

MONKS ORCHARD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Croydon

(Non Party)

(Independent)

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NEWSLETTER – AUTUMN 1998
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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This year marks the **Seventy-Fifth Anniversary** of the Monks Orchard Residents' Association. A remarkable record of service to the local community. Compared with today, Monks Orchard was sparsely populated in 1923. Even at this initial stage of development the early residents recognised the value of joining together in order to preserve the nature of the area. Spectacular changes have taken place since then which reflect the growing demand for homes and the growth of Croydon as a major commercial centre. Nevertheless, the aims of the founder members of our Association remain as relevant today as they were then. There is still an important need to formulate and advance the interests of those living in the area.



Members of your Executive Committee continue to freely donate their time to deal with planning matters, safety, security, highways, transport, environmental and other local issues plus the production of the newsletter. The workload is likely to increase as the pressure grows for more housing development and important decisions have to be made to prepare the local bus network for the introduction of the new Tramlink services. Even if the Council and other local and national bodies do their job well, MORA still has a vital role to play in collecting and forwarding the views of residents. It has often been recognised that a strong and active residents' association carries considerable weight when dealing with local and national authorities.

It is essential that MORA continues to represent your views into the new millenium. If you choose to live in Monks Orchard you must like the area and wish to retain its special character. In order to do this we need your help. You can help in a number of ways, by becoming a Road Steward or by joining the Executive Committee. All that it takes is a few hours each month and the satisfaction gained makes it worthwhile, enjoyable and sometimes exciting.

Bob Akers - Chairman

Planning News

CEMETERY UPDATE

MORA is continuing to work closely with the Shirley Oaks Residents Association (SORA) to frustrate the proposals for the use of the now disused tree nursery at Shirley Oaks as a cemetery. This site backs on to homes in Woodmere Avenue. The latest news on this most unwelcome scheme is that the applicant has still failed to provide the Council with adequate information on the traffic impact of the proposal. The Environment Agency also requires details about the level of the water table on the site, because it is worried that graves may cause contamination. This requires boreholes to be sunk and measurements taken in November and March.

In that basis, the application cannot be determined until April of next year at the earliest. Residents of Woodmere Avenue whose homes back on to the site will not know what's happening to the proposal for another 6 months at least. MORA believes this to be unacceptable, particularly as the planning application was actually submitted in January of this year. We will be pressing the Council to refuse the application on the basis of the continuing uncertainty and the absence of any detailed information being provided by the applicant.

We are not leaving it at that though! An alternative proposal is being drawn up to use the site as a nature reserve. SORA assisted by MORA and with the help of expert volunteers is shortly to submit a planning application for the use of the site as a reserve for plants and animals. This is a much more appropriate use, and the Executive Committee hopes that MORA members will support this exciting and sustainable initiative which could provide a lasting project to commemorate the Millennium.



For this scheme to be successful, the site needs to be acquired, and discussions are taking place between the Shirley Oaks Management Company and the existing owner. The nature reserve scheme itself will provide a sanctuary for local wildlife and will protect the existing flora and allow new planting.

Owen Whalley, the MORA Planning Officer, is active in this initiative and will be contacting MORA members in Woodmere Avenue affected by the proposals shortly with more details. If you want further information, or have any expertise to offer, please contact Owen on [REDACTED].

When the planning application is finalised more details will be published in the newsletter, so watch this space!

MORE BACK LAND DEVELOPMENT FOR WOODMERE AVENUE?

MORA members had to take urgent action some weeks ago when a contractor began to fell important mature trees in the back gardens of some of the properties fronting Woodmere Avenue. This was the first confirmation of the speculation that developers are looking to build on the long back gardens of these houses that lie between Round Grove and Woodmere Close. Fortunately, the Council's Tree Officer was able to act promptly and prevent too much damage but not before some fine mature trees had been lost. Some trees are already protected and the Tree officer is investigating the formal protection of others.

MORA inquiries at the Planning Department have confirmed that two developers have submitted draft schemes for comment. To date no formal planning applications have been submitted. One scheme submitted by Direct Build Services anticipates 10 detached dwellings being built on the site taking access from Round Grove. The second scheme proposed by C.A.Lennon Associates also indicates 10 houses. Access to four of these would be from a new road opposite No.3 Round Grove while access to the remaining 6 would be further round onto Round Grove. Officers are yet to give their views on either scheme and until either is translated into a planning application, the public will not be able to examine the proposals.

Large back gardens continue to be attractive to developers and as housing land is at a premium in the south east, we can expect further pressure for back land schemes in our area. MORA will do its best to protect existing residents' amenity and privacy but it is unlikely that such schemes can be stopped entirely.

If you are approached by any developers, please let Owen Whalley know by contacting him on [REDACTED].

FUTURE FOR H.W.WEST SITE STILL UNCERTAIN.

Yet another planning application has been submitted for the redevelopment of the H.W.West & Sons site at 139-141 Shirley Road. The latest scheme again proposes the redevelopment of the site to provide a two-storey building fronting Shirley Road. This would provide offices on the ground floor with accommodation in the roofspace to provide 4 two bedroom flats. It is also proposed to build 14 three-bedroom houses in the existing yard area and construct a new vehicular access on to Shirley Road and Primrose Lane.

An earlier scheme for exclusively residential development on the site went to appeal earlier this year and was dismissed on grounds of the loss of employment, poor layout and access arrangements.

The current scheme is an improvement but MORA is still worried about the loss of amenity to the residents of Shirley Avenue as well as the implications for traffic on Shirley Road and Primrose Lane. The site is close to the ambulance station and to other busy junctions.

BP PERSIST WITH EXPANSION PLANS

Those MORA members who use the BP petrol filling station on Shirley Road may wish to think again. The company still wants to expand the filling station and provide 24 hour shopping facilities to compete with the Tesco Express nearby. Originally it was the company's intention to knock down one of the pair of semi-detached houses that adjoin the site and build the new shop against the party wall of the remaining house. Fortunately, the Council wasn't impressed with this idea and it has been dropped.

Still keen to expand, BP now proposes to knock down just the garage of the house and move the boundary of the petrol station across. They then hope to sell the garage-less house. This would need planning permission and Council officers have indicated informally that this scheme would also be unacceptable. In the mean time the semi-detached house that BP own is still boarded up and continuing to deteriorate. The Company has consistently ignored the concerns of the worried occupier of the adjoining semi-detached house about the poor state of the property, and has failed to maintain the house, its fences or its garden. MORA is pressing the Company to act responsibly, so far with little success.

SECURITY MATTERS

The appointment of a new full time Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer (Elizabeth Hill) based at South Norwood Police Station coincides with a major re-launch of the Scheme using the 'Meercats' motif.



All Co-ordinators have been written requesting them to re-register their Scheme if it is still active. They will then receive a new Information Pack.

The new Crime and Disorder Bill is expected to become law shortly. It introduces a range of more stringent measures to deal with youth crime including 'fast track' appearance before the Courts. Croydon is one of the pilot scheme areas being used to test the effectiveness to these measures. For the first time, it introduces a statutory obligation on Local Authorities to become involved in safety in the community.

CAMERAS MAY REPLACE THE BEAT BOBBY

The days of pounding the beat in the tradition of television's Dixon of Dock Green may soon be over. Scotland Yard Chief Sir Paul Condon says tighter budgets mean some police forces will not be able to afford to have officers walking the streets for hours every day.

Instead, says the Metropolitan Commissioner, they could be replaced by advanced closed-circuit TV security cameras. Sir Paul, the most senior operational police officer in the country, admitted he was no longer promising to increase street patrols. "We can't keep a high visibility patrol up," he added. Traditional beat Bobbies could soon disappear forever, he said. "The service will not be able to generate significant new numbers of Bobbies on the beat from within current arrangements. We can't conjure up thousands of extra officers."

The Met has already reduced Bobbies from 28,000 to 26,900. Policing in the next century will depend more on technology, he added. "We are on the verge of great developments on what technology can do. It will begin to compensate and replace some of the reassurance we have sought from Bobbies on the beat." He warned that smaller forces may also have to merge to offer cheaper and more cost-efficient services.



MONDAY POLICE SURGERY:

10:30 – noon at St George’s Church, Elstan Way, Shirley. Any resident is welcome to come along and bend my ear about local, non-urgent problems.



Letters to the Editor:

INFORMATION FROM CROYDON COUNCIL

HOUSING RENEWAL GRANTS

A range of grants are available to owner/occupiers in Croydon. They are ALL subject to a financial means test.

Renovation grants up to £20,000 where a property is unfit (i.e. badly leaking or holed roof, dangerous wiring, severe rising damp, extensive dry rot, no bathroom etc.).



Renovation grant up to £5,000 where property is fit but in need of substantial repairs and the owner/occupier is over 60 yrs old.

Home Repair Assistance up to £2,000 to owner/occupiers and private tenants over 60 yrs old for minor repairs and home security measures and to over 18 yrs old for energy efficiency measures, minor adaptations and fire safety measures.

For energy efficiency measures, contact Croydon Energy Network on 0181-683 0333. For all other grants contact Croydon Home Improvement Agency on 0181-407 1337.





REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO PRIVATE RENTED PROPERTY

The standards to service that can be expected from Environmental Health Service Staff when dealing with complaints about Private Rented Accommodation, for example from a Private Landlord or Housing Association can ensure that the accommodation does not deteriorate beyond current standards. These standards include: safety, repair, means of fire escape in shared houses, overcrowding and personal washing and cooking facilities.

MAKING A COMPLAINT

You can make a complaint about your accommodation by phoning Environmental Health – The Private Sector Housing Team, on 0181-760 5476 (there is an answerphone service when the office is closed). Or write to: The Private Sector Housing Team, Environmental Health Service, Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon CR9 3BT. Or you could pop in at the ‘One Stop’ reception on the ground floor of Taberner House between 8.30 am. and 4.45 p.m. If you live in a Council owned property, contact your Housing Management Officer (with the address and phone number available on 0181-686 4433, extension 2675 or 2687).

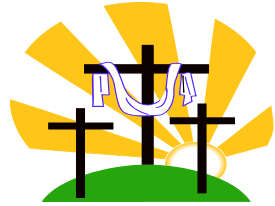
The Environmental Health Service would then contact you within one working day, and the complaint is dealt with in confidence. Further advice and the process of dealing with the particular complaint will be also be explained.

All Environmental Health Officers carry identity cards, so ask to see their card when they call. Please allow builders or the Rent Officer to come in if necessary, so that the work is not held up. If you are having problems with your landlord, please contact ‘Housing Advice’ at Taberner House for help and assistance (telephone 0181-686 4433, extensions 3896 or 2686).

Finally, the Environmental Health Service do not rehouse people. If you wish to apply for rehousing, you should contact Housing Applications on 0181-686 4433 extensions 3893 or 2407.

SHIRLEY GROUP OF CHURCHES

Our recent meetings on the subject of the Millenium have produced some great ideas, which are being worked upon and will be presented to our next full Council Meeting on Wednesday 7th October at Shirley Methodist Church, starting at 8 p.m. The meeting will be open to all – you don't have to be an official church representative to come. If you have a secret longing that we should do something which is close to your heart but haven't got around to telling anyone yet, please don't hold back any longer – give me a call on [REDACTED] – I shall be pleased to hear from you.



One World in Croydon seeks to bring all the communities in Croydon together. Its program this year starts off with the Weatherill Lecture on Thursday 15th October at 8 p.m. at Trinity School when we are honoured to have Archbishop Eames, Anglican Primate of All Ireland, speaking on "Looking Ahead – an Irish Road". As this is at a local venue I do hope as many as possible will come to hear this interesting speaker on such an important subject.

At 10.15 am on Sunday 11th October you can join the Croydon Fun Run in Lloyd Park and raise money through sponsorship for anti-landmine charities or Mayday Heart Appeal. Registration and Sponsor forms from Derek Cooper on [REDACTED].

From 7.30 p.m. on Friday 23rd October there is an International Evening in St. Mary's Church Hall, West Croydon, when you can enjoy food and entertainment from various countries. Tickets are £6.00, (£3.00 concessions) from Derek Cooper, or on the door.

A Charity Christmas Card Sale, with other seasonal items, will take place at the Methodist Church on Saturday 17th October between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. In the evening the same venue will host a Fun Quiz starting at 7.15 for prompt start at 7.30. Tickets at the door £3.00 per person to include light refreshments.

LONGHEATH COMMUNITY AND CHURCH CENTRE

Recent news from Longheath community and Church Centre is that the funding requirements are in place and that tenders will go out soon with the hope of completion by Easter 1999. It is hoped that the Bids will be within the funding raised



SCOUTS 23rd CROYDON SCOUTS GROUP

I read with interest in the summer newsletter the article on Local Agenda 21 and 'what we can do' for the environment.



The members of MORA may like to know that the Scout Group has an aluminium collection point at our headquarters at the rear of St. George's Church, (Elstan Way, off the Glade)

The cash collected from the aluminium is used to help international causes. We have just finished a project to aid a 'water appeal' of the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and have been able to assist them by sending a considerable donation to help sustain clean water supplies in 3rd world countries.

All aluminium for recycling can be left at the main doors of the Scout Hut.

If anyone needs further information, they can telephone [REDACTED]
Sandra Dunnion (Mrs)
Group Scout Leader



SHIRLEY DISTRICT GUIDES

Were you a Guide or a Brownie? Even if you weren't, the chances are that you know someone who is – or was. Next year we are planning to celebrate 50 years as a separate Guiding District (when Guiding began in Shirley we were part of Addiscombe) and we hope those celebrations will be something to remember. If you have any memories, photographs or souvenirs of early Guiding in this area, do phone me so that we can contact you nearer the time and perhaps include them. Watch this space for more news of our plans.



But Guiding is about much more than past memories – its happening in the present too. Guiding is thriving in Shirley and the number of girls counted in this year's census in February show an increase on last year, with a total of 354 girls under 18 and 37 Guiders actively involved, as well as 10 uniformed adult unit helpers.

However, looking to the future, the sad fact is that there are still more girls in Shirley who would love to join Rainbows (age 5 to 7), Brownies (age 7 to 10) but can't because our existing units are full or limited in the numbers they can take because of a shortage of uniformed Guiders. We've even had to close two units in the last two years because we haven't got the Guiders to run them.

So – if you are between the ages of 18 and 65, female, have a little spare time that you want to put to good use and enjoy being with a group of enthusiastic girls, of whatever age – this could be the chance you've been waiting for. Guiding is all about helping girls grow into caring and responsible adults while having fun at the same time. Guiders enjoy the experience too.

Guiders need to be prepared to make the Guide promise, "go into" uniform, and to undertake the necessary training to gain a Guiders warrant – but they do NOT need to have been a Guide or a Brownie themselves. In fact, if you always wondered what you had missed, this might be your chance to find out! Reliability, honesty, a sense of fun and the ability to work in a team are much more important than being able to tie a reef knot or know about Baden Powell.

If you would like to know more (without any commitment) about how you can get involved in future Guiding – or to share your memories of Guiding in the past in Shirley, do please phone me, Liz Bebington on [REDACTED], (I am Shirley District Commissioner). If this is not for you, thanks for reading this far. Do please tell any one you know who might be interested. We want to be able to offer the experience and fun of Guiding to all the girls – and adults – who want to join for another 50 years.



SHIRLEY SHORT MAT BOWLS CLUB

As summer draws to a close, a new season of Short Mat Bowls commences. Shirley Short Mat Bowls Club holds regular sessions in the Shirley Parish Hall and at the moment have vacancies for Thursday morning, Friday afternoon and Friday evenings.

If you would like more details of this enjoyable pass-time and social event please ring either Pat Godden; Hon. Secretary, telephone [REDACTED] or, Mr Peter Hacker, Hon. Treasurer, telephone [REDACTED] who will be happy to send you membership details and an application form.



NEWSLETTER COPY DATES

Any contributions for future newsletters should be with the Editor by the following dates at the latest. The earlier the copy is received, the more chance of its inclusion as the total copy must result in a multiple of 4 pages.

Copy Dates for forthcoming Issue - Nov 14th, 1998 and 6th Feb, 1999.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS 1998/9

President:	Vacant	
Chairman: Bob Akers	████████████████████ ██████████████████	████████████████████
Vice Chairman: John Walkington	████████████████████ ██████████	████████████████████
Acting Secretary: Bob Akers	████████████████████ ██████████████████	████████████████████
Treasurer: Ken Butler	████████████████████ ██████████████████	████████████████████
Planning Officer: Owen Whalley	████████████████████ ██████████	████████████████████
Minutes Secretary: Bob Akers	████████████████████ ██████████████████	████████████████████
Editor: Derek Ritson	████████████████████ ██████████████████	████████████████████
Transport Officer: Peter Mortimer	████████████████████ ██████████	████████████████████
Highways Officer: Peter Mortimer	████████████████████ ██████████	████████████████████
Membership Sec: Alyce Menhinnitt	████████████████████ ██████████████████	████████████████████
Hon. Historian & Area Manager: Charles Hutchings	████████████████████ ██████████████████	████████████████████
Area Manager: Arthur Taylor	████████████████████ ████████████████████████████	████████████████████