

Park Hill Residents Association NEWSLETTER

Issue 131

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

Summer 2018

NEW REFUSE COLLECTION: WHAT IT MEANS IN PARK HILL



Granville Close and Garrick Crescent: -

If you live in a house or maisonette with a dustbin cupboard, you will continue to use your bin for general waste (non-recyclable waste) as at present.*

The two new bins which are being delivered to each household will be used by these residents as follows: one for plastic packing, glass, cans and cartons and the other for paper and card. The Council will re-sticker these bins to make clear what goes into each bin.

In September, residents with the new bins will no longer have their recycling collected from boxes. Residents can keep the boxes for their own personal use. Alternatively, the Council will be running a collection service for any unwanted boxes. More information on this service will be available nearer the time. All properties which can accommodate the new recycling bins will have them delivered and will be expected to use them. If you have problems with storing the new recycling bins, then contact the special on-line service - wasteservices@croydon.gov.uk or phone 020 8604 7282.

We appreciate that many people continue to be concerned about the new arrangements but hope that these changes to them will help.

** If you live in a house or maisonette with a dustbin cupboard and currently use a wheeled bin for general waste, the contractors will continue to collect general waste from this bin.*

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Croydon Town Centre

Robert Williams gives his personal view on the future of Croydon Town Centre.

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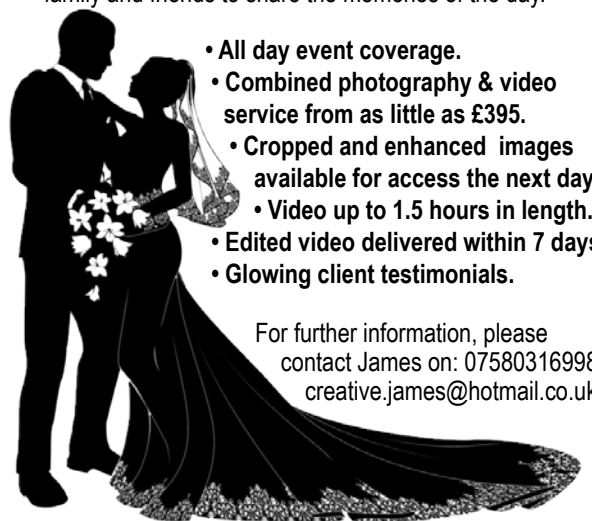
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MEMBER

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MEETING 2018

About fifty-five residents came to the Neighbourhood Meeting at St Matthew's Church on 17 May – plus our MP Sarah Jones, Councillor Vidhi Mohan and officers from the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team.

The year's work

Opening the meeting, John Ingman, Chair of the Association, reported on the year's work. The Association's Committee had met five times and had regular reports at its meetings on planning, the NHS and liaison with the police. Three newsletters had been published and circulated to over 2,600 households. The Chair thanked all those involved in this work. The Newsletter was supplemented with an e-mail service which has been particularly helpful in keeping residents up to date in emergencies – there were over ninety subscribers.

During the year, the Local Government Boundary Commission confirmed changes to the ward boundaries for Croydon Council. As a result, a new single member ward for Park Hill and the Whitgift Estate was created as from May 2018. However the new ward did not include the area north of Chepstow Road and Fairfield Road and the Association's Committee had considered changing the boundaries of the Association. For the time being, however, they had decided to leave things as they were. The Committee continued to monitor planning developments and to object where it was felt necessary. The Council was under pressure to allow as many homes as possible to be built and this was a threat to Park Hill since the focus appeared to be on the smallest possible properties. A new zebra crossing was installed on Park Hill Road and a 20mph speed limit on side roads in the area. The boundaries of the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team were altered in line with the ward boundaries from May 2018. The Team's weekly updates on crime in the area had been very useful.

In the coming year, the Association's focus would be on three areas – litter, potholes and parks. Residents were encouraged to report problems to the Council as they arose and to press for improvements such as new toilets in Park Hill Recreation Ground.

Finances – Treasurer's Report

David Stanton reported a surplus of £234 on the year. Cash in hand at the end of the financial year on 28 February 2018 was £3086. Though membership had fallen by 20 to roughly 300, income had risen partly because of the increase in the subscription to £5 as from March 2017. David Stanton was thanked for his work and thanks were also expressed to Richard Tweed for his work as auditor.

Elections to the Committee

Patricia Bonham, John Chambers and John Ingman were re-elected to the Committee for a term of three years, and Robert Williams was elected to the Committee for the same period.



General discussion

Sarah Jones MP and Councillor Vidhi Mohan introduced themselves. Sarah had been elected MP for Croydon Central in 2017 and had just been appointed Shadow Housing Minister. Her special interests included education and knife crime. Vidhi explained that he had formerly been a Councillor for 12 years for the Fairfield Ward before being elected in May 2018 as the first Councillor for Park Hill and the Whitgift Estate. PC Tom Rowlatt explained that the new Police Safer Neighbourhood Team would cover Park Hill and the Whitgift Estate. The Team planned to continue to circulate weekly e-mail updates on crime. He urged residents to buy CCTV systems which could assist prosecutions.

Topics covered in a general discussion included:-

Progress with the Westfield development: it was hoped that a final tranche of Compulsory Purchase Orders would be made in June/July and this would clear the way for a start on the project in 2019.

Knife crime and gangs: the police outlined Operation Sceptre where weapon searches are made in residential areas every two weeks or so to trace knives secreted in the area. If a resident found a knife, they should call 101.

Police Response Times: the Met was no longer committed to respond within one hour but the Safer Neighbourhood Team locally is committed to visit each victim of crime in the ward to pick up any lines of enquiry. The police can sometimes offer targeted advice to deter crime in specific locations.

The Chair thanked everyone for their support of the Association and the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Park Hill Personalities:

We talk to Councillor Toni Letts OBE who recently completed her second term as Mayor of Croydon about the challenges – and the hopes – in Croydon today.

'To serve others' is how Toni Letts sums up her work as a Councillor over more than thirty years – and this has been equally true of all the other duties she has taken on since she first came to Croydon nearly fifty years ago. She became involved with local politics because she wanted to change the lives of families she was working with in New Addington. However being a Councillor has only been part of the story.

She worked with Croydon YMCA first as Housing Director then as Chief Executive developing housing for people in need – youngsters, refugees, drug and alcohol, and HIV/Aids units and new mother and baby units. She chaired the NHS organisations which organised the care for Croydon's residents – first Croydon Health Authority and then Croydon Primary Healthcare Trust – as well as a specialist commissioning Board for London. She brought up three children and looked after an invalid husband for many years. And she found time to deal with people's individual needs. Talking to her, there is a constant flow of stories about people she has helped – from a barefoot woman fleeing domestic violence with two babies to an ex-prisoner for whom she not only bought clothes for a job interview but even ironed his shirt.

What does she think of the continuing

needs in the world around her? She has always had a special interest in domestic violence. She was a founder member of the Family Justice Centre, opened Crocus House a safe house for victims of domestic violence and spoke about domestic violence to the United Nations in New York. In her view the problem is getting worse – though at least victims are more likely to come forward and more likely to get help. But in different cultures, behaviour is still condoned and accepted. She is particularly concerned about elder abuse – the abuse of elderly people by their relatives – which can be hard to deal with because the victims can't or won't come forward.

Domestic violence is just one aspect of families under strain. In Toni's experience, many families do not talk to one another – a trend made worse by social media with each member of the family wrapped in their own little world. These problems are made harder by the pressure on housing which leaves many families living in over-crowded accommodation where there is not even space for the children to do their homework. It is no surprise that in these circumstances youngsters seek a substitute family in gangs which give them the support they lack at home. At the same time, support services by local authorities and other bodies have been



cut back over the years. 'All services' she says. 'can save for a while. But when austerity goes on, year after year, then services find it hard to do their job'.

The NHS is particularly affected because an ageing population makes steadily greater demands on the available services. It is not simply a matter of money – it is how the money is spent. Toni is keen, for instance, that more should be done to stop people falling ill in the first place – for instance to reduce childhood obesity which leads to diseases like diabetes later and encouraging older people to take more exercise.

However Toni is an optimist and she sees hope for Croydon and its people. It is not only the prospect of the Westfield Centre and the regeneration in retailing. She also sees an opportunity for Croydon to develop culturally with the renovation of the Fairfield Halls. It is worth remembering too that there are nearly 100,000 young people aged between 4 and 18 in education in Croydon today and only a tiny fraction of them are involved in crime. During her term as Mayor, she was heartened by the election of William Awomoyi as Young Mayor after a contest in which 20,000 young people voted. With young people of this calibre Croydon has in her view a good future.

Toni enjoyed her second term as Mayor which finished in May 2018. She previously been Mayor in 1997/98 and was delighted to be asked again. She carried out over 800 engagements in her term of office. She had thought that she would stand down as a Councillor this May but she was persuaded to stand again for Selhurst and is as busy as ever. She has joined the Planning Committee and is acting as Croydon's Business Ambassador seeking to attract new organisations to Croydon. But she has a bit more time now to spend with her family who now include six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Toni is remarkable not only for her energy and commitment but also her compassion and concern for others. As her father, a priest, taught her in Dublin as a child when he cared for discharged prisoners, we always need to remember that the stranger we see is made in the image of God.

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Membership Application Form

I/We wish to join/renew membership of Park Hill Residents Association and enclose a subscription of £5 to cover the membership to March 2019.

Name(s).....

Address.....

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WHERE, WHEN, HOW: A GUIDE TO LIVING IN PARK HILL

This pull-out section gives information about local services - from shopping to getting rid of rubbish. It will be particularly helpful for newcomers to the area but we hope that other residents too will find it useful.

WHERE, WHEN, HOW: A GUIDE TO LIVING IN PARK HILL

WHERE?

Food and household shopping

The Kiosk Convenience Store in Chichester Road has a wide range of groceries and papers etc. It sells stamps and delivers newspapers daily. Open 6.30am – 8.30pm Monday – Saturday (closes at 6.00pm on Sundays). The nearest supermarket is Waitrose in George Street, not far from East Croydon station. Open till 10pm Mon-Fri, till 8.00pm on Saturdays and 12 noon-6.00pm on Sundays. There is also a smaller Sainsburys store in George Street which opens 6.00am-12 midnight every day and one nearer the station open till 11.00pm daily.

Pharmacies

Nearest pharmacies are Boots in George Street (near East Croydon station) and St Clare Pharmacy further down George Street. (Boots don't open till 11.00am on Saturdays; St Clare's open 8.00am – 6.30pm (Mon-Fri) 9.00am – 6.30pm (Sat).

Money

Nearest cash machines are at East Croydon station at the left hand side of the entrance. Nearest bank is Barclays in George Street, not far from Waitrose.

Parks

Nearest parks are Park Hill Recreation Ground (get to it from Chichester Road – look for the Water Tower) and Lloyd Park (get to it from the other end of Chichester Road – turn right into Park 3.3Hill Rise and keep walking south.)

Do-it-yourself

For making minor repairs to your property and for all kinds of things for your house including small electrical goods: Clas Ohlson, first floor, Whitgift Centre. For bigger projects, try B & Q, IKEA or Homebase off Purley Way.

Schools

For information how to apply for a place in a State school in Croydon, go to the 'Schools Admission' section on the Croydon Council website – www.croydon.gov.uk. For information about admissions to fee paying schools, go to the school's website.



Street parking is free after 5pm and before 9am, Monday to Saturday and on Sundays.



Rubbish must be separated into household waste and rubbish that can be recycled.

The nearest parks are Park Hill Recreation Ground and Lloyd Park.



To contact the local police team, phone the Safer Neighbourhood team.



St Matthews' Church is on Chichester Road. Many local activities take place there as well as religious services.



The Kiosk has a wide range of groceries and papers for sale and is open from 6.30am - 8.30pm.

WHEN?

Buses

Services 64 and 433 which link Park Hill Road and East Croydon station run every 7-8 minutes during the week and at longer intervals at other times such as Sundays. (At East Croydon, there are frequent rail services to London and a range of other bus services – X26 provides a link to London Airport Heathrow.)

Parking

Street parking is free after 5.00pm and before 9.00am Monday-Saturday and on Sundays. You may park on single yellow lines at those times provided you don't block other road users. At other times you may park only in parking bays with meters. You can get an annual parking permit from the Council – apply on-line at www.croydon.gov.uk. Don't park at any time on double yellow lines or red route lines.

HOW TO?

Find a doctor

Local practices are: East Croydon Medical Centre, 59 Addiscombe Road CR0 6SD; Friends Road Medical Practice, Friends Road CR0 1ED; or Birdhurst Medical Practice, Birdhurst Avenue CR2 7DX. You will need to register at one of these practices before you can get treatment there. If you are not registered or need urgent help out of hours, go to the 24 telephone NHS helpline on 111. They will advise you where you should go to get treatment, whether you need to go to hospital, to see a GP or go to a pharmacy and if necessary will make arrangements for you.

Contact police and fire

For emergencies only, phone 999 for police, fire and ambulance. For non-urgent calls to the police, phone 101. To contact the local police team, phone the Safer Neighbourhood team on 07920 233887.

Find a Church

St Matthew's (Church of England) is in Chichester Road. Many local activities take place there as well as religious services. For other denominations and faiths, check websites.

Deal with the rubbish

A complicated business. There are different arrangements for houses and maisonettes, and walk-up flats. If your rubbish is not collected, phone 020 8726 6200 or report on-line at www.croydon.gov.uk – you will have to open an account. The arrangements for houses will change in September 2018 and this summary reflects those changes as we expect them to be.



For information about applying for a place at a state school in Croydon, go to the Croydon Council website.

Houses

Rubbish has to be separated into: food; paper and cardboard; recyclable items such as plastics, tins and glass; and other household waste - each has a separate bin. Food waste is collected every week in a black box. Paper and cardboard are collected every two weeks. Recyclable items (plastics, tins, glass) are collected every two weeks. Any other household waste is collected separately every two weeks. Collections are usually on the same day of the week. The collection days will change in September 2018.

For dates of collection, go to www.croydon.gov.uk and then 'Environment' and 'Waste Recycling'. Put in your address and post code and this should open a page giving dates for all the collections for your property. You must put your boxes out the night before the collection at the edge of your property. If you need new blue or green boxes and lids, contact the Council on 020 8726 6200 or report on-line as above.

If you have large items to dispose of, take them to the Council dumps in Factory Lane CR0 3RL or at Purley Oaks CR8 1DL. Both are open seven days a week. Check opening times on the Council website under 'recycling centres'. You will need to get a permit the first time you go - the website tells you what this involves. The Council will also collect items such as domestic appliances and furniture for a charge (from £10 upwards). Phone 020 8726 6200 and arrange a time. You will have to put the item to be collected out on the edge of your property. Garden waste is collected separately from April-November but there is a charge (from £55 upwards). You need to enrol on-line: go to 'Croydon council garden waste' on Google.

Walk-up flats

Rubbish is put in a storage area. You will need to separate your rubbish into three: food (collected each week); recyclables such as glass and paper; and other things which can't be recycled (these are collected every two weeks). Put the different things in the separate bins in the storage area.

This note has been prepared by Park Hill Residents Association which represents the people of Park Hill. For further information about what we do, go to our website - www.phra.org.uk We can't cover everything here - there is a lot we could say for instance about places to eat and entertainment. If you have questions which this note hasn't answered, contact us via the website or call 020 8681 2355 and we shall do our best to answer them.

Contact Council and other services:

- **Highways** - including reporting potholes: highwaysmaintenance@croydon.gov.uk
- **Parking**: parking@croydon.gov.uk
- **Parks/Green Spaces inc.Grass Verges**: parks@croydon.gov.uk
- **New Road Lining Requests**: ParkingDesign2@croydon.gov.uk
- **Street Events**: coordination@croydon.gov.uk
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- **Overgrown vegetation on private property, anti-social behaviour, abandoned vehicles, fly tipping/litter on private property, street trading or vehicle trading, illegal encampments, trade waste, graffiti**: Neighbourhood Safety - sandra.hillarby@croydon.gov.uk
- **Blockage or leaking from a private property onto the Highways**: Neighbourhood Safety - sandra.hillarby@croydon.gov.uk and the Environmental Enforcement team at, environmentalenforcement@croydon.gov.uk and / or the relevant Water Board
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Here & There

– A Round-up of Local News

TURNPIKE LINK – PERIMETER FENCES & GATES

The Turnpike Hill Trust is proposing to install perimeter fences and gates to stop crime on the estate. At present there is a network of pedestrian lanes and alleys across the estate which give access to it. These enable people to cut through it quickly – for instance on mopeds – and commit crimes such as robbery in doing so. Local people are very concerned about the risks this creates and the Trust consider that the problem must be dealt with. There will be fourteen gates each with a number lock and the fencing linking the gates will be about two metres high. The main entrances for vehicles to the estate such that off Park Hill Road will not be affected. The police support the proposal as do local Councillors.

One of the main features of Park Hill is its open aspect with lawns criss-crossed by paths and we have opposed fences round other developments in the area. However we recognise the concerns of local residents in Turnpike Link and how strongly they feel about the threat of crime created by the network of lanes there. In this instance therefore we are not pressing our objections but we hope that this approach will not be repeated elsewhere in Park Hill and that other ways can be found to deal with problems like these which do not affect the special character of the area.

RIDGEHANGER, PARK HILL RISE



We have objected to the proposed demolition of this large half-timbered house at the top of Park Hill Rise. In our view, the redevelopment is too intensive. It would be intrusive and would overlook neighbouring residents and interfere with their privacy.

We have said to the Council that Ridgehanger is an attractive house which adds to the area and we would very much regret its demolition. But if there is no alternative, then steps should be taken to reduce the impact of the new development.

We therefore support local residents in arguing for:-
reducing the height of the building from 3 to 2 storeys;
removing the balconies at the front and rear of the building. These would allow residents of the new block to look into the windows (including bedrooms) of houses in Park Hill Rise, Selborne Road and Lyndhurst Close; and requiring the developers (and subsequent residents) to retain the screen of trees round the site. This should be a condition of the planning

permission and should be clearly specified and defined.

As we go to press, we await the decision of the Council's Planning Committee.



COUNCILLOR'S SURGERIES

Our Councillor, Vidhi Mohan, is holding 'surgeries' for residents at St Matthew's Church, Chichester Road, on the second Saturday of each month (excluding August) from 10.00 – 11.00am.

EAST CROYDON MEDICAL CENTRE



East Croydon Medical Centre is the biggest GP practice in Croydon with nearly 19,000 patients. When the Care Quality Commission reviewed it last year, they rated it 'Good' against a range of measures – including safety, effectiveness, care and leadership. But accessing the services at the Centre is not always easy.

It can take ten-fifteen minutes to speak to a receptionist on the phone especially at busy times. The Centre recognises the problem and is tackling it in various ways – with more staff answering calls, and a new scheme with a range of options. Calls can be then diverted to ease the pressure on the receptionists. The busiest times of the day are between 8.00 and 9.00am and again between 2.00pm and 3.00pm – and it's worth avoiding those times if you can.

The practice recognises too that getting a routine non-emergency appointment can be difficult. This is partly due to sheer pressure of demand and partly because they are integrating patients from the Heathfield practice which they took over a little while ago. They are seeking to recruit two more full-time GPs to meet the demand. They are also trying new ways of deploying staff but many GPs at the practice work part-time due to domestic commitments and this limits their availability. As a general rule, however, the aim is that

appointments can be booked up to four weeks in advance.

Matching the increase in staff is a building programme. The first phase has been delayed because the position of the lift in that scheme depended on its place in a larger scheme which will involve building above the car park. Until that scheme was agreed in June, the current work could not go ahead. The practice hope that the scheme currently under way will be completed early in the autumn and the entrance in Brickwood Road will then re-open.

LADY ELISABETH POYNTON



We are sad to report that Lady Elisabeth Poynton (2nd from right, above) passed away peacefully at home on 6th April. She was 102, and had lived through two World Wars and was married in 1946. Her husband Hilton was knighted for his services to the Colonial Office, but died in 1996. As a resident of Stanhope Road since the 1950s, Elisabeth maintained a keen interest in our Annual Street Party, seen above just three years ago with her neighbours. She supported PHRA over many years, was a keen gardener, Cordon Bleu cook, and a kind and generous friend to all who knew her. She is survived by a daughter Anne and two sons, Christopher and John.

FLY TIPPING – HOW TO REPORT IT

There seems to be more fly tipping in Park Hill than ever before. You can report it to the Council by phone on 020 8604 7000, e-mail: flytip@croydon.gov.uk, or download the 'Don't Mess With Croydon' app on to your mobile phone.

More generally, open an account with Croydon Council if you haven't already done so - this gives access to a range of services. Just Google 'Croydon Council my account' Then insert your e-mail address and a password on the form shown. This opens the way to a range of services including for instance reporting fly tipping. Highlight 'fly tipping' and follow the sequence. You will be asked to identify the location using arrows and there is a photo which you can adjust to show the precise spot. Then register the location and give details of what has been tipped. Then confirm this. The Council acts quickly – sometimes in less than 24 hours.

ANDREE DYER

Andree Dyer who was for many years Advertising Manager for the Newsletter and a member of the PHRA Committee died earlier this month. She had been ill for some time. A highly independent lady, purposeful in all she did, Andree worked hard for the Association, liaising with advertisers, attracting new business and ensuring that payments were made. She developed good working relationships with many of her advertisers and we are grateful for her work.

PEACE & WELLBEING FESTIVAL



Photos taken by: Peace Garden - Josi Kiss, Art & Craft Fair - Vipul Sangoi, Yoga - Josi Kiss.

A sunny summer day of firsts, lasts and the future summed up the Peace & Wellbeing Festival, created by the volunteers of the Friends of Park Hill Park, which had over 1,000 visitors on the 23rd of June 2018.

The festival stage opened with Croydon's first ever Yogathon, a mass free yoga session, led by popular local yoga teacher Dawn Smith and had 67 people taking part. Next on the stage was a free 5-hour programme of dance, music & poetry performances with over 70 performers, both amateur and professional, who spanned a phenomenal cross-section of ages, genres, cultures and countries.

The stage finale was the last performance in Croydon's week-long Festival of Peace, by the London Mozart Players of their Peace Anthem, with lyrics by poet Shaniqua Benjamin and the Peace Dance, created by renowned choreographer Anusha Subramanyam. The Peace & Wellbeing Festivals audience really took this performance to their hearts joining in the communal singing & dancing of the Peace Anthem and dance.

For the first time, Park Hill Park's historic garden pavilion was used for an art & craft market, hosted by Made in Croydon CIC, which featured Bev Jones; one of Croydon's best-loved artists.

In the park, festival-goers could visit a selection of stands with offers including a full Thai body massage or spinal health checks as well as free music, art and craft activities for children. The food on offer catered for all tastes and included Indian, Vegan and Caribbean street food, as well as the parks traditional Water Tower Teas café.

Visitors were also shown more of the future community Peace Garden in the Victorian Walled Garden. This garden has been created by the Friends of Park Hill Park in partnership with 12 very diverse community groups from across Croydon. This long-term project will eventually feature 12 small gardens, with pathways and a central performance area. The Friends of the Park Hill Park will be crowdfunding the pathways to allow disabled access to the new garden. For more details or to join the volunteers contact info@parkhillpark.org.

CROYDON TOWN CENTRE

- a personal view by Robert Williams, a member of the Residents Association Committee

Croydon Town Centre will be radically changed over the next four years, Council planners hope. A huge new shopping mall will be built on land between Wellesley Road and North End. Five residential towers will be built above the mall, with nearly 1,000 homes. A further five towers will be built with about another 1,500 homes in three different sites close by. These too will have some shopping and public space. The tallest of these will be 68 storeys high. The first, in the old Essex House site opposite the station is now under construction.

These developments will change the whole appearance of the borough for miles around. The largest building rivals the Shard, yet will be residential rather than business. The mall will be divided by an east west cycle way, and might be developed separately in two parts, to the north and the south. Mostly though, these buildings must be completed before they can be occupied, and they cannot be started unless the whole of each site is cleared. The mall promises 8,000 new jobs and a long-awaited revival of Croydon as an up-market shopping destination. The potential benefits for the town are clear.



The mall is dependent upon a large capital investment. The project will be undertaken by the Croydon Partnership - The Whitgift Foundation, Westfield and Hammerson. Whitgift own the land and the investment is expected to come from Westfield and Hammerson who will also operate the mall. Outline planning permission has been granted for this ambitious scheme. The experience and resources of an organisation such as Westfield and Hammerson are essential for its success. An investment from that source of £1.4 billion is anticipated. Further investment in respect of the other five towers will come from other sources. One such source will be the borrowing of the buyers of the residential units. As there are about 2,500 of these, this might amount to a further £800 million.

The plan is being put into effect at a time of great uncertainty in this country. Setting out such concerns will sound unwelcome to some, however there is a need to exercise caution in such an ambitious scheme. High street shopping is under pressure from online competition which offers great value and convenience. The residential

towers will provide homes far above the ground in an environment unfamiliar to today's flat dwellers. The buyers will buy off plan, and will be putting up a deposit for something not yet built. For those built above the mall, this will be dependent upon the success of the mall itself. This country will leave the EU whilst the project is under construction and may be passing through a transitional period for most if it. Many expect there to be economic upset at least in the short term as this happens.

Lastly, the project itself will create a vacuum during which retail capacity in Croydon will be diminished. After all, if the king decides to build a new castle next to the old one, and move himself and his dragon and his archers over to it when it is finished, then he can do so at his leisure. If he has to demolish the old castle first, then the dragon at least may get nervous about the whole scheme.

The developers of the Essex House site are wisely starting early and employing a method of construction which will complete the building in record time. This will serve as a touch stone for the rest of the project, and will be watched closely by those who have concerns for the developments as a whole.

There have been efforts to redevelop the centre of Croydon as a retail mecca before. Park Plaza was expected to go ahead in 2005 for instance. The land on which the new project will be built was the subject of development as office accommodation in the 1960s, and much of this is now to go. If the present scheme fails, one major loser will be the Whitgift Foundation, which has worked consistently for the good of the community for 400 years. The downside risk however, is that with the rise of the internet retailing may make the concept of a shopping mall all but obsolete. If so perhaps the land is best employed simply as housing, in which case, at least it will not be necessary for these new buildings to be located in giant towers, and instead they can be on a more human scale.

The views in this article are the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of the Residents Association.

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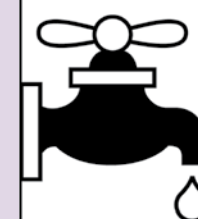


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