

# Monks Orchard Residents' Association

[www.monks-orchard-web.org.uk](http://www.monks-orchard-web.org.uk)  
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Croydon

(Non Party)

(Independent)

NEWSLETTER – Spring 2004



## NOTICE OF 80th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2004 MORA AGM will  
be held on  
Friday 26th March,  
at 8.00 p.m.

In St. George's Church Hall,  
Elstan Way, Shirley.

# ADVANCE NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Eightieth Annual General Meeting of the Association is to be held on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March beginning at 8.00 p. m. in St. George's Church Hall, Elstan Way, Shirley. There will be reports from the Local Councillors and a report back by Geraint Davis M.P.

Anyone wishing to become a member or wishing to help with the work of the Association are asked to let the Chairman know before or after the meeting.

## **Meeting Agenda**

1. Apologises for Absence
2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
3. Matters Arising
4. To receive and adopt the 2003/2004 Annual Reports
5. To Elect Officers and Committee for 2004/2005
6. Any Other Business
7. Presentation on the work of the Trading Standards and Consumer Advice Service

The minutes of the previous A.G.M. are on our website and were published in the May 2003 issue of the newsletter. A copy of the audited financial report is printed on page 19.

Reports from the local Councillors and the Member of Parliament form an important and informative part of the Annual General Meeting. Those presenting the reports usually agree to take questions from the floor of the audience. However, members wishing to have a more considered answer to a complex question are asked to give advance notice so that a more accurate response can be prepared. Questions should be sent in writing, with the name and address of the sender, by March 14<sup>th</sup> to Anne Johnson, Vice Chairman and Secretary of Monks Orchard Residents' Association, [REDACTED], or emailed to [monksorchardweb@btinternet.com](mailto:monksorchardweb@btinternet.com).

# CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

Council tax is set to continue to rise above the rate of inflation. Following last years 27.3% rise an increase of 7.3% is expected for the forthcoming financial year. For example, the owners of properties in Band C will have to pay 1036 pa, Band D £1,165, E £1,424 and F £1,683.

This has been a difficult time for the Council as it has attempted to keep any increase within Government guidelines and thus avoid the threat of capping. A large proportion of the additional Council spending has been in response to resident's demands for a action on crime and improvements to the services of health, social care, education and the environment. Many

will want these improvements to continue and may be willing to meet the extra cost if the present tax was replaced by a system that takes account of the ability to pay.

The urgent need to make economies and to deliver services to the people at an affordable price has resulted in a close examination of all expenditure and the setting of new priorities. The cuts in expenditure will adversely impact on all those that live and work in Croydon. One service that is almost certain to disappear is the rolling rubbish collections. Residents Associations in all parts of the borough are campaigning for the retention of this service, which is very popular and much used by those without their own transport.

## THE GLADE DEVELOPMENT



Rumours circulating about this development have aroused greater fears and suspicions than any previous local problem far exceeding the concerns raised by the expansion of the medium secure unit at the Bethlem Royal Hospital. Members have been stirred to pursue enquiries, pen letters and make phone calls. Sadly, some have been sufficiently alarmed to place their homes up for sale in the hope of being able to move elsewhere. The reasons why a peaceful and civilised community as Monks Orchard should be so troubled are easy to understand.

The media have taken the issue on board and we have managed to create "Front Page" headlines on the Sunday Express of the 15th February. The Express Reporter Sarah O'Grady, has reported that the Shadow Housing Minister, John Hayes is demanding an investigation and an urgent meeting with his Labour opposite number over the project. Also, early morning discussion of the newspapers referred to the article on radio and TV. Perhaps this will result in answers that we in MORA have been trying to obtain for our members without success.

When it is rumoured that a large group from another area, some perhaps new to this country, are to be deposited in the centre of an established community there is bound to be suspicions and fears. The complete lack of any prior warning or consultation served to increase the rumours and add to the concerns. Residents were kept in the dark about the change from "luxury" private use to "affordable" social housing. The failure



of the developer, the owners and representatives of Croydon council to keep residents informed has fuelled rumours and resentment. Acting on behalf of members, MORA sought expert professional advice on how this move could be resisted and was informed that nothing legally could be done because planning permission had been granted and the developer had taken a commercial decision to sell to Presentation Housing Association. Contact was then made with the Croydon Planning Control Department and Presentation Housing (<http://www.presentation-sia.org.uk>) to obtain more information about the future occupants, how they will be selected, how the estate would be managed and to explore ways in which they could be absorbed into the community?

The Advertiser Friday, January 23, 2004

## Residents claim they were left in dark over housing development

THOUSANDS of local residents, who were residents, claimed they were left in the dark over a housing development in Croydon.

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Presentation Housing Association was keen for the development to be integrated into the area and suggested a number of ways in which this might be achieved. One of the options that appeared to be acceptable was to hold a public meeting at which the concerns and fears of residents could be addressed. Encouraged by this, MORA circulated a flyer informing residents that a public meeting would be held on Friday

16<sup>th</sup> January in St George's church hall. Invitations were sent to the Director of Housing at Croydon, Presentation Housing Association, The Housing Agency, the local Councillors and Geraint Davies M.P.

The concern and frustration of the local residents was underlined by the fact that over 350 attended the meeting on a cold winters night and many more were turned away because the hall was full. Curiously, out of all the speakers invited only Councillor Derek Loughborough and Geraint Davies M.P. attended and only two apologies were received. There was great disappointment that public officials, whose wages are paid by ratepayers and who are responsible for spending public funds, did not feel it necessary to attend and explain to residents', why they had imposed this problem on the local community.

The meeting was cut short by a failure of the public address system but there was sufficient time for those attending to voice their opinions and demonstrate their disgust at the way they had been kept in the dark about the intended use of the development and its implications on the community. In response to demands, Geraint Davies agreed to use his influence to get the housing authorities to attend a future meeting with residents. Pressed by Geraint Davies the Council and Housing Association agreed to meet two representatives of MORA but refused to attend another open public meeting. The offer was discussed by MORA but was declined because it was thought that residents had the right to meet and question those officials, the actions of

which has created such concern for the residents. MORA consider it is the duty of the politicians and public officials to demonstrate that the influx of approximately 100 people, half of them possibly children or adolescents, will not adversely impact on the services of education, health and transport or other financial implications for the community at a time when cuts are being made.



We have written to Geraint Davies and Councillor Loughborough, thanking them for attending the meeting

Geraint Davies has written to residents' within the affected area of the development, indicating that he is keen that the residents are able to raise issues of concern with the Council and Presentation Housing Association. He has offered to receive such concerns so that he can raise them directly with the Council on behalf of residents.

The concerns expressed by MORA members are varied and complex, many relate to fears of disruptive behaviour or the adverse affect on local services, such as education, health and transport.

**A summary of questions raised by members are listed below:**

- What is the definition of Affordable Social Housing in relation to the immediate surrounding housing?
- When initially advertised, the development was advertised as Luxury 4 and 5 bedroom houses with en-suite bathrooms. What has changed to allow them to be now identified as affordable social housing?
- Has the Council acted correctly if the original planning application refers specifically to private use?
- When were changes made to the planning application allowing them to be used for social housing?
- Can we see the Council's Meeting Minutes when the decision was given for this development to be used for social housing and the Councillors who voted for it?
- The existing development of 14 dwellings is the maximum permitted for acquisition by a housing association. Was this a prime consideration in earlier planning requests?
- How did Presentation Housing become aware of the opportunity to purchase the complete development.
- What are the criteria for choosing Presentation Housing tenants? Can it be confirmed if and how many local key workers will be offered this accommodation?
- Given the impact on our environment, can the Council clarify how it is going to fund the increased pressure on local schools and pre-schools when their budgets are in such a critical state? Was this discussed when the change of use was approved?

- Is it correct that each family housed will have a minimum of 3 children?
- Are previously rejected traffic calming measures now to be introduced?
- Why was there no re-application for permission for social housing?
- In what Council Tax Band are the 72 – 80 The Glade properties?
- The rent for 4 Bedroom luxury housing is around £1500 pcm and 5 bedrooms £1800 pcm. If the tenants are on housing benefit, who is paying this rent?
- If satisfactory answers are not provided, can residents' make representation to the planning ombudsman on the grounds of maladministration or can residents' apply for a judicial review?
- Is there any way of ensuring that the homes are not offered to families known to be responsible for anti-social behaviour or are convicted criminals?

In order to appreciate the fuller implications of the Council's Policy on social housing:

- How many properties in Shirley have been taken out of the private housing stock and are now considered as social housing?
- How many Social Housing Tenants are on Housing Benefit as a percentage of the total social housing tenants and what is the cost of housing benefit to the tax payer [local or central government]
- How many tenants in social housing owe rent to the council and how much is owed in total.
- How many smaller, more affordable homes could have been built for similar cost to give more people the opportunity to have a home?

### **The History of the Site**

Three presentable bungalows with long gardens originally occupied the site at 70, 72 – 80 The Glade. The first one was purchased by CBP New Homes Ltd. and a mixture of pressure and financial incentives resulted in the acquisition of adjoining properties.

The first planning application for the site of 78 – 80 The Glade was made in March 2000. The proposal was to erect 9 four bedroom detached houses with integral garages. This high-density development, totally of contrasting design and appearance to the surrounding dwellings, dismayed residents living adjacent and they succumbed to pressure to sell their properties and move elsewhere. This application was refused because it would have resulted in an over development of the site and have an unsatisfactory relationship with adjoining properties.

CBP New Homes Ltd. submitted an application for the enlarged site of 76 – 80 The Glade in November 2000. The proposal was to erect 9 four bedroom detached houses. This application received approval subject to a number of conditions aimed at protecting the privacy of adjoining occupiers and the retention of trees of high amenity value. Work started on the clearing of the site but the work soon came to a halt leaving the empty properties an open



invitation to squatters. Information was received that the site had been sold to another developer and that a new application proposing housing of greater density would be submitted. In March 2001 another application was made to demolish 72 and part of 74 The Glade and to erect a pair of four bedroom semi-detached houses with attached garages. MORA submitted objections to this application because the houses would be completely different to the surrounding properties and would not contribute to the visual congruity of the area; permission for this development was refused.



A year passed since the work came to a halt on the clearing of the site at 78 – 80 The Glade. Squatters, vandals and fly tippers had occupied the partially enclosed site. Local residents were depressed and troubled by the sight of damaged and decaying buildings plus piles of rubble. The purpose of speculative neglect, often used by developers, is to let the site deteriorate to weaken the resolve of residents to resist further planning proposals. The site was allowed to deteriorate until the spring of 2002.

Glade Developments, the new name for the owners, submitted a further planning application for the site at the rear of 72, and 74 – 80 The Glade in March 2002. The proposal was to demolish the existing buildings and to erect 12 four bedroom detached/semi detached houses with accommodation in roof space plus 2 three bedroom semi detached houses all with internal garages. In July 2002 permission was granted. At the same time CBP New Homes Ltd submitted a planning application for the adjoining land at 72 – 74 The Glade. The proposal was to demolish 72 and part of 74 and to erect a pair of 3-bedroom semi detached houses with integral garages.

To maximise on their investment Glade Developments submitted a new application for planning permission in January 2003. This proposal was for the erection of 12 four-bedroom detached/semi detached houses with accommodation in roof space and a pair of 3-bedroom semi detached houses all with integral garages. Local residents supported by MORA opposed this application, nevertheless planning permission was granted in April 2003. As building commenced a sign was erected on the site by Wates the estate agents offering the properties for sale as luxury accommodation with en-suit bathrooms at prices beginning at £285,000. Local residents breathed a sigh of relief at the thought that the mix of homes, for sale and rent on affordable market terms, would attract high and low incomes that are the basis of social inclusive communities and do not add to the burden of the local taxes.

## Statement from Geraint Davies, MP.

There's been high drama in Parliament and in the Glade in recent weeks with the Higher Education bill and the Hutton Report and controversial plans for social housing. I am pleased that the Government accepted my proposal to ensure no new graduates will pay tuition fees beyond 25 years after graduation. This means that many graduates on low incomes or who have career breaks for family will not have to pay all their fees.

A new primary school teacher in Croydon who earns £18,000 and has university debt of £13,000 told me she pays £80 per month and was worried about further change. I explained that under the new rules she would pay £22.50 per month and if her income stayed at £18,000 (which it won't!) she would only have to pay half the debt over 25 years as payment is 9% on income over £15,000.

Meanwhile in the Glade there has been concern that 14 four-bedroom houses are to be used for social housing (11 by the Council and 3 by Presentation Housing Association). Unfortunately, at MORAs public meeting Croydon Council and the Housing Association did not attend. At the meeting I said I would use my influence to get the housing authorities to a future meeting with residents. The Council and Housing Association have agreed to have a meeting with residents representatives but due to the disruption caused by the BNP at the last meeting refused to attend another open meeting. The MORA committee insist upon a meeting open to all residents. As your MP if you have any concerns about this issue I will raise them directly with the Council.

On this and other issues, contact me by writing to Geraint Davies MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA; emailing [geraintdaviessmp@parliament.uk](mailto:geraintdaviessmp@parliament.uk) or faxing [REDACTED]. My constituency advice line is open from Monday to Thursday 10am to 12.30pm on [REDACTED].

## COUNCIL TAX



At the previous Annual General Meeting members endorsed a proposal that MORA campaign on their behalf against the year on year, inflation-busting increases in Council Tax. It was agreed that the time had arrived to say 'enough is enough' because the taxes for many are becoming unsustainable. Subsequent to the meeting, attempts were made to place the issue on the agenda for discussion at meetings of the Neighbourhood Partnership, which were established to discuss matters of concern, but requests to place the increase in council tax on the agenda have been refused. The Executive Committee have discussed ways in which an effective campaign could be launched such as writing letters to Members of Parliament and of the Government. Eventually, it was decided that adding support to the national



campaign for the reform of council tax would be the best way of pursuing the issue. The 'Is It Fair' (<http://www.isitfair.co.uk/>) campaign, which is supported by the British Legion, is nationwide, non-party political and is for everyone (not only pensioners) who wants the existing system of Council Tax abolished. The stated aims are to make people aware of the need for action and to have the existing property-value-based council tax replaced by a system that takes account of the ability to pay. It is hoped that people power will achieve these objectives and a successful council tax protest rally that was held in London on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> January following which a national petition was delivered to 10 Downing Street. The protest rally has placed the need for a fairer rate system on the national political agenda.

The new rates are beginning to come in and in many cases the rises are not as high as last year but any rise is too much after the extortionate rises of last year. We have a rise of about 6 percent. That means tax will have risen by 86 percent since 1997, pensions will have risen by 15.8 percent and many wages and salaries by not much more. Council Tax in its present form must be abolished.

A new document available to download from the "Is It Fair" website has been written by Roger Redman and Colin Aiken, and it sets out a fair tax raising system. It is a long document but well worth the read.

MORA proposes that we become an affiliated group to the "Is It Fair" Campaign and publish details of "Is It Fair" action group activities, in our newsletter, to support replacement of the Council Tax with a fairer system. This is a non-political campaign. Also, we will have copies of the "Is It Fair" petition forms for signature at our AGM. You can download the petition from the "Is It Fair" campaign website [see above].

## PLANNING NEWS



One of the deciding factors when buying a house is often the size and design of the kitchen. When most of the dwellings in Monks Orchard were constructed, only a small amount of space was devoted to the food preparation and cooking area, the majority of the floor area being devoted to reception rooms and bedrooms. The small area allocated for the kitchen (sometimes called the scullery) had to accommodate the pantry, sink, stove, and, in some of the older properties, a copper in which to boil clothes. The kitchen in many of the older local properties seldom exceeded **convert to metric** [6 ft by 8 ft]; forming what is termed a 'galley' kitchen.

The significance of the kitchen has grown with the passing of the years and it has become one of the most important rooms in the home. The modern kitchen has to contain the heating boiler, washing machine, clothes drier, oven, cooking hob, microwave, refrigerator and freezer, food processor, the

list grows longer as more labour saving devices are developed and introduced. In addition it can be used as an area in which meals can be consumed.

It is not, therefore, surprising that the largest number of planning applications made over the past decades have been for a rear/side extension that includes the enlargement of the kitchen space and/or the addition of a utility room which can be used to house items such as, the heating boiler, freezer

and washing machine in order to make more space in the kitchen. Ingenious methods are used to increase the size of kitchen areas, internal walls have been demolished and structures constructed of timber or glass appended to the rear of properties. Adding a brick built extension that blends in with the original building can prove expensive involving surveyors, building inspectors, the planning process, and builders, plumbers, electricians, designers and flooring specialists. The growing number of kitchen extensions proves that homeowners are willing to undergo the expenses and inconvenience to provide a modern cooking and living area and to make the house more attractive to potential purchasers,

Curiously, some local developers have failed to recognise the importance of the modern kitchen. A number of properties recently constructed in Monks Orchard have kitchens no larger **metric** [7ft by 9ft]., which, if entry and exit doors are taken into consideration, does not allow much space for essential equipment.

It, therefore, comes as no surprise that many of the planning applications for extensions are made by owners of recently constructed properties.

## PLANNING REPORT



### The Glade

CBP New Homes Ltd. have submitted two planning applications for the site at 72 The Glade that is situated on the corner of Greenview Avenue and adjoining the new estate of 14 houses purchased for social housing by Presentation Housing Association. The first proposal is to leave the existing building and to erect a detached four- bedroom house at side with integral garage and formation of vehicular access onto The Glade. The second proposal is for the demolition of existing building and the erection of a two -storey building comprising 2 two bedroom and 2 one-bedroom flats and formation of vehicular accesses onto The Glade and Greenview Avenue plus provision of parking spaces for four vehicles.

The bungalow and land originally formed part of the site at the rear of 72 – 80 The Glade, which was subject to speculative neglect for many years. Eventually planning permission was given for the erection of 14 three storey

four bedroom houses, the number deliberately kept below 15 to avoid the need to make appropriate provision to meet the affordable housing requirement. The original owner, who has now applied for planning permission, retained the bungalow and the land adjoining. This would seem a clever mechanism used by developers to overcome planning requirements.

It would have been preferable and more appropriate for the area of land to been treated as a complete site instead of being subject to piecemeal development. This would have allowed houses of a similar character to be constructed. The aforementioned proposal, if approved, will result in the erection of a house of contrasting design and appearance to the surrounding dwellings that would have a cramped and overcrowded layout out of keeping with the character of development in the surrounding area and result in an unsatisfactory relationship with adjoining residential property. On behalf of local residents MORA has submitted objections to both applications.

### **Orchard Avenue & High Trees**

In March 2003 Land Investment and Development submitted a planning application for the site at 79 – 85 Orchard Avenue. The proposal was the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of 9 detached houses with integral garages and a four-bedroom chalet bungalow with integral garage and formation of access road.

The aforementioned was followed by a separate application for the site of 2 High Trees and 81 Orchard Way. This proposal was for the demolition of 2 High Trees and the erection of a four bedroom detached house with integral garage and a three bedroom detached chalet bungalow with integral garage and formation of vehicular access onto High Trees.

Local residents supported by MORA and Councillors opposed both applications. The proposals were not discussed by the Croydon Development Control Committee because Land Investment and Development decided to appeal directly to the Secretary of State following the failure to determine the planning permission within the time allowed (the planning and development officers were engaged in industrial action at the time). The appeal having to be decided on an exchange of written statements and a site visit by an inspector, which took place on 13<sup>th</sup> January. The Inspector dismissed both appeals and planning permission was refused. In his reasons the Inspector took full account of the objections made on behalf of local residents.

### **Wickham Road / Cheston Avenue**

Children Child Care Ltd. has applied for planning permission for the Tudor Lodge at 377, Wickham Road. The proposal is for alterations and use as day nursery for a maximum of 66 children; erection of single storey side and rear



extensions; alterations to vehicular accesses onto Cheston Avenue and Wickham Road and provision of associated parking. The residents living in properties in Cheston Avenue have genuine concerns about the number of additional vehicles that will be attracted to the area. Young children are usually transported to nursery by car, which in order for the children to alight safely, will need to be parked in Cheston Avenue. The Wickham Road (A232) linking Croydon to Bromley is part of a designated red route that is used by public transport and heavy lorries throughout the day and especially during the morning and late afternoon. The additional vehicles parked in nearby roads will have an adverse affect on the flow of traffic and create safety problems for other road users and pedestrians. MORA has joined with Spring Park Residents' Association in submitting objections to the proposal.

### **The Tree Nursery Site, Shirley Oaks Village**

The following update is from Mick Hewish, Chairman of the Shirley Oaks Nature Reserve Committee.

Shipmeade Properties has appealed against Croydon Council's decision to refuse planning permission for the Garden of Remembrance. The Planning Inspectorate at Bristol informed us that this could be decision based on written representations from all concerned. The two Residents Associations, Shirley Oaks Hospital, local conservation groups and our Councillors have written to the Inspectorate and asked for a Local Hearing instead. Everyone will be able to have his or her say at the hearing, and then the Inspectorate will make a decision.

We have just been informed that this request has been granted due to the amount of interest in the site, and the date of the hearing will be advised later.

### **Rylands Fields**

The much maligned Council scheme to build a pool and indoor sports centre on the raised playing field adjacent to the Arena tram stop is again open to challenge. The Council planned to close and sell the South Norwood Pools in Portland Road, after spending over a million pounds on refurbishment, and adopt a Private Finance Initiative scheme to build a pool and indoor sports centre on metropolitan open land which forms part of a wildlife corridor linking the golf range, Long Lane woods and Ashburton Playing Fields. Subsequent to a flawed consultation process, Croydon Council gave themselves planning permission, by one vote, on 5<sup>th</sup> June and then had to hold a second vote, with the same result, when residents discovered that the procedures for the environmental impact assessment had not been followed. MORA supports the No to the Arena (NAG) South Norwood Residents' Association, The Friends of South Norwood Country Park and Ryelands Primary School in objecting to the development. The proposed development, due to its size, scale and general appearance would be visually intrusive and would strike a discordant note in the context of the openness of Metropolitan Open Land.

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Furthermore, it would add to the traffic congestion problem that already exists in the area. The Secretary of State has called a public enquiry that adds to doubts about the way the proposed scheme has been handled by the Council.

## HOUSING OF THE FUTURE



Many years have passed since we were instructed to save energy by insulating and draft proofing our homes. There is now a need for much more drastic measures because of the growing threat of global warming coupled with the need to conserve fossil fuels and reduce emissions. The United Kingdom supports the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and this requires even greater energy efficiency and emission limitation that will eventually change the way we live, travel and work. New building regulations are in the process of being drafted that will completely change house design and construction. The Lord Mayor of London is spearheading a move to ensure that 'the vast majority' of new homes in London are powered by solar panels under a new proposal, which comes into force next month.



These measures answer only part of the many problems facing planners and politicians as they try to meet the demand for housing in the 21<sup>st</sup>. century. The need is for high density, affordable housing, built on sound environmental principles, which will have energy and water efficiency and contribute to sustainable living

without degrading the environment. The new house of the future will face south to make the most of the heat from the sun, have excellent insulation and triple glazed windows. It will also have a wind or solar power unit able to cut mains consumption by a third plus a water saving device that will be able to make the most use of rain and recycled water. The homes will be fitted with water efficient washing machines and toilets to keep water consumption to a minimum. Workspace will be included offering the option to work at home and cutting out commuting.

The environmentally friendly energy efficient home may be viewed as something drawn from a science fiction but such houses have and are being constructed, In Beddington a former sewage works has been turned into 100 properties for sale and rent. The project is called BedZed (the Beddington Zero Energy Development). The development aims to be a beacon to show how the demand for housing can be met without destroying the countryside. It shows that an eco-friendly lifestyle can be easy affordable and attractive – something that people will want to do. This is a unique project, being the first to incorporate up-to-the-minute thinking on sustainable development into every aspect of the scheme, from the energy efficient design to the way the

houses are heated. The energy used is from renewable sources generated on site. It is the first large-scale 'carbon neutral' community i.e. the first not to add to the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. All sewage is treated on site using a 'Green Water Treatment System'.

This pioneering green village, composed of 100 properties, is totally different in appearance than most traditional estates; from a distance it looks like a series of linked factory or storey units. The buildings are constructed of steel and glass, brightly coloured and have roof gardens. Of the 100 properties at BedZed, 52 are for outright sale and 23 are available through shared ownership. All the shared ownership properties are now sold. The guide price for the remaining galleried apartments is £170,000. BedZed is situated on the Carshalton Road A237. Nearest railway station Hackbridge. Full information can be accessed on [www.bedzed.org.uk](http://www.bedzed.org.uk)

## PLANNING WATCH



It is always helpful to have advanced notice of the activities of planners and developers. If developers ask you to sell your land or property, please contact Bob Akers, telephone number [REDACTED]. A full list of planning application received and decisions made can be viewed on the Council web site: For planning applications in 2003 - <http://www.croydon.gov.uk/environment/DCandE/Planning/PlanControl/PlanApps/RecApps03/>. For planning applications in 2004 - <http://www.croydon.gov.uk/environment/DCandE/Planning/PlanControl/PlanApps/109865/>.

## SECURITY AND CRIME PREVENTION



### **LONDON GETS SAFER – a Metropolitan Police update – January 2004**

#### **A record year for Crimestoppers**

Londoners' tip-offs to the Crimestoppers Unit in 2003 led to 25 murder charges and the seizure of drugs, guns and stolen goods to the value of £1 million. 590 arrests were made thanks to intelligence from the unit – 100 more than during 2002. Eighteen people were charged with firearms offences, 215 in relation to drugs and 33 for other serious crimes. Londoners made 41,583 calls to the Crimestoppers hotline - 0800 555 111 - last year.

#### **Video link facilitates testimony**

The Met's Overt Operations unit installed a digital camera and ISDN link into the home of a frail 96 year old woman. Her testimony by video-feed into court allowed her to present evidence to help secure an eight year sentence for the man who had burgled her.

## Cold case justice

A man has been convicted of rape fourteen years after the crime was committed thanks to improved forensics and the skill and perseverance of officers. The woman, 77 at the time of the assault and now deceased, had been too traumatised to ever make a full written statement to the police. When the Met's Sapphire Cold Case Investigations Team revisited the exhibits a year ago, the Forensic Science Laboratory was able to re test a previous unidentified sample. Advances in DNA techniques enabled the rapist to be identified and arrested.



## RE-CLASSIFICATION OF CANNABIS

Chief police officers have issued new guidelines on policing cannabis possession following the Government's proposal to reclassify cannabis from a Class B to a Class C drug, commencing Thursday 29 January 2004.

Announcing the new policing enforcement guidelines, Andy Hayman, Chairman of ACPO's (the Association of Chief Police Officers) Drugs Sub-Committee and Chief Constable of Norfolk Constabulary, said:

"Following a period of consultation these guidelines have been developed to provide police officers with straightforward operational guidance for dealing with simple cases of possession by adult offenders.

"The proposed reclassification of cannabis will mean that officers will still have a power of arrest for simple possession. In the spirit of the Home Secretary's decision to reclassify cannabis, the new guidance recommends that there should be a presumption against arrest. In practice, this means that in the majority of cases officers will issue a warning and confiscate the drug. Police officers will be expected to use their discretion and take the circumstances of each case into account before deciding whether to arrest or not.

"The guidance suggests that arrest will be considered in circumstances such as the smoking of cannabis in public view, repeated possession of the drug, public disorder as a result of cannabis possession or possessing cannabis in the vicinity of premises frequented by young people, such as schools and youth clubs. Young people (under 18s) who are found in possession of cannabis will receive a formal warning at a police station.

Borough Commander Ch Supt Vicki Marr said: "The re-classification of cannabis will allow us to focus more police time and resources on Class A drugs. That said, our message is clear, despite the reclassification, it remains illegal to possess cannabis and repeat offenders will be treated accordingly. If cannabis is smoked in open public view, for example, inside or in the vicinity of, premises frequented by young people or if there are local policing problems linked to Cannabis use we will continue to use the full powers of arrest available to us".

## NEWS RELEASES: WEEK-ENDING 30/01/04



On Friday 23 January 2004, a man was sentenced to six years imprisonment for rape. In March 2003 a Polish couple arrived in the UK and were staying in lodgings in the Croydon area whilst waiting for their visitors permit to be accepted. The couple were eager to find work and someone from the lodgings put them in touch with a man who promised to find them work as cleaners. On Saturday 5 April 2003, the man drove the female member of the couple to his home address under the pretext that they would be testing some cleaning equipment. It was here that he raped the victim. The incident was reported to Police and the man was subsequently arrested on Saturday 5 April 2003. On Friday 23rd January 2004 the court found him guilty and he was sentenced to six years.

DC Rob Buckell, Croydon Sapphire Unit said " Any sex offence is horrendous but this was a particularly cruel one committed by an apparent respectable businessman against a young foreign tourist who had only been in the UK a couple of weeks. Not only did he rape her, he gave her an infection and got her pregnant, which had to be terminated. This affected both the victim and her partner and this verdict sends out a powerful signal to those who commit this type of crime. The MPS will use all of its available resources to hunt down and bring these offenders to justice. Our thoughts go out to the victim and her partner."

On 23 January 2004, a 26 year old man from New Addington was charged with GBH with intent and will appear at Croydon MC on 6 Feb 2004. This follows an appeal to the public the previous week. An appeal was launched locally with CCTV stills released to help identify the two individuals involved in a vicious bus attack in Homestead Way, New Addington on a young male on 19 December 2003. The incident happened on the 464 Metro bus. T/DC Drew said "As a result of the appeal a great number of people contacted us and Crimestoppers. I would like to thank all those people who came forward and gave valuable information which has assisted us with our enquiries".

DS Quinn originally described the attack as "a violent and savage attack on a young boy who had been out with friends for the evening".

## Bogus Caller Alerts

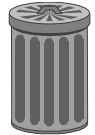


She is described as a white female, aged about 32 years of age, with very long blonde hair, wearing a dark fur trimmed hat, also described as felt or Russian. She is most active between 1200 to 1400 hours and 1900 to 2000 hours. She knocks on doors claiming she is a neighbour and has been locked out of her home/lost her house keys and needs cash to get to Epsom or Croydon. Please let the police know if you or your neighbours encounter her.



## BOGUS CHURCH VISITORS

On 27 January at 11.05 in Thornton Heath, two elderly occupants answered the door to three suspects who stated that they were from the church and asked to come in. They were described as a white female aged about 30 years and 5'5" tall, a white male aged about 26 years and also 5'5" tall and a black male aged about 40 years, 5'8" and wearing a brown jacket. When they were refused entry, all three barged their way into the premises. During a struggle, the victims were punched and kicked, the phone line was ripped out of the wall and the struggle continued as the suspects searched the ground floor but eventually decamped empty handed.



## Rolling Rubbish Collection

The Spring issue of the newsletter usually contains information of the rounds and dates of the annual rolling rubbish collection. It is regretted that the rounds are unlikely to take place this year as a direct result of a cost cutting exercise by the Council. Abandoning these extra collections in which lorries tour areas picking up large items of waste could save the Council about £80,000. Cllr. Ryan the Council's cabinet member for the environment has stated that rolling rubbish is an old-fashioned service that is bad for the environment. He also added that adequate alternatives were in place that included offering individual residents free collection of seven items of bulky waste a year, the provision of reduced-priced compost bins to encourage people to recycle garden and kitchen waste and plans to expand kerbside recycling facilities.

The rolling rubbish collections were very popular with members of MORA who used them to get rid of items that would not normally be accepted by the cleaning operatives. The people worst hit will be those members without vehicles in which to transport their rubbish to the dump. There are those that think the economy will be counter-productive and will result in more items of rubbish being dumped on open spaces throughout the borough.

MORA has written to the Council to ask for the rolling rubbish service to be retained but single complaints are likely to be ignored. MORA has joined with other Croydon residents' association in organising a coordinated campaign for the service to be reinstated.



## Make Your Garden Greener

Gardens produce plenty of waste, but composting provides a practical way of disposing of it in an environmentally friendly manner and generating a rich soil nutrient to be re-used in the process. Subsidised by funds from Central Government, Croydon Council is offering discounted compost bins.

At just £5 to Croydon residents, the compost machine 220 is perfect for any size garden and has a hatch to allow easy access to the compost you produce. There are a limited number of bins on offer at this special price, and only one application per household, so place your order today!

24-hr order hotline: 0845 130 60 90, or order on-line at:  
[www.getcomposting.com/croydon](http://www.getcomposting.com/croydon). Money-back guarantee.

## 29th Croydon Scout Group



### BEAVERS, CUBS & SCOUTS

Boys between the ages of 6 to 14 years can join this scout group as follows:

Beavers (age 6 to 8)

Cubs (age 8 to 10½)

Scouts (age 10½ to 14)

If your son is under 6, his name can be put on the waiting list.

### ADULT HELP REQUIRED

Do you have a couple of hours each week or month to spare and want to help Shirley youth enjoy Scouting?

**FURTHER INFORMATION** on all of the above can be obtained by telephoning Dave Smith, the Group Scout Leader, on [REDACTED].

## The 6th Great Book Sale

Thousands of books at bargain prices



**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2004**  
**10 am – 4 pm, Shirley Methodist Church**  
**Eldon Avenue, Shirley.**



**COLLECTING NOW!**

Good quality paperbacks, hardbacks, children's books, CDs, tapes, records and videos will be greatly received at any of the following:

Mr. Stephen Hunt  
Mr. Jonathan Baxter  
Mr. Bob Wakefield



No deliveries to the church, please.

[www.GreatBookSale.org.uk](http://www.GreatBookSale.org.uk)

**Last collecting day is 29<sup>th</sup> February.**

# ADVERTISING INSERT



This issue of the newsletter contains an advertising insert giving details of some of the services on offer in the neighbourhood, and we hope that you will find them of help and interest. The extra income gained will be used to improve the service provided for members. The advertisers have been selected with care and only those companies and service providers that have demonstrated their commitment to a fair, professional and honest trade have been included. Anyone wishing to advertise in future issues of the newsletter should contact Terry Greenwood telephone: [REDACTED].

## ACCOUNT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST. DECEMBER 2003

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2003</b>		<b>2002</b>
Subscriptions	3800		2659
Bank Interest	29		31
Advertising Revenue	550		-
	-----		-----
	4379		2690
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>2003</b>		<b>2002</b>
Printing & Stationery	2367		2283
Road Stewards	400		400
Hall Hire	16		15
Vestry Hire	187		187
Chairman's/Secretarial Expenses	37		65
Sundries	165		-
Insurance	140		346
Donations	-		300
Audit	10		10
Website	20		100
Subscription to BCTV	25		25
Total	<u>3367</u>		<u>3731</u>
Surplus	1012	Deficit	1041
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>2003</b>		<b>2002</b>
Current Account	3503		2505
Deposit Account	4820		4806
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	Nil		Nil
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>	8323		7311
<b>REPRESENTED BY</b>			
Surplus at 1.1.2003	7311		8352
Surplus for Year	<u>1012</u>	Deficit	<u>1041</u>
Surplus at 31/12/03	£8323		£7311

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2003/4

<b>Chairman:</b>	<b>BOB AKERS</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Vice Chairman &amp; Secretary:</b>	<b>ANNE JOHNSON</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Membership Secretary:</b>	<b>ALYCE MENHINNITT</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Hon. Treasurer &amp; Advertising Manager:</b>	<b>TERRY GREENWOOD</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Editor:</b>	<b>DEREK RITSON</b> Email: monksorchardweb@btinternet.com Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Transport &amp; Highways Officer &amp; Area Manager:</b>	<b>ELAINE ECKHARDT</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Social Secretary:</b>	<b>CHRISTINE ROSS-SMITH</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Police Liaison/Security:</b>	<b>JEAN COOK</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Hon. Historian:</b>	<b>CHARLES HUTCHINGS</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Primary Care:</b>	<b>MARCIA NASH</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Planning Officer:</b>	<b>IAN CONNOLLY</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Area Manager:</b>	<b>MICHAEL NASH</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Area Manager:</b>	<b>PATRICIA TURNER</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Committee Member:</b>	<b>MARGARET DOMONEY</b> Tel: [REDACTED]
<b>Minutes Secretary:</b>	<b>VACANT</b>