



Councillor Stuart King (Job Share)
Lead for Environment and Transport

Environment Transport and Urban Regeneration October 2018



Councillor Paul Scott (Job Share)
Lead for Urban Regeneration

Transport and Environment

School Pedestrian Zones – Next Phase

The council trialled a scheme creating temporary pedestrian zones around Woodcote Primary School in Coulsdon and Heavers Farm Primary School and St Chad's Catholic Primary School, both in Selhurst.

The innovative trial was introduced in September 2017 on a temporary basis after the school, parents, residents and police raised concerns about safety during the school run. The scheme has had a really positive impact that has improved safety in the roads around the schools.

Survey results show that across all three schools there was a 22% reduction in the number of pupils travelling to school by car and a 34% increase in those walking or scooting to school. The improvements were recorded across all three schools, and as a consequence there are potentially 186 fewer school run car journeys a day at these schools – a really positive and healthy outcome. All three schools have also reported that punctuality has improved as well.

The restrictions ban most traffic from the neighbourhood roads around the schools during the mornings and afternoons when they are busiest. Exemption permits are available to local residents, staff at the school, those with mobility issues and others with a legitimate need to access the roads.

All three pedestrian zones have since been made permanent and plans are under way to make the scheme available at other school locations from September 2019.

The successful nature of the scheme has been acknowledged at a series of industry Awards with Croydon recently winning the London Road Safety Award 2018 as well as scooping two awards at the British Parking Awards earlier this year.

Heidi Alexander Visits Croydon

Heidi Alexander, the Deputy Mayor of London (Transport) visited Croydon on the 13th September, following an invitation to see the scale of development and ambition in Croydon. We:

- showed how we are delivering the Mayor of London's 'Good Growth' objective, creating new homes and jobs side by side in the Town Centre and working to make the Centre a more walkable, cycle-able and enjoyable place;



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- emphasised the vital importance to Croydon, London and the wider South East of improving the capacity of the Brighton mainline and building a new higher capacity, world class station at East Croydon; and
- Called on TfL to look seriously at extending the Tramlink network within Croydon and to review and enhance the Borough's bus network to support Good Growth across the Borough.

20 MPH

In March of this year the fifth and final instalment of the area wide 20mph project went live, which saw the completion of the Council's ambitions to introduce 20mph speed limits in residential roads across the borough.

Monitoring of the five areas started in April, and areas one and two have now had their initial 'after' surveys completed.

In area one (North Croydon), which takes in Crystal Palace & Upper Norwood, South Norwood, Selhurst, Thornton Heath & Norbury Park wards, the average mean speed across all the residential roads was 1.8mph lower than that recorded in the 'before' surveys. For area two (North East Croydon), which includes Woodside, Fairfield, Addiscombe East & West & Shirley North wards, the average mean speed recorded was 1.2mph lower than the 'before' surveys.

These reductions may appear small, but according to ROSPA if average speeds are reduced by 1 mph, the accident rate would fall by approximately 6% so these figures suggest a good, early and positive impact has been achieved. The figures are also in line with expectations and similar or better than those in many other locations across London and the rest of the Country.

'After' surveys for areas three (North West Croydon), four (South East Croydon) and five (South West Croydon) are to be carried out over the next six months to see if the good progress made so far is replicated across the final three areas of the borough.

Collision statistics will take several years to reveal change, but from the reduction in traffic speeds shown in the first two areas, it is expected that this will help to improve road safety, discourage through traffic, encourage walking and cycling, and to provide a safer and more pleasant environment for people to live and work in.

The Council is now looking at further refinements to this project with the possible introduction of 20mph on those parts of the main road network where there is high pedestrian



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movements and a need to reduce traffic speeds to help improve the local environment, quality of life and community cohesion.

The full benefits of this extensive project will take many years to come to fruition, but Croydon is proud to have taken the ambitious steps towards a safer and healthier borough.

Fiveways Update

As of September 2018 the Fiveways project has reached an important stage. On 10th September Transport for London (TfL) published their 'Response to Issues Raised' report following the public consultation on the project in Summer 2017. This report sets out how the Fiveways scheme has been amended over the last year in response to consultation feedback, to further improve the pedestrian environment and strengthen the cycling provision and to improve project affordability.

<https://tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/improvements-and-projects/a23-and-a232-fiveways-croydon>

The main changes to the design are a revised alignment of the A23 Bridge by Waddon Station and changes Croydon Council pressed for, namely:

- Addition of Left Turn from Stafford Road to Epsom Road;
- Additional Cycle Facilities on the A23 that now go as far south as the Harris Academy school;
- Improvements to the proposed Cycle Facilities on Epsom Road.

We are still pressing for:

- Adequate mitigation for the required loss of trees and associated changes between the A23 and Fernleigh Close; and
- TfL to continue to work closely with the Council on construction matters to avoid or minimise disruption during construction.

Next Steps

1. A detailed design and build contract will be procured by TfL in 2019 with works commencing on site from 2021 for approximately 2 years.
2. The formal Compulsory Purchase Order Stage is due to commence from 2020. Letters have been issued to affected residents and businesses in the last few weeks that also include the offer of a personal meeting if requested.



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3. At the appropriate time there will residents and businesses will be engaged with on some of the specific design elements that interface closely with properties, in particular, the new public space that will be created at Fiveways Corner and the changes to the highway boundary and landscaping between the A23 and Fernleigh Close. The nature and timing of the engagement will be partly dependent on whether a planning application is required the highway works.

New Highways Contract with FM Conway

London Borough of Croydon is embarking on a seven year contract with the option to extend up to a further three years with FM Conway to maintain and improve Croydon's Highway Infrastructure. The service commencement date for the new contract is 1st October 2018, the Contractor (FM Conway) has been working on contract mobilisation with the Council since June 2018.

The works and service to be provided will enable the following outcomes to be achieved, which supports the Council's Corporate Priorities:

- To build a place that is easy and safe for all to get to and move around in;
- To create a place where people feel safe and are safe;
- To create a place that communities are proud of and want to look after as their Neighbourhood;
- To create a place where people and businesses want to be
- To have the right people with the right skills in the right job
- To be digital by design in meeting the needs of local people
- To be open and transparent and put communities at the heart of decision making;
- To enable more local people to access a wider range of jobs
- Include the Council's commitment to the London Living Wage
- Include the Council's commitment to delivering Social Value opportunities

Through the award of a long-term partnering contract the Council will continue to maintain and improve its highways.

The Council together with the preferred bidder will jointly deliver a contract providing a range of benefits including value for money; a commitment to the London Living Wage and a clear



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social value offer aiming to benefit both local businesses and local people including apprenticeships and training.

Parking Charges Update

New parking charges came into effect across the borough from Monday 17 September which preserve free one-hour parking bays in 11 community centres.

The new scheme is designed to ensure spaces are available where they are needed and maintain a fair tariff across the borough. The scheme will be introduced over a six week period as signage across the borough is updated.

One hour free-parking bays in South Norwood, Thornton Heath, Purley, Coulsdon, Beulah Hill, Cherry Orchard Road, Lower Addiscombe Road, Addiscombe, Brighton Road (South Croydon), Selsdon and Old Lodge Lane (Purley) will all be protected.

On-Street parking charges will go up by 10p for every half hour and in off street car parks the charges will increase by 10p for every hour. These changes will support a healthy turnover of places and therefore help ensure empty parking bays are available for drivers when they are needed, while maintaining a fair fee structure across the borough.

Any surplus in parking revenue accounts fund the borough's contribution towards Freedom Passes. The Freedom Pass provides free travel for older and disabled Londoners on almost all public transport in London.



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1. Croydon's City Centre transformation update

1a. Croydon Westfield - Serving the CPO orders

Since the Cabinet decision at the beginning of June to activate the CPO on Whitgift, considerable work has been undertaken by the Council and Croydon Limited Partnership's teams to prepare all the paperwork necessary to allow the notices to be served on all the land interests within the CPO boundary. These were completed in early September, through a combination of hand delivery, post and erection of notices. This formally notifies land owners and occupiers that their land will be necessary for the Whitgift redevelopment either for direct redevelopment or that cranes will need to operate in the air space above. The target for Vacant Possession is August 2019. This will allow one more Christmas and January sales for the Whitgift to trade. The Council will continue to work with Croydon Limited Partnership to ensure that the town centre remains vital and viable in the run up to construction starting as well as during the works.

1b. Works commence on the conversion of the former Nestle Tower



Works have commenced on the conversion of the former Nestle Tower. The developer is R&F Properties. Above is an image of the existing building and how it will look once completed.



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1c. The worlds tallest pre-fabricated building starts to rise out of the ground on George Street

Excavation and basement works have been underway for several months, with the site now fully excavated to two storeys below ground. The concrete cores have begun to rise up behind the hoardings, and will shoot up at pace over the next few months, rising to 38 and 44 storeys. The Council's planning team have been working hard with the developer to refine the bespoke glazed terracotta façade and enable installation of the first pre-fabricated module in March 2019.



1d. Fairfield Halls taking shape



Work on the Fairfield Halls continues. The site was open for tours on the recent Open House Weekend, and tickets were snapped up very quickly.



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1e. Detailed consent sought for the next phases of Ruskin Square

Proposals for residential phases 2 (building R02) and 3 (building R03) of Ruskin Square



have recently been submitted and consist of two build to rent blocks of 9 and 20 storeys containing 150 and 176 units respectively. The proposals have recently gone out for public consultation which ends on 15/10/2018 and officers are currently in the process of making a full assessment of the submitted proposals.

1f. Taberner House redevelopment foundations nearly complete and Queens Gardens proposals progressing well





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- Redevelopment *pilled* foundations nearly complete with a target date for the next 2-3 weeks.
- Targeting completion of 4 residential blocks between September and November 2021
- Targeting completion for Queens Gardens in April 2021.



For an up to date view of this development try this link which takes you to a timelapse camera on top of Bernard Weatherill House.

<https://timelapse.regenology.co.uk/api/embedded/vEA/>



2. Making a splash - Play fountains to be created in central Croydon

As part of the ongoing redevelopment of Croydon Town Centre there will be an opportunity to create more places for people to relax and have fun. Almost £50 million is earmarked for expenditure on



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creating streets and places that are attractive, safe and welcoming. Providing water features such as this one near London Bridge is a key part of changing the look and feel of the town centre. The Council intend to install at least one water feature in the town centre in the next couple of years.

3. Draft Suburban Design Guide

The draft Suburban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD2) provides guidance for:

- Suburban residential developments. This includes the development of new homes in place of existing dwellings, in rear gardens and in back land sites. It is focussed on smaller scale development of up to 20 homes on any given site.
- Development in Areas of Focussed Intensification. These areas are those identified in the Croydon Local Plan 2018: Kenley, Brighton Road, Forestdale and Shirley. The guidance provides a framework to facilitate development that may come forward in the area.
- Residential Extensions and Alterations to existing homes across the borough. This provides an update to the existing SPD2 guidance on this type of development.



It is a Supplementary Planning Document to the Croydon Local Plan 2018 and is intended to assist in the delivery and management of around 10,000 homes in these locations as an element of the borough's housing target (32,890 new homes by 2036). The document provides technical design guidance that seeks to both limit any negative impact on places, including the amenity of existing residents, and frame opportunities where increased densities can enhance places and bring benefits to communities.



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The document is currently subject to public consultation from 3rd September 2018 to 15th October 2018 with a series of events held across the borough. During this time representations are encouraged and should be submitted to the Spatial Planning service. Further information is available here:

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration/framework/localplan/spdandoapf>

4. Suburbs for the Many, not just the Few

Many residents have raised concerns about the changes that are happening in Croydon's suburbs as they continue to evolve. I thought it might be helpful to set out my views on some of the key issues that will continue to influence the future development of these important areas of our Borough. We have a difficult challenge ahead as we work to accommodate our growing population and provide all the new homes local people need, whilst maintaining the character and openness of our suburbs.

We are committed to protecting our open countryside, 'metropolitan open land' and local green spaces. As a result, all developed areas across the Borough will need to change to accommodate the thousands of homes that are needed. The latest assessments, as expressed in the emerging new London Plan, suggest we need to accommodate over 50,000 new homes in Croydon over the next two decades. That means roughly 1 new home for every 3 existing. Croydon's Local Plan has identified space for around 11,000 of these in our city centre and for another 11,000 on previously developed 'brown field' sites. Some areas have greater potential for growth than others, such as the A23 and Brighton Road corridors, and Purley with its excellent transport links. We will be looking at large scale opportunities for mixed use redevelopment in areas along Purley Way. Some of our other local town centres and designated 'intensification areas' could also accommodate larger number of homes. Many parts of the borough though, especially in the north and around the city centre, are already densely built up and offer only limited opportunities for growth. More homes will need to be accommodated in our lower density suburbs.

The Council is currently consulting on how to accommodate new homes through the evolution of our suburban areas. A wide range of ideas are being put forward which recognise that all urban areas change over time to meet societies changing needs.

Some people will be concerned about their area changing, but we are committed to tackling the housing crisis and meeting the needs of all residents as soon as possible and into the future. In Croydon alone we currently have over 1100 children and their families living in emergency housing. Approximately 40 people sleep rough on our streets every night. Many hundreds sofa surf, unable to find a permanent home. Thousands of families live in overcrowded conditions. Our schools are full with young people who will want and deserve



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a home of their own in a few years' time, whilst the older generation is living longer and more independently.

We need to adjust to the fact that the need for new homes brings with it some inconvenience, changing views, some increases in traffic and parking in some areas, and increased interaction with neighbours.

Whilst many of the new homes will need to be affordable, we need many more homes for sale and rent too, helping to make sure we have a choice of homes that are affordable to all and meets all needs.

The distribution of the new homes does create some positive opportunities. Aneurin Bevan, talking about the housing crisis after the second world war, set out a vision of "the living tapestry of a mixed community" where "the doctor, the grocer, the butcher and the farm labourer all lived in the same street". Building different sizes of homes within our established suburbs creates the opportunity for many more people to enjoy living there, helping to deliver Bevan's ideal.

The planning system in Croydon is now fully focused on delivering a 'Housing New Deal – Housing for the Many'. We are ensuring that Planning is working to create a fairer Croydon where everyone can have choice over where they live. A place where large houses with big gardens, short terraces and small blocks of flats, often looking like a large house, can be mixed together throughout our greener, lower density suburbs.

On Croydon's Planning Committee we are seeing a number of themes and common concerns emerging regarding developments in the suburbs, especially since the adoption of the new Local Plan. Whilst every planning application is decided upon its own merits and conformity to planning policies, the following points are regularly debated regarding subsequently approved proposals:

Character of the Local Area – In planning terms this relates to the distinctive or typical quality of a building or area, as described by historic fabric; appearance; townscape; and land uses. It does not relate to whether properties are rented or owner occupied, or whether or not they are a house or block of flats for example. The socio-economics of local residents is never relevant.

Overdevelopment and The London Plan Density Matrices – The current London Plan includes suggested housing densities based upon the Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL rating) of an area. These are in the process of being withdrawn as they are widely recognised as being seriously flawed. They suggest that the level of development suitable



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for a site can be calculated mathematically, although even the guidance given on their use makes it clear they should not be used 'mechanistically'. In Croydon we do not use planning by numbers, but take a much more holistic approach.

The Height of Buildings in Our Suburbs – 3 storey development is now expected as the minimum for new development to help ensure that land is used efficiently, except in special circumstance, irrespective of whether the majority of buildings in the immediate vicinity are only 1 or 2 storeys high. In reality most areas have some 3+ storey buildings already.

Bungalows – Unless they are listed or in a conservation area, bungalows are not specifically protected in Croydon. In most circumstances they represent excellent opportunities for redevelopment to provide more homes

Overlooking of Neighbouring Gardens – some level of overlooking from one property to another is usual in suburban areas, either from adjacent properties or those backing onto each other. More, smaller homes may well result in some increased level of overlooking. Croydon's planning policies do though restrict direct overlooking from close distance into the area immediately behind existing homes where people typically have patios and conservatories.

Roof terraces and balconies – most people like to be able to sit outside their home on a nice, sunny day. In apartment buildings this will usually take the form of roof terraces and balconies. Whilst care must be taken to ensure that these are not too intrusive, their introduction into our suburbs is to be expected and is usually welcomed.

The right to a view – whilst nobody actually has a right to a view beyond their own property, new developments are expected to maintain a reasonable outlook for their neighbours. Inevitably some views will be lost though.

Parking, Public Transport and PTAL Ratings – ensuring that residents can get around conveniently, to suit their lifestyles, is clearly important, but that doesn't mean that we will put the car before providing homes. Getting the balance right is important when considering how many parking spaces a new residential development should have access to. Some households do not have a car (20% in Purley and 13% in Kenley based upon the 2011 census). We need to reduce our reliance upon cars as a society. In Croydon, where there is good access to public transport, we will allow lower levels of parking to be provided. The level of access is determined by the PTAL rating or the distance to a railway station or tramstop. Where there is plenty of on street parking space we will allow that to compensate for lower levels of onsite parking, after all in most areas parking on street is very common.



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Sizes of homes and gardens – most people would like to live in a large home, but for many that simply isn't affordable. We won't let that stop many of them moving into the suburbs though. There are now strict national standards that require new homes to be built to a decent size depending upon the likely occupancy. Unfortunately, the Tory Government still thinks it is ok to convert worn out old office blocks and even warehouses into tiny, future slum, housing. Council's are generally not allowed to stop this. In central Croydon the Labour Council has stopped any more of these 'rabbit hutches' being created though.

Every home should have access to external space, and in most cases a garden. The modern gardens generally though will not be as big as many of those laid out in years gone by. We need some of the space for homes. But the importance of gardens is still recognised, with open space, large proportions of existing gardens, protected trees and wildlife continuing to be protected.

We need many more homes of all different sizes to accommodate the needs of our growing community, with at least 30% overall having 3 or more bedrooms. 1 bedroom flats suit individuals and couples. 2 bedrooms accommodate small families, sharers, homeworkers and down sizers. Whenever a family sized home is demolished we usually require at least 1 3 bedroom replacement.

Affordable Homes – we need many more affordable homes, whether they be lower cost for sale or private rent, shared ownership or (and in particular) supported, social rent. Unfortunately, the government refuses to allow us to require small scale developers building 9 or less homes make any direct contribution to affordable homes. The Council though is bidding for more money to allow us to buy more individual homes and potentially small blocks of flats. Hopefully we will be seeing a lot more social rented affordable homes being occupied in places like Purley and Sanderstead in the near future.

Negative Impact on Property Values – this is never a consideration when making planning decisions. A major reason for prices being as high as they are, is the lack of new homes being built over many years. Ensuring that everyone has a decent home that they can afford may well require some readjustment in the cost of homes.

Consultation on Planning Applications – We very much encourage local residents to take part in these consultations but they are not referendums. Local residents have the opportunity to raise concerns regarding the application that they would like the Planning Authority to consider. All concerns are considered, although often it is the view of the Council's professional planning officers that genuine concerns around issues such as overshadowing, overlooking or parking are not of such a magnitude as to warrant refusal.



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Their recommendations and the decisions made by either senior planning officers or Councillors on the Planning Committee are strongly guided by the Governments National Planning Policy Framework. Very importantly this recently updated document gives a very clear direction that there should be a presumption in favour of planning permission being granted. This is to be irrespective of the level of local support or opposition to the application by the local residents.

An article in the Croydon South edition of the Advertiser on 14th September set out rather well aspects of the debate around the intensification of the suburbs. Talking about a current planning application for 9 flats in a building designed to look like a large two storey house with an attic storey above, one resident is quoted as saying “It’s the most prominent building on the road and it will change the feel of the area, attracting renters and different types of people that won’t be interested in looking after the area.” An objection to another recent application was that the residents of the flats might smoke in the back garden, polluting the local atmosphere. An objector recently told the Planning Committee that they feared the residents of a proposed small block of flats would invade his garden and his house.

In the same article noted above, local developers Aventier comment upon one of their now completed developments in Shirley that received large numbers of objections. Residents were concerned that the new development would tower over the surrounding properties and be totally out of character. The developer explains “When we completed the development, the adjoining owner called us to offer an apology. He said that the completed building looked a lot better than the old building and that it made a great contribution to the street scene.” I suspect a similar view will ultimately be held about many other new developments too.

The YIMBY, ‘Yes in my back yard’ movement is gaining ground as most of us recognise the need for more homes in every neighbourhood, so long as they follow our planning principles and policies.

5. Plans for Neighbourhoods – Evolution and Devolution for our local neighbourhoods

The Local Plan 2018 has been developed to deliver 33,000 new homes across the borough over the next two decades – a third to be built in the suburban areas beyond the Croydon Opportunity Area and District Centres. This was based on the borough’s housing need, and is likely to increase further over the next few years. The Council is currently consulting people on how these new homes can be best integrated into the existing neighbourhoods



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(Supplementary Planning Document 2 – Suburban Design Guide) and will continue to engage proactively in ensuring the delivery of the new homes residents need. This will inform the detail in the annually updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which ensures that growth and the additional services that local communities will require can be accommodated in a sustainable and positive manner.

The Council recognises that accommodating the new homes our community needs will be challenging. We are already seeing the transformation of our ‘city centre’. We now need to be planning for sustainable growth that will see our suburbs evolving to meet changing needs as initially outlined in the Local Plan 2018, but with greater levels of change in some areas, whilst protecting, and indeed strengthening the identities of each of the distinct Places that makes up our Borough.

Improving our neighbourhoods is a priority and must reflect existing challenges of the 16 ‘Places of Croydon’. The envisaged growth will introduce additional needs for social infrastructure including public transport, schools, health care facilities, sports and entertainment facilities, and community centres and they will therefore require individual plans – Plans for Neighbourhoods - that:

- sets out a vision for each area for 2036
- recognises the current strengths, challenges, and opportunities in each area
- support their improvement by making them more active and successful
- gives their communities a greater say in their futures
- accommodates their growth over the next two decades, integrating more people and their homes, and the additional social infrastructure to support increased and changing needs; and
- identifies a series of short, medium and long term projects that will address current and future needs to deliver the vision

Each ‘Plan for a Neighbourhood’ will be a living document that will evolve over time. The initial phase will be bring together the information we already have and identify any gaps. This will help in determining priorities and needs across the Borough. As the Plans develop they will increasingly involve the community and key stakeholders.

They will develop under the umbrella of a borough wide strategy, whilst being unique and responding to the very different needs of each Place of the Borough. Key to this is to ensure the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods with a strong offer of local services, transport and facilities. Local communities and key stakeholders will be increasingly involved in shaping the regeneration and future evolution of their neighbourhoods.

As the ‘Plans for Neighbourhoods’ develop they could include aspects such as Community identified issues and local initiatives to address them, supported where necessary by the



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Council. A community list of small local projects could be established to be funded from ward budgets, bids and local fundraising. Ambitious communities could establish or develop their own 'Community Hubs' of local services and facilities run for and by the Community, with other important local amenities formally scheduled as Assets of Community Value. Expressions of the local distinctiveness that can be developed through art, events, street furniture, could recognise local history, celebrate the current community and look forward to the future of each Neighbourhood

6. Developers Forum

On 18th September the Planning division hosted their Annual Developers Forum which brings together the key main developers who operate in the borough. This allows the Planning division to update developers of new processes in the submitting of applications, as well as new policy developments at a local and regional level. The aim is very much on two way communication, alerting the planning division to comment, complaint and compliments all in the pursuit of better applications and developments, that are determined swiftly. Around 25 developers attended and valuable feedback received, which will be reviewed and incorporated into practice over the next couple of months.