

Monks Orchard Residents' Association

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Croydon

(Non Party)

(Independent)

NEWSLETTER - Autumn 2007



Computer Generated Image of the Fairview development
'The Academy' Estate - off Stroud Green Way.
Image by permission of Fairview New Homes Ltd.

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The Monks Orchard Residents' Association was founded in 1923, and represents 2,500 residents.

Chairman's Comment

There was relief that Monks Orchard remained mainly unaffected by the flash floods that caused chaos in parts of the borough and even greater disruption and damage across England. Sustained heavy rain always causes concern because parts of Monks Orchard have a moderate chance of flooding according to the Environmental Agency. If the extreme weather consistent with global warming continues there is a real danger of parts of the area being flooded and the potential is being increased by back garden developments and the paving over of front gardens that prevent the drainage of water from flash floods. Furthermore, much of the higher density housing is taking place without appropriate improvements being made to the drainage and sewerage infrastructure.

The Executive Committee have been busy during the summer working on behalf of the local community. A detailed statement supported by local Doctors and Pharmacists was submitted in response to the consultation on the proposed Primary Care Strategy for Croydon and, as a consequence, the proposals have been dropped. The Government has its mind set on establishing 'miniclinics, and the situation needs to be watched if there is not to be a severance of the important link between Doctor, Pharmacist and Patient.

During the summer an increased number of reports were received regarding occurrences of crime and anti-social behaviour. A large part of Monks Orchard is on the peripheral of the area covered by the Ashburton Safer Neighbourhood Team and, as such, runs the risk of being treated as a low priority area. MORA is pressing for a greater visual police presence during the hours when crime and anti-social behaviour is more likely to take place.

Complaints are still being received about overcrowding on the 367-bus route. MORA has repeatedly raised this issue with Transport for London and will continue to press for an acceptable resolution to this problem.

Readers of the planning report will note that MORA has been devoting time and energy examining planning submissions and, where appropriate, taking action to resist the more outrageous proposals submitted by developers. To improve the chances of a favourable decision it is essential to have the active help and combined support of those opposed to development proposals.

Eyes & Ears of the Association:

We need Road Stewards to deliver our Quarterly Newsletters and collect yearly membership fees for the following roads:

**Stoneleigh Park Ave, Fairford Avenue, Greenvview Ave
[evens], Shirley Ave, Mardell Crescent, Woodmere Ave.
Chaffinch Ave and Chaffinch Close.**

Anyone willing to undertake this important activity for the residents, please contact the Membership Secretary - Diane McInerney on [REDACTED].

Planning News

The expense and stress associated with selling and buying a new property has encouraged a growing number of owners to extend their homes rather than move to a larger property. To increase living space and the value of their property they are willing to accept discomfort, noise, upheaval, disruption and inconvenience, but this also has to be endured by those living nearby, especially close neighbours. It is completely wrong that those living adjacent to the development are not required to be formally informed or consulted, providing the proposed extension falls within the criteria of a General Permitted Development Order that permits the living space of a property to be increased by 70 cubic metres or 15% without the need to apply for planning permission. The extension to a nearby property can often result in a loss of light, outlook, privacy, change of character, and loss of value, and there is absolutely nothing that can be done.

Nearly all urban home improvements create concern to those living nearby but research has shown that by far the most contentious are loft conversions. These are complex and expensive pieces of structural engineering that, far from adding value to a property, they can detract from it especially if the installation of an extra staircase ends up ruining a first floor bedroom or can be climbed by only the most agile and athletic. Careful planning is needed to avoid adding rooms that are hot in summer and cold in winter. The conversion of a loft can take two or three months to complete during which time the necessary scaffolding erected around the building can restrict access to adjoining properties, run the danger of damage to adjoining roofs and water seeping into the adjoining roof space. Furthermore, the protective sheeting covering the construction can bellow constantly in the wind and the noise can cause sleep disturbance and frighten young children. The disturbance is greater if the conversion is carried out by a 'do it yourself' enthusiast who is only able to work weekends and bank holidays when neighbours will be wanting to spend quality time relaxing in their garden and the work can stretch for months, even years. Some



extensions are incredibly ugly, the proportions of the original dwelling are lost and fundamentals like brickwork and windows seldom match the original, but are far worse, and without prior consultation they convert two storey dwellings into three stories. The additional space may be used for exercise; games or music and those living in the adjoining dwelling can suffer noise and movement directly above their bedrooms.

Loft conversions are not allowed to exceed the height of the highest part of the existing roof or the plane of the existing slope facing the public highway,

but no such restriction applies to the rear of the property. Large windows can be added to the rear of the roof and the more ambitious developers will add double patio style doors leading to a veranda that allows the occupants to act like medieval monarchs or twentieth century dictators and look down on those going about their lawful business below.

Of all the blots on our urban landscape, dodgy loft conversions are among the worst; some look like a garden shed, or like two winking eyes with one bigger than the other. The result is that a once harmonious skyline, a model of architectural geometry just looks like a mess. Perhaps people should think twice before building an ugly loft conversion, which would be a victory for common sense.

Council Tax Campaign

Members responded to the appeal made at the Annual General Meeting to support this year's campaign by Isitfair in association with the Tax Payers Alliance aimed at drawing attention to the problems created by the continual rises in Council Tax. Members were asked to enclose their Council Tax demand plus a comment, and mail to a collection point so that the letters could be delivered in bulk to the then Chancellor, Gordon Brown at the beginning of May. A large number of people throughout the nation responded and the letters were deposited on the floor of the treasury and an official gave assurance that individual replies would be sent to all. Phil Woolas M.P. Minister for Local Government and Community Cohesion eventually made a single reply to all the letters sent and reiterated that the Government takes the view that it is excessive increases in Council Tax not Council Tax itself that is controversial and the present system should be retained. He sees it as his job to ensure that the taxpayer is protected from excessive increases. Nevertheless, the Government and the London Mayor continue to load additional financial burdens on the Council Tax Payers, to name a few; recycling targets, the demands of increasing immigration, enforcing the introduction of Home Information Packs, extra policing and, of course, the spiralling cost of the Olympic Games.

Mr. Woolas responded to the question about prisons by stating that the reason why crime is down is the use of custodial sentences for offenders, a policy which carries widespread public support. As regards people who refuse to pay Council Tax, it is not possible under law to be jailed for being unable to pay; it is only possible under law for wilfully refusing to pay. Furthermore, some 15% of the total national Council Tax is paid by Council Tax benefit to protect those on lower income.



Isitfair continues to provide information about people being summoned to court for refusing to pay the above inflation annual rises in Council Tax.

MORA is also in contact with the representatives in the London Council Tax area who are refusing to pay the unfair Olympic surcharge imposed by Ken Livingstone. They nervously wait to know what action will be taken. It is of interest that the London Borough of Hillingdon has become the first London Borough to announce proposals for a Council Tax discount scheme for pensioners. The scheme, approved by the council's Cabinet at its meeting on Tuesday December 12th proposes a 2% reduction in next year's Council Tax for pensioners. Pensioners aged 65 and over will be eligible for the Council Tax discount.

The Leader of Hillingdon Council and Older People's Champion, Councillor Ray Puddifoot said " The responsibility for ensuring pensioners have sufficient means to keep pace with the rising cost of living, including Council Tax rises, clearly rests with the Government. If the Government will not accept this responsibility, I would like Hillingdon Council to do something to help. Under the proposals, the increase in Council Tax is likely to be lower than the increase in the state pension. This will give pensioners a better deal and peg our Council Tax increase to a level they can afford." Perhaps there is a need for an Older People's Champion in Croydon's Councils Cabinet.



Home Information Packs

Previous issues of this Newsletter have included news of the introduction of Home Information Packs (HIP's) because of their importance to homeowners. The initial plan was to introduce the necessary legislation in June 2007 and the aim of the packs was to supply, facilitate, cheapen, and expedite the selling and buying of houses. When putting a house onto the market, the seller or estate agent would by law, have to provide a Hip containing all kinds of prescribed information such as title, casements and rights of way, results of searches, planning warranties, service charges, home condition survey, fixtures and fittings, energy efficiency, water, gas, electricity details, you name it, it has to be there. Thus the buyer would have all the necessary information from the start and the deal could go through promptly and satisfactorily for all concerned. The seller would have to pay for the Hip to the tune of an estimated £750 - £1,500 and more if it is out of date and needs revision.

Subsequent to the announcement of the proposed introduction, HIP's came under constant attack from a variety of sources because of duplication. Not many Building Societies and sensible buyers will rely on a standardised home condition report produced by the vendor and would commission their own survey thus adding to the cost. As predicted there was a rush of buyers wishing to complete the purchases before the deadline?

The Government responded to the pressure and retreated from plans to force sellers rather than buyers to pay for a survey when selling their home and

HIP's would no longer have to contain a home condition report. Only one part of the home condition report remains compulsory and this is the Properties Energy Performance Certificate with information of the properties energy efficiency similar to the ratings on domestic appliances.

After a delay HIP's finally became law on 1st August 2007, amid persistent concerns that house sales would be held up by shortages of home inspectors in certain areas. The new regime is also bedevilled by claims that it is riddled with loopholes that will allow widespread avoidance. The amended law will apply to houses with four bedrooms or more from 1st August at a cost now predicted to be £400 - £500 and for 3 bedroom properties from 10th September. There is fear that the HIP's database may be used to help implement an overhaul of Council Tax charges. There is also concern that the packs will be unenforceable and that many householders may be willing to risk being fined the £200 to avoid a possibly higher charge of buying a Hip.

Shopping Online

A revolution has taken place in the way we live and shop. The expansion in the use of broadband connections has resulted in a massive increase in online shopping and it has been calculated that one in four adults living in the UK have purchased goods online in the last six months. In the past the internet was used mainly by the under 30's to purchase books, music and videos but much of the recent growth is the consequence of more mature people using the web and giving birth to the term 'silver surfer'. There was some reluctance to provide credit card information but the introduction of secure connections, bank confirmation schemes and policies' regarding disputed purchases has gradually increased customer confidence. Online shopping provides easy access to virtually millions of items from all over the world; within minutes you can be perusing the online catalogues of the largest department stores ordering hand made crafts, booking your dream vacation, finding a rare book and all sorts of things you would not be able to get elsewhere. It is particularly useful if you live in a remote area, have mobility problems, prefer not to mix with crowds or are simply too busy to have time to spare to spend time shopping. As with all things in life it is necessary to be aware of the pitfalls as well as the advantages to ensure that your online shopping experiences are good ones. What follows is intended to bring together those things you need to be aware of before purchasing online.



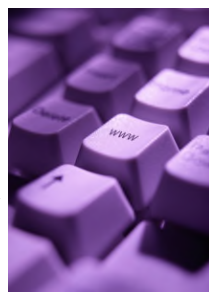
Shopping-online for Groceries

Most of the supermarkets will deliver to your doorstep at a selected time, seven days a week. There is a charge for this service and the cost is related to the day chosen and can be as much as seven pounds for each delivery. This needs to be taken into account and balanced with the convenience

gained. The grocery websites are constantly being made more user friendly and the choice of items and delivery slot can be changed, however, first time users should expect to make errors on weight and quantity until they become familiar with the procedure. The items ordered arrive well presented, usually undamaged and can be rejected and returned without charge. Occasionally items are out of stock and this can present problems when catering for a special occasion. Subsequent to confirming the order, checking out can be a challenge. A credit or debit card is essential and details of the number and security code have to be submitted and accepted. The questions asked can be confusing and acceptance is refused if any information has been entered incorrectly. Most companies will email a confirmation together with a list of the items ordered and this should be checked thoroughly. A telephone help line is available to deal with queries. It needs to be recognised that the items delivered will not be exactly those selected in person. If you wish to purchase a particular cut of fresh fish or meat or require advice on preparation and cooking it is usually best to do the shopping yourself. Furthermore, the use by dates can sometimes be very short.

Shopping Online for Clothes

Quality clothes at competitive prices can be obtained online, but knowledge and caution is required to ensure that at a click of a mouse you do not purchase something that you really have no use for. It is sensible to buy from clothing outlets that you know and trust. Undertake a little research, maybe you know someone who has already shopped at the online store you intend to use. Only do business with companies that provide clear and detailed information, often the type of material and range of sizes are not clearly stated. Also, the colour depicted on the website may not accurately reflect that of the product. Remember you are making an online purchase and do not have the opportunity of using a fitting room to try garments for quality and comfortable fit. Prior to confirming a purchase, find out about the return policy; rejected items can usually be returned but have to be repackaged and returned at personal expense requiring a visit to a post office and a delay whilst the new order is processed and despatched. It is less convenient than returning unwanted items directly to a local store for immediate exchange or refund.



Shopping Online for Furniture and Electricals

Surfing the web for furniture and electrical equipment and comparing brands together with price can be rewarding. All the major outlets compete for custom providing a wide choice and savings can be made. Reports suggest that most laptop computers, mobile phones, digital cameras and white electrical goods are now purchased in this way. Use is made of a combination of shopping options; people begin by inspecting certain items in a store to grasp an idea of look, feel and suitability and then decide that purchasing

online offers the best value. Conversely, the specification and performance of the item is compared online and the purchase made in a store. It is advisable to compare delivery charges although some outlets offer free delivery of selected appliances. Major outlets also offer an installation service and will arrange the removal of the old appliance for a fixed charge and it is important to investigate, compare and request these services before confirming the order. Ensure you understand how long the standard delivery will take; faster delivery can sometimes be arranged at an increased cost. It is also necessary to find out if the item is in stock and how long it will take to process your order. It is common for an Internet based outlet not to carry stock and items are not obtained until an order is received and this can take four weeks or more.

Essential Precautions

- Only send credit card information over a secure connection that is usually indicated by a closed lock or key symbol at the bottom of your browser.
- Only buy from a company you can trust and provides clear contact information including a telephone number.
- When making international orders find out if there are any additional costs or regulations regarding customs and import duty.

Monks Orchard Sunday School

This year Monks Orchard Sunday School is celebrating its 60th anniversary having opened on 6th October 1947. The first meeting was held at Monks Orchard Primary School in The Glade with 106 children in attendance and this number gradually increased to approximately 200. Generations of local residents will be able to recall happy memories of their weekly visits to the school that is staffed and managed by dedicated volunteers. Sunday schools aim to introduce children to the Bible, the Christian message and Christian fellowship in an exciting and enjoyable way but they achieve more than that, they encourage children to be sensitive to the feelings of others, to socialise, increase reading skills and to be confident and well behaved. Those who attended for instruction may not all have become regular churchgoers but the teaching and example set at an early age still provides helpful guidance in their daily lives.

Prior to the establishment of a local centre the children living in the north of the ward wishing to attend Sunday school were transported by bus to Holmsdale Baptist church. John Savage aided by his wife Connie and two other local residents were fundamental in starting the school in a hired room at Monks Orchard Primary School where it successfully thrived for 53 years. In 2000 the classes moved to Longheath Community and Church Centre in Long Lane. John no longer takes an active role in teaching having reached a grand age of 93 years, many of which were devoted to the local community and he could claim to be MORA's longest serving member having joined in

1938. He is a joy to talk with and has clear memories of the area and the changes that have taken place.

Classes are held every Sunday in Longheath Community and Church Centre beginning at 11.00 a. m. and children are invited to attend.



The Croydon Society

The Croydon Society was formed following the Second World War to protect the town's heritage after many buildings suffered significant bomb damage. For the past sixty years it has been the boroughs civic and amenities society and has been active in preserving and championing the boroughs heritage. It produced many interesting publications of local interest and published Croydon Focus a quarterly journal that contained well-written articles on local history, town developments and events. A programme of lectures and guided walks were organised for the benefit of members. In common with many associations of long standing the officers and members of the Executive Committee have all grown old and appeals made for younger replacements were ignored. It is disappointing that there is reluctance for residents to become involved in anything of a voluntary nature even when it could affect their own back 'yard'. Subsequent to failing to attract replacement officers the Society had no choice but to close and has itself become part of local history. This confirms only too clearly that if it was not for a small band of stalwarts, all such organisations would simply die and this includes local residents' associations.

MORA Green Space and Tree Officer

Monks Orchard is fortunate in having within its boundaries playing fields, recreational parks, bird sanctuaries, part of ancient woodland and numerous green open spaces all of which combine to make a valuable contribution to the character and quality of life. Furthermore, most of the residential streets and avenues are lined with trees that provide shade and improve air quality during the summer months. Green spaces will become greatly treasured as more blocks of apartments are constructed without any recreational space for tenants. Financial constraints have resulted in trees being neglected and those that are vandalised, damaged or deceased are not being replaced.



The increasing demand for more homes to be built to meet the demand from the 12,000 homeless in the borough is supported by Government Ministers, The Mayor and the Council and is resulting in all available spaces being viewed as potential sites for development. There are open spaces such as the woods in Long Land that are used by irresponsible people as dumping

grounds for cast off bedding, furniture and parts of motor vehicles. It is important that local open spaces are defended by those that value their contribution to the quality of life of the community; residents in other parts of the borough have organised themselves to successfully undertake this task.

There is the increasing danger that the use of open spaces will decline because residents are afraid to let their children play and explore these areas that will leave them open to misuse by motorcyclists, joy riders and fly tippers.

To protect these important community spaces from decline requires the time and energy of one or more stalwarts or enthusiasts. The structure is already in place, the Council has a full time dedicated open space and woods officer and grants and lottery money are offered for conservation, clean-up, boundary protection and improvement projects.

The Executive Committee has decided that a dedicated Open Space and Tree Officer is essential to liaise with the Council to protect and improve these open spaces to make them more accessible, also to press for trees to be replaced in streets and avenues. Bob Akers, your Chairman invites those that care for open spaces and trees to contact him on [REDACTED]. Only a few hours each week is required and the work could be exciting and rewarding.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Despite a series of Government measures, anti-social behaviour remains a serious problem in almost every part of the country. Adolescent males have for generations gathered together, especially when there are young girls that are allowed to remain out into the early hours. In the past such gatherings caused noise and nuisance but not on the scale created by today's juvenile gangs. So what has brought about this change? Today's gang members are likely to be younger, highly mobile, have money to spend, access to alcohol and drugs, possess mobile phones, carry weapons, know their rights and have little fear of the law.



Teenage groups seek somewhere secluded to assemble unobserved and usually opt for a poorly lit estate, alleyway, church yard, empty property, open space or cul-de-sac. Socialising, showing off and horseplay can, under the influence of alcohol and drugs, quickly develop into extreme behaviour. To defend themselves and their properties, residents erect fences and

gates to restrict access to their area and the gangs are forced to move on. What happens when a local gang arrive in your peaceful surroundings? Opening your bedroom curtains before retiring and seeing twenty or more hooded adolescents sitting on your garden wall and spilling into the front

garden can prove highly intimidating and result in a restless night for you and the neighbours.

Assembling in groups in the street does not break the law; it is only when trespass or wanton damage occurs that it becomes an issue for the police. Most residents will keep a watchful eye on the gang especially if it increases in number and the noise escalates whilst more relaxed residents will shut the noise out and retire to bed. If fighting occurs or property is being vandalised, sit tight and call the 999 emergency numbers. However, experience shows that the police cannot always come when called, especially at weekends. In the early hours the gang will usually disperse and peace will return until the following night.

In the light of day the aftermath will be there for all to see; garden walls demolished, plants and shrubs ruined, graffiti on the walls, damage to vehicles, bottles, tins, the leftovers of takeaway meals, and signs that the garden has been used as a toilet. In extreme cases there will be evidence of drug taking and sexual activity.

Politicians and Police Superintendents will repeatedly say that they are tough on anti-social behaviour but little positive action can be taken without evidence supported by witness statements. Needless to say it is impossible to identify individuals wearing hoods at night and only the brave will offer themselves as witnesses for fear of being targeted for reprisals. Every decade in the past has had its yobs and however many police are employed it has to be recognised that the problem will never go away completely.



Croydon Primary Care Proposals

Many of you are aware that the NHS is trying to devolve certain hospital functions out *"into the community"* so that patients will have *"easier access to services"*. I use the italics carefully as I believe that the expressions used are not necessarily to be interpreted literally. The extreme end of this shift in strategy would transfer some hospital (or secondary care) services into Primary Care Centres which far from making things easier to access may achieve the reverse. What some planners envisage is that many GP surgeries would merge under one roof as a form of healthcare supermarket. These centres would also house a pharmacy, dentist, chiropodist, optician etc in their grand design scheme. This might sound attractive in principle until one realises that this would mean the closure of all the satellite surgeries and pharmacies in what would be quite a large area. In order to achieve the critical mass necessary to make these centres viable, there would have to be 20,000 – 30,000 patients registered under the one roof. Thus a town the size of Croydon would support up to 15 of these centres with the abolition of 50 pharmacies and virtually all the existing GP practices. Now it doesn't take a

genius to realise that the vast majority of patients would end up travelling much further to reach healthcare facilities than they do at present. (Let us not even get into the carbon footprint debate on the implications of this!) Many Croydon residents can walk to their nearest pharmacy or GP at the present time and this means that access is good. There are several pharmacies that stay open until 9pm in Croydon and 2 that stay open until 11pm. (Sainsburys Upper Norwood & Purley Way).

The latest report into HealthCare provision in London written by Professor Ari Darzi further muddies the water. He wants 50 "Poly Clinics" which are essentially the same thing as Primary Care centres with some minor hospital functions bolted on. If you recall some years ago, Tony Blair had the concept of the Walk-In-Centre which everyone assumed would be the answer to the pressure on Accident & Emergency centres. This turned out to be a false hope. Walk in Centres are nurse led clinics and although they do sterling work, the list of what they cannot do far exceeds that which they can. I would have thought the best answer to solve at least some of the short term access problems in the NHS, especially in London, is to equip the current network of Walk-in-Centres with more functionality. What about a doctor on the premises performing minor surgery, a scanner or two, or some diagnostic capability? Let us make far better use of what we have in primary care rather than invest millions of more NHS money (that's our taxes) in building new concepts. By developing the capabilities and skills of those who could work and do work in existing pharmacy & GP practice premises, the NHS could have real expansive resources in the community without wasting yet more millions on grand schemes and ambitious designs.

Andrew McCoig

McCoig Pharmacy, 143 Wickham Road, Shirley

Changes to the Freedom Pass Scheme

The Freedom Pass scheme is due to be extended to include nation wide bus travel from 01/04/2008. All existing Freedom Pass holders have passes, which are due to expire on 31/03/2008. Croydon Council is still in the early stages of planning for the next mass renewal it can be confirmed but at this stage that:

- Older people will be able to renew their passes at the Post Office next spring and new stickers will be affixed to their existing passes to extend the period of validity to 31/03/2010 and to show that the pass is valid for the new national scheme.
- People who hold Disabled Persons Freedom Passes from Croydon will be sent an invitation to renew their pass early in October this year. Croydon Council will then check to see whether they continue to satisfy the conditions for participating in the scheme and will write again to the clients next spring to advise them of the outcome of their applications. If they continue to qualify for

a Disabled Persons Freedom Pass they will send them a letter of authority for them to take to the Post Office next spring and two stickers will be applied to the existing pass to extend the period of validity to 31/03/2010 and to show that the holder is entitled to free nation wide bus travel under the terms of the new scheme.

- There may be some disabled people who previously held a discretionary Freedom Pass who will no longer qualify for a Freedom Pass under the new scheme as there is no provision for awarding a National Scheme pass on discretionary grounds. Croydon Council will ensure that all renewal applications are checked for entitlement under the criteria specified under the Transport Act and will notify any clients who do not qualify for a renewal of their existing Freedom Pass by post next spring.

For more information on the changes please contact Linda Lourenco, Concessionary Travel Service, London Borough of Croydon, email travel.service@croydon.gov.uk or call 020 8726 6000 and ask for Linda.

Planning Report

Appeals

07/00955/P Full planning permission

R/O, 93-97 Tower View:

Erection of detached one bedroom bungalow at rear

LPA Permission Refused: 25/04/2007

Appeal Date: 07/06/2007

Appeal Ref:A/07/2046819

Not yet decided at time of going to press.

07/01039/P Outline planning permission

26-28 Tower View The erection of a detached four bedroom house at rear;

formation of vehicular access onto Edgewood Green and provision of associated parking

LPA Decision: 10/05/2007 Permission Refused

Appeal Received Date: 27/06/2007

Appeal Ref: A/07/2048617/WF

Not yet decided at time of going to press.

06/03157/DT Telecommunications Code System operator

Highways Land O/S, 12 Astor Court, Ham View, opposite entrance to Regency Walk

Siting of 8 metre high telecommunication mast with 1 antenna attached and 1 equipment cabinet.

(Approval) refused by LPA: 22/09/2006 Appeal A/07/2040517/NWF

Appeal Decision: Appeal allowed and approval granted. 20th Aug 2007.

06/05062/P Full planning permission

3 Lorne Avenue

Erection of detached three bedroom house at side; formation of vehicular access and provision of associated parking

LPA Permission Refused: 02/02/2007.

Reason: Out of character with the locality and detrimental to the visual amenities.

Appeal Ref: A/07/2044235/WF

No decision at time of going to press; Inspector's site visit scheduled 28th Aug



Applications:

07/02860/RES Approval of reserved matters

114 Orchard Way Demolition of existing building; erection of two storey building comprising 8 two bedroom flats; alterations to vehicular access and provision of associated parking.

This application is to gain full planning approval of the details of the earlier approved outline planning application.

07/03118/P Full planning permission

Monks Orchard Primary School Siting of 2 portable classroom buildings

This case has not yet been decided at time of going to press.

07/02719/P Full planning permission

60 Woodmere Avenue Erection of 2 four bedroom detached houses at rear with attached garages and formation of vehicular accesses onto Round Grove

This case has not yet been decided at time of going to press.

Decisions:

07/02298/P Full planning permission

66 Tower View Demolition of existing house; erection of 4 semi-detached three bedroom houses and additional technology room on first floor and accommodation in roof space to 2 houses and cycle/bin stores. formation of vehicular accesses onto Edgewood Green and provision of 8 parking spaces (amended description).

Permission Refused: 09/08/2007

07/02563/P Full planning permission

16 Bywood Avenue Retention of security shutters, box and associated rails

Permission Refused 21/08/2007

Reasons: Inappropriate to the building or the character of the area.

07/02404/P Full planning permission

9 Woodmere Gardens Demolition of existing buildings; erection of 4 two bedroom semi detached houses; formation of vehicular accesses and provision of associated parking

Permission Refused: 13/08/2007

Reason: Overdevelopment of the site

07/01681/P Full planning permission 30/04/2007

16-16A Fairhaven Avenue, 22 Gwynne Avenue, Demolition of the existing building; erection of six three bed roomed terraced houses; formation of vehicular access and provision of associated parking

Permission Refused: 25/06/2007

Reasons: Detrimental to the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining properties.

07/01738/P Full planning permission

31 Woodland Way: Demolition of existing building; erection of 2 four bedroom detached houses; alterations to vehicular access and provision of associated parking

Permission Refused: 27/06/2007

Reasons: Failed to take account of TPO's in relation to construction.

**MONKS ORCHARD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
HANDY ADS SECTION**

ESTATE AGENTS

FREE VALUATIONS

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Security Information from the Bank of England

With the recent release of the new twenty pound note, it seems a good time to remind you of security features to help you to identify genuine banknotes.



Feel of the paper - banknotes are printed on a special paper, which should not feel limp or waxy.

Raised print - this is used on some parts of the note. By running your finger across the note you can feel raised print in some areas, such as the words 'Bank of England' on the front of the note.

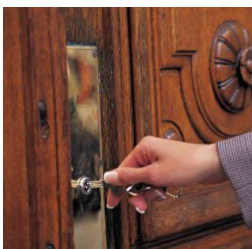
Take your time to check your notes - particularly if light conditions are poor or you are handling a large number of notes. Look at the note, and feel the note. Do not rely on one single feature - If you have doubts, compare the note with one that you know to be genuine. There are some counterfeit notes about, and they are completely worthless. Don't get caught out - protect yourself and check your banknotes when you receive them.

It is a criminal offence to keep or pass on a note that you know to be counterfeit. If you have a note that you believe is a counterfeit you must take it to the police as soon as you can. They will provide you with a receipt and send the counterfeit to the Bank for analysis. If the note is genuine reimbursement will be made in full.

Town Centre Robbery Hotspot

Thefts of mobile phones, purses and cash are occurring in the Town Centre area around Whitgift Centre, North End and West Croydon Bus Station. Over the last weekend there were three victims of pickpockets aged over 80+ years. The Town Centre Policing Team, Safer Transport Team and plain clothes officers will be operating in this area and any gangs of youths will be dispersed under the Town Centre Dispersal Order which is in force. There has been an incident this week where a victim had his mobile phone stolen from his pocket while using an ATM in North End. The possible suspects were two eastern European females with babies.

Bogus Callers/Bogus Police



Two Council properties in East Croydon and South Norwood areas had a window smashed and a white male described as 5'10" tall of slim build and with dark brown hair has twice posed as a Police Officer but did not produce any ID. In both cases the man said he was investigating a break in and his father was outside. Cash was stolen from both flats.

More recently, an elderly victim had a knock on the

door, a male stated that a bird was trapped in her roof gutter. He claimed that a neighbour had advised him to call. The victim showed the suspect into the house and he stated he could push the bird out from inside her loft! While in loft victim asked for a cup of tea when victim returned suspect was outside her bedroom and then claimed her roof was leaking and he could fix it for cash. She gave him £20 and he said he would return later.

Also, a Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator has reported that on Thursday 2nd August at approx 7.30 pm a elderly resident (aged 85) a member of his watch answered her front door to a white male - approx 5' 10 height - in his thirties - dark clothes - dark hair- said to have a south London accent.

He said that he required to enter the premises to turn down the water pressure at the stopcock because of a water leak in the house next door - he said that he was from the water board - No ID or official clothes were seen. Fortunately the elderly lady (because of previous warnings) refused entry - and the person went away.

With the summer months there has been an increase in the number of bogus callers offering to carry out gardening work etc with cash in advance being asked for. They then disappear having taken the cash! Whenever possible only employ someone who has been recommended to you by a friend or neighbour.

El Gordo Spanish Lottery

A Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator has reported another variation of the Spanish lottery winning letter, which has the usual form attached headed 'Santa Lucia Security Company S.L.' asking for your full personal details so that the spammers can assume your identity and or take cash from you for your processing fee on the winnings that you will never see.

Another co-ordinator was handed a leaflet in whilst in Croydon headed 'The lazy mans way to residual riches' which promises cash for nothing! There are many references to this website on the internet mostly from other get rich quick websites. It may be a pyramid selling scheme and also refers to you using your bank account to receive payments. Remember if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

A Neighbourhood Watch member has also received a letter from "Loterias y Apuestas del Estado" to confirm their winnings which are identical to the last two letters from differently named lotteries with the usual request for the win to be kept secret due to a mix up with the winning numbers. Attached is the request for your full personal details and a copy of your passport! from Seguros Bilbao. These details can then be used to hijack your identity and/or empty your bank account.

Be Warned!!!!

Warning from the Home Office Regarding Telephone Scams

Telephone scams

Bogus calls designed to convince you to hand over your credit card or bank details are a real problem. Be cautious.

If you are contacted by telephone and told that you have won a prize, think for a minute: did you enter any competitions?

Odds are you didn't. The vast majority of the time, these calls are scams, originating from abroad and designed to convince you to give over personal details such as your bank account number or credit card information.



If this happens to you, just hang up the phone. If you ever do win, you will never be asked for personal details, nor would you ever have to pay anything in order to collect your winnings - that's a sure sign that something is wrong.

Many people have been taken in by these scams, and some have lost their entire life savings.

Don't be one of them!

- never give out personal details over the phone
- always ask for more information
- be sure you know who you're talking to
- keep your bank account details safe

A Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator has reported a possible telephone scam which may be connected with this Home Office warning. One of the members received a phone call from a male who was well spoken and very convincing. The call went something like this: "This is a message from the Government Agency regarding debt and the problems it causes. This is a Government initiative introduced to minimise debt and up to 2/3rds of your debt may be cancelled but only if you speak to a financial adviser. Press 5 to talk with etc. etc". Press 5 to connect to a financial adviser." It sounds like an attempt at selling debt counselling/voluntary liquidation.

Theft of Golfing Equipment

There has recently been a series of linked golf club burglaries across the Metropolitan, Surrey and Kent Police areas. If you are a golfer Police advise that clubs etc be kept out of sight when in your car or being transported to and from your house.

Holiday Checklist

Here is a checklist you could use to make your home safer while you are on holiday:

Have You:

- Told your neighbours when you will be away, also your Neighbourhood

Watch Co-ordinator so that they can keep an eye on your property.

- Set timers for lights, TV and or a radio.
- Locked and secured your car if you are not taking it with you.
- Cancelled the newspapers and any milk deliveries.
- Asked your neighbours or a relative to collect your post, or to push it through the letterbox properly.
- Locked all external doors and window locks.
- Locked your shed and locked away all tools and ladders that could be used to break into your house.

Bicycle Security

Bicycle theft has recently shown an increase throughout the Borough the Crime Prevention Officers have issued a few brief tips regarding cycle security:



- When purchasing a cycle record and register your bike. This is easiest at the time of purchase.
- You may wish to consider registering it on a secure crime reduction website www.immobilise.com this is free to register.
- Consider photographing your bicycle which will assist any identification should it be lost or stolen
- When parking your bicycle avoid dimly lit or isolated areas. Make use of any cycle stands
- Don't lock or park your bike in the same area every day, keep the thieves guessing!
- Lock your bike through the frame and remove attachable items where possible. Where you have to leave your bike accessories secure them. A heavy duty D lock is the minimum level of security, other security products can be found on www.soldsecure.com website.

Further advice on cycle security can be found on www.crimereduction.gov.uk

'On Stream' Working in Croydon for British Gas

A company called 'On Stream' will be working in Croydon from 14th August to 11 September on behalf of British Gas to change old gas meters.

Engineers will attend in a white and blue van and will have photo ID cards. If you are concerned as to validity ask for the engineers name, close the door, do not let them in, and call the company call centre on 0845 606 6588 for confirmation that this engineer is genuine.

The company has been sending out letters to warn customers that the meter has to be changed and would prefer them to make an appointment day and time for the visit. If you are unsure in any way do not let the engineer in until you have checked.

Walk Routes in Croydon

It has been suggested, that to maintain a healthy lifestyle, one needs to walk at least three miles each day! It is comforting to know, that in Croydon, we have a number of pleasant walks in Parks and Woodland areas.



Croydon Council, in collaboration with N.H.S. Primary Care Trust, has produced a booklet, 'Circular Health Walks in Croydon', in which walk routes are cleverly marked. These include -

Seldon Wood Walk Route (2 Miles)

Starting at the CarPark off Old Farleigh Road.

Bus - T33.

Free parking available.

New Addington Walk Route (3 Miles)

Starting in front of the Swimming Pool.

Bus - 64, 314, 464, T31, T32.

Tram - New Addington Line 3.

Parking Pay & Display.

Lloyd Park Walk Route (3 Miles)

A more difficult walk with some hills.

Starting at Lloyd Park Tram Stop.

Tram - Lloyd Park Line 3.

Lloyd Park car park has been closed—Parking limited to around nearby roads.

Norbury Park Walk Route (2¼ Miles)

Starting at Norbury Train Station.

Bus - 50, 109, 255.

Parking limited around nearby roads.

South Norwood Country Park (2 Miles)

Bus - 312, 192.

Tram - Arena Line 2.

Parking free.

Guided walks may be arranged, in advance. Information on any or all of these, may be obtained at the Tourist Information Centre, Croydon Clocktower, or from The Active Lifestyle Team, 'Working for Health Coordinator', Tel No: [REDACTED].

It is better to walk in a group or with a partner, on grounds of safety.

Helen McMullan

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MONKS ORCHARD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

'I wish to become a member of the Monks Orchard Residents' Association'

Name:	Signature:
Address:	
Post Code:	

Please send this completed form to:

DIANE McINERNEY



Thank you for supporting MORA

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