

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Deputy Leader, Alison Butler

October 2018

Latest News

Changes to HMO licensing

From 1 October 2018 mandatory licensing will no longer be limited to certain HMOs that are three or more storeys high, but will also include buildings with one or two storeys.

New conditions for mandatory HMOs

Minimum room sizes for HMOs

The mandatory room size conditions will be the statutory minimum and are not intended to be the optimal room size. We are deeply disappointed by the recommended room sizes set by the government, particularly given the issues of isolation and mental health. Croydon will use the discretion allowed to Local housing authorities to set their own higher standards within licence conditions.

Croydon's minimum room sizes are as follows:

	Bedsit room containing kitchen facilities only	Bedsit room containing en suite facilities only	Bedsit room where shared kitchen facilities are in a separate room	Shared house where kitchen facilities are in a separate room and there is a communal living room
Single room	13.5m ²	12.5m ²	10m ²	6.5m ²
Double room	18.5m ²	17.5m ²	15m ²	10.2m ²

Waste disposal

All licences issued after 1 of October 2018 will include a condition requiring the compliance with the council's storage and waste disposal scheme, building on the work already going forward under Landlord Licensing.

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Some landlords who already have a licence under Croydon's selective licensing schemes (CPRPL) will have properties that now come under the extended scope of mandatory HMO licensing. Such landlords do not need to reapply for a licence until their existing licence expires. Upon expiry of the current licence the landlord will need to apply for a licence under Part 2 of the Act (a mandatory HMO licence).

We have put information on the website, written to all SL holders notifying them of the changes and also put information in the landlord newsletter.

Update on the programme of works for major planned maintenance to Council Homes for 2018/19

Overview: Programme of Delivery for 2018/19

Longheath Gardens

Works are to 17 low rise blocks (18 including Wimborne House) and comprise external refurbishment; replacement roofs; concrete & brickwork repairs; balcony replacements; replacement of lining to underside of walkways and general redecorations.

The works are programmed for progressive completion with the final completion date in October 2019 subject to finalisation of the Section 20 consultation process and detailed planning of the requirements for the final 6 'structural' blocks.

98-176 College Green

Works comprise refurbishment of high rise sheltered block; replacement roof; cladding; replacement lifts; concrete repairs and windows; new self-contained flats to ground floor. The works are progressing well on site with a projected completion date of September 2019 as reported previously

Dartmouth House

Works comprise refurbishment of high rise block and attached low rise; replacement roof; concrete repairs and over-cladding and new windows. Planning approval was received on 6 June 2018 and detailed design and procurement of the works is currently being undertaken. Section 20 consultation will take place in late 2018/early 2019 with an expected start date in the first quarter of 2019.

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56A -76D Chertsey Crescent

Works are similar in nature to Dartmouth House and comprise refurbishment of high rise block replacement roof; concrete repairs and over-cladding and new windows. Planning approval was received on 21 June 2018 and detailed design and procurement of the works is currently being undertaken.

Davidson Lodge

Davidson Lodge is a 16th century styled Grade II listed building which has been converted into 20 bed-sits for elderly residents.

The general repairs to the external fabric of the building includes roof replacement, brick and stone repairs, window and glass repairs and general external refurbishment including replacement of the rear fire escape staircase. Minimal internal works will be carried out including damp proofing and minor alterations. There has been extensive liaison with the Heritage Officer to agree the final scope of works.

Works will commence in September 2018 with anticipated Completion in December 2019 as previously advised

Working Together

Brick by Brick

Update on progress with Brick by Brick developments

Brick by Brick (BxB) now has planning consent on around 40 sites so far, providing 1035 new homes. 490 of these (47%) are designated affordable, above what the borough has been able to achieve from other developers over the last five years. BXB are also delivering some major non-residential and public space improvements such as the Fairfield Halls/College Green scheme. Most recently a planning application for 26 new affordable homes at Shrublands Avenue was approved at the Council's Planning Committee in August. Many sites are now under construction and

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their first new homes will be completed in early 2019 at Ravensdale Gardens and Auckland Rise (see below for further information)

Neilcott Construction starting on site at Station Road, South Norwood.

Some initial site works have begun at the BXB Station Road site in South Norwood. Neilcott Construction were awarded the contract to build 14 new homes and a new library space designed by BXB in house architects Common Ground Architecture. BXB aim to fully start on site by the end September 2018 with a completion date forecasted for September 2019.

Community consultations for Bedwardine Road, Arkell Grove and Kennelwood Crescent

In July BXB ran three community consultations for their proposed schemes on Bedwardine Road, SE19, Arkell Grove, also in SE19 and Kennelwood Crescent in New Addington. All three events were very well attended by local residents and local councillors. The next steps are for BXB to review the results of consultation alongside their various surveys and reports. Following this, BXB will make amendments to the proposed designs and submit for planning approval.

Community engagement for our Tamworth Road development

The engagement for the BXB scheme at 1 Drayton Road is being held on 27th September. Their proposal is to create a small scale private residential development of high quality housing to the rear of the former Tamworth Road School Building.

The development will see the demolition of the existing derelict single storey buildings that currently occupy the site and replace them with a new mews street. All units will have individual front doors onto the mews, as well as ground floor kitchen windows. This will activate the new street, creating a welcoming environment with passive surveillance at ground level.

Ravensdale & Rushdun and Auckland & Sylvan development construction update

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Works are progressing at a fast pace on both BXB sites in Upper Norwood. Within both developments, the timber frame structures are now and windows can already be seen in most of the new homes. Final roofing work and first fix heating is now being installed. BXB are working to build these schemes with our contractor, Quinn London, and are aiming to complete in early 2019.

Marketing suite

The new BXB marketing suite and offices on George Street has now been fully stripped out, and they are starting to bring this 4 storey Victorian building to life. BXB start their fit out works in the coming weeks with work progressing through October. More details on when the marketing suite will be open will be provided in future bulletins.

Shadow Housing Minister urges Government to fund sprinklers as council installation reaches halfway point

Sarah Jones, MP for Croydon Central and Shadow Housing Minister, has joined with Croydon Council to urge Government action over "essential" sprinkler installations in the borough.

The council has now reached the halfway point in its sprinkler programme. Over 740 flats have been successfully retrofitted with sprinkler systems so far as part of an installation programme for the council's 25 tallest blocks and one eight-storey sheltered housing block.

On a visit to view a block in Addiscombe, with Sarah we made a joint call for Government to deliver on their promise to assist councils with the cost of fitting sprinklers following the Grenfell Tower disaster last year. The Council has requested a Government contribution to its sprinkler programme three times, all of which have been rejected.

Our MP Sarah Jones, as Shadow Housing Minister, has responsibility for scrutinising the Government on building standards and post-Grenfell response. Sarah will be launching a national campaign for Government to deliver funding promised last year

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to councils across the country. Many councils are still unable to start work to retrofit sprinklers due to lack of funds.

Following the Grenfell Tower fire, Croydon Council was the first local authority to commit to retrofitting sprinklers in its tallest social tower blocks. Last summer the Housing Secretary told councils it would help fund “whatever measures need to be taken...to make buildings safe.” Since then, no support has been forthcoming for sprinkler works, despite Croydon Council allocating £10m upfront from its housing maintenance budget, meaning long-term upgrades such as bathroom or kitchen replacements would be delayed.

Praise for “innovative” Croydon homelessness prevention scheme

A joint council and community initiative that supports residents who are struggling to pay their bills has won a commendation in this year’s London Homelessness Awards.

The Food Stop is London’s first joint welfare and food club, where each week households receive £20 worth of fresh fruit, vegetables, meat, dairy and other products for £3.50. Food Stop membership also provides residents with access to a weekly jobs club, cookery courses and wider support from over 30 other local organisations, including Croydon Council’s Gateway service, which helps with housing, benefits, debt management and social care assessment.

In less than a year, the Food Stop has:

- Recruited around 100 members from Fieldway and New Addington
- Prevented 42 rented households from becoming homeless
- Saved residents over £16,000 on their combined food shopping bills
- Reduced rent debts and improved household finances among 43 families
- Helped 17 long-term unemployed residents into work and 13 into training

Now the project, which was set up last October by the council, The Family Centre in Fieldway, charity FareShare and other partner organisations under the umbrella name Community Connect, has received a commendation at the London

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Homelessness Awards. Supported by the Mayor of London, these celebrate innovation and good practice among public sector, voluntary and private organisations across London.

Croydon Council was one of six finalists in the awards. The three winners will be announced at a ceremony on 18 October.

London Homelessness Awards judging chair Simon Dow said: “It was a tough choice to get to six but we think these projects show real innovation, sustainability and commitment to help reduce homelessness in London.”

There are lots of great initiatives across London to tackle homelessness, so it’s a real compliment that Croydon has been commended in these awards. This recognition underlines the great work being done by the council’s Gateway service with community partners to prevent homelessness and boost residents’ financial independence.