

NEWS

ISSUE 144 // PARK HILL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER // SPRING 2023

IS PARK HILL JUST WHERE YOU LIVE, OR IS IT TRULY HOME?

If Park Hill is indeed home, then a great opportunity to be more informed and involved in decision making is approaching. Your neighbourhood Residents Association is holding its **Annual Meeting on Thursday 25th May at 8pm in St Matthew's Church**. Please come along express your views and hear more from other local people who share your interests and concerns.

All residents are welcome, come early to get a seat, meet with friends and neighbours, and make your voice heard. If you have something to say, this is your chance speak to us, your local Councillor, your local MP, the police and SNT chair, and hopefully the Mayor Jason Perry. We hold this meeting around the same time every year, and it gives everyone a chance to talk about those topics which are most important to us all – the state of Park Hill, Croydon Town Centre, the Council and the Country's economy, and what can we all do about it!

All households and property owners in Park Hill are welcome to join the Resident's Association as members – it's only £5 a year (see form on page 20). These membership fees



go towards supporting community projects. We also invite anyone who would like to contribute more actively to consider joining the Association committee or any of our smaller action groups. If you're interested, please come forward and talk to us.

We'd welcome new members with ideas, energy and enthusiasm to make things happen. Most of the committee have lived in Park Hill

and served the community for many years. We all love Park Hill but some of us are ready to step down and hand the reins to a new generation of residents. Folks who can spare some time and contribute their expertise and experience to make Park Hill an even better place to live.

We're friendly, non-political and open to all.

Please join us on May 25th to find out more!

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WATER TOWER TEAS

Opening around Easter time, this cafe is a great place to meet up with friends, with tables and chairs set out on the grass and a range of eats and drinks available.

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HISTORY OF PARK HILL - PART 2

Continuing the story of Park Hill from the middle of the 19th century, written by Richard Link, our local resident historian.

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PARK HILL PARK - SPRING UPDATE

Turn to page 18 to find out about the Walled Garden Project and how you can help The Friends of Park Hill Park if you shop in Tesco's.





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WHAT'S HAPPENING

IN PARK HILL

“GREETINGS FROM THE JANUARY LITTER PICK TEAM”

Says Robert Webb



We had another highly successful litter pick on Sunday 15th January, as many of you will already know. A huge ‘Thank you’ to all of the 28 volunteers who collected a massive 52 bags of rubbish between them,

as well as an assortment of road signs, a traffic cone, matting, hubcaps, roofing material, and several other assorted items.

Your Committee really appreciate the support that these Litter Picks receive, and it's such a rewarding feeling to take part, enjoy the feeling of ‘doing something’ to help the environment, and smarten up the whole area – at least for a day or two.

So if you want to meet some new friends, please put the date in your diary for our next Litter Pick on **Sunday June 25th starting at 12noon** – we always meet on the grass outside St Matthew’s Church at the corner of Chichester Road and Park Hill Road. Robert has organised bags, pickers and hoops from the Council, but you may want to bring along your own gloves.

Water Tower Teas



We want to give a shout out for the café in Park Hill Park which is due to open again at Easter, all being well. It's been a great place to meet up for refreshments from Spring to Autumn, with tables and chairs set out on the grass – and a range of eats and drinks.

Jenny has run Water Tower Teas for around 38 years, originally with her husband Ken. He sadly passed away and Jenny’s daughter Ange helps most days, but other family members also assist.

Their season runs from Easter to Halloween (roughly) and they sell wonderful cakes!! Your editor met up with our local Councillor Jade Appleton for a coffee and cake before it closed for the Winter.

NEW VICAR AT ST MATTHEWS CHURCH

Following the retirement of Rev Simon Foster in July last year, it has been announced that **The Reverend Ruth Chapman**, presently Curate at Warlingham, Chelsham & Farleigh Team Ministry, also in the Diocese of Southwark, has been appointed Vicar at St Matthew, Croydon, subject to completion of the necessary procedures. Further details, including the date of the Licensing service, will follow in due course.



INTERESTED IN PHOTOGRAPHY?

We meet at Shirley Methodist Church Hall, Eldon Avenue, CRO 8SD on Wednesdays at 7:45pm for 8:00pm - 10pm meeting, between early September and late July (except during the Christmas & Easter breaks).

Tea, coffee and biscuits are served at the interval, during each meeting.

If you're interested in photography, novice or expert, you're always welcome. Newcomers may join us for several evenings, at no cost, to see if the club is right for you, before making any longer term commitment.

Our programme of events, examples of our images and plenty more can be viewed at:
www.croydoncameraclub.org.uk.

We look forward to seeing you!...



IS THERE ACCOUNTABILITY AT PARK HILL GP SERVICES?

by Penelope Channon

When we resumed our public meetings in late 2021, residents reported difficulties getting GP appointments. Since then, the PHRA has been signposting members experiencing issues back to their local surgeries because NHS England has required all GP practices to have a Patient Participation Group (PPG) since 2015.

A PPG is a group of patients, carers and practice staff who meet regularly to discuss practice issues and patient experiences to improve the effectiveness of the service. During Covid GP services were told by NHS England that they could briefly “suspend engaging with and/or reviewing feedback from their PPG and may pause implementing any improvements previously agreed.”

ECMC leading the way



East Croydon Medical Centre (ECMC) has resumed regular PPG meetings. The most recent was on the 23rd of February with other surgeries in their Croydon Central Link PCN (Edridge Road Community Health

Centre and St James Medical Centre with Castle Hill). There was initial confusion about the time and date but an informative meeting was held.

Staff from ECMC reported they are using the new E-Consult platform on their website where patients can expect a response within 12, 14, or 48 hours. E-Consult was stated to be the ‘Future of the NHS.’ The surgery is also transitioning to a phone system that will mimic E-Consult. Both systems are designed to triage patients. Urgent cases are directed to 111 or 999. Other patients are referred to the appropriate member of the surgery’s multidisciplinary team (MDT). The team includes: in-house paramedics, pharmacists, nurses and GPs who specialise in acute or long-term conditions. The Community Pharmacy Consultation Service will also be utilized to give patients advice.

There are 500 additional appointments available to patients at Croydon’s GP Hubs. These operate 8am – 8pm, 7 days a week. Croydon University Hospital (CUH) has also opened a new out of hours clinic for Acute Respiratory Infections keeping more infectious patients away from vulnerable patients and the essential GP staff. CUH is also running a phone triage service on Sundays.

ECMC is responding to patient feedback and using more technology. They plan to use QR codes, have set up an Instagram page and hope to install an E-consult kiosk. A new voicemail system is now in place and call wait times are now down to 5 minutes at 8:15am. The staff at ECMC and Edridge Road worked hard to prepare for their

Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection on the 8th of February. The two centres got a combined score of GOOD. There are still improvements needed for some specific areas of patient safety, but action plans are in place to achieve them.

What could go wrong?

Like any workplace staff can get sick and technology can fail. This happened when the phone system went down on February 20th. This is being followed up by surgery staff. There have also been problems with the 111 system. Patients have been referred back to the surgery on busy days rather than being offered GP Hub appointments adding further pressure at the surgery rather than alleviating it.

Extra pressure is also being put on Croydon GP services because private companies with government contracts house vulnerable adults and young people from other parts of the country here in the borough. These sites may only offer limited or no staff support for their residents. As a result, these vulnerable individuals aren’t always able to attend scheduled appointments or follow medical advice.

In happier news, ECMC staff expect handover of the new building to take place on April 7th. We join them in hoping the first appointments will take place on the new site by the end of April. We are gratified the ECMC is being so open and transparent with us and their patients by involving us all in these regular meetings.

Birdhurst and Friends Road Medical Centres

Birdhurst and Friends Road, along with three other practices in their GPnet Primary Care Network (PCN), held a forum to create a joint PPG in June 2022. PHRA were disappointed to learn these plans had been abandoned. Responsibility for these groups has now returned to the individual practices. Both practices have information on their websites about these groups but much of it is either dated pre-pandemic or is not reflective of their current schedule for meetings.

We enquired about this and Friends Road let us know the information is not accurate but their current priority was completing end of year processes. In June they intend to begin the work of restarting the PPG. Birdhurst similarly said they did not have a PPG and aim to restart theirs. They did not give a specific date. It would be reasonable to assume their website is also inaccurate.

The Future

We shall continue to monitor the situation at Friends Road and Birdhurst. We hope to share how you can get involved when these PPGs restart. For residents who are patients at ECMC, you can request to join the PPG by emailing swlccg.ecmadministration@nhs.net under the heading ECMC PPG. We encourage all concerned residents to embrace the opportunity to help shape these vital local services.

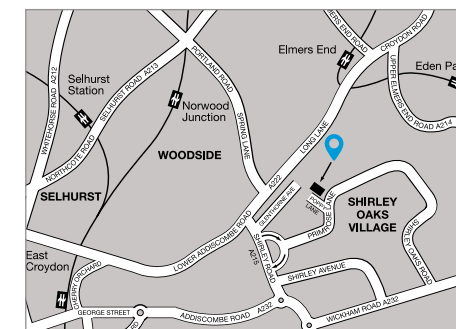
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JADE REPORTS

Our Local Councillor Jade Appleton has been busy...



Council

Many residents will be aware of the vote in early March by the council to raise council tax by 15%. As a member of the Scrutiny and Overview committee I was able to question the Mayor and officers on the budget in advance. I focused on three areas – whether this would be a one off, what would happen to the council and Croydon if this did not pass, and how would vulnerable residents be supported. The responses I received outlined that the Government had given permission for a one off increase in council tax of 15% this year. In response to what would happen if it did not pass I was informed that the council would become unsafe, vital services such as childrens and adults social care amongst others would not run, and further damage to Croydon would occur. In response to support for vulnerable residents, and how difficult it will be for residents to pay amongst many other pressures, I was informed that the council plans to increase the council tax support scheme that will provide to low income households and those who cannot afford to pay. The Mayor also stated that he remained committed to ensuring those responsible for the financial collapse our held to account for their failures. I will be working over the next year to ensure anyone in need of support due to the rise is provided with information and connection to teams who can assist. I am hopeful this will be a first step towards the restoration of Croydon. If anyone would like to discuss further please do get in touch.

Litter pick and street cleansing

It was brilliant to join so many volunteers for the litter pick in January, great to see everyone pulling together to clean up Park Hill, even in the cold weather there were 28 volunteers! I'm working hard to try to reduce fly tipping locally and graffiti – especially under the tram tunnel by Lloyd Park. Please do let me know if you're experiencing any issues in your road and I will follow up with officers to see how we can work to improve it. I've also been pressing officers to continue work on removing basal growth around trees to enable better access along our pavements and to ensure gritting in the cold weather. Many thanks to all who completed the Council Survey for feedback to the services we receive and how we can improve this going forward.

Working with local policing team and surgeries

Ollie, our local PCSO, and I have been continuing to hold our monthly surgeries at St Matthews and Lloyd Park café. It is great to meet so many people at these, we also often have additional attendees from the community such as the resident association committee members, local school teachers and our ward panel chair, as well as the local friends group. We're all working together to ensure we protect our community in Park Hill – if you would like

to book an appointment at either location please do email me to secure a space.

Safer Neighbourhood Ward panel

It was great to attend the ward panel meeting at St Matthews in late February. There's a full report on page 10. I requested an update on the Town Centre PSPO from Cllr Ola Kolade the cabinet member responsible. I outlined our concerns about dispersal and Cllr Kolade committed to keeping the PSPO under review and the panel informed.

Healthy streets and local schools

Many residents and Park Hill schools have been in touch on the new healthy streets scheme which is being trialled around Stanhope, Cotelands, Pageant, Crusader and the Avenue. Issues include access for black cabs, those without cars, deliveries, multiple school pick ups, workman visiting and access for collections. There's a huge increase in traffic on Chichester Road and parking on pavements. I have fed back all comments to council officers to include

in their consultation response. The local policing team is increasing patrols along Chichester road to discourage pavement parking and blocking of the road. Please provide feedback on the scheme via the council website or myself. Email me for the link. It's essential to formally respond on the consultation, as after the trial period responses will be reviewed and a decision will be taken as to whether to make the scheme permanent.

Road safety

I shall continue to press for improved road safety locally with the council – especially for the crossing along Park Hill Road, by Selborne Road. I've been working on a possible petition locally and am currently awaiting an update from the leading officer for transport at the council on how recently allocated money from TfL is being used to improve road safety across the borough.

Lloyd Park

I recently attended the 250th anniversary run of the Junior Parkrun in Lloyd Park. It was fantastic to see so many turn out and what a great community Parkrun it was for Park Hill. I was very honoured to hand out the



wristbands to juniors who had completed 50 and 100 runs locally. It's also been great to see the work of the local disc golf club in the park, installing new tee pads so that the course is more accessible for all. As well as this I've been following up on three park issues in particular – bins, dangerous dogs and lighting. On bins I've been pressing officers at the council to improve collection and to plan ahead for busier times such as Easter. On dangerous dogs towards the Coombe side of the park, I've been working with our local police team and council dog warden to resolve issues and make the park safe for everyone to use. On lighting – I've been pressing officers to look for ways we can address the lack of lighting running from the tram stop, along the tennis courts, I am hoping they can provide some suggestions as to how we move forward. Finally, by working with local friends group we've managed to secure some fencing and signage for one of the oldest trees in the park to protect it from damage.

Park Hill Park

Over the past few months I've been in close touch with Friends of Park Hill Park, working with them to press the council for updates on the Water Tower, and to resolve the leaks which have been blocking path access over the winter months. The Friends Group have been continuing their work in the walled garden and I have been working with them and our local policing team to try to reduce anti-social behaviour in the park and ensure anyone sleeping in the park is provided with appropriate support and resources from streetlink.

Mobile phone mast

In early February I received notification of a possible mobile phone mast planning application for Park Hill Road next to the crossing by St Matthews. Working with the RA, and local residents I went back to convey concerns around the accuracy of planning documents, to clarify the area that would be covered by improved coverage and to stress that we felt as a community it was important any masts were used by multiple operators. I received confirmation our views have been noted and we now await the submission of the application where we can make formal comments. We shall wait to hear.

Planning - Croydon Park Hotel Site

A new planning application has been received for the application which has been registered under reference 23/00872/FUL which proposes: 'Demolition of the existing buildings and retention of the existing basement, site preparation and enabling works to allow for the erection of a residential building (Use Class C3) comprising a maximum 455 homes with a maximum height of 39 storeys and community floorspace (Use Class F.1/F.2) on the ground floor, highways and access works, landscaping, car and cycle parking, and other associated works. Further explanation (for consultation purposes and not forming part of the formal description of development set out above): The proposed development comprises the demolition of existing

structures with basement retained, site preparation and enabling works, and the construction of two buildings with a shared basement and ground floor level, comprising heights of 9 storeys, and part 12, part 38, part 39 storeys, to deliver 455 residential homes (Use Class C3), and 83.6 sqm of community floorspace (Use Class F.1/F.2), highways/access works, landscaping, car and cycle parking, and other associated works.'

The application was validated on 6th March 2023 and we are in the process of undertaking the required publicity to the application.

Interested parties can view the application on the Council's website by entering the above application number. It is also possible for representations to be submitted online or by emailing: dmcomments@croydon.gov.uk. I have concerns around the potential impact on local infrastructure, from GP provision to school places. I want to ensure that if the application is approved it must commit to supporting local groups such as Friends of Park Hill Park. I would urge anyone interested to submit comments.

Bus timetables and bus shelters

I am continuing to press council officers for the replacement bus shelters. I have also been informed of a change of service frequency for the 64 bus – I have contacted TfL for more information on this, please do get in contact if you would like me to share this with you when received.

ULEZ

Croydon Council strongly opposes the plan to expand the Ultra-Low Emission Zone. Alongside other outer London authorities, Croydon is exploring options to legally challenge this flawed expansion. The council will also be resisting attempts by TfL to use our lampposts and street furniture for ULEZ signage and cameras. I believe that this is a flawed policy and we should instead invest in improving the public transport network in outer London to make it easier for local people to make more sustainable transport choices. Please do get in touch if you'd like to discuss this further.

Looking ahead to the Coronation

Communities across Croydon are being given the opportunity to get-together with their friends and neighbours to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. The Coronation Big Lunch Event is being held over the weekend of Saturday 6 May to Monday 8 May 2023, and to make the events as easy and accessible as possible, there will be no council charge for Traffic Management Orders (TMO) to close roads for those wishing to hold street parties. Whether your Big Lunch takes place in the street, a park or open space, the council has put together essential information to help organisers planning for the historic event, which can be found on the council website.

Completed application forms must be submitted by Friday 7 April but organisers are encouraged to apply as early as possible as there will be a limited number of Traffic Management Orders granted across the borough.

THE AMAZING HISTORY OF PARK HILL - PART 2

BY RICHARD LINK, OUR LOCAL RESIDENT HISTORIAN

In continuing the story of Park Hill from the middle of the 19th century, there will be much in common with new residential neighbourhoods in the outskirts of London.

Development usually encroached on farmland- this happened here as is clear from previous field plans. From the outset there was a reflection of the growing need for substantial houses for the increasing 'middle classes' made up of merchants in many trades and those in professions and business of all kinds. Many commuted to London using the excellent train services only minutes away. Many too were finding prosperity in the rapidly expanding town with new shopping streets and culture and sporting facilities. This built on its established reputation as a market town which had drawn people from the surrounding area.

The new housing on Park Hill covered over 150 acres on plots up to half an acre and the houses often had coach houses attached. They were built on 99 year leases from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners along six new roads between 1865 and 1875. The top floor usually had accommodation for servants.

However the first new residence built on Park Hill was by John Horniman, then living at Addiscombe Lodge, who bought land (then known as The Warren) in 1850. He employed the 'Brown building firm' to erect a house in the current Italianate style to be called Coombe Cliff. Horniman's Tea had become a well-known brand and the firm had introduced pre-weighed packet tea for the retail market. John Horniman became a wealthy man and invested heavily into religious education, hospitals, handicrafts, assisting the sick and disabled. He travelled widely in his business and collected curios and items of Natural History. Coombe Cliff was also well known for its conservatory where he kept his botanical collection. The design was reportedly by Joseph Paxton famous for the Crystal Palace re-built at Sydenham. In

recent years the conservatory has been dismantled and re-erected at the Horniman Museum and Gardens at Forest Hill where it is used as a tea room and for holding talks. John Horniman's son also lived at Coombe Cliff for a short while after his father's death in 1893. Later it was occupied by Ald C.J. Allen (Twice Mayor of Croydon). My father was an admirer of one of his daughters and attended a wedding there in 1902 and took photographs. The property was purchased by the Croydon Corporation in 1930 for a Convalescent home for children and has been used since as an Art School and an Adult Education centre. It stands today proudly above the cutting of the Brighton railway line.

The adjacent Park Hill recreation ground (now known as Park Hill Park) is one of Croydon's larger open spaces, which in total occupy 118 sites comprising 2641 acres. Following Government policy for providing open spaces in populous regions the newly created Croydon Corporation purchased 15 acres in 1887 from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for the sum of £4000. A further £2000 was spent in laying out the park with paths, turf and tree planting. It was opened by the Mayor (Mr Ward of the Croydon Advertiser) who commented that they might have spent a bit more by including a bandstand! This was added later. He thought that the fountain which had been transferred from Broad Green was more suited to a cemetery than a Pleasure Garden. He felt that the park would be monopolised by nursemaids pushing perambulators along asphalt paths. He maintained 'All should be welcome.. rich and poor, saints and sinners.. provided they behaved themselves!'

Until the first World War there was a vibrant community on Park Hill. Both my grandfather and great



Eversley photographed in 1969 before demolition

uncle moved to Park Hill with their families from Stoke Newington in the 1880s. The photos show a croquet party at 'Homedale' (on the corner of Park Hill Road and Chichester Road, see right) and also my own family enjoying ice-creams in the garden at 'Eversley' in Chichester Road in about 1896 (see below). A house with extensive gardens was 'Engadine' occupying the central area of what is now Turnpike Link. In 1898 a garden party was held there (as reported in the local newspaper) by the owner Alderman Barrow. In showery weather they listened to the band of the Coldstream Guards.

There were other noted residents, apparently three Lord Mayors of London. Colonel Walters, at 36 Park



Croquet party at 'Homedale'

Hill Road, was influential in the musical training of the composer Samuel Coleridge Taylor who had been born in Croydon and later sang in the choir of St Mary's Church, Canning Road. Prior to the first World War there was a varied social life, including home musical entertainment, tennis parties, a reading circle, local dances both in private houses and at the Public Halls in George Street.

The local tennis club was the East Croydon Lawn Tennis Club which was moved from near Altyre Road to the area between Stanhope and Chichester Road (west) in 1885.

It became known for hosting the East Surrey Championships from 1906 until 1914. Members of the club often took part in the Wimbledon championships. One of the best known was Miss Aitchison, ranked No. 8 in England in the early part of the 20th century. The club also entered a full quota of teams for the Surrey County team events. From my own memory there were at least 4 clay courts and six grass courts, with a pavilion for changing and serving refreshments which could be enjoyed on the surrounding area of lawn. The seats were rather rickety by the 1960s! The club closed in the early 1970s and the land has since been used as sports fields for the adjacent Park Hill Junior school. This stands on the site of Park Hill House, demolished in 1949.

In 1960 the Croydon Millenary year (there had been a record of a priest living in Croydon in the year 960) my father contributed an article on Park Hill in the Advertiser series on each of the Croydon districts. His recollections included the following:

The street crossing sweepers and the 'very smart cobs' driven by Mr Skilton, a well known local butcher,

the muffin man with his bell and board and the periodic visits of a performing bear. He was thrown a pole by his Italian master and then danced to the weird and plaintive melody of the maestro. In those days the milkman came daily with his churns and cans to fill jugs at the back door. He also remembered Mr Strickland, the outside porter at East Croydon station, who called with his horse and van to collect the family's luggage when they were about to leave on holiday. Mr Norman Neill, with his livery stables off Hazeldean Road (later a garage) was known to everybody as many residents had their own horses.



The Drawing Room at Eversley

Train services were plentiful in the area. Another station was at Coombe Lane (later called Coombe Road) on the Woodside and South Croydon Joint Railway which opened in 1885. It was constructed by the renowned railway engineer Sir Joseph Fairbank and included the tunnels under Park Hill and a cutting some 80 feet deep on the south Approach, for years the home of badger setts. During excavations there were significant archaeological finds which caused great interest and the geology of the cutting revealed a variety of compacted deposits. The railway line operated until 1986 and is currently part of the Tramlink service to New Addington. The station was approached along a footpath (now part of Vanguard Way to Newhaven) from Brownlow Road and Lloyd Park.

After 1918 the large houses became difficult to maintain. Families had suffered losses during the War and the earlier generation were approaching retirement and moving away, often to the nearby country. Servants were hard to find and the leasehold houses were being turned into flats. The basement level was usually approached through a separate entrance and this accommodation would have direct access to the rear garden. Coach houses became self-contained houses. A few families lived on in their original houses until the Second World War. My parents (who married during the war) managed to maintain our house 'Eversley' with limited help for a further 25 years.

Adapted from part of a talk to the Sanderstead Local History Society in April 2022.

PARK HILL & WHITGIFT SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM (SNT) WARD PANEL UPDATE

Over the winter period the SNT ward panel team has met twice and discussed matters of safety, security and policing on our ward. We have an engaged group of around 20 who represents all aspects of life on our ward. We have business, schools, residents' associations, friends of parks, faith groups, Asian community reps and concerned residents. Our local Councillor also attends. We have a mix of all ages and a good cross section of people who work, live, commute through or learn on our ward. We discuss activities crime statistics and with our three ward officers from the Police set priorities or focus areas for their routine policing work. It's a pretty relaxed group so why not come and join the meetings – which last around 90 mins and are held on the ward. If you have interest to join please contact Graham Lyon at grahamvlyon@gmail.com

– Come on, try it out we don't bite! Remember to sign up for PCSO email updates and to report any suspicious activity to the police by contacting Police Team - Park Hill & Whitgift SNT SNMailbox-ParkHillandWhitgiftSNT@met.police.uk

We are pleased to welcome PC Sam Pike to our ward, alongside Charles Gryson and our well known PCSO Ollie White. Sargent Nathan Savile looks after the SNT.

5 December 2022, Archbishop Tenison School



The meeting was attended by 21 people, including community members, school representatives, councillors, and police officers. The police provided a summary of recent crimes in the area, with vehicle theft and burglary being the most common offences.

Several new attendees reported incidents of burglary and the police advised residents to take precautions such as leaving lights on using a timer switch and installing home CCTV. They also warned residents to be cautious of unverified contractors who may try to enter homes.

The meeting also discussed concerns about the safety of teenagers in the area and the lack of lighting in Lloyd Park. The police have been patrolling the tram stop regularly, and councillors are exploring the possibility of using solar lighting as a safety measure in the park.

In addition, there were concerns raised about the pavilion in PH Park and its use by a woman and an older man who seemed to be living there. The police investigated the situation to check the safety and welfare of all parties involved, and they have since departed.

Lastly, the meeting addressed the issue of the Lloyd Park Bowls club being empty and open to anti-social behavior. Councillors are exploring options to re-open the club and are open to ideas from the community.

27 February 2023, St Matthew's Church

Sgt Sara Ginn discussed her role in encouraging recruitment in London to ensure that the police force reflects all communities. She encouraged anyone between 18 and 57 years to attend college for a three-year BSc degree course in policing by paying all the fees and giving a £34k grant for living expenses.

Coombe Wood School students, Edmund and Gabrielle, and Archbishop Tenison's student Cychelle gave short presentations on issues that young people encounter related to safety, security, and crime in Croydon. They raised concerns about the lack of lighting on footpaths from the Lloyd Park tram stop and around Lloyd park making the area after school very dark during winter time. Personal safety is a major concern. Advice was given on protection for Students in such situations. The police and various charities also provide victim support services.

The police report for crimes etc was discussed. The ward is expected to have the lowest figures in the Borough since it is the smallest and remains low for crimes per head of population. During the period PCSO Ollie emailed advice on helping prevent burglaries at our homes. Sadly as we go to print we hear of further home burglaries.

The three priorities that the panel set for the next period are

1. protection of women and children,
2. burglary/theft,
3. vehicle crime, theft of, theft from and theft of catalytic converters.

Councillor Jade Appleton has regularly updated the panel on ward issues. Recently she expressed concern about traffic issues around Park Hill schools and improving the tram bridge over the Fairfield Path, where there is much graffiti and poor surroundings.

We invite our adjoining wards to meetings to see if any common themes arise. There are several however we see less of stealing or duplicating car registration plates of vehicles suspected of being used for robberies, issues with people exhibiting poor mental health and antisocial behaviour, and the need for more ambulances to cope with the number queuing at the hospital.

Ola Kolade, Croydon cabinet member for community safety, gave an update on the use of the Public Safety Protection Order (PSPO) in the center of Croydon to tackle street drinking and antisocial behavior where complaints have been made. This should now be active, and we will monitor if this initiative just moves more crime to surrounding areas such as our ward.

Please consider joining the panel. We would plan a full open house meeting early summer and we will inform people in good time when we hope to have senior borough police and maybe our MP and or Mayor.

That's all for now. Stay safe.

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Palm Sunday 2 nd April	8.30am	Said Eucharist
Monday 3 rd April	10am	Sung Eucharist
Tuesday 4 th April	8pm	The Stations of the Cross
Tuesday 4 th April	8pm	Eucharist with Reflection
Wednesday 5 th April	8pm	Taizé Service
Maundy Thursday 6 th April	8pm	Eucharist with Foot Washing
Good Friday 7 th April	12 to 1pm	Church Open for Quiet Reflection
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	2 to 3pm	The Last Hour
Easter Day 9 th April	10am	Easter Sunday Celebration with Eucharist

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Summer Concert

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Saturday 17 June, 7 pm

Croydon Minster, Church Street CR0 1RN

Autumn Concert

Music of Mozart and Handel

Saturday 18 November, 7.30 pm

St Mildred's Church, 30 Bingham Road CR0 7EB

September Baroque Singing Workshop (date tbc)

Shirley Methodist Church, 2 Eldon Ave. CR0 8SD

December Christmas Concert

Date tbc. Check our website nearer the time.

St Matthew's Church, Chichester Road, CR0 5NQ

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YOU'RE LOOKING GOOD, PARK HILL!



As well as being controversial, the growing number of tower blocks on the fringes of our neighbourhood have created some new photo opportunities. Robert Webb, our resident photographer has taken this great shot from about 35 floors up. When Spring has sprung and all of the leaves are fully out, we must ask him to take another one.

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.

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Thursday 25 May, 8pm

PHRA Annual Neighbourhood Meeting and AGM, St Matthew's Church

Your PHRA hosts a Neighbourhood meeting once a year. This gives all our residents an opportunity to connect with their neighbours and express their views to the Residents' Association, representatives from central and local government, local police and the Safer Neighbourhood Team. To find out more go to page 1.

Sunday 25 June, 12 noon

PHRA Summer Litter Pick, gather at the bench on the corner of Park Hill Road and Chichester Road

We organise a local litter pick twice a year. Bin bags, hoops and pickers are provided. Come along with a pair of gloves, meet your neighbours and help keep Park Hill beautiful!

Saturday 15 July, time TBC

PHRA Volunteers THANK YOU! Event St Matthew's Church

This is a new invite-only event in 2023. We hope our AMAZING volunteers can attend a sophisticated and relaxed evening with food, drinks and the kindest people in our community. Those who give their time to keep Park Hill tidy, to write and deliver the Park Hill News, help facilitate our events and of course our hard working committee. If you are a volunteer keep an eye out for your invitation and if you'd like to become one, please contact us - see the form on page 20.

Saturday 30 September, time TBC

THE PARK HILL SHOWCASE Run in association with the PHRA and St Matthew's Church

The PHRA and St Mathews Church are collaborating on this new event. We'd like to invite Park Hill community groups to come and showcase their gifts and passion to the wider population. This event will be free for groups and attendees and refreshments will be available. We hope to have a wide variety of displays and demonstrations by the beautiful and talented people of Park Hill. Expressions of interest are now open please go to www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/T2KFG5R to register your group.

Special Christmas Event - TBC

This one is still in the works so we're not revealing too much at this stage... watch later editions of Park Hill News!

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PARK HILL JUNIOR SCHOOL 'LEARNING TO BE THE BEST I CAN BE'

by John Chambers, Editor

If you live in Park Hill and have children of school age, you will naturally turn to Park Hill Junior School as your first choice for a local school for 7 to 11 year olds. The school has been in Stanhope Road since the 1960s when much of the Park Hill we know today was built. It has always been a local school for the local community, and has undergone a massive transformation over the years, modernising and expanding to three streams with some 372 students now attending. The intake is 90 children a year, so competition for places is high. The local catchment area includes the 3,000 local homes in Park Hill, and the school caters for a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, reflecting the diverse nature of our community.



Under the leadership of Head Teacher Ann Pratt (pictured left), the school website states 'The mission of Park Hill Junior School has always been to create a strong educational foundation in the lives of the children of our community. We do this through support, leadership and high-quality education. We are passionate about the progress our students

make and we are committed to helping every individual to reach their full potential. Park Hill Junior School will always be a safe, happy and excellent learning environment.'



I was shown around the school by Carrie Cooper (left), Deputy Head Teacher and Clara Waxer, the SENDCo/Member of the Core Leadership Team, both of whom are Designated Safeguarding Leads, and Clara also has special responsibility for Looked After Children.

The school has a warm, friendly atmosphere, and all of its facilities are aimed at developing the whole child, while its teachers are passionate about inspiring the children to be the best they can be. The school day can range between learning academic subjects, as well as having enriching experiences like trips to the theatre, temples or mosques, museums and the Royal Greenwich Observatory - all designed to widen children's cultural experiences and stimulate their enquiring minds. Special events such as STEM Week, Multicultural Day, Parliament Day, Neurodiversity Week, sports, public speaking and musical performing opportunities are also included in the curriculum to inspire children, deepen their understanding of the world and develop their self-confidence.

The school's mini-buses are in constant use, and every year, a party of children go down to Sussex for the day to cut down and collect the School's Christmas tree. An 'Inspiring Pupils'



careers workshop is planned for 23rd May where the school will be inviting members of the community to come in to talk to the children about their different careers, with a range of activities designed 'to develop the whole child' and help raise aspirations.

The school has a much-used outside learning area which has been roofed over, providing a sheltered area for play and sporting activities if there's bad weather outside. Clara (left) is Canadian, and from her own background is keen to give local children the confidence to feel at home in the outdoors. Children like the open air and the freedom to run, and the school is blessed with a large area of



playing fields, with a wild area of woodland with ponds and vegetation, built with the help of a local community group 'The Good Gym', and keen members of staff who provide the expertise of growing food and cultivation. The woodland has enough upturned logs arranged for a whole class to sit and be taught outside. Year 5 have recently enjoyed recreating the surface of the moon in the outdoor area, bringing their learning to life.

Another impressive feature of the school is the ICT Suite (right) and its numerous work stations, ranging from desktop computers to iPads to Chromebooks, even catering for one or two who prefer to stand rather than sit. By the time they leave, all children should be familiar with many programs and apps - confident in this digital world - and challenging some parents to improve their own skills!



Volunteers at the school are always most welcome and very much valued by the school, helping children with their reading skills and accompanying the many enrichment trip.

In summary, PHJS aims to meet every child's needs, so that they can become successful in whatever career path they choose. Our local schools all strive to turn their pupils into confident, polite and independent young people. The Junior School, under the umbrella of the Folio Education Trust, feeds into several other local schools and is a primary source for Coombe Wood school, which allocates some 53 slots for pupils from PHJS each year. Other pupils go on to grammar schools and the private sector, but we know the importance of friendships made at school, which can last a lifetime!

PHRA looks forward to developing closer links with PHJS and all our local schools. We all have the common aim of nurturing our children and providing a safe and caring environment for them to be 'the best they can be'.

For more information on Park Hill Junior School, their excellent website is at: www.phjs.co.uk

PARK HILL NEWS NEW LOOK, NEW LOGO

We hope you like our new look. Our new logo was created by a local graphic designer, Joanna Witecka. She has given PHRA a contemporary branding reflecting two iconic landmarks, St Matthew's Church and the Water Tower, as well as the parks and many trees that give Park Hill its special quality.



Tamsin Skilton, our regular designer, has updated our 'masthead' at the top of our front page, reflecting our skyline which seems to change with every passing year. When we were formed in the late 1970s, Croydon was

a very different place. The original Committee had 12 members - all passionate about retaining the character of the area. Some familiar faces here - including the original Chairman Denis Jackson, and his successor Basil Baker. You may recognise others in this happy band!



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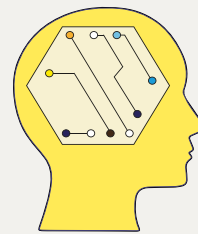
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WE NEED YOU!

Your PHRA Committee still needs help from those who can offer their skills and time to keep the Association running smoothly. We need volunteers to distribute this Newsletter 3 times a year to your neighbours or in a road near you, especially if you live in a block of flats. We also need people to help us run events. We want our Committee to represent the diversity of our Community, so we encourage residents of every colour, shape, age, ability and gender to please consider joining us. We want to reflect a complete range of views held about living in Park Hill and our hopes for how we'd like Croydon to be.

We are also looking for a new Treasurer, but if you can help in any way, do contact us at info@phra.org.uk or phone 07958 379 335 and leave a message.

PARK HILL NEWS - EDITOR/PUBLISHER & ADVERTISING CONTACT

John Chambers
Tel: 07958 379 335
email: jc@jca-design.com

YOUR PHRA TEAM:

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

David Stanton (Treasurer)
Robert Webb (Secretary)

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PARK HILL PARK SPRING UPDATE

by Josi Kiss, Co-Chair of the Friends of Park Hill Park

The Friends of Park Hill Park volunteers would like to say a huge thank you to the Park Hill Residents' Association for donating funds towards the new wooden safety barriers in the Peace Garden section of the Walled Garden Project.

The Peace Garden is one of the 6 'garden rooms' within the Walled Garden Project and features a walkway and meeting space, which will eventually be surrounded by a patchwork of smaller gardens featuring a profusion of yellow Peace Roses. The patchwork of mini gardens is being created and maintained by local community groups including Faiths Together in Croydon, Soroptimists International, the Dialogue Society, Croydon Quakers, Croydon Mencap, the Good Gym Croydon and now the Park Hill

Residents Association (PHRA). Using the PHRA donation Friends' volunteers John and Clive designed, built, and painted the barrier green over the winter. John is a structural surveyor and he and Clive took design inspiration from Japanese gardens, whilst meticulously checking that the new barrier is fully compliant with the disabled guidelines and regulations. Following completion of the new wooden barriers in February, the Friends volunteers were able to remove the large, unsightly, orange barriers that been used to stop entry



Above: Volunteers John and Clive building the safety barrier

into the Peace Garden during the build.

As a final part of the barrier's design, the Friends volunteers will plant several evergreen climbers at the base of the structure. Eventually the resulting plant growth will cover the wooden structure and create a living wall of green; the perfect backdrop for a welcome sign for the Walled Garden Project as well as a sign celebrating the donation made by the Park Hill Residents Association.

The Friends of Park Hill Park would like to invite members of the Park Hill Residents Association to join in the planting of the climbers during March and April 2023.

Although it was not 100% complete in 2022, the Friends hosted several fully inclusive events in the Peace Garden's meeting place including regular gardening classes, arts projects with Turf Projects, Tai Chi classes with Croydon Mencap and poetry with local group 'Poets Anonymous'.

As part of Croydon's Borough of Culture in 2023 there will be several new events in the Peace Garden's meeting space such as a return of Jenny Lockyer's very popular 'Stories in Gardens' (pictured right) and performances of 'Choogh Choogh' presented by Indian dance group Beeja. Please look out for the dates of events on the Friends of Park Hill Park & Recreation Ground face book page and PHRA.org.uk or twitter for more details or email the volunteers at: FriendsofParkHillPark@outlook.com

Now that Spring has arrived, the garden needs more attention. Weekly sessions in the Walled Garden on most Sundays from 11am to 1pm have lots

to do - weeding, planting etc. the Friends will supply any tools that are needed, but you may want to bring your own gloves and wear suitable shoes. All are welcome but children and those with extra needs must bring a carer with them.

Tesco Community Grants Scheme - Please vote for us!

Do you shop in Purley Extra, Sanderstead Express, Coulsdon Express or Croydon Southend Express Tesco Stores? If so, please vote for The Friends of Park Hill Park. To vote, customers will need to make a purchase within the Tesco store of any value. You will receive (or request if not given) one token per transaction. If we are 1st we will get £1,500, 2nd £1,000 and 3rd £500. We have secured some funding already from the Borough of Culture funding for Stories in the Garden to be delivered by Jenny Lockyer but if we secure additional voting through the Tesco Community Fund then we can offer more sessions. Thank you.



Above: Tai Chi with Croydon Mencap
Below: Stories in the Garden



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It is great to be writing for the Park Hill Residents Association as spring approaches in Croydon.

I've been holding cost-of-living events all around the constituency as people struggle with bills and the cost of food and energy. This is a really difficult time for lots of my constituents, and I am disappointed that the leadership of Croydon Council has decided to raise council tax by 15% across the borough. I am pleased that the government has extended support for energy bills for the next three months, but disappointed that the Budget didn't go further to support hard working people.

Park Hill Junior School has recently been to Parliament and I was delighted to meet with them and answer their questions. I welcome lots of schools and am always happy to offer tours. Recently the Croydon Ramblers have come to visit, as have lots of excitable and interested Scouts. If you have a community group that would like a day out in Westminster, please do email me!

I've been focusing on tackling crime in my role as Shadow

Policing Minister, and I know this is a real issue locally with the recent spate of catalytic converter thefts. I've been working closely with Superintendent Mitchell Carr, who has recently moved to oversee community policing. I am concerned about robberies at Croydon tram stops, and have talked to them about issues at Lloyd Park stop. I have been pushing for years for neighbourhood policing to be protected and enhanced and I'm pleased the new Met Commissioner has the same ambition.

I know just how important it is that people feel safe and secure in their neighbourhoods, and if there are any concerns – be they about antisocial behaviour, the safety of women and girls, or something else – I will always be on your side and here to help.

I'm ready to help with any issues and concerns, whatever they are. Please do get in touch and I'll do what I can to help, via email at sarah.jones.mp@parliament.uk, or ring my office on **0208 191 7066**, and arrange to come to a surgery via email or phone.

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

£5 PHRA MEMBERSHIP 2023/2024

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Address: (Memberships are for households not individuals)

Name of primary contact:

Are you (Please tick one) ☐ A rental occupant in Park Hill ☐ A property owner and resident in Park Hill
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What is your current involvement? (Tick all appropriate responses)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None (Joining PHRA for the first time) | <input type="checkbox"/> Member |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Park Hill News Distributor | <input type="checkbox"/> Committee Member |
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Would you like more information about any of the above? ☐ No ☐ Yes – Please specify:

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A MESSAGE FROM JASON PERRY, EXECUTIVE MAYOR



When I was elected as Croydon's first Executive Mayor in May last year, I pledged to do everything in my power to fix the mess I had inherited and rebuild our council so that it delivers reliable services for residents. This work, whilst challenging has been progressing and the Council has now set a balanced budget for 2023/24.

Two and a half years ago, the first Report in the Public Interest sent shockwaves through our borough and revealed the sheer scale of our financial problems. Since then, Croydon has faced three Section 114 notices, another Report in the Public Interest detailing the failed and costly Fairfield Halls renovation and countless other revelations. This history matters and forms the context for the budget which included the council tax increase, which I know has disappointed and angered residents.

To understand more about why the council is in this situation I would encourage you to look at the frequently asked questions page I have published by visiting <https://news.croydon.gov.uk/budget-2023-24/>.

This shows what I am doing to return the council to a sustainable financial footing and how those responsible for the financial collapse of our borough are being held to account.

I know the council tax increase has been really difficult news for residents but the scale of the council's financial crisis means that we must look at every option possible to protect essential services. Without this council tax increase, we would have to make a further £20m savings next year, on top of the £36m savings we are already making. That would mean more cuts, including to services for vulnerable people as well as universal services such as waste collection and street cleaning – and I am not prepared to do that.

I want to promise you that we are also working hard to change the way your council is run, so that it delivers the essential services that you rely on whilst offering you good value for money. Ultimately Croydon will become a smaller, more efficient council that does less, but does it well.

In positive news, despite the challenges we are

facing we continue to make strides in improving Council services and I am pleased we have reached the next milestone on our journey of housing improvement. We recently awarded three new contracts to deliver improved repairs and heating services to our council tenants, making significant improvements to drive up standards and create better, more effective housing services in Croydon. It continues to be our priority to ensure that every resident has a warm, dry home they are proud to call home.

In addition, I recently announced the Council's planning service is set to undergo a major transformation programme to improve service for customers, and ensure all new homes are well-designed and enhance the unique character of Croydon's neighbourhoods. Budget cuts under the previous Administration, along with other challenges, placed pressure on the service which this new service delivery plan aims to alleviate. I know that this has been another priority for residents and I am looking forward to getting this project underway in tandem with the Local Plan review.

Finally, it was a privilege to launch This is Croydon, our programme of events for our year as the London Borough of Culture. Croydon is home to so many fantastic communities and our year as London Borough of Culture is a chance to celebrate and showcase what makes our borough so special – our people. This is Croydon is unique in that it is truly community-led, developed by our amazing local cultural organisations working in partnership with the council, creating opportunities for residents of all ages, from our borough and beyond. The London Borough of Culture offers not only an opportunity to showcase Croydon but also offers a chance to revitalise our local economy, draw inward investment and leave lasting legacies.

I look forward to putting the past behind us and moving forward together, recognising our unique identity as London's largest, youngest, and greenest borough. I know that as a community we will pull together through these dark times to restore pride in Croydon and resume our place as London's best borough

Jason Perry

Executive Mayor of Croydon

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