

PARK HILL NEWS

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FAIRFIELD HALLS HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE!

Go to pages 11-14 to find out what's on at the Fairfield Halls this Winter.

ISSUE 143 // PARK HILL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER // WINTER 2022

BUMPER 24 PAGES!! Greetings to all our readers!

This Park Hill News is our pre-Christmas/Winter edition, that has often included a brief review of the year, with a front page that looked back at the old year but offered an optimistic look at the New Year and what it might offer.
Well, right now that's a difficult one!

2022 has been a very painful year. The government has announced a financial package of £55bn tax rises and cuts to public services that will impact on all of us in Park Hill. Our local council has admitted that it is unable to balance the budget for 2023-2024 and will once again need government help.

So Doom and Gloom? NO! There may be little to be cheerful about looking at 2023, but we'll report on the work our local representatives, the Mayor, our local Councillor and our local MP, who are all doing their best to make our lives better. They have a tough job, with little money to splash and plenty of problems to face every day. There's a lot going on and you can read about it inside.

What is YOUR RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION doing to help?

Currently we represent just 83 residents who have paid £5 annual membership, out of 3,000 homes in the area! That's less than 3% of homes actively interested. But we carry on, because we believe it's important to give all residents a voice – even though we could do with more help. Please Join us!

Your Committee meets up six or seven times a year, we hold an Annual Meeting to vote in a Committee for another year, usually the same 6 or 7 volunteers, we



agree the Accounts, report on what we've achieved, publish three of these 'Park Hill News' during the year which keeps you in touch, we make an occasional donation of £150 or so to a deserving local cause – and try and help solve any special issues that residents request, especially when there are planning issues at stake. And we organise TWO very successful annual Litter Picks (see page 3).

Let's recognise the NEW things that have happened this year:

- Jay Patel joined us, representing the Asian Resources Centre
- We connected with the infant school by:
- Supporting the fete and the fireworks, funding the road safety banners

AND - We part-funded the Park Hill walled garden fencing (see article page 16).

Continued on page 3

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THE NEW EAST CROYDON MEDICAL CENTRE

Two Committee members attended the Patient Participation Group (PPG) meeting about East Croydon Medical Centre - read more on page 4.

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THE AMAZING HISTORY OF PARK HILL

Turn to page 8 to read about the history of Park Hill written by Richard Link, our local resident historian.

Pages 18 - 19

PARK HILL INFANTS SCHOOL "A MAGICAL INFANT ENVIRONMENT"

On 4th November John Chambers, our editor, visited Park Hill Infants School to meet the school's Head and Deputy Head teachers and to have a tour of the school.



CONTENTS



Caring for Croydon

Full nursing care

Outstanding and accredited end of life care

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

PARK HILL

MORE GOOD NEWS...

Continued from front page

AS WELL AS - Connecting with the local Patient Participation Group on behalf of residents.

THIS IS ON TOP OF ALL THE THINGS WE USUALLY DO - LIKE THE ANNUAL MEETING!!!

We can build on this, and we've further plans for next year... connecting more with our volunteers, recruiting them to help build numbers, and maybe organise an event or two. We've got our technical wizard to help Fiona with the website and we'll have a bright new logo and banner next year too.

It's slow going but there's cause for celebration.

So how do we expect you to respond, dear reader? One way is to take part in the Litter Pick. Next is go to the Membership Form on page 20 and commit £5 to support the work we do. Finally, have a look at 'We need you' on page 17.

We have survived the pandemic, been faced with a war in Ukraine which has had a devastating effect on soaring energy and food costs, and here we are, wishing us all a 'Merry Christmas'. Let us all try and build together, concentrating on all the positives that we have here in this relative oasis part of Croydon. Let's keep it that way! We DO have much to be thankful for; The Fairfield Halls are building their programme as a key part of our cultural life; Croydon is London Borough of Culture 2023, and the Council is making great efforts to celebrate all that is good and vibrant in our diverse community.

Have a Great Christmas (Festive Season - for those not celebrating Christmas) and All the Best for the New Year!

DISCLAIMER:

Park Hill News is a free publication distributed to around 3,000 homes in the Park Hill area of Croydon. We are a non-political organisation, so the views expressed by contributors are their own personal views, and not necessarily the views of Park Hill Residents' Association.



PARK HILL
NEWS WINTER 2022



SUNDAY 15th JANUARY is LITTER PICK DAY!



Thanks to all of our volunteers who did a fantastic job at our Summer Litter Pick. Park Hill was momentarily left spotless and was probably the cleanest area in Croydon, with not a trace of litter. So let's do it again!

On Sunday January 15th between 12 noon and 1.30pm, come and join a great group of local residents, all eager to clean up the area. There's a real sense of satisfaction when we return to base with our bags full of all the rubbish that has been left on our streets and pavements.

Everyone is issued with a 'picker' and a bag in a plastic frame. All you need to bring is a pair of gloves - and that's it. You'll be allocated an area to clean up and we try and avoid duplication so that the whole area is covered.

Last time we were able to collect 33 bags of assorted rubbish as well as a large suitcase, an abandoned sleeping bag, a wicker drawer unit, a tv monitor, parts of an abandoned child's car seat, a bumper and various abandoned estate agent signs. **Let's keep Park Hill tidy!**

LOOKING FOR A CAREER MOVE?

If you are thinking about a job change and would like a FREE 30 minute consultation to guide you, just email: contact@oxanabristowe.com - it may help you in your search!

From the home of Compu Konnect THANK YOU PARK HILL FOR YOUR SUPPORT

We started in May 2022 with Kids Art Clubs and successfully commenced our English and Maths coaching classes for year 3 and year 4 young children.

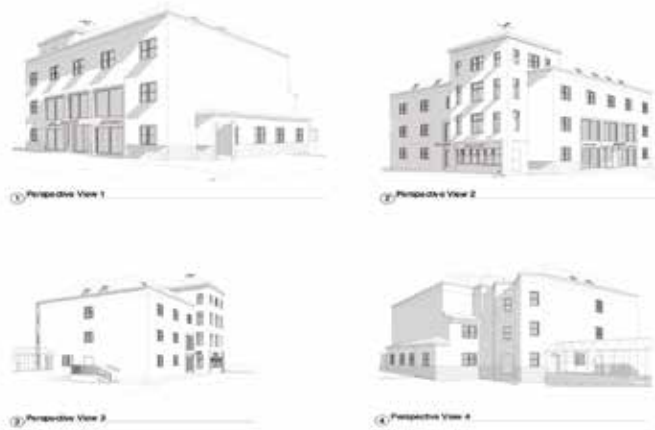
Our quest has been to nurture the young talent and give the best to help them grow in confidence in our community.

Special thanks to Park Hill and Whitgift ward Councillor Ms Jade Appleton.

THE NEW EAST CROYDON MEDICAL CENTRE

by Fiona Nicol, John Chambers & Penny Deakin

Issues with access to GP services are often raised in our neighbourhood meetings so PHRA has been particularly focused on connecting with local Patient Participation Groups (PPGs). These exist as a forum to give feedback, both good and bad, to your local practice. East Croydon Medical Centre (ECMC) has been holding their online PPG meetings quite regularly, the most recent was on Friday 17th November. Two committee members attended the meeting on behalf of Park Hill residents. The full minutes of this meeting should soon be available on the surgery website.



Overall, there is good news to report. Most notably, the new Medical Centre is on track for completion in early April 2023. We expect patients from Park Hill will welcome news that journeys through the underpass for appointments will soon be a thing of the past! We were told the project was delayed when the construction company went into administration. Progress halted until a suitable replacement could be found. Now the new contractors, Logan Construction, are working at a swift pace. The roof is complete and quick progress is anticipated in the newly watertight site.

During the meeting the practice staff acknowledged they must address problems experienced by patients since the surgery closed for this extended period. The April reopening will hopefully eliminate many of the difficulties and more face-to-face appointments will be available.

According to staff the shortages were largely due to lack of space. When completed, the finished building will consist of 29 clinical rooms, compared with 9 previously. Staffing has also been an issue, but new GPs have been employed. In addition, a joint initiative with other local services has made 140 new appointments available outside of normal surgery hours every week.

The new building will have room to house significantly larger reception and administration teams who will help meet the surgeries' goal of getting call waiting times back down to acceptable levels. The successful call back service will continue getting messages to patients and online bookings for nurse



appointments are now available. We at the PHRA are cautiously optimistic and hope to see this vision realised in April.

It was unfortunate all this good news was only heard by 4

attendees. There had been some confusion about the date, time and location of the meeting but the lack of engagement was still disheartening to see. The PHRA would like to encourage ECMC patients to join the PPG with this link: www.eastcroydonmc.co.uk/ppg-signup-form The next ECMC PPG will be an online meeting - Thursday February 16th at 2pm. Feedback can also be shared on their website.

To residents registered at Friends Road Medical Practice and Birdhurst Road Medical Practice GPnet5 held their last PPG back in June. We reached out to representatives there but at time of print had not received information about future meetings. To join this group please contact: gpnet5.ppg@nhs.net



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barchester.com/ChestnutGardens

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Call: 0208 003 1878 or visit us at: 58 Addiscombe Road, Croydon, CR0 5PH



JADE REPORTS

Our Local Councillor Jade Appleton has been busy...



REMEMBERING THE QUEEN

September was a very sad month. It was an honour to sign the book of remembrance in the town hall, as well as to attend the memorial service in the Minster. It was a life of service I know none of us will ever forget and it was very moving to watch the tributes from local groups including Park Hill schools.

LLOYD PARK AND PARK HILL PARK

Great work continues in Park Hill Park by the Friends Group who are replanting the walled garden and working to ensure the park is safe and clean for all. Water Towers Teas is now closed until Easter! I will miss their fantastic cakes! It was also lovely to see the Diwali celebrations in the park!

Over in Lloyd Park there have been a number of events over the summer, festivals, 10k runs and funfairs. I am determined residents' concerns about local events are listened to and have been pressing the council to improve communication, as well as working with our policing team to look at ways we can reduce anti-social behaviour around these events. I hope this will improve going forward.

WARD SURGERIES

Ollie (our local PCSO) and I have been continuing our ward surgeries at St Matthews and Lloyd Park cafe. In November we were delighted to be joined by Tara from Croydon Council who acts as the leading dog safety officer. There have been a number of reports locally of dogs off lead and aggressive behaviour in both parks and we were delighted to enable this drop in to ensure residents have the information they need to keep themselves and their pets safe.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

In the summer we received the good news that an application for a new block of flats, inappropriate in size and design, that had been planned for Coombe Avenue, had been turned down. Many residents had opposed the new block and I was pleased to see the decision to reject the application.

We have also recently been informed about a new possible planning application for the Croydon Park Hotel, the information can be viewed here - <https://thelilabet.whatyouthink.co.uk/> I am concerned about the impact on schools, doctors' surgeries and other infrastructure locally and will highlight this when the application goes in.

HEALTHY STREETS

In October Croydon Cabinet approved recommendations for a new healthy streets scheme around Park Hill schools, including Stanhope Road. I'm aware residents have been contacted individually about this but please do let me know if helpful to discuss and issues around permits can be addressed by contacting chnpermits@croydon.gov.uk. I am hopeful this will improve traffic flow and safety for children on the way to school and I was pleased to see the council listen to residents and include Cotelands in the scheme.

POPPY APPEAL

Remembrance in Croydon - it was good to see so many attend the remembrance service held at the Minister in Croydon and also attend the town hall following to remember those who gave so much for all of our freedom.

SANDILANDS TRAM ANNIVERSARY

November 9th also saw the very sad anniversary of the tragic tram crash at Sandilands tram stop. I attended the very moving memorial service in New Addington and the site itself. My thoughts are with the families of all impacted and the tragic events that occurred.

SCHOOLS

It was fantastic to pay a visit to Park Hill Infants in the autumn, to meet their fantastic, dedicated staff and pupils, they were spending the morning learning about space exploration and I was amazed how talented and curious the students were - very impressive and a credit to Park Hill!

In November I also took part in mentoring sessions at Archbishop Tenison's. I met with pupils from year 10 to talk about their career aspirations, to help with their CVs and to talk to them on what they wanted to do in the future. It was great to meet such inspirational young people.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD WORK

I was delighted to attend the ward panel locally with so many residents in attendance, as well as the police, schools, businesses and park groups. I am working hard with the ward panel and local policing team to focus on their priorities, in particular safety of those in Lloyd Park. Ollie (our PCSO) and I have done a number of door to door visits; if you have any concerns let us know we are always happy to drop by.

ROAD SAFETY

I am continuing to press council officers to meet with me to discuss road safety concerns. I am keen we look for ways we can improve the crossings on Park Hill Road especially, which I know are heavily used by local schools. If you have any concerns, please do get in touch so I can use this to help build our case with the council to have crossings improved.

BINS AND KEEPING OUR STREETS ACCESSIBLE

I have secured two extra street bins, one near the end of Radcliffe Road and one by Park Hill Juniors - I hope both will reduce street litter. I have been chasing council officers to remove basal growth around trees to make it easier for prams to pass and am continuing to press for leaf clearance (especially along the Fairfield Path) and grass cutting locally. Looking forward to the PHRA winter Litter Pick!

WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION

I am aware some residents are still expressing concern about missed collections, and I'm pleased that in each case we have been able to resolve matters quickly, but if you are

experiencing any issues please do not hesitate to get in touch:
email: jade.appleton@croydon.gov.uk

COUNCIL WORK AND COMMITTEES

I've been continuing my work on a number of council committees. On Scrutiny we have been looking at how we can help residents tackle the cost of living crisis. On Ethics we have been looking at how we can make the council more accountable and transparent. At full council I was also able to ask about how Croydon was supporting children's mental health after the pandemic.

BUS SHELTERS

I am continuing to press for the return of the bus shelters in Croydon, removed under the previous administration. I know Mayor Perry is prioritising their return especially with the colder winter months ahead.

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THE AMAZING HISTORY OF PARK HILL

BY RICHARD LINK, OUR LOCAL RESIDENT HISTORIAN

We know that a park was attached to the Archbishop of Canterbury's manor in Croydon. The manor was centred on the 'country house' near the source of the River Wandle. This was one of his residences and was later known as a palace. Among others it was used by John Whitgift and guests included several monarchs.



The deer park spread for 227 acres in an easterly direction from Park Lane with boundaries of Addiscombe Road and Coombe Lane. It is known to have existed as early as 1326 when Archbishop Reynolds conferred the keepership on Le Berber who held the office of PARKER. This was held for life and the best known was Sir William Walworth, appointed in 1382. In the previous year, when Lord Mayor

of London, he was famous for slaying Wat Tyler, the leader of the Peasants' Revolt.

The land was exchanged for other lands with King Henry 8th by Archbishop Cranmer but it reverted to the same Archbishop during the reign of Edward 6th.

The future of the park was under review when the Palace was sold in 1780 with the surrounding land. There was a plan to build a new palace on land surrounding Park Hill House, the keeper's residence. However it was decided to purchase instead Addington Park from William Coles in 1808.

There are references to Park Hill about this time which give a good impression. It appears that the land had been turned over to farming. In 1805 Park Hill House (which stood on the site of the present Park Hill School) included outbuildings, namely



two barns, a cow house, a calf house, a straw house and a waggon lodge, all boarded and thatched. There was also a stable for six horses with loft over, and another for three horses, a chaise house, a harness room and pig sties. Mr Boxall was the tenant and he was provided with hedgeboot (timber to mend fences) and houseboot (timber to repair the house and provide fuel). The house itself was built originally in the early 17th century but largely reconstructed in about 1800 with additions coming later in about 1830 and again after 1870. The house suffered damage in the Second World War and was demolished shortly afterwards.

At an auction held on 25 June 1813 the land was divided and leased in 13 lots. Lot One included Park Hill House, meadows and fields. This was on a 21 year tenancy to John Grantham at a cost of £377 plus further rent for each acre taken into tillage.

In 1840 there is a record of a sale of land to the London and Brighton Railway for land used for the railway cutting south of East Croydon station.

In 1846 Jonathan Wickham Flower, the geologist and collector, was in residence and remained there until

his death in 1873. He was responsible for a strange 'improvement' to the property. In the 1840s he had acquired the Gothic-styled disused Power House belonging to the short-lived Croydon Atmospheric Railway (from West Croydon to Forest Hill) and he used part as the Lodge and part as stables.

Park Hill was also the temporary home of the Croydon Racecourse and this was sited between the present Park Hill Road and Park Hill Rise. The Grandstand stood to the south on higher ground near Chichester Road. The races brought several thousands to watch and continued after 1865 at Woodside. A ramp was laid at the nearby station on the Addiscombe line.

Park Hill Farm was at the corner of the present Park Hill Road and Coombe Road. There were also chalk quarries,

both at Pitt Place (to the south of Coombe Road and now the site of apartment blocks) and also to the west of Park Hill Road below Stanhope Road (later occupied by the Quarries Hotel).

By 1862 Park Hill had been taken over by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners on the vacation of the See on the death of Archbishop Sumner. They then decided to develop the land for leasehold residences over a network of new roads. The house illustrated was Florence Court (later Eversley) in Chichester Road.

For 150 years Park Hill has been known for its Water Tower (illustrated), designed by the Engineer and Surveyor for Croydon, Baldwin Latham in 1867. It is a Norman style edifice some 125 feet high and the brickwork is at present under restoration. It was constructed

for water storage additional to the huge underground reservoir beneath built in 1851. This stored nearly a million gallons of water. The walls rose vertically for 30 feet and the wall piers continued as ribs in the domed roof some 12 feet above the water level. The water was pumped from the Surrey Street Waterworks through a steel aqueduct. Eventually a new reservoir was built on higher land at Russell Hill and the Park Hill site was abandoned in 1923 and demolished in 1971.

(This article is edited from a talk given by Richard Link to the Sanderstead Local History Society in April 2022. He can be contacted by email: richard.link@btinternet.com. His family have been residents on Park Hill since 1887).



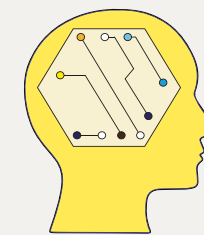
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PARK HILL AND WHITGIFT SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM AUTUMN MEETING



Parkhill and Whitgift Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) had its meeting on 26th September at St. Matthew's Church. Some 25 attendees were welcomed by the Chair Graham Lyon, who also welcomed new members from Reynolds Way, Head Teacher of Coombe Wood School and Students from Archbishop Tenison's School. Other attendees included PCSO Oliver White, Donna Murray-Turner, Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB) Chair and Cllr Jade Appleton.

PCSO Olly White reported on recent crimes, outcomes and comparison figures of crimes over recent months.

Two previously known persons were arrested in the vicinity of Lloyd Park for drugs offences but were unconnected to reports of suspicious behaviour recently reported by those living in the area.

Reports that persons seem suspicious and seen wearing balaclavas are not actioned by the police as the wearing of any clothing is not an offence, however, a description of clothing is useful to identify persons suspected of illegal activity.

There were separate reports around Lloyd Park, people were seen not wearing any clothing, report of an older woman being threatened by a person demanding her mobile, there was also report of a stabbing, but it appeared that this was an embellishment on a report of a person being beaten up with a knuckle-duster – still not great! There remain more reports of thefts of catalytic converters from motor vehicles. Victims are urged not to try and prevent the theft or engage with the thieves in any way as they are known to be very violent. Victims of such thefts should contact the police as soon as possible.

That said – **PH&W ward is the lowest for crime for any ward in Croydon and one of lowest in London.**

Croydon itself had approximately 3,000 crimes reported per month in last three months reported. Park Hill and Whitgift averages around 25 a month per month.

Andreea, the manager at Lloyds Park Café said there have been a few incidents at the Café, mostly from teenagers but their behaviour has recently improved. School children are now advised to stay away from the Café by schools. Students are also advised to take extra care at Tram stops and public

transport hubs.

There are concerns about people urinating in the street and drug taking on Cherry Orchard Road. Also, concern was raised about cars being driven fast along Park Hill Road, Selborne Road and Chichester Road. Parking and road behaviour on Sunday outside Archbishop Tenison's School during events shows also careless drivers. There was some discussion about fast drivers in Park Hill Rise and Chepstow Road and junctions between Coombe Road and Castlemaine Avenue and Melville Avenue. An accident occurred for young parent and child. Steps are being taken to improve the junction.

There was a general discussion about the event organised by Garage-Nation in August. Olly stated policing this event was carried out by a special Police events team and the council licensing team so he had no role. Council, Police and Residents have lodged concerns and feedback is expected.

The committee set three priorities for next quarter:

1. Protection of women and children
2. Patrolling of Lloyd Park
3. Vehicle crime, and theft of catalytic converters.

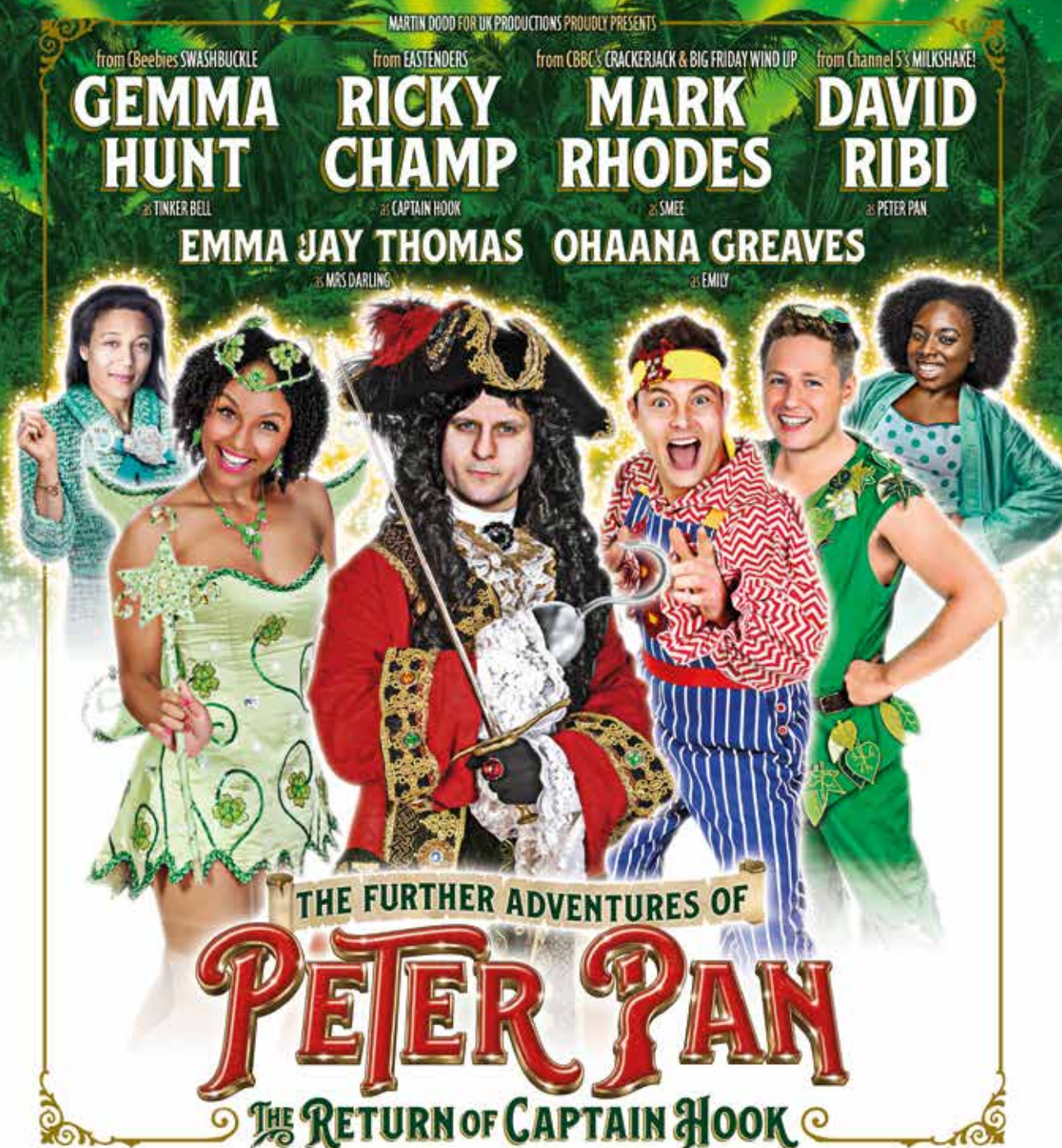


Guest, SNB chair Donna Murray-Turner (pictured above right) said she shares people's concerns but is pleased that PH&W ward is a low crime area when compared to others. She reported that politics restrict funding for her work. Funding for London Boroughs is small, she asked that we petition our councillors to hold the council to account. She gets no funding from Croydon so may need to run our own affairs. The SNB chair does take video calls with SNTs. Donna Murray-Turner said each ward has a different demographic and set of priorities including homelessness, drugs, drinkers and fearful pedestrians. She said she tries to share good practice between London Councils and agrees that we may not be getting it right but conversations amongst the interested parties are good.

The next SNT meeting is planned for Monday 5th December. If you would like to be involved and help raise concerns, represent parts of our community, and help set Police Priorities and get your voice heard come join the SNT.

Contact Chair at GrahamvLyon@gmail.com, or Police at snmailbox-parkhillandwhitgiftsnt@met.police.uk

FAIRFIELD HALLS



SAT 10 DECEMBER-SAT 31 DECEMBER 2022

fairfield.co.uk





Christmas with Aled & Russell

Two of the world's greatest classical voices, Aled Jones and Russell Watson, reunite for Christmas 2022 with a brand-new album. Performing together again following a three-year hiatus, the powerhouse duo will also embark on a colossal UK tour this Christmas.

Mon 12 December
Concert Hall | 7:30pm | from £37.50

London Mozart Players Messiah 360

Sometimes, it's best to stick to the classics. And what's Christmas without Messiah? LMP are revamping Handel's classic with a brand-new presentation. Placing you, the audience, in a ring around the orchestra, this immersive experience will showcase the work from all angles. As Croydon's resident orchestra, LMP are also joined by local singers and choirs.



Sat 17 December
Concert Hall | 7:00pm | from £21.75



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Kate Rusby at Christmas

Joining Kate on stage for this unmissable evening of Christmas cheer will be, as ever, her hugely talented and intuitive band of musicians including producer and husband Damien O'Kane as well as a top-flight brass quintet affectionately known as The Brass Boys.



Thu 20 December
Concert Hall | 7:30pm | from £34.75

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Armenian State Symphony Orchestra

The **Armenian State Symphony Orchestra** comes to **Fairfield Halls** in a concert that features its nation's greatest composer, Aram Khachaturian with music from his most popular work, the ballet **Spartacus**.

Wed 22 February 2023 | 7:30pm | from £47.50



Swedish Philharmonia

After a very successful UK tour just before the pandemic, the **Swedish Philharmonia** (also performing as **Gävle Symphony Orchestra**) return to the UK with the virtuosic Serbian violinist **Nemanja Radulovic**, who will perform Tchaikovsky's challenging Violin Concerto, Sibelius Symphony No. 2.

Mon 27 March 2023 | 7:30pm | from £47.50



Estonian National Symphony Orchestra

The **Estonian National Symphony Orchestra** (Eesti Riiklik Sümfooniaorkester, ERSO) started out in 1926 as a small radio orchestra. Over the years, it has become the most prominent orchestral ambassador of Estonia abroad, powerfully increasing its international scope particularly in recent decades.

Thu 25 May 2023 | 7:30pm | from £45.50



National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine

We're delighted to be one of 17 major UK concert venues welcoming **The National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine** (NSOU) for the 1st time in over 20 years. Join us to show solidarity with the people of Ukraine during this conflict and support the continuation of their rich musical culture.

Wed 18 October 2023 | 7:30pm | from £45.50

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THE WALLED GARDEN

Josi Kiss and Catherine Graham have been very active in bringing to life the Walled Garden in Park Hill Park - or as the Council call it 'Park Hill Recreation Ground'. Catherine has just sent us an update on how it's all going:

Thank you, PHRA for choosing our community group to fund. Your donation is going towards covering the cost of buying wood for our fence which we are currently constructing. One of our fantastic volunteers who is an experienced builder by trade is working on creating the legally compliant fence to run along a small section of our middle garden - the Peace Garden - to act a safety barrier to prevent anyone in a wheelchair going off the edge of the pathway.



We will be painting the wood green using an outdoor wood stain and then planting climbing plants which will gradually disguise the fence and

replace with beautiful blooms! We welcome any suggestions of climbing plants.

Once finished we will be able to remove the orange barriers which we will be very happy to see the end of. We are on a winter break from running the 'Garden for Wellbeing' project and will restart that in the spring, dependent on the weather of course!

We are still running our Sunday community gardening sessions where volunteers are currently doing grounds maintenance work, such as sweeping the leaves off the pathways which is a constant theme at the moment. The leaves are either swept under the hedging at the railway side of the garden where they become a lovely habitat for overwintering creatures, or get put into a bulk bag where they decompose over the next few months to become a fantastic leaf mulch or soil conditioner. We also add leaves to our compost bin making sure we have a good mix of greens and browns. One of our regular volunteers has become our lead when it comes to our composting process and we get into big trouble if we mess up his 3-way composting system! He has taken under his wing one of our newer volunteers and gladly shares his knowledge and experience that he has gained whilst volunteering with us. We love our home-made compost which then gets added to our garden beds.

Other jobs that we will be doing over the winter includes adding woodchip in some areas to prevent weeds coming through, cutting down some perennial shrubs and transplanting them whilst dormant, and some fruit tree pruning. The volunteers will also be having a well-earned break in December and will restart in the New Year if weather permits.

We will be hosting the occasional workday session during the winter and welcome ad hoc volunteers. We will promote



our work day sessions via Facebook, our noticeboard at the Pavillion and will be looking to create an early winter programme to send to you which you can share with your members.

We have lots of planning to do for next year so, even when not in the garden, we will be doing tasks behind the scenes including applying for further funding. We are a volunteer-led community

group and whilst we give our time for free and love to share our skills and knowledge, there are still costs that we need to cover such as our public liability insurance, gardening tools and gloves to replace, plants to buy and other ongoing costs.

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WE NEED YOU!

Your PHRA Committee still needs help from those who can offer their skills, time and resources to keep the Association running smoothly. We need volunteers to distribute this Newsletter 3 times a year to your neighbours, or a road near you in Park Hill. The Committee is getting older (aren't we all), and our aim is to represent ALL parts of our Community, irrespective of race, colour or religion, so please think about joining us. We want to represent a full range of views about living in Park Hill - your part of Croydon.

We are also looking for a new Treasurer, but If you'd like to help in any way, please contact info@phra.org.uk or phone 07958 379 335 and leave a message if necessary.

PARK HILL NEWS EDITOR/PUBLISHER & ADVERTISING

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YOUR PHRA TEAM:

Pat Bonham (NHS Experiences)
John Chambers (Park Hill News)
Penny Channon (Community Engagement)
Fiona Nicol (Membership and Website)

Jay Patel (Community Partnership)
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PARK HILL INFANTS SCHOOL

"A MAGICAL INFANT ENVIRONMENT"

My first visit to meet the school's Head and Deputy Head teachers and tour of the school, 4th November 2022, by John Chambers, Editor, Park Hill News.

WOW! My head is buzzing as I'm writing this a day or two after my visit – I was blown away by the high standards of teaching and the results they have achieved. You can see it in the behaviour and responses from the children, who seem to love the school as much as the teaching staff do.

I was so unprepared for the experience of what teachers, children and their parents are probably used to on a daily basis. Our son is now 47, so it's over 40 years since he attended the school, and although we have fond memories of that, I'm sure that school life and current teaching methods are very different from those days.

We are so lucky to have this school in Park Hill, but first a few facts. There are now 9 classes, 3 per year for children of 4-5, 5-6 and 6-7. That's a total of 270 pupils, and for each yearly intake there are some 400 children applying for just 90 places, so competition for entry is fierce. Reception places are offered to children living within approximately 0.4 of a mile from the school, so the intake is really local – fulfilling its original design as a school for local kids from local families.

Ofsted seem to agree with my overall impression, their last report rated the



Above: BFG drawings by the children.



Above: Park Hill infant school buildings. Below: The Nest (quiet room) outside and inside.



school as 'outstanding' and another visit is due soon. Around 54% of pupils don't have English as their first language at home, so the staff can match some of those language skills by the variety of background and nationalities they represent. Results speak for themselves, this year the school was in the top 2% for reading and maths for children working at a higher level. Headteacher Jane Charman has encouraged a practical hands-on approach among all staff, who in addition to their academic qualifications are blessed with a variety of special skills, like woodworking, music and drama, art appreciation covering a wide range of cultural experience.

I was taken around the school by Deputy Headteacher Natasha Parry who showed me each of the year's classes in action. The children seemed completely at ease talking about their work and play, and Natasha encourages them to explain what they are doing, in a confident and relaxed way. The children are well behaved, attentive and keen to learn –



which probably explains why they let off so much energy and enjoyment at break time!

The school remained open all through the pandemic lockdown, helping key workers to carry on with their jobs, and the school has developed an important role working with families, supporting those in difficulties with uniforms, running a breakfast club and liaising with parents when there are any challenges or difficulties either at home or school.

Both the school and Park Hill Residents' Association are keen to develop the links that have already been formed, and we have taken part in the consultation surrounding the Healthy Streets Scheme that Croydon Council is proposing. Its aim is to reduce congestion and keep the roads around the school safer, something that residents have long been asking for.

The school works closely with the Junior school as they share many of



the same families and work together to achieve the best outcomes for their children. Also, for those residents with pre-school children, the school works closely with Tunstall Nursery School whose Executive Headteacher is also Jane Charman, from Park Hill Infants.

The Nursery has a similar ethos, but is tailored to the needs of this younger audience, and currently has vacancies for 2, 3 and 4 year olds. It's in Tunstall Rd, Croydon CR0 6TY, and their Baby and



Toddler Group is very well regarded by the parents whose children attend.

The current economic climate means that Park Hill Infants School works on a tight budget and has always encouraged parent participation in fund raising activities for special projects. The Nest building has now been completed and furnished with part-funding by parents, and future projects may include a mini-bus for taking children to outside venues – instead of costly hirings of a van and driver. The future at Park Hill Infants School is bright – and magical.

Below: Aurelia and Stella - winners of the banner competition.



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Our member of Parliament SARAH JONES WRITES...



It is a pleasure, once again, to write an update for the Park Hill Residents Association. A lot has changed since your last newsletter: we've seen two new Prime Ministers and three new Chancellors. Politics has been a mess.

Locally, I have been very busy. Everyone is feeling the strain of energy costs, food prices, and rent increases: I am aware just how difficult things are at the moment, especially as winter approaches.

I have been holding Cost-of-Living sessions across the constituency, with the mental health charity Mind, Citizens Advice, and the South West London Law Centre. It's been a chance for people to bring their concerns and receive advice and support. Those who have attended the Cost-of-Living sessions across the constituency, spoke about real concerns with energy bills and rising living costs. For example, 64% of people are worried about energy bills and 44% of attendees are worried about the cost of food.

The next session will be held at The Wellness Centre, 1st, Floor Whitgift Centre, Croydon CR0 1LP on Thursday, 1st December, 11am – 1pm. I've also written a Cost-of-Living advice booklet which will be arriving on your doorstep soon: keep it, pass it on to your neighbours and friends, and please make use of it.

I've been continuing to hold the Government to account in my role as Shadow Policing and Fire Minister and finished taking the Public Order Bill through the House of Commons for Labour. I asked a question at Prime Minister's Question Time, and at Business Questions I raised an important constituency case, pressing the Government to change the rules on legal aid funding at public inquests.

Regarding casework there have been a variety of issues

ranging from pension queries through to housing requests. Following the tragic death of Kyra Hill, who drowned at an aqua park facility in Windsor, I am supporting her family, who live locally and are campaigning to ensure that lessons are learnt from this devastating incident so that no other family must go through anything like this again.

This month marks six years since the tragic tram crash which devastated our Croydon community and took the lives of seven people: Dane Chinnery, Donald Collett, Robert Huxley, Phil Logan, Dorota Rynkiewicz, Phil Seary and Mark Smith. After meeting with the Government, the Minister reassured me that all tramway legislation is being reviewed as part of a wider commitment to scrutinise local transport legislation. Good progress is also being made to implement the recommendations of the Coroner's Reports, and the Department for Transport is considering putting these on a legal footing. Rest assured, I will continue to advocate and press the Government to make the changes that we need.

The recent review of parliamentary boundaries proposed moving Park Hill into Croydon South constituency. I love representing Park Hill and would be very sad not to. Croydon has too large a population for three MPs so the commission is redesigning our boundaries and creating four seats. Final decisions will be made next year.

As always, please get in touch with me via email at sarah.jones.mp@parliament.uk, and my team and I will do our best to help you. Alternatively, you can ring my office on 0208 191 7066. Phone lines are open Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 10:00 and 12:00 and again between 14:00 and 16:00.



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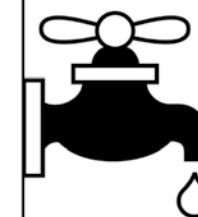
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A MESSAGE FROM JASON PERRY, EXECUTIVE MAYOR



Since taking up office, one of my key priorities has been to get to the bottom of the Council's current financial position and the challenges ahead. Unfortunately, it is clear that the previous Administration's financial mismanagement has been disastrous for our borough and reduced the

Council's ability to weather the challenges of inflation and cost of living price increases.

However, despite the financial challenges we are facing, we continue to deliver on key pledges. I am pleased to report that the Council have begun putting more resources behind our graffiti clean-up, after the previous Administration cut the service. In recent years you will have noticed the increase in graffiti across the area, affecting the image of Croydon. However, under the re-introduced graffiti removal service I have instructed that the additional resource focus where it is needed most, prioritising illegal, antisocial, and offensive graffiti across the borough, providing a cleaner, more pleasant environment that our residents and businesses are proud to call home.

In addition, the Council has concluded consultation on the proposed Public Space Protection Order (PSP), and it was great to see overwhelming positive support for the reintroduction of an order in the town centre. Antisocial behaviour negatively affects all of us, whether living, working or shopping in Croydon, and gives the wrong impression of our local area. That's why I was pleased to see residents, businesses and other key partners, including the Police, give their backing to my plans to make our town centre safer. With the re-introduction approved at November's Cabinet meeting we should see the new order in place before the end of the year.

Back in September's Cabinet meeting I also provided a statement of intent affirming the Council's commitment to tackling violence against women and girls in our borough. This statement set out how the Council will work with the police and community partners to tackle the factors that women and girls have highlighted as issues whilst moving about the borough. This will form part of a refreshed community safety plan.

These commitments to improving safety and the targeted approach to cleaning up graffiti are just small parts of our wider work to restore pride in Croydon – I remain firmly committed to rebuilding the image of Croydon as the attractive place to live, work, and visit,

that we know it to be.

Finally, coming into the winter months I am aware that families and households across Croydon are feeling the squeeze from current cost of living increases. Despite the financial challenges the Council is facing, I assure you that there are a number of avenues of support which both the Government and Council are providing to help residents through the current crisis. Full details are available on the Council's Cost of Living webpages and I encourage you to reach out to your Ward Councillors if you need assistance in navigating this.

Whilst there may be difficult decisions ahead, I know that Croydon's communities will rise to the challenge and together we will set Croydon back on the right path.

Jason Perry

Executive Mayor of Croydon

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