some advice for

the next candidates.

He said: "If the next Young Mayor is reading this I'd say you have to be able to improvise in this job.

"You need to be creative and have a positive mental attitude and stay optimistic.

"You'll need to have a genuine passion for young people in Croydon."

Shea said: "I really like the aspect of representing young people and going to Parliament for the first time and being shown around.

"I felt like the jobs fair we organised for young people was one of my main achievements because that was one of the main things I

wanted to do in my manifesto.

"I got so much feedback from people saying they found it useful.

"If the new Young Mayor or Deputy Young Mayor is reading this I'd say have a clear idea of what you want to achieve during your time but also have some leeway.

"Make sure you can compromise but be firm if there's something you know young people really want."

The deadline for submitting nominations is Sunday 26 April 2020.

Visit www.youngcroydon.org.uk/young-mayor for more information on the elections.



NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK EVENT CELEBRATES 100 IN 100 SUCCESS

A celebration breakfast marked the success of Croydon's 100 in 100 campaign last month.

Taking place during National Apprenticeship Week, the event at Croydon College was attended by some of the Croydon apprentices that secured employment during the 100-day initiative, along with their employers and local training providers.

Through Croydon Apprenticeship Academy, a one-stop shop for apprenticeships in Croydon, 110 apprenticeships were successfully created and filled during the 100 day campaign. A further 12 young people have secured new apprenticeships

since the campaign's end.

During the celebration event, some of the apprentices' employers and the council's training providers were presented with certificates by Councillor Manju Shahul-Hameed, cabinet member for economy and jobs, in recognition of their commitment and contribution to developing staff through apprenticeships.

For more information on apprenticeship opportunities in Croydon visit www.croydon.gov.uk/education/adult/apprenticeships



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CarelinePlus specialise in enabling residents to sustain their independence by using Telecare and Assistive Technology.

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If you would like to discuss any of the options available, please call us on **0208 654 7166** or email **careline@croydon.gov.uk**



NEW LEISURE CENTRE GOING SWIMMINGLY

Thousands of residents have been enjoying New Addington's stunning new leisure and community centre since it opened its doors earlier this year.

The new multi-million pound facility had received more than 17,000 visits in February – just six weeks after opening.

The modern leisure centre, with extended sports and leisure facilities, includes a 25-metre, six-lane main swimming pool and a learning pool, an extensive fitness suite, sport halls and multi-purpose activity studios – hosting all the latest branded classes.

Meanwhile an on-site cafe provides post-workout refreshments.

The new centre includes flexible community spaces, including two halls with capacity for around 300 people, with a kitchen, bar, and storage rooms.

The development is the latest step in a major project which will transform the western side of Central Parade, and is part of the council's extensive regeneration plans for New Addington.



The new gym at New Addington Leisure Centre

SPRING INTO ACTION

With the weather getting warmer and the days brighter and longer, this is a great time to keep on track with your health and wellbeing goals for the year.

Our handy **Physical Activity Finder tool** can help you to find and create a list of things you can do in Croydon to be healthier and happier, whatever your interests or ability.

From aerobics and football to swimming, walking and Zumba, it's a one-stop shop for exercise classes, sports and many other activities taking place locally.

Moving more reduces your risk of getting heart disease or having a stroke by up to 35%.

You also have less chance of developing other long-term conditions such as type 2 diabetes and some cancers.

It is recommended that to stay healthy, adults should try to be active every day and aim to do at least 150 minutes of physical activity over a week through a variety of activities.

However, this can be achieved by breaking it down into manageable 15 minute sessions throughout the day.

You can gradually build up your time as even exercising a little, is better than not doing any.

Get started today at www.JustBeCroydon.org/be-active



CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION

The NHS website has the most up-to-date information and guidance about the coronavirus, including the important steps we should all take to help prevent the spread of viruses and germs, and advice for returning travellers from the most affected areas. www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/



TIME TO ELIMINATE MEASLES IN CROYDON

Public health chiefs are encouraging everyone in Croydon to protect themselves and their children against measles by having the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccination.

Measles is deadly serious and there have been recent outbreaks in London, as well as worldwide.

It is highly contagious and those who catch it can develop health complications, which can be fatal.

Rachel Flowers, Croydon's director of public health, explains why we all have a shared responsibility to help close any immunisation gaps in the borough: "We know that among the reasons why some of you choose to not get vaccinated is because you are worried about the side effects."

"However, not being vaccinated against serious illnesses, like measles, can result in them becoming more widespread in our communities - putting your family, friends and vulnerable people around you at risk."

Did you know? Both children and adults can have the MMR vaccine

The MMR vaccination is routinely given to children as a single injection to babies, as part of their routine NHS vaccination schedule, usually within a month of their first birthday.

It takes two doses of vaccine to be fully protected, and a second injection is given just before starting school, usually at three years and four months.

However, the vaccine is also available to all adults and children who are not up-to-date with their two doses - it's never too late to get protected.

If you are unsure if you or your family are fully vaccinated, speak to your GP about the MMR vaccination and how to get immunised against other preventable diseases.



Courses Starting Soon

- Functional Skills ICT
- Functional Skills English
- Functional Skills Maths
- Level 2 Award in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools
- Certificate in Supporting Teaching & Learning in Schools Level 2
- Dyslexia Awareness
- Health & Social Care
- Languages
- ESOL
- Employability
- Learning Support Practitioner
- Special Educational Needs

To find out more about the courses and possible government funding, call 020 8774 4040, email courses@londonlc.org.uk or visit londonlc.org.uk/llc-local



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Council meeting dates

Full council meetings start at 6.30pm and are held in the council chamber of Croydon Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX.

Meeting: Monday 30 March **Deadline:** Monday 23 March

Meeting: Monday 1 June **Deadline:** Monday 25 May

Questions (maximum number of words: 50) for consideration at a full council meeting, can be emailed to **democratic.services@croydon.gov.uk** or addressed to **Questions for the council, Democratic Services, 7C Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA.**

Unless otherwise stated, cabinet meetings start at 6.30pm, in the council chamber of the Town Hall.

Meeting: Monday 23 March, Monday 11 May, Monday 8 June

For information on meetings, minutes and agendas, go to www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings For information on cabinet and shadow cabinet members, go to www.croydon.gov.uk/cabinet

Unless otherwise stated, scrutiny meetings start at 6.30pm, in the council chamber of the Town Hall.

Meeting: Tuesday 7 April, Tuesday 16 June

For information on scrutiny, go to www.croydon.gov.uk/scrutiny or email democratic.services@croydon.gov.uk

Meetings of the Safer Neighbourhood Board are held in the venues indicated. For further information, visit www.croydononline.org/safer-neighbourhood-board

Meeting: Thursday 19 March 6.30pm F10 Town Hall

Details of all Croydon Council meetings can be found at www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings

Useful contacts

For police, fire brigade, ambulance, call: 999 or 112, Text phone 1800

Croydon Council general enquiries
020 8726 6000

GP Hubs and Non-emergency urgent care - 111

Croydon University Hospital
020 8401 3000

Get in touch

To get in touch with the *Your Croydon* editorial team, email: yourcroydon@croydon.gov.uk

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Central Library and Museum of Croydon

Katharine Street, Croydon CR9 1ET

Open: Monday to Saturday (see website for daily hours)

Library – www.croydon.gov.uk/central-library

Telephone: 020 8726 6900

Email: libraries@croydon.gov.uk

Museum –

www.museumofcroydon.com

Telephone: 020 8253 1022

Email: museum@croydon.gov.uk

Guided Walks

While young lambs are trying to find their feet for the first time and new buds are bursting forth there's never been a better time to get out and explore the parks and open spaces across Croydon.

MARCH

Saturday 28

Ponds, streams and wetlands
South Norwood Country Park

Join the warden for an hour and a half walk with pond dipping and bird spotting. Meet by the visitor centre at 2pm. Children over five and families are welcome.

APRIL

Saturday 4

Springtime walk – Selsdon Wood

Meet the Friends of Selsdon Wood by the wooden bear in the main car park off Old Farleigh Road.

Saturday 18

Spring flower walk – Littleheath Wood

Join the Friends of Littleheath Wood for a stroll through fields and woods searching for the first spring flowers. Meet at 10am by the entrance near the junction of Queenhill Road and Littleheath Road.

MAY

Saturday 9

Bird spotting – Hutchinson's Bank

Join a volunteer on a bird spotting walk. Meet by the Farley Dean Crescent entrance at 11am. Bring your own binoculars.

Sunday 17

Brilliant butterflies – Dollypers Hill Nature Reserve

Meet the butterfly border team and discover the beautiful insects living on the site over an hour and a half. Meet at 11am at Caterham Drive, Coulsdon.

For full details, visit: www.croydon.gov.uk/leisure/parksandopenspaces/walks

JUNE

Friday 5

Bat watch – Selsdon Wood

Join the Friends of Selsdon Wood by the wooden bear near the car park off Old Farleigh Road for an evening wander. Meet at 8.50pm.

Saturday 6

Discover green spaces – Croydon Library

Do you want to find your nearest park or learn about bees, gardening, local wildlife or more? Visit Croydon's Central Library for talks, displays and activities throughout the day.



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Mottingham

Saturday 21 March, 10am - 1pm

Visit our next Open Day:

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Saturday 28 March, 10am - 3pm

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