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An immense man of the people

The Mayor of Croydon is the historical and traditional figurehead of the borough.

Whichever councillor is elected Mayor takes a backseat from politics for a year and becomes Croydon’s foremost ambassador.

Becoming Mayor is the pinnacle of achievement for any councillor. It is a distinction that sets them apart and qualifies for a special place in the borough’s annals.

And so it was an enormous shock to lose Jonathan Driver, who cruelly died on New Year’s Eve with nearly five months of his Mayoral year still to serve.

The tributes to Jonathan – from political friend and foe, from local business and voluntary groups, from the people he charmed with his Yorkshire wit, and from the pupils he taught in school at Wandsworth – showed a depth of affection and admiration.

It’s no exaggeration to say that he had eased into the role of Mayor, earning respect as one of our most popular first citizens. He chaired meetings of the council with fairness, humour, humility and common sense. He had enormous esteem for the tradition of the Mayoralty – and, by ‘eck, he was enjoying life as Mayor.

While it’s not quite correct to say that he was Croydon’s youngest ever Mayor – a unique achievement that still rests with the now Lord Bowness – at 41 he was, in most people’s eyes, a relatively young man.

He coped stoically with his diabetes and did not allow it to impinge on his civic duties, hence the widespread sense of disbelief that illness curtailed his life in such an untimely manner.

Jonathan Driver may have been small in stature but he grew to be an immense man of the people as Mayor of Croydon.

We sympathise with his family, his friends and his pupils. Above all we commend a colleague who served as Mayor with compassion and a highly tuned sense of public duty. He will be missed.

Councillor Mike Fisher
Leader of the Council
Wellesley Road design shortlist drawn up

Competition proves fierce for job of redesigning Croydon’s “canyon”

The transformation of the Wellesley Road/Park Lane town-centre through route is a step closer with the announcement of four shortlisted architectural practices.

Each has been invited to submit design concepts for the regeneration of this key traffic route, sometimes likened to a canyon running through the middle of one of London’s largest town centres.

Following the launch of the competition in mid-October 2008, 50 practices submitted expression-of-interest documents, containing their initial ideas, together with company details and illustrations of their experience. The competition to transform what many consider to be London’s third city had an international flavour, with 36 submissions received from the UK, nine from Europe (including Spain, Portugal, Italy, Denmark, Sweden and Portugal) and five from North America.

Detailed submissions for stage two of the design competition are due to be submitted by 2 April, and Croydon Council expects to appoint the winning design team in June. Details of the competition can be found at www.croydonthirdcity.co.uk

Waddon by-election date confirmed

A by-election will be held in Waddon on Thursday, 12 February, to choose a successor to the seat that became vacant following the untimely death of Councillor Jonathan Driver, the Mayor of Croydon.

In 2006, Waddon was one of the most keenly contested wards in the borough, with a dozen candidates vying for the three seats. Polling, at six stations across the ward, will start at 7am and finish at 10pm.

The count will be held in the Town Hall, Katharine Street with declaration expected by around 11.30pm.

Proposed Selsdon academy moves to 2010 opening

Uncertainty over government plans causes delay to council

The opening of a proposed academy to replace Selsdon High School has been postponed until September 2010. The council plans, however, to begin the selection process for a potential partner imminently.

The delay has been caused principally by growing uncertainty as to whether the government would allow John Ruskin Sixth Form College to close to become part of the new academy.

The council still believes that inclusion in the academy would have represented the best future for John Ruskin College.

But the council has decided it cannot wait any longer in giving clarity to the parents, teachers and pupils of Selsdon as to what will happen next, so has resolved to proceed with its academy preference but without John Ruskin College as part of the plans.

Despite the unwanted delay, the council believes that – depending on the outcome of consultation – a 2010 opening date should allow for stronger bidding from potential sponsors of an academy, including its own sixth form, on the Selsdon site.

Free winter courses for young

Enrol, have fun, learn a skill – you might even earn a valuable qualification

Hot on the heels of the success of the Croydon Summer Uni, a similar event is being staged over the colder months, continuing the aim of motivating disaffected young people.

Croydon Winter Uni is providing an exciting range of courses and activities for people aged from eight to 24.

Run by Croydon Voluntary Action, the uni offers its courses, free of charge, across sporting, academic and cultural subject areas.

If you are finding it difficult to be motivated, are at risk of exclusion from school, maybe struggling with health or family problems, having behavioural problems or not in any form of education, training or not working at the moment, this programme is for you.

It is free to join, so why not try something different, meet new people and learn a new skill?

Courses available until the end of March include art, multimedia, fashion and animation.

Volunteering opportunities are also available if you are interested in furthering your knowledge and skills in your chosen Winter Uni courses – and you might even gain an accredited qualification.

This encourages long-term development and ability to make a positive contribution to society.

For a full list of courses, and to download application forms, visit www.cvalive.org.uk or contact Winter Uni coordinator Nicole Beckford at nicole.beckford@cvalive.org.uk.

Alternatively, she can be written to at Croydon Voluntary Action, 97 High Street, Thornton Heath, CR7 8RY or called on: 020 8683 5313.

Steve Phaure, CVA chief executive, said: “Croydon Voluntary Action is thrilled to be hosting this exciting project.

“Young people are at the heart of communities in Croydon, their engagement in these courses will ensure they can grow and learn together in a positive environment.”
Helping keep the roof over your head

If you’re having trouble with your mortgage repayments, a new council scheme might help

An additional layer of protection is being offered to Croydon homeowners after the council was chosen as one of the first in the country to introduce a mortgage rescue scheme.

Working alongside housing associations, the council is offering vulnerable homeowners, on the brink of repossession, an affordable way of staying in their homes.

Eligible homeowners are offered two options:

- the first allows them to own their homes on a shared-equity basis, with a share being sold to a housing association, enabling the applicant’s monthly mortgage payments to be reduced;
- the second would see them sell their home entirely to the housing association but remain there as a tenant, paying affordable below-market rent.

The council has already begun accepting enquiries.

The scheme will not, however, be suitable for everyone who is behind with their mortgage, and applications will be considered only when all other options have been investigated.

Residents who are concerned about their mortgage repayments should always keep in contact with their lender and get early advice if they are getting into difficulty.

Anybody wishing to apply for the scheme can contact the council’s housing advice team on 020 8726 6100. They will be referred to an independent money adviser who will assess their application.

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Braking the speed habit

Speeding motorists beware – you could soon get a letter from the police

Following its successful trial in Kenley and Sanderstead some 18 months ago, Road Watch is being rolled out across the borough.

Taking on board residents’ concerns about speeding vehicles, Croydon Council has invested £13,000 in equipment and joined forces with the police to expand the scheme.

Using hand-held laser devices and roadside electronic display boards, volunteers and local police are able to monitor and record the speed of passing vehicles and flash up the information to motorists.

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

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

Parking on a budget

Save money, support the council and help keep council tax rises to a minimum

With the strains on all our finances not showing any appreciable signs of easing, here’s a little tip to save you money when parking in central Croydon.

The council operates some of the best value-for-money car parks in the town centre, compared to its competitors.

In addition to saving on your parking costs, using a council facility goes a little way to keeping council tax increases to a minimum.

Commuters can park for up to 24 hours at Factory Lane car park for £4, or for £7 at Jubilee Bridge car park.

Just a short 10- or 15-minute walk from Croydon town centre, both offer great value for money compared to Q Park in Surrey Street at £8.50, and the NCP car parks which range from £10 at Wandle Road multi-storey to £15 at the Allders and Whitgift Centre car parks.

An annual pass for Factory Lane costs just £300 – equating to only £25 per month – whereas at Q Park it costs £795, and more than three times as much at NCP Wandle Road, where you’ll pay £1,037.

One of the town’s best-kept secrets is Wandle Road surface car park, open to members of the public every weekday after 4pm, and offering four hours’ weekend parking for just £2.70, comparing favourably with the £4.50 charged at Q Park, and the £5 fee at NCP Wandle Rd, Allders and Whitgift.

From Sunday to Wednesday, users of the Wandle Road site can park all evening after 4pm for £2, and for £3 from Thursday to Saturday.

The council-operated car parks can be found at:

- Factory Lane Car Park, Factory Lane, Waddon
- Jubilee Bridge Car Park, Lower Church Street, Croydon
- Wandle Road Surface Car Park, Wandle Road, Croydon

For further information on Croydon Council-operated car parks, visit www.croydon.gov.uk/transportandstreets/parking/carparks/

New year’s honour for Hannah Miller OBE

Deputy chief executive of Croydon Council, Hannah Miller, was appointed an officer of the Order of the British Empire in the new year’s honours.

She received the honour for her work for services to the welfare of children.

Hannah has lived in Croydon since 1985, when she first came to work for the council, managing its residential homes, day centres and sheltered housing. She had embarked on her social work career as a child care officer in Tower Hamlets in 1970.

She rejoined Croydon in 1998 as director of social services after a four-year stint in Islington, where she was chief social services officer.

In 2008, she became executive director of the newly combined department of adult services and housing. Until taking up her new post, Hannah was prominent on Londonwide children’s social care issues, and was a founder member of the London Children’s Safeguarding Board.

Said Hannah: “Naturally, I’m thrilled by the award and never imagined that just doing my job would have led to this kind of recognition.

“T owe a great deal to my husband and two sons who have always supported me, and also the countless, dedicated social work staff who I’ve been privileged to work with for the best part of 40 years.

“Without them I wouldn’t have been able to pursue such a satisfying occupation. They’re all equally deserving of acknowledgement.”
Councillor Jonathan Driver (1967-2008)
Mayor of Croydon 2008

With shock and a deep sense of loss, Croydon Council announced the untimely death, over the New Year break, of the borough’s Mayor, Councillor Jonathan Driver

Councillor Driver, 41, was elected to represent Waddon in 2006, and had served his constituents with commitment and dedication.

He commenced his year in office as Mayor of Croydon in May 2008, and carried out his duties with distinction and a strong human touch.

Highlights of his time in office included leading the town’s armed forces parade in October and visiting Croydon’s twin town, Arnhem, in September.

A larger-than-life figure, Councillor Driver was noted for his deep knowledge and love of history, his championing of the Book of Common Prayer, his passion for music, and a dry Yorkshire wit.

Leader of the council, Councillor Mike Fisher, said: “I’m deeply saddened by the news of Jonathan’s untimely death.

“He was a valued member of the Conservative group, a strong local advocate for the people of Waddon, and wore the Mayoral chain with gravitas and a strong sense of civic pride.

“He will be missed hugely by the council and the borough for many years to come.”

Leader of the opposition, Councillor Tony Newman, said: “The news of Jonathan’s passing away has come as a deep shock. The thoughts of myself and the Labour group at this time are with his family and all those close to him.

“Although previously a political opponent, Jonathan had proven himself to be a popular and able Mayor with a strong sense of fairness and proper conduct. He will be missed.”

Any donations should be made to the Mayor’s Charities, via Croydon Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR9 1XW.

Popping out to help

During February, Croydon Council’s Pop Service will be visiting a number of venues, including those listed below, offering help and advice to older people and those with disabilities. For details of additional venues, visit www.croydonpop.org.uk, check with your local service provider, call 020 8654 4440 or email info@croydonpop.org.uk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>SERVICE</th>
<th>VENUE</th>
<th>SERVICE PROVIDER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues 3 February</td>
<td>10am – noon</td>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>Selsdon Baptist Church, Addington Road, Selsdon CR2 8LA</td>
<td>Croydon Hearing Resource Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 4 February</td>
<td>11am – 2pm</td>
<td>Bus/Table</td>
<td>Parchmore Day Centre, 55 Parchmore Road, Thornton Heath, CR7 8LY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs 5 February</td>
<td>10am – 1pm</td>
<td>Bus/Table</td>
<td>North End, Croydon</td>
<td>Health visitor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat 14 February</td>
<td>10am – noon</td>
<td>Bus/Table</td>
<td>Chelsham House, Bethlem Royal Hospital, Monks Orchard Road, Beckenham, BR3 3BX</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 18 February</td>
<td>10am – 2pm</td>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>North End (near Barclays Bank), Croydon</td>
<td>Health Visitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 19 February</td>
<td>10am – noon</td>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>Peter Kennedy Court, 180 Orchard Way, Shirley, CR0 4EZ</td>
<td>Croydon Hearing Resource Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 23 February</td>
<td>2pm – 4pm</td>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Arun Court, 12 Howard Road, South Norwood, SE25 5DD</td>
<td>Croydon Hearing Resource Centre, Stroke Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 24 February</td>
<td>10am – 2pm</td>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>Lidl, 845-853 London Road, Thornton Heath, CR7 6JH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs 26 February</td>
<td>10am – noon</td>
<td>Bus/Table</td>
<td>Cedar House, Fieldway, New Addington, CR0 6PB</td>
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How you can stay warm this winter – and keep your fuel bills down

In the December edition of Your Croydon, the council outlined how it is addressing the current economic problems, and their impact on Croydon residents. As any householder will be aware, the winter months invariably mean increased energy bills and other costs incurred in keeping warm.

A number of projects and services offering advice on improving energy efficiency, cutting fuel costs, and reducing energy bills, is available to residents. Some are specifically aimed at older people, given their increased vulnerability to the cold; while others are available in specific areas in the borough where the financial pressures that come with increased energy bills are felt most.

Some services, though, are available to all borough residents, and the council feels it is vital that everybody is made aware of these services, and how they can be accessed.

Services available

Savings in the region of £340 can be made on home fuel bills with a visit to the Energy Saving Trust website at www.est.org.uk/check where you simply complete a free home energy check.

The site also hosts an online energy doctor service – follow the links and ask the energy doctors a question.

The trust’s advice centre in London offers free, impartial advice to help Londoners reduce their energy consumption.

Phone: 0800 512 012 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) Website: www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy_efficiency/coldbusters.asp

The Warm Front initiative provides grants of up to £2,700 for people receiving benefits and living in private accommodation to install various energy efficiency measures in their homes.

Phone: 0800 316 2805 Website: www.warmfront.co.uk

Winter fuel payments provided by the government are available to people who were 60 years old before 20 September last year.

The payments increased that month from £200 to £250 for people over 60, and from £300 to £400 for those over 80.

More information on the services available to older residents can be found at www.croydon.gov.uk/keepwarm

The Keep Croydon Warm initiative is a partnership between Croydon Council, British Gas and the Energy Saving Trust.

It provides loft and cavity-wall insulation at discounted prices, and residents who arrange insulation through the scheme will receive a £100 discount off their next council tax bill.

Some residents are also entitled to free insulation, and the average annual fuel bill saving for homes that participate in this scheme is between £130 and £220.

The Croydon Home Visiting Scheme operating in the Thornton Heath, Selhurst, Fieldway and New Addington wards, and aiming to distribute energy-efficiency investment directly into areas of need is currently being reviewed.
Practical tips for reducing energy costs

10 ways to save energy, money, and help prevent climate change.

1. Turn your thermostat down. Reducing your room temperature by 1°C could cut your heating bills by up to 10%, saving about £60 per year. If you have a programmer, set your heating and hot water to come on only when required, rather than all the time.

2. Is your water too hot? Your cylinder thermostat should be set at 60°C/140°F. Your hot water can be kept insulated by using a cylinder jacket.

3. Close your curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping through the windows and check for draughts around windows and doors.

4. Always turn off the lights and close the door when you leave a room.

5. Don’t leave appliances on standby, and remember not to leave laptops and mobile phones on charge unnecessarily.

6. If possible, fill up the washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher: one full load uses less energy than two half loads.

7. Boil only as much water as you need (but remember to cover the element if you’re using an electric kettle).

8. A dripping hot water tap wastes energy and in one week wastes enough hot water to fill half a bath, so fix leaking taps and make sure they’re fully turned off.

9. Use energy-saving light bulbs. They last up to 10 times longer than ordinary bulbs, and using one can save you around £45 over the lifetime of the bulb. This saving could be around £70 over its lifetime if you’re replacing a high-wattage incandescent bulb, or one used for more than a few hours a day.

10. Do a home energy check (www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/check). Answer a few simple questions about your home and you will receive a free, impartial report telling you how to save up to £340 a year on your household energy bills.

Visit: www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/What-can-I-do-today/Getting-started

Contact details of available projects and services

Organisations that can provide advice, assistance, and services include:

Creative Environmental Networks
Ambassador House, Brigstock Road,
Thornton Heath, CR7 7JG
Tel: 020 8683 6600
Fax: 020 8683 6601
Email: enquiries@cen.org.uk
Website: www.cen.org.uk

Coldbusters
Tel: 0800 512 012 (freephone)
Website: www.cen.org.uk/energy_efficiency/coldbusters.asp

Warm Front
Tel: 0800 316 2814 (freephone)
Winter fuel payment helpline
Tel: 08459 151 515 (local rate)
Typetalk: 08456 015 613
Website: www.dwp.gov.uk

Energy Saving Trust
Tel: 0800 512 012 (freephone)
Email: advice@est-london.org.uk
Website: www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/london

A number of projects and services offering advice on improving energy efficiency, cutting fuel costs, and reducing energy bills, is available to residents.

Some residents are also entitled to free insulation, and the average annual fuel bill saving for homes that participate in this scheme is between £130 and £220.
Hidden treasures and secrets of life on board Henry VIII’s flagship revealed in unique exhibition

Croydon will be the place to visit between April and August when a major exhibition, entitled Hidden Treasures from the Mary Rose, opens in Haling Park, the home of Whitgift School.

The sports and conference centre at the school will house a sensational collection of more than 200 artefacts, raised from the Solent in 1982, after 437 years underwater.

As well as displaying many of the finest treasures from the Mary Rose, the exhibition will feature fascinating insights into the daily lives of officers and ordinary sailors.

The Mary Rose Trust has agreed to provide some of its most cherished artefacts for the exhibition, many of which have never before been on public display.

It will be the largest exhibition of Mary Rose treasures to be seen outside Portsmouth, made possible through a partnership between Whitgift School, Croydon Council, the Mary Rose Trust and the Whitgift Foundation.

The exhibition is timed to coincide with the 500th anniversary of the accession of Henry VIII, and will be one of the highlights of a series of activities nationwide marking this important historical event. It is expected to attract tens of thousands of visitors to the borough.

Ticket prices have been heavily discounted, with Croydon residents seeing 50% lopped from their admission charge.

Major items from this world-class collection will be given fresh interpretations, and computer-generated imagery will give visitors the first opportunity to see the faces of Mary Rose crew.

The exhibition offers an unrivalled educational opportunity for schoolchildren, with free admission for pre-booked school groups and their teachers.

A key focus will be learning, and the exhibition will target Key Stage needs through discovery visits, workshops and lectures.

A team of small, well-trained dogs, with their handlers, will lead school children round the exhibition to find out more about the life of their “ancestor”, the ship’s dog.

A number of associated activities, including falconry displays, archery demonstrations and concerts of Tudor music, will add extra interest.

There will be an important outreach programme, and special needs workshops will be available.

Related cultural and educational activities focusing on the Tudor period will be programmed for the exhibition period, through the council’s own resources and partner organisations, to provide a Croydon perspective for visitors.

Corporate hospitality packages and sponsorship opportunities are available for companies and individuals who may wish to be associated with the whole exhibition or with key exhibits.

Don’t miss this exciting opportunity – book your tickets today.

For more information, visit www.maryrosehidden treasures.org or call 020 8633 9939.
New funding promises improvements to range of services for older people and those with disabilities

Services for older people, including those offered by the much-valued Pop Service, will benefit from a government cash injection of £80,000. The money comes from a successful application to the Innovation for Life Challenge Fund, which invites local authorities to find solutions to longstanding problems that have the potential to lead to real social change and improvement in health and well-being.

One such solution found by Croydon Council, and supported by partner agencies, has been the extension of the Pop Service; which provides information and advice to older people and those with disabilities, in their communities.

In addition to a table-top service, the purpose-built Pop bus has a full timetable of stops at borough locations that might not otherwise receive a visit, because, for example, no suitable community premises are available (see page five).

Service users are able to get practical help and advice on a range of matters including benefits allowances, pensions and housing.

They can also get blood pressure checks, hearing tests, and advice on diet, exercise and medicine management.

The existing service is expected to be extended using a social enterprise model and by providing additional facilities, not provided by the bus, at the council’s Aztec Centre, in Thornton Heath.

The centre helps promote independent living for people with disabilities.
The door opened on the future of sheltered housing for older people with the recent official opening of Fellows Court and Coleby Day Activities Service.

The cake-cutting ceremony marked the completion of the first scheme under Croydon Council’s Homes for the Future project.

With council leader Mike Fisher doing the honours, the new facilities at the Morland Road, Addiscombe, site offer older people the opportunity of independent living, behind their own front door, safe in the knowledge that help is close at hand when needed.

More than 100 guests attended the celebrations, which saw the unveiling of a commemorative plaque acknowledging Anne Fellows, who worked tirelessly to improve services for older people in the borough, and who, sadly, died before she could see the fulfilment of her work.

Fellows Court forms part of a £38m council scheme to modernise and enhance services for older people in the borough.

Extra-care housing enables older people to live in their own home, while receiving intensive levels of help and support at the times when they need it most.

Offering a realistic alternative to residential care, the day activities services at Fellows Court provide intensive focused support to older people with physical frailties to help them maintain or recover optimal independence.

Designed over four floors, the building comprises 32 one-bedroom flats (two of which have been reserved for rehabilitation and intermediate care purposes) and eight two-bedroom flats.

For frail elderly people living in the community, a 36-place day-activities centre provides essential services including a midday meal, assisted bathing, visiting healthcare professionals and, perhaps most importantly, companionship.
A range of communal amenities is available, including a restaurant, laundry facilities, a fitness and exercise suite, a hairdressing salon, a healthy living centre, an assisted kitchen for those needing to regain cooking skills, as well as arts and crafts, lounge and garden areas.

This scheme has a dedicated staff team providing carer, domestic, laundry and catering services. A freshly cooked midday meal is served seven days a week, and staff are on hand to provide assistance with the preparation of breakfast and supper, and personal care where residents require this support.

The council has worked in partnership with Caring 4 Croydon Ltd, a consortium formed of three partners (Eldon Housing Association, UMEI Investment and Geoffrey Osborne Ltd) to deliver the Homes for the Future programme, providing innovative and imaginative buildings to meet the needs of the borough’s older residents for many years to come.

Success in securing central government funding for the full build costs of the new schemes was achieved after several years of hard work by the council and its partner organisations.

These key partners included the Older People’s Network (OPeN), Croydon NHS Primary Care Trust (PCT), Alzheimer’s Society Croydon, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM), and Age Concern Croydon.

The partnership responsible for Fellows Court continues to work at the heart of the Homes for the Future (New4Old) programme as it goes forward with other projects which will see the replacement of ageing care homes with state-of-the-art facilities offering residential and day centre services.

Those projects are:
• Heavers Resource Centre, Selhurst Road, South Norwood – recently handed over to the council on completion of the building works;
• Langley Oaks, South Norwood – scheduled for completion in 2010;
• Addington Heights, New Addington – also due to open in 2010.

Extra-care housing enables older people to live in their own home, while receiving intensive levels of help and support at the times when they need it most.
Residents have shown they have the will and resource to take back local woodland from the vandals

After years of being blighted by vandals setting fire to dumped cars, fly-tipping, motorbike riding and other antisocial acts, woodlands bordering New Addington have been improved by the work of local volunteers.

For the past three years members of the Addington Conservation Team (Act) have worked hard in partnership with Croydon Council to deliver the Capital Woodlands Project.

And the group’s efforts have been recognised with a London Tree and Woodland Award, for The Most Innovative Woodland Project Demonstrating Community Benefit.

Funded by the National Lottery/Heritage Lottery Fund, the aim of the project was to raise awareness, and improve the environments, of Birchwood and Rowdown Wood.

The Act has grown and now holds two volunteer workdays every month, carrying out practical nature conservation work – coppicing hazel and supplying the product to the local allotment society, keeping pathways open, making charcoal and surveying the woods for future management.

A visitor survey shows that more people, especially families, now use the woods. Many commented on the vast improvements made.

For details of Act and its upcoming events, visit www.addingtonconservationteam.org.uk
Everybody in the borough receives one service or another from the council. Would you like the opportunity to thank an individual for the outstanding service you received from them?

As part of the Croydon Council awards, the Going the Extra Mile category is open to members of the public to make a nomination for a person who delivered a service above and beyond the scope of their role. You can nominate between now and 19 May. The shortlist of nominees will be announced in the summer.

For further information, log on to the council’s website at www.croydon.gov.uk
Nominations can be made online at www.croydon.gov.uk/councilawards
by email to service.review@croydon.gov.uk
or by completing the form on the following page.

When you have completed the form, you can either hand it in at any Access Croydon reception or borough library, or post it to:

Croydon Council Awards
Customer Service Development Team
Customer Services Division
Croydon Council
5th Floor, Taberner House
Park Lane
Croydon, CR9 3JS

• Judging takes place during the year, with final judging in July.
• All nominees will be recognised at a celebration-of-achievements event to be held in November.

You can nominate between now and the 19 May, with announcements made of shortlisted candidates in the summer.
Please help us to recognise those who have gone the extra mile to provide you with outstanding customer service on behalf of Croydon Council. Please complete the following questions, giving as much detail as possible to help the judges:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of individual</th>
<th>Role/where do they work?</th>
<th>Date on which it happened</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

A. What did this person do that you would like recognised?

Please explain in your own words

B. What particularly impressed you about the way this person helped you?

Please explain in your own words

C. How did you feel as a result of the service you received?

Please explain in your own words

If you would be happy for us to contact you about your nomination, please write your contact details below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact me at/by</td>
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Date received by CSDT: AC review: C A P
Historic parks, open spaces and houses gain immunity from future development

Protection of the borough's heritage has been given a boost with the creation of eight new conservation areas and the proposal of dozens of parks and green spaces for inclusion on the borough's Local List of Historic Parks and Gardens.

And there's the promise of a clutch of new local areas of special character, recognising the significant local value of their buildings, promised for later in the year.

A total of 51 of Croydon's parks and green spaces have been proposed to comprise the borough's Local List of Historic Parks and Gardens.

The list has been drawn up to be added to an inventory compiled by the London Parks and Gardens Trust, noting the historical value of local open spaces in all the capital's boroughs.

Only parks that met criteria set by English Heritage can be added to the local list.

All types of open space were considered, including parks, gardens, churchyards, cemeteries, commons and greens.

The extensive range of criteria includes such groupings as:
• sites laid out before 1820 – where a portion of the original layout can still be seen or is buried by archaeology;
• sites laid out between 1820 and 1939 – where enough of the layout survives to reflect the original design;
• valuable settings of historic buildings – which are of value for their historic designed landscape in their own right (e.g. churchyards).

Parks and open spaces across the borough make it onto the list of proposals, including: Addiscombe Recreation Ground, Coombe Wood, Kenley Airfield, Mitcham Road Cemetery, South Norwood Lake & Gardens, Waddon Ponds and Woodcote Village Green.

The Local List of Historic Parks and Gardens is expected to be adopted as part of Croydon's Local Development Framework in 2011.

For full details of the criteria and to see all the proposals for the Local List of Historic Parks and Gardens, visit www.croydon.gov.uk/environment/conservation

Meanwhile, the first boroughwide review of conservation areas and local areas of special character (LASC) for more than 15 years has been completed, and Croydon's built heritage is more protected than ever before.

The borough now has a total of 22 conservation areas, and, once finalised, 40 LASCs.

There are eight new conservation areas:
• Chatsworth Road (Fairfield)
• St Bernards (Fairfield)
• Wellesley Road North (Fairfield)
• Norwood Grove (Norbury)
• Norbury LCC Estate (Norbury)
• The Chapman Houses, Croham Manor Road/Hurst Way (Croham)
• Church Street (Fairfield/Broad Green)
• Beulah Hill (Upper Norwood)

Also, central Croydon has seen its areas extended and added to, to protect the heritage from ongoing and impending change, as well to promote enhancement in the future.

Those areas indentified as new LASCs will not be designated immediately, but are scheduled for consultation this year, with adoption expected by 2011. They include:
• 10-49 Bingham Road (Ashburton)
• 59-127 Chipstead Valley Road (Coulson West)
• Woodcote Valley Road (Coulson West)
• Foxley Lane and Smitham Bottom Lane (Purley)

For more details on conservation areas and LASCs, visit www.croydon.gov.uk/environment/conservation
The initial landings were successful but, although an advance party got to the bridge and bravely held out for several days, the ground forces sweeping up from the south could not reach Arnhem quickly enough.

Since then, all Croydon Mayors and Arnhem Burgomasters have supported and encouraged wider links between the two towns.

Reaching Croydon in May 1946, they found not only a place that had suffered extensive bomb damage but also many individuals who, inspired by the outbreak of peace, welcomed the prospect of ties with a town in the Netherlands.

Within a few weeks of the first meeting between the two Dutchmen and members of the council, a small group from Croydon met representatives from Arnhem and the basis of the link was formed.

For 50 consecutive years, an annual sports exchange took place, and competitions and matches between individual clubs take place to this day.

Over the years, many organisations have established links with their counterparts in Arnhem, including schools, sports clubs, youth groups, cultural societies, church groups and associations of professionals and business people.

The purpose of the link was, and still is, to foster everlasting friendship between the people of the two towns of Croydon and Arnhem. Indeed, the Arnhem Gallery in the Fairfield Halls was named in tribute to the towns’ association.

In 1985, after 39 years of being linked informally, both municipalities signed Deeds of Twinning at ceremonies held in Arnhem and Croydon (picture, left).

Since then, all Croydon Mayors and Arnhem Burgomasters have supported and encouraged wider links between the two towns.

The council’s Croydon Arnhem Committee has now introduced a scheme to provide small grants for organisations undertaking projects or activities that will help to strengthen the link between the two towns.

To learn more about the grant scheme, email lea.goddard@croydon.gov.uk

Alternatively, you can call 020 8670 5730 or write to: Lea Goddard, Head of registration services, 2nd Floor, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR9 1DE.
Heeding the smoke signals

At more than a fiver a packet, cigarettes are an expensive route to possible ill health – and they’re not cool

Last month’s edition of Your Croydon carried an article highlighting the good sense in giving up smoking.

Quoted in the article was 37-year-old Brian, from Waddon, who had been an enthusiastic smoker for about 20 years before attendance at a non-smoking clinic proved to him that the risks outweighed the debatable benefits.

Why did you want to stop smoking?
After several failed attempts at quitting, on my own strength, I eventually realised that I needed professional help to tackle my smoking habit.

How did the sessions fit around your life?
Pretty well. I had to make a slight change to my week, but what I’ve gained from the change has benefited me beyond my expectations. I found the weekly meeting encouraging and informative.

How did you feel about attending the stop-smoking clinic?
Initially I thought the clinic wasn’t for me. I kind of believed that I’d drop out and revert back to my smoking habits. How wrong was I!

How did you feel about stopping smoking?
I knew that I needed to stop, but felt powerless to do so. It was something that I thought I really enjoyed. In hindsight, I realise that I’d only been fooling myself for much too long.

What age did you start smoking?
I first tried smoking when I was 13, but actually took it up aged 17.

How long had you smoked for?
I’d smoked on and off for 20 years.

How many times had you tried to give up?
I’d tried to quit between 15 and 20 times.

What did you use to help you in your quit process – patches, gum, champix, etc?
Previously, when I tried to quit, I relied solely on my willpower.

How did you find attending the stop-smoking clinic helped?
Seeing the advisers at the clinic worked as a great encouragement. The information about my smoking habit was broken down in such a way that I could begin to understand the damage I was doing to other people and myself.

Any difficulties along the way?
Non-believing friends who expected me to fall at the first hurdle. My own automatic negative thoughts. Strange dreams when I’d had some micro-tabs too close to bedtime.

What have you done since you gave up? For example, have you treated yourself with the money you saved, or anything like that?
Since quitting I’ve got back into my health and fitness programme, been away on a relaxing weekend break to north Wales, where I could really appreciate the fresh country air, and booked a holiday to Portugal for September.

How do you feel since you stopped smoking?
I feel healthier and more in charge of my behaviour. My home smells fresh and I’m financially better off, too.

Any other comments about the clinic and your quit process?
I’d like to give a special thank-you to all the ladies who assisted me through my journey, the girls on reception and the well-mannered, friendly security guard at the door.

Any advice for those thinking about stopping smoking with the help of an adviser?
There is help out there and a variety of nicotine replacement therapies to assist you in giving up. In addition to this, there’s support from the advisers. You need to look calmly and honestly at yourself, believe in yourself and make a change for the better.
Council

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Cabinet Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 February</td>
<td>2 February</td>
<td>Cllr Mike Fisher (leader of the council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 March</td>
<td>23 February</td>
<td>Cllr Tim Pollard (children’s services and adult learning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 March</td>
<td>2 March</td>
<td>Cllr Gavin Barwell (safety and cohesion)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To submit a question (maximum number of words: 50) for consideration at a full council meeting, email it to council.questions@croydon.gov.uk; fax it to 020 8760 5657; print and complete the form at www.croydon.gov.uk/councilquestion and post it to Questions for the council, Democratic and legal services, Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon CR9 3JS; or call 020 8726 6000 extn 63876.

Scrutiny

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

<table>
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To submit a question (maximum number of words: 50) to the cabinet member detailed above, email it to scrutiny.public.questions@croydon.gov.uk; fax it to 020 8760 5657; or call 020 8726 6000 extn 62529 or 62315.

Neighbourhood Partnership

Neighbourhood partnership meetings (all start at 7.30pm)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Venue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 February</td>
<td>Addiscombe, Woodside and Ashburton</td>
<td>Ryelands Primary School, Albert Road, Woodside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 February</td>
<td>New Addington and Fieldway</td>
<td>Applegarth Primary School, Bygrove, Fieldway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For information on Neighbourhood Partnerships, visit the website at www.croydononline.org/neighbourhood_partnerships/, email neighbourhood.partnerships@croydon.gov.uk, write to Neighbourhood Partnerships, Democratic and legal services, Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon CR9 3JS or call 020 8726 6000 extn 62564 or 62811.

Croydon Community Police Consultative Group Partnership

Meetings of the Croydon community police consultative group are held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall. All are open to the public and begin at 6.30pm. For further information, go to www.croydononline.org/ccpcg

Forthcoming meeting dates are: Wednesday 18 March; Thursday, 7 May.

Details of all Croydon Council meetings can be found on the council website at www.croydon.gov.uk/meetingsofthecouncil

These meetings are to be transmitted using webcasting; Neighbourhood Partnership meetings are not webcast live. They can be viewed at www.croydon.ukcouncil.net/site/webcasts.php
Live events at the Clocktower

Museum Exhibition
Scene Unseen: Celebrating the arts in Croydon
Friday 20 February to Saturday 6 June
11am–5pm (closed Sundays and bank holidays)
Come and discover the creative face of Croydon – past, present and future. Find out what links Charles Dickens, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Bridget Riley to Croydon’s history.
The exhibition also explores the wide range of art forms taking place in the community.
FREE, no tickets required. Exhibition Gallery.

Live Performances
Tavaziva Dance:
Heart of Darkness
Wednesday 4 February 7.30pm
Take an emotional and spiritual voyage into modern Africa with Zimbabwean-born choreographer/composer Bawren Tavaziva and his five dancers.
£10 (£7.50 concessions)

Quincy: Single Mum
Thursday 5 February 8–9.50pm
East London comic Quincy performs a funny, sad and touching autobiographical show about that rarely publicised thing – the single black father (who just happens to be a comedian).
£10 (£7.50 concessions)

David Benson sings Noel Coward
Friday 6 February 8–9.50pm
Benson is at his best as he takes on Coward’s masterful songbook including Mad Dogs and Englishmen, London Pride, Mad About the Boy and Mrs. Worthington. £12 (£9 concessions).

Valentine’s Film Night:
Breakfast at Tiffany’s
Saturday 14 February 8–10pm
Enjoy a romantic serving of Audrey Hepburn accompanied by a side-order of delicious chocolate and a glass of bubbly.
£7.50 (no concessions) Ticket includes refreshments

High Tease Revue
Thursday 26 February 8–9.30pm
Featuring scenes from Victorian Values
A celebration of the traditional variety show, delivered with 21st-century sass and sophistication. With award-winning international performers, the suilliest of sirens, the daring antics of glamorous showgirls and the edgiest comic-cabaret masters. £10 (£7.50 concessions).

Tom Cawley’s Curios
Friday 27 February 8–9.45pm
Tom Cawley’s critically acclaimed jazz-piano trio explore influences ranging from Django Bates to Rufus Wainwright and James Taylor to Chopin. £10 (£7.50 concessions)

Guided walks in February

Saturday 21 February – Littleheath Woods in winter
10am, junction of Queenhill and Littleheath Roads, Selsdon.
If all trees look the same to you in winter, come and learn how different some of them can be. Bus: T33, 64, 409

Sunday 22 February – Conservation of the Whitgift Field, Riddlesdown
Booking is essential, please call the warden on 07771 715812
Hear why the field is important to local wildlife, then get active and help us to improve the grassland. Tools, training, tea, coffee and biscuits provided. Come for an hour or stay all day.

Sunday 22 February – Man in Kings Wood
2.15pm, Orchard Road entrance to wood
Discover how the people of Sanderstead Parish managed the woods through the centuries. Bus: 403, Limpsfield Road

Tuesday 24 February – Wildlife tracks and signs in Selsdon Woods
11am, Selsdon Wood car park by toilet block
Join the warden on a search for clues and tracks that animals have left behind. Family event. Bus: T33

Saturday 28 February – Behind the scenes in Happy Valley
12-2pm, Happy Valley car park, Fox Lane, Old Coulsdon.
Learn why Happy Valley is a nationally important and protected site for wildlife. Regrettably, due to the route of this walk, dogs not permitted. Bus: 404, 466

For further information of the listed and other walks and wildlife, go to www.croydon.gov.uk/leisure/events or call the community partnership officer on 020 8726 6900 ext 64952
One of Croydon’s most recognisable buildings is the NLA Tower, situated on an island in Addiscombe Road at the junction with Addiscombe Grove and Cherry Orchard Road.

I remember it being built in 1970 and it was, to me, a real skyscraper at the time with its 24 floors looming over East Croydon.

Back in June of last year, Your Croydon featured a couple of my pictures of the old and new East Croydon stations. The older of the two was taken before the tower was built but, in a top corner of the newer, part of the tower can be seen. This view, though, taken in 1977, was probably my first real picture of the building.

We all knew it then as the NLA Tower although it soon got the nickname of The Threepenny Bit Building, due to its unusual shape.

When decimalisation came along, it became The 50p Building – an obvious sign of inflation, going from three old pence to 50 pence overnight. Then it was The Wedding Cake.

I believe it’s now called No 1 Croydon, although everyone I know still calls it the NLA Tower.

The outside has changed very little, although the building now looks much cleaner and brighter thanks to a recent major restoration, which also saw the installation of colourful night-time illuminations.

Perhaps, however, the greatest change can be found in the grounds of the tower.

In the 1977 picture, the island was a giant roundabout, and, behind the wall on the bottom left of the picture, was a kind of sunken garden, accessed by subway.

Nowadays, the gap has been filled in and has become the foundation for the East Croydon bus station, just out of frame in the right-hand photo.

Local photographer Frazer Ashford remembers when the NLA Tower’s value soared from 3d to 50p.
Energy costs money.
We’ll help you save both.

Receive a free, personalised, home energy report online and you could save around £340 per year.

energysavingtrust.org.uk/check

For free, impartial advice tailored to you call the ACT ON CO2 advice line on 0800 512 012

energy saving trust
Here to help everyone save energy in the home.
you told us
“the streets should be cleaner”

we listened
“all streets are now cleaned at least once a month, and in busy areas several times a day”

we’re still listening
www.croydon.gov.uk/listening