

Park Hill Residents Association NEWSLETTER

Issue 133

Keeping you up to date with local news and services www.phra.org.uk

Spring 2019

A NICE PLACE TO LIVE?

Why did you decide to live in Park Hill?

Good transport links? Easy access to a range of shops and schools? The pleasant streets, the many trees, the landscaping? It looked a nice place to live.

In many ways it still is a nice place to live. But it is not as nice as it was - because of litter. Every time we go out, there is litter of all kinds, big and small - and there seems to be more litter than there was. Why? The Council have reduced street-sweeping. There is more packaging of various kinds. And - let's admit it - people are lazier about dropping litter and picking it up.

In January the Residents Association collected 26 bags of litter - a record - from the verges of Park Hill Road and the surrounding area. We are very grateful to everyone who collected litter that day. But a month later, litter had accumulated again round the bus stops, near the shop, and on the pavements.

What can we do?

- First, not drop litter ourselves. Take it home.
- Second, with small amounts of litter

left by other people - pick it up, take it home or put it in a litter bin or in the gutter. No, it's not pleasant but neither is a street full of litter.

- Third, with bigger amounts of litter left by other people, tell the Council. Best to do this on-line. Go into 'Croydon.gov.uk' and open My Account with Croydon Council (if you haven't already done so). Then you can report litter (and much else) to the Council. Use the 'excessive litter' heading. You can pin-point just where the litter is - there is even a photo of the area affected. Alternatively phone them on 020 8726 6200 between 8.00am and 4.00pm.
- Fourth, with big items such as sofas and other furniture or bags of litter - what is known as fly tipping - report it to the Council. Again best to do this on-line using the 'fly-tipping' heading. The Council will usually respond in 24 hours.
- Fifth, come to the next litter collection organised by the Residents Association on **SUNDAY 16 JUNE** - see the notice below. It is for just an hour and it will make a difference.

SUMMER CLEAN 2019



Having collected 26 bags of litter in January, we're having another collection of litter from the verges of Park Hill Road and other places - to tackle this problem again. This summer clean will take place on:

Sunday 16 June at 12 noon

- weather permitting. Meet by the sundial at St Matthew's Church - at the corner of Chichester Road and Park Hill Road. The clean-up will last an hour but you are welcome to come for less.

Please bring gloves - we will provide sacks and sticks. Do come! We'd be very grateful for your support. You improve your neighbourhood. You meet your neighbours. You see something for your work.

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The Neighbourhood Meeting 2019

Come to the Park Hill Neighbourhood meeting on Thursday 9 May at 8pm at St Matthew's Church, Chichester Road. Turn to page 5 and find out more.

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Park Hill Personalities

We talk to Ann Pratt, Head Teacher at Park Hill Junior School about her background and her hopes for the school.

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Here and There

Read all the latest news about the Fairfield Halls Redevelopment; the Black Theatre Company in residency at the Fairfield Halls; the new path at Lloyd Park and the Ends Festival at the end of May; developments at Croydon University Hospital and Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance Croydon Group.

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Westfield - a 2020 Vision?

Having read recent reports about the further delay to Westfield, we were surprised that the Council and its 'Partnership' with the consortium apparently has no 'Plan B' for the site. Read more on page 12.

This newsletter is distributed to 2,700 households in Park Hill.



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WE NEED YOUR SUBSCRIPTION, PLEASE!

Subscriptions for the coming year to the Residents Association are now due. The subscription is now £5.

We have over 300 members and we are very grateful to them for their support. But we represent 2,600 households and we'd like to have more of you as members.

Please join the Association if you aren't already a member – or renew your subscription if you are a member.

Here is what your subscription does and how you can pay it.

What happens to your subscription?

- it helps cover the cost of this Newsletter which appears three times a year. The money we get from advertisers does not cover the full cost of producing and printing the Newsletter.
- it helps with special projects such as new trees and plantings and our website.
- it helps cover the running expenses of the Association, such as hiring the hall for the AGM and refreshments there. (Committee members pay for postage and stationery themselves).

How can you pay your subscription?

- the Road Steward who distributes this Newsletter may call on you;
- you can pay at the AGM on 9 May;
- you can send your subscription of £5 to our Membership Secretary using the form below.
- you can pay your subscription by internet transfer. The sort code for our bank account is 30-92-45 and the account number is 01330171. (The account is held with Lloyds Bank). Please give your postcode as a reference.)

Thank you for your help.

The Neighbourhood Meeting 2018

FIND OUT WHAT IS GOING ON IN PARK HILL



Come to the Park Hill Neighbourhood Meeting (formerly known as the AGM) on

Thursday 9 May 2019 at 8.00pm
St Matthew's Church, Chichester Road

What's Happening?

The Residents Association: what it's been doing and what it plans to do.

Question and Answer session

Our MP Sarah Jones, our local Councillor Vidhi Mohan and the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team have been invited. Find out the answers to the questions you want to ask.

How long is the meeting?

The meeting lasts ninety minutes with a refreshment break.

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION. YOUR SUBSCRIPTION HELPS TOWARD THE COST OF THESE NEWSLETTERS AND MAINTAINING OUR WEBSITE.

Membership Application Form

I/We wish to join/renew membership of Park Hill Residents Association and enclose a subscription of £5 to cover the membership to March 2020.

Name(s).....

Address.....

Please forward your subscription to Fiona Nicol, 10 Selborne Road, Croydon CR0 5JQ

Park Hill Personalities:

We talk to Ann Pratt, Head Teacher at Park Hill Junior School, about her background, her work and her hopes for the school.

"I'm a passionate advocate for children," says Ann Pratt. "I love explaining things and helping children to develop. I always have done. Even as a child I would line up my dolls and teach them."

She has come a long way from those days. Now she heads a school with 366 pupils with three classes per year spread over four years. She leads a wide range of staff including 16 teachers and teaching assistants, 7 individual support advisers for children with special needs, 5 staff for a breakfast club and after school programme, 3 office and 6 kitchen staff – and others.

Ann has been in her current post since September 2018. She was looking for a post nearer to her home. The school and area were new to her but from the start she was impressed with the ethos of the school – the calm and politeness of pupils, the quiet atmosphere, the commitment of staff to include everyone. She also liked the surrounding area and the setting of the school. She had worked in different places – Lambeth, Greenwich and Kent, and in different kinds of school – primary and secondary. She had faced some considerable challenges including turning round a school rated 'inadequate'. By contrast Park Hill Juniors was rated 'good' at its last OFSTED inspection.

Nonetheless, heading Park Hill Juniors is a demanding role. As she says 'There is no such thing as a typical day'. On the one hand she is managing a large staff and a substantial budget. There are considerable financial pressures on the school and she has to ensure that the money goes as far as it can. She has to encourage and support her staff – staff well-being is one of her prime concerns. There are many demands on teachers and supporting staff – it is not just chalk and talk. It is about keeping detailed records of every

child's performance, responding to the concerns of parents, preparing and presenting material so that children can meet the required standard. Ann has to make sure that the demands on teachers' time and energies are manageable and that their performance is regularly reviewed. She is pleased that there are no major problems with recruiting staff at Park Hill Juniors – and indeed many of the teachers have been on the staff for many years.

On the other hand she is not just a manager. She has to see and be seen. She tries to be at the school gate at the beginning of the day as often as she can. She will teach children – usually with other teachers. She will seek by her own observation to make sure that the various systems for monitoring a child's development and safety are in place and working effectively.

The children at Park Hill Juniors come from a wide range of backgrounds – including Asian, Eastern European, White British and Black Caribbean. Many come from homes where English is not spoken and may need support at school. Ann's own background helps her to lead a diverse school like this. Brought up in Sierra Leone in West Africa, her parents taught geography at the University there and her first school was on the campus of the University. Her parents, however, spent long periods in the UK and in the USA and she eventually settled in the UK. One of four children, the family is now widely scattered – and so she appreciates the strains and strengths of settling into a new environment.

It is not easy to combine a job like this with family responsibilities, let alone having space for outside activities. Ann has a son who is now 15. She is active in her Methodist Church – where she is deputy leader of the Sunday school and her husband is organist. She also



takes a leading role in developing policies on safeguarding children in Methodist Churches in London. She even finds time to give beauty treatments to her friends.

Looking ahead, Ann is keen that every child in the school is able to develop to the full. Some children get a lot of help and support at home from their parents. But some don't and Ann is particularly concerned that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are able to progress as quickly as the rest. She wants too what she calls the 'middle attainers' – who are achieving the expected standard – to do better and achieve more.

It is not easy to cope with the day-to-day demands of running the school – the emails and the meetings – whilst at the same time setting and achieving targets for the future.

But Ann wants Park Hill Juniors to be an outstanding school and she is committed to working with her staff and her pupils to that end. We hope that their efforts will be rewarded.

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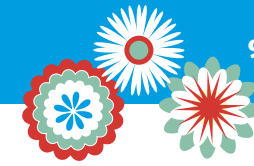
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Here & There – A Round-up of Local News

FAIRFIELD HALLS REDEVELOPMENT – A TANGLED STORY



The Fairfield Halls is due to re-open again in the autumn. Its refurbishment has cost a good deal more than was expected - £41m instead of £30m partly because all the asbestos in the

building has been removed and the design has been altered to include two additional studio spaces.

The cost of this work will be met by the Council's development company – Brick by Brick – which is redeveloping land around the site. It was originally envisaged that this would include the development of a site in Barclay Road owned by Croydon College. But the College sold that site to a private developer, Stonegate Homes.

So Brick by Brick is now proposing to develop the remaining area – the car park at the rear of the Law Courts – more intensively. They now want to build 440 flats instead of 218 - about 20 per cent will be affordable homes for rent. The blocks will be up to 29 storeys high instead of 21 storeys. This will mean a very densely populated site with little privacy and tall blocks close to each other. Yet another cramped development.

Is there really a market for all these small flats in central Croydon?

BLACK THEATRE COMPANY IN RESIDENCY AT FAIRFIELD HALLS

Talawa Theatre Company is to take up residence within the redeveloped Fairfield Halls in Croydon, giving the UK's primary Black theatre company a 200 seat studio and offices. The new spaces, opening to the public on 16 September 2019, will operate as a central hub for Black artists, develop a community outreach programme, and allow the company to create, develop and premiere new work.

Besides providing a space for Talawa's artist development programme the new residency will create opportunities to train young Black artists in technical and creative theatre disciplines, working in partnership with organisations in the borough and nationally.

In addition to premiering and developing new work, Talawa Theatre Company will use the studio as a space to research & develop new ideas, and create a programme of activities, debates and events aimed at Croydon's diverse community.

Talawa Theatre Company is the most successful Black theatre

company in the UK. They have established a track record of producing work which shines a spotlight on Black artists, creating theatre for diverse audiences across the country. Recent productions have included collaborations with the Royal Exchange: Guys & Dolls, King Lear (in association with Birmingham Repertory Theatre) and All My Sons (Royal Exchange Theatre, UK tour).

BUILDING WORK AT EAST CROYDON MEDICAL CENTRE, ADDISCOMBE ROAD

When is the building work at the Centre finishing? It has been going on for several months and there is little sign of progress.

We asked the Practice Manager what is happening. He explained that the initial specification for a lift to the first floor had been revised so that it would serve the additional accommodation which the practice proposes to build at the rear of the building above the current car park. However by the time the revised plans for the lift had been submitted, the deadline for funding this development had passed and a new bid had to be made for funds. At the time of writing the practice is waiting to hear if this new bid has been successful and if the bid for the major new development has been approved.

The practice is keen to press on with the building work. It is now the largest medical practice in Croydon and badly needs extra space. But for the moment it is not possible to say just when the building work will resume.

SPRING WALK IN LLOYD PARK

FOLP has arranged a Spring Walk to be led by Dr Jane McLauchlin for the 21st April 2019 (2-4pm). Please do join us to learn about spring flowers and plants not to mention an excuse to have a stroll in Lloyd Park. You do not need to register, please meet us by the Park Life Cafe for 2pm.

DEVELOPMENTS AT CROYDON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Talking of things medical, the new A & E Department on Mayday Road finally opened at the end of last year. There are separate areas now for adults and children. The area is spacious and clean and there is more privacy than before. Minor cases are now dealt with in the 'Urgent Care' section so that the A & E Department focuses on more serious cases. There is a separate entrance for ambulances directly off Mayday Road.

There is also a new Physiotherapy Ward – Reedham – in the Woodcroft Wing and a new Escalation Ward based in Fairfield 2 Ward, where elderly frail patients are prepared for discharge (including whether their accommodation is suitable and they can cope with looking after themselves.



Here & There – A Round-up of Local News

CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONERS' ALLIANCE CROYDON GROUP

The Croydon Group of the Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance (CSPA) meets on the second Tuesday morning of each month at the United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove at 10:15 am.

The CSPA works with other organisations to promote the interests of pensioners. We receive information and updates about current issues of interest at our meetings and have an opportunity to discuss these. The Group aims to support the work of the CSPA parent organisation, for example by participating in fact-finding exercises or by contacting relevant organisations or MPs.

The Croydon Group organises a programme of speakers covering a variety of topics, chosen with the aim of providing something to interest everyone. The meeting on April 9th is our Annual General meeting, which will be followed by lunch at the Croydon Park Hotel. In May our talk is about the origins of peculiar expressions in everyday conversation and in June a major crime detective will tell us about offender profiling.

Membership of the CSPA is open to those who receive or will receive benefits from the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme or similar schemes. More information about the CSPA and the benefits of joining can be found on the website <https://www.cspa.co.uk>, by emailing enquiries@cspa.co.uk or by phoning 020 8688 8418.

Further information about the Croydon Group can be obtained from the membership secretary, Doreen Parkinson, email doreenp1@virginmedia.com or telephone 07528 847294. Anyone interested is welcome to attend a group meeting before deciding whether to join us.

LLOYD PARK – WHAT IS THE PATH FOR?



A tarmac path is being built at the top of Lloyd Park near the entrance from Deepdene Avenue and running down towards Lloyd Park Avenue. But no one seems to know why. So Roy Colbran Secretary to the Whitgift Estate Residents Association spoke to the man who is building it.

He says that it is to be a combined pedestrian and cycle track which will join up with the track that was installed a few years ago and runs down from the Deepdene Avenue entrance to the left stopping where the ground drops away

through the trees. That path is to be widened to match the new section which is fully three metres wide to allow for it being for combined use.

The previously unpaved stretch down by the side of the allotments has now been paved and is also three metres wide although there is no intention to do anything to the rather rough narrower section at the top.

Clearly a good deal of money has been spent on the project. But quite why is still not clear.

ENDS FESTIVAL, LLOYD PARK 31 MAY – 2 JUNE

This event will take place in Lloyd Park on 31 May – 1 June. The organisers are expecting 15,000 people to attend each of the sessions which will finish about 10.00pm. Further details are available on the Festival website – www.theendsfestival.co.uk

The website 'Inside Croydon' said "At last Croydon is to get the sort of live music event it deserves".

We hope that those attending will enjoy themselves but we are not sure what Croydon has done to deserve this.

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WESTFIELD – A 2020 VISION?



Having read recent reports about the further delay to Westfield, we were surprised that the Council and its 'Partnership' with the consortium apparently has no 'Plan B' for the site. However it was reassuring to hear that the Whitgift Foundation believes that all is going well, and they now expect construction to start in 2020.

Croydon badly needs a Vision for the next 30 years. It seems that London has a 30 Year Plan to which our Council has subscribed, yet there has been little public consultation as to what will happen to Croydon Town Centre - even over the next 5 years!

A recent supplement in the Croydon Advertiser published in conjunction with Develop Croydon, gave an upbeat view of the exciting pace of change across the town centre. It featured several high rise developments set to deliver over 2,000 new apartments in the heart of Croydon. Let's hope the Council and the NHS will provide the infrastructure to sustain these new residents - the schools, the doctors' surgeries and the jobs?

Everyone seems to acknowledge that retail shopping has already been transformed by the likes of Amazon and the internet. Indeed if we each examine how our last 10 purchases have been made, most of us who are computer literate and use a credit card would confirm that many of those purchases have been made online rather than in the high street.

Even clothing purchases are now routinely made over the internet, especially by young people who appear to find it quite OK to send off for stuff, and if they don't like it, think nothing of sending it straight back. The old culture of 'mail order' was once thought of as inferior and catalogue based, e.g.

Littlewoods. But the internet has transformed and rebranded online stores like 'Very', with its stylish, fresh designs, contemporary fashion and all manner of other goods, TVs and a whole range of electronic devices.

So what will happen to Croydon's core? Its square mile was once a wide ranging, retail nirvana, but is now a depressing collection of sad, shuttered retail units, with only Marks and Spencer, Sainsbury, Currys/PC World, Superdrug and various sports and trainers shops showing signs of being busy. We are therefore dependent on Hammerson and Unibail Rodamco Westfield to transform Croydon into the UK's premier shopping centre.

Croydon was once a major source of employment in the South East, but Nestlé, Philips, and Brooke Bond Oxo left years ago, so we have become more of a dormitory town relying on fast and efficient train and tram services to London and our neighbouring suburbs. That is yet another problem needing decisive planning and action before it's too late. Network Rail's plans to unblock the Selhurst Triangle bottleneck and speed up train services to London and the Coast are still being talked about, with no firm completion date.

At least we are now promised a Grand Re-opening of the Fairfield Halls on September 16,

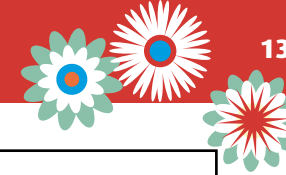
with Cinderella as the family pantomime in December, and Tim Vine starring as Buttons!

Let's hope it all happens – but if it doesn't, please don't blame Brexit!

Photo (left) taken by Glenn Foster:
www.glenn-foster.squarespace.com

Here are details of the 9 major developments close to Park Hill, according to 'YourCROYDON'

- Queen's Square (the Nestle building) – 290 homes under construction with proposals for phase two – St Georges's Walk – due to be submitted later this year. This will include new homes and businesses and a new town square as well as the restoration of Segas House.
- Taberner House – 513 homes in four blocks to be complete by 2021 – half the new homes will be affordable.
- College Green – about 2,000 homes to be built on this site – first phase to include demolition of multi storey car park to build 440 new homes.
- Addiscombe Grove – 21 storey building to include 112 one-bedroom homes aimed at local first-time buyers.
- Morello – site on eastern side of East Croydon station – first 330 homes built and planning consent approved for another four buildings including two 25 storey towers to provide 445 new homes.
- Vista 24 – on site of former Job Centre in Dingwall Road– 181 homes and commercial space.
- Ruskin Square, Dingwall Road – second commercial building now ongoing and 625 homes expected in total.
- Carolyn House, Dingwall Road– refurbishment and extension of 1960s office block – 183 new homes, retail units on ground floor and roof garden.
- Cambridge House, Wellesley Road – office block to be demolished to provide 92 new homes in 26 storey block – 100% affordable – expected next year.



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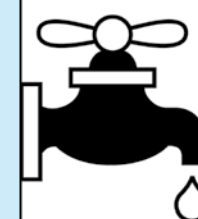


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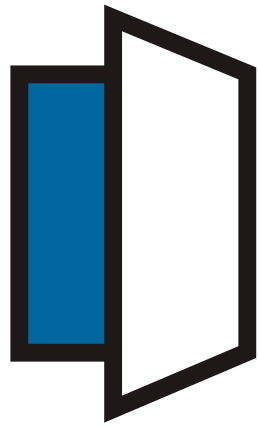
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