

# PWRA

Issue six  
Sept 2019

## news

**NEW INSTALLATION  
APPROVED FOR ROTARY  
FIELD – MORE DETAILS  
INSIDE!**



**YOUR INPUT  
NEEDED:  
NEW COUNCIL  
GOVERNANCE  
SURVEY – PG5**

**Cllr. Badsha Quadir, PWRA Chairman writes:**



Welcome to this edition of the PWRA Newsletter. I hope that you have all been able to enjoy the summer. In this issue we will cover safety in Purley, planning, and in particular, the partial review of the Croydon Local Plan, the Campaign for a Directly Elected Mayor for Croydon, and list some forthcoming local events that may be of interest.

However before commenting on these items, I first want to write how pleased I am, that the Sculpture commemorating the Surrey Iron Railway has got planning consent for installation in the Rotary Field. When a date for its dedication is confirmed, I hope many of you will be able to attend.

On a more sober note, I know that we were all shocked at the fatal stabbing in Purley a short while ago. With this event in mind, I thought it timely to ask our local Police Safer Neighbourhood Team to put crime levels in Purley in context, and remind us of simple steps we can all take to keep safe and secure.

Planning matters continue to dominate in the PWRA area. We have seen the current administration continue to encourage the destruction of family homes and support their replacement with small blocks of flats, which are totally out of keeping with their surrounding area, and have woefully inadequate car parking provision. We are now also seeing the current administration starting to encourage private developers to bring forward larger development proposals, which require the destruction of multiple family homes at one time. Whilst the PWRA is prepared to support high quality, high density housing development in, or immediately adjacent to, Purley Town Centre as we consider this to be an important element for the rejuvenation of Purley, we will continue to try and resist such development outside this area. We will also continue to seek the protection of Purley and Woodcote's green spaces. As many of you will be aware, the Council have commenced a review of the current Local Plan, with protection of green spaces and the identification of new development sites, being two key elements of this review. This Newsletter updates on the current status of the review and outlines the next steps.

Finally, and with the current administration's stance on planning, and its ignoring of residents' views being a significant catalyst, the PWRA is supporting the Campaign for a Democratically Elected Mayor for Croydon. This Newsletter contains the background to this campaign, why we support it, and next steps needed to progress. Crucially, we ask you to sign the petition supporting this move. 14,000 signatures are needed to require the Council to hold a Borough wide referendum for this proposal.

# OUR COUNCILLORS *report...*

## Rotary Field Sculpture commemorating Surrey Iron Railway

### Cllr Simon Brew, Purley & Woodcote Ward reports:

In March we reported on the selection of Alan Potter, to produce the sculpture to commemorate the Surrey Iron Railway. Since then, we have moved through the process of selecting a finalised design and submitted this to Croydon Council for planning permission. We are now very pleased that this celebration of Surrey Iron Railway and of the part that Purley proudly played in the development and operation of one of the very first railways anywhere in the world, has been granted planning permission.

The sculpture will probably be installed in December or January. We will keep you updated on timing and events to mark its arrival.



Picture of Final Design



**Simon Brew, Conservative ward Councillor for Purley and Woodcote comments:**



‘It’s been a long struggle and has taken several months longer than I expected, but we can at last look forward to the installation in Rotary Field in a few months’ time of the Iron Horse sculpture which will celebrate one of the world’s very first railways. The sculptor Alan Potter drew his inspiration for the design from many local history sources; it will be a life-sized two-dimensional replica in cast iron of a dray horse pulling two wagons on a site very close to the former track of the railway. The project has been supported by the five councillors from Purley & Woodcote & Purley Oaks & Riddlesdown wards and Croydon Council, the PWRA, Purley Rotary, Purley BID and the Bourne Society.’

If you’ve ever wondered what councillors do, some of us write blogs about our more interesting activities. Mine is here:

[https://croydonconservatives.com/teams\\_detail.asp?WardID=29](https://croydonconservatives.com/teams_detail.asp?WardID=29)

and my colleague Helen Redfern’s is here:

[https://croydonconservatives.com/teams\\_detail.asp?WardID=36](https://croydonconservatives.com/teams_detail.asp?WardID=36)

## **Have your say on resident participation in the council’s decision making by 1st October**

**Helen Redfern, Conservative ward Councillor for Purley Oaks and Riddlesdown writes:**



In view of Croydon Council’s current consultation with residents on how best to run the Council, I would like to share with you the work of the Governance Review Panel which I was invited to join last October. The Panel is tasked with looking at how Croydon is governed and to make recommendations on options for improvements to better serve residents. The Panel is independently chaired by Dame Moira Gibb and, whilst cross-party in its membership, has more Labour members than Conservative.

Initial research, conducted by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, showed that Council Members (ward councillors) did not find many aspects of governance to be positive and that there was a strong desire from backbenchers to contribute more – after all, councillors cannot represent their wards or the wider Borough if

they are not part of the decision-making process. There was also a desire to ensure that we were listening to residents’ voices.

The Panel has spent a lot of time considering different models – from the Strong Leader model that we have now to full committee-based systems. We had an interesting visit to Sutton Council to explore their hybrid committee system that involves cabinet members chairing decision-making committees. Councillors from both elected political parties in Sutton seemed to like this model and appeared to be able to work together well. It's unclear whether this was a sign of a good governance model or simply that there is a positive working culture within Sutton Council. And that's the elephant in the room.

Much of what Members want to achieve in Croydon could be achieved already without expensive changes in the governance structure. The Council Constitution permits the creation of neighbourhood partnerships, area forums, area committees, focus groups and service or user based consultative groups as part of its community leadership role. Existing committees could give more weight to comments made by councillors outside of the Administration's leadership – and committees and meetings could focus on finding the right solutions for Croydon, and not what suits a small group of people. The greatest problem in Croydon's governance may be the culture in which decision-making takes place – often feeling like a pre-determined decision being reached by any means. Even the Governance Review Panel meetings have on occasion been unnecessarily ill-mannered, an example of the poor culture in action.

Initially tasked to report back to Full Council in April 2019, with a budget of £25k, the Panel is now expected to report back in December 2019 with the budget increasing to £100k. As a panel member I haven't been advised how this money is being spent but it is certainly time for us to reach some decisions on how the Council best serves residents in all parts of the Borough. Therefore, it would greatly benefit the Panel to hear residents' views so that we can ensure that what you need is at the centre of the thought process as final decisions are made.

**Please consider completing the survey by going here:**

<https://getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/kms/elab.aspx?CampaignId=892&noip=1>

**Or press 'Take Survey' below:**



# *More local news...*

## **Purley and Woodcote Safer Neighbourhood Team**



In view of the recent fatal stabbing in Purley we asked our local Police Safer Neighbourhood Team to put crime levels in Purley in context, and remind us of simple steps we can all take to keep safe and secure.

In Purley and Woodcote in July (the latest statistics available) the most reported crimes were, Residential Burglary (18), Harassment (17), and violence (17). Whilst not wanting to play down the severity of these crimes this amounts to 7 crimes per 1000 people as compared to 9 crimes per 1000 people across London as a whole and 8 crimes per 1000 people across the entire Borough of Croydon.

There are many simple steps we can all take to keep ourselves safe and secure and the Metropolitan Police have prepared a number of simple guidance materials to help us with these. The link below is to the Mets 'Be Safe' campaign website which sets out ways we can all prevent burglary, mobile phone theft, and scooter theft. Additionally on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October Croydon Neighbourhood Watch and the Croydon Met Police have organised a Crime Prevention Day. Please see the 'Events' section of this newsletter for details.

<https://www.met.police.uk/police-forces/metropolitan-police/areas/about-us/about-the-met/campaigns/be-safe-campaign/>

## Partial Review of the Croydon Local Plan

Although only formally adopted in February 2018, Croydon Council has already started a partial review of the Local Plan. This process commenced earlier this year, with a request for input from individuals and organisations, such as Residents Associations. The Council says this review is needed so soon because of:

- the emerging new London Plan which, worryingly for us, with the current administration's planning policy, is expected to significantly increase the new housing requirement.
- the requirement to review Local Plans within five years of their adoption, and
- the need to monitor and evaluate the actual performance of the current plan vs its objectives.

With the above as context, two elements of the review were of particular interest to us:

**Protection of local green spaces** - Croydon Council requested Residents Associations' assistance to gather evidence supporting green spaces across the Borough. The stated intention is to determine which green spaces could be granted a planning designation, offering additional protection from future development.

**Identification of development sites** - Croydon Council asked for individuals, landowners, developers and organisations to propose locations for future development within the borough.

The PWRA, along with neighbouring Residents Associations, has been actively involved in this process, either making submissions, or encouraging our members and the wider resident community to do so. Consequently, we are pleased to understand that the Council received some 7900 online responses from individuals, a few hundred more responses by letter, and input from all Residents Associations. We also understand that, in addition to evidence to protect existing green spaces, the council also received over 200 suggestions for new green spaces to be protected.

### Next Steps

Currently the Council are reviewing all the submissions and we understand that having done so, the next step will be an extensive 6 week period of public engagement this autumn. This engagement will focus on the emerging themes / conclusions of the review, of which the local green spaces and possible development sites will be a part.

Following this autumn consultation, the Council will then spend the first half of 2020 drafting changes to the Local Plan, carry out another round of public consultation, and then submit a draft revised Local Plan for examination by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. All in all, this is likely to mean that a revised plan will not be adopted until early 2022. We will keep you updated throughout this process and seek / encourage your input all along the way.



## Support the Campaign for a Democratically Elected Mayor for Croydon

The PWRA strongly supports the Campaign for a Democratically Elected Mayor for Croydon. Like many others, we believe that there is a problem with democracy in Croydon. Planning is probably the most prominent example – we see family homes being destroyed, communities being spoilt, and genuine planning objections being brushed aside. The Council is simply not listening to residents, and so why is this?

For many years, our Borough has been split across the middle between the Labour and Conservative parties. Of the 28 electoral wards in Croydon, 24 have majorities of over 17% for one or other of those parties. So, in those areas no party other than the incumbent has any real chance of winning. Because of this, the only voters whose votes really count in a local election are those in the 4 ‘marginal wards’ that have a small majority for the current winning party. This is why the Council can and does ignore the rest of us!

By gaining a relatively small number of extra votes in these four marginal wards, and thereby winning the election, the successful party takes control of the Council. They can then afford to upset voters in many areas in Croydon without any real risk that it will affect their chances of gaining power again next time. They can afford to lose votes in all the areas where they have control, apart from the marginal wards. They don't need to bother in the wards where they did not win and do not expect to win. This is why there really is no accountability to the vast majority of people in the Borough. Why would the Council listen to you?

Running a Council requires difficult decisions sometimes. Whoever is in power, it is only natural, given the above circumstances, that there will be an inclination to only listen to and take notice of the residents in the four marginal wards but not the rest of us. We believe that replacing the current system with a Directly Elected Mayor would change all this, bringing major benefits to residents in both the immediate future and the longer term. With a Directly Elected Mayor, every single vote would count so 270,000 voters would choose the Leader rather than the 41 councillors that currently do so, and so they would have to listen to us.

Furthermore, a Directly Elected Mayor would also be able to raise the profile of Croydon, improving its image. With a direct mandate from the people of Croydon, the Mayor could stand up for Croydon residents in negotiations with the London Mayor and UK government, particularly over housing, and also to get our fair share of resources. We need infrastructure and services to keep up with the building of the many new homes. We need family homes, family life and communities to be valued and protected.

Consequently, the PWRA is asking you to support the Resident Association led and residents' funded campaign to petition for an elected Mayor in Croydon. To do this you only need to visit the Directly Elected Mayor web-site at: <http://democ.org.uk>. Every Croydon voter is eligible to sign and with 14,000 valid signatures the Council must hold a referendum on this subject.



# Events

**Purley Literary Society** – The first meeting of the 107th season of the Society is on 8th October in the hall of Purley United Reformed Church (next to Purley Hospital). The talks to the end of the year are:

- Tuesday 8th October: Ian Porter will speak about, 'The Remarkable Mr Selfridge'
- Tuesday 22nd October: Russell Bowes will speak about, 'The Inexhaustible Mr Paxton'
- Tuesday 5th November: Anthony Poulton-Smith will speak about, 'What's in a Name?'
- Tuesday 19th November: Lindsay Ould will speak about, 'Museum of Croydon Archives'
- Tuesday 3rd December: Nicola Moorby will speak about, 'The Great British Paint Off'

You can access Literary Society's full season programme and more detail on each talk via this link:

<http://www.purley-literary-society.com/>

**The RSPB Croydon Local Group** – The Group hold monthly illustrated wildlife talks at the Whitgift Sports Club (Croham Manor Road, CR2 7BG). These are held on the second Monday of the month at 2pm and again at 8pm. Admission is £4 (incl free refreshments), and you do not need to be an RSPB member.

Forthcoming talks are:

- **Monday Dec 9, 2019:** "A Norwegian Experience" - Mick White. In this talk we will travel to Norway, a country of Culture, History, and the Aurora Borealis. We will look at some of the bird life that can be found north of the arctic circle, before finally experiencing the celestial wonder of the Northern Lights.
- **Monday Jan 13, 2020:** "Orchids of Italy's Gargano Peninsula" - Andrew Cleave. The Gargano Peninsula is home to over 50 species of orchids and hybrids, several of them endemic to this area. Flowers, birds, butterflies, lizards and beautiful scenery make this a photographer's paradise.
- **Monday Feb 10, 2020:** "50:50" - Gary Prescott. The intrepid Biking Birder will regale us with tales of 50 RSPB and WWT Reserves he is planning to visit on his beloved cycle, aiming to see fifty bird species at each.

**Croydon Neighbourhood Watch** - Croydon Neighbourhood Watch is holding a CRIME PREVENTION DAY on Saturday 5th October at The Royal Russell School. This is being held in partnership with Croydon Met Police. They have an exciting programme lined up with some excellent guest speakers including Detective Superintendent Neil Matthews; Croydon MPS, Donna Murray Turner; Chair of Croydon's Safer Neighbourhoods Board and Hamida Ali; Cabinet Member Safer Croydon and Communities. The agenda will also include sessions on latest police measures, burglary, cyber crime and scams, and neighbourhood watch. You do need to register for this event and this can be done by emailing the Neighbourhood Watch Office on [nhw@cbnwa.com](mailto:nhw@cbnwa.com)

Please also see the attached 'leaflet' on the event and do circulate it to all your neighbours and friends - all Croydon residents are welcome.

Croydon Neighbourhood Watch in association with The Croydon Metropolitan Police presents its first ever

# CRIME PREVENTION DAY

**Saturday 5 October**  
**@ The Royal Russell School,**  
**Coombe Lane, Croydon, CR9 5BX**  
**(Free parking on site)**  
**Time: 10:00 – 15:00**



**PLUS...**  
**Marketplace with stalls including Trading Standards and Smartwater offering FREE Smartwater kits (RRP £75)**

**#safertogether**  
**#goodneighbours**

Full lunch and tea and coffee provided (£10 cost per head).

To register for the event please email [nhw@cbnwa.com](mailto:nhw@cbnwa.com)

**Concerned about crime in your area? Do you feel unsafe in your home? Worried about knife crime, drug dealing in your ward?**

Come and hear the latest measures being taken to combat crime and how we can feel safer in our communities.

Key sessions on Policing, Cyber Crime, Scams, Violent Crime and Community Action with guest speakers from the Police, Croydon Council, Neighbourhood Watch and community groups.

All welcome.



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