

Monks Orchard Residents' Association

www.monks-orchard-web.org.uk

Croydon

(Non Party)

(Independent)

NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2003

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

The massive rise in Council tax is a bitter pill for ratepayers to swallow but especially for those on pensions and fixed incomes. The two flawed and highly expensive referenda offered residents low increase options for purely political reasons. Subsequent to last years elections a huge black hole was discovered in the Council's finances and ratepayers are now being forced to plug the gap.

Services have been reduced, schools are starved of cash and money is still being wasted. To have the third highest council tax increase in England suggests mismanagement on a grand scale.

Unfortunately, there is very little a Residents' Association can do to change things but it can try to ensure that those living in Monks Orchard receive a fair share of the available services.

BETHLEM UPDATE

The Bethlem Planning Appeal took place at Bromley Civic Centre on the 8th through to 18th April 2003. The result of the appeal is not due until the 2nd June 2003.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of CABBE, especially Ian Muir, and the members of the West Beckenham Residents' Association for their valued assistance in protesting against the proposed development and representing MORA at the appeal hearing.

Further updates will be available on the CABBE website (www.cabbe.org), on our website (www.monks-orchard-web.org.uk), or in further newsletters. For further details, see the 'Bethlem Appeal' section of the Minutes of the AGM.

MONKS ORCHARD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the 79th Annual General Meeting of Monks Orchard Residents' Association held at St. George's Church on Friday 28th March 2003.

Bob Akers opened the meeting by welcoming members to the 79th Annual General Meeting of the Monks Orchard Residents' Association. He drew attention to the fact that the association is now in its eightieth year, a remarkable milestone. He also welcomed Councillor Eddie Arram, Councillor Derek Loughborough, Councillor Janet Marshall, Councillor Avril Slipper, Geraint Davies M. P. and P.C. Kevin Hitch.

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Richard Chatterjee, Councillor Michael Fisher, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Hutchins. P.C. Derek Walpole, Mrs B.A. Britton, Mr. J.D. Hussey, Mrs. L. Payne.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

This was held on Friday 22nd March 2002, and the minutes were published in the April edition of the newsletter and copies distributed at this AGM: the minutes were approved.

Matters Arising

Item 8. At the last meeting a question was asked about the timing of the traffic lights situated near the Shirley Library in the Wickham Road. The minutes of the meeting, as published in the newsletter, evoked a response from a traffic expert living in accommodation overlooking the crossroad. He was able to explain the amount of research undertaken before the timings were agreed. Special consideration was given to the elderly and frail people that have to cross at this busy road junction.

Item 8. It was acknowledged that the storage situation outside the Co-op supermarket in Wickham Road had improved.

Chairman's Report

It was reported that the association has been very active during the past year. Responding to pressure from members, a campaign against the plan to expand the Medium Secure Unit at the Royal Bethlem Hospital was started and is being maintained. This has proved a very important concern and MORA is working closely with CABBE (Campaign Against Bethlem Building Expansion) and adjoining residents associations to oppose the proposal that will result in an increase of crime and the fear of crime. Detailed and lengthy submissions have been made to the public appeal enquiry that opened on Tuesday 8th April.

A campaign has been mounted against further installations of telecommunication masts, especially in sensitive locations such as nurseries, schools and near domestic properties. MORA is not alone; all over the country protesters are campaigning, usually unsuccessfully, against proposals to erect mobile phone masts, which are considered a threat to health. So great is the concern that a mast in Tiverton Devon, erected against the wishes of local residents was attacked and demolished in a night attack.

MORA is continuing to support the campaign against the proposal to create a Garden of Remembrance on the land adjoining Poppy Lane Shirley Oaks. Together with the committee of Shirley Oaks Nature Reserve and Shirley Oaks Hospital; documents have been submitted to the Planning department stating local objections to the plan.

There has also been engagement with the revision process of the Unitary Development Plan. Changes sought by MORA are those concerning the loss of metropolitan open land, telecommunication masts, shopping parades, road safety and street parking. The Chair said that he is pleased to be able to confirm that membership of the association remains strong.

Treasurer's Report.

John Walkington confirmed that the accounts are in good order. A copy of the audited accounts for 2002 was published in the spring issue of the newsletter and copies were available for inspection. It was noted that for the first time during the past six or more years that expenditure has exceeded income. The previous year there was a surplus of £200 and this year there is a deficit of £1041. The reason for the deficit is that we have published additional editions of the newsletter, printed posters and produced documents in support of the campaign against the expansion of the Medium Secure Unit at the Royal Bethlem Hospital. The size and content of the quarterly newsletter has also been increased and printing costs have therefore risen. The accounts were approved.

Although there is a healthy balance in the accounts it was noted that the deficit must not be allowed to continue. The Executive Committee has compiled a budget for the year and has identified where economies can be made. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in contact with our members by continuing to produce an informative newsletter and to maintain an updated web site that allows members fast access to information. It is also vital to maintain a good fighting fund in case it is necessary to employ legal or professional advice. It was noted that consideration must soon be given to increasing membership balanced with increasing the fees of membership to cover running costs.

PLANNING REPORT



It was reported that there has been a slight reduction in development activity during the past year. As in previous years the majority of the applications were proposals to alter or extend existing properties. It is clear that the addition of a double glazed conservatory is now one of the most popular ways of increasing domestic living space. The increasing demand for housing means that properties with large gardens remain under constant threat by developers.

The emerging London Plan requires boroughs to increase the provision for additional homes which will result in pressure for higher density housing to be built in the area. Glade Developments have recently gained permission to build 15 houses on the land rear of 72 and 74-80 The Glade. Most of these will have accommodation in the roof space thereby producing a three story type dwellings in an area that once was occupied by bungalows. Higher density housing also produces parking and traffic problems that must be addressed. The revision of the Croydon Plan also mentions that making use of the roof area can expand living space. This is acceptable if the additional space is well designed and of an acceptable standard. Sadly some roof extensions do not meet these criteria and are out of keeping with adjoining properties.

Bethlem Hospital

Members will be able to recall that at last years Annual General Meeting there was a presentation followed by a discussion of the planning application made by The South London and Maudsley NHS Trust for the erection of a new secure unit to accommodate extra patients for mental health care. During the summer both Bromley and Croydon Councils turned down the application but an appeal has been made against this decision. The appeal hearing is to be held on Tuesday 8th. April beginning at 10 a.m. at the Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley. As a result of making detailed written submissions, MORA could have had a more formal role at the public enquiry but this was not possible because of the unaffordable costs of engaging legal counsel. It was, therefore, decided to follow the lead of Spring Park, West Wickham and West

Beckenham residents associations and to ask CABBE to represent our interests at the enquiry. (Ed: which they have undertaken with exemplary effort and for which we are extremely grateful).

The hearing is expected to last six days. It is hoped that as many objectors as possible will attend on the first day of the enquiry on Tuesday 8th April in order to fully demonstrate the amount of public concern.

At the Pre-enquiry meeting held on 9th December the Inspector was concerned by the lack of representation from Croydon Council. Bromley Council has arranged for a legal representation at the enquiry but Croydon Council have only made a short written submission covering the principal issues of fear of crime and the effect on the open character of the Metropolitan Open Land. Hugh Malyan, the Leader of Croydon Council has made it clear that, in his opinion, a written submission properly represents the interests of local residents. This opinion conflicts with the views of local ratepayers, Bromley Council and those of the Planning Inspectorate that has confirmed that an appearance at the enquiry will add strength and clarity to the objections tabled and provides an opportunity to submit further information. It also allows accurate answers to be given to any questions raised by the planning inspector or other parties present. Despite constant pressure from local ratepayers, residents associations and councillors, Hugh Malyan, the leader of the Council, has refused to change his position (Ed: What is our Council Tax for, if we as Council Tax payers cannot get adequate Council representation on major residents' issues of this nature?).

Shirley Oaks Tree Nursery

Mick Hewish, Chair of Shirley Oaks Nature Reserve Committee, gave the following report:



The saga of the old tree nursery site in Shirley Oaks continues. The land has developed naturally into a beautiful wilderness and local residents already have Planning Permission to create a Wildlife Reserve on the site but the owner refuses to sell the land.

For the fourth time in as many years the owner has applied for permission to develop the site. His first attempt for a cemetery was opposed and withdrawn. Two other applications for a Garden of Remembrance were refused by the Council Planning Committee because of the conservation value of the land. He has again applied for use of the land for a Garden of Remembrance.

In an attempt to reduce the conservation value of the site the owner requested a Walkover Survey of the site. His "expert" reported that the site has no badgers or bats on site. This has been refuted with pictures of the badgers and a report from a bat survey confirming two types of bats on site. The London Ecology Unit has confirmed that the site has conservation value.

In another attempt to reduce the conservation value of the site the owner employed a bulldozer to strip the vegetation into large piles ready for burning. This would remove winter habitat and food supply for the wildlife. But our prayers were answered when Environmental Health Officers prevented the contractor from burning the piles of shrubs, local residents had complained of bonfire nuisance. The wildlife kept their homes and food at least for this winter. A blanket Tree Protection Order has stopped any trees being removed.



Shipmeade Properties was quoted in the Croydon Advertiser as stating that their agents are clearing rubbish as well as dead and diseased trees for the benefit of the environment. If this was truly the case why has all the rubbish been piled up and left all this time at the entrance causing a terrible eyesore?

The latest chapter is that the owner has submitted a revised application to include areas of Conservation/Landscaping. This is yet another ploy to deceive the Planning Committee. It does not state if these areas are for Landscaping or Conservation. These are two completely different uses of the land.

The Shirley Oaks Nature Reserve Committee will continue to fight for the protection of the wildlife in the area and hopes that your Association will continue its strong opposition to this use of the land. I thank your Chair Bob Akers for his help, support and actions in opposing this application.

Security Report



Mrs. Cook. began by reporting that there has been improvements in graffiti removal, and Telewest have promised to remove the graffiti from their cable boxes. Shrubs, which overhang onto the pavement and pose a danger to pedestrians, are being lopped. Abandoned vehicles continue to be targeted and removed. Vehicles offered for sale now have to be parked on private land, not on the highway. Croydon now has more Police Officers and Street Wardens have been introduced in some parts of the borough. The Minstead operation is continuing but it appears that the culprit has once again gone into hiding.

Mrs. Cook said that the latest crime figures were not available in time for her to announce but these will be published in the next issue of the newsletter [Ed: This will now be published in the summer edition of the newsletter]. She reported that garden and garage crime is on the increase and householders are advised to tighten their security. Sheds and garages should be fitted with secure locks and window openings protected by the attachment of wire mesh inside the glazing.

Report Back by Councillors

Subsequent to the changes in the electoral boundaries, the geographical area of Monks Orchard is now split between two electoral wards and as a consequence there are now six councillors. Councillors Richard Chatterjee, Michael Fisher and Janet Marshall represent those living in the Shirley ward. Councillors Eddy Arram, Derek Loughborough and Avril Slipper represent those living in the Ashburton ward. It was stated that they are busy people and it might not always be possible for them to attend every Annual General Meeting. The Chair was pleased that some had attended to introduce themselves.

Report by Councillor Derek Loughborough.

Councillor Loughborough began by offering thanks to The Chair and the Executive Committee of MORA for successfully representing the views of residents. He reported that he and his fellow councillors are dealing with a number of planning issues. If a look was taken at the centre of the town, large parts of it are being redeveloped - not always, in his view, for everybody's benefit. As mentioned in the MORA newsletter, copies of the Croydon Plan are available and the revision exercise is proceeding. Residents can inspect copies of the plan in local libraries. The revision process is complicated but if anyone has any particular concerns or points to make, he and his colleagues will ensure that they are forwarded and receive attention.

Attention was drawn to the Council's green postcards that are obtainable from local libraries. These are post free, and can be used to report abandoned vehicles, graffiti, dumped rubbish, defective footpaths and a range of environmental problems. Given a bit of luck the problem is usually attended to within seven days.

Councillor Loughborough then acknowledged that residents had now received the news of the record increase in their Council tax. This from the Council's point of view was a colossal political issue. One side says that it is total mismanagement and the other says that if you want the services they have to be paid for - a clear choice. He and his colleagues agree that economies could be made. He was quite sure that the vast majority of residents are greatly upset by the amount of the increase, particularly pensioners who received a 1.7% increase in their retirement pensions and a 27% increase in their council tax.

Councillor Loughborough answered the following questions.

Q. A resident mentioned that her rates had risen by £33 a month and could not foresee them ever being reduced.

A. Councillor Loughborough responded by saying that he and his colleagues could run the services without such a massive increase. The Government had not been so generous with the funding this year, however, there have already been £12 million worth of cuts in local services because the council discovered a black hole in the accounts immediately after the local elections.

The 27% increase is to maintain services following these cuts. It is proposed to increase spending on some services (for example, £3 million on the new street and rubbish clearing). A large amount of this would have had to be paid anyway because the contractors would be anticipating increases in wage settlements over the five years of the contract. One of the big problems that exist at this particular moment is the crisis in school finances. There are deficits of anything up to £½ million and schools cannot cope with this without reducing teaching strength. Furthermore there are increases in teacher's salaries, national insurance, pensions, and the London allowance. All these increases have to be met out of the educational budget and a sum of £10 million is needed to cover these extra costs. The Government has given £13 million but this is only one tenth of the amount required. The money overspent this year will have to be found next year.

Q. It was asked if council tax payments could be spread over twelve months instead of ten.

A. Councillor Loughborough responded by saying that the law of the land required for the payments to be made over ten months.

Q. It was asked if the cost of feeding and housing asylum seekers added to the cost of the local rates?

A. It was confirmed that the cost was met from national taxes. The one cost that is met by the local ratepayer is that of the children that arrive in this country unaccompanied. At present there is approximately 200 children supported by the borough.

Q. It was mentioned that the cost of using the South Norwood Swimming Pool has been doubled and this had been coupled with a lowering of the standard of cleaning. Apparently the reason is that members of staff are leaving and are not being replaced.

A. Councillor Loughborough said that he would forward the complaint. He agreed that the council is increasing the fees and contributions for all its services; parking charges, for example.

Q. It was asked why Hugh Malyan had refused to properly represent the views of local ratepayers at the Royal Bethlem Hospital appeal. It was stressed that if expansion of the medium secure unit is permitted further building will take place and the green site will be lost forever.

A. Councillor Loughborough said that Hugh Malyan had probably taken the advice offered by the Director of Planning.

Q. It was asked if the local Councillors would be attending or speaking at the appeal hearing.

A. It was thought that this was unlikely.

Footnote: A letter from Jenny Dunne, Head of Revenue Benefits Croydon Council was published in the Croydon Advertiser on 18th.April. She writes that the council has reviewed payment options and will, when requested, allow

payments to be made in February and March if residents make payments by direct debit.

Report Back by Geraint Davies M. P.

The Chair said that everyone was aware of the pressure on Members of Parliament at the present time. He was therefore pleased that our local M.P. Geraint Davies had been able to attend and give his report.

Geraint Davies began by saying that many people have written to him about the rise in Croydon Council Tax. He said that nobody wishes to have a 27% increase but it was important to understand why. He explained that three years ago the council tax in Croydon was below the London average, The last two council tax increases, which were subject to a referendum, raised the charge by 2% in 2001/2 and 3.6% in 2002/3 which only covered the extra cost to the Greater London Authority. If this was taken into account the council tax actually went down over this period. The cost of services continues to rise and there is now a need for an adjustment that moves Croydon council tax back up to where it was, just below the London average. Obviously people are slightly bemused by this but this is basically what has happened. There has been a tax holiday and then a readjustment. Residents should not blame the central government as the money provided from this source has risen by 32% since 1997. At present, central government pays 70% of service costs.

People are rightly concerned about the problems with school finances, but over this period the money going to schools has been increased by a third. In Croydon the amount per pupil has grown from £1952 to £2569. During the period 1996 – 2002 the number of teachers and support staff has risen by 549 to a total of 4,718. That is 124 extra teachers and 425 support staff so there are now smaller classes and more teachers, and during this time there have been better results in Croydon schools. For example, the proportion of those gaining 5 A to C GCSEs rose from 45% to 49% last year. There were eleven failing schools in 1997 and now there are none because the schools have responded positively to new investment. He acknowledged that concerns were being expressed by school Heads and Governors. What has happened is that the government settlement this year was 3½% (an extra £8.3 million), but this money is insufficient to cover the welcome increases in pay and pensions for teachers that are expected to cost in excess of £10 million.

The Government has agreed with Croydon Council to increase the schools budget by £105 million. One of the difficulties is that some of this amount is used for centrally provided Special Educational Needs provided by the Council which means that not all this money is going to schools. To help overcome these difficulties he has held meetings with the Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott and Education Secretary Charles Clark and has secured the town's schools an extra £2 million. He has also got the Council

to provide at least an extra £500,000 for schools this year. New cash will be used to replace “Standards Funds”, with secondary schools typically receiving an extra £50,000, and primary schools £20,000. David Miliband, the schools Minister has assured him that the Government will improve Croydon’s schools budget next year.

Geraint Davies then referred to the opposition to the installation of telecommunication masts and mentioned that he has been campaigning against these. His latest pitch on this problem is that technological advances in the United States will result in telecommunication masts becoming obsolete because the signals can now be transmitted via satellite, He is pressing for the telecommunication technology used in this country to be advanced to the American standard.

Geraint Davies answered the following question:

Q. It was asked why is money being spent on war when there are shortages in the funding of education.

A. Geraint Davis said that no one wanted a war but the disarmament of Iraq is important. He explained why and stressed that the involvement of Great Britain is essential to help ensure that at the end of the war there is proper democracy and human rights for the Iraq citizens. The Government is continuing to increase investment in Britain’s schools paid for by the extra 1.5million people in work, paying tax instead of drawing dole. The cost of war is a one off and will not affect annual education investment which will rise in Croydon next year.

Election of Officers and Committee for 2003/2004

The Chair said he was delighted to be able to report that during the past year two members, Elaine Eckhardt and Rovanna Groves, agreed to be co-opted to the Executive Committee. They and all the present members have agreed to serve for a further year.

John Walkington has indicated that he wishes to stand down as Vice-Chairman but is willing to continue acting as Honorary Treasurer. Ann Johnson, our Secretary, has been formally nominated as Vice-Chairman. No other nominations have been received and Miss Johnson was therefore elected unopposed. In order to save time The Chair suggested that the Executive Committee be proposed, seconded and elected en bloc.

The Executive Committee for 2003 will be as follows:

Bob Akers (Chairman), Anne Johnson (Vice Chairman and Secretary), John Walkington (Treasurer), Alyce Menhinnitt (Membership Secretary), Derek; Ritson (Editor), Jean Cook (Police Liaison/Security), Charles Hutchins (Honorary Historian), Marcia Nash (Primary Care Liaison), Christine Ross-Smith (Social Secretary), Michael Nash (Area Manager), Elaine Eckhardt (Area Manager), Rovanna Groves.

The Chair stressed that additional help is needed. If any member is willing to devote a couple of hours each month to the help the association please let him know. He warmly thanked all those that act as Road Stewards and Area Managers. Without their help the association would be unable to continue.

Presentation of Life Membership

The only way that the association can acknowledge and honour those that have devoted their time and energy for the benefit of the local community is to award them an Honorary Life Membership. This means that they receive a certificate, a small token gift but most of all, their name is added to the role of those special people that have been honoured by the Association in the past.

The Chair said that he was pleased that John Walkington had agreed to accept this award. During the past ten years he has made a valuable contribution to the work of the association at a variety of levels, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Area Manager, Road Steward and helper with the rolling Rubbish Collections. The Association owes him a debt of gratitude for his unfailing willingness to help in difficult times.

Any Other Business

The Chair mentioned that a 27% increase in rates is a bitter pill for all residents to take, especially those on a fixed income, such as pensioners with small savings. Researches have shown that no Council service or wage settlement over the past year has given cause for this massive rise. To have to face the third highest council tax increase in England suggests mismanagement. The association exists to respond to local concerns. Members were asked if they wanted MORA to campaign against this increase; the proposal was endorsed.

Presentation

The Chair said that a major concern of local residents is crime and fear of crime. Opportunist thieves are responsible for many recorded crimes and often taking simple precautions can prevent these. He was pleased to welcome P. C. Kevin Hitch from the Crime Prevention Team who provided information on how to protect our property, our valuables and us.

P.C. Hitch began by drawing attention to the Home Office books and pamphlets that were on display. These contained useful information on what to do to reduce the risk of being a victim of crime and how to secure your home and garden. He said these could be taken away, read and passed on to others. Ultra violet marker pens were also available. P.C. Hitch mentioned the following in his presentation:

Marking of Property

Ultra violet markers can be used on all types of surface to covertly mark property, thereby providing protection. Write the house number and postcode or name on your valuables and household items including garden tools. When dry this leaves an indelible mark that can only be read using an u/v detection lamp. The police are being issued with an u/v detector

sufficiently small to be fitted to a key ring and allow immediate identification of articles that have been stolen. Ultra violet kits can be obtained from 'Selectamark' (01689 860757)

Preventing Bogus Callers



The tricks used by bogus callers, who often work in pairs or even in teams, are varied and keep changing. They may pretend to be genuine officials or, more simply, they may ask to use the telephone or request a drink of water. People continue to be 'conned' because they are too trusting. This type of crime is easy to prevent 'don't let them into your home.' Gas, water, electricity and some councils now operate a password system. Ask for details and enrol in the scheme.

Fitting a door chain or spy hole will help you check who the caller is. Genuine callers will usually carry an identification card and will be happy to make an appointment to call. If you have any doubts don't open the door. If you experience trouble fitting or using a chain the problem could, perhaps, be solved by using a door bar that are available from locksmiths. A new device called a 'Memo Minder' is now available that reminds vulnerable people to put on their security chain and to ask for identification from the caller. Spy or observation holes fitted to entry doors are less effective if you have poor eyesight or in bad lighting conditions. A larger version with improved optics and wider field of vision is now available.

Unscrupulous Tradesmen

Householders can become victim to dodgy trades people in a number of ways. They may knock on the door to inform you that your roof or chimney needs attention or contact is made by random to fix an emergency plumbing or electrical problem. Unscrupulous tradesmen often take advantage of your predicament by exaggerating the problem, or making it worse, and then charging an excessive payment for a small amount of substandard work. To avoid being placed in this position, contact the Council Trading Standards Services (020 8407 1310). They have a register of approved local tradesmen who have demonstrated their commitment to fair, professional and honest trade.

[Ed. We have included a link from our website, www.monks-orchard-web.org.uk, to Croydon Council's website for direct access to the register of approved traders].

Securing Sheds and Garages



A number of ground locks are now produced to secure garage doors. The 'Garage Door Defender', which is suitable for all types of door, has a base pillar made from armoured steel which is fixed permanently in position. A large 'T' shape restrictor slots over the pillar and is secured with a padlock.

Thefts from garden sheds and outbuildings are on the increase. Bicycles, lawn mowers and power tools are stolen and are then sold at Boot Fairs. Garden sheds should be secured with a stout hasp, staple and a padlock.

Alternatively, use an electronic shed alarm or a steel door bar secured with a padlock. Garage and shed door bars can be obtained from local locksmiths and hardware stores or direct from Brew Brothers (020 8311 1150). Purchasers should ask for items that have achieved 'Sold Secure' status.

Help Alarms

Older people, especially those living alone, should think about getting an alarm to use if they trip or fall at home. It can also be used to summon help with other problems such as bogus callers. The 'system' consists of a help alarm unit and a pendant. Pressing the button in the middle of the pendant operates the alarm unit that automatically dials one of the Care Centre's Operators who will know who you are and where you are. If you are near the alarm unit you will be able to talk to the operator (without picking up the phone) and request assistance. Pendants can be worn around the neck or on the wrist. They are waterproof and can be worn in the bath or shower. 'Seniorlink' alarms for the elderly are supplied through Help The Aged to the Crime Prevention Office (020 8649 1070). The alarms are fitted free on successful completion of an application form but there is a charge of approximately £1.50 per week to cover the cost of full 24hr. monitoring service.

P.C. Hitch answered the following questions:

Q. What is the best type of portable personal alarm and where can they be obtained?

A. These alarms can be electronic or the pressure type and they can be purchased from large department stores.

Q. Is it breaking the law for door-to-door salesman to call late when it is dark?

A. This activity is not against the law but reputable salesmen do not usually make visits after nightfall.

Concluding, the Chair asked those members present to let him know if they have any topics they would like included in future meetings. He thanked all the members for attending this evening to show their support and for taking an interest in the local community. He also thanked Councillors and Geriant Davies M.P. and P.C. Hitch for their contributions to the meeting.

PLANNING NEWS



Desperately short of cash and pressed by the Government to build more homes, the Council appears to be weakening in its resolve to reinforce and respect the existing pattern and siting of buildings and the space between them where they contribute to local character. Some very inappropriate developments, completely out of character with the surrounding area have been allowed in Monks Orchard. A good example is the development taking place on land the rear of 72 and 74-80 The Glade. Ignoring objections, permission was given for the erection of 15 four

bedroom detached/semi-detached three-storey houses on this small site. This high-density three-storey development will be used as a model by future developers that wish to maximise on their investment.

Orchard Avenue

Land Investment and Development have made an application to demolish the existing buildings at 79-85 Orchard Avenue and to erect 9 detached houses with integral garages plus a detached four bedroom chalet bungalow and formation of access road leading onto Orchard Avenue. A further application for full planning permission by the same developer is for the demolition of 2 High Trees and 81 Orchard Avenue and to erect a four bedroom detached house also a three bedroom detached bungalow with formation of vehicular access onto High Trees. Local residents supported by MORA are resisting both applications.

The Glade & Watlings Close

Hillcrest Homes (UK) Ltd. have made an application for outline planning to demolish the two bungalows at 102 & 104 The Glade and to erect 4 two storey three bedroom houses with accommodation in roof space and formation of vehicular accesses onto The Glade plus the erection of a pair of three bedroom semi-detached houses with formation of vehicular access onto Watlings Close. Local residents supported by MORA are resisting both applications.

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 applications received and decisions made can be viewed on the Croydon council web site: http://www.croydon.gov.uk/pddept/planning_applications.htm

LONG LANE TO ARENA TRAMSTOP FOOTPATH

Monks Orchard residents have discovered the advantage of using the tram as a convenient and fast mode of travel to East Croydon station and the centre of Croydon. There are those who also enjoy visiting West Norwood Country Park with its lakes, wetlands, wildlife and pitch and putt course. The Arena Tram stop and the Country Park is approached by the use of the narrow pathway which leads from Long Lane between the golf range and the Tollgate Estate to the Arena tram stop. Complications arose when the path became part of the National Cycle Network and there is now conflict between pedestrians and cyclists. Responding to the concerns of local residents, funding has now been secured to address this situation. The hedge alongside the path is to be removed and the existing pathway will be widened to four metres to allow the segregation between pedestrians and cyclists. The increase in width and the improved lighting may also serve to make the path appear safer for use especially after nightfall.





SPEED CALMING IN LONG LANE

Speed tables are to be introduced in Long Lane to reduce traffic speeds, provide more time for pedestrians to cross the road and to improve road safety throughout the area which should particularly benefit children, the elderly and those with mobility problems. The tables will be placed in Long Lane at the following approximate locations, (i) the junction with Bywood Avenue (ii) outside Numbers 152 and 154.

Bethlem Appeal

The enquiry opened on Tuesday 8th April and completed hearing evidence on Friday 18th April. The decision of the Planning Inspector will be made known on Monday 2nd June. The following attended the enquiry and spoke against the application. This Association owes them a debt of gratitude and thanks them for representing the views of the local community.

Nicholas Nardecchia, Barrister representing Bromley Council

Stuart Macmillan, Chief Planner, Bromley Council

Tony Lamb, expert-planning witness, G. L Hearn limited

Mr Beardsmore, planning policy witness, G.L Hearn limited

Lawrence Wright, Chairman CABBE

Pauline Stephens, CABBE

Ann Glover, CABBE

Ian Muir, West Beckenham Residents Association/CABBE

Nick Goy, West Beckenham Residents Association

Andrew Pelling GLAM and Leader of the Opposition Croydon Council.

Information Request! ?

Do you have any information on the following buildings?

Monks Orchard Mansion?

Park Farm?

South Lodge (by White Hart)?

Orchard Way (old houses pre 1970's)?

The Evening Standard Sports ground that was in the Bethlem Grounds?

The day centre at the rear of Eden way in the Bethlem grounds?

Eden Park area? Millers Pond?

Eden Park Hotel?

Shirley Park Farm?

Dower House (original)?

Holly lodge (North lodge)?

Beckenham Golf Course (in monks orchard area)?

The allotments that were in the Bethlem Grounds behind Eden way?

Spring Park area?

Harvington? Bennets Way?

Old cottages in Wickham Road?

The Old shops that were on the corner of Eden Park Avenue and Upper Elmers End Road?

Did you work on any of the Farms or in Monks Orchard Mansion? Have you any photos of the above?

Anything that is related to the above, the smallest bit of information will help. Any clubs, churches, or societies that may have a history that are within the above areas?

I am writing a book on Monks Orchard, and would appreciate any help you could possibly give. Contact Pat Manning on [REDACTED].

Email: [REDACTED]

Croydon NHS – Primary Care Trust

SOME WAITING TIME GOALS FOR CROYDON'S NHS...

- Improve access to out of hours care through NHS Direct by March 2004.
- Maximum wait of 4 hours in A&E from arrival to admission/transfer or discharge by March 2004.
- Access to a primary care professional within 24 hours by Dec 2004.
- Access to a primary care doctor within 48 hours by Dec 2004.
- All outpatient appointments and inpatient elective admissions to be pre-booked by Dec 2005.
- Maximum one month wait from diagnosis to treatment for all cancers by June 2005.
- Ensure 75% of eligible patients receive thrombolysis within 20 minutes of arrival at hospital by April 2003.
- Reduce bed-blocking in acute beds by reducing delayed discharges by 20% by March 2003.

All of the above have been taken from the Health Improvement and Modernisation Plan for Croydon 2002—2005. For a full copy please contact Jo Flint on 020 8274 6012.

FOR HELP WITH YOUR HEALTH...

Register with a GP	020 8274 6000
Mayday Hospital	020 8401 3000
Croydon Walk-In Centre	020 8666 0555
Emergency Contraception	020 7636 7866
Dental Emergency	020 8401 3443
Samaritans	0845 7909090



For medical advice out of hours:

NHS Direct	0845 4647
Croydoc at Mayday	020 8401 3637

MORA Theatre Trip

A New Show in London for a limited period!



CALAMITY JANE

Thursday 31 July 2003, best seats - £26.50 coach inclusive.

Pick up point in Wickham Road, opposite West Way Gardens, at 6.00pm.

Tickets will be given out on the coach. Hope you can join us!

For more details, contact: Christine Ross-Smith, Tel: [REDACTED]

AGE Information & Advice

Concern

PURLEY CROSS CENTRE
12a Brighton Road, Purley
Tel: 020 8763 2963

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

From 9am - 1pm (telephone service)

10am - 12noon (pop in).

The types of inquires we would be happy to help with are:

Benefits (checks, form filling, queries), Health/Disability matters, Housing, Leisure and Learning, Legal Matters, Care Homes, Minor Repairs, Consumer, Trades People. Home visits are also possible - please ask!

Rubbish Collection

PLEASE READ THIS CODE OF PRACTICAL ADVICE:

This code of practice is designed to minimize safety hazards that may arise during the provision of the service. All Associations and Groups must comply with the following; failure to do so may result in the service being withdrawn.

- It is expected that the maximum quantity per household will not be greater than 10 sacks or equivalent.
- In the interest of general safety and to reduce environmental impact, items for disposal should not be presented until the day of collection.
- The crew and/or Council Officer is in charge of the loading operations at all times. To assist the crew, they need to liaise with named representative(s) of the Association or Group. The representative(s) will be expected to accompany the crew throughout the collection and advise residents of the following:
- Residents should be encouraged to participate in bringing rubbish to the rear of the vehicle but **MUST NOT LOAD**.

- If items for disposal are being left unattended for removal by other members, then they must be placed at the front of each property close to the highway without causing obstruction on the footway.
- A 2 metre exclusion area at the rear of the vehicle must be observed during the vehicle compaction cycle.
- Children must not assist in the operation.
- If you are unsure of the acceptability of any item, please seek advice in advance from this office on 020 8 255 2700, or ask a crew member on the day of collection.
- Residents are encouraged to recycle as much as possible through existing recycling facilities.
- Gratuities should not be offered to the operatives.

To improve on site safety and comply with disposal regulations, some items cannot be accepted. These include:

- Large items such as washing machines, cookers and fridges (collection of these items can be arranged through this office on 020 8 255 2700).
- Asbestos.
- Waste from any commercial premise or operation.
- Car tyres/batteries.
- Paint, oil or similar liquids.
- Trees.
- Gas cylinders or aerosols.
- Corrosive, flammable, explosive or toxic substances.
- Construction waste (bricks, rubble etc).



Large amounts of rubbish are being dumped at the side of the road by non Mora members. Please would you leave your rubbish inside your garden, where it can easily be seen, and clearly marked MORA RUBBISH; or, by being there to assist. Any rubbish left on the side of the road will not be collected.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are now required by the Council, to provide a named representative(s) for each round. Also, three volunteers are needed for each round. If we haven't enough volunteers three weeks prior to the round, the round will unfortunately have to be CANCELLED.

If you would like to volunteer, please telephone:

Alyce Menhinnit on [REDACTED]
 OR Bob Akers on [REDACTED].

MORA RUBBISH COLLECTION DATES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

ROUND ONE: SUNDAY 1st JUNE

Dustcart meet at SHIRLEY AVE - Junct. with WICKHAM ROAD, down SHIRLEY AVE to SHIRLEY RD, up SHIRLEY RD, down BARNFIELD AVE, up VALLEY WALK, ELDON AVE, WICKHAM ROAD to ORCHARD AVE, down FIRSBY AVE, up VERDAYNE AVE, down RIDGEMOUNT AVE, up WICKHAM AVE, along WICKHAM ROAD to CHESTON AVE, PARKFIELDS; back to ORCHARD AVE (1-77/2-72) via WILKES GDNS, RUSSETT DRIVE, POTTERS CLOSE, then WOODLAND WAY, HIGH TREES.

ROUND TWO: SUNDAY 8th JUNE

Dustcart meet at CORNER of WOODMERE AVE/ORCHARD AVE, ELSTAN WAY, GRT GATTON CLOSE, TOWER VIEW & EDGEWOOD GREEN, WOODMERE AVE, PIPERS GDNS, ROUND GROVE, MERE END, WOODMERE CLOSE, WOODMERE GDNS, GLADESIDE nos: to 1-49/2-48) LORNE GDNS & LORNE AVE.

ROUND THREE: SUNDAY 15th JUNE

Dustcart meet at BYWOOD AVE, THE ROSERY, CHAFFINCH AVE, CHAFFINCH CLOSE, BROOKSIDE WAY, MEADOW AVE, GLADESIDE nos: 51-91/50-94 (as far as Lorne Avenue) via HOMER ROAD, GLADESIDE, FAIRHAVEN WAY, LAVENDAR WAY, GWYNNE AVE, GLENWOOD, MARDELL ROAD, LONGHEATH GDNS.

ROUND FOUR: SUNDAY 22nd JUNE

Dustcart meet at corner ORCHARD WAY/BURREL CLOSE, ORCHARD WAY up to 45/84, via SLOANE WALK, BARONS WALK, BARONS CLOSE, KEMPTON WALK, REGENCY WALK, CASTLETON CLOSE, HAM VIEW, RADNOR WALK, KELVINGTON CLOSE, OVERSTONE GDNS, CARRINGTON CLOSE.

ROUND FIVE: SUNDAY 29th JUNE

Dustcart meet at the bottom of The Glade/Long Lane end; THE GLADE 72/109 (up to Greenview Ave) taking in OAK WAY, ALDERSMEAD AVE, STOKES ROAD, GREENVIEW AVE, ASHTREE WAY, taking in ASHTREE CLOSE, FAIRWAY CLOSE, FAIRFORD AVE, FAIRFORD CLOSE, OAKWAY, STONELEIGH PARK AVE.

ROUND SIX: SUNDAY 6th JULY

Dustcart meet at ORCHARD GROVE, ORCHARD WAY (from nos 1-43/2-82), LYCONBY GDNS, COVERACK CLOSE, ORCHARD RISE, OAKVIEW GROVE, PIPPIN CLOSE, FRESHFIELDS down ORCHARD AVE (from nos. 79-125/74-100), down THE GLADE (Nos. 1-70/2-107 as far as Greenview Avenue), via GLADE GDNS, CAMROSE CLOSE, DARLEY CLOSE.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2003/4

Chairman:	BOB AKERS Tel: [REDACTED]
Vice Chairman & Secretary:	ANNE JOHNSON Tel: [REDACTED]
Hon. Treasurer:	JOHN WALKINGTON Tel: [REDACTED]
Membership Secretary:	ALYCE MENHINNITT Tel: [REDACTED]
Editor:	DEREK RITSON Email: monksorchardweb@aol.com Tel: [REDACTED]
Police Liaison/Security:	JEAN COOK Tel: [REDACTED]
Hon. Historian:	CHARLES HUTCHINGS Tel: [REDACTED]
Area Manager:	ELAINE ECKHARDT Tel: [REDACTED]
Area Manager:	MICHAEL NASH Tel: [REDACTED]
Primary Care Liaison:	MARCIA NASH Tel: [REDACTED]
Social Secretary:	CHRISTINE ROSS-SMITH Tel: [REDACTED]
Planning Officer:	VACANT
Minutes Secretary:	VACANT
Transport & Highways Officer:	VACANT
Committee Member:	ROVANNA GROVES