LDA ignore results of its own public consultation

London Mayor Ken Livingstone, his London Development Agency and their master planners, Latz, have again ignored results of their own public consultation events, demonstrating absolute determination to bulldoze through their proposals to build housing on highly protected public parkland.

No amount of public opposition deflects the LDA from this proposal. Nigel Westaway, facilitator of the 19 May Park Stakeholder Dialogue meeting, said “there is a clear message from this room that they don’t want housing.”

Park reconstruction: up to 50 yrs

The time-scale for redevelopment of the Park is given as 20, 30, and now even 50 years, and the enormous cost of the 2012 Olympic Games is affecting Park funding.

Cost: £67.2 million, Time-Scale: Up to 50 Years

Blocks of flats to replace camping site at Rockhills

Roger Frith, senior LDA project manager, and Tilman Latz, master planner, are still considering removing the highly popular camping and caravan centre to replace it with 5-storey blocks of 132 luxury private flats with underground parking for 66 cars. Entrance to this estate would be from Westwood Hill, between the busy Crystal Palace Park Road junction and Sydenham Hill roundabout.

Blocks of flats to replace One O’Clock Club

Six 4-storey blocks of flats for 45 luxury 1-3 bedroom units with parking for 30 cars is proposed for Crystal Palace Park Road on the site of the One O’Clock club, St John’s Ambulance centre and recently built Heritage Lottery funded maintenance block which would be replaced with a larger structure a few yards up the hill.

No figures are given for the cost of this demolition and relocation.
£67.2 Million and Mounting -
The Unprecedented cost of Crystal Palace Park ‘Improvements’

Three options were presented on Cup Final Day, to the 19th May 2007 Park Stakeholder ‘Main Group’ meeting. Basic park improvements for a “revised local park” would include playgrounds, fountains, sunken gardens and restoration of the historic walls.

**Total cost £40.5 million**

An “enhanced regional park” requires an extra £17.3 million allowing improvements to the maze, the cricket pitch, the concert bowl, the Crystal Palace bell, a new rosary and an adventure playground.

**Total cost £57.8 million**

The LDA/Latz preferred option for a “national/international destination” is to spend another £9.4 million to bring the total spend to a staggering £67.2 million.

This extra sum would allow the building of a ‘tree top walk’, a ‘Paxton aquarium mist-garden’ and a ‘Paxton spring’. Construction of a revolutionary ‘energy tower’ to power the Park’s new water features, on the base of Brunel’s original water tower, is estimated at anything between £3 million and £20 million and is not included in any costings.

The master planners’ presentation split the Park into sections with a break-down of the costs for each section: a)preparation – earthworks, b) access – ramps, steps, stairs, handrails, footpaths, roads and parking, c) landscaping – grassed areas, planting, trees, irrigation, park lighting, drainage and ‘furniture’; and d) building – new structures and demolition of existing.

**Anerley Hill**

Latz’ first ‘slide’ showed the Anerley Hill edge of the Park and a section of the terracing. Preparation was put at £211,000, access £751,000, landscaping £1,186,000 and building £5,820,000.

**Total: £7,968,000**

This total figure includes the £5.8 million proposal to build a ‘glasshouse’ at the southern end of the Italian terrace but does not include the proposal to build a new Crystal Palace ‘lodge’ (a replacement for the existing high rise hostel adjacent to the NSC) or any changes to the present museum.

**Crystal Palace Hilltop (former site of The Palace)**

The figures here were: preparation £1,360,000, access £2,537,000, landscaping £4,323,000 and buildings £150,000.

**Total: £8,366,000**

Reassuringly, any buildings would be limited to kiosks and small cafés. However, the restoration of the Grade II listed Subway and construction of a new museum nearby is not included in these figures nor is the proposal to construct a viewing tower. Although not included in the costings, the future removal of the iconic TV mast is still being considered by Latz.

**The Terraces**

The figures here are: preparation £323,000, access £1,772,000, landscaping £3,686,000 and buildings £2,000,000 - allocated for the restoration of the historic walls and balustrades, but not the steps.

**Total: £7,781,000**

No buildings are planned, although disability access ramps will be integrated, while it is anticipated that the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) will contribute 50% to the terrace restoration.

**Transitional Landscape**

This is the area just below the terraces, presently used as a car and coach park, and the site of Paxton’s bust. The figures here are: preparation £2,406,000, access £1,416,000, landscaping £2,446,000 and £997,000, and access £1,608,000.

**Total: £6,368,000**

**Central Area**

This is the area of Park surrounding and including the National Sports Centre although any future new sports facility or NSC reconfiguration is not included in the costs as these would be funded from another source.

Latz’ illustrations showed a requirement for a substantial amount of soil to bury the NSC up to the first floor and turn it into a “pavilion in the park” and to create grassed stepped terracing in the surrounding landscape.

The figures are: preparation £1,038,000, access to different levels £1,535,000, new landscaped terracing £2,595,000.

**Total: £5,168,000**

**Lower Lakes**

Costs here are: preparation £136,000, access £703,000, landscaping £859,000 and buildings £2,700,000 respectively. This last figure would be for the building of a dinosaur interpretation centre and park café, together with a new ‘boathouse’. Also included is the restoration of Paxton’s original fountain basin, the previous home to the flamingos. Capel Manor College and their ‘urban farm’ are not included in these costings.

**Total: £4,398,000**

**Cricket Pitch**

Ground preparation will be £124,000, access £36,000, landscaping £997,000 and the building of a new cricket pavilion was given as £1,001,000.

**Total: £2,658,000**

**English Landscape Garden**

Many consider this to be one of the most beautiful areas of the Park. Latz’ proposals here are the most costly, showing preparation £246,000, access £1,608,000, landscape £2,472,000 and buildings which would include an entrance building, a children’s nursery/café, tree-top (sky) walk, a new glasshouse at the northern end of the Italian terrace and improvements to the concert platform. The presentation also included slides showing the foot-print of the new
private residential blocks at Rockhills to replace the camping centre. Excluded are the Thames Water reservoir and the proposed second energy tower.

**Total: £17,624,000**

**Park-wide costs**

The master plan shows the incorporation of new water-features and these would cost an estimated £4,500,000, dealing with possible unexploded ordnance (Second World War bombs) £80,000, CCTV £500,000 and services (electricity, water etc.) £1,810,000. Possible unexploded ordnance (Second World War bombs) £80,000, CCTV £500,000 and services (electricity, water etc.) £1,810,000.

**Total: £6,890,000**

Total Park costs were given as £67,200,000, although Tilman Latz said this may not be the final figure.

**Potential funding streams**

Roger Frith explained that a business plan is being developed, but that the LDA “don’t know precisely where the money’s coming from”. They were looking at a number of potential funding streams, which might include the LDA, HLF, Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS), other lottery programmes, Sport England, foundations/charities, sponsorship (corporate or private), energy-related grants, public donations for trees and bricks, for example. He continued that at this moment no decision has been made for sale of parkland for housing, but should they decide to build, they would “…maximise the value and minimise the land-take”.

An extract entitled ‘Funding for the Park’, from the LDA’s own website, states: “The long term implementation costs of the master-planning designs for the park will need to be found from a mix of private and public money. The public contribution will be limited. This means that any large-scale works would need commercial investment. As with the sports facilities, we will be looking for a sustainable option that does not involve significant revenue subsidies”.

**Other proposals**

With the LDA and Latz’ desire to see 24-hour Park opening, the Main Group discussed security and lighting arrangements. Proposals included that all the main paths would be lit by non-intrusive lighting, with some areas covered by CCTV. Improved park patrols and co-ordination with police was seen as essential, with ‘help’ points provided at key locations.

As in previous meetings, the attendees were made to split into three separate groups to discuss the issues and to indicate their preferences using, this time, red, green and blue dots. Some found the questions confusing and contradictory, and had difficulty in affixing their sticky dots in a meaningful way to the prepared statements.

Yet again, the final results showed substantial opposition to private housing in the Park with similar objection to routing the tram through the Park.

**A good evening to ‘bury’ a meeting**

It seems that the LDA will not take no for an answer when it comes to sale of parkland for housing to fund basic improvements to Crystal Palace Park. With the first meeting to allow discussion on LDA private housing proposals held on Cup Final Day, the second, and perhaps last chance to hear the housing and funding options before the planning application is submitted to Bromley in September 2007, was held on the evening of the England vs. Brazil game inaugurating Wembley Stadium on 1st June 2007.

‘dialogue’s’ policy of “minimising opposition” was tested when angry people asked why the LDA continue to promote the sale of parkland for large blocks of 177 private luxury flats, at the meeting in Anerley Town Hall.

LDA architect, Phil Meadowcroft, gave a presentation which included new aerial photographs of Rockhills and Crystal Palace Park Road, with a “yellow land” overlay. Roger Frith announced that the LDA had dropped the proposal for the large block of flats on the site of the park keeper’s lodge, but then failed to show the even larger maintenance building which would take its place.

The 60 people present were divided up, as usual. Charles Anglin from ‘dialogue’, the meeting organisers, told one group: “the reason we have had a workshop specifically dedicated to the issue of housing is because it’s been hugely controversial and up till now there hasn’t been costs and people have said they want to have a discussion about the housing.” Roger Frith agreed that “if we took out residential there’s probably a 95% consensus on everything else in the Park.”

Kim Rich, a founder-member of the Crystal Palace Campaign, summarised objection eloquently: “you [LDA] are not listening, exactly as Bromley didn’t listen 10 years ago. Most people do not want housing on a park. We do not want a park that will be accessible 24 hours a day with the incumbent problems that that will bring, not solely in the Park but to all those people who live in and around Crystal Palace and love the Park for what it is - a green, open space.” Ms Rich drew comparison to the good maintenance of other Bromley parks, at which Roger Frith said: “if this park had been in the centre of Bromley it wouldn’t be in the state it is.” He said: “I saw the accounts and how they spent it”...“I’m disgusted how little e Bromley put into the Park.”

When asked what message building private houses on a park sends other councils, Mr Frith said: “it is included in the master plan and whilst it’s unpopular, hopefully we can use that to persuade GOL and other people that parks need to be funded differently from the way they are now.”
Master Planners reveal proposals

The 10th February 2007 Crystal Palace Park ‘Main Group’ meeting facilitated by Nigel Westaway and The Environment Council began with unanimous opposition to the relocation of Crystal Palace Football Club to Crystal Palace Park as suggested in recent media speculation.

No football in the Park

Roger Frith, Senior Development Manager of Infrastructure Development at the London Development Agency, dismissed the reports as pure speculation, saying, “It is not something that the LDA as an organisation supports, neither does the GLA … I can make it quite clear that we have no intention of having a dialogue with the football club…”, although previously, during a visit to Crystal Palace National Sports Centre, London Mayor Ken Livingstone, in yet another personal indulgence, said he favoured the location of a premier football or rugby club at Crystal Palace Park.

Hilltop reassurances

Tilman Latz, of Latz + Partner, the recently appointed Park Master Planners, outlined initial ideas for the restoration of the old Crystal Palace hilltop site. He described tree plantings, wildlife and ecology areas, a park promenade, the opening up of views to the west, and improved facilities and services including opportunities to stage temporary events such as an ice-rink, circuses and fairs. He recognised the importance of the Grade II listed Subway and considered it a possible location for the Crystal Palace museum. There was no mention of the doubling in size of the bus/tram station.

Mr Latz confirmed there would be no commercial development on the site of the old Crystal Palace, saying “we are confident we can put something there which is as strong, but gives the place really back to the people without investing millions or commercialising it.”

Park proposals

Other ideas included two glasshouses on the Italian Terrace: a Mediterranean Garden with music and a café at the southern end, and a Tropical Garden with Butterfly House to the north. Latz envisage building power-generating wind towers on the bases of Brunel’s water towers to power new water features, the removal of the athletes’ hostel known as ‘the Lodge’ and the construction of an adventure playground on its foundations, removal of ugly concrete structures and parking surfaces, and the restoration of an accessible and greened central axis. Alternative parking arrangements for cars and coaches have yet to be presented.

Controversy

Whilst there was broad support for Latz + Partner’s plans for the greening of the Park, concerns were expressed when, disregarding the published findings of his own consultants confirming the overwhelming public opposition to building private luxury residences on protected public parkland, Tilman Latz endorsed the LDA’s highly contentious housing plans. He said: “I would like to have these villas back” and that they “should be taken up the hill to Rockhills to the corner…” Repeatedly, throughout his Park presentation Mr Latz stated that he “could not go into detail”.

At the ‘dialogue’ public meeting on 27 January 2007, Mr Latz acknowledged overwhelming public opposition to building houses on the Park, and routing the Tram through parkland.

Despite Ordinance Survey and other maps that clearly define the Park’s boundaries and the boundary drawn in English Heritage’s Register of Parks and Gardens, Tilman Latz maintained that Rockhills was, according to their research, “…never part of the Park”. This statement was corrected at a later meeting when he acknowledged he was wrong.

Editor’s Note: Rockhills was the name of Sir Joseph Paxton’s former mansion and never an area with villas or other public/private housing.
The ‘Triangle Gateway’ & Tramlink

Latz’ drawings of the ‘Triangle Gateway’, aka the Norwood Gate, confirmed it would remain public open space without major building to inhibit public views into or out of the Park. However, a twin-track tram line was shown routed across this area of parkland. Misleadingly, slides were shown of various continental trams running through sylvan settings, using a rail system with no unsightly overhead power lines. When concerns were expressed about the tram running through the Park, Mr Latz said “it’s not my business, it’s TfL’s business but basically I must say that I support it.”

His views conflicted with those expressed at public meetings by his own consultation team ‘dialogue’ who “noted there was strong opposition to the potential tram extension routes that enter the Park.” Tilman Latz said he was in favour of the tram because of his positive experiences in Europe, whilst admitting “there are some terrible examples”. He then contradicted his unequivocal support for the Croydon Tramlink extension by saying “if we don’t get that [European] quality, forget about tramway.”

Any discussion on the tram was prevented by ‘facilitator’, Nigel Westaway, on the justification that it was not part of the Park Master Plan, despite there being oblique reference to it in the LDA Planning Framework document - the basis of all public consultation. It should be noted that TfL are represented on the little-known ‘GLA Crystal Palace Park Steering Group’ whose April 2006 meeting notes state: “Links to Tramlink need to be built into masterplan for Park.”

Future of our Park decided behind closed doors

Despite statutory requirement for ‘consultation’ with local residents and groups, the future of our Park is really being decided behind closed doors at the LDA HQ, Palestra House, between the GLA, LDA, London Assembly representatives, Transport for London, the Master Planners, the Crystal Palace Park Events Manager and countless consultants. These discussions are not referred back to Park stakeholders at Main Group Meetings, nor do any local representatives participate.

The minutes of the Crystal Palace Park Steering Group held on 7 November 2006 state: “TfL are liaising with the master planners and the bus department at TfL.”

Tramlink are to meet with representatives from the bus team on 23 November 2006.”

The minutes of these meetings confirm that the LDA and TfL are in discussion about the location of the tram terminus and its route through the Park. The minutes of 26 February 2007 state: “Engineers now say this would require three platforms at Crystal Palace rather than two…” and “There is public support for the off-road routing option, but this would be very costly and would take out some housing.” Nevertheless it is considered acceptable to “take out” some park.

Such decision-taking was predicted by members of the Park Working Group as far back as 2003.

CPCA Members

Please let us have your views on Tramlink and other issues. Should the tram stop at Crystal Palace Station, cut through the Park to the hilltop or even come here at all?

If you care about the area, join the CPCA. Together, your voice counts.
‘Consultation’
‘dialogue’ - style
“maximise support ... minimise opposition”

Latz + Partner stated at the 19th May Main Group meeting that the LDA had told them to employ a public relations consultancy. ‘dialogue’ were commissioned and Senior Consultant Charles Anglin introduced their work as “trying to facilitate ‘active outreach’ to as wide a spectrum of people as possible”.

At the Park Main Group meeting of 14 October 2006, Mr Anglin continued: it is “very important that it is an impartial approach. This consultation is about understanding the issues and feeding back so that the design team addresses them.”

According to the official report of this meeting, the Nigel Westaway/The Environment Council Stakeholder Dialogue process, which has been running for 4 years “was never intended to engage thousands of people”.

The CPCA welcomes the involvement of ‘dialogue’, a complimentary consultation to the existing Stakeholder Dialogue Process, but notes from its website: www.localdialogue.com, that the reference to ‘local community relations’ is: “dialogue will ensure that local communities are kept informed of the benefits of any development proposal, and that support is captured and opposition put in context.” ‘dialogue’s’ role in the redevelopment of The Oval Cricket Ground, is given as an example of their success at community consultation. Their objective was stated as: “to inform local stakeholders of the redevelopment proposals, maximise support for the scheme and minimise opposition...” For a scheme in Stevenage, ‘dialogue’s’ objectives were given as: “Identify supporters for a flagship affordable housing scheme and minimise expected opposition from immediate residents. Support the development team to achieve an early planning consent to enable early delivery.” The CPCA are concerned that this approach may be used at Crystal Palace.

‘dialogue’ meeting 27.1.07

Their first public workshop on 27 January 2007 attracted over 100 people, many of whom were new to Crystal Palace Park consultation events. The meeting was divided into three groups to discuss options for the hilltop, the gateways, and the NSC/central axis.

At these sessions everyone was encouraged to make comments, although time constraints meant that it was not possible for people to take part in all three discussions, nor was there opportunity afterwards to compare and debate the opinions of the various groups.

What did emerge was a general consensus against large-scale development, sale of parkland for private houses in the Park, and urban encroachment. Park-related structures such as children’s playgrounds, a warden’s lodge, café and toilets were well-supported.

No ‘official’ discussion was allowed on the proposal to route the Croydon Tramlink extension through the Park as it is not considered as part of the Park consultation, but as a separate consultation by TfL. However, it was noted by the ‘dialogue’ team that “there was strong opposition to the potential tram extension routes that enter the Park”.

‘dialogue’ meeting 17.3.07

The second public workshop to discuss the future of Crystal Palace Park organised by ‘dialogue’/Latz + Partner was held at Sydenham High School on 17th March 2007. Possibly as a consequence of late notification, the meeting attracted only 50 people. It was advertised in the 3rd edition of the LDA’s A3 glossy newsletter, ‘It’s Your Park’, delivered just a few days before.

The CPCA were asked by ‘dialogue’ to pre-submit a list of topics for possible discussion. Of the 30 questions submitted, few were addressed satisfactorily, with many allowed no discussion whatsoever.

Creative centre-fold

The centre-fold illustration of the 3rd edition ‘The Palace Site’, revealed detail never before available at public consultation. A regimented grid of hundreds of trees, interspersed with public spaces, forming a “tree-lined promenade, spanning the length of the site”, is shown reaching into the area currently occupied by National Grid’s TV mast. The bus terminus is shown as double its existing length, extending as far as to the Subway.

When questioned on this additional urbanisation of GII* Metropolitan Open Land, Tilman Latz said that the centre-fold illustration was entirely his own long-term vision and had not been ratified by TfL or National Grid.

Mr Latz said the extension of the bus station to the Subway was his idea but not agreed by TfL, and as the route of the tram has not
been decided, he saw no reason to mark it on the plan, although he had shown a slide of the tram route through the Park to the Main Group Meeting a month earlier.

Though Tilman Latz explained his ‘purely visionary’ concept to those at the meeting, the 37,000 who received “It’s Your Park” did not, however, receive the benefit of this clarification and may have thought this centre-fold illustration was the definitive design for the hilltop.

It was 10 weeks and several meetings later, at the 1st June ‘dialogue’ meeting, when LDA’s Roger Frith made a surprise announcement that the bus terminus will be doubled in size on the Park. The centre-fold illustration of Tilman Latz’ ‘vision’ had become reality after all.

Group discussions

The meeting was divided into three groups: ‘phasing & funding’, ‘security & lighting’, and ‘ecology and sustainability’.

The wall-chart record again confirmed majority opposition to housing, including from the Crystal Palace Foundation whose Chairman, Melvyn Harrison, reminded everyone that the housing built around the edges of the Park in 1869 was to sustain the ailing Crystal Palace Company. He questioned whether the LDA are in the same dire financial straits and stated that the CPF are ideologically opposed to housing in the Park.

Others present said public parks should be funded from taxation and that there was a need for more green space not less. Other concerns were the huge cost of consultation, the failure of the LDA to provide any business plan, the cost of the Olympics and its effect on Park funding, future Park management, the time scale of any ‘improvements’ and the obligation to restore and maintain historic structures.

When John Newton, LDA wildlife consultant, was asked if his plan took into account the intended development by the LDA he said, no it didn’t and it couldn’t have because he didn’t know what the intended development was.

No business plan

Roger Frith was present at this meeting and confirmed the timescale for completion of LDA Crystal Palace Park proposals as now 15-20 years. Tilman Latz said that he would be a grand-father before this Park was finished.

Mr Frith also confirmed that, two years after the original promise, costings for the Park’s restoration and a business plan were still not available. An earlier CPCA request, under the Freedom of Information Act, for a copy of the Crystal Palace Park Regeneration Cost Estimates produced by the Master Planners, was refused on the grounds that the LDA considered it “exempt information”.

Tilman Latz Retraction

Tilman Latz’ controversial claim at the Main Group Meeting of 10th February 2007 that “Rockhills was never part of the Park”, was retracted at this meeting. He said: “I was wrong”. His maps show clearly that the boundary of Crystal Palace Park includes Rockhills.

‘dialogue’ summary

As recorded, twice, in the 48 single A4 pages of the report: “The most contentious issues were the removal of the caravan site and proposals to build housing... The significant objections to housing centre on the principle of using parkland for residential development, feeling that park funding should come from general taxation, as Crystal Palace Park is a public amenity .... Although no consensus on funding on housing was reached, a significant proportion of people were against housing on parkland.”

‘dialogue’ marquee 14.4.07

Over a warm, sunny Easter weekend, many took advantage of making dinosaur eggs and having their children’s faces painted, courtesy of the LDA. The most frequently asked questions by the few who ventured inside the marquee to read the presentation boards and participate in the discussion sessions were - why do the LDA persist in promoting the sale of parkland for housing, why do the LDA want to remove the internationally recognised caravan and camping centre, why can’t the tram stop at Crystal Palace Station and why does this park need so much ‘treatment’?
Capel Manor’s presentation of their proposals for the new children’s farm followed the ‘dialogue’ meeting of 27 March 2007. When members of the CPCA pointed out to CM Chief Executive Steve Dowbiggin, Estates Manager Nick Evans, and Roger Frith, LDA, that the revised planning application showed no indication of the farm being open at weekends, Roger Frith stated that a requirement of the LDA funding of £80,000 over two years was that the farm was open at weekends “or they won’t get the money” and suggested they correct their application.

When asked the consequences should the LDA refuse further funding, i.e. would the college continue but public opening for the farm cease, Madeline Hall, Head of College, said the farm might continue, but with an added entrance charge.

Children’s farm welcomed

The CPCA greatly welcomes the return of a publicly accessible farm on the Park; however the original Capel Manor application contained no guarantees or commitment to the establishing of a farm and contained reference to significant expansion within the Park.

The first application, for change of use of the Crystal Palace Park Children’s Farm to an educational college facility, was refused by Bromley Council’s planning committee in September, 2006, on the grounds that it was an inappropriate development on Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) with which the Government Office for London agreed and issued a ‘holding direction’.

Second application

In February, the College submitted a new application, which was considered by the Council on 26 April. Although short on detail and containing conflicting information, such as change of use on MOL which could be regarded as a departure from Bromley’s Unitary Development Plan, the extent of the proposed site area, and failure to demonstrate ‘very special circumstances’ - a requirement when developing on MOL - their application was approved by the committee.

Shared concerns

Bromley’s Advisory Panel for Conservation Areas (APCA) objected to the ‘viper-spiked’ fencing and gates that will enclose the development, on the grounds it “will be overbearing, insensitive and needs a better design solution”.

Within the detailing of the Capel Manor planning application, the precise area of proposed occupation is unclear, as are the specific uses and operating conditions, and most importantly, the extent and guarantee of public access to animals.

Under the proposed lease, 6,300 square metres are assigned for Capel Manor usage, within which 2,500 square metres will be behind the 2.4 metre-high, viper-spiked metal fencing. The tenancy boundary will enclose approximately 7,800 square metres. Thus, Capel Manor would be able to fence off 7,800 square metres of land, of which they held tenancy and, accordingly, the public would no longer enjoy rights of access to this area of public parkland.

Limited opening hours

The farm will be open to the public from Monday to Friday, for just 90 minutes in the morning and the same in the afternoon; and, at the weekend, for just four hours in the afternoons, for 300 days a year, meaning the farm would be closed to the public for more than nine weeks. To what extent the farm will be open after school hours or during school holidays is unknown.

This limited public access demonstrates a distinct change of ethos. The animals are primarily for the College’s educational courses, with public access allowed only at its convenience. This will be nothing like the farm as we knew it.

No long-term guarantees

CPCA request for sight of Capel Manor’s lease has been refused, but the LDA confirm that the agreement reached between them and Capel Manor College requires some public access to the animals, in return for a ‘ peppercorn’ rent for their presence in the Park.

Currently, College courses are run from premises in the Jubilee Stand. This unofficial change of use is being investigated by Bromley Council. It is the LDA’s intention to demolish this stand in five years time, when it would become necessary for the College to find new premises. This may see the re-emergence of Capel Manor’s original plans, to build classrooms within extended farm grounds, resulting in further loss of parkland.

This substantial area of the Park will be under the ownership and management of a private
organisation, which will have the option to expand their operation, setting a further precedent for development on the Park. As part of its horticultural courses, the College has already extended its activities, by occupying approximately 168 square metres of land in the middle of the Park.

**Bring back Crystal Palace Park Children’s Farm**

The CPCA seeks the re-opening of the Children’s Farm as it was – a much-loved amenity in the Park, open for the convenience of visitors, not as a limited concession by a private organisation. It should re-open for the long term, not just for two years, and not be an excuse to enable further development within the Park.

In granting a lease, the LDA and Bromley Council should have ensured that the farm would be truly a children’s farm, open regularly each day, and not occasionally, at Capel Manor’s discretion, as is now probable.

The CPCA’s scrutiny and comment on Capel Manor’s planning application have resulted in an improved scheme. Without the CPCA’s diligence, Capel Manor’s second planning application would NOT have included weekend opening hours for public access to the proposed farm. The College’s omission, on such a fundamental point, led them to add a last minute correction to their application.

We must now hope that Capel Manor College will satisfy everyone’s expectations, and establish a children’s farm that meets the hopes and aspirations of the many who would welcome this amenity back in the Park.

**Correction**

Contrary to our previous understanding, the farm opening times will be reduced, as confirmed on the LDA website, which states: “the farm will be open to the public in the afternoons, for 4 to 5 days a week, with school parties visiting in the morning.”

**LDA Consultation Battlebus: an inauspicious start**

The latest LDA consultation initiative was parked in the grounds of Sydenham High School on Saturday 17 March to take those interested to Capel Manor’s exhibition in Crystal Palace Park after that day’s ‘dialogue’ meeting. The plan was aborted when the double-decker, painted white and bedecked with the motifs: ‘THE COME AND TALK TO US BUS’ and ‘CRYSTAL PALACE PARK, PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE’, refused to start. The bus has been leased by the LDA to aid consultation at local schools and other “hard to reach groups”.

**PARK PLANNING APPLICATION SUBMISSION - SEPTEMBER 2007**

Nigel Westaway has told the CPCA that the Nigel Westaway & Associates and Environment Council facilitated dialogue process would end at the beginning of June, although ‘dialogue’, would continue. This would allow the master planners, Latz + Partner, three months in which to assimilate data collected since June 2002, and submit a planning application to Bromley Council in September 2007. Bromley is expected to take six months to a year to consider the application.

Munish Chopra of ‘dialogue’ explained to visitors at a 27 May presentation that the public would be able to view, in October, the plans as submitted to Bromley Council the month before. He was pleased that so many people were completing questionnaires which will be appendices to the application.

When it was suggested there should be a presentation board giving details of the location, size and number of private residential blocks of flats, thus enabling the public to make informed comment when completing questionnaires, Mr Chopra became angry and insisted that he did not have time to add to the presentation boards which were produced in March, and anyway housing was mentioned. It was pointed out that those visiting these roving presentations are told the minimum. The board entitled ‘Rockhills and Sydenham Gate’ states: “Several options are being considered for this site ranging from retention of the Caravan Club to the construction of a new entrance for the park funded by housing.” ... “One option also being considered is recreating the row of villas [now 4-storey blocks of flats] that historically stood alongside the Park on Crystal Palace [Park?] Road.”

At the May and June meetings for public discussion of funding and housing, attended by about 150 people, master planner Tilman Latz and architect Phil Meadowcroft presented slides and aerial photographs showing plans for blocks of flats at an advanced stage. These plans must have been in existence for some time, exposing a serious lack of communication, as this vital information was not available at ‘battlebus’ presentations and information marquees.

When asked at a Penge Forum meeting on 6 June, Roger Frith said the LDA would make the decision this July whether or not to include the sale of parkland for residential in the planning application.
The CPCA has submitted detailed response to Transport for London (TfL) on their proposals to extend Croydon Tramlink to the hilltop of Crystal Palace Park, creating a major new transport hub on the Park behind the bus terminus, to include several platforms and overspill sidings for the stacking of additional trams.

Strong concerns held by the CPCA are that the public consultation exercise on these proposals and the MORI-conducted opinion poll were both inadequate and misleading, with no option given to terminate at Crystal Palace Station thus avoiding the need to build a tram system on 4,000 square metres of parkland.

**Business Case**

TfL claim that extending the tram to Crystal Palace will generate extra spending, create employment opportunities and contribute to an increase in property prices. These claims are unsubstantiated and simplistic, with no supporting study or business plan provided.

The claim that the tram will "regenerate" the Triangle is pure speculation as it is more likely to take people away from the area, thus benefiting Croydon, Wimbledon, and other shopping centres, rather than Crystal Palace town centre.

Regular bus and rail services already link Croydon with Crystal Palace, with trains taking just nine minutes from Crystal Palace to West Croydon station. The tram is less flexible than a bus service in terms of routing, which affects pick-up and set-down points.

The spending of £70 million to duplicate existing public transport services is irresponsible application of public money, although a case exists for a regular local hopper-style bus route connecting local stations, stores and high streets.

TfL further claim that “property prices in wards served by the tram have risen by an average of 4% more than in other wards”. This is not a justification for extending Croydon Tramlink to Crystal Palace and would benefit only those who own their own properties and are moving out of the area, while those seeking to move in will find it more difficult to get onto the property ladder. Others may find, as has been found elsewhere on the route, that the proximity of the tramline will have a negative impact on the value of their property.

Upper Norwood/Crystal Palace is predominately a high density residential area with business opportunity locations at a premium. TfL’s presumption of job creation by extending Tramlink to Crystal Palace is a flawed assumption.

The routing of the tram on Anerley Road and Anerley Hill will create major traffic problems in the area during and after construction, adversely affecting the environment and the commercial viability of the area in both the short and long-term.

**Effects on Crystal Palace Park**

Crystal Palace Park would be severely compromised by the presence of a tram. The negative impact of the tram can be seen throughout the Croydon Tramlink system. The record of persistent vandalism, damage, inherent lack of maintenance and housekeeping on existing tram routes is conspicuous throughout the system, resulting in the tram infrastructure blighting and urbanising the environment through which it passes. TfL openly admit that this is a problem. However, the lack of any remedial action by the tram operators does little to heighten public confidence in undeliverable promises to establish a structured and efficient maintenance regime.

The Mayor’s London Plan and the London Strategic Parks Project have clear policies with regard to protection of the capital’s public parks and open spaces. None have been desecrated with commercial development, consequent to sale of land to the highest bidder, and some have undergone extensive improvements, resulting in wide acknowledgement and praise.

TfL’s scheme to bring Tramlink to Crystal Palace via a route through the Park conflicts with the presumption against development on Metropolitan Open Land and on a ‘Registered Historic Park and Garden Grade II *’. Furthermore, this conflicts with Bromley’s Adopted Unitary Development Plan’s policy BE11 and MOL policies. Significantly, Bromley Council does not have an Urban Design Guide which notifies alterations to the streetscape resulting from construction of the tram, particularly in respect of tram passing through an historic park where there will be adverse visual effects. These are all material considerations in planning terms where protection and preservation of the historic character and...
appearance of the Park are paramount. Any case for bringing the tram to Crystal Palace must include an Environmental Impact Assessment to identify the full effect of Tramlink on Crystal Palace Park and adjacent areas.

Additionally, consideration must be given to the intrusive nature of the proposal which may:
- fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Crystal Palace Park Conservation Area by altering the character of the area in a material or detrimental way,
- alter the character of the Grade II * registered Park of Special Historic Interest in a material or detrimental way,
- damage or otherwise adversely affect the character and appearance of the Grade II listed terraces.

The CPCA notes that the Mayor’s London Plan and the London Strategic Parks Project is being ignored. TfL have never put forward any special case for extending Tramlink through Crystal Palace Park.

Routing the tram through the Park would impact on green open space and an historic and sensitive environment which the public have right to use and enjoy. Such a move would set a precedent threatening the protection, security and character of all green public places.

Impact and effects on area

All TfL options to extend the tram to Upper Norwood/Crystal Palace include “possible property acquisition”, i.e. compulsory purchase of people’s homes and businesses. Such demolition of property for the tram-track and associated infrastructure will provoke a change in character and ambiance of the streetscape with consequent social impact.

The loss of existing services, consequent to competition from the tram, is patently evident in the cutting of bus services on certain routes in Croydon following the introduction of Croydon Tramlink. Similarly, it is expected that some overland train services will be cut after the completion of the East London Line extension.

Routing the tram through Crystal Palace Park raises serious safety issues for park users. The Norwood Gate entrance has considerable pedestrian movements from its proximity to the Triangle. There is also heavy pedestrian use of the entrances to Crystal Palace Park at Cintra Gate and Ledrington Road.

If route options 1 or 3 are imposed, heavy traffic congestion and associated pollution on the already busy Anerley Road and Anerley Hill will be inevitable, with the likely consequence of increased traffic flow on parallel routes such as Crystal Palace Park Road.

Summary

The CPCA finds that the views of its members and others are varied and often ambivalent with some welcoming the extension while others consider that adequate transport facilities already exist in this area. The MORI residents’ survey states “most residents (80%) who use public transport say it is easy to travel within the area – one third (34%) cite it as very easy. While nearly half (46%) of residents do not consider there to be any transport problems locally ….”

One clear view that has emerged is that routing the tram through protected public parkland is emotive and contentious and is generally considered unacceptable.

The CPCA believes no case has been made for a Tramlink extension to the hilltop of Crystal Palace Park and that the practical and logical terminus should be at Crystal Palace Railway Station via routing adjacent to the existing railway track.

Under existing Disability Discrimination legislation, the installation of a lift from platform to road level at Crystal Palace Station for the disabled, infirm, elderly, and parents with push-chairs is long overdue.

Trams are a means of public transport which should be confined to suitable roads and existing tracks, to lessen their intrusive and undesirable environmental consequences. There is no place for them in Crystal Palace Park.

The CPCA maintains that the TfL Croydon Tramlink Crystal Palace extension ‘consultation’ was misleading and failed to provide sufficient accurate information to enable objective public scrutiny, particularly in the absence of any coherent business case and with no option for the possibility of terminating the tram at Crystal Palace Station.

The CPCA’s full submission to TfL is available on our website www.cpca.org.uk
THE CHAIRMAN WRITES:

Plenty to do

It has been a busy time since the publication of the last CPCA newsletter, which has seen our Committee heavily involved in many and various activities. Suzanne, our Hon. Secretary, is a major force behind the CPCA, indefatigable in her efforts, not least of which is her work in the production of this Newsletter. Our website is now, thanks to Jeremy, our webmaster, attracting great interest containing, as it does, varied, and regularly updated material. The CPCA’s events continue to prosper under Katriona’s stewardship, with the events subcommittee dreaming up new activities for members to enjoy. Our database, maintained by Jo, aided by Kalina, is now working splendidly, while Don continues tirelessly in heading up the Planning subcommittee. My sincere thanks go to the unmentioned members of the CPCA committees, and other highly valued helpers, without whom we would not be the effective voice that we are.

Ongoing Park saga

And so it goes on, and on, and on....!

Just when will the LDA listen and, perhaps more importantly, accept the results of their own consultations, the CPCA’s 7,000 signature petition, a member’s online petition, the results of the surveys carried out by the local ward councillors in Southwark and Lambeth (Bromley, Croydon and Lewisham councillors did not attempt this exercise) and the Croydon Advertiser poll - all showing huge majorities opposing the principle of selling our park for houses.

Encouragingly, my presentation to the Dulwich Community Council on 4 June 2007, on the LDA’s latest £67.2 million Park proposals, was well received, with strong support for the CPCA’s stand.

Meanwhile, the LDA machine rolls relentlessly on, seemingly oblivious to all concerns, while their funding philosophy for the Park, as demonstrated through their website, talks of “commercial investment” and “limited public contribution”. Do we want a government agency that adopts a practice of sell-off and big business investment, to own and control what is still a public asset, and, for the time being at least, a precious and historic public park, or is it time for a more fundamental approach?

A new approach

With investment in parks at an all-time low, and with most of our parks and green public open spaces having to compete for funding against increasing demands by local services, it is hardly surprising that Crystal Palace Park is under threat. The relatively new Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has been the saviour of many a UK park, although in Crystal Palace Park the HLF funding was poorly applied.

There have been many reports on the future prospects of our parks. Look no further than our playing fields, if you want a projection. They are being sold off indiscriminately, often for housing schemes or superstores, in order to fund some local ‘vision’ or ‘regeneration’ project that promise much, but usually deliver just further urbanisation.

We need some visionary thinking from government, its agencies and advisors. It is to this end that the LDA should be applying itself, in order to provide a sustainable and popular future for our Park.

Crystal Palace Park is an inherent part of the psyche of the CPCA; indeed, issues that may affect the future of the Park are tenets of our constitution. We would be failing in our duty as a responsible local amenity society, if we did not fully scrutinise all proposals that may, in our view, impact on the Park.

The CPCA fully supports the LDA vision of an improved and revitalised Park, and remains hopeful that, ultimately, the right decisions will be made - ones on which all Park stakeholders can find accord.

LDA Park costs to date

Recently, Andrew Pelling MP asked the London Mayor the question: “What investment has been made to date in Crystal Palace Park and how does this sum compare with expenditure on consultations, exhibitions and brochures on plans for the Park?” In response the Mayor gave the total gross spending, from 2004 to the end of March 2007, as £11.1 million.

At £6.2 million, the NSC has, so far, accounted for the major proportion of this figure, with the GLA and Sport England contributing £1.2 million. Included, is £1.5 million to improve access and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance, while this financial year will see the LDA and Sport England spend a further £4.2 million on the refurbishment of the NSC plant.

The Park Planning Framework, legal fees and consultants’ costs are given as £3 million, with £1.5 million spent on the master planning team. Consultation and communications have added a further £500,000 to the expenditure.

The welcome removal of the defunct bridge and turnstiles near Crystal Palace station has cost £250,000, with the area due to undergo landscaping and further improvement.

Ironically, the £11.1 million total is almost the gross figure quoted by the LDA as the income for sale of land for housing, although a large chunk of this possible ‘income’ will be needed to meet relocation costs.

Digging the dirt – the future?

The ever increasing costs of the 2012 Olympics have made the prospect of a new, state-of-the-art sports centre unlikely in the foreseeable future. Umpteen millions are to be spent propping up the NSC, before converting it to a ‘pavilion’ in the Park - bereft of heating, and partially buried in soil obtained, so we are told, from other areas of the Park. Could this soil come from underground car parks associated with the proposed new private housing and, perhaps, spoil excavated in the construction of the tram extension through the Park?

Whatever the logistics, the Park will be very different from the one we see today – becoming a major events park – planned to be open 24 hours a day, commercially sustained, and with only limited public subsidy.

John Payne
Mayor Ken Demonstrates his own Style of Democracy at Bromley

Many questions – few answers

On 21 November 2006, the Great Hall at Bromley Civic Centre was once again filled to capacity with over 600 people seeking answers from the London Mayor and members of the London Assembly at People’s Question Time. On 6th May 1999, this same hall witnessed a near-riot when Bromley’s Full Council granted final planning permission to London and Regional Properties for development of Ian Ritchie’s huge multiplex on the site of the Crystal Palace.

Ken Livingstone was in excellent form, capitalising on the relaxed PQT chairmanship of Bob Neill MP, who repeatedly let him off the hook, allowing him to avoid searching questions, and to veil important issues with attempted humour.

On Tramlink to Crystal Palace, the Mayor would not confirm precisely where the tram will terminate and Mayor would not confirm precisely issues with attempted humour.

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On Tramlink to Crystal Palace, the Mayor would not confirm precisely where the tram will terminate and the proposed route, only that “we intend to extend up to Crystal Palace. Crystal Palace will become a major transport interchange…”

A question on the escalating costs of the 2012 Olympics brought the following reply, “I can confidently predict [it] will make a profit for London. We read many alarming things, and the cost for building the Olympics is substantial, but at the end of it if we own the land, and after the Games we will sell the land for new housing and new employment. I think it will have a regenerative effect that will benefit the whole of London.”

When the question was asked if he recognised the importance of parks in the light of higher density housing, global warming, atmospheric pollution, 4.5 million UK asthma sufferers and increasing obesity levels in adults and children, Ken Livingstone said “The answer to that is of course, yes. But, I suspect you may be thinking of Crystal Palace … I think there is every prospect there will be a limited amount of housing to pay for the renewal of the Park”. The meeting then exploded into uproar.

There was disbelief when the Mayor of London then said he could “…do a deal…” to sell parkland for private luxury houses to raise money towards Park improvements or “…put it on your Council Tax…”

Playing with public money

At one point it was clear that the Mayor confused the funding promised by the Government, Sport England and the LDA for the redevelopment of the sports centre with the funding needed to “do up one small park” which he said would cost “…the best part of £50 or £60 million…”

The business plan and cost/benefit analysis promised for the past two years to justify his London Development Agency’s claims for the ‘necessary’ sale of parkland, is still awaited, while their Park renovation costings have fluctuated wildly between £30 and £60 million.

Democracy - Livingstone style

Throughout the evening, Mayor Livingstone was allowed to ask his own question at the end of each topic. To the astonishment of all, he used this bizarre method to decide GLA strategy for the long-term future of Crystal Palace Park.

His question was: “If you want me to put it [the cost of LDA Park improvements] on the council tax as opposed to doing the deal for the housing development say yes…” and he gave his word that the outcome of the ‘yes/no’ electronic voting system would be absolutely binding on him when he had to decide on Crystal Palace Park funding in about two years time.

The issues facing Crystal Palace Park were not explained to the 600 present, and in a travesty of democracy, the Mayor accepted the wishes of the 84 who favoured selling parkland for housing as binding on London’s suffering millions of council-tax payers, also disregarding the 7,000 who signed a petition to him opposing Park sell-off, the Croydon Advertiser poll showing 85% opposing housing on parkland, and the results of the LDA’s own consultation that confirmed substantial opposition to housing.

No new National Sports Centre

Following a question from CPC Chair John Payne over the future of the NSC, the Mayor said that he thought the existing building was “…a nice building” and that “…it will be a free-standing building in the Park…for five-a-side football and so on”. The Mayor also stated that, “It will not be a National Sports Centre; it will be regional for people of South London”.

The latest announcement from the LDA is that no new sports centre will be built in the Park until after the Olympics although quite when ‘after the Olympics’ has not been confirmed.

Going round in ‘Triangles’

In response to a question from the floor concerning the difficulties of the Upper Norwood one-way system, the Mayor answered: “I do not want to intervene and tell people what they should be doing in the Norwood Triangle, because it is predominantly local. If the council tells us they do not think it is working, we will sit down with them and see what we can do about it”.

Putting the onus on Croydon Council without acknowledging the constraints put upon the Council by his own agency – Transport for London - is misleading.
For a person who built a career on challenging established authority, Ken Livingstone’s description of those who questioned the £675 million grab from the Heritage Lottery Fund towards the 2012 Olympic Games costs as “Professional cynics and pessimists” is surprising.

Another assailed by the London Mayor was One London Party leader and London Assembly member Damian Hockney, who when asking Ken where £300 million extra to be paid by the Greater London Authority was coming from, was told by him during a live radio broadcast “I guarantee we won’t be spending any more on the Olympics than he has spent on cosmetic surgery”.

Many felt Ken Livingstone, as the Spokesman for London, demeaned this office and yet again shot himself in the foot in evading the question and resorting to personal remarks, whilst exposing himself to the predictable riposte from Damian Hockney: “At least the tax payer didn’t fork out for it”.

The moguls at City Hall are similarly hyper sensitive to question that the staggering increase in projected costs for the 2012 Olympic Games from £2.4 billion to £9.35 billion in under two years is anything but beneficial to London, as this will provide better trains, 40,000 new homes and as many new jobs, and redress the affluence imbalance between West and East London.

Ken Livingstone has written that “The cardinal deception is to claim that the Olympics investment is for 16 days of sport, when it actually underpins the next 50 years of East London’s future”, which assumes that the siphoning-off of £2.2 billion from the National Lottery for the London 2012 Olympic Games will be acceptable to the rest of Britain.

It is not just politicians making capital and journalists seeking copy who are raising criticisms, as Sport England described their loss of £55 million funding as “...a real blow to community sport in England”.

Despite his flamboyant and erratic style, Ken Livingstone is an astute politician who realises that wherever the extra funding for the London Olympics comes from it must not be from London tax payers, who finally, through the ballot box, might end his seeming invincibility.

Only London’s voters can effectively demonstrate their disapproval of Ken’s policies, as where previously the 25 member London Assembly could by a two thirds majority veto the Mayor’s proposals, this provision has been removed by amendment to the Greater London Authority Act, which has also greatly increased the Mayor’s powers.

It could reasonably be argued that the stated purpose of the London Assembly has been superseded by changes in the law, when the potency of its scrutiny of the Mayor’s activities is limited to statements by Tory Assembly member Roger Evans “The Mayor has spent more time in Havana than in Havering” and by L/A Chairman Brian Coleman that he never believes anything he reads in ‘Inside City Hall’.

Realisation is dawning that through no fault of its own, the nation may be faced with one of the most expensive Olympic Games in history, due in no little part to the enormous cost of security at an event which, watched by billions on TV, would provide terrorists with a world stage.

Within the euphoria at the successful London Olympic bid were some pragmatists who, with the benefit of that most exact science hindsight, may not have been so jaundiced after all, as what was being then whispered in the corridors of power, is now being openly discussed.

There is increasing conjecture that the Olympic Games may have reached the stage where due to sheer immensity and cost, and of course the world political situation, a new venue every four years is unrealistic and that it is time to find a permanent home for the Olympics in a country politically and culturally moderate, if one exists.

If the staggering increase of £7 billion in two years is a stage in a progression, the final cost may be simply unsustainable, raising the spectre of the 2005 World Athletics Championships at Pickett’s Lock, which were handed back by the UK, lock, stock and barrel.

Mike Warwick.
Barker Bombshell for Bromley Council and UK Government

Appeal Lords rule – you got it wrong

Bromley given flawed advice by Officer

On 6th May 1999, at a full Bromley Council meeting, over six hundred people, concerned at the damaging environmental effects of building a huge multiplex on Crystal Palace Park, witnessed Bromley Chief Planning Officer, Stuart Macmillan, advise councillors and officers present that, “An environmental assessment is an irrelevancy.” This was despite the concerns of several councillors on the committee who would like to have seen an EIA carried out, given the material changes to the building since the outline stage. Demonstrating exceptional forethought, Cllr Hall said “As we may be taken to the European court it would be extraordinarily unwise to pass this now. I would like further legal advice on European law which I think has not been adequately dealt with”.

Bromley taken to court

Following the granting of planning permission for the multiplex development, without Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), local Crystal Palace resident Dianne Barker took Bromley Council to court for this perceived breach of a European Union Directive.

Important victory

On 6 December 2006, seven years seven months and a dozen court hearings later, the House of Lords endorsed the European Court of Justice ruling in Strasbourg earlier that year, that Bromley was wrong in failing to require Environmental Impact Assessment.

Robert McCracken QC, counsel for Dianne Barker, said the House of Lords have ordered Bromley to pay Dianne Barker’s costs in the High Court, and the Court of Appeal, and half her costs in the House of Lords and the European Court of Justice. They have ordered the Government to pay half of her costs in the House of Lords and European Court of Justice because of the Secretary of State’s intervention in joining forces with Bromley Council.

As the planning permission for the multiplex development has expired, the Lords did not need to make an order quashing it. The Government have now said that they will issue new regulations.

Lord Bingham, Lord Hope, Baroness Hale, Lord Carswell and Lord Brown, the five members of the Appellate Committee, all found for Dianne Barker.

Law Lords judgement

In his judgement, Lord Hope of Craighead said, “If it is likely that there will be significant effects on the environment which have not previously been identified [i.e. at the earlier ‘outline’ stage] an EIA must be carried out at the reserved matters stage before consent is given for the development.”

He found “the council misdirected itself in law when it decided that it had no power to require an EIA to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Directive at that stage” and that “…these proceedings have resulted in a decision in the appellant’s favour on an important issue of principle.”

This House of Lords decision is due in no little part to the courage and determination of Dianne Barker, and to her legal team, solicitors Susan Ring and Richard Buxton and barristers Robert McCracken QC and James Pereira, who were quite outstanding.

Stuart Macmillan, Bromley’s Chief Planning Officer, declined to respond when invited by the CPCA to comment on the unanimous finding of the Appellate Committee that he was wrong.

The CPCA believes that this important decision sends a clear warning to any, in the future, who would disregard the interests of the public, and dismiss with contempt those who would oppose plans for commercial development and exploitation at the cost of irreparable damage to the environment, and which are likely to impact adversely on their lives. This ruling will allow public scrutiny and challenge to such schemes, ensuring that developers and planning authorities provide greater accountability for their proposals.

Dianne, seven years, seven months and a dozen court hearings later...
In what may be his final flourish before leaving the Crystal Palace Park Dialogue Process, Nigel Westaway, facilitator since June 2002, resorted to some creative analysis in his summary of the ‘sticky dots consultation exercise’ of the 10 February 2007 Main Group Meeting (see page 4).

Mr Westaway claims that: “Focussing specifically on the housing proposals, a total of 78 red dots and 56 green dots were placed – indicating a majority against the proposals, but with a substantial minority in favour....” Funding improvements with limited residential development has 36 red dots with only 12 green dots in support. Mr Westaway’s summary clearly does not accurately reflect the results. His instruction on the day was “if they [attendees] supported all the proposals on a sheet they were asked to indicate this by sticking one dot in the sheet title box only.”

The Rockhills proposals were spread over two wall-sheets. On the sheet headed ‘Rockhills Entrance - Sheet 1 of 2’ sixteen green dots were placed by those in favour of ALL eight proposals on that sheet, none of which mentioned residential development or housing.

On the sheet headed ‘Rockhills Entrance - Sheet 2 of 2’ one green dot was placed by a person who was in favour of ALL the proposals on that sheet, one of which was: “Fund these improvements with limited residential development along the perimeter of the Park.”

In his ‘Summary of the Crystal Palace Park Main Group Report of 10 February 2007 Nigel Westaway gave the number of green dots in favour of all the Rockhills proposals as 17, achieved by adding the 16 green dots on sheet 1 to the single green dot on sheet 2. This false ‘result’ favours the LDA and their housing proposals.

Continuing his imaginative analysis, Mr Westaway stated in his summary: “the great majority of red dots (42) were placed in opposition to housing proposals for this area and, to a lesser degree (7 red dots), in opposition to relocation of the Caravan Club” yet there was no reference on the wall sheets to “the relocation of the Caravan Club”. One must ask how he arrived at that conclusion.

His further claim in the summary that “if all the dots supporting all items in a group are weighted accordingly, the overall level of support is 95.5%” is equally unsound. The method of calculating this weighting is neither transparent nor supported by the analysis provided. It is not possible to assess how this overwhelming level of support is assessed, as no basis of this calculation and weighting is provided.

More than one sticky dot could have been placed against proposals by anyone seeking to influence the outcome improperly, thereby invalidating the results of the exercise. The dots may provide a visual representation of opinions, but cannot be used as part of a statistically robust and credible assessment. Relying on red and green sticky dots, as an assessment of public opinion, is open to abuse in the calculation of the results, and is open to exploitation by those who may wish to influence the outcome. The incorrect statistical analysis of this exercise is a further attempt to stifle debate, and misrepresents the strong opinions of local people.

In making such an assertion of support for ‘ALL’ proposals, Mr Westaway misleads, not only recipients of his summary, but his clients, the LDA, as to the true level of opposition to sale of parkland for 176 private luxury villas and apartments.

Nigel Westaway’s style of conflict resolution and facilitation is random and imprecise, and a cavalier approach to very important issues. It should be remembered that dialogue is conversation, usually formal, for the exchange of opinions and ideas.
Many will remember the social phenomenon - CB Radio - whereby people could indulge themselves in flights of fantasy, hiding behind, often outlandish, pseudonyms.

Its successor is perhaps the ‘Virtual website’, numbers of which have dramatically increased, when although, unlike which have dramatically ‘Virtual website’, numbers of often outlandish, pseudonyms.

in flights of fantasy, hiding behind, phenomenon - CB Radio - whereby individuals.

Two such ‘sites’ are ‘Virtual Norwood’ and ‘Sydenham Town’, which although offering opportunity for participation on local issues, scrutiny of these sites identifies the same few people, mostly lacking the courage to identify themselves, who are ‘posting’ defamatory and vindictive statements again and again, maligning and reviling others.

Some ‘posters’ damage their credibility in demonstrated ignorance on issues they raise, which go unchallenged amongst the sycophants who are themselves disseminating disinformation and inflammatory rhetoric, of which they falsely accuse others of doing.

Some, in their anonymous attacks, expose their inability to focus valid argument, and under the new order they seek to impose, dissent becomes disruption, and those who strongly express the same views become a mob, not a majority.

Graphic demonstration of this is on the ‘Sydenham Town’ website, where Marion Wood is to be commended for identifying herself in her posting on 5 June 2007: “Having studied the information provided by the CPCA website and after re-reading all Sydenham Town postings about this topic, I remain opposed to the LDA proposals for private blocks of flats to be built on publicly owned open green space.

I am disappointed by the tone and nature of some of the more personal remarks in recent postings regarding the community association and its chairman. With reference to Rent a Mob tactics at public meetings, it strikes me that these may be exactly what they are. The question is who is doing the hiring?”

In response, “nasaroc” posted on 6 June 2007: “Marion - I’m very unclear about your comment: “Who is doing the hiring?” You are surely not suggesting that the people at the meeting acting in this fashion are not all long-term members of one particular group. Which they are. Or that they are being provoked into behaving in an undemocratic and intimidating fashion? Which they aren’t. Or that they’ve been “hired in” by some sinister outside body to undermine the CPCA? This is fantasy world stuff! Whatever your views on housing on the site, there is simply no excuse for trying to block other people’s opinions by intimidation and heckling.”

Concerning blocking other people’s opinions by intimidation, Crystal Palace Campaign Founder Member, Kim Rich, who has devoted years to the protection of Crystal Palace Park, was blocked from giving her opinions to those at the 1 June 2007 ‘dialogue’ Meeting by Munish Chopra on the grounds she would have opportunity to speak to them later.

Kim Rich had no opportunity to speak to them later, and was able to speak to only half the attendees and to put her ‘views and opinions’ on tiny pieces of paper to be stuck on wall charts, under classification ‘positive’ or ‘negative’, as decided by the ‘dialogue’ team.

“Charles” in a ‘Sydenham Town’ posting of 3 June 2007 agreed: “Yes, the rentamob sound awful …” criticism that would be more valid if “Charles” had been at the 1 June 2007 Anerley Town Hall ‘dialogue’ meeting, which by his own admission, he was not.

In a defamatory outburst posted on ‘Sydenham Town’ on 3 June 2007 “outcast” alludes to “…so many dissfunctional (sic) people…” attracted to the Crystal Palace Community Association, and states: “They have embarked upon some sort of vendetta against the LDA and even got the Farm stopped!” and by further allusion that they are “…not normal members…” but “…unsavoury fanatics. I think they are a menace…The CPCA should be barred from further meetings.”

The date of posting and the date of joining, both given as 03 June 2007, suggests “outcast” joined ‘Sydenham Town’ specifically to make vitriolic attack on the CPCA whilst hiding behind anonymity.

Continuing in this vein, “Eaglesman” posts in the newsshopper.co.uk website on Thu 31 May 07: “How many members does this so-called “Community Association” actually have, apart from Payne and Elkin? Why don’t they self-appointed “representatives “ try saying something positive for a change instead of just winging? Don’t they know the history of the park? It was built using proceeds from the sale of land on fringes for housing - that’s right, all those grand old Victorian piles on Crystal Palace Park Road.”

Far from being ‘so-called’, the CPCA is a Registered Charity with a large membership of which John Payne is the Chair and Suzanne Elkin the Honorary Secretary, duly elected by democratic process, something with which ‘eaglesman’ may be as unfamiliar as with the history of Crystal Palace Park. The land which was sold to a local builder, years after the death of Paxton, was to raise money for the ailing Crystal Palace Company, and the Park was certainly not built from these proceeds, as claimed by “eaglesman”.

These ‘posters’ have inadvertently made Marion Wood’s case quite conclusively. (Could “nasaroc”, “outcast” and “eaglesman” be related - perhaps we should be told?)

The CPCA gives no more regard to anonymous website vilification than to anonymous letters and graffiti, but will consider its position, should the Association or any member of the Association be defamed or libelled.
The Crystal Palace caravan and camping centre is the oldest in the country, established in 1951 to accommodate visitors to the Festival of Britain.

A recent article in the South London Press alerted the public to its possible removal because the “London Development Agency (LDA) wants the club moved out to create more green space near the Rockhills entrance”. However, the article missed one vital point: the London Mayor and the LDA want the land for housing.

Far from creating “more green space” as claimed by the LDA, their wish is to remove the Club to clear the way for a private housing development.

LDA consultation on the future of Crystal Palace Park gave the public an option to oppose housing at the ‘Norwood Gate’ entrance but no opportunity to oppose private housing at Rockhills or Sydenham Gate, nor to oppose plans to remove the camping and caravan centre, a decision taken unilaterally by the Park Working Group.

The 7,000 signature petition against housing on Crystal Palace parkland to the London Mayor, organised by the CPCA, has been ignored, as have the 85% who voted against housing in the Croydon Advertiser poll and the views of all those who registered objection to housing in the LDA’s own consultation questionnaire.

In the report of the first ‘dialogue’/Latz meeting on 27 January 2007, it states that “there was general consensus against housing in the park and general urban encroachment”, a view again endorsed in their second report of the 27 March meeting. A letter to Dialogue Members of 12th June 2007 from the facilitators of the recent Main Group meeting, confirms the ‘dialogue’/Latz findings, stating: “The possibility of residential development still stands out as the most contentious issue, with the majority at the 19 May meeting opposed to it.”

At a Crystal Palace Park meeting last year, Roger Frith, LDA Senior Project Manager, tried to dismiss the importance of the Caravan Club as a “wholly commercial enterprise” and was equally dismissive of the valuable revenue stream that the campers and caravaners contribute to the local economy - estimated at several million pounds per year. The intrinsic value and delights of staying at this beautifully maintained campsite was highlighted in Simon Calder’s glowing reference in The Independent of 31st March 2007.

The building of a housing estate would cause irreversible loss of precious parkland and set a precedent threatening all other parks. Presumably, selling parkland for a few million pounds to allow a developer to build 5-storey blocks of 132 luxury flats is not considered ‘commercial’ by the London ‘Development’ Agency. The March 2007 Park Working Group report states: “Master planners feel that it would be great advantage to the park for the Caravan Club to be gone: it would enable proper [?] use of the Rockhills area …”.

The transcript continues: “the desirability of removal of the Caravan Club (and that issue only) might usefully be explored with Main Group” while the Crystal Palace Park Steering Group Minutes of 26 February 2007 state unequivocally: “Caravan Club site to be reduced or relocated.”

Unfortunately the issue was not “usefully explored” at the following Main Group meeting, nor did the facilitator, Nigel Westaway, allow full and proper discussion of other contentious issues.

The forgotten building

In response to a question put at Anerley Town Hall on 1st June about the proposed Ledrington Road building, LDA’s Urban Design Manager, Robin Buckle, said “The options for the Station Gate building are still key worker housing; it’s still the athlete’s accommodation related to the current ‘Lodge’ building or it could be student accommodation. That student accommodation could be related to Capel Manor. It could be related to the sports centre in some way.” He said the number of units would be “in the region of 32.”

Interpreting the Park

The LDA have appointed Laura Samuels as the new ‘Crystal Palace Park Interpretation Development Officer’ on a nine-month contract. Based at 18 Church Road and also at the offices of architects Meadowcroft Griffin, her role is described as developing “Museum practice” and “Park interpretation”.

For this period she will leave her post at Prince Research, the LDA consultants who gave ominous warning early on in the consultation process of difficult decisions facing the Park.
The demolition of the present National Sports Centre and the building of a modern sports facility near Crystal Palace railway station was cardinal to LDA proposals for greening the centre of the Park, as described in their ‘Planning Framework’ document, the basis of all LDA public consultation. It was the demolition of this building, and removal of its associated infrastructure, including the vast area of car parking, that substantiated LDA claims to be creating 39 acres of additional parkland.

**English Heritage yet to be told**

Tilmann Latz stated that English Heritage are very much in favour and support fully his proposals for the Park. This statement is somewhat surprising given that proposals for the Park are totally confusing and that EH can only comment on proposals put to them formally with regard to registered parks consent.

**LDA made no proper case to demolish NSC**

Now, LDA consultants publicly claim that the NSC could not be de-listed and demolished “because English Heritage opposed it”. The truth is that no application was made by the LDA for either de-listing the building or for its demolition; although English Heritage have confirmed to the CPCA that they would oppose the demolition of the building unless an overwhelming case could be made against its retention, suggesting that if such a case was made against its retention, as happened at Wembley, English Heritage would not oppose its demolition.

The claim that English Heritage has prevented LDA plans is a convenient excuse to justify not building the new sports facility within the time frame originally promised and promoted. In failing to produce a case for de-listing and demolition, and contrary to overwhelming public support for its removal and the building of a new centre, Mayor Livingstone now promotes the NSC as a ‘pavilion’ in the Park.

The LDA intend to demolish the raised walkway (a structure which was integral to the architect’s original design) and remove the training pool, fitness centre and climbing wall, leading to the loss of these facilities. With the proposed new entrance into the NSC, a floor lower than at present, and earth banking around the ground floor, the NSC will appear to be a much taller structure than at present.

**Latest U turn**

Following their decision to keep the NSC, the LDA have been forced to produce a February 2007 ‘Addendum’ to the Crystal Palace Park Planning Framework. This elusive document states: “the LDA now proposes to retain the NSC, not as a multi-use sports centre, for it doesn’t meet modern day standards and is no longer fit for purpose, but for a more low-key sports function, such as five-a-side football.”

However until a new permanent facility is built, and to ensure the continuity of training for swimmers and divers prior to the 2012 Olympics, the LDA will install new pumping and filtration equipment at a cost of £4.2 million. The renovation work is due to start this autumn and will see the closure of the pool and other facilities until Easter 2008.

The present estimated time scale for the building of the new regional sports facility, formerly called the ‘new National Sports Centre’ by the LDA, has been ambiguously given as “after the 2012 Olympics”, but exactly when ‘after’ has not been made clear.

Should the LDA actually deliver on the promised new sports centre while retaining the existing NSC building, the built development within the Major Developed Site (MDS) area of the Park would be increased significantly and conflict with recommendations subsequent to UDP Planning Inquiry.

The probability is that no new sports centre to include aquatics will ever be built in Crystal Palace Park, following the expense of the 2012 Olympics, on the justification that sufficient training facilities exist at Lee Valley.
**Puppet Playtime: For Whom the CCAP Fits**

As pointed out last time, the pantomime season is never far away. For Crystal Palace theatre-goers, this is just as well. Puppets have been working all hours to meet the demand, driven (sometimes to distraction) by their master who, graciously as ever, has seen fit to give them some much-needed relaxation. Of course, it must be recalled that puppets have had many treats in the past, with more to come - if they can behave themselves. Thus, some moons ago, marquees were erected to allow the puppets and their fellow-residents to try spotting the, almost invisible, tree-houses on the edges of the nearby park, while their offspring had their faces professionally painted; 'post-its' were provided for the grown-ups to participate in the fun; and everyone felt at ease. More recently, park rewards have been offered, thanks to the patronage of the LAD, which have had a wide appeal: ice-skating was perhaps the most popular of these, so it was a shame when, last Christmas, it had to be cancelled. Meanwhile, future promises include expensive, Olympic-sized, paddling pools, palatable pathways (unlike LEYBORM imitations), palatial piazzas, possibly even a palace or two, lakes with gondolas, plenty of green (the in-colour), topped out with continental-style tram-rides, chardonnay on the terraces, frankfurters (with or without onions/garlic) and cappuccinos for sale, with the occasional cuppa, or bag of chips, to whet the appetite for sale, with the occasional cuppa, or bag of chips, to whet the appetite of the indigenous park-lover.

Over-enthusiasm, one way or another, must have caused this regrettable lapse in behaviour. However, despite an ill-timed outbreak of red stickers in certain quarters, this overwhelmingly green and pleasant theatrical occasion, passed off quite peacefully, to the obvious relief of the puppet-master and his faithful band of associates. The only fly-in-the-ointment was the unmistakable sound of a concrete-mixer nearby. Even this may have been more imagined than real. Who knows? "Who, indeed!" comes the distant cry of the red NEK.

As a footnote, no more, no less, it must be said that dress codes (as distinct from behavioural equivalents) are changing at the theatre. Rumour (?) has it that would-be theatre-goers should be careful in their choice of headgear. An individually tailored hat is acceptable, but try wearing a hat which suggests any affiliation to a particular troupe of players or puppets and you may find you are causing an offence, punishable ultimately by exclusion from the performance. You have been warned - especially those who prefer to put on a Community CAP when attending a show. Moreover, there is no longer any excuse for partisan cheers or jeers, whether or not accompanied by CCAP throwing. Such CCAPers have been outlawed by the maestro di cerimonie.

Richard Francis, resident theatre critic

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**Don’t Call Us, We’ll Call You - We’re The Master Planners**

The reply received from Munish Chopra of ‘dialogue’, to a CPCA email alerting him, the LDA and the master planners of the lack of safety fencing around the deep ‘archaeological’ holes dug by machine in two areas of the hilltop was somewhat surprising: “In response to your earlier email, the spoils and trenches have been fenced off. If you have any further concerns over these issues, please let me know.

Can I reiterate that all correspondence with the masterplanning team to a local society should go through either myself, Charles Anglin or Emma Wheelhouse. Members of the masterplanning team will not be able to respond. This rule has been consistently applied to all societies with the exception of the interpretation officer who has a special remit to talk to certain societies.”

Perhaps they’d have rather not been bothered until the ambulance was called.

The excavation behind the bus terminus - now rather better secured.
The London Development Agency is writing itself an unenviable place in history with its plans for housing to invade the margins of Crystal Palace Park. Future decades will look back with astonishment that anyone could have been so blinkered, small-minded, or have failed so badly to have grasped the realities of the 21st Century. Environmental awareness is rising again as a spate of television documentaries and newspaper articles underline the dangers of global warming. Documentary-maker Sir David Attenborough is amongst the many experts who were initially sceptical, but later acknowledged the growing weight of evidence that global warming, due to release of greenhouse gases (notably CO2) by human activity, is a real threat.

But what has this got to do with our Park? Our ever-shrinking parks and green spaces have a vital role to play as we battle the 21st century spectre of climate change. The time has come to treat them responsibly. They must not be targeted as potential development land waiting to be wrested from the public, through spin and manipulation. Almost everyone now understands the urgent need for action to reduce the scale of global warming.

Together, we can turn this disaster around and leave a green Earth for future generations – but only if everyone is prepared to do their bit locally. It is astonishing that the LDA is so out of touch that it could promote plans to smother chunks of Crystal Palace Park with housing, when this Park could be used to soak up CO2.

But, doesn’t the community want this housing? The ‘facilitated dialogue’ claims that a ‘significant minority’ support housing - but only after the figures have been processed in a very questionable fashion. The CPCA, the amenity society for the area, rejects the need for housing. The LDA consultation forms were misleading, and the LDA refused to accept a 7,000 signature petition (several times bigger than the number of responses to its own consultation). In any case, Crystal Palace doesn’t exist in a vacuum. A survey in next-door Dulwich revealed that an over-whelming majority rejected the plans. If developers find that they can successfully use a ‘dialogue’ process to de-fuse a powerful protest which fought under the slogan “Save Our Park,” and build houses on Crystal Palace Park, this will be bad news for all of Britain’s public open spaces and the communities that enjoy them. The wider impact of sale of protected parkland for residential use will be yet another thoughtless contribution to the climate problem confronting a worldwide community.

But won’t the new houses be environmentally-friendly? You’ve heard the story about the person who thought that the more slimming biscuits they ate, the slimmer they’d get? Slimming biscuits are merely less fattening than ordinary biscuits, and environmentally-friendly houses are merely less damaging than ordinary houses. Even zero-carbon-emission buildings would occupy land that could otherwise be managed to actually soak up CO2. Selling chunks of parks to finance work in parks is like selling your organs to finance your health care! Those pushing for houses have blustered that it’s more like having your appendix out. Whilst most of us understand that public green space is essential to our health, the LDA see it as a disease and want it ripped out! You have only one appendix, but our Park is dying a death of a thousand cuts – hasn’t enough land already been surrendered for Thicket Road, Crystal Palace Park Road, Ledrington Road, the old caravan park, the new caravan park, the BBC TV mast, the reservoir, the National Sports Centre and a bus terminus?

But shouldn’t we work through the facilitated Crystal Palace dialogue? Everyone’s first responsibility is to a much bigger dialogue - the urgent world-wide dialogue about averting climate change and environmental degradation. Those who turn their back on that dialogue and encourage plans for housing where they should be nurturing green parkland will not be admired by posterity. History will remember them as refusing to move with the tide of public commonsense – they will be ridiculed as the real Crystal Palace Park dinosaurs.

But, what can we do? A new movement is afoot amongst architects and planners to create ecological inter-fingering of cities and green space. The LDA supports the idea of nature areas in the Park and on a part of the hilltop. We must persuade the LDA to fully embrace the green 21st Century vision and to earn history’s applause for leading the way into a positive future. Outrageously, hundreds of trees, including a healthy three century old oak, were felled in the Park in 2000, for needless re-landscaping. We must push for urgent re-planting with dense woodland belts instead of housing estates. As the trees grow during the coming pivotal decades, they’ll absorb CO2 from the atmosphere helping to relieve the global problem) and provide havens of shade and coolness in the face of the heat-wave summers that will become more common (helping to relieve the local problem). This is exactly what parks are for!

Dr Martin Heath
Chair, Ridge Wildlife Group
Congratulations to Jim & Stephanie Lodge

CPCA members, Jim and Stephanie Lodge live outside the Crystal Palace area but have devoted much time and effort to actively supporting the protection of Crystal Palace Park, first from London & Regional Properties and Bromley’s multiplex proposal for the hilltop, and now from LDA plans to sell off parkland for private housing.

Their voluntary active support for the environment has been recognised by the Court of the Southwark Civic Association and the Council of the London Borough of Southwark, who last year presented them with a Southwark Civic Award.

The commendation reads: “They have been instrumental in helping to protect open spaces across the borough – open spaces with high amenity value and/or wildlife value which are at continual risk from built development in this crowded part of London. The list is long and the success varied, but they have worked ceaselessly and unfailingly and many green spaces are now still green because of them. Stephanie and Jim are unique because they not only campaign against inappropriate development but volunteer their time to make a positive difference.” The CPCA heartily endorses this award and offers our warmest congratulations to Jim and Stephanie.

Please open the Park gates

The removal of 1960s concrete, in the form of bridge and turnstiles by Crystal Palace Station, is most welcome. Visitors will have a friendlier reception at this entrance into the Park and large vehicles can now transport equipment directly to the Stadium for the staging of large events, thus avoiding the need to circumnavigate the Park, scattering foliage and park users in their wake.

“Good morning”

A friendlier reception would also be welcomed by early morning commuters from Thicket Road, and beyond, who would love to stroll through Crystal Palace Park, past the dinosaurs, on their way to the railway or bus station. This is made impossible because the gate is locked until 9.30 a.m.

Many children would use this route if they could, and what better way to start the day on their way to school, developing an affinity with nature, a sense of belonging, and appreciating that this is their park too.

Spot the Similarity

As active participants in the gatherings outside The Empire cinema in Leicester Square, Jim and Stephanie will remember the wording used by the Boycott UCI Group eight years ago, when lobbying London & Regional Properties not to build a multiplex cinema on precious parkland; exactly the same wording now used by the LDA:

‘pastpresentfuture’

Above: 1999 - the beautifully decorated cake made by Phyll Connolly, to mark the second anniversary of protest outside UCI’s flagship cinema, The Empire Leicester Square. Below: 2007 - the new LDA Park logo - history repeating itself?
THE CPCA WEBSITE

Would you like to be told when our website is updated? We have an ‘RSS web feed’ that delivers headlines from the CPCA pages straight to your computer, updated every time an item of interest is added. RSS (Really Simple Syndication) allows you to see when internet sites have added new content without having to visit the sites themselves, so you will have the latest news and information sent directly to you almost as quickly as they are posted online. Sites that provide an RSS service do this by publishing constantly updated headline feeds which are usually illustrated with an orange feed symbol to denote their availability.

To receive the RSS feeds you will need to install a ‘news reader’, which is software that checks the feeds and notifies you when these have been updated and new content is available to read. There is a range of different news readers available for most operating systems, some to download and others accessed via a web browser.

Once you have installed a news reader, you are ready to decide on the content to receive and there are various ways to subscribe to an RSS feed; these include dragging the feed’s URL address into your RSS reader, or copying and pasting this into a new feed.

The CPCA’s feed address is http://feeds.feedburner.com/cpca which can be accessed by clicking on the orange RSS link button in the ‘Latest News’ column of our pages. Once subscribed, you can then click on the headlines to go directly to each story.

Jeremy Walker

Broadband!

Always mindful of CPCA expenditure, we’ve waited a long time for the price of broadband to fall. The cost of us making this techno-leap is now equal to our present monthly telephone charges. Our email address will remain the same: cpca@onelnet.com

Email reminders

Please, if you move or change your email address, do let us know.

2008 Subscriptions: Please note that subscriptions for 2008 were due on 1st March. Paying promptly saves the cost of sending out reminders. If you already pay by standing order you need take no further action. Many thanks.

CPCA Membership Form

Rates
Annual Subscription £8
Concessions £5
Optional contribution towards postage etc.

Total £......

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Membership details
I/we* wish to join/renew membership* of the CPCA.

I/we* enclose my/our subscription/contribution of £...... for year beginning 1st March 20...

(*Delete as appropriate) Please make cheques payable to CPCA or complete the standing order form overleaf

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(Your email address enables us to keep you informed of local issues more quickly – please write clearly.)

>>>>>>> continued >>>>>>>>>>
Hypocrisy as the Mayor greens Trafalgar Square and proposes blocks of flats for a park

Visitors and Londoners enjoyed the pleasure of walking and relaxing on the turf, which covered Trafalgar Square in May. The purpose was to advertise London’s villages, but that was secondary to people’s obvious delight to see grass in an urban setting. We had a village here at Crystal Palace until 2002, when Croydon Council and Transport for London turned the roads into a race track. Now, while Ken turns Trafalgar Square green for two days, his cohorts are preparing to concrete over areas of parkland, larger than Trafalgar Square - for ever.

**Why not get involved?**  Please tick any activity you would like to take part in, or skills you can offer.

(a) Helping to distribute newsletters  [ ]  (j) Fundraising  [ ]
(b) Writing an article for the newsletter [ ]  (k) Becoming a committee member [ ]
(c) Giving a talk to members [ ]  (l) Law [ ]
(d) Organising an event for members [ ]  (m) IT skills (hardware/software) [ ]
(e) Membership recruitment [ ]  (n) Journalism [ ]
(f) Media experience [ ]  (o) Desktop publishing/graphics/design [ ]
(g) Publicity and public relations [ ]  (p) Town planning [ ]
(h) Administrative/secretarial support [ ]  (q) Web design/maintenance [ ]
(i) Researching information [ ]  (r) Accountancy [ ]

Other: …………………………………………………………………………………………………..………

To ensure that your membership is maintained you may prefer to pay by standing order through your bank. If so, please complete this form and return it to the CPCA at the address below.

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Please pay the CPCA (Barclays Bank, Upper Norwood & Crystal Palace Branch, Sort Code 20-94-67, Account No. 50309486) the sum of £ ……. on 1st March each year until further notice.

Membership details are kept on a database and not made available to any other party. If you prefer not be included, please tick the box [ ]

Please return this form with your subscription to CPCA:

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Member of the London Forum of Amenity & Civic Societies & The Open Spaces Society  Registered Charity No. 261790
Feeling a bit deflated by the never-ending saga of the park? Help is at hand - ‘Jumping Beans Inflatables’ will henceforth be providing bouncy castle and go-kart fun for the little ‘uns every Saturday and Sunday, and every day during the school holidays. They are situated in the café/gorilla statue area of the park. Jumping Bean supremo Jay is a local lad, who grew up coming to Crystal Palace Park. He’s been bringing a variety of inflatables along for a number of years, but this year he has been asked by ‘the park people’ to start his season even earlier than usual. Goes are £1.50 - £2.50, and last long enough to exhaust the average small person.

The warm weather since Easter has seen the park full of children riding bikes, feeding ducks, running round the maze etc, and the playground facilities are sorely inadequate. The little doughnut roundabout had an average of 14 children squashed up on it for the entire duration of our last visit. There is plenty of room for more equipment there.

We are looking forward to the smoking ban starting on 1st July. Favourite restaurants of ours from pre-offspring days will become usable again. And in anticipation, both Paradou and Café St Germain are already non-smoking indoors, with customers using the terraces able to smoke.

Rachel Ward

Warehouse Theatre4Kidz
£4.50 children, £6 grown-ups.
The Warehouse also arrange children’s parties after the show.
For details please contact 020 8680 4794 or visit: www.warehousetheatre.co.uk
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East Croydon BR
**Views**

**NEW TOWN MANAGER**

Recently, Amber Rusk, the new Town Centre Manager, invited the CPCA to the opening of her new office at 18 Church Road. Amber faces a daunting task in attempting to restore the vibrancy and economy of the District Centre and the CPCA wishes her success and looks forward to working with her.

**Blackbird Bakery**

I am sure I am just one of many who are pleased to welcome the Blackbird Bakery to Westow Street. It is so good to finally be able to buy such a variety of delicious breads, croissants, cakes and tarts. The mushroom and gorgonzola quiche and the honey wholemeal bread I chose this week were excellent. There is also seating for those wanting to sit and sample something tasty on the premises.

I wish them every success in the Triangle and hope that a butcher, greengrocer and fishmonger might be tempted to follow in their footsteps.

Janet Clifford

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**Mr Kai loses his battle against the one-way system**

After providing great service to the Crystal Palace community, and far beyond, Mr Kai’s long-established Chinese restaurant on Central Hill, opposite Gipsy Hill police station, has closed due to lack of business, especially passing trade.

With the imposition of the one-way system and the resultant necessity for London commuters to navigate all three sides of the Triangle, Steve Kai experienced an immediate 30-40% fall in custom which he valiantly tried to recover over the past four years. But the fight was futile.

He expresses his sadness, and will miss the unique character of the Triangle.

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**Janet Clifford**

After offering you ‘My Triangle’ in the last edition, I have recently been talking to a young family in the locality to learn about ‘Their Triangle’.

They enjoy visiting the Upper Norwood Library every Friday, then go to Planta, the health food deli, and La Bruschetta on Westow Street for a delicious snack. One of their favourite Italian restaurants is Il Ponte on Westow Hill. Although they research on Amazon, this family like to support Bookseller Crow because of the efficient and personal service.

They are delighted with the new Blackbird Bakery and appreciate the personal touch at Kim’s Post Office who save the Radio Times for them. Kim’s now carry an interesting range of Polish goods - worth having a look at. The Aquarium has a wonderful selection of reptiles. They have been given lots of free advice about looking after their goldfish and the children see it as their local ‘zoo’.

Mum and daughter like having their hair cut at Jo Doobyz above Yellow Bird. They use Concorde Stationers frequently, for printer ink for example, as it is more convenient to order and collect it from them.

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Hollybush Stores and Macdonalds Discount Stores are useful for household items, as are Woolworths. South of the River is good for presents and cards while they choose Gurkha Cottage, the specialist in Nepalese and Indian cuisine for their take-aways. The family have always found Sefgroves the Chemist well stocked, particularly for babies needs and buy their biodegradable nappies there.

They walk to the Triangle to shop and are vegetarians and support a veggie box delivery system, while finding Sainsbury’s useful for filling in the gaps. They are a family of true local shoppers and their first port of call will always be a local trader. What they value most is the wealth of helpful, friendly local traders for them to buy most of what they need in a quiet, relaxed atmosphere.

So why not see what you can find locally. If it’s not there ask for it! Let’s keep local shops by supporting them.

Please get in touch with us if you would like to tell us about your
The imposition of a Transport for London approved one-way system at Crystal Palace has resulted in the Triangle becoming a carousel for through traffic with insufficient parking for visitors and inadequate and dangerous pedestrian crossings. One large stationary vehicle, whether legally unloading or not, can reduce the traffic flow to a single lane and grid-locks are a regular consequence of a system that simply does not work and has resulted in the closure of established businesses, with more to come.

The vulnerability of the area to traffic chaos was well demonstrated on Wednesday 18 April 2007 when necessary police measures following an armed robbery at Barclay’s Bank brought the area to a standstill, with drivers unable to do anything but sit trapped in a one-way system, with break-downs and the need to use lavatories adding to the traffic chaos.

Had there been other emergencies requiring ambulance or fire-appliances, they could not have responded in reasonable time, and quite possibly not at all, and it is to be wondered if it will take a fatality or other horrific event for the planners to accept that they got this one badly wrong, whatever their computer simulations and models might have forecast?

In response to complaints, politicians who promised a review of the system should they come to office, now say the system works well and that they have no plans to review it, and claim that the new one-way system resulted in Sainsbury’s opening in Westow Street.

It should be remembered that whilst the opening of Sainsbury’s was most welcome and that it provides a valuable facility for shoppers in Crystal Palace, most who visit it contribute nothing to the wider local economy, arriving to park in Sainsbury’s car park, shopping, and then leaving the area without ever having put a foot outside.

Mike Warwick

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69 Westow Street

Every so often someone will ask about the ramshackle building held together by scaffolding at the end of Westow Street next to the White Hart pub. It has stood empty for a long time and pervades an aura of mystery and expectation.

Built circa 1837, probably as an addition to the White Hart Inn building that preceded the present public house on the site, it served as assembly rooms and survived when the rest of the inn was rebuilt in 1870 to the designs of the idiosyncratic local architect Sextus Dyball. In 1874 the building was being used for Sunday evening services by the congregation that eventually built themselves St Andrew’s Presbyterian church alongside (now the listed Grade II Greek Orthodox church of St Constantine and St Helen). From the 1890s the building was used for stabling and as a billiard room.

It is of 2 storeys with a stuccoed front and weatherboarded sides and rear. The front elevation has a blocked modern doorway at ground floor, but on the first floor the tall window openings still survive with their moulded architraves. The open pediment has been heavily cut back but its shape is still visible, as is the central oculus with its stuccoed surround and keys. Ironically, the building it most closely resembles is Jack Straw’s Castle as rebuilt in 1962. The inside is plain but some interesting features survive on the first floor, including a chimney-piece with a console-bracketed mantel shelf, a richly decorated plaster cornice and panelled doors.

Although the building has been unused and allowed to fall into a deplorable state of disrepair since 1985 - unsurprising given the number of years it has been neglected - its architectural potential is still evident. Its neo-classical proportions and outline form an intriguing counter-point to the fruity and muscular polychromy of the White Hart on the one side and the ragstone gothic of the church on the other, without which the conservation area would be architecturally and historically the poorer. It has been consistently identified as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Upper Norwood Conservation Area and is locally listed. This is an important building.

Several planning applications to demolish the building have failed, and an appeal dismissed. We remain on tenterhooks about the future of the building.
CROYDON CONSERVATIVES RENEGE ON THEIR PROMISE

In 2005 Cllr Andrew Pelling, the then Leader of the Croydon Conservatives pledged in the CPCDA newsletter that “a Conservative administration would review the operation of this one-way system…”

In the light of the London Mayor’s comment at People’s Question Time in Bromley [see page 13], as the posters on the door of Sefgrove’s Chemist in Westow Hill bear witness (see photo above) and following many members’ concerns, the CPCDA tried to arrange a meeting with Cllr Mike Fisher, newly elected Conservative Leader of the Council, to discuss ways of improving or amending the operation of the one-way system.

After unacceptable delay, his dismissive response was that the traffic management arrangements had been reviewed since May 2006, when they took office, and he referred to two reports compiled by David Wickens and Iain Sim, the same officers who introduced the one-way system in May 2002.

Cllr Fisher wrote in his letter to the CPCDA: “On the basis of these reports you will not be surprised to find I disagree with your view that the one-way system has not achieved what was originally hoped for.” He continued: “I find your comment that ‘the area shows little sign of inward investment’ to be surprising. Particularly so given the widely welcomed opening of the Sainsbury’s food store last year. It is in the nature of town centres that businesses open and close all the time.”

In his final paragraph, on which the CPCDA is seeking clarification, Cllr Fisher wrote:

“The Mayor for London has made it clear that having personally signed off the introduction of the one-way system as part of the package of Single Regeneration Budget funded environmental improvements for Upper Norwood he will be guided by Croydon Council on this matter. There are exciting proposals in the pipeline for Crystal Palace Park and for the extension of Croydon Tramlink to Crystal Palace Parade. These schemes have the potential to build on the local improvements already secured, and to enhance the accessibility and the ‘offer’ of Park and the Centre. This can only help to further improve business prospects for Upper Norwood.”

He claimed that the most recent survey indicated “that the level of occupation of commercial units in the centre is rising and therefore business activity is increasing rather than decreasing.”

The CPCDA finds little evidence of any net gain in businesses in the Triangle with so many struggling to survive and others permanently pulling down the shutters as soon as their leases come up for renewal. After the huge inconvenience caused by the site remaining empty for over a year and a half, the arrival of Sainsbury’s was simply replacing like for like.

The reports on the consequences of the one-way system make interesting reading. “Report for Leadership” 8 September 2006 states:

• that journey times and other measures of traffic performance were much the same as prior to the scheme, as predicted,
• there is no scope to reduce time for vehicles in favour of pedestrians without major disruption and congestion,
• there were also indications that accident rates may be dropping which could be linked to better crossing facilities.

Reasons given in the report highlight the problems of reversion to two-way working as:

• Western Hill is now a Strategic Road so TfL approval would be needed,
• both Lambeth and Bromley are affected as the Triangle borders three boroughs,
• TfL signals would need to be involved with very long lead in periods,
• there is less than £100,000 remaining in the scheme budget and reversion could cost in excess of £500,000,
• would alternative parking be provided to replace the on-street parking the majority of which would have to be removed to facilitate two-way working,
• probable objection to TMOS* particularly from the police, fire and bus organisations who wrote in support of the changes as part of the review,
• potential criticism if accident levels rise, as would be likely.

An earlier report dated 8 November 2004 by David Wickens, Croydon’s Head of Engineering and Project Co-ordination confirmed that:

“Average speeds have increased within the Triangle but congestion has been reduced.”

“Improved pedestrian facilities at the Central Hill/Gipsy Hill junction could be provided but at the expense of delays and congestion.” It states queues at this junction “would get much longer if pedestrian facilities were improved or the banned turns removed.”

The conclusion of the 1st December 2006 ‘Report to Leadership’ by Iain Sim, Divisional Director Urban Regeneration, Department of Planning & Transportation, was that: “One way working was introduced to Upper Norwood District Centre with the support of public consultation results and the endorsement of the Crystal Palace SRB Partnership. The scheme has succeeded to the extent of improving public safety (casualty reduction), moving traffic congestion outside the Triangle and maximising on street parking.
One of the biggest concerns expressed by users of the Triangle is pedestrian safety, although it was revealed at Lambeth’s Norwood Area Committee meeting of 22 March 2007, under Agenda item 2.3 that a “live trial of an all red phase in July 2006” at the Westow Hill/Central Hill/Gipsy Hill junction, carried out by Lambeth officers “demonstrated that it would not be possible to add signal controls to the three uncontrolled arms of the junction without introducing unacceptable levels of congestion”.

However, an unacceptable level of danger to pedestrians, within the Triangle one-way system, does not appear to be a consideration and it is now official that it will not be modified to improve their safety. Clearly, the priority is traffic flow, not pedestrian safety.

Where’s the intelligence?

When the one-way system was introduced in May 2002, Croydon officers promised new “intelligent” traffic lights designed to mitigate congestion by responding to traffic flow, whilst detecting the presence of pedestrians and responding to their crossing needs.

In the event, the placebo-buttons of the state-of-the-art control systems enable pedestrians only to illuminate the ‘wait’ signal, whilst having absolutely no effect on the operation of traffic lights at road junctions.

TfL (Transport for London) see the free movement of traffic, particularly buses, as the priority and taking precedence over the safety of those who live, shop, work and socialise here.

No consultation

The Lambeth report continued: “A modelling exercise carried out by Lambeth officers has demonstrated that similar unacceptable congestion levels would result from a proposal to reinstate the left turn from Central Hill into Gipsy Hill.

Current illegal left turning is a safety problem which could be mitigated by either of three options:
• Mobile camera enforcement
• Road marking to indicate carriageway alignment with opposite side of the junction. Effectively a buildout with white lining.
• Physical buildout by extending out the kerbs and footway.

A meeting has been arranged between Croydon and Lambeth officers to look at the junction and identify possible future works. Once these issues have been discussed it is likely one of the three options above will be pursued.”

Following expressed CPCPA concerns at this meeting, the Chairman, Cllr Graham Pycock, instructed the Lambeth officers present to return with a fuller report.

The CPCPA believes it is incumbent on the Council and TfL to ensure the system permits smooth and logical traffic flow while ensuring safe crossing for pedestrians on every leg of the junction.
We hoped that we had achieved a effective cross-borough policing.

MPS would be the first to acknowledge "…crime in the area has dropped by contribution to the consultation on Lewisham or Southwark. Not include officers from Norwood /Crystal Palace would be announced a year ago that Upper Neighbourhood Team specific to the area, although this team would benefit from a new Safer Neighbourhood Team specific to the area, although this team would benefit from a new Safer Neighbourhood Team. Later, the title grew to include the word 'Triangle' and the area it covered, shrank.

On 5 October 2005, the Borough Commanders of Croydon, Bromley and Lambeth wrote to the CPCA inviting us to the press launch of the 'Crystal Palace Safer Neighbourhood Team'. Later, the title grew to include the word 'Triangle' and seemingly the area it covered, shrank.

The CPCA spoke to local Bromley MP, Bob Neill, at a recent Bromley Police Community Consultative Group meeting concerning the effectiveness and implementation of the cross-borough SNT at Upper Norwood, who brought the matter to the attention of Paul Minton, Commander South-East Link MPA (Metropolitan Police Authority).

Commander Minton wrote to Bob Neill MP last month: "In general terms, I am disappointed that having invested in a dedicated Safer Neighbourhood Team for the Triangle, the intended benefits are not apparently being experienced by the community." He continued: "…crime in the area has dropped by 8.9% since October 2005, but the MPS would be the first to acknowledge that there is still considerable room for improvement."

The CPCA looks forward to receiving the official 'Police Review' which has been recently published.

The CPCA is concerned at the level of these figures where traffic flow (particularly buses) is seen as a priority over pedestrian safety. (see article on page 29)

Keep your sat nav safe

The police are warning motorists that car satellite navigation systems are becoming all-too-easy-pickings for thieves. The portable systems are installed in minutes and can be removed by a thief in seconds. Always lock up when leaving your car and don’t leave anything on display.
Gipsy Hill News

Planning issues continue to dominate in Gipsy Hill. An application to build a block of houses on Cawnpore Street was rejected on the grounds of its mass and design. The developers had tried to get too much on the site, and the design was unsympathetic to the nearby Gipsy Hill conservation area. One day that site will be developed, but this particular design was inappropriate. A lot of hard campaigning by local residents, including CPCA members, ensured that the Planning Committee saw sense.

By the time you read this we will know if the council has been successful in its attempts to operate dustcarts from the Vale Street depot (next to West Norwood Cemetery). The site is unsuitable, as it is centred in a residential area, with many tight corners and dangerous junctions. The site’s previous use as a bus depot was ended precisely because it was so unsuitable. Local residents have opposed the plans vigorously, but as the council itself is the applicant, we are fearful of being out-gunned.

The old St Saviours College site is to be redeveloped on Hamilton Road. The developers have consulted widely, and the plans look quite attractive. Local residents and councillors will follow the application carefully, to ensure that it adds to, rather than detracts from, social amenity in all its aspects. If only the Cawnpore Street site developers had engaged with the community in the same way and re-shaped their plans, they might not have come such a well-deserved cropper.

Cllr Andrew Gibson
Conservative Councillor, Gipsy Hill Ward
Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton Hill, London SW2 1RW
tel: 07748-736451
fax: 020 7926 2845
agibson@lambeth.gov.uk
Group Surgeries: 11.00-noon, every Saturday, 495 Norwood Rd SE27 9DJ
First Sat., 9.30-10.30 Emmanuel Church, Clive Rd
Third Sat., 9.30-10.30, Upper Norwood Library, Westow Hill
www.conservatives.lambeth.com

Southwark joins “Green Chain Walk”

Southwark Council will be joining the South East London “Green Chain Walk” after College Ward Councillors helped to secure funding in the recently approved Budget for 2007/08. The Walk is a series of green open spaces, crossing Bromley, Bexley, Greenwich and Lewisham linked by a network of signed footpaths, which will now extend into Dulwich. A primary aim of the “Green Chain Walk” is to protect open spaces from development.

The planned extension into Southwark will be based around the former route of the Crystal Palace High level railway, and was first proposed by local Dulwich Village resident, Philip Kolvin. It will link the four cultural jewels of our area, the Crystal Palace dinosaurs, the Horniman Museum, Dulwich Picture Gallery and Nunhead Cemetery through one well maintained and welcoming route, creating excellent educational opportunities in local history.

£150,000 has already been found in the capital programme to fund the high priority improvements, such as safety and access issues to the proposed route, which gets the project off to a good start. I know the Crystal Palace Community Association, and many other groups supported this project, and it will continue to have my full support as work progresses.

If you wish to contact me about this, or any other College Ward issues, please e-mail me at lewis.robinson@southwark.gov.uk

Cllr Lewis Robinson, Conservative Councillor, College Ward

Lambeth Norwood Area Committee

As an aid to local democracy, by allowing members of the public to question their ward councillors and council officers in open debate, it has been common practice for councils to hold regular forums at different locations in their boroughs.

Croydon have ‘Neighbourhood Partnership’ meetings, Southwark hold ‘Community Councils’, Lewisham have ‘Area Forums’ and up till now Lambeth had ‘Area Committees’. Bromley have rarely allowed their constituents the equality of open democratic local debate.

The Lambeth ‘Norwood Area Committee’, serving the people of Gipsy Hill and Thurlow Park Wards, is always well attended and informative, permitting local people to have their say on issues of importance to them.

In October 2006 the government set out new plans for giving people a greater say in how their communities are run. The aim of the local government White Paper, ‘Strong and Prosperous Communities’, is to reduce the amount of excessive control from central government, and give local authorities the chance to reshape services with the individuals and communities who use them. As a consequence, Lambeth propose to replace their area committees with a single Area Assembly called ‘Communities First’. This will place an increased emphasis on community engagement through community and neighbourhood bodies, strengthening the role of the ward councillor. Until the new scheme is established the existing Area Committees are to be suspended, which it is hoped will not be for too long.

If you care about the area, join the CPCA.
Together, your voice counts.
It is the CPCA’s practice to consider all planning applications in the locality we know as “Crystal Palace”. One of the principle objectives of the CPCA is to represent the views and interests of the community, and it welcomes any involvement in local planning issues that are brought to its attention. All concerns by CPCA members and Crystal Palace residents alike are considered. Significant applications on which comments have been made are as follows:

**EPS, 1A Carberry Road**

The replacement of the existing works buildings for a 3-storey building of 5 flats and 5 terrace houses appears to be over-development because the plot ratio has been calculated to include the access road used in the density calculation for a neighbouring development.

We have reservations about the loss of the Victorian works building, the retention of which would preserve the character and historic fabric of the conservation area, and which is perfectly capable of conversion, particularly because of the poor design of the street frontage. The developer has been negotiating with the Residents’ Association.

**Cumberlow Lodge, 24 Chalfont Road**

A major development of 3 and 5-storey buildings for 155 residential flats laid out on a formal axial plan is effectively an estate. We have particular in-principle objections in respect of the imbalance against family house units with private contained amenity space that the development provides, increased traffic generation likely to cause congestion and pose a parking burden, difficult public access to the open space (MOL), unsatisfactory security by design.

**The Old Dairy Site, 3-5 Cawnpore Street / 99-107 Woodland Road**

The CPCA supported determined local opposition to redevelopment of the site involving the demolition of the existing buildings and erection of 2 new 3/6-storey blocks to provide office space and 60 flats with basement parking. The application was refused at the Council’s planning committee on the grounds of the adverse impact on the Conservation Area.

The developer is considering appealing against the decision, whilst the architects look at a more favourable design solution following proper consultation.

See detailed report page 34]

**52a Church Road**

We objected to the proposed conversion of the upper floors to form 2 flats in this important locally listed building centred on the adverse disruption caused to the roof shape in providing open amenity space via a terrace, and the less than subservient dormer to provide the necessary space standards for squeezing in a second flat. The application has been refused.

R. Stephens & Son Ltd.
115 Church Road

An appeal has been lodged against Croydon Council Plans subcommittee refusal of the application for residential development with a single retail unit across the full depth of the site in the form of 2 blocks fronting Church Road and Lansdowne Place.

The appeal is to be heard in July and CPCA will attend and give evidence against to support the strong local feeling.

‘West 9 Food & Wine’, 81 Gipsy Hill

The proposed replacement of the existing building with a 3-storey retail unit and 3 flats met with strong objections on the grounds of adverse impact on the street scene and neighbouring buildings, over-development and poor design.

**15 Sylvan Hill**

Objections were made to the proposed development of 13 flats in a 3-storey block is far too large and high for the location and context. Whilst it may give the impression of a single family residence, its architecture is insufficiently articulated to convince, giving it an institutional appearance, and is incongruous by its lack of response to the sloping nature of the street which other properties do by a stepped form. The plagiarisation of features is inappropriate and results in a design of particularly poor quality. The application has been refused.
The retrospective application for the unauthorised wholesale replacement of existing timber doors and windows for PVC-u units, has been refused by Croydon Council. The owner has appealed the decision.

Aluvents Ltd., Westow Street/Victory Place

Demolition of the existing works buildings to be replaced with a 4-storey building for class uses A1-A4 and 29 flats has been granted despite strong objections over the bulk, size and scale of the development, mix of residential units, traffic considerations, and unsympathetic design of the street frontage building.

Jasper Road, rear of 48-50 Woodland Road

Following previous refusals and dismissed appeals, yet a further appeal for a single detached dwelling in an overtly contemporary style with associated off-street car parking has been dismissed on the grounds of unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

’Friends’/’Next Address’ 76-78 Westow Street

When taken cumulatively with the existing development at 80-88, this proposed 3-storey building comprising 2 retail units and 8 flats will produce an over-dominant structure that is out of scale with the general character of the street. It replaces small-scaled houses that are already dwarfed, and pays no heed of the attractive locally listed neighbouring building that provides the stop end.

Out of context, inappropriate architecture, a roof form that is dominant and highly unsympathetic, it is difficult to say whether this application is better or worse than that approved in 2005 as neither enhances the conservation area.

Strategy and Policy

In Croydon we have been consultees in the production of the Scoping Report, Sustainability Appraisal Report, which identified positive impacts and negative outcomes, resulting in the Conservation Area Appraisal for South Norwood Supplementary Planning Document (SPDs are replacing Supplementary Planning Guidance). This is important work because it brings on line the vital and long-overdue review of conservation areas in Croydon. Also, the final draft for Statement of Community Involvement, and Scoping Report for Designing for Community Safety.

In Lambeth and Southwark we have been continuing our involvement in the delivery of the Council’s Replacement Unitary Development Plan as notice of further modifications are proposed.

Co-ordinated approach to planning in the Triangle

We wrote to Croydon Council pointing out the desperate need for a co-ordinated approach towards development proposals in the Triangle in the light of an inadequate and out of date conservation statement, and the piece-meal, developments taking place which, lacking any formal reference to context, will change the village character of the area without contributing positively to the economic viability of the district centre. The wider development of the area needs to be interconnected and consistent, which by consideration of potential links to the surrounding sites would be to the benefit of new buildings and their relationship with the sometimes awkward and potentially dangerous situation posed by the one-way gyratory system. It is, however, highly unlikely that any formal and meaningful strategy will be implemented before irreversible damage has been done to the grain of the conservation area.

Unauthorised Works

Unauthorised works continue unabated along all legs of the Triangle, ranging from installation of shopfronts, internally illuminated fascias and projecting signs, erection of advertising signs and hoardings, window replacement and installation of satellite dishes to name but a few. The CPCA deplores this because
• flouting the planning process, for whatever reason, is unlawful
• generally, such works erode and blight the appearance and character of the conservation areas
• such works do not actually increase the business of the traders
• it encourages others to repeat the same acts
• enforcement is a time-consuming process and costly to the tax payer

If the CPCA accepted that subverting the law is the way to behave, and failed to bring attention to such actions in all instances, it would be guilty of failure to uphold its duty and its responsibility.

CPCA, Planning Subcommittee
A highly-controversial housing development on the old Dairy site between Cawnpore Street and Woodland Road, SE19, described by one councillor as “Lego blocks …not appropriate for this area” has been submitted by Greenacre Homes on behalf of Wandle Housing Association. Another councillor said, “It is introducing an alien form of development to the Conservation Area.”

On 20 February 2007, at Lambeth’s Planning Applications Committee meeting, more than thirty local residents witnessed Alan Camp, architect (ACA) attempt to ‘horse-trade’ with the Council in a last ditch attempt to influence them into approving a highly unpopular, highly-intensive housing development, comprising a contemporary styled 6-storey accommodation block with 60 self-contained flats and some office space.

Similar developments, already constructed in the area, are wrecking the village character of Upper Norwood and inadvertently contributing to its economic decline. CABE (Commission for Architecture in the Built Environment) have slammed such design as “soulless development built for nowhere but found everywhere.” Lacking a sense of place, and failing to neither enhance nor compliment the character or street scene of the adjoining Conservation Area, the effect is incongruent.

View of a brick wall
The blue, yellow and copper-clad development would have towered just 6 metres from residential accommodation in the old Dairy Building in the Conservation Area on Gipsy Hill, blocking both light and views with a cliff-like brick wall.

‘Consultation’ at Christmas
Pre-application discussions with Lambeth officers had been going on for 18 months. In contrast, consultation with residents and locals began, perversely and most inconveniently, in the Christmas holiday period, with extremely limited access to the application documentation, and a token gesture of a presentation exhibition of fait accompli proposals, after the deadline for receipt of representations.

Team work
Success in opposing over-development at Cawnpore Street was due to the hard work of Ward Councillor Andrew Gibson, local residents and the CPC, and in no small part to the vigilance of a CPC member and local resident who discovered, in his research, that Lambeth officers, just a month earlier, had advised the rejection of this planning application. Cllr John Whelan received no answer when he asked officers why they had made this U-turn. In a surprise revelation, the architect confirmed that if they didn’t receive planning approval they would lose a £6.5 million Government grant.

To much applause, the application was refused on the grounds of amenity: the sense of enclosure of the old Dairy Building on Gipsy Hill and of design: the height, scale and bulk of the development and its detrimental effect on the Conservation Area.

Don Bianco, chair of the CPC planning subcommittee said afterwards, “Everyone recognises the need for housing and is not opposed to development on this site. However, this was a missed opportunity to consult properly and provide a scheme that was sympathetic to the area, pleasant to live in and finding favour with its neighbours. We seemed to have learned nothing from the mistakes of the 60s.”

A second application & appeal
The developer is considering appealing the decision, but has allowed the architects to seek to involve the local people in design revisions. André Sutherland from ACA walked around the area with Don Bianco in an attempt to “understand the proportions, rhythms, use of materials and its character” and design a scheme which better suits the neighbourhood. He was aware of the concerns of those residents living higher up the hill wishing to maintain their views and said “if our building is interrupting that green view then we have a duty to address that”.

The visit resulted in some slight modifications to their original proposals which they displayed on 30 May at the Goodlife Hall:
- the use of primary colours and metal cladding has been replaced with brickwork - a yellow London
Woodland Road plans

In contrast to the high-density Cawnpore Street development, the new scheme for the lower end of Woodland Road, off Gipsy Hill, has sought local approval from the outset. Southwark’s hostel development planned for the same site several years ago was refused by its own planning committee on grounds of over-development and detrimental impact on the Conservation Area. It would seem that the lesson has been well learned as the new outline proposal by HTA Architects Ltd on behalf of the Metropolitan Housing Trust, by adopting a more traditional approach, has the potential to be acceptably in keeping with the existing street scene.

Initial consultation has been welcomed and the concerns raised by local residents over some design aspects, particularly the ‘office-block-look’ of the accommodation at the end of the new terrace, has been acknowledged by the architect, with the promise of an amended design.

This development is for 13 units comprising four townhouses, two maisonettes, six 2-bedroom flats and one 1-bedroom flat. They will have gardens backing on to the railway line and an amenity space, but no off-street parking is provided. Parking should not prove a problem, unless a major scheme for Cawnpore Street is resubmitted which does not provide sufficient off-street parking for residents. The proposals are still at an early stage and a planning application has yet to be submitted.

Awards for All

‘Awards for All’ is a Lottery grants scheme aimed at local communities to fund schemes for people to take part in art, sport, heritage and community activities as well as projects promoting education, the environment and health in the local community, with grants of between £300 to £10,000.

It aims to extend access and participation by encouraging people to become actively involved in local groups and projects; to increase skill and creativity by supporting activities that help develop people and organisations, encourage talent and raise standards; and to improve the quality of life by supporting projects that improve people’s opportunities, health, welfare, environment or local facilities. The range of projects is wide and could include:

- a crèche,
- publicising and promoting a group that recycles computers for community use,
- a training and activities programme to involve disabled people in sport,
- a creative writing skills course for young adults to enable their work to be published and performed,
- an exhibition and trail walk featuring buildings of local interest,
- play and sporting facilities with qualified coaching for young people,
- promoting healthy eating and greater physical activity,
- creating a community wildlife garden,
- improving a community hall to provide better facilities,
- trying out new ways of recruiting volunteers,
- an historic event illustrating various periods of history and rich cultural heritage of a community,
- involving people in a community event.

Visit the website for more examples: www.awardsforall.org.uk

It is not often that access to potentially large amounts of monies become available to local amenity societies. If you have any thoughts for improvements that you would like to see in our community, then this opportunity would offer a means of attaining it through the offices of the CPCA.

Do please send us your ideas.
As a further step towards the government's aspirations to devolution, 21 May marked the publication of Communities Secretary, Ruth Kelly's Planning White paper, harkening a wide-ranging overhaul of the planning system with sweeping changes to speed up building developments. Homeowners will be able to carry out simple home improvements - build home extensions, loft conversions and conservatories without planning permission. It will put climate change at the heart of planning applications (though the environmental charity, Friends of the Earth, claims the reforms will accelerate climate change), and will centralise the planning process for big infrastructure projects such as power plants and airports, with a new quango of independent experts guided by national policy frameworks which have been drawn up by ministers to cover all such schemes. The Local Government Association has already voiced objection to such a body as stripping away democratic accountability from the planning system, and beckoning a loss of control by planners.

The new rules will commit local councils to a 'town centre first' approach prioritising the survival of the high street and small shops. This bodes well for the development of the 'Triangle' as a meaningful District Centre.

There will be more free planning advice augmenting the present Planning Aid and Planning Portal with up to 1,500 advisers, a legal duty on developers to consult the public, and a new open floor stage in planning inquiries for local people to present their case. No reason, therefore, for people to be ignorant of planning rights . . . and wrongs.

The White Paper builds on two reviews – the Barker Report on the planning system and the Eddington Report on transport (but also to a smaller extent the Stern Report on environmental aspects). Both have highlighted long delays in the system, the need for planning to adapt in a changing world, and raise the priority of the planning function in local authorities.

An axiom of policy making is the red tape endemic in the system. In planning we have the 'needs test', a weapon in refusing planning developments that are unnecessary to everyone except developers. For instance, it prevents out of town retail centres if the town has perfectly good shopping facilities already. Big retailers may bristle, but planning is all about not letting money colonise public space.

The acid test is the proposals for Green Belt – that Victorian notion of distrust of cities, without which the country would be a carpet of concrete. And yet 13% of England is Green Belt and 13.5% is developed.

For conservation areas there is a positive step forward towards restoring the level enjoyed before the Shimizu case* in respect of part demolition works.

Moreover, relaxation of the need for a full planning application does not necessarily imply a free for all for the homeowner. Clearly, a neater, faster processing system is necessary, but, as Lord Lockhart, Chair of the Local Government Association said, it must take neighbours into account, too; "We can't have people simply building a garage where they like without considering the impact on neighbours". The arrangement will be that small-scale development will still be subject to strictures, retaining safeguards on noise, siting and size to protect neighbours, as well as the requirements of UDP policies and PPG15.

In town planning, the national is usually inimical to the local – the national is imposed by Whitehall, the local environment is known by the town hall. It may appear that in the Planning White Paper we may have the makings of a planning doctrine that is more responsive and accountable to that first tenet of planning - for the common good.

Don Bianco

*The House of Lords Judgement in the case of Shimizu (UK) Ltd v Westminster Council, and Government advice in PPG15, where consent for demolition was deemed necessary only if carried out on such a scale as to amount to total demolition of the whole of an unlisted building. The loss of such a prominent case cast doubts on the effectiveness of conservation area designations and opens up local authorities to public criticism. There has been much pressure to change the law in relation to demolition of unlisted buildings in whole or in part. I think we are getting there, but at great loss of historic fabric.
The Rt Hon. Tessa Jowell, MP for Dulwich and West Norwood, attended a demonstration of over seventy concerned Library users, including many children, at the Upper Norwood Joint Library (UNJL) on 24 February, to protest and petition against under-funding of the Library, and ensure the Library’s continuance as essential to the community. Ms Jowell spent two hours talking to Library users, members of the Library Campaign and the CPC, when requirement with the 1964 Libraries Act was discussed. Tessa joined forces with local Croydon councillor Pat Ryan in encouraging people to sign a petition organised by him, demanding fair and equal funding for the Library.

The Upper Norwood Joint Library in Westow Hill SE19 is the country’s only independent jointly-funded library, receiving money from both Lambeth and Croydon Councils to operate as a stand-alone library authority. Over the years neither council have met their full obligations under a Joint Agreement that clearly sets out the Library’s financial and operational responsibilities.

**Consistent under-funding**

Long-term under-funding has reached a point which will force drastic cuts in services if not resolved. Croydon’s funding of our Library remains at the same level as in 1992/3 and they have confirmed no change for 2007/8. However, Croydon’s own library service has received over £8 million in 06/07 compared with £4.5 million in 1992/3 – a rise of 70%, with Croydon’s library-spend per resident being approximately £24 whilst UNJL’s is under £12 in total.

The previous Croydon administration pledged in their Library Strategy 2005-2009 that they would “provide an additional £30,000 per annum to UNJL starting in 2005/6”. However the money earmarked for 2005/6 and 2006/7, totalling £60,000, has never been provided and, although appearing on Croydon’s website for almost one year before being pulled only recently, this commitment has been withdrawn, compounding the major deficit under which the Library has to operate.

Joe Figueira, Chair of the Upper Norwood Library Campaign, said: “Currently it is Croydon that is offering a reduced contribution to Upper Norwood Library, while their other libraries receive significant maintenance and capital investment. Croydon have reneged on their commitment, resulting in cuts in service, which may lead to a 30% reduction in staff, reduced opening hours and ultimately closure, possibly within two years. We are not asking for new money, but rather a fairer proportion of the money allocated from the Croydon’s Library Service to UNJL. After all, who still gets paid today at the same level as 15 years ago, and are the prices of today’s goods the same as they were in 1992? That’s the situation now threatening the survival of the Library.”

At the 15 May meeting of the UNJL Committee, Croydon Cllr Steve Hollands, announced a “generous” 3-year funding plan of £10,000 this year, a possible £20,000 next (budget permitting) and £30,000 the year after. This is woefully inadequate and fails to address the funding problem. Independent consultants estimated that Croydon were under-funding the Library by £80,000 per annum.

Minutes after this announcement, it was revealed that, within the Treasurer’s report was a debit of £22,400 taken, without warning or explanation, as a “contribution to capital outlay” from the UNJL’s budget. Result: the Library is actually £12,400 worse off this year.

To add insult to injury, Croydon insist that UNJL prove their ‘efficiency’ by producing performance data, plans, reports and statistics.

The Upper Norwood Library Campaign was formed in 1984 by Library users concerned at its chronic under-funding.

To add your support to the Library campaign please contact: Upper Norwood Library Campaign at membership@unlc.org.uk, or write to The Secretary, 5 Becondale Road, SE19 1QJ. Membership is £3 p.a. website: www.unlc.org.uk
BEULAH HILL
ISSUES

Despite residents’ best efforts the new development proposed for 66-70 Beulah Hill is to go ahead.

The developer, Barnfield Homes, appealed against the decision to refuse planning permission by Croydon Council officers and has won. However, before work can commence they have to submit details to the Council for the external facing materials. As these are just cosmetic issues there would appear to be no reason for the Council to refuse permission and the development will shortly proceed.

Barnfield Homes have written to residents closest to the development to say they will try to minimise any disruption once building works start, and - if you are thinking of selling your house please let us buy it! Needless to say last comment was not well received.

Residents are now hoping that this will be the last of any further developments along Beulah Hill.

The issue of the open spaces decimated two years ago is still ongoing. Croydon Council cleared up overhanging branches and rubbish, but only adjacent to the public footpath; they cannot do anything to the land itself. Mr Virani, the landowner, is still to plant the tree on the open space to the rear of Founders Gardens, in lieu of the one destroyed despite its supposed protection by a Tree Preservation Order. Residents in Founders Gardens also have to contend with a tree that was blown over during the last storm which overhangs their garden walls.

So after two years local residents are no nearer to getting the open spaces back to anything like they were before the arrival of Mr Virani and his ‘contractors’. The Council still appear to be powerless to act on residents’ behalf and residents are still fighting to get something done.

To this end, local residents are looking to form an association. This is still in its embryonic stage but there has been good interest from residents, not only along Beulah Hill, but adjoining roads. Whilst the residents association will be a-political it does have the support of Councillor Pat Ryan, who is working hard on residents’ behalf to restore the open spaces and oppose any further developments.

Residents are somewhat dismayed to find that it has been impossible to glean a response from either Councillor Robert Askey or George Filbey.

Mary Johnson

Croydon Council to build on Norwood Recreation Ground

Over 100 local residents attended a meeting called by Croydon Council on 18 April at Rockmount Primary School, Chevening Road to discuss the proposed redevelopment of the current changing rooms on Norwood Recreation Ground into a Children’s Centre facility for young children and their families.

There should have been five speakers, but such was the outcry that only one managed to give their full presentation. The meeting was called to a halt earlier than Croydon had planned and when the residents were asked ‘was this a resounding NO’, officers and councillors were left in no doubt. This result has now been taken back to the council and residents await a reply.

The proposal is for a Children’s Centre to “deliver a range of services …such as anti-natal care, baby groups, health care visitor sessions, adult learning, support for families of children with special needs, counselling, debt management etc.”

This is not recreational use. Croydon Council is also selling the Rockmount Infant School site on Hermitage Road which would be a more suitable location for this amenity.

If the Council can sell its educational sites and replace them by building on parks, our green spaces will not be safe from use for any council amenity developments.

J Micallef

Further comment from the meeting

Contrary to Croydon Council assertions, Sister Bernadette of St Mary’s at Virgo Fidelis said that she was willing and able to accommodate this centre.

The Council stated there was no problem with parking, which is disputed by residents. The relocation of Rockmount Infant School, the new 74 place nursery on the Church site and the proposed new centre open 9 am to 4 pm every weekday, the situation would be much worse. It was said that the Council already plan to mark yellow lines down Rockmount Road from the Church into Orleans Road, preventing residents from parking outside their own homes.

Over 100 letters of objection from residents had not been received by the council and at least one email was deleted.

One resident of 30 years asked why the council no longer put up the goal posts, marked out the football pitches or opened up the changing room. No answer was given. He suggested that if they did, maybe the children would come back to use the park more often. At one time there were two football pitches, marked out in season, one rugby pitch and sometimes a cricket pitch. The popular skate-boarding half-pipe won for the ground by a former Croydon Councillor has never been replaced.
Because private gardens are defined in law as 'brownfield sites', garden grabbing – the practice of developing numbers of new homes on plots of single dwellings, is in full swing across the country and here locally on Beulah Hill, as highlighted in our May 2006 newsletter.

Even when whole rows of houses are bought up and developed in this way, the local council has to consider each planning application on its own merit. If it could legally look at the bigger picture it would show housing densities rising at an alarming rate, placing huge burden on basic amenities such as schools, doctors' and dentists' surgeries, and traffic infrastructure.

Developers do not have to concern themselves with these issues, and council treasury departments, unfettered by the need of a long-term vision, may welcome the increased revenue from council tax income. As with so many aspects of British life at the moment, this piecemeal approach to planning is damaging the very fabric of our communities.

Greg Clark, MP for Tunbridge Wells, introduced a Private Members' Bill in the House of Commons to stop the wholesale exploitation of this loophole in the planning system. Its next reading is on Friday 15 June 2007, which the public can attend.

DULWICH COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

Wherein the scene for demolition is set by the Primary Care Trust Executive and it’s so amenable Board, The story so far:

The proposal to build a Community Hospital continues to be the cause of great concern. Not because we oppose the idea. On the contrary! As early as 1998, we published our concept of what the proposed hospital should offer. But what is being planned cannot serve our needs. Every few weeks the scale and range of services they plan gets smaller and the estimates increase. On top of this, the procedures for consultation and planning have been subject to grave criticism. Members will know that we have complained to the Health Ombudsman. The latest news (6 March 2007) is that the review of our case is still with her. Since our last submission, much has happened. The eastern end of the site has been cleared at public expense. The circumstances of the demolition of nearly half the hospital have been a demonstration of administrative arrogance.

The Southwark Primary Care Trust (SPCT) was due to meet our Councillors to discuss a range of issues connected with the project and the buildings on 13 September 2007. Pre-emption being the usual way of life for administrators in the NHS, the SPCT called a meeting of its Board for two days before this to confirm the intention to demolish our hospital. The meeting was to be held in public but for some reason, the public were not told. We learned about the meeting only by accident. We turned up to find that papers were being tabled for the Board and only after a delay did we receive copies. The documents were endorsed as independent reports recommending demolition. Independent they were most definitely not! We were given little time to read them. Amongst them was also a letter which had been requested from the Local Initiative Finance Trust Company (LIFTCO) by the PCT itself.

That letter, in effect, warned that LIFTCO would withdraw from the project if demolition did not take place. The LIFTCO took the opportunity of that letter to remind SPCT that LIFTCO had been granted exclusive rights over all health and care developments in Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham for the next 25 years! The papers were collected back in.

Why? How could they possibly be confidential?

At the following Dulwich Community Council, we had the opportunity to question Mr C Bull, then CDO of the PCT. He was asked about the papers which he had presented to the Board as being independent. He admitted that they had in fact been produced 'in house'. He was also asked about the exclusive rights granted to the LIFTCO. We pointed out that such rights have commercial value. We asked him when those rights were granted and if they had been put out to public tender. At which point, his memory failed him.

Ken Hoole
Chair, East Dulwich Society

Useful telephone numbers
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Bromley: 8464 3333
Croydon: 8686 4433
Lambeth: 7926 1000
Southwark: 7525 5000
Lewisham: 8314 6000

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LETTERS

Triangle may lose out

If ever testimony were wanted to help determine a planning application for the development of the site of the Crystal Palace, it came yesterday.

I had arranged to meet my fiancée in a restaurant in Westow Hill. My minicab got to All Saints Church but then, put simply, the whole of Church Road was in gridlock, not helped by the constant feed of rat-runners from Upper Beulah Hill. It took 20 minutes to get to the Alma, at which point I concluded my journey on foot, given my lateness.

Why will Bromley Council, and the vested interests it seems to represent, not understand that any leisure industry development of the park will inevitably result in traffic jams of biblical proportions.

If Bromley wants to make life (and commerce) in the area of the Triangle impossible or quite intolerable, then flogging the park off to the “entertainment industry” is the way to go.

As a result of the sort of nonsense I encountered yesterday, I cannot be alone in deciding that in future, I shall go (by tram - given priority on the roads) to Croydon or Beckenham to find a restaurant, since my punctuality cannot be reasonably assured in Crystal Palace. This must surely be of concern to traders and would not be helped by hordes visiting a multiplex or similar.

Fraser Murrey

Where’s the Common Sense?

Gate lodges, lived in by park wardens (now back in fashion), could have been financed by the money spent on years of “consultation”/publicity by the LDA. A 24/7 presence in the park, linked to emergency services, would have been - could still be - a big bonus for park-lovers. No need for ring-fencing the Rockhills & Sydenham Gates with luxury private housing, since the security aspect would already be in place there, and elsewhere.

Meanwhile, the timescale of Park “improvements” recedes ever further into the distance. 10/15/20 ...50 years before the job is “done”? Why so long? A simple makeover, tidy/spruce-up, cost-effective, could come about within a couple of years. Or does all the vast amount of money lavished on glossy presentations, publicity and “dialogues” (more and more of them) have to be justified by something equally grandiose?

People are dying from respiratory diseases (often caused, or aggravated, by lack of clean air), including asthma, not to mention coronary illness and obesity (where exercise in parkland could help). There is, therefore, a real danger that simplicity and practicality are being sacrificed to satisfy the promotion of something fanciful and unwarranted. Indeed, there seems to be a complete lack of thought and common sense. A mini-version of the Olympics bandwagon appears unstoppable. Some very searching questions need to be asked, and answered, before it is too late.

By all means entertain a “Vision”, but keep it realistic. Otherwise, regrettably, few of us will be around to enjoy the outcome.

Richard Francis and family

Park Consultation

We were unable to get to the workshop on Saturday but as regular park users wish to record the following views.

The Park should be green, a lung for London and a place where wildlife can thrive. All proposals for buildings and paving should be assessed critically against this principle, which is embodied in the planning status of the park as Metropolitan Open Land.

Specifically -

1. We are strongly opposed to the building of houses at Rockhills Gate and Sydenham Gate. It is in conflict with the whole concept of a park to use the land for building houses. We would, however, approve of the replacement of the athlete’s ‘Lodge’ by a building at the station gateway; provided that it is no bigger than the building it replaces;

2. We are strongly opposed to using any park land for a tram route;

3. the maintenance depot near Sydenham Gate should be demolished and returned to grass and trees;

4. There should be no question of preserving the buildings of the old National Sports Centre for any purpose after a new sports centre has been built. If a new centre is built “tarmac should be turned to turf”, as envisaged in your headline. This was a central recommendation of the planning inspector in her inquiry into Bromley’s Unitary Development Plan. Her conclusions should be strictly upheld. A way must be found to cope with the listed building issue. It is anathema to have two major complexes in the park.

C J Farrow & Mrs A Farrow

Public ‘choice’ - TFL style

In not offering a choice of halting the Croydon Tramlink extension at Crystal Palace Park, but giving three “choices” that all involve running trams through the Park, TfL is not offering choice at all. Most people can guess the decision was made, long before ‘public consultation’, to take the tram up Anerley Road, into Station Road and to the hilltop through the Park.

TfL fail to provide any costings or accurate maps, so preventing respondents from making an informed choice; and failing to disclose problems such as traffic chaos and how tramlines elsewhere have become graffitied magnets.

TfL give misleading “facts”
about the frequency, speed and cost of tram travel - for example, cherry-picking the best tram frequencies without mentioning those days and times when the tram frequency is worse than current bus services, and not mentioning that current train services are faster than the trams.

TfL are economical with the truth about Tramlink's success and offer uncorroborated assertions. They claim that Tramlink has proved extremely successful when in fact it has failed to meet projected passenger targets; state (without evidence) that Tramlink has attracted over £1.5 billion of extra investment to the area; and claim that Tramlink will bring important economic benefits to the area (when in fact Bromley's experience has been the opposite, losing business to Bromley).

TfL rely on a MORI survey that failed to make a valid case for running trams through the Park, and were more than sloppy in their drawings of the boundary of the park and the tram's route within it.

J Salmon

Local people losing control of their local amenity

What has happened to the sanctity of our public parks and gardens? How is it that the capital's open spaces, so envied by visitors from foreign cities and so vital to every Londoner's quality of life are suddenly up for grabs?

Bromley Council has in the recent past been dealt a series of blows and defeats over proposals in Crystal Palace Park. And yet the commercialisation of the Park, the green lungs of Upper Norwood, continues. More and more, pressure is being put on increasing revenue, closing off acreage for ever. With each scheme that is proposed and presented, our confidence in the custodians of our Park and their political masters is eroded.

No public park should have to justify its existence in economic terms – indeed, Latz + Partner, the master planners for the Crystal Palace Park project have stated that no public park can be economically self-sustaining – but then nor should their upkeep depend on commercial use. Yet, unless the political will is there to protect the principles of public open space, the London park will become increasingly the resort of companies and corporations who are able to simply purchase them for their own exclusive use. Surely, powerful voices are speaking against this? What about our ally the Mayor? – well, as far as Crystal Palace goes, forget it. He's one of the perpetrators who, in hypocritical fashion, elects to contradict his own policies.

Crystal Palace Park is an iconic open space in one of the most envied parts of London. Originally part of the grounds of Penge House, it was purchased by the Crystal Palace Committee in 1852 as a site for the permanent residence of the Hyde Park Crystal Palace which would incorporate extensive pleasure gardens. The Park later passed to the GLC and finally in 1970 to Bromley Council. Since even before the fire in 1936, the Park was in decline, but spiralled downwards despite the upkeep by the GLC. Inroads were modest and expensive. The erection of a hoarding around the top of the Park resulted in the exclusion of the public from a substantial area of the parkland. It was ugly, took weeks to erect, and intimidated the regular users. It took the threat of a legal battle to bring Bromley Council to its senses, realise that it was breaking the law, and remove the hoarding – and yet, to date, parts of it can still be seen in place.

The potential hand-over of ownership of the Park to the LDA hailed a new occupying force with different powers, determination and deceit, and the same stultified ideas. The community have overestimated the goodwill of the LDA/GLA, who, under the cloak of a new vision for the Park, finally revealed that it intended to develop and sell off areas of the Park for private housing, arguing that they needed the money generated from such development to fund improvements in the Park, and the consequent spin offs would regenerate the area around it. Yet for over two years they provided no reliable figures, studies or viable business plan to back this up. Through incentives, appeasement, sweeteners, spin and investment of millions of pounds into the 'consultation' exercise, they lured a small group of people into supporting their plan, but to many of the local residents, the argument was profoundly disturbing. The fears were, rightly, that once responsibility had shifted from the local level to a central position, the care of green spaces would fall even further down the list of local government priorities. And once the public realm is eroded, it becomes a fight against huge financial pressures to reclaim it. It seems the commercial enterprise, Capel Manor College, have managed to achieve this, aided and abetted by those now in charge who have hijacked our Park, and are determined to tell us what is best for us, confident in the gullibility of sectors of the community.

It is hoped that the numerous victories of the local community against faceless and uncaring bureaucracy will inspire community groups to fight the exploitation of their own coveted open spaces. The message is clear, the public realm is not open to negotiation and the principles that inspired the LCC to enshrine in law the public status of Crystal Palace Park should never be compromised. Let's hope that central government will show similar integrity in their approach to our precious open spaces.

Don Bianco

If you care about the area, join the CPCA.
Together, your voice counts.
Don’t talk at us - listen.

Why are the LDA so keen to build houses on Crystal Palace Park? The revenue from these four/five story high buildings will only bring in about £12 million and we were told by Roger Frith that, by the end of this financial year, the LDA will already have spent around £15 million on planning and consultation alone. They intend to spend nearly £70 million on the park so this measly £12 million will only be a drop in the ocean. Why should we have our grade two star registered Victorian park scarred forever with ugly housing in order to pay for their consultation talks and documentation?

Also, they seem to want continuous dialogue although we have been telling them for almost three years that we don’t want their houses. The LDA’s conception of dialogue is a strange one. They will allow questions but never comments. Real dialogue has room for both. I must admire their plans for the park. It shows some interesting and well thought out ideas. However the fact is that we cannot afford all these changes and, like everything else in life, if you can’t afford it you must simply scale it down to an affordable level. The LDA are so set on having houses built on this city park that they won’t even consider this obvious option.

The LDA want to get rid of the camping centre, an excellent inner city resource while, at the same time, they want to build a private college in the park. All we want is the farm back so that young children can go in and enjoy learning about animals. They also seem to view the park as an events’ park but we, the local people, just want a quiet green space for our family enjoyment. The LDA seem to consult ad nauseum but never take into consideration the feelings of the people who live here. They talk at us. They don’t hear us.

I hope Bromley Council will not give permission for housing on an inner city park, a disgraceful idea, and that all other London councils watch this space. If the LDA are allowed to build on an historic Victorian park then no other park in London, or in the whole of England, is safe!

Geraldine Cowan

Those closest receive no news

The lack of organisational skill by the LDA in informing local residents of park proposals does not inspire me with confidence in what they may plan for the future.

I live on Crystal Palace Park Road and first heard about ‘public consultation’ meetings from the CPCA. I met four residents of Thicket Road recently, who have never received information of plans proposed for the park. They attended their first meeting on 6th June after I told them about it. I found out about one meeting after picking up a leaflet from a rubbish bin on my road, where a bundle of leaflets had been dumped. The LDA information glossy - It’s Your Park’, has arrived once, although friends in Dulwich have received four. Do I live too close for LDA comfort perhaps?

Half my garden was taken and given back to the park by Ken Livingstone when he was leader of the GLC - at that time the plan was to demolish all the houses on the park side of CPP Road and return the land to park. What is going on now when he wants to do the opposite and take parkland for housing?

What a difference a change of office makes.

Monica Clarke

Environmentally irresponsible estate agents

Today a 10-page A4 glossily printed magazine was hand-delivered, together with two heavily laminated plasticized A5 ‘leaflets’. I checked with the recycling department at Lambeth – these ‘leaflets’ are non-recyclable. How many thousands have been distributed in this area alone and will end up in landfill? Aren’t we continually being warned that local authorities will charge us for not recycling or having too much refuse? These came from a local estate agent who, in this magazine, was exhorting readers to contemplate selling off gardens for development: “...long gardens and corner plots can also offer potential…” just when we are beginning to recognise that gardens, scraps of open space and earth open to air/rain/wildlife are essential in maintaining biodiversity, water catchments etc.

Another house agent had his cars driven round and round the Triangle in the rush-hour, causing more fumes and traffic jams. There are surely more responsible ways to advertise.

Even house salesmen should be more responsible about protecting the environment; it’s their children as well as ours who will suffer.

Audrey Hammond

Delivering ‘dialogue’

Concerning its client Surrey County Cricket Club, ‘dialogue’ gives under redevelopment proposal objectives: “...maximising support and minimising opposition ...” which conflicts fundamentally with requirement for those facilitating public consultation to maintain impartiality.

Just how opposition can be minimised was evident at the 1st June 2007 ‘dialogue’ meeting at Anerley Town Hall, when over-long presentations, the substitution of writing on ‘post-its’ for free expression, the laborious summary of what people said and wrote, the division of those present into smaller groups and a near continuo of unnecessary comment and ‘clarification’ from ‘facilitators’, occupied 68% of the meeting.

Attendees at an impromptu meeting later, outside the Hall, organised by Dr Martin Heath, complained they had been treated like school children, something they would not endure again.

Mike Warwick
Bernard Weatherill  

an appreciation

In 1983 a shift in the Croydon North East constituency boundary brought to the Upper Norwood/Crystal Palace Triangle a new MP – Bernard Weatherill. What a straightforward, perceptive, charming and courteous gent he was. For an area at the fag end of the borough this was the first (and probably only) piece of luck to come our way. Here was a very independent thinking sort of Tory; the sort of man you would vote for whatever your politics. He was that rare thing – a politician guided by common sense!

Straight away our new MP arranged a meeting in Norwood, with representatives of all the local groups. I had of course written to him with ample descriptions of the historic qualities of his new area and the aims of the CPTCA (as it then was) to conserve them and to regenerate the area. After the meeting we all walked round the Triangle, up all the alleys into the yards and the field and we looked at all the interesting old shops and the features above them. He really wanted to know every inch of it.

His genuine interest in everyone and everything was apparent from the start. One of his first achievements was to set up the Upper Norwood Improvement Team – UNIT – which met quarterly at the Queen’s Hotel – the only suitably large venue. He chaired it himself, with great style and humour, and it brought together local groups and a variety of councillors and officers. This was a valiant, and successful, attempt to get representatives of all five boroughs to discuss local issues with residents, under one roof – something of a triumph. He modestly denied being the instigator. “The secret”, he told me later, “is to let people think they have had the good ideas themselves!” When late sittings at the House made his presence unpredictable, he chose just the right person, Janet Finlay, as his successor.

His interest extended to my work, and soon he commissioned a painting of his study at Speaker’s House. After a tour of Speakers quarters (overlooking Westminster Bridge and the Thames) beautifully restored to Pugin’s original glory by Mrs Weatherill, I started a series of happy Monday afternoons there. Ensconced on a tall stool in a corner of the study I worked in pen and watercolour at recreating the rich wallpapers, panelling and curtains around the splendid window, and Mr Speaker’s treasurers – such as the statuette of Indian officers from his old regiment on his desk. He showed me his thimble – always kept in his waistcoat pocket – to remind him that he was first and Betty speak out’, on Radio 4, he was asked how he hung in their sitting room, went with them when they moved and is now in their home in Surrey.

Bernard had a marvellous way of making one feel one was special; if he introduced me it was “...do meet my best friend Audrey Hammond...” I’m sure he said that about many friends, but at the time one always felt it was special to oneself. When Mike Conrad, Brian Dann and I were struggling to create the CPTCA book “Crystal Palace-Norwood Heights” he was encouraging from the first and promised to do all he could to help launch it. and did exactly that. On 15 October 1988 he spent the whole day in the Triangle with us! First at the ‘Picture Palace’ amidst an exhibition of all the paintings from the book, he submitted to being photographed with everyone – all the Mayors and dignitaries from the boroughs, representatives of local groups, kind friends and sponsors – everyone and anyone who wanted to record his and their presence together on The Day. He officially pulled the cord to reveal the big Crystal Palace map outside Safeway.

(Where is it now Mr Sainsbury?) He greeted, with smiles of recognition, the dozens of his constituents who came up to thank him for his help with their problems in the past. Then he walked round to Joanna’s in Westow Hill with us (about 80 people) for the celebration lunch, made more speeches, chatted to everyone and stayed practically till the end – what stamina! And, looking at the photographs, he seemed to be enjoying it all.

He always kept in touch, visiting galleries where I was exhibiting if they were near the Lords, or our studio exhibitions (handily on his way home). He continued to keep in touch with events in the Crystal Palace area and nailed his colours to the mast when he came to support and speak at a big Crystal Palace Campaign public meeting (for which he was rebuked for interfering in what was no longer his business!) Bernard Weatherill was MP for the same part of Croydon from 1965 until he retired in 1992, having been Speaker of the Commons for the last nine of those years. With his distinctive voice, kindliness, humour, incisive use of language and knowledge of Parliamentary law he must have been one of the greatest Speakers ever. When he retired – how loyal can one get – he chose to be Baron Weatherill of Croydon North East!

On a very recent and very moving programme, ‘Bernard and Betty speak out’, on Radio 4, he was asked how he wanted to be remembered – he said “He was trusted – absolutely”. Here was a man who was ‘happy in his skin’. I am very proud to have known him, and to have been considered his friend.

Audrey Hammond
Spa Hill Allotments - moving with the times

Spa Hill Allotments is 22 acres of activity right now with over 300 plot holders sowing seeds for bumper crops later in the year. This allotment is the first in the country with its own wind turbine contributing to the electricity needs of the site and often visited by schoolchildren wishing to learn about wind generation. Recently CCTV cameras have been installed for protection and to counter illegal dumping. This innovation is in no small part due to funds raised by Antonia who runs a café on site providing full English breakfasts and snacks throughout the day. The Distribution Centre is open Saturdays and Sundays 10.30 - 12.30 and is open to garden members as well as plot holders. Garden membership is £2.10 p.a. and seeds, tools, pots, fertilisers etc are available at prices lower than garden centres. You can also get some sound advice from experienced gardeners.

Spa Hill entered ‘the best allotment in the country’ competition and was short-listed. TV cameras were on site the 18 April to film areas of interest including an eco-friendly shed built using medieval techniques and with a planted roof.

There is a library, workshop on site and there are regular deliveries of horse manure from the Royal Mews. Classy stuff!

Training days are a great introduction for new plot holders and gardeners alike. These are organised in March and April each year. The ethnic variety of plot holders reflects the local population and it is fascinating to see different cultivation techniques, tools used and the variety of crops grown.

There is a waiting list for plots and the present policy is to give preference to applicants living no more than 2 kilometres from the site. On two occasions in the last decade a Spa plot holder has won the ‘best plot in Croydon’ award. But whether experienced or novice, everyone enjoys the tranquillity of the allotment site where wildlife includes sightings of birds of prey. A large pond is being built at the moment and already a heron and some ducks have made their first viewing. Sadly they would not have found much to eat at this stage.

Social events such as seed-swapping and informative talks are held at various times of the year and our summer barbeque is something not to be missed with a wide range of ethnic food and music.

Check out the website www.spahill.org.uk or call in the office and put your name on the waiting list - 180 Spa Hill SE19

Mike Conrad
Ed: MC aka ‘greenfingers’ and CPCA cartoonist

It is with sadness that we have to report the felling of two ‘iconic’ trees in the area: the false acacia on Fox Hill, affectionately known as ‘the Pissarro tree’ from its immortalisation in his 1870 painting of Fox Hill ‘Lower Norwood’, and the lonely pine on the Italian Terrace of Crystal Palace Park. Both trees had reached the end of their lives and were liable to fall.

This paragraph from Percy Fitzgerald’s book ‘Victoria’s England’ describes the slopes of Norwood: “...the roads are all ‘green lanes’, and in spite of the innumerable villas, never seem to lose their sylvan character. The foliage, the laurels and shrubberies are luxuriant, and the grass abounds; and with it there is a dreamy solitude and an air of contented happiness and tranquility...”
Feel like a walk in the country? Then just go down to Norwood Park. Primroses and violets cluster around the trunks of old trees. Cowslips nod in the grass. Bluebells and wild garlic are just coming into flower. This is the ‘Country Walk’ which runs across the north side of the park with Salters’ Hill at one end and Finch Avenue at the other.

Six years ago it was just a wilderness of bramble, cow parsley, cleavers and bindweed and Friends of Norwood Park asked me to organise a nature trail through it. But the work proved backbreaking and gradually the Friends dropped out. A succession of keen but untrained volunteers followed and each year, Iain Boulton, Lambeth’s environment officer, brought in a team of outside volunteers (some did more harm than good!).

But now, at last, we are a proper team! Laura Osmane, a young Italian mother, looks after our accounts – but prefers swinging an axe. Janet Coleman, a retired art teacher, is our secretary (thanks to her weeding expertise a thousand cow parsley roots go to London Wildlife and Roots and Shoots each year). Then there’s David McVie, who enjoys the fresh air and exercise after a week at his desk at the Foreign Office. Finally, there’s Sarah Bowring, professional clarinettist and likely to turn up late and wearing her best suede shoes (I rush to put plastic bags over them). But more volunteers are needed if we are going to achieve a long-term aim: to turn three acres of the park into a ‘perfect piece of countryside’ with all the flowers, ferns and trees once native to London.

Ten thousand wild flowers and ferns have been planted since the start but a lot have failed, been stolen or vandalised. The same applies to 60 odd trees and some 300 shrubs and climbers – it’s the price of working in a park that is not closed at night and near a high crime area. There’s also the work just maintaining the wood chip path, seven sitting areas made from sections of tree trunk and including an open air classroom seating 30+, some country hedging, two small meadows, a pond, a bog and a new venture - a small cornfield. We need help raising funds for all this - it’s done without asking for grants or financial help from Lambeth.

Are Lambeth parks pleased? A senior manager wrote to me curtly last year: “Cease operations immediately until you have public liability insurance to the value of £5 million”.

So we have re-joined Friends of the Park to share their insurance - an uneasy alliance. We are hands-on people and hate meetings!

John Cotter  020 8244 8724
Team leader (& sculptor by profession)
Apologies for the slow start to this year’s CPCA events (due to work and other commitments). We are now back on track, with some new members on the committee, busy putting together the summer and autumn events programmes.

It was good to see many of you in April on the guided walk around Bloomsbury. Peter Grant gave an insightful and colourful account of the famous and infamous characters that have left their mark on this fascinating area of London.

We followed this with a walk on 3 June to Box Hill in Surrey. Our next Sunday walks will be:
- 19th August around Greenwich
- 28th October a walk along the Regents Canal in London

Our walks are friendly and informal, it’s a great way to meet new people or to catch up with others that you already know. Phone us for more details or check the website.

Our Summer Quiz Night will be on Friday 15 June at our usual venue, the Goodliffe Hall. Our last quiz in October was a very close call, with the winning team only one point ahead with four other teams close on their heels. Please book early so you don’t miss out, as they are popular. This is a great night out - give it a try if you have not been before. Don’t worry the questions are not too hard!

We look forward to seeing you at the Victorian Weekend in Crystal Palace Park on Saturday 30th June and Sunday 1st July.

We are starting a CPCA Dining Club with a meal at A-Torre, the Portuguese restaurant in Westow Street on 16 July. Many of you have told us that you never get the chance to try out the vast number of different restaurants in the area, so we thought it would be fun to arrange occasional dinner and lunch events, trying a different restaurant each time. If you have a favourite restaurant that you think we should visit, please let us know.

We have a generous offer of help to arrange the barn dance again and will send you details on this and other events soon.

Katriona Ogilvy-Webb & the events subcommittee

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**Quiz Night**

Our next CPCA quiz night will be **Friday 9 November**

Please join us at the Goodliffe Hall, Highland Road, off Gipsy Hill SE19

Doors open 7.15 for a 7.30pm start

Book your table for 8 or come on your own and meet new faces or old friends in a relaxed & friendly atmosphere.

**Tickets are £7.50 for members, £8.50 non-members, to include a fish & chip supper**

Bring your own drink and glasses but both will be available should you forget.

**Raffle & Prizes & Fun**

Please book by Monday 5 Nov. latest, to allow time to organise the food.

Phone/fax CPCA 8670 4395 or email: CPCA@onetel.com

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**Dining at A-Torre**

**Monday 16 July**

This Portuguese restaurant at 19 Westow Street is well-established and popular, serving a range of dishes including vegetarian, but is probably best known for its wide range of seafood.

Entradas start from £2.50; main courses £5.95 for vegetarians, £7.75 for meat dishes and £8.95 for their fish. They also have a range of salads, which can be ordered as starters, side dishes or main courses with a wide selection of desserts including delicious ice creams and home made traditional Portuguese puddings; desserts start at £1.20.

We are booking for 7.30pm, if you would like to join us please tell us by 14 July.

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**Victorian Weekend**

**Saturday 30 June & Sunday 1 July**

The CPCA will be at the Victorian weekend; a great annual event organised by the Crystal Palace Foundation with the Park Rangers.

The CPCA will be setting up stalls as usual, offering a raffle, our popular tombola and Victorian games, refreshments and information.

Open from 11am to 5pm both days, at the Penge entrance, there will be fun for all the family.

Come along and meet us

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**Croydon Stagers**

**Old Tyme Music Hall**

**at The Stanley Halls, South Norwood Hill**

**3rd to 7th September**

featuring the most welcome return of **Michael Pearse**, comedian and magician and **David Blythe**, ventriloquist.

**Call Croydon Stagers box office on 8776 1064**
St. Mark’s Players
present
**Our Business is Show Business**
Stanley Halls South Norwood
Fri.15th & Sat.16th June at 7.30 pm All tickets: £7.50 to include a finger buffet
& Sat.16th June at 2.30 pm All tickets: £5 to include coffee & cake
Box Office: 8393 3640/8240 9378
www.smplayers.co.uk

Sounds of the Suburbs
8th free music festival
Saturday 28 & Sunday 29 July
at the Crystal Palace concert platform
featuring new and emerging music talent
from south of the Thames with food, craft & market stalls, local information points and a fully stocked and licensed bar.
For more information contact Carol Ann Walters on 8289 0460, email carol@thebowl.org.uk or www.thebowl.org.uk

Freedom of Expression II
Christ Church, Gipsy Hill
8pm last Thursday of the month
The very best in acoustic music, poetry, comedy and magic from around London and further afield.
28th June 2007
Trombone Poetry + Roshi
Nasehi + Liz Crawford +
Mozzy Green + Jessica Grace
There’s no bar, so bring-a-bottle or avail yourself of the basic refreshments that we’ll be providing on the night.
We aim to bring you quality acts in a relaxed and intimate atmosphere... for free!
More details at www.myspace.com/freeexpress2

Group 19
illustrated talks will be on the
ART & ARCHITECTURE
OF ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS
Thursday evenings at 7.15pm
4 & 18 October; 1, 15 & 29 November & 13 December
Scout Headquarters Hall, Rama Lane, off Cintra Park, SE19
Admission £5 at the door
All are welcome
More information: Norman Sutherland 020 8670 3591

Life Drawing Sessions at the Goodliffe Hall
The clergy and parishioners of Christ Church, Gipsy Hill, have been organising many cultural events for the enjoyment of local residents and to fundraise for the refurbished Goodliffe Hall.
Among these are the evening life drawing classes, organised by Rebecca Rumsey and Laura. Originally supported by mums and dads from Paxton School, these informal sessions with excellent models began to attract a wider range of students from young people to seniors, who appreciated the quiet atmosphere of study and the modest fee. At £6.50 for 2 hours, it was unfortunately not possible to continue to cover the costs of models and the hire of the very suitable large hall, but we would like to start again in the autumn, with sufficient ‘drawers’ and maybe a slightly higher fee. If anyone is interested and would like to join the sessions in the autumn, please ring Audrey Hammond on 8670 6239.

Farmers’ Markets
Nearly every weekend provides an opportunity for visiting a local market for fresh fruit and veg, meat, fruit juices, lots of organic stuff including wonderful flour (Dulwich only), delicious cheeses (so different from supermarket produce), honey, wine, etc.
Support Kent Farmers and reduce food miles!
West Norwood High Street
(at the junction with Lancaster Avenue): 10 am to 3 pm on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month.
Hillyfields, Brockley
10 am – 3 pm, on the 2nd Saturday of the month (worth visiting just to see the wonderful park, heaving with little children in bright colours doing their sports practice)
Dulwich College
9 am – 1 pm on the 4th Sunday – this is the big one – with many stands and Arts and Crafts in the covered cloister.

Open House
free annual weekend event
15 -16 September 2007
The Capital’s biggest free access architectural festival, ‘Open House London’, allows the public to visit private residences from slick contemporary homes to pre-fab and social housing, Arts and Crafts gems, 20th Century Modernist classics, Livery-Halls, government buildings, Ambassadors’ residences, private clubs, contemporary workspaces, historical houses, City banks, medical centres, schools, RIBA award-winners, sustainable exemplars and more...
The Buildings Guide for 2007 will be available from mid August through www.openhouse.org.uk sending an A4 SAE (65p stamp) + cheque for £3 (payable to London Open House) to 4th Floor, 297 Euston Road, London NWI 3AQ
Information Line: 09001 600 061 or visit www.openhouse.org.uk
Open House is an architecture education charity committed to raising the standard of London’s built environment. We open people’s eyes and minds to good design through dialogue, learning, and direct experience of excellent spaces and places.

St. Mark’s Players
present
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