

Monks Orchard Residents' Association

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Croydon

(Non Party)

(Independent)

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NEWSLETTER - Summer 2013



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The Monks Orchard Residents' Association was founded in 1923, and represents approximately 2,000 residents.

Chairman's Comments April 2013

Another AGM over but it did appear we were slightly down on numbers this year which is a pity as we were given very interesting talks by Dr Martin Baggeley - Medical Director of South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and by Dominic Conlin, Director of Strategy and Business Development at Croydon University Hospital. We thank them for their time in attending our meeting.

As you are aware, there are changes forthcoming regarding permitted developments to peoples' homes, making it easier to improve their properties. The original scheme by Eric Pickles MP was to allow home owners to erect extensions which many would say were over-development of the property. There were many representations against this proposal, not least by MORA, and there is now a re-think. A government amendment to the legislation will have been laid down before the House of Lords on 22nd April. We are awaiting sight of these amendments. (Ed. see page 15)

Your scribe attended a radio discussion on Croydon Radio with Andrew Pelling discussing the role of MORA and we covered the previous ill thought out proposals of the change in planning regulations.

Following on from the above you may be aware it has been revealed that some councillors in a northern county have been offering for hire their services to property developers, trading on their inside knowledge of the planning system to obtain these property developers' planning approval all for a consultancy fee of up to £20,000. I would suggest this could be construed as a 'conflict of interest' and possibly bordering on the illegal!

Of great importance to the existence of MORA is to obtain more help; we have been able to attract John Helen as an Area Manager, Sue Winter as a Road Steward, Barbara Turner as Advertising Manager and Vilas Patel to manage the membership database from Derek Ritson and Diane McInerney.

We still desperately need more Road Stewards to deliver the

newsletters and collect subs, without which MORA will fold. If MORA does fold in say 12 months time (which is more than likely) you will lose the influence of MORA on any decisions made by Croydon Council. It only takes a few hours a year, so please contact anyone on the reverse of this newsletter and I will personally visit you at home and explain what MORA is about.

Have a good summer and enjoy any holiday you may be taking.

Dave King
Chairman

Minutes of the 89th 2013 MORA AGM

26th April at St George's Church Hall, ELston Way, Shirley

Dave King, Chair of MORA, opened the meeting and welcomed all those present. These included Gavin Barwell MP, The Mayor Eddy Arram, Cllrs Mike Fisher, Richard Chattergee, Janet Marshall, Avril Slipper, and Adam Kellet. Spring Park Residents' Association was represented by Trevor Ashby and Lesley Godden. Also, the Editor of Shirley Life Marzia Nicodemi-Elikioya was present.



Dave King - MORA Chairman

Apologies were received from Steve O'Connell, Diane McInerney, Christine Ross-Smith and Barbara Turner.

The Minutes of the 88th AGM were approved by a show of hands.

There was a change to the published agenda as Gavin Barwell had child care problems and needed to leave early so spoke first with the Mayor's agreement.

Gavin Barwell thanked everyone for accommodating him, and apologised for disrupting the procedures.

Over the last 12 months he has been attempting to change the perception of Croydon as a leafy suburb, which does not meet the reality of the situation. He has had two successes in that Croydon is to get a better share of police funding, which will mean an additional 117 police officers by 2015, and also there will be a change in educational funding for new school places. Croydon has been allocated £63 million pounds, more than any other local authority. So far he has

not succeeded in changing the way general funding is allocated, but is still trying.

He was pleased that there is to be a new joint venture to redevelop the centre of Croydon and felt it essential that this is used as a catalyst to encourage other companies into the town, and that as many of the jobs generated as possible went to local people.

Gavin also announced that he is to hold a public meeting at the Town Hall on 9th May on Health Services in Croydon, and that he is organising a “litter pick up”, involving as many groups and companies as possible on the weekend 11/12 May.

Gavin then took questions. He was asked if the fact that he had voted against the House of Lords amendment to the changes in the permitted development rights meant that he



Gavin Barwell MP

agreed with the changes. He pointed out that as a PPS he could not vote against the Government without resigning, but stated that he had written to the Planning Minister supporting MORA's position. He was glad to announce that a compromise had been reached in that the Council would inform neighbours of a proposed extension, and if nobody objects the building can go ahead, but if there are any objections full planning permission is needed. He also pointed out that under the existing permitted development rules Councils may apply an Article 4 declaration to prevent building and it is possible that Croydon will do so in conservation areas or where there has already been a lot of development.

One of the audience asked if he could help with Croydon Visual, as they do a lot of good work, but are in danger of closing due to lack of funds. Gavin responded by stating that he had not so far been asked for help but will contact them in the near future to discuss the situation.

A further question from the audience concerned Government policy regarding increasing population density. Gavin felt the increase in housing density was due mainly to two factors; immigration which the Government is trying to reduce, and family breakdown which requires more small units. He commended Croydon Council for their shift in planning policy which will mean new development will be concentrated in the centre of Croydon, while other areas, including Shirley and Monks Orchard, will be protected.

The audience was also concerned about the appeals process for planning. The Government is redefining the National Planning Policy Framework to give greater weight to local planning policy, so the number of successful appeals should diminish.

A question was asked about the improvements needed in the infrastructure.

Gavin pointed out that the school places would increase and that the Hospital will be seeking funding for improvements in A & E. He also felt that concentrating development in the centre of Croydon will make it easier to demonstrate the need for improved infrastructure and he would be supporting any bids made by the Council. Gavin closed by thanking the audience and inviting them to talk to him at the office in Wickham Road if there were any other concerns.

Matters arising from the previous Minutes of the 88th AGM.

Croydon Voluntary Action gave a presentation during which Community First Funding was discussed. MORA had considered seeking funding, however this had to be for a project which met specific criteria, such as increasing activities for young people, or support for older ones, improving community ties, or residents' health, or improving green spaces.

All these would require teams of volunteers, which MORA would be unable to recruit, and there was insufficient time to properly assess the situation.

The parking issues at Mere End still give rise to complaints from residents. Cllr Adam Kellett will report back later in the proceedings.

Chairman's Report

Dave King gave the Chairman's Report which emphasised the real possibility of MORA folding. Many of the current Committee members are reaching ages where health problems are affecting their ability to continue. Dave listed some of the many achievements of MORA over the years, including the prevention of:

- A four lane motorway through Shirley
- A Tesco development in Orchard Way
- Use by Crystal Palace of Ashburton Playing Fields as a training ground
- The loss of nature reserves in Long Lane Woods and Poppy Lane

MORA believes that without the Association residents will lose their voice in the community. As well as losing committee members we have also lost many of the road stewards and area managers responsible for delivering the newsletters and collecting subscriptions. Without new blood MORA is likely to close in the next twelve months.

We have managed to get a few new members, Vilas Patel will now manage the membership database, Barbara Turner is taking over as advertising manager and John Helen is taking on one of the vacant areas as area manager, with Sue Winter taking on the road stewardship for Valley Walk.

Recent activities have included objecting to the development of the Shirley Triangle, situated to the rear of the petrol station adjacent to Shirley Avenue, which is designated as a site of nature conservation importance.

Another major achievement was the acceptance of MORA's written evidence to

the Communities and Local Government Select Committee on the relaxation of the Permitted Development Regulations, which enable extensions to be built without planning permission.

MORA has also been involved with Gavin in getting one of the new lamp standards moved to a position that will not allow unauthorised access to the rear of a property in Watlings Close.

Dave King thanked Nathan Reed for taking on the management of the MORA website.

Dave then announced that 2 more members had volunteered to become road stewards, Doug Kenny and Adrian Winchester.

Treasurer's Report

Terry Greenwood, Treasurer of MORA, showed a slide which was also in the Spring Newsletter. This confirmed that we had a surplus last year of £61. Terry stated that he had started taking on advertisements to fund the newsletter printing and other items of expenditure, and so far it had been quite successful. He will now have assistance on the advertising side and also stressed the need to recruit more road stewards to keep the funds coming in.



Terry Greenwood - Treasurer



Ian Fraser - Planning

Planning Report

Ian Fraser reported on planning applications for the past year. So far MORA has a success rate of 64% in preventing unsuitable developments. To improve the success rate Ian also looked at those applications which were passed despite our objections. Three of these were back garden or back land developments.

A very similar development in Woodmere Avenue was refused permission. The most obvious difference in the applications was the number of letters of objection. 65 neighbours wrote objecting to the Woodmere application, with the other applications only generating an average of 13 each. It would appear that the Council Planning Department takes notice of numbers rather than its own planning policies. Ian offered to assist any MORA member who wished to object, and encouraged them all to act to prevent any further deterioration in their surroundings.

Membership Report

Dave thanked all our road stewards and area managers for their excellent work over the past year. As a result of our road stewards being more proactive in collecting subscriptions, despite the number of members having fallen, the total collected has risen.

Dave showed a slide giving details of those roads where we need additional road stewards and asked for the committee to be informed of any new neighbours moving into the area so that we can drop a copy of the newsletter in and invite them to join.

Shirley Supper Club

The Supper club now has around 50 members and a waiting list to join. Christine Ross-Smith was thanked for all her hard work in arranging the various outings and supper venues. In November she organised a Shirley Community and Charity Christmas Fare, where despite the weather being absolutely dreadful large sums of money were raised for various charities, including Demelza, The Cats Protection, Evalina Children's Hospital and St Christopher's Hospice.

The final trip last year was up to London to see the Christmas Lights, with supper included.



Jean Cook

Election of Committee Members

Jean Cook has decided not to stand again for election to the Committee. She was thanked for all her hard work and presented with a bouquet of flowers.

The positions of Vice Chair, Transport and Highways and Police Liaison are now unfilled. Members were urged again to consider standing for the Committee.

Those considering volunteering were invited to attend a committee meeting,

without committing themselves. Assistance is urgently needed for our Editor and our Planning Officer, as well as Area Managers. Joan Pring has offered to take on Police Liaison. The nominations for remaining members were approved en bloc by a show of hands.

Eddy Arram Mayor of Croydon

Eddy Arram, the Mayor of Croydon thanked MORA for inviting him, saying that MORA was one of the oldest and most active residents associations in Croydon. He praised the Shirley Library, which through its active Work Club had helped people find jobs. He also felt that the youth of Shirley deserved more praise; the Scouts, Guides and the ATC had all received awards for achievements.

He stated that this is also true of Croydon in general, in Croydon College one



Eddy Arram - Mayor of Croydon

Foundation year alone had given 16,000 hours of community work. Croydon Youth had also won the London Youth Games and the Para Youth Games. Croydon has the largest number of volunteers doing all sorts of community work, in any London Borough. One thing Croydon is not good at is shouting about how good we are. We need to celebrate the good things about living in Croydon. He had very much enjoyed his year of being mayor and

thanked everyone for their support.

Security Report

Two members of the Shirley Safer Neighbourhood Team gave a report on issues in the area.

The main focus is on anti-social behaviour centred on the footpath between Burrell Close and Greenview Avenue. This involved youths riding mopeds and general disturbances. Increased patrols were set up. One youth was arrested, and seven were given ASBOs. There was a lack of engagement from the families of the youths and a Dispersal Order was introduced around the area. The amount of anti-social behaviour has decreased, and it is hoped the area covered by the Dispersal Order can be reduced. Three more youths have been warned, one of whom is a brother of one of the earlier trouble makers.

The SNT have been involved in arresting drug dealers under Operation Hawk, with more arrests anticipated. Leaflets are first distributed seeking information which may be given anonymously.

In the past four weeks in Shirley there have been 3 burglaries, 5 Thefts from Motor Vehicles and one Robbery, from a pizza delivery rider. A suspect has been arrested in the last case.

The Team have put in a lot of work and were proud of their efforts. They encouraged members to come to talk to them at any time.

Cllr Mike Fisher Leader of Croydon Council
Mike Fisher apologised for his late arrival,

and thanked MORA for inviting him. He announced that the recycling rate had gone up to 46%, from 16% seven years ago, for which he thanked residents.



Shirley Safer Neighbourhood Team



Cllr Mike Fisher

The Council tax has been put up by an overall rate of 1.2%. Over the last seven years it has only risen by 11%, despite a reduction of 28% in Government funding. He pointed out that if Croydon received the same level of financial support as Lambeth, council tax would be reduced by 96%, and if we had the same as Tower Hamlets he would be giving money back to residents.

He was delighted with the proposed joint £1billion redevelopment of Croydon town centre. Since this was announced commercial property prices have risen by over 10%, and the first speculative office block development for 20 years is now fully let.

He was asked about the large amount of uncollected council tax, and pointed out that the collection rate has been increasing steadily, and is now at its highest ever at an overall rate of 98%. As Croydon has a large tax base it collects in real terms more than many others

Dr Martin Baggaley, Medical Director of The South London and Maudsley Foundation Trust.

Dr Baggaley gave a brief overview of the situation at Bethlem Royal Hospital. There are currently around 300 beds, one third are for Croydon residents, one third for national cases, and one third for forensic patients who have committed an offence. These are the ones likely to give rise to most local concern.

There have been no instances of crimes committed in the local area by any patients. There have been no escapes from River House since it opened.

Patients are granted leave to help them prepare for life back in the community, and is an essential part of their rehabilitation.

There have been 4 instances of absconding off-site, while patients were attending court or an outside hospital, and 8 where the terms of the leave were breached, such as returning late. This is from a total 18,127 instances of leave granted. The Buddi system of electronic tagging, incorporating a GPS system, has greatly reduced the number of absconders.

The Bill Yule Medium Secure Unit was closed following the escape last year of 4 young offenders, and will not be reopening.

In October 2012 there was some patient unrest, which required police intervention. There were no escapes during this period.

There was a newspaper report that a paedophile unit overlooked the football ground. Bethlem has no such unit and the report was totally untrue.

Dr Baggaley assured members that he appreciated their concerns, and hoped he had covered the issues.

There were no questions and Dave King thanked him for his presentation.



Dr Martin Baggaley



Dominic Conlin

Dominic Conlin, Director of Strategy and Business Development, Croydon University Hospital (CUH)

Dominic gave a brief overview of the current situation. CUH has an income of £240 million per year, 70% of which goes on staff costs. It has between 540-590 inpatient beds, with 40 day care beds. There are 3,500 staff in CUH with 800 community staff. This is one of the few trusts that run both the hospital and

community care, which will help ensure a smooth handover.

CUH has a total of 1.2 million patient contacts each year, approx 3,000 per day.

The aim will be to make staff more productive, spending less on non-clinical support staff.

A surprisingly small proportion of the income was spent on the accident and emergency department, considering how much this impacts on patients' perceptions.

The Government demands trusts improve quality, with no overspending, and sustainability for the future. Should services and organisations fail they will be reorganised as not fit for purpose. That must not be allowed to happen in Croydon.

A series of proposals for change are being worked up by clinical groups. The final proposals are not available as yet.

Dominic agreed with the Mayor that we do not do enough to celebrate our successes. He listed a number of areas where CUH has been recognised as doing well, including the National Cancer Patient Survey, the Stroke Unit, and the Sexual Health Unit. The report into the failings in Mid Staffs had shocked many in the NHS, and CUH must not make the same mistakes, and it is clear that there is still much work to do. The in-patient survey shows CUH is one of the lowest in the country for patient satisfaction. The Care Quality Commission has served compliance notices, and much work is being carried out to improve the necessary areas. CUH has achieved well above the national benchmark in harm free care, preventing infections, falls and bed sores.

The proportion of trained nurses on wards will be improved to 70/30, and 11 additional consultants will be recruited. It is clear that changes need to be made in shift patterns.

Improving patient throughput will enhance patient experience, reducing unnecessary delays and making more productive use of facilities.

Dominic ended by urging residents to become Members of Croydon Health

Service where they will have an opportunity to have input into future planning. In response to a question concerning parking at CUH Dominic stated that an additional 50 spaces are to be provided. Parking at CUH is the cheapest of any London hospital, and cheaper than street parking. The money raised is all used for patient services.

Question and Answer Session

There were a number of questions from residents, mostly answered by Mike Fisher.

The cost of translation services last year was £8108, and will be about the same this year.

The Council is looking at introducing more 20mph limits around schools, but the limits need to be enforced.

Back garden developments have been made more difficult, not banned. Should the Council lose an appeal it can be very expensive, so a balance must be found.

Mike Fisher offered to put the enforcement officer in touch with a local resident whose neighbour was apparently using a gymnasium as accommodation.

There are no plans to close either Shirley Library or any local Fire Stations.

The Council is seeking an injunction preventing certain traveller families staying anywhere in Croydon, but the Court may not grant this.

So far as Mike is aware no Councillors have been involved in assisting developers to obtain planning permission.

Cllr Kellett explained that he was still looking into the Mere End parking issue, without success. Should additional yellow lines be put in, this would simply move the problem further into Mere End.

The main development area for Croydon will be the centre of the town, currently mostly shops and offices with an anticipated increase from 1,400 residents to 17,000. This should reduce anti-social behaviour.

A final question concerned dangerous parking in Orchard Grove around school times. Dave King will look into this.

Dave King then thanked guests and members for attending and closed the meeting.



Cllr Adam Kellett

This is an abridged version of the Minutes of the 89th, 2013 MORA AGM. We are not producing a complete textual copy as we have a full audio recording of the proceedings, available if requested from the Editor and which will be saved to an archive disk with all other MORA 2013 information. We archive all minutes of meetings and other items to DVD on a yearly basis. You can obtain a copy by providing a memory stick for the full version [52Mb] by contacting the Editor. The file is too large to send over the internet.

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AN URGENT MESSAGE TO OUR MEMBERS

MORA was established in 1923 and is now coming up to our 90th Year. We have around 2,000 members. It seems on the surface to be an active and successful Residents' Association and we have just had a successful AGM in April. MORA has become, however, like an old friend you take for granted until suddenly they are not there any more. We have been seeking new members for the committee and replacements for Area Manager & Road Steward vacancies for some years now and the matter is becoming desperate.

Some of the (very few) younger members are frantically busy with work and families, the majority are getting much older and are developing health issues which affect their ability to continue with their service to the community. As an example one member has just resigned after many years sterling service at the age of 85.

We have had some recent successes in enlisting three new committee members: Barbara Turner – to take on the Advertising Managers Job from Terry; Vilas Patel – to take over the management of the members' database from Diane & Derek, and John Helen – Committee Member and Area Manager for Area A, managing nine Road Stewards.

We are proud of our past achievements, but we will be unable to continue after this next year unless we can attract fresh blood onto the Committee to help spread the load.

To keep members informed we publish a quarterly newsletter. Over time this has developed into a fairly professional colour magazine. Again this takes a lot of time and effort to produce; we need suggestions for articles and assistance with its production. We also need volunteers to distribute these newsletters and area managers to organise the distribution. Printed copies are received from the printers in pre-boxed quantities for each Area Manager. The Membership Secretary distributes these to Area Managers who then split the quantities for their Road Stewards for them to distribute to members.

We have 8 Area Managers serving 72 Road Steward categories which divide up the MORA Area. The Road Stewards also collect the yearly membership subscription (£4.00 per household, £2.00 for Senior Citizens) and complete a membership card for each member with a retained portion which is returned with the money collected to the Membership Secretary. The details on the membership cards are then used to update the membership database and the fees given to our treasurer for payment into our MORA accounts in order to fund the association's expenses which include the printing costs.

**WE HAVE A NUMBER OF VACANCIES FOR
AREA MANAGERS & ROAD STEWARDS**

Area B Vacancies

Road Steward for Gladeside Nos. 54 to 84 [B1]

Road Steward for Lorne Gardens Nos. 1 to 49 [B4]

Road Steward for Lorne Gardens Nos. 38 to 80 [B5]

Area D Vacancies:

Area Manager to support six existing Road Stewards

Area E Vacancies:

Area Manager to support four existing Road Stewards, also,
Road Steward for Shirley Avenue [E2]

WE ALSO NEED SUPPORT FOR:

Our Planning Officer – Ian Fraser – to help with research and changes to planning law, preparation of objection letters and also to assist in representation on the Shirley Planning Forum.

Our Editor – Derek Ritson – to assist as an editorial team to put articles and items together for compilation of the quarterly newsletter.

Without help, these two important posts are likely to become vacant at the 2014 AGM with dire consequences for MORA.

Anyone willing to help please contact one of the committee members or email monksorchardweb@btinternet.com

The Localism Act gives residents and volunteers the opportunity to shape the community and contribute to planning policy. While we are members of the Shirley Planning Forum our Planning Officer – Ian Fraser - needs further help and support, especially if the committee is even further reduced.

You may feel that we are crying wolf again and nothing much will change, that we will somehow stagger on as we have in the past. This time, however, the situation is much more serious. We have only one year to save MORA. During that year, if you decide you can help, we will mentor and assist you to use your talents and fresh ideas to serve a vital part of the community in which you live.

With the likely legislation to relax permitted development rights for homeowners, will you be aware of your rights and be prepared to object to proposed developments on 50% of the curtilage of land adjacent to your property? Without MORA, you would have no one to help or represent you.

If we get no help, 2014's AGM will be a Special General Meeting to wind up MORA. *Is this what you really want?*

Planning report

The recent local election resulted in surprise wins for the UKIP. Many voters claimed that the government had not listened to their views. From a planning point of view, readers may have some respect for these opinions.

MORA is convinced that the proposal to change permitted development planning law will permanently degrade and change the character of Monks Orchard. Permitted development proposals allow new single storey rear extensions to be built up to 8m deep without planning permission. The new rules will allow outbuildings to be built which utilise up to 50% of the total curtilage. Examples of some local permitted developments are illustrated. These developments do no credit to the developer, the government or our Local Authority who are now forced to approve permitted development applications.

MORA responded to a government consultation on these proposals. NO summary of the public's conclusions was available to MP's for debate. The public's concerns were NOT assessed by Parliament.

'The brevity of the Government's recently published seven page summary of 1178 detailed responses endorses the view that they are not listening to the view of the people affected by this changing law. The level of respect that the Government hold for voters, responding individuals, local authorities and professional organisations is negligible'.

The summary of the consultation was not made available until the parliament was prorogued prior to the State Opening and the Queens Speech. The summary, although very short, was delayed for 5 months since the close of consultation. Nick Bowles reported in January 2013 that there had been 1,400 responses. In May 2013, the report stated there were 1,178 responses. Where are the missing 122 documents? Would this have altered the government's summary?



Example of existing Permitted Development at 19 Ashburton Rd

MORA have analysed this summary and have created a simple chart to illustrate the public's responses to the 10 questions which were asked by the government. These questions are summarised as:

Q1 *Should the maximum depth for rear extensions be increased to 8m for detached houses, and 6m for any other type of house?*

Q2 *Are there any changes which should be made to convert garages for accommodation?*

Q3 *Should shops and professional/financial services establishments be able to extend their premises by up to 100m², provided that this does not increase the floor space by more than 50%?*

Q4 *Should shops and professional/financial services establishments be able to build up to the boundary of the premises, except where the boundary is with a residential property, when a 2m gap should be left?*

Q5 *Should offices be able to extend their premises by up to 100m², provided that this does not increase the floor space by more than 50%?*

Q6 *Should new industrial buildings of up to 200m² be permitted within the curtilage of existing industrial buildings and warehouses, provided that this does not increase the floor space by more than 50%?*

Q7 *Should permitted development rights be in place for a period of three years?*

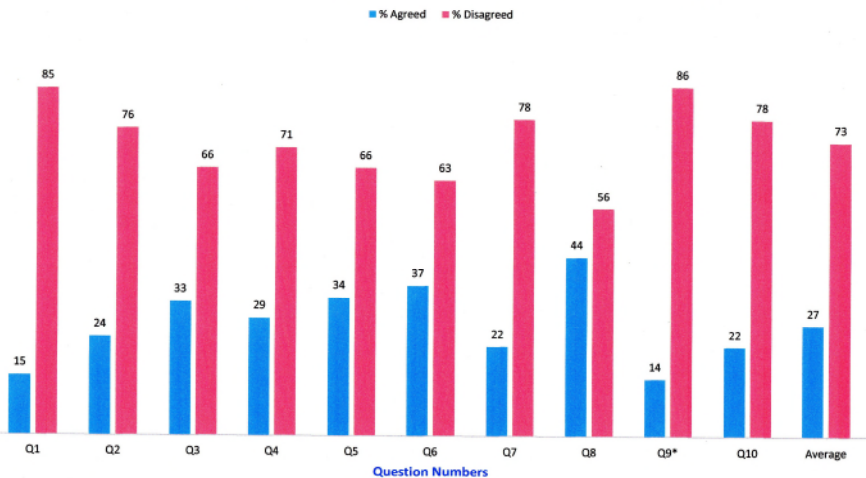
Q8 *Should developments be completed by the end of the three year period?*

Q9* *Should Sites of Special Scientific Interest be excluded from the changes to permitted development rights?*

Q10 *Should approval for electronic communications equipment be removed for a period of 5 years?*

Communities & Local Government

Permitted Development Consultation - Response Summary



(*) Question No. 9 was asked in the negative. All other questions were asked as a positive. To assess whether the proposed scheme is or is not acceptable to the public, the response to question 9 has been reversed to maintain continuity.

The Government have proposed that there should be a NEW NEIGHBOURS CONSULTATION SCHEME which will **ONLY** accept objections from neighbours whose boundaries abut the proposed development. It is implied that neighbours will **ONLY** be allowed to object to these permitted developments on the grounds of loss of amenity. More distant neighbours and other interested parties and Residents' Associations, will **NOT** be given the opportunity to comment on **ANY** aspect of the development, including **compliance with the character of the area**, compliance with the **Unitary Development Plan or the National Planning Policy Framework**. These planning policies are totally ignored by the current and the proposed permitted development system. *If generous size limitations are complied with, the developer will be permitted to build almost any single storey development. The Local Authority will be forced to accept permitted development applications that would have been unacceptable under normal planning law.*

The Governments 'solution' does NOT address the question, - 'should the depth of rear extensions be doubled under permitted development rules?' **A resounding 85% of respondents said NO. THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD RESPECT THIS VIEW.** The response to all the questions resulted in a statistical damnation of the new proposed permitted development scheme.

The AVERAGE LEVEL OF DISAGREEMENT of all respondents to the ten questions was 73% within a range of 85% and 56%. The average level of APPROVAL to the 10 questions was just 27% within a range of 15% and 44%. MORA can find NO LOGICAL REASON FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT THE PRINCIPAL OF PERMITTED DEVELOPMENTS IN EITHER THE ORIGINAL OR THE MODIFIED FORM.

Despite the overwhelming rejection of the proposals by the respondents to the consultation, it would appear that Mr Pickles has bulldozed his proposals through Parliament and has laid Secondary Legislation before parliament on 9th May 2013 so amending the existing Permitted Development rights.

In a letter to Members of Parliament, Mr Pickles stated that “*Uncontroversial improvements are fast-tracked*”.

We agree, BUT uncontroversial improvements associated with normal planning applications ARE ALREADY FAST TRACKED.

They are also subjected to a wider democratic process and provide greater scrutiny to assess the suitability of the plans within the wider environment. They also assess how the development will affect the amenities of the neighbours in the area and appropriate compliance with other



Another existing permitted development in our Ashburton Ward.

Local Authority policies. The normal planning system, when applied correctly, additionally affords a degree of control and protection to neighbours, the local community generally and local wildlife. **Mr Pickles' letter also states that “*It builds consensus: it encourages homeowners to talk informally to their neighbours in advance*”. Consensus will NOT be built if amenity, character and the protection of the area are lost.**

Our members should bear in mind that the government are proposing to double the potential maximum size of permitted developments and allow up to 50% of the curtilage of a dwelling to be built on,

(i.e. if the back garden area equals the area of the front garden, it would be possible to completely cover the rear garden with development) which will result in an increase in the number of effectively uncontrolled developments!

Permitted developments include structures such as gymnasiums which can be misused to give additional illegal and dangerous living accommodation.

It has been reported that many such developments have been used as living accommodation. These have been nicknamed as “beds in sheds”.

Mr Pickles states: *“Neighbours’ amenity is protected, with the council and councillors acting as independent arbiters”*. Our photographs demonstrate that **this is not the case**. Mr Pickles concedes that his modified proposals will now consider if *“the development will have an unacceptable impact on neighbours’ amenity”*, **BUT** he implies that this is the only topic which the council will be allowed to consider. **Neighbours’ amenity is one single item of many that need careful consideration.**

Mr Pickles also states that: *“It saves homeowners money”*. We would like to remind Mr Pickles that someone (perhaps other Council Tax payers) will have to pay for the supply of these free facilities and local government’s time by additional taxation. Only those changing the character of the area and destroying the amenities of the



**Permitted Development
view from the adjacent garden**

area and those disregarding neighbours’ rights will save money. This additional taxation and loss of rights does not seem to be fair to the rest of society! An additional claim of Mr Pickles is that: *“It is consistent with growth and with localism”*. **MORA believes that this scheme is not consistent with localism as only adjacent neighbours will be able to object.** Residents, Associations and ‘Place’ Forums (who have experience and knowledge of planning issues) will be excluded from the decision process. **These plans are NOT constructive as claimed by Mr Pickles. Planning decisions should be controlled through the established democratic process and the existing planning system should be used to control, preserve and retain the best living standards.**

The proposed permitted planning system will support black market developers who accept cash in hand deals. The financial benefits of development growth will thus be denied to society generally.

The most damaging concern is that parliament is now debating legislation without adequate knowledge of the consultation results. This consultation was reduced from the promised 8 weeks to 6 weeks, and closed on the 24th December when the public were busy preparing for Christmas. The Government are definitely not listening.

Readers will appreciate that MORA strongly disagrees with the proposals.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/extending-permitted-development-rights-for-homeowners-and-businesses-technical-consultation>

Croydon Cats Protection

The Croydon Branch of Cats Protection, originally known as Cats Protection League, began in November 1981, when around a dozen of us got together as volunteers to try and do what we could to help the unwanted and stray cats in our area. The branch was set up as part of the nationwide Cats Protection League, which had become a registered charity in 1928 and whose headquarters



are now at Chelgate, Sussex. We soon realised the enormity of the task we had taken on, particularly in respect of fundraising, to bring in enough money to help with foster care and pay vet bills etc. in addition to the actual hands on care of the cats which needed help, of which there were many. Since then, however, the branch has grown to now become the largest in the country, with all the still on going work continuing to be carried out by dedicated volunteers. Testimony to this is the fact that last year the branch homed 436 cats and kittens as well as helping many people on low incomes with the cost of neutering their cats and kittens.



In addition to helping cats that come in directly through the public, trapping and neutering feral cats is also carried out by the branch. This often supported by people

living near the feral colonies, who agree to feed donated food to the cats once they are returned. It means that ultimately the colony will cease as, of course, the cats can no longer reproduce. It is not Cats Protection policy to put a cat to sleep unless it is so ill it is not likely to survive.

During the branch's first eight years or so we, as a family, fostered virtually non-stop, cats who were awaiting new homes. There were sad times, as some cats and kittens arrived in a very poor and neglected condition and were invariably very frightened. However, with lots of tender loving care we were, over the years, very successful in preparing them for new homes. Of course, it was a wrench when they moved on but we had to accept that this was all part of rescue and rehabilitation work. I have to say there were some who did stay on to become permanent members of our household.

All our foster cats were very special with their stories to tell but there have been those which, for one reason or another, have been especially memorable. One of these was Henry. Prior to coming into our branch he

had sat for many weeks by a park bench, clearly abandoned. His 'cauliflower' ears, apparently caused by a neglected infection, were in a dreadful state. One ear had to be amputated straight away and an operation on his other ear soon followed. It was because his mangled ears resembled those of some boxers that he was named after Sir Henry Cooper. Henry hit the local newspaper headlines when his namesake, Sir Henry, very kindly agreed to be photographed with him on behalf of the branch and the work they were doing. Henry finally remained with our family. We know that his operations caused him a lot of pain but despite that and his previous experience he bore no grudge and was as loving to us as was possible and an absolute star. Like Sir Henry he has now passed away but, as with Sir Henry, he was a character never to be forgotten.



Tragically, more animals are now being abandoned making the work of all animal charities that much more difficult. Fundraising has always been important and now even more so. Croydon branch runs 8 bazaars through the year and, importantly, runs a shop in High Street, Purley, a key contributor. New members are always welcome and any assistance that can be offered is extremely appreciated. Without its members and the roles that are played by the volunteers the branch would not exist. Anyone interested in joining or helping in some way can ring the Helpline on [REDACTED].

Joan Pring.

大家好，这是来自中国的问候

Greetings from China - Update

Much has occurred in Chongqing since I last wrote to you about my Chinese experience. The cold, dry winter has quickly given way to warm and damp weather and the air is already incredibly humid. Spring is fleeting in Chongqing. Whilst I am enjoying leaving my coat and jumper at home, many Chinese people are still wearing thick layers, even in temperatures over 25 degrees.

China has celebrated three festivals since my last correspondence; Chinese New Year, the Dragon Boat Festival and Tomb Sweeping Day.

I spent Chinese New Year's eve with my boyfriend's family, sharing a small



feast and watching the Spring Festival gala show, which is broadcast across the country. Crab, dumplings and pigs ears were just a few of the dishes enjoyed. Spring Festival is one of the only times of the year when the whole of China shuts down and takes a holiday, which wreaks havoc on all forms of transportation as people return to their hometowns. The Dragon Boat Festival and Tomb

Sweeping Day are smaller events in the Chinese calendar but significant nonetheless. To celebrate the former, people eat sweet dumplings called tang yuan, which are made of glutinous rice and served in a sweet soup. Large crowds gather in the streets to watch children perform dragon dances. Tomb Sweeping Day is a more somber affair when families gather together to remember their deceased. Tombs are traditionally swept clean and paper money is burnt to send to their loved ones.

Though I have been busy teaching I have also had time to enjoy some local attractions. One such attraction is the hot spring in Tianchi. Here there are several pools of varying temperatures in which you can relax and absorb the beautiful and calming surroundings. One of the pools is home to qin qin yu or 'nibble fish', which diligently nip away at your dead skin. This is said to improve your metabolism and leave your skin with a healthy glow.

One rather foggy day I ventured as far as the Bamboo Forest in Yongchuan, which was the film set for 'House of Flying Daggers'. This vast forest covers several mountains and visitors can walk along a steep, old stone wall and lose themselves in the magic of the trees.

Last month I was one of two hundred guests at a 50th birthday party, which was held at an impressive restaurant in the centre of Chongqing. The lady was presented with calligraphy on a scroll, wishing her happiness and success for the rest of her life. I was also invited on stage to perform a short piece on the piccolo. There were twenty tables laden with elaborate dishes including bullfrog, bamboo and spicy intestine and there were copious amounts of alcohol. Guests barely touched the food but instead busied themselves with conversation and toasts as is customary in China. Towards the end of the evening birthday cake was brought to each table, not to be eaten but to be smeared on each other's faces.

My time in China is proving to be so wonderful that I plan to stay another year and perhaps study Chinese at university alongside working.

Helen Etheridge



A FILM CREW VISITS SHIRLEY

Early on the morning of 29th April, Valley Walk awakened to the arrival of the crew of the company 'Another Film Co.' They were there to film a

new commercial on behalf of Natwest Bank. It was to be about a bride on her wedding day, with her father who is constantly paying the costs associated with the 'big day'.

The film crew set up all the gear in the front garden of 7 Valley Walk and eventually started filming take after take of a couple of actors delivering cleaned garments for the wedding. The camera on rails followed each take until – as you say – the Director was happy with



what was 'in the can.' It was then onto another set inside the house.

According to the company's Location Manager it's customary, in a situation such as this, to offer a donation to the local residents' association,

to compensate a little for any disturbance which may affect residents living nearby. Thanks must go to Valley Walk's road steward, Sue Winter, for providing MORA's contact details. In the event, MORA was pleased to be offered £100.

Despite the early hour our intrepid Editor, Derek Ritson, visited the location and managed to capture some of the film crew's activities.

Watch the finished advert on the You Tube Natwest Video Channel:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SwRvniu3Qo0>.

Croydon Symphonic Band

On 10th July Croydon Symphonic Band will be performing its 40th anniversary concert at Fairfield Concert Hall and we have chosen some of the best music we have performed over the years. The programme will include a Symphonic Suite from 'Star Wars' by John Williams, Louis Prima's 'Sing Sing Sing', a selection by George Gershwin, a suite from Prokofieff's 'Romeo & Juliet', music by Nigel Hess and much much more!



Croydon Symphonic Band

Conductor: David Cox *nchf* National Festival, Community Wind Band
Birmingham Conservatoire, Adrian Boult Hall 11th April 2010

CSB is an amateur community band with 50 members/players from Croydon and surrounding areas and we are keen to make the concert a big success by inviting as many members of the local community as we can. Box office prices are £10 for adults and £6 for concessions but we can make tickets available to your members @ £9 for adults and £5.50 for concessions. This offer is not available at the Fairfield box office but only by either telephoning Derek Reeves on [REDACTED] or emailing on [REDACTED] and mentioning the name of your Association.

Shirley Open Gardens Weekend 29th and 30th June 2013



Supporting Shirley Neighbourhood Care
Look out for green trail and information maps
available from local shops, G.P. surgeries, and
libraries in the area.

Admissions to all gardens by voluntary donation

Shirley Neighbourhood Care Scheme
Shirley Methodist Church
Eldon Ave Croydon CR0 8SD [REDACTED]
Email : snc@cnca.org.uk



Help us contain this pest

Oak processionary moth

The oak processionary moth, a native of mainland Europe, has been found breeding on oak trees in parts of London and in the Pangbourne area of West Berkshire. Its caterpillars feed on oak leaves and produce silken nests on the trunks and branches of affected trees. As well as seriously damaging our oak trees, the caterpillars can pose a risk to human and animal health.



Caterpillars of the oak processionary moth on the branch of an oak tree.



A silken nest on the trunk of an oak tree.

Tiny hairs from these caterpillars can be blown on the wind and cause itching skin lesions and, less commonly, sore throats and eye problems. If you think you may have been exposed and have an itching skin rash and/or conjunctivitis or other symptoms, contact your GP or call NHS 111.

If you are involved in tree work and are planning to fell or prune oak trees in any of the outbreak areas, please contact our Plant Health team for advice on safe disposal of the material. Call the team on 0131 314 6414 or email them at: plant.health@forestry.gsi.gov.uk.

If you think you have seen the caterpillars or one of their nests or webs, use our Tree Alert web form or app available at www.forestry.gov.uk/oakprocessionarymoth to report it to us. Alternatively, you may also get in touch with your local council contact (below):

Richard Edwards (Trees & Woodlands Officer)
Croydon Council, e-mail: parks@croydon.gov.uk
Tel: 0208 726 6000 xtn. 62387

Remember: this species is most likely to be seen on oak trees (see photographs).

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU –

DO NOT touch the caterpillars or nests.

DO NOT try to deal with them yourself. Effective treatment requires specialist skills and careful timing. Contact with nests or caterpillars can endanger your health.

WARN children not to touch caterpillars or nests.
KEEP pets away.



www.forestry.gov.uk/oakprocessionarymoth



Bethlem Royal Hospital Bowls Club

Monks Orchard Road BR3 3BX

Would you like to learn how to play bowls?

Yes? Then come to our...

Free Open Day

Sun 23rd June 2013 2pm

Casual clothing is acceptable, but please bring flat soled shoes or trainers. You can borrow a set of bowls and our members will give you instruction and guidance

If you decide to give it a try after our open day, we offer a one month's free trial period with as much instruction as you think you need

The club was formed in 1936 and celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2011. We are a mixed private club open to the community

There is a lovely club house in a beautiful woodland setting, inside the grounds of the hospital. We have a licensed bar, and hold regular social events such as bingo and quiz nights

We are a long way inside the grounds, so please follow the signs to the bowls car park. If you cannot get to the open day but are still interested you can phone Tony on [REDACTED]

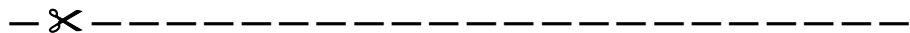
[REDACTED] and we can arrange a time to show you around and answer your questions

We Look Forward To Meeting You!

www.bethlembowlsclub.co.uk

MORA COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2013-2014

Chairman	Dave King	
Secretary	Mary Evans	
Treasurer	Terry Greenwood	
Planning Officer	Ian Fraser	
Membership Secretary	Diane McInerney	
Editor	Derek Ritson	
Advertising Manager	Barbara Turner	
Primary Care	Mercia Nash	
Social Secretary	Christine Ross-Smith	
Transport & Highways	Vacancy	-
Ward Panel & Security	Joan Pring	
Trees & Open Spaces	Sue & Martyn Buchanan	
Membership Database	Vilas Patel	
	{ Michael Nash	
Committee Members and	{ Patricia Turner	
Area Managers	{ Anne Horton	
	{ John Helen	



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
[Redacted]

Thank you for supporting MORA.

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