



Crystal Palace Community Association

# CPCA

## NEWSLETTER



Spring 2012

Registered Charity No. 261790

Free to members

# CAN ANY BODY BE TRUSTED WITH THE PARK?

The CPCA believes Bromley reference to “...*difficult decisions having to be made*” and to “...*opportunities for investment...*” under proposals for a Trust or not-for-profit Body to manage Crystal Palace Park to be ominous allusion to commercial development and other inappropriate usage of a Park that since its creation has been green open space for recreation, relaxation and other public enjoyment.

At 10 am on 7 March 2012 in the Royal Courts of Justice in The Strand, the CPCA will challenge decision by the Secretary of State to approve the LDA Crystal Palace Park Masterplan, which includes sale of protected public parkland for 180 private luxury apartments on Grade II\* registered Metropolitan Open Land.

The CPCA will be represented by Robert McCracken QC and Annabel Graham Paul who represented the CPCA at the LDA Masterplan Local Public Inquiry in summer 09.

The London Development Agency will no longer exist from 1st April 2012 yet their Masterplan proposal for Crystal Palace Park could establish legal precedent threatening all public parks and open spaces throughout the United Kingdom.

Some CPCA members who have expressed an interest in this application may wish to attend.

*The CPCA Masterplan Objection letter June 2008 can be viewed on the website; [www.cPCA.org.uk](http://www.cPCA.org.uk) - First page, News, right-hand pane last item at the bottom.*

# Who should be paying for the Park?

To reduce their liability for the costs of maintaining Crystal Palace Park, Bromley the freeholders of this world famous Grade II\* registered park, are considering establishing a 'trust' or similar not-for-profit body to administer future management and governance of the Park.

This followed unexpected refusal of the LDA to exercise option for a lease of the whole of the Park, subsequent to submission and acceptance of their controversial Park Masterplan including sale of protected public parkland for construction of private apartment blocks.

Bromley's Crystal Palace Park Management Board, comprising of six independently chaired boards, will make recommendations to Bromley's Executive Committee who will then determine the future of Crystal Palace Park. Such recommendations will, amongst other things, place emphasis on:

- *Sustainable development to promote revenue streams*
- *Implementing the vision and spirit of the Crystal Palace Park Masterplan*
- *To approve and champion capital and revenue projects that improve the usage and visitor experience at Crystal Palace Park*
- *To examine and pioneer different opportunities for investment at Crystal Palace Park recognising difficult decisions may have to be made for the on-going sustainable future of the Park to be guaranteed*
- *Develop skills and employment opportunities at Crystal Palace Park*

The CPCA believes Bromley reference to "...difficult decisions having to be made" and "opportunities for investment" to be ominous allusion to commercial development and other inappropriate usage of a park that was historically for recreation and relaxation.

Bromley's terms of reference further state that, "...the business of the Crystal Palace Park Management Board is carried out in an effective, professional and transparent way"

and that the 'Community Stakeholder Board' will comprise of 11 members, three being selected from existing local community groups.

Whilst Bromley state that selected members must have sufficient authority to speak for their organisations/sectors/partnerships and provide worthwhile contribution to the work of the Crystal Palace Park Management Board, whilst ensuring that feedback is given to their nominating organisation, Bromley also state that members must ensure that the aims and objectives of their organisation or group are aligned with those of the Crystal Palace Park Management Board.

The CPCA considers these terms of reference to be not only ill-conceived and unworkable, but effectively fundamental conflict of principle.

'Community Links Bromley', part-funded by the Council, was retained to interview and select appointees to the 'Community' Board.

Terms of reference for Board appointees stipulate eight individuals not affiliated to any community group and three from existing local community groups, totalling 11 persons. Penge & Cator Councillor John Getgood has published the identity of the 11 persons appointed to the Community Stakeholder Board on the Virtual Norwood website.

Louisa Allen, Bromley lead Officer on the Trust proposal, met the CPCA Committee to outline the structure of the various boards which clearly showed requirement for participation of established local stakeholder groups. However, not a single Community Board appointee is from an established local community society or group with a membership structure. When asked by the CPCA why terms of reference had not been met, Louisa Allen could provide no answer.

Under the proposed Trust or not-for-profit body, Crystal Palace Park will for the first time in its history have to generate its own capital and revenue funding, despite 55 of the total acreage of 200 being already leased to commercial interests, generating an annual income to Bromley Council of £218,000 – more than half the Park's annual running costs.

Capel Manor College has publicly stated it would like to acquire more land in Crystal Palace Park to expand its commercial activities, whilst English Heritage has a record of supporting major built development on the Park – including residential housing. Both bodies hold appointment to several 'Trust' Boards.

The CPCA, a 42 year old local amenity society, fully constituted and registered as a charity and with a flourishing membership, was not selected for appointment to the Community Board, despite its unsurpassed knowledge of the Park and of local issues.

## ***Donation towards Costs***

Donations towards costs of our legal challenge have been most welcome, but we seek further contributions towards our case preparation costs. Any contribution you can make, no matter how small, will be most gratefully appreciated and prompt renewal of your membership would also be helpful. Substantial donations as provision against potential shortfall in our protective costs order have been received, and the CPCA wishes to place on record its appreciation of this generosity. Although confidentiality prevents identification of individuals, the CPCA is able to identify, with most sincere appreciation, the Norwood Society and West Beckenham Residents Association as generous contributors.

# The future of the Upper Norwood Joint Library

Three hundred people attending last November's public meeting, organised by the CPCA, gave a massive vote of support for the Library's continuing place at the heart of the cross-borough community of Upper Norwood.

Meanwhile Croydon and Lambeth continue to play political football with the Library's future.

From 1st April, Lambeth are cutting their funding to the Library from £211,000 to £170,000.

Croydon have stated that they will be withdrawing all their funding from the end of March 2012.

Without Croydon's share of funding the Library may be forced to close.

The Upper Norwood Library is more than 50% cheaper pro rata than other library services in either Lambeth or Croydon. The central library services of both Croydon and Lambeth are, unbelievably, amongst the most expensive in London, yet despite the weight of evidence demonstrating that the UNJL could be a cost effective 'model service' for the rest of the country and could help avoid mass library closures and drastic service reductions, council officers refuse to consider this option.

Concerningly, Lambeth have not challenged Croydon's decision to unilaterally withdraw from the Joint Library Committee, although provision for referring disputes to arbitration exists in the Joint Library Agreement.

Following the Lambeth Libraries Commission report, Lambeth produced a consultation document in January 2012 called 'Cooperative libraries – have your say'\* where, on page 13, opinions are being sought regarding the future of our independent Library.

It is vital that Lambeth funding remains specific to the UNJL (box 1), and is not used to subsidise the

development of the proposed new co-operative Lambeth library service (box 2).

If you value your Library and want to do something, please write to Ed Vaizey MP Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries; the Rt Hon. Malcolm Wicks MP, Croydon North; the Rt Hon. Tessa Jowell MP, Dulwich & West Norwood; all at *The House of Commons, SW1A 0AA*.

Also write to the Leader of Croydon Council - Cllr Mike Fisher; Croydon Chief Executive - Jon Rouse; and Croydon Cabinet Member - Cllr Sara Bashford. Copy your letters to local Croydon Councillors: Pat Ryan, Alisa Fleming and John Wentworth.

*Croydon Council, Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon CR9 3JS*

Letters should also be written to the Leader of Lambeth Council - Cllr Steve Reed; Lambeth Chief Executive - Derrick Anderson; and Lambeth Cabinet Member - Cllr Florence Nosegbe. Copy your letters to local Lambeth Councillors: Matthew Bennett, Jennifer Brathwaite and Niranjan Francis.

*Lambeth Council, Town Hall, Brixton Hill, London SW2 1RW*

The CPCA believes the future UNJL should enjoy continued jointly-funded independence with both councils working in co-operative partnership with the local community, under the principles of the Charter and the terms of the Joint Library Agreement, in line with the wishes of the Crystal Palace Community.

\* 'Co-operative libraries – have your say' – freephone 0800 013 1497 or email

*CooperativeLibraries@lambeth.gov.uk or access information from the Council website: [www.lambeth.gov.uk/CooperativeLibraries](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/CooperativeLibraries) where you can complete the questionnaire online.*

## ACTION FOR LIBRARIES

A National Rally in protest at proposed reduction in library services will be held on **Tuesday 13th March 2012** from 11.30am Central Hall Westminster followed by lobbying MPs at Parliament at 2.30pm.

All library users, campaigners and staff are urged to attend and support this rally to demonstrate the vital importance of our libraries in providing access to learning and education and as a lifeline for many communities.

10% or even more of UK libraries are currently closed or under threat of closure.

Citizens all over the UK are strongly campaigning to counter the threat to our essential library services, and by this action are sending a clear message to MPs to maintain our library services and ensure they are not closed and premises sold-off.

### Correct email addresses

Although we have mentioned this before, many emails sent to members fail to arrive due to incorrect email addresses on our database. If your email address has changed please send us a quick 'test' email to ensure that we have your correct details. This will help us to quickly send you urgent and up-to-date information from time to time.

*[cpca@onetel.com](mailto:cpca@onetel.com)*

## Membership renewal reminder

Membership subscriptions are due on 1st March 2012 and we thank those who have already renewed, whether by standing order, cash or cheque.

As you will see from this newsletter, many important issues face us, not least our legal challenge to the Secretary of State's decision to grant approval to the LDA Crystal Palace Park Masterplan. Therefore it is more important than ever to maintain a strong membership base and we ask that you ensure your membership is up to date.

The cost of membership remains the same - £8 (£5 concessions) for family membership. The membership form included with this spring newsletter includes a standing order, which you may find more convenient and has the added bonus of saving us administration time.

## Become a CPCA Committee member

The life-blood, indeed the very reason for the CPCA's existence is the membership. No membership, no CPCA! Please speak to your family, friends and neighbours – encourage them to join by explaining the work that we do in trying to keep the area 'special'.

Above all we need new blood to join our committee. Currently, due to health reasons and family commitments, we have no Vice-Chair, Hon. Secretary or Membership Secretary, three vitally important committee roles. So, if you have a little time to spare, please call us, arrange a meeting and come and see what's involved. You never know, you might actually enjoy it!

## Forthcoming events

### Wednesday 16th May 41st CPCA AGM

Our Annual General Meeting will take place at 7.30 pm, 16th May 2012 at Christ Church Gipsy Hill, by which time we should know the result of our legal challenge. As usual there will be a guest speaker and refreshments.

### Wednesday 25th April Meal at *Mediterranea*

21 Westow Street, SE19

Join us for a meal at this intimate Mediterranean restaurant in Crystal Place. We have booked the table for 7.30pm. Please let us know by Sunday 22nd April if you wish to join us.

### Sunday 13th May Walk through historical Chelsea and Battersea Park

Join us for walk through historical Chelsea, where we will consider interesting architecture and a number of blue plaques where some famous characters once lived. We will end by walking through intriguing Battersea Park where, weather permitting, we will have a picnic lunch, or if the weather is not on our side lunch in the park's cafeteria.

Meet at Crystal Palace station at 10.15 am, for the 10.31 train to Victoria. The cost of the walk is £5 per person, towards CPCA funds (refreshments and travel are not included).

### Friday 16th November CPCA Winter Quiz night

Please refer to the summer quiz for details.

### Friday 8th June

### CPCA Summer Quiz night

at the Goodliffe Hall, Highland Road, off Gipsy Hill.

Quiz mistress Katriona will again host this popular, fun and friendly event, where she will test our brain cells with a range of questions to suit all.

Organise a team of up to 8 people or be linked up with others, who hopefully might know the answers!

The quiz starts at 7.30pm and the tickets cost £9 for CPCA members and £10 for non-members.

As always, the ticket price includes a fish and chip supper.

Vegetarians are offered a vegetable quiche as an alternative; please let us know if you prefer this option, when you make your booking. Bring your own drinks, but if you forget there will be a limited choice available.

### Sunday 14th October

### Circular Walk through Hayes Common and Keston

Following last year's popular walk through the rural parts of West Wickham we plan to go a little further afield this year and walk through Hayes Common and Keston. A pub lunch en route will help us refuel and rest.

Meeting point yet to be arranged and we will send out these details nearer the time. Cost of the walk £5 per person, towards CPCA funds (refreshments not included).

### Tuesday 4th December

### Meal at Thai Crystal

7 Westow Hill, SE19

Join us for a meal at this friendly Thai Restaurant. We plan to book the table for 7.30pm. Please let us know by Sunday 2nd December if you plan to join us.

CPCA c/o 10 Jasper Road, Upper Norwood, London SE19 1SJ

Tel / Fax: 020 8670 4395 cPCA@onetel.com www.cPCA.org.uk

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