



CROYDON IS ALIVE!



Photo by Eva Rinaldi

TAILOR SWIFT - SHE CAME, SHE SAW, SHE CONQUERED! WHAT DID SHE SEE IN OUR TOWN THAT WE HAVE BEEN MISSING?

Taylor Swift chose Croydon and flew 3,500 miles to record her recent video in the Whitgift Centre. It shot straight to No.1!

Perhaps she appreciates some hidden quality in our town?

We have all witnessed the steady decline of parts of our town centre over the last few years. However that hides a wonderful history. One of our residents has written a book which tells a different story - a tale of Croydon at the heart of this country's innovative ideas, the first international airport, the first indoor shopping centre, and many others fascinating facts that will change your ideas about our town.

Will Noble came to live in Croydon in 2022, and after 2 years of painstaking research, published 'Croydonopolis' - a complete work of dedication exposing the great and glorious history of Croydon back to the reign of Elizabeth the first, and even before that.

It's a tonic to read, and everyone who cares for the place they have a home should read and enjoy. There's a brief profile of Will on page 10, and although we, as PHRA, have no part of this story, Park Hill itself does feature, as do many up to date developments.

We have wide range of homes in Park Hill which attracts residents at all stages in their lives, from busy

single commuters who may spend little time at home except to sleep, to families with kids who need good schools and a garden or green spaces in which to play. For cultural attractions, Croydon was once the 'go to' place around London... *Continued on page 3*

GOT SOMETHING YOU WANT TO SAY ABOUT CROYDON?

Join us at our Annual Residents Meeting on **Thursday 21st May** at **St Matthew's Church, Chichester Road** at **8pm - 10pm.**

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BITS & BOBS

CROYDON IS ALIVE!

Continued from front page

... but as you can read on other pages, the Fairfield is now run by an organisation based in Bournemouth which specialises in managing Swimming Pools and Leisure Centres.

Not exactly experts in booking top cultural acts for South London's premier concert hall and theatre. Why doesn't the Council take back control and build up the programme on offer to rival the West End and attract the audiences it had not so long ago?

So let's at least celebrate what we have here in Park Hill, let's look after it and appreciate living here.

LITTER PICK - YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHAT WE FOUND!

It was drizzly, and it was cold - but a valiant group of 14 volunteers attended our winter litter pick on Sunday 11th January. As a result of their activities:

- A total of 24 bags of assorted rubbish were collected (see photo)
- In addition, some nitrous oxide canisters, 2 empty suitcases, a wooden cabinet, some hosepipe, a set of moped headlights, a vacuum cleaner and a scooter (whaaat!!)

A very big 'thank you' to our hardy volunteers, to the Council (for the loan of collection equipment), and their contractors Veolia - who promptly disposed of the rubbish that we had collected.

NEXT LITTER PICK

We need to do it all again on **Sunday June 14th at 12 noon**

Please encourage people to take their litter home! It's often drivers travelling through Park Hill who just wind down their window and chuck stuff out. Let's make Park Hill Litter free!



JOIN IN AND MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

Join us at our Annual Residents Meeting on Thursday 21st May at St Matthew's Church, Chichester Road at 8pm - 10pm.

Meet your political representatives, the Mayor, Councillors, our MPs and your hard working Committee. Come and say 'Hello', ask questions, find out more about what's going on, and use your voice to shape the future of our area and town. GET INVOLVED!!

There will be refreshments at half-time even a glass of fizz - though it may be lemonade! Hope to see you there.

HOW TO REPORT FLY TIPPING

Fly Tipping in your local area can be reported using the phone App 'Love Clean Streets'



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LLOYD PARK WELL-BEING WALKS

Why don't you sign up to join the Wellbeing Walks in Croydon?

We meet at Lloyd Park Café at 10am on a Monday every fortnight and the walk will last approximately 1 hour to 1 hour 15 minutes. Our next walks are on Monday 27th April, 11th May, 25th May, 8th June and 22nd June and walks will continue every two weeks from then.

This is a leisurely-paced walk along grassy areas and main paths, with some gentle inclines. It's a great way to enjoy nature and boost your wellbeing.

After the walk, feel free to stay for a cuppa at the café and connect with others. Toilets are available just outside the café.

Lloyd Park is easily accessible by tram and bus, with stops right outside the park. There's also on-site parking available.

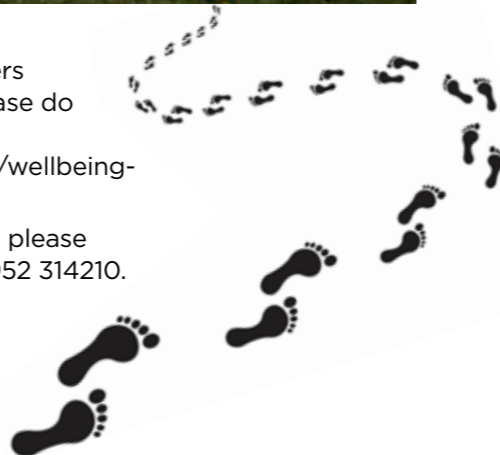
Families are welcome but we kindly ask that you do not bring dogs, as some participants may be uncomfortable around them.



If you haven't already signed up for Ramblers Wellbeing Walks, please do so before attending: www.ramblers.org.uk/wellbeing-walks-sign-up

For more information please contact Sarah on 07952 314210.

Remember to bring - Comfortable clothing and footwear and a bottle of water.



A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR:

Park Hill Residents' Association (PHRA) was formed in the 1970s, and our first Newsletter was produced in June 1974, reporting on our first Annual General Meeting in March that year. I was on the new Committee, we were young, enthusiastic and eager to get to grips with the challenges of a new estate, award-winning, modern homes built from the mid 60s by Wates on the site of many grand old Edwardian homes with large gardens, elegant residences demolished to provide an expanse of land we call Park Hill.

That was 52 years ago. Times have changed - as we've often said in our Newsletters. What now for the future of PHRA? How can it survive without those same, enthusiastic residents to take part, to steer it and sustain it as a vibrant and useful part of our community? These are the questions we are faced with on what remains of the current Committee. Is PHRA useful, is it valued? The only visible sign of a residents' association is the Newsletter - which has sadly only appeared once last year and once this year - our 150th edition - which maybe my last?

The answer is that unless a few more residents come forward to take over the day to day running of the Association, we shall have to wind it up at the end of

the new financial year which will end on 28th February 2027. Meanwhile we shall hold our Annual Meeting on 21st May this year, and we hope that as many of you as possible will come and support us at that meeting. Please do re-join the association, it's still only £5 and it helps to keep our website and Park Hill News going. Let's see if there are new faces, new talents and residents who care about maintaining the nature of Park Hill, and who are prepared to spend just an hour or two, now and then, looking after the interests of one of Croydon's most sought after neighbourhoods.

On a personal note, I was determined to produce our 150th issue, having rashly volunteered to produce the first one in 1974. There were 14 on the Committee then and we were able to share things around so nobody had too much on their shoulders. Now we have 3 main jobs done by 3 people (Newsletter, Website, Treasurer), with support from 4 others (including the Litter Pick). We still have no Secretary, and some of us are getting very old and tired!! Please bear that in mind and consider this:

Who else will collect and represent the views of our community to our political representatives?

See you on May 21st !

By John Chambers (editor)

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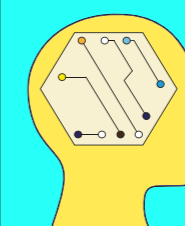
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PARK HILL PROFILE

JAMES CORK

One of the busiest family residents in Park Hill is James Cork.

Father of 4, he has lived in Croydon since 2009, but there have been Corks in Croydon since the early 1900s.

His career began in Switzerland as a Polydesigner before moving into the film industry, working in the art department. This led to a role as a director in an international animatics company. Due to the increasing caring responsibilities for his aunt, who had Alzheimer's, along with his wife, they relocated to Park Hill in 2015 to live together and raise their first daughter. James went back to freelancing, working as a Supporting Artist (SA) in film & TV, appearing in productions including Grace, House of the Dragon and Bohemian Rhapsody..., while also working locally as a Tasker, assembling IKEA furniture and doing handyman work.

In his spare time, he is a Scout Lead Volunteer at the 7/12th Croydon.

Over the past year he has taken on another new role, following a path where his experience and expertise will be invaluable.

"Since the end of the summer," writes James, "I have become a professional chaperone, looking after young people on TV & Film sets. Making sure they are safe and

well looked after.

It brings together my experience in film and volunteering with Scouts, a natural fit. I still do handyman and SA work, as freelancing is tough nowadays.

Our Scout Group, based on Birdhurst Rise, has seen an exponential growth in the number of young people involved, but sadly, we lack the number of adult volunteers to sustain our group, and that means there is a long waiting list now.

My younger children are still in the



Park Hill Schools and that is a great community to be part of.

This Park Hill News, which I've helped distribute ever since moving here, has been a wonderful feature



of the community, keeping us all up to date and hopefully bringing more people together. It used to be published four times a year; now we are down to one.

Like many local groups, this newsletter also relies on volunteers, and without more support, it may struggle to continue.

If anyone has a little time to spare, consider reaching out, whether with the Park Hill Resident Association, the Park Hill Schools (parent with children there), the Friends Group of Park Hill Park and Lloyd Park or youth organisations such as Scouts."

"PARK HILL HAS ALWAYS FELT LIKE A STRONG COMMUNITY TO US, AND I'D LOVE TO SEE THAT CONTINUE AND GROW FOR THE NEXT GENERATION."

James Cork, Brownlow Road



James in 'Lord of the Rings: Rings of Power s2' playing a Wildman (Amazon Prime).

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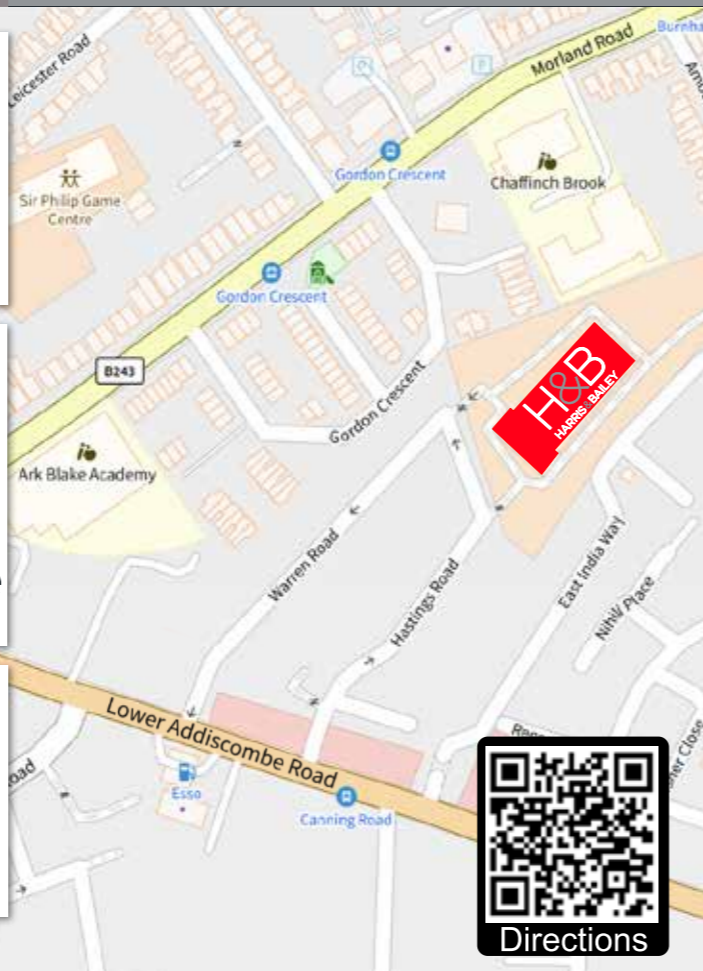
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PARK HILL PARK NEEDS YOU TO KEEP IT LOOKING NEAT & TIDY!

Park Hill Park is a much-loved green space, which relies heavily on local people volunteering their time, energy, and ideas through The Friends of Park Hill Park organisation, which is entirely volunteer-run and now urgently needs new active members.

Long-standing volunteers have achieved a huge amount since setting up in 2014, however, without new blood many of the current projects, such as the children's events, arts projects, dog groups and community gardening, that keep the park vibrant and welcoming, are at risk of disappearing. The urgency is real: without more volunteers stepping forward soon, the group will struggle to maintain the momentum that has transformed the park over the last 12 years.

Sadly in 2025 Councillor Ola Kolade confirmed in writing that no money is now available to Park Hill Park to finish the work started on disabled toilets in 2024. Sadly, this toilet is currently closed. We

must also make safe the much-used basketball courts and introduce new concepts such as an outside gym, like the one in Ashburton Park. This leaves the Friends group to try and raise funds from grants and crowd funding, and all this needs lots of people to become involved. The need for all the above is especially acute because the park has become significantly busier since the increased number of flats in nearby central Croydon, and it is a much loved and needed leisure and recreational facility for the whole community.

New volunteers bring not only capacity but also new perspectives, ideas, skills, and enthusiasm. Volunteering with the Friends of Park Hill Park is flexible and open to everyone—whether someone can spare an hour a month or one morning a week. Volunteering is a chance to meet neighbours, learn new skills, and directly improve a cherished local space.

If you want more information,

please contact the Friends group via email: Friendsofparkhillpark@outlook.com



Above: 'Friend of the Park' local resident Nigel Mosedale, enjoying a spot of weeding on a sunny afternoon.

HELICOPTER TO THE RESCUE!



Some of us will have heard the air ambulance land on the playing fields at Park Hill School the other week - not a common sight! Robert Webb managed to get this nice photograph

According to Rev. Ruth Chapman at St Matthew's - someone had been taken very ill at the church and were taken to St Georges Hospital in Tooting. We wish them well.

PILLAR BOX ZOO

We have some very creative residents who brighten our day with their handiwork. You may have noticed a series of these wonderful pieces which adorn this letter box. They deserve an award and are greatly appreciated by passers by.

Which is more that can be said for our postal delivery service, which is patchy to say the least. The posties do a good job, but some have rounds that are simply too large, and the mail gets stacked up at the sorting office and delivered in bulk, often days after time-sensitive documents are needed by residents.

If this has affected you, phone the local sorting office on: 03457 740 740.



TAKING OWNERSHIP

By Barnaby Powell

The closure of 5 of 13 Croydon libraries has meant the dismantling of precious places of easy public access, amenity, recreation, culture, knowledge and inclusivity. These were places where gnawing hungers were met, idle curiosity satisfied and the constant thirst for refreshment quenched. Above all, they met the need for social contact and human company and conversation. They had a profound effect on people's daily lives. What was lost with their closure is incalculable in terms of access denied to this gateway into information, literature, learning, online research, board games and a quiet corner to meet, read, do homework or talk with friends in book and writing and poetry groups.

The promised 'comprehensive and efficient' service required by law is withdrawn and communities are left bereft of priceless assets. In the longer term, these cuts will prove to have been a false economy as the true cost will come to be measured in declining literacy in the young, limited opportunities for social contact, loneliness in the elderly and distress in the less mobile and mentally fragile members of the community. Croydon Council's approach to the problem of its bankruptcy is entirely rational and pragmatic, if not also entirely short-sighted. The best hope of any restitution of the service lies squarely with Central Government to honour its statutory pledge to maintain libraries and their funding.

'Levelling up' means not just more even investment in regional infrastructure and housing, but crucially a lifting of the level of attainment in literacy and knowledge acquired through education, raised expectations and the creation of that fuller, richer life of wider opportunity and choice that people naturally aspire to. Cutting this service removes from people's lives those freely available resources which enable them to rise above their own imagined limitations, snagged as they so often are on their small screens, trapped by the lure and snare of social media. It deprives people of their right to develop their innate capacity for delight, discernment and discrimination which is theirs to be cultivated.

To this end, it is the libraries - or, as the Americans have taken to calling them, 'Learning Resource Centers' - which meet our basic compulsions to seek knowledge and information to furnish our minds. Here we have access not just to the printed and spoken word of the ages, but also to that human contact which may point us and even inspire us in hitherto unconsidered directions. We live in a democracy in which we are all bidden to participate - not just with the vote, but through the process of calm deliberation and discussion of priorities in the choice of those public services most essential to providing meaning and purpose to our private lives as individuals who strive and struggle to achieve a satisfactory level of life and a living.

In his great pivotal and seminal work, 'The Uses of



Literacy', the writer and teacher, Richard Hoggart describes how the working classes yearn to break free of their servitude, to capture the spirit and gaiety of the nation under their own strenuous devices and to find routes to fulfilment of their desires and ambitions. At the centre of these storms and struggles stand the libraries, citadels and beacons of hope where they can dream awake and discover life's infinite possibilities.

In the face of such losses, we volunteers must band together to bootstrap our way out of the current Slough of Despond which a run-down Croydon has become. We must take ownership and revive the use of those vital amenities like libraries that enable people to move on from raw opinion to confident self-expression and judgment.

Now that people have been driven out of these places, we need at least to improve life on the streets. We not only need to pick up litter but also keep feet off seats on public transport and assert our right to safe passage along pavements as endangered bike- and coffin-dodgers, secondary smokers and vapers and as involuntary audience of the noisome pestilence of swears shouting. It is time for the gradual degeneration of the local environment to be checked and the once-vibrant feel of Croydon's centre to be recaptured and restored.

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OUR REPRESENTATIVES: COUNCIL & WESTMINSTER

JASON PERRY, EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF CROYDON



It's always a pleasure to update residents through Park Hill News and to share some of the work taking place locally and across Croydon.

Many families will already have enjoyed the new playground at Park Hill Park, delivered through £140,000 of investment. Designed with input from local families and the Friends of Park Hill Park, it provides a more accessible play space with new equipment, improved paths and a dedicated toddler area.

We have also strengthened safety in and around the park. Croydon's Town Centre Public Space Protection Order now includes Park Hill Park and surrounding streets, giving police additional powers to deal with antisocial behaviour such as street drinking and harassment.

Across Croydon, we are starting to see progress. Overall crime has fallen

by around 4%, with robberies down 29% and antisocial behaviour in the town centre down 24% over the past three years. Police are also using tools such as Live Facial Recognition in the town centre to identify offenders and keep people safe.

I am also taking a zero-tolerance approach to fly-tipping and environmental crime. Dedicated enforcement teams and rapid response crews mean 98% of fly-tips are now cleared within 24 hours, helping keep our streets clean.

Many residents will remember the difficult financial situation Croydon faced when I became Mayor in 2022. Since then we have made significant progress fixing the council's finances. Debt has stabilised and we are working within balanced budgets while cutting waste and unnecessary bureaucracy.

Regeneration in the town centre is also beginning to move forward again. Westfield are back at the table working with us on plans to bring forward a new development to unlock the long-awaited transformation of the Whitgift and Centrale sites. Their proposed investment in upgrading Centrale, alongside the reopening of Allders Parade, shows confidence in Croydon returning.

CROYDON HAS BEEN MY HOME ALL MY LIFE AND I HAVE RUN A FAMILY BUSINESS HERE FOR OVER 30 YEARS, SO I UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES FACE.

That is why I ran to become

Croydon's first Executive Mayor in 2022, to help our town fulfil its potential.

Everyone in Park Hill deserves a clean, safe neighbourhood, a thriving town centre and a council that is getting Croydon back on track.

There is still much more to do. But Croydon is moving in the right direction, and we must not risk that progress by changing course now.

CHRIS PHILP MP CROYDON SOUTH



My work in Parliament as our local MP keeps me busy, but my priority is always getting things done for our local community.

A major focus locally is trying to improve Croydon town centre. We are now beginning to see some progress. I have been working closely with Executive Mayor Jason Perry and also putting pressure on Unibail Rodamco Westfield (URW, who own Centrale and the Whitgift Centre) to get the long-delayed regeneration promised by the Westfield project moving again.

A key step was the recent

refurbishment of Allders Parade.

NEW SHOPS AND RESTAURANTS HAVE NOW OPENED THERE TO BRING BACK SOME LIFE TO THE TOWN CENTRE. BUT THIS MUST ONLY BE THE BEGINNING.

We must have wider-scale regeneration. There are now plans to improve Centrale shortly, and I also met URW recently to urge them to get on with sorting out the whole Whitgift Centre, which is in desperate need of fixing.

NATASHA IRONS MP

CROYDON EAST, REPRESENTING THE RESIDENTS OF NORTH PARK HILL



Everyone who uses East Croydon station knows that its operating beyond its intended capacity.

Trains are forced to cross paths simply to clear the junction and around two-thirds of trains passing through East Croydon are delayed or cancelled. This design means disruption escalates quickly and spreads across the network, with knock-on effects along the Brighton Main Line and Thameslink.

I recently secured and spoke in a Westminster Hall debate calling for the Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme to be reinstated and funded to fix this. This followed a discussion

Tackling crime and antisocial behaviour is a top priority, both locally and nationally.

So, I have been strongly encouraging the use of Live Facial Recognition in the town centre. This used to be based on vans, but there are now fixed cameras which can be used more easily by the police.

It scans people passing by, and if they are wanted by the police the officers operating the system are alerted. This has led to 200 arrests in the town centre of people who would not otherwise be caught, including a man wanted for a double rape and another wanted for kidnap. Crime in the town centre

I chaired at Gatwick Airport in conjunction with National Rail and GTR - where partners across the board supported the Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme.

EAST CROYDON SITS AT THE HEART OF ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT RAIL CORRIDORS IN THE COUNTRY. IT IS ONE OF BRITAIN'S BUSIEST STATIONS AND A CRITICAL JUNCTION LINKING THE SOUTH COAST AND GATWICK AIRPORT TO LONDON, WHILE THAMESLINK SERVICES RUN DIRECTLY THROUGH TO LUTON AND BEDFORDSHIRE.

This route underpins large parts of the national economy. It supports commuting, business travel and tourism, and its strategic importance is only set to grow. Luton Airport is expanding, Gatwick is progressing with its Northern Runway, and developments such as the proposed Universal theme park in Bedfordshire will place even greater demand on the network.

This entire corridor is constrained by the Croydon bottleneck - one of the most serious capacity constraints on the national rail network, and it

has gone down by 12% in the last year as a result.

Locally, I continue to work closely with our police to ensure residents' concerns are acted on and that we see visible action where it is needed most.

One of the best parts of this job is meeting local residents, businesses and community groups and hearing directly about the issues that matter to you.

If you run a local business, school or community group and would like me to visit, or if there is anything I can help with, please do get in touch at:

chris.philp.mp@parliament.uk

will only worsen.

The line is expected to reach full capacity by 2030, while Gatwick's expansion depends on more than half of passengers travelling by public transport - an ambition that cannot be met without additional capacity through Croydon.

The Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme was the plan to fix this. It would have expanded East Croydon and redesigned the track layout to remove these conflicts, but the last government pulled its funding in 2022. No alternative has followed and the result had been paralysis.

Croydon is stuck not just on major infrastructure, but on essential everyday improvements. Necessary upgrades like step-free access at Norwood Junction are being paused, not because they lack importance, but because they could be undone if a larger project eventually proceeds.

I've been repeatedly campaigning for this, and as the co-chair of the Parliamentary Group for the Southeast & the Gatwick Diamond Gateway I want to ensure the quality of our infrastructure reflects our growth ambitions.

I will continue pushing for progress, so that residents see more reliable journeys, Norwood Junction can finally become accessible, and Croydon can play its full role in supporting the growth of our region.

CLLR ANDREW PRICE

PARK HILL & WHITGIFT WARD

Council services and Love Clean Streets

Graffiti: On 5 January 2026, some graffiti appeared on a wall in Park Hill & Whitgift, close to Lloyd Park, that used to be regularly tagged by teenagers. Within 24 hours, having been reported on Love Clean Streets, it was removed by the Council's Graffiti cleaning team. Mayor Jason Perry re-introduced the Graffiti cleaning team when he

was elected, that had previously been cut by Labour. It was surprising to see graffiti on that wall as the kids appeared to have given up, as it was being removed so quickly in the 2 years beforehand. It appeared to be an example of the 'broken windows' theory in action, of when something was well looked after, less anti-social behaviour might occur.

Potholes: Earlier this year, we had snow and frost, which caused some of the road surfaces to buckle and crumble, in the weeks that followed. On 7 February, some of the roads on in Park Hill, were in a terrible state, including the main road, Park Hill Road. By 21 February, notwithstanding the vast size of our Borough, the most dangerous potholes were filled and repaired.

MORE THAN 98% OF FLY TIPS ARE REMOVED WITHIN 24 HOURS BY THE COUNCIL.

Fly-tipping: I have reported, and witnessed that happen on numerous occasions across Park Hill & Whitgift. Greater enforcement action is being taken - new enforcement officers have been hired and it has been good to see a number of fines given out for fly-tipping, including one perpetrator who was fined £7,000.

Mayor Perry has introduced a zero-tolerance policy to anti-social behaviour and having seen the speed within which things are cleared, I would encourage you to use the Love Clean Streets app, whenever you see something that needs sorting out. The app can be downloaded to your Smartphone from here: www.croydon.gov.uk/lovecleanstreets

Trees: Many residents will be pleased to know that the Council has in the past month conducted an inspection of the trees in Park Hill with the expectation of them being pruned later this year.

Surgery details: Finally, I hold a surgery, on the first Saturday of each month, 10am-11am in the foyer at St Matthews (Chichester Road, CR0 5NQ), except in January and August (and also April, as it is Easter weekend this year), but please contact me at other times by phone and email, if there is anything with which I can help you.

Contact: andrew.price@croydon.gov.uk or 07356 179 381

WHAT DOES AI THINK OF PARK HILL?

By Peter Attewell



What lies ahead for Park Hill, according to AI?

As an experiment we asked an AI Chatbot to assess our area and peer into the future based on current plans, council documents, local projects and wider

borough regeneration covering housing, public spaces, community life, and the broader context.

Park Hill Park is being actively improved with new playground equipment, accessible facilities (including disabled toilets), paths, and community-led projects like the Walled Garden to enhance wellbeing and social use of the park.

Funding from developer contributions and grassroots support are driving these enhancements. Croydon Council's investment plans include continued upgrades to our local park's accessibility, biodiversity, paths, heritage features and recreation offering, aiming to restore it as a top local green space.

The Park Hill Residents Association (PHRA) actively represents local views on planning, environment, traffic and community projects so future changes are likely to involve local consultation and influence. Local groups are pushing for cultural, heritage and educational elements to be part of Park Hill's story, including potential exhibitions, archives and community learning projects that celebrate local history.

Being close to Croydon town centre we are affected by broader borough regeneration strategies, like the Croydon Growth Zone & Town Centre Vision, and the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy.

Croydon is planning for significant new homes and mixed-use growth borough-wide, while protecting key green spaces and heritage assets, which may affect planning policy around Park Hill too.

However, we remain residential and community oriented, without major high-density schemes. Local plans aim to balance growth whilst retaining neighbourhood character.

The area currently has a calm, leafy suburban feel with low crime and strong transport links - walking distance to both East Croydon and South Croydon stations, making it appealing for families and commuters alike. Residents generally appreciate the area's peaceful quality and proximity to town amenities.

In summary, the next 5-15 years, should see park and public space enhancements, better facilities, more inclusive design and stronger community cultural activities in Park Hill Park.

JAZZ AT THE CLOCKTOWER CAFÉ

By Richard Rice, part of the Clocktower Team

Jazz at the Clocktower Café is one of Croydon's best-kept secrets, despite having celebrated its 25th Anniversary in 2025. Situated adjacent to the Town Hall and Library in Katharine Street in a large, bright and airy art gallery with excellent acoustics it regularly welcomes world class musicians, typically in trios and quartets. The jazz is open to all, with the majority of the regular attendees being retired, hence performances generally feature well-known standards and the Great American Songbook. Good songs, well played: what more could you ask for?

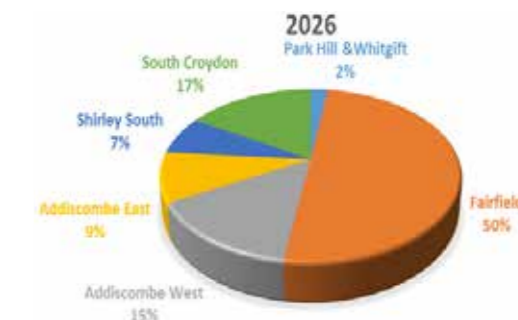
Concerts are held on almost every Thursday of the year between 12 noon and 2 pm, with a ten minute interval and attendance costs only £10 (cash). Almost every seat is situated at a table, so many of the audience take advantage of the wide variety of food and beverages in the café and have their orders brought to where they are seated. Programmes of events are provided and a weekly newsletter is available from: johnanthonychambers@me.com

Jazz at the Clocktower Café provides a welcoming environment, whether visitors come alone or with friends. Even if you are not a jazz devotee - and nobody will care if



you don't know your Miles Davis from your George Benson - why not come along and enjoy some music at lunchtime and help keep music live in Croydon.

KEEP CRIME DOWN IN PARK HILL! – BE VIGILANT!



There are many things to be thankful about, living in Park Hill. One of them is evident from the latest survey of Reported Crimes by the Metropolitan Police. Just 2% for Park Hill & Whitgift, compared with the 5 surrounding Wards - the same as last year.

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CROYDONOPOLIS

Will Noble is the author of 'Croydonopolis' - a must read for anyone interested in what has shaped Croydon over the years. He's a relatively new Croydon resident, so has done 2 years of research in writing his book. The editor asked him:

What first made you come to Croydon in 2022?

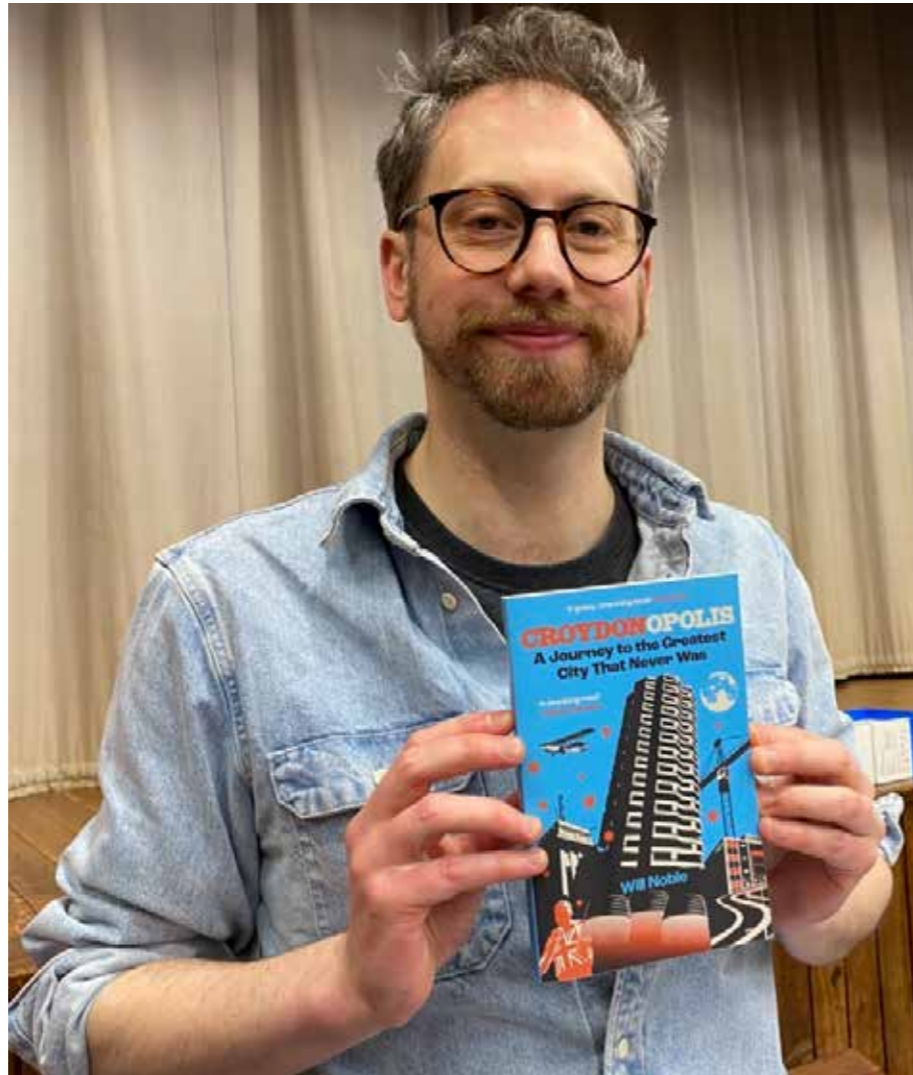
I'd visited Croydon a few times before I moved here, most memorably for one of the National Trust's Edge City walks, as well as a tour of Croydon Airport. So I already really liked it as a place. And then when we were looking to move, for various reasons Croydon made sense. Being within walking distance of Surrey Street Market and the Green Dragon clinched the deal.

What surprised you most from your research?

There is a LOT of information out there on Croydon: the local archives are stuffed with history, but there are also dozens of books, periodicals, pamphlets, etc, as well as some very knowledgeable people. It quickly became clear when I started researching that a) Lots of people loved Croydon, because they'd written about/documentated it, and b) I had a lot of work to do.

How many copies did you/publishers think you'd sell?/What's the current situation?

When me and my publisher (who's originally from Croydon) hit on the idea for Croydonopolis, we immediately felt this was a book that needed to be written. While that doesn't guarantee a bestseller, it gives you a gut feeling that people will be interested. We've been blown away by interest in the book, and that's steadily continued since it was published in 2024. Every now and then Waterstones calls me in to sign more copies, which is lovely.



Where are you living now?

I'm still in Croydon — haven't moved to Hampstead yet!

With your perspective working for The Londonist, how can Croydon regain its momentum and prestige as London's Greatest City (that is)?

At a grassroots level Croydon's already headed in the right direction: I speak to so many people, societies, clubs, etc who love Croydon, want it to do better, and are actively doing things to make this so. But Croydon has sadly been mistreated and neglected by people in high places. For everything to come together now, it requires investment, and big

picture, daring visions in tune with Croydon locals. After all, Croydon's always been about reaching for the stars. As for city status, I'm not sure that'll happen — but it's not the most important thing anyway.



If you haven't yet read the book, we recommend buying it using this address (although it's also available in Waterstones

**Croydon, Amazon etc):
www.safehavenbooks.co.uk/
croydonopolis-paperback**

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SCHOOLS UPDATE...

PARK HILL JUNIOR SCHOOL: GROWING TOGETHER THROUGH OUR FIVE VALUES

At Park Hill Junior School, we believe that education extends far beyond the classroom walls. Our mission is to create an environment “where every child belongs and every child grows.” To bring this vision to life, we are proud to celebrate the launch of our Five Values, which serve as the heartbeat of our school and our connection to the wider Park Hill community.

Values in Action

Our values—Limitless Learning, Courageous Curiosity, Sustained Success, Kind Community, and Confident Communication—are not just words on a wall; they are the tools our pupils use to navigate a changing world.

Courageous Curiosity encourages our children to ask the “big questions” about the world around them.

Confident Communication ensures they have the voice to advocate for themselves and others.

A Culture of Responsibility

Central to these values is our commitment to Wider Community Responsibility. We teach our pupils that they are part of a series of concentric circles: starting with

responsibility for their classroom environment, moving to school-wide leadership roles, and finally reaching out to the Park Hill community.

Through our “5 R’s”—Responsibility, Resilience, Resourcefulness, Reflective, and Relationships—our students lead initiatives that impact our neighborhood. Whether it is our Eco Leaders working on local sustainability, our TFL Explorer Ambassadors promoting safe travel in our streets, or our community outreach and charity work, our children are learning that “Sustained Success” is most meaningful when it benefits the Kind Community we all share.

We want our neighbors to know that Park Hill Junior School is more than just a building; it is a hub of young citizens who are eager to contribute, listen, and grow alongside you. We are shaping the leaders of tomorrow by teaching them the importance of belonging today.

PARK HILL INFANTS' SCHOOL: OUR CORE VALUES AT PARK HILL INFANT SCHOOL

At Park Hill Infant School, we believe that strong values are the foundation of a happy and successful school community. We are proud to nurture and celebrate

five key values that guide everything we do: Honesty, Kindness, Positivity, Respect, and Courage.

Honesty is at the heart of building trust among pupils, staff, and families. We encourage our children to be truthful and open, creating a safe and supportive environment for all.

Kindness shines through in the way our pupils care for one another, showing empathy and compassion in their daily interactions.

Positivity helps us face challenges with enthusiasm and optimism, inspiring our pupils to embrace learning and growth with confidence.

Respect is fundamental in appreciating the diverse backgrounds and cultures within our school community, helping everyone feel valued and included.

Courage empowers our pupils to try new things, speak up for themselves and others, and develop resilience as they grow.

Together, these values shape the character of our school and prepare our children to become thoughtful, confident, and caring individuals who will make a positive difference in the world.

We warmly invite our local community to join us in celebrating these values that make Park Hill Infant School a truly special place.



ARCHBISHOP TENISON'S SCHOOL:

ARCHBISHOP TENISON'S SCHOOL IS THE ONLY CHURCH OF ENGLAND SECONDARY SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM IN THE BOROUGH OF CROYDON

We are committed to academic excellence within a Christian community and believe in educating the whole person. Our aim is for pupils to leave Archbishop Tenison's as academically successful, confident, emotionally and spiritually mature young people, equipped to take advantage of the opportunities available to them both in school and in later life.

The school seeks to uphold Christian belief through worship and daily life, enabling students to grow in a living faith. It fosters intellectual curiosity, academic enquiry, and integrity, encouraging a genuine love of learning. Students are supported in broadening their cultural experiences through active engagement in the expressive arts and by understanding the role of culture, science, and technology in shaping society.

Physical development is promoted through a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities, encouraging positive attitudes towards health, safety, and sportsmanship. Tenison's is also dedicated to promoting respect and understanding of different religions, ethnicities, and cultures, helping to reduce intolerance and build an inclusive community grounded in strong moral values.

Students are encouraged to recognise their abilities, fulfil their potential, and contribute meaningfully to society and the wider world. Preparation for the world of work is combined with the development of interests that enrich and sustain lifelong fulfilment. A strong emphasis is placed on emotional awareness, helping students understand themselves and others, and contributing to a supportive, caring environment where every individual is valued and respected.

The school strives to be a centre of excellence, embodying core values of courtesy, calmness, concentration, confidence, and consideration.

Our curriculum vision is to learn together as a Christian community, educate the whole person, provide a broad and balanced curriculum, teach with deep understanding, and inspire learning with tenacity, humility, and hope.

HOLY WEEK & EASTER CELEBRATIONS

By Vicar. Revd Ruth Chapman

There was lots going on at St Matthew's church in Holy Week and Easter.



We began the week on Palm Sunday, when Christians remember Jesus arriving in Jerusalem on a donkey. We even had a real live donkey on the day and we went on a walk from church to Lloyd Park and back waving our palms and singing. It was fantastic!

Then during Holy Week we held a Messy Church which was great fun and our children and young people learnt about Easter. We held the solemn services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday before arriving to the joy of Easter. Our Easter Day services began at 6am just before sunrise when we lit a fire and the Easter candle.

We then had our regular services at 8.30 and 10am which were full of Easter joy! For more information about the church services and activities please do have a look on our website www.stmatthew.org.uk



WHAT HAPPENDED TO COMMON SENSE? HAVE YOU EVER BEEN PHUBBED* OFF?

By Barnaby Powell

One of the hazards of trying to reach across the inter-generational divide is the risk of failure to communicate – often at the most basic level of attempted conversation. Attention is a fleeting thing – even in mature human beings – and so easily diverted by more pressing matters and more engaging sounds, sights and images. Older notions of respect for elders by the young have been superseded with the passing of deference by a more casual acknowledgement of the esteem to be accorded in relations between young and old.

Is the female phubber simply flighty? Or just frivolous, but actually a fibber and a flibbertigibbett? And is the male a moron? Or just a liar and truly a looby and a slubberdegullion? We're not sure, as she and he are permanently distracted or enchanted by abstraction in their self-absorption. They will do anything to escape the company of people they find awkward or potentially boring, taking calls in the middle of a conversation without apology and with no attempt to put off responding until later. Their refuge is texting, X

or Facebook, Tik Tok, Instagram or Snapchat, goofing off into the Metaverse as they retreat into the speech bubble of a virtual world in their head. Ring tones are like a fire alarm that commands them to obey – all the faster if it is 'This is your wife!' or 'AllahuAkbar!'

A government paper has now been produced with a grand title on the need for 'Parity of Esteem' in the treatment of physical and mental illness. This phrase seems to follow the current trend to misuse language to lift the stigma attaching to tattooing, smartphone-scrolling and vaping by the dim-witted, highlighting the cost of this mental constipation to the economy (estimated to be around £39 bn). So many of the work-shy, feeble-minded and those with low self-esteem are thus excused the inconvenience of employment on the grounds of their vulnerability to the pressures of paying attention to their own welfare. The acronym DEI, a public watchword which stands for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, may more often be understood to stand for unavoidable Delay, Expense and Incompetence.

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THE NATIONAL GALLERY'S ART ON YOUR DOORSTEP

Over the past few weeks I have been to look at the life size reproductions of the National Gallery paintings currently on display in Croydon as part of their Art on Your Doorstep programme. Most of the paintings are on display in Central Croydon, with nice works by Van Gogh and Monet lining the walk through Queens Gardens to the Town Hall area. The smaller reproductions are mounted on the railings of Queen's Gardens and Park Hill Park in the manner in which artists would display their works for sale in parks in Paris and London.

In my opinion, the larger paintings worked best, especially Jan Gossaert's beautiful Adoration of the Kings outside Croydon Minster and Seurat's Bathers of Asnières in Trumble Gardens in Thornton Heath.

The South of the Borough has two Turner beauties. Once voted the nation's favourite painting, The Fighting Temeraire is displayed at the entrance to Coulsdon College, and Rain, Steam and Speed is in the Rotary Field in Purley.

Not every reproduction works though - Renoir's Umbrellas and a Picasso painting are lost in the scruffy passageway leading to the Whitgift Centre at the side of McDonalds. I was disappointed too with the way Pieter de Hooch's The Courtyard in a House in Delft was displayed in New Addington. I wonder also if Taylor Swift noticed the hidden tiger in Henri Rousseau's Surprised!, not too far from the now famous escalator she descended in the Whitgift Centre when she came to Croydon in February to make her Opalite video.

The choice of paintings by local community groups is varied and interesting. However I was a little bit disappointed that they had not included Camille Pissarro's beautiful painting of Fox Hill, a road right on the Croydon/ Bromley border. Pissarro also married Julie Vellay in Croydon Register Office in 1871. Inclusion of this particular painting would have enhanced the Upper Norwood/North of the Borough display at St John's Church in Auckland Road, particularly with Pissarro's local connections.

The paintings have certainly brightened up our Borough. Now let's hope residents will be inspired to go and see the original paintings free of charge in the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square. Certainly my favourite work in the programme, the splendid rearing horse, George Stubbs's Whistle jacket, displayed in a perfect natural outdoor setting in Park Hill Park, is sure to capture the attention of children playing nearby over the coming warmer months.

There are worksheets to download from Culture Croydon's website along with maps of the Trail to guide you round www.culturecroydon.com/event/national-gallery-art-on-your-doorstep.

The recent workshops held in February led by visual artist Rachel Gadsden, to make a Croydon Masterpiece will have further enhanced children's exploration of the Trail. All of this will help to nurture a new generation of art lovers. Moreover despite the fears expressed by many that these paintings would be vandalised, so far they are 'holding their own' and remain graffiti free!

A personal view by Jean Aarons, Arts Society Croydon Area (tascroydonarea.org.uk)



Above: 'Whistlejacket' by the British artist George Stubbs showing the Marquess of Rockingham's race-horse approximately at life-size.

DISCLAIMER:

Park Hill News is a free publication distributed to around 3,500 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.

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PARK HILL PARK CAFÉ OPEN FOR BUSINESS AGAIN



The Park Hill Park café has reopened at Easter and they are planning to stay open until around Halloween later in the year. So come and enjoy the better weather, relax with a coffee or tea and select from a range of snacks and cakes.

PARK HILL COMMITTEE:

Since the last issue of Park Hill News in the Spring of 2025, the Committee has been fairly dormant - some might say 'asleep' or even 'invisible'. This was due to some of the issues discussed on page 7. However, the Committee did meet last year on 14th January, 11th March and 10 July. Our Annual Meeting on 6th May was well attended by our regulars, with some welcome new faces.

There has been a brief discussion about planning for a 2026 'Showcase Event', but no satisfactory date could be found, and the task of organising was too great for the resources available. So planning switched to this Spring'26 Park Hill News as the Editor had now recovered from his previous health problems in 2025.

Three or four members of the Committee have carried on in their own areas of responsibility, Financial, Website and Newsletter, and as no major issues of concern had arisen which required an emergency meeting, none took place!

YOUR PHRA COMMITTEE:

Chair: Vacant
Membership/Website: Fiona Nicol
Treasurer: Mick Montgomery
Secretary: Vacant
Park Hill News: John Chambers
Other Members: Peter Attewell, Susan Adelaja, Anita & Paul Reeves.

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HAZELDEAN ROAD FOOTBRIDGE

Letter to the editor - written by 'Sentinel'

What has happened to the Hazeldean Road footbridge?

As readers may know this was the pedestrian structure serving as a key footway link between Park



Hill's Hazeldean Road and the Fair Field area (ie Fairfield Hall and the College) across the main East Croydon to Brighton railway line.

This footbridge afforded Park Hill residents a quiet way to walk into central Croydon without having to navigate either the cacophony of the urban highway that is Barclay Road or the crowded East Croydon station area.

Although the footbridge is shown on ordnance survey maps and the A-Z, it has been closed for so many years now that newer residents may not even realize that it's there!



Doubtless there are plans for the footbridge included somewhere in the various 'regeneration schemes', but its future (if any) is certainly not well highlighted. This letter is a request for more information on the plans to be published to the (long suffering) Park Hill residents.

A BETTER CROYDON

By Fiona Nicol

A friend who had not visited Croydon for a few months asked what had happened to Croydon? It looked better than she remembered.

I mentioned this to other friends who live locally and often shop in the town centre. They agreed. It's hard to pinpoint exactly what's improved. North End being regularly cleaned is a big plus. And the new shops in Allders are an improvement on the deserted building (and the ice cream is good). The new Holland & Barrett livens up a dull corner - and is attracting shoppers. New cafes are springing up around the town centre. I have mixed feelings about the new crossing on Wellesley Road. It's a big improvement on the smelly, dark subway, but you need to watch for the trams moving at a different time from cars and buses, which must be difficult if you are visually impaired. There doesn't seem to be any sort of audio signal which would be so useful. And is it really a good idea to open the crossing now, with its main exit to East Croydon station marred by road and pavement works?

The remodelling of Centrale and the shops on North End should help the feel of the centre. Work appears to be underway on buildings in George Street, including what looks like new shops on the side of Allders. We still await the "new" Whitgift Centre and are not very thrilled by yet another consultation. But at least the plans for the first phase 'Whitgift Square' appear quite firm although the overall development is still a bit conceptual.



Perhaps those who never get nearer the town centre than East Croydon Station or the SL5 bus should venture further. Maybe it's the sunshine, or just the May elections but it is looking better.

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SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM WARD PANEL UPDATE - APRIL 2026

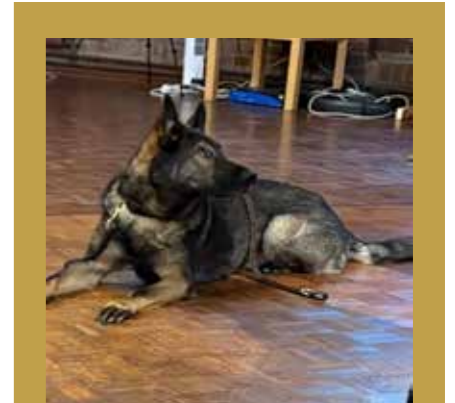
The ward panel continues to thrive with a wider group of participants - all are welcome. We are particularly pleased to have students from Archbishop Tenison's school attending.

Each quarter we have meetings to discuss ward safety and security and then we set the priorities for our Police team who are; Inspector Andy Smith, Sargent Aaron Bawden, PCs Charles Gryson and Sam Pike and our well-loved PCSO Ollie White. We have a small team with Grace Rehman as secretary and Natasha Parry as Vice Chair. We are very kindly supported by Mrs K who bakes an exceedingly good cup cake.

Recently we have had specialist talks on topics such as Cyber Crime, Live Facial Recognition (Croydon being a first in the country), Car theft and Police dog handling. We also have had lively debates regarding issues covering our parks, poor driving behaviours, road safety and youth support amongst many others. We also review the crime stats which continue to show that Park Hill & Whitgift ward remain in lowest absolute and lowest per 1,000 population crime areas in Croydon and London.



"Hello. My name is Ted. I'm a sniffer dog with the Metropolitan Police. I specialise in tracing blood, saliva, semen, fire and explosive devices and materials. My claim to fame was my work at Grenfell Towers."



"Hello my name is Logan. I work for the Metropolitan Police. My specialty is firearms. If you have a gun you better not come near me."

The ward priorities set for the Spring are;

1. Protection of Women and Children
2. Patrols and focus to be undertaken to deter burglary and vehicle crime/theft.
3. Patrols to be increased with aid of traffic enforcement capability around Park Hill schools at start and end of school day.

We advise you all to join MET Engage to get direct timely messages regarding ward Police matters www.metengage.co.uk/ which we hope will be available in App form shortly.

The next meeting, our AGM, is scheduled for June 25th June @18:30 at St Matthews Church. We plan to have our MP, the Croydon Mayor and our Inspector to answer all your questions regarding Safety and Security. Please attend and bring a friend!

For more information or to join the panel please contact our Chair: GrahamVLyon@gmail.com.

World Class Jazz AT THE CLOCKTOWER CAFÉ

**THURSDAY LUNCHTIMES 12-2PM : £10 CASH AT INTERVAL
9 KATHARINE STREET, CROYDON CR9 1ET**

Celebrating our 25th year at the café on 4th December last year with (left to right) Richard Shepherd, Martin Shaw, Mark Crooks, Mirko Scarcia and Pete Billingham

<p>MAY</p> <p>7th: Dave Warren, guitar Martin Hathaway, alto sax Andy Cleydert, bass Buster Birch, drums</p> <p>14th Rachael Cohen, alto sax Bruno Heinen, keyboard Mirko Scarcia, bass</p> <p>21st: Louise Messenger, vocals Laurence Corns, gtr/vocals Simon Read, bass</p> <p>28th Dave Storey, drums Oli Hayhurst, bass Rachael Cohen, alto sax Artie Zaitz, guitar</p>	<p>JUNE</p> <p>4th: Terry Seabrook, keyboard Chris Coull, trumpet Nigel Thomas, bass</p> <p>11th Brandon Allen, tenor sax Tim Laphorn, keyboard Mikele Montolli, bass</p> <p>18th: Dave Warren, guitar Steve Ashworth, organ Buster Birch, drums</p> <p>25th Simon Spillett, tenor sax Sam Dunn, guitar Andy Cleydert, bass</p> <p><i>Note: Changes may take place and extra players added</i></p>
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We really appreciate your support each week keeping live jazz at the Café
Join or leave our mailing list? Email jc@jca-design.com

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PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION. YOUR £5 A YEAR SUBSCRIPTION HELPS TOWARD THE COST OF THESE NEWSLETTERS, OUR WORK SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY AND MAINTAINING OUR WEBSITE.

£5 PHRA MEMBERSHIP - MARCH 2026 - FEB 2027

Park Hill Residents Association (PHRA) membership is open to all residents, property owners and interested parties in the Park Hill area.

Name:

Address:

Email address: Phone number:

Our preferred method of payment is by internet transfer. Please give your address as the reference. Bank: 30-92-45. Account No: 01330171. If you can't pay online, please post the Form or drop it round to 10 Selborne Road, CR0 5JQ together with cash or a cheque made out to Park Hill Residents' Association for £5. Thank you.

M | V

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ESTATE AGENTS

Planning on moving?

Why not get in touch to discuss how we can help. Our two Directors, Ashley Marriott and Ian Vernon, have been helping people move in Park Hill for over 40 years.

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