

Monks Orchard Residents' Association

www.monks-orchard-web.org.uk
email: monksorchardweb@btinternet.com

Croydon

(Non Party)

(Independent)

NEWSLETTER - WINTER 2005

Merry Christmas



*And a Happy New Year
To All Our Members!*

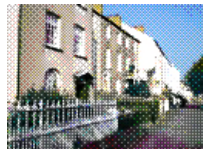
The Monks Orchard Residents' Association was founded in 1923, and represents 2,500 residents.

Chairman's Comment

The Executive Committee wishes members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and thanks them for their continued support. Grateful thanks are offered to Area Managers and Road Stewards that form the leading edge of the Association. May the festive season be a time of peace, reflection and contentment for us all?

Council Tax Protest

At the Monks Orchard Residents' Association Annual General Meeting in March, 2004 members unanimously endorsed a proposal to support the aims of IsItFair, a nationwide, non-political group that campaigns to have the Council Tax abolished and replaced by a system based on the ability to pay. It was recognised that the main threat to the members of our community is that of massive rises in local taxation. Council Tax has more than doubled over the past ten years, rising at more than three times the rate of inflation, which is just the beginning of a steep change in the rate of increase. There will almost certainly be double-digit rises in each of the next two years, due to the redistribution of government grants, followed by a revaluation of properties in 2007, which in many areas will mean many residents moving up a Council Tax band. On top of these there will be the increase in council levies for the year.



The IsItFair campaign, started by an indefatigable pensioner called Christine Melsom, continues to attract support. A number of blameless citizens of high social standing have been put in prison because they refused to continue to pay this unfair tax based on the value of their property and no relationship to their income. The latest stage in the campaign was to ask M.P.s. to present petitions in Parliament asking for the existing system to be scrapped and replaced by a fairer system based on the ability to pay. Responding to the wishes of members, MORA collected signatures for the petition and in a very short time collected almost 400 but many more could have been obtained if more time had been available. Interestingly, very few residents declined to append their signatures to the petition. Copies of the petition were displayed in local shops and members of the Executive Committee went door to door calling on residents, a laborious and time consuming task but very rewarding. When increases in local taxes are mentioned some residents remain complacent but others get very worked up and this results in a lengthy debate. The lack of time and limited number of canvassers available prevented personal calls to all our members, but a big thank you to all who took part by appending their signatures to the petition.

MORA contacted Andrew Pelling our Member of Parliament to ask if he would agree to support and represent his constituents by presenting the petition from the floor of the House. A positive response was received stating that although he had reservations he would be happy to present a petition signed by Croydon Central constituents.

The main phase of this particular IsItFair Council Tax protest campaign action has now been completed. Petitions were run in over 200 constituencies and, at the latest count, 67 MPs have agreed to present it. For those that like greater detail the breakdown is as follows; 45 Conservative, 8 Labour and 14 Liberal Democrats. Based on the number of seats each of the main political parties holds in Parliament, the totals work out at almost 23% of the Conservatives, more than 22% of the Liberal Democrats and just over 2% of Labour MPs have agreed to present the petition. To date 21,358 signatures have been collected and more are likely to be added. All we can do now is to await the response received by the petitions, details of which will be reported as soon as it becomes available.

Resisting The Planners



The new phrase 'Nimby' can now be found in modern dictionaries, it is an acronym for 'not in my backyard'. It has become a defiled term much used by politicians, councillors, developers and town planners to vilify a person who seeks to resist inappropriate and unwanted developments in his or her area. Undesirable developments can include poorly designed, high density or backland developments, manufacturing plants, prisons and secure units. By characterising those objecting to an unsuitable planning proposals as 'Nimby's' developers and bureaucrats aim to dismiss genuine community concerns about perfectly reasonable issues such as design, construction, density, operation and impact on the local community and infrastructure.

Inappropriate, unwelcome, dangerous or unpleasant features are usually imposed on a neighborhood by developers in the name of greed and council planners keen to satisfy targets imposed by central government. Normally neither the developers nor the council planners have, or wish to have, any understanding of the character and nature of the area and the potential impact on the local community. Planning Officers employed by the Council often do not remain in the area long enough to see the result of their actions and the problems created.

Problems resulting from unsuitable developments such as the lack of transport, schools, medical facilities are left for others to deal with after resident's objections have been constrained or dismissed as 'Nimbyism' and planning permission given. Many important issues that have the potential to blight the lives of residents living nearby, for example, fume emissions, noise, road safety, security, and flooding are usually of no direct concern to the local



planners. Usually, these problems only come to notice when residents suffering from the effects complain and it is then left for other services to deal with.

It cannot be considered unreasonable for local residents to want to defend the special character, of the area in which they have chosen to live. They cannot be expected to say 'what a good idea' to a proposal that would destroy their privacy, amenities and if the proposal is refused environment and bring about a massive a reduction in the value the property they have worked for years to purchase. No consideration or advice is given to the house owner who may be trying to prevent a high-density development being erected nearby or, on a larger scale, the inhabitants of a small peaceful rural village that is to be surrounded by many thousand new homes without full consideration of the impact on the community or the local infrastructure. It is unacceptable that Council policy permits Planning Officers to discuss and offer an opinion on a planning application with the applicant but prevents any helpful information being provided to the objectors.

Residents wishing to raise objections to an unacceptable planning application will find that they have to do so in a very limited time scale, usually less than three weeks, providing they receive or are shown a copy of the letter informing them of the application. During this time the application and plans have to be viewed, the site visited and considered representations prepared.

The Development Control Committee considers the largest and most contentious applications. To be viewed as contentious six or more letters of objection have to be submitted or an objection made by the local Residents Association or by a Ward Councillor, A number of objectors may attend the meeting determined to speak against an unwanted development but only one can be nominated from amongst them to speak on their behalf.

The procedure that is heavily weighted against the complainants is as follows:

- a) The Planning Officers give a brief presentation showing relevant slides and express why they are supporting the application.
- b) The applicants or agent is then given the opportunity to speak for three minutes. Normally they have had the benefit of help and advice from the Planning Officers in preparing the application and will be familiar with planning regulations.
- c) The nominated representative speaking on behalf of all the objectors is then invited to address the meeting for maximum of three minutes. This small amount of time is seldom sufficient to outline all the potential problems associated with a complex development. In order to maximise the opportunity thought and preparation is necessary to ensure all the pertinent planning objections are included.
- d) A supporter of the application is then invited to address the meeting for maximum of three minutes

- e) The Ward Councillor who has made a referral is then invited to speak for maximum of five minutes.

Finally the members of the committee debate the item and when it comes to the vote the members usually divide on party lines. Experience shows that a recommendation to grant permission made by the Planning Officers is difficult to overturn. Furthermore, if the proposal is refused, the applicant is able to appeal to the Secretary of State, but objectors do not have this right if an unwanted development is granted planning permission.



Despite the numerous constraints and hurdles that need to be surmounted it is possible to successfully oppose an unwanted and inappropriate planning proposal. The onus is on the Council to provide reasons as to why it is essential for the development to go ahead. The first essential thing to do is to circulate the details of the proposal to others in the neighbourhood who may be unaware of the threat. Organise a meeting of those wishing to oppose the development and agree a common approach. Teamwork gets results and this is vital because developers can submit repeated applications and every one has to be inspected and opposed. Petitions and individual letters of objection made without any guidance or basic knowledge of the planning procedure are seldom effective. Use publicity and make every possible effort to confront the bureaucrats. Finally write detailed letters that clearly point out the planning issues and inappropriateness of the proposals. Local residents will have a greater knowledge of the proposed site than the Planning Officers and must present this effectively. Many letters of objection sent by individuals express anger and personal concern but only those that address planning issues will be taken into account.

The Government is examining proposals that aim to speed-up and simplify the planning system and to give more power to local people. Among the proposals is to introduce a scheme that will effectively allow neighbours to become your Planning Committee. It will be interesting to follow the progress of these proposals which will be reported in this newsletter.

MORA has gained a working knowledge of the Unitary Development Plan and of planning regulations that enables it to offer advice and help to those under threat by developers and planners. No other local group is able to give unbiased advice, free of charge and is able to draw on the advice of experts. This has made it possible to prevent or modify a number of recent applications based on greed as opposed to the good of the community. Many residents hold the opinion that it will never happen to them but when it does they demand effective action and often do not know where to turn for help. This is one of the reasons residents band together to form an association to assist and support one another when their homes or surroundings come under threat.

Planning Report



129-131 The Glade

The application for the demolition of the existing two bungalows at 129 & 131 The Glade and the erection of a terrace of a two storey building with accommodation in roof space comprising 7 flats and 5 houses; was refused permission at the Development Control Meeting of 8th September. The 157 Local residents and MORA representation, with backing from Local Councillors resulted in an overwhelming objection to the proposal and the Development Control Meeting rejected the proposal virtually unanimously. This result shows that when local residents make the effort, a planning proposal can be successfully challenged. However, this is not likely to be the end of the story; the developer is very likely working away on a new, equally unacceptable proposal!

Land at Glade Gardens

We have now established that the reason for withdrawal of this application was based on an objection raised that the Land was designated "Local Open Land" and therefore the Planning Departments recommendation was invalid. The council then engaged the "The Policy and Strategy Team" to consider whether the site is designated LOL or should be re-designated for development. MORA, on behalf of local residents', has requested the planning department to inform us of any change of designation and the reasons for doing so. Council officers are still considering the proposal in relation to the Local Open Land (LOL) policies of the UDP and draft Croydon Plan. As of going to print, the result of their deliberations have not been made public. We can report that the developer has erected fencing around the site to prevent access by local residents. The local press have given coverage to the objectors on two successive weeks.

66 Tower View

As mentioned in the last newsletter, an application was made for outline planning permission for the demolition of 66 Tower View and the erection of 4 four bedroom semi-detached houses with detached garages with access from Edgewood Green and vehicular access from Tower View. This application was refused on 11/10/2005. The application was opposed by local residents who appended their names to a petition and mailed letters of objection. MORA objected to the proposal because of the lack of detail contained in the drawings showing the proposed positioning of the houses on the site, the means of access and would also have resulted in an excessive provision of on-site car parking spaces.

18 Bywood Ave (Fish & Chip Shop)

The local residents continue to be aggravated by acrid smells. We await a report on the results of the petition being organised by our local MP and Councillors.

15 Gladeside

An application for change of use of residential property for use as a residential care home for the elderly and erection of single storey side/rear extension was withdrawn due to a realisation that the garage — which was part of the proposal — was not large enough for habitable premises. We await the outcome of the planning departments recommendation.

New Planning Applications:

176-178 Orchard Way

Application for Outline planning permission for demolition of existing buildings and the erection of 14 two bed flats with provision of associated car parking and amenity space. We are currently requesting copies of proposals.

81-83 Orchard Avenue & 2 High Trees

Land Investments and Development have submitted a new application for planning permission for the site of 81- 83 Orchard Avenue and 2 High Trees. The proposal is to demolish the buildings at 81 and 83 and to erect 4 two storey four bedroom houses with accommodation in roof space plus 1 detached two bedroom bungalow: formation of vehicular accesses and provision of associated parking. Despite a long hard fought campaign by local residents supported by MORA, a previous application for the development of this site gained the necessary permission. The new application is for the development of a smaller area because of the change of mind by the owners of the corner site at 79 Orchard Avenue.

89B Gladeside

The owners of 89b Gladeside have submitted an application for planning permission to demolish the existing building and erect 4 three bedroom terraced houses and provision of associated parking. This is a large back land site extending from Gladeside to Ashburton Fields.

72 The Glade [Telecommunications Mast]

A planning application has been submitted by O2 for the siting of a 12.5 metres high telecommunication mast with ancillary equipment cabinet outside 72 The Glade, fronting Greenview Avenue. The proposal is to modify the top of existing mast and increase its output power for the new G3 mobile phone technology. Local residents supported by MORA objected to the proposal on the grounds of the danger to health because of its close proximity to nearby dwellings, which may, in the future, contain young children. This claim was overruled because the Government has advised local authorities responsible for decision making that providing the siting of the mast is not considered unsightly or cause obstruction it should not be rejected on the grounds of danger to health. MORA will continue to support residents by submitting objections but the growth in modern mobile phone technology will increase the pressure for additional masts to be erected in Monks Orchard.

Bethlem Building Work

Construction work is due to start on 12th September for a new 89-bed unit at Bethlem Royal Hospital.

The programme of work is scheduled to take two years to complete. I would like to assure you that our main contractors, Interserve, will make every effort to minimise any inconvenience to immediate neighbours and hospital patients during this period.

Work will take place on weekdays between the hours of 8am and 6pm. There will be a special entrance for construction traffic on Monks Orchard Road, close to the junction with Wickham Road. Our contractors will have a temporary site compound within the hospital grounds with additional 24-hour security arrangements.

Should you experience any inconvenience during this time, please contact Jane Wearne or Eddie Simmons of our Project Management Team on [REDACTED].

Stuart Bell
Chief Executive
South London and Maudsley NHS Trust

Police Liaison/Security



At my latest Neighbourhood Watch Police Meeting on Wednesday 19th October, a long discussion was held on the incident in Parkfields of a 17 year old man who was stabbed to death. As was expected, a number of stressed elderly people are very traumatised by the event, especially those who live close to the park. Inspector Alec Stowe has contacted the Council requesting that fencing is checked and gates are locked at night by the Park Warden, after the Dog Patrol has ended. He will also meet with the Council Parks Department to make enquiries on the possibility of closing off the “public footpath” in Freshfields as a deterrent to school pupils using it and gathering in large numbers, causing disturbance to residents in the area. Inspector Stowe will also put forward an order for a Knife Amnesty to be implemented.

Graffiti has been noted in Shirley Oaks Road. The trees by the Tabernacle provide cover for groups of people using drugs in the area late in the evening. Evidence of drug taking paraphernalia has been discovered under the trees. The Council have been informed and all of the debris will be removed.

A Professional Comedy Club Group are currently engaged in performing a “Play on Gang Culture” in local schools to spread awareness of the dangers and damaging lasting effects of this unacceptable activity. The ASBO (Anti-Social Behaviour Order) is still ongoing from 2003 for under 16 offenders

discovered out alone after 9.00pm, and Bromley is being contacted on this problem, as young people from that borough have been apprehended in this area.

MORA were informed that the traffic lights at Wickham Road Junction are to be re-aligned owing to congestion and danger. We hope that this will happen in the very near future, as it has been the cause of many problems.

Lastly, a direct line to the Addington Police Station will be up and running next month. The Telephone numbers will be announced in the local press.

Jean Cook
Police Liaison & Security

Crime Alerts

Offence	Location	Date	Method
Robbery of the Person	Orchard Avenue	17/10/2005	Victim walking home after leaving bus, three teenage black males, one wearing a red jumper, approached from behind, pushed her to the ground then stole bag.
Criminal Damage of Motor Vehicle	Wickham Road	16/10/2005	Damage by person unknown.
Burglary Dwelling	Wickham Road	05/10/2005	Suspects forced entry to premises posing as delivery personnel, kicked punched and threatened victim in order to find location of cash. Entered LOFT area and stole in excess of eight thousand pounds. Four arrests have been made.
Criminal Damage	Regency Walk	11/10/2005	Persons unknown cracking door glass with a stone, no entry gained
Robbery of the Person	Cheston Avenue	10/10/2005	Victim punched in the face and property stolen.
Criminal Damage	Kempton Walk	24/09/2005	Object thrown at exterior wall. Plastic cladding damaged.

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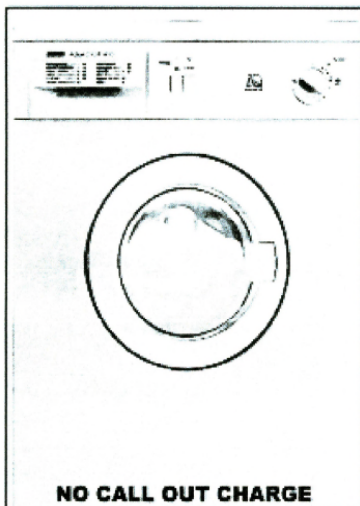
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Scam Warnings



Latest Email Information

A new phishing method is targeting Yahoo users by recording their name and password while logging them onto a legitimate area of the portal. Users receive an instant message or email purporting to be from a friend wanting to show them photos. The message has a link to a phishing site, which records the users ID and password while forwarding the user to the real Yahoo site. The actual phishing site is hosted in free web space provided by Yahoo and uses fake logo's. Be aware!

Watch out for some more email scams to obtain your banking details. Barclays and Halifax have reported incidents of emails asking for account details. There are also bogus emails from Argos and Ebay asking for account details and email addresses. There are also fake emails asking for donations to the Katrina Hurricane Fund and the Asia Quake appeal. Delete all emails immediately and do not use the links provided.

Criminals are also using spy ware to get hold of personal data they can sell or use themselves. Users are being urged to keep anti-virus software up to date and regularly use reliable anti-spyware programs such as Spybot and Ad Aware.



Bogus Callers

A few Bogus Callers have been posing as Police Officers in the local area and showing fake ID. A real Warrant Card is all black leather with a photo of the officer and has the Metropolitan Police crest in silver metal. It is also worth remembering that Police do **not** call and check your cash. If you are suspicious about an officer's identity, ask them to clearly display their Warrant Card, or ask them to wait while you call your local police station to confirm their identity.

Thames Water operates an electronically recorded password scheme. Once recorded against a customers account it is transferred to a field technician together with his work instructions so that he is aware when calling at the address. If you are in doubt, you can call Thames Water to verify the identity of a caller, all field technicians who have authority to visit premises are listed on computer. If a caller claims to be from the 'Water Board' THEY ARE BOGUS. All staff carry id and will use the name Thames Water.

In Shirley, a white male was seen at the rear of a property. When challenged, he said he was looking for keys that had been thrown over the wall. At the same time a white female rang the front door bell. While the victim answered the front door, the male entered via the open back door and a wallet was taken. Victim was alerted to this when her bank telephoned her regarding large purchases on her credit card. Also in Shirley, a distraction burglary has occurred where an elderly victim had a white female, approx age 22 years with blond collar length hair call selling dusters, while the victim went to get change her handbag was taken.

There has also been a report from one of our members about a man with a suspicious Spanish accent trying to sell DVD players from the boot of his car, and a young male asking to use the toilet, saying he was 'not from these parts'. If you are in ANY doubt about the authenticity of these callers to your home, then it is best to not allow them any access to your home. If you have any further worries, don't hesitate to report them to your local police station. It helps if you can give a good description so that we can warn people to be on the lookout.

Telephone Scam

A member has reported a telephone call from a company called GVC asking for credit details. The phone number was 012685 55095 but there was no reply when the number was called back. It appears to be a scam to obtain financial information, as there is a timeshare company with a similar name.

There has been a report from a Neighbourhood Watch member where a vulnerable old lady living nearby received a phone call claiming to be from the Police stating that they were in the area and would come and mark her property. The Burglary Squad have confirmed that they do not operate in this way, property marking is normally carried out at a central point and is only advertised in the press or by the Neighbourhood Watch newsletter. If you receive such a call, try and obtain the caller's number by using 1471 and phone Croydon Police on 020 8667 1212 and report this incident.

Thefts of Car Keys

There are increasing numbers of burglaries taking place to gain access to car keys, especially new top of the range models. Car keys should never be left near the front door or on view in the house. Also with winter coming never leave the car unattended outside your house with the engine warming up!

How Identities are Stolen

Identity theft is Britain's fastest-growing white-collar crime, increasing at nearly 500% a year. The simplest way is to be robbed of your credit-cards. A thief can spend freely with them until they are reported lost. After that he can use them as identification to acquire store-cards. At present, shops issuing storecards are denied access to the banks' hot card file of stolen card numbers. Identity theft can also go on for months or years without the victim's knowledge. Fraudsters bribe burglars and postmen for bank statements, which contain enough data to open new accounts and take out fraudulent loans in your name, or they can simply retrieve discarded credit-card slips from dustbins.

How to Protect Yourself

Be careful whom you give private financial information to. Do not give out your account details, telephone numbers, or addresses to anyone who may ask you in the street, and tear up or shred documents like credit-card slips before discarding them. If you think you may be a victim then send off for your credit-reference files from Experian and Equifax - it only costs £2. They will

show any fraudulent applications for credit. Inform CIFAS, the Credit Industry Fraud Avoidance System, which will put your name on an alert file.

Appeal for Witnesses (Stabbing in Shirley)

We are appealing for witnesses following the death of a 17-year-old male in Shirley on Friday 14th October 2005. Officers were called at approx 2130 to the Parkfields Recreation Ground in Shirley Croydon to reports of a disturbance. On arrival they found a 17 year-old male youth had been stabbed. He was taken to hospital where he later died. A 15-year-old male youth has been arrested in connection with the incident. He was charged with Murder on Monday. An investigation has been launched by the Specialist Crime Directorate led by DI Neil Cochlin. A number of youths were in the park when the stabbing occurred. Police are appealing for anyone with information or who witnessed the incident to call the Incident Room on 020 8721 4054 or Crime Stoppers 0800 555 111.



General Advice

Carry a personal attack alarm in your hand especially at night and be prepared to use it. A personal alarm set off next to an attackers head can leave them shocked and disorientated, giving you valuable seconds to remove yourself from the situation. If you think you are being followed, cross the road and keep walking. If you are still being followed, make for the nearest busy area, an open shop or well-lit house.

Vary your route and times

Stick to busy, well-lit roads with pavements

Don't switch off to the world by wearing a personal stereo

Don't take short-cuts through dark alleys, parks or waste grounds

Avoid poorly lit or little used areas

Walk facing oncoming traffic

If you have to wait around, choose a well-lit, busy area and look confident and positive.

Never accept a lift from strangers

It's safer to walk away from trouble

Mini Motorbikes/Gopeds

The Police and Croydon Council are reminding parents about buying mini motorbikes/scooters for Christmas. Please remember these can only be ridden on private land with the consent of the owner. It is an offence to ride them on roads, pavements, cycle paths, woods and other public land. They can be used on the road if they are licensed and taxed.

Police have said they will deal with young people causing a nuisance under the Police Reform Act 2002. This allows Police to initially warn riders which if ignored will result in the seizure of the bike. The owner will be liable to a penalty fine of £105 for the costs of recovery and a Storage charge of £12 per day for up to 21 days, after this period the bike can be destroyed.

There can also be other offences such as riding without insurance or helmet; in the case of minors their parents can be prosecuted.

Crime Reduction Strategy



The Council has recently published the Safer Croydon Crime Reduction Strategy 2005 – 2008. The strategy sets out the main crime reduction priorities for the next three years but remains a 'living' document able to incorporate new national initiatives and tackle emerging local concerns. The implementation of the action plans will be closely monitored and reviewed on an annual basis. The strategy deals with crime under the following headings: Safe Neighbourhoods, A Safe Town Center, Violent and Property Crime, Drugs Misuse and Crime, Young People and Crime, Managing Prolific and Priority Offenders, Hate Crime, Domestic Violence, Rape and Other Sexual Offences, Criminal Justice System, and Communication and Consultation.

The aims of the strategy are challenging, (a) to reduce crime by 15% and more in high crime areas by 2007/08, (b) to reassure the public by reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behavior and building confidence in the criminal justice system without compromising fairness. (c) reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs including substantially increasing the number of drug-misusing offenders entering treatment through the criminal justice system.

The section on Safer Neighbourhoods deals with anti-social behaviour that blights people's lives, destroys families and ruins communities. If left unchecked it creates an environment in which crime can take hold. Although there are many forms of anti-social behaviour, a definition given in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 is "acting in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more person not of the same household as the perpetrator".

Residents may like to know the three main forms of anti-social behaviour, which are:

- 1) Interpersonal/malicious or harassing behaviour towards individuals, groups or organisations which cause alarm or distress, (e.g. hoax calls and intimidation).
- 2) behaviour degrading the local environment (e.g. dog fouling, noise nuisance, graffiti, setting fires and fly tipping).
- 3) threatening or physically obstructive-behavior stopping people from using public spaces e.g. intimidating behavior by groups of youths, aggressive begging, street drinking and drug misuse.

The publication of the Crime Reduction Strategy comes at a time when crime and the fear of crime is an important concern to residents of Monks Orchard. There has been a murder in a local park and an increase in violent and minor crimes, many of which can, in some way, be traced back to the local schools.

It has always been the case that a strong rivalry existed between the students of different schools that was not always confined to academic attainment or the sports field. Minor skirmishes were always a possibility when groups of students were making their way to and from places of learning but now these are becoming more serious and are sometimes motivated by drugs and differences in religion, ethnic and cultural backdrop. It must be acknowledged that the majority of young students are hard working and law abiding but it only needs a small active gang led by one or two seriously disturbed youths to create fear and damage especially to the reputation of the school they attend.

The Crime Reduction Strategy is strong on aims, objectives, strategies, audits, targets and initiatives by the Home Office but it is only when residents learn of positive and effective action being taken by the police and the courts that confidence in the system will be gained. The prevailing perception is that the criminal justice system is weighted in favour of the perpetrator and against the **innocent**. Additional amounts of our taxes are being used on anti-crime measures but the results to date are disappointing. There is still some doubt about the effectiveness of Neighbourhood and Street Wardens, anti-social behaviour orders are seldom used and banning gangs of youths gathering in one area only forces them to move elsewhere. What has proved to reduce crime is the presence of more police. MORA, and the local Councillors have been pressing for a Safer Neighbourhood Team to be assigned to Monks Orchard.

These special units are being rolled out across the borough but because Monks Orchard is recognised as a 'low crime area' we will not get one until later in the year. It is important to report all crimes and anti-social behaviour to ensure that we do eventually get the police cover that we pay for. It should be remembered that despite the increase in crime and anti-social behaviour Monks Orchard is still a pleasant place to work and live especially when compared with other inner urban areas and we should do all in our power to keep and improve it. Copies of the Crime Strategy can be obtained from Safer Croydon, Croydon Council, Taberner House, Park Lane, CR9 3JS phone 020 8760 5463.

Street Cleaning

The Council's propaganda publication 'Croydon Reports' constantly contains claims that the borough is 'cleaner, safer and greener'. The stated aim is to have streets that are among the cleanest in London within twelve months. Underlying this claim is the new cleaning contract awarded to Cleanaway. These statements will not impress residents of Monks Orchard that have to live in streets littered with tins, bottles, packaging, partially consumed hot food takeaways and dog mess that seem



to have taken root on the pavements and in the gutters. The Street Scene Officers will tell those individuals that decide to complain that, under the new contract, the local streets are scheduled to be cleaned only once every four weeks. There are those residents that will come to the decision that this is a clear example of 'paying more for less'.

On further investigation residents will discover that some residential areas within the borough are cleaned much more often, sometimes daily. MORA has found it impossible to find the reason for this blatant inequality in street cleaning and questions remain unanswered. Could it be that a political decision has been taken to clean favoured areas more often than others? Could it be that the amount of litter deposited determines the frequency of cleaning? If so, it follows that even more litter will have to be deposited if local streets are going to be cleaned more regularly.

This may appear a trivial issue but it is one that concerns residents who pay a large proportion of their income in council taxes to live in a clean locality. Recently, over one hundred residents in The Glade added their names to a petition to protest about the filthy state of their area. The petition was organised by Councillor Avril Slipper but the submission was ignored. MORA wrote to the Council in August asking for a copy of the cleaning contract and to enquire who was directly responsible for determining the schedule of cleaning that treats some areas more favourably than others. Having pressed for a response, to date, none has been received despite the claim that Croydon Council deals with enquires speedily.

367 Bus Route



In March 2005 on receiving news that the route of the 367 was to be extended to cover Shirley Oaks Village, MORA made representations to Transport for London. It was clear to all those with local knowledge that re-routing the bus along the Lower Addiscombe Road, that is well served by bus 289 and 312, would create longer travelling times, delays and overcrowding. The problems likely to result from replacing bus route 494 by extending the 367 route were debated at the Annual General Meeting in the presence of Andrew Pelling, Greater London Assembly Member. Regardless of the objections the changes to route 367 were introduced in June 2005 without any consultation or prior notification causing passengers to be late for connecting services, flights and appointments. No revised timetables for the route were published until weeks following the change.

Surprisingly, during the next few months only a few complaints from residents were made to MORA and the conclusion was reached that local residents had adjusted to the change or found an alternative method of travel. It was reported in the May issue of the MORA newsletter that 'the system is bedding down OK'. Residents who use the service and have been adversely affected

by the change, but had chosen to remain silent, quickly challenged this statement. The subsequent number of letters and phone calls received since this statement was published proves that the changes have created frustration and anger. The opinions offered show that the important local bus service that serves the heart of Monks Orchard has become unreliable, erratic and overcrowded and it is not unusual for travellers to wait for 60 minutes or more for a bus. The lengthening of the route has increased the time taken to travel to East Croydon by a time that varies between 10 to 20 minutes and often considerably more during the morning 'peak hours' when the Lower Addiscombe Road is congested with traffic. In the morning 'peak hours' the bus from Bromley is full on arrival in the Wickham Road with the consequence that passengers wishing to board the bus at following stops are left stranded. Furthermore, in the afternoon the buses departing from West Croydon are used by passengers wishing to travel the short distance to Addiscombe leaving little or no space for those travelling to Shirley, Beckenham and beyond. The overcrowding problem has increased since the introduction of free travel for school children.

Responding to these concerns MORA is again challenging the wisdom of the changes made to route 367 by officials whose aim is to reduce costs. We are asking for the situation to be reviewed, as a matter of urgency and for action to be taken that will bring about improvements in the reliability and smooth running of the service.

Complaints about the erratic service have also been made to the local Councillors who have personal experience of the problems associated with this route. In response a petition is being organised and signatures are being collected from passengers waiting at bus stops.

Residents suffering inconvenience from problems associated with the route 367 bus should either append their names to the petition or write personally to: Central Customer Services, 23rd Floor Express State Building, Empress Approach, London SW6 1TR.

Christmas Party Cancellation



Unfortunately, it proved necessary to cancel the Christmas Party arranged for the benefit of the local community and held in support of St. Christopher's Hospice. Shirley Parish Hall had been booked and the dance band engaged for what promised to be a pleasant and pleasing pre-festive season gathering which could have been enjoyed by all. News of the event was published in the September newsletter and posters displayed in local stores and libraries, but the sale of the advanced tickets was extremely disappointing. Our Social Secretary, Christine Ross-Smith, donated considerable time and energy to arrange the event and is sad that her valued efforts proved unsuccessful.



The lack of support raises questions about the wisdom of arranging future social events for the benefit of the local community. In the past, social events have been offered and these have usually been supported, appreciated and enjoyed by all. Theatre visits and short breaks remain of interest to some members but it is difficult to think of an event that would engage the support and interest of the whole community. It is likely that we are experiencing a change in society and people no longer wish to socialise. There are now a great variety of venues available locally and in London. Coupled with this is the choice of entertainment and amusements which can be accessed in the home. Even the Fairfield Halls and local cinemas find it difficult to attract sufficient customers to many of their offerings. Although the policing of the town centres have been subject to improvement there still lurks in many peoples mind a fear of crime.

MORA does not wish to relinquish its traditional role of organising social gatherings for the local community but deciding on those that will be of interest and gain support is, to say the least, difficult. If any member wishes to share their ideas please contact Christine Ross-Smith phone [REDACTED].

"The Land of the Free"



Or; it COULD happen here

The following story came from across the Atlantic, but who knows?

In the year 2005, The Lord came unto Noah, who was now living in the United States, and said, "Once again, the earth has become wicked and overpopulated and I see the end of all flesh before me. Build another Ark and save two of every living thing along with a few good humans." He gave Noah the blueprints, saying, "You have six months to build the Ark before I will start the unending rain for 40 days and 40 nights".

Six months later, the Lord looked down and saw Noah weeping in his yard but no ark. "Noah!", He shouted, "I'm about to start the rain! Where is the Ark?"

"Forgive me, Lord," begged Noah. "But things have changed. I needed a building permit. I've been arguing with the inspector about the need for a sprinkler system. My neighbours claim that I've violated the neighbourhood Home Owner's Association zoning laws by building the Ark in my yard and exceeding the height limitation. We had to go to the Planning and Zoning Board for a decision.

"Then the Department of Transportation demanded a bond be posted for the future costs of moving power, overpasses and other overhead obstructions, to clear the passage for the Ark's move to the sea. I argued that the sea

would be coming to us, but they would hear nothing of it.

"Getting the wood was another problem. There's a ban on cutting local trees in order to save the spotted owl. I tried to convince the environmentalists that I needed the wood to save the owls. But no go!

"When I started gathering the animals, I got sued by an animal rights group. They insisted that I was confining wild animals against their will. As well, they argued the accommodation was too restrictive and it was cruel and inhumane to put so many animals in a confined space.

"Then the EPA ruled that I couldn't build the Ark until they'd conducted an environment impact study on your proposed flood. I'm still trying to resolve a complaint with the Civil Rights Commission on how many minorities I'm supposed to hire for my building crew. Also, the trades unions say I can't use my sons. They insist I have to hire only Union workers with Ark building experience.

"To make matters worse, the Customs and Immigration Agency seized all my assets, claiming I'm trying to leave the country illegally with endangered species.

"So, forgive me. Lord, but it would take at least ten years for me to finish this Ark."

Suddenly the skies cleared, the sun began to shine, and a rainbow stretched across the sky. Noah looked up in wonder and asked, "You mean you're not going to destroy the world?"

"No", said the Lord. "The Government has beaten me to it."

Reprinted from Croydon Focus, published by The Croydon Society.



Fame: The Musical

TUESDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2006

**TOP PRICE SEATS NORMALLY £42.50
WE HAVE THEM WITH COACH INCLUSIVE FOR £23.50!!**

Reservations please by 22 November

Please phone Christine



If you would like to join us!

The Shirley Players



The Shirley Players are presenting "Look Who's Talking!" a comedy by Derek Benfireld at the Parish Hall Wickham Road on Friday and Saturday November 25th and 26th at 8.00pm. Tickets are £6.00 obtainable from the Box Office on [REDACTED] or from any member of the Players.



Shirley Christmas Lights

Croydon Council have recognized their mistake of last year of not contributing to the Shirley Christmas Lights and have reversed their decision for this year. MORA have therefore made a contribution to this years Christmas lights along with Local Businesses and other Residents' Associations. We hope you all enjoy the Shirley Christmas lights again.

Road Stewards & Area Managers Needed!

ROAD STEWARDS REQUIRED

M.O.R.A. is looking for Road Stewards for the following roads:

CHESTON AVENUE
GREENVIEW AVENUE (EVEN SIDE)
VALLEY WALK/ELDON AVENUE
WATLING CLOSE/STOKES ROAD
ALDERSMEAD AVENUE
MARDELL AVENUE
THE GLADE (1-71/2-48)
THE GLADE (73-165/50-100)

All it takes is about half an hour every three months, to deliver the newsletters to MORA members and collect the subscription fees once a year. If you would like to become a Road Steward, please would you contact Alyce on [REDACTED].

AREA MANAGERS REQUIRED

Due to Area managers leaving the area for pastures new, there are a couple of vacancies for Area Managers. This entails delivering newsletters to the road stewards four times a year.

Area B which covers Tower View area (about 8 road stewards)

Area E which covers the Cheston Avenue area (about 4 road stewards)

Area G which covers Greenview Avenue area (again about 8 road stewards)

If you would like to be a part of your local residents' association, please call Alyce on [REDACTED].

MORA COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2005/6

Chairman:	BOB AKERS	
Vice Chair:	VACANT	
Secretary:	ANNE JOHNSON	
Membership Secretary:	ALYCE MENHINNITT	
Minutes Secretary:	CAROLE GREENWOOD	
Hon. Treasurer &		
Advertising Manager:	TERRY GREENWOOD	
Editor:	DEREK RITSON	
Transport & Highways:	VACANT	
Social Secretary:	CHRISTINE ROSS-SMITH	
Police Liaison/Security:	JEAN COOK	
Primary Care:	MERCIA NASH	
Committee Member + AM:	MICHAEL NASH	
Committee Member + AM:	PATRICIA TURNER	
Committee Member:	MARGARET DOMONEY	
Committee Member:	SHEILA WAGLAND	
Committee Member:	JEFF CLARK	
Neighbourhood Watch rep:	ANDREW SEGRAM	



MONKS ORCHARD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

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

Name:	Signature:
Address:	
Post Code:	

Tick box for membership:

☐ Full Membership £2.00

☐ Senior Citizen £1.00

Please send this completed form to:

Alyce Menhinnitt,

Helping People with Disabilities to Help Themselves
Printed by
CROSLINK
Supported Workshop
020 8255 5473