

Clr Alison Butler - Homes and Regeneration

January 2018

Latest News – Regeneration

Update on Local Plan

The Croydon Local Plan was submitted to Secretary of State in February 2017, following Full Council approval and two rounds of public consultation. The examination in public into the soundness of the Local Plan took place in May - June 2017, before a Secretary of State appointed Planning Inspector. The examination gave the opportunity for participants to present their representations to the Inspector. Following the examination and the Inspector having regard to the written representations, the Inspector recommended a number of main modifications to the Local Plan to make it sound. Consultation on the main modifications has been undertaken in two rounds and concluded on 5th January 2018. The Council now await the Inspector's final report and, subject to the Local Plan being found sound, anticipate adoption in February 2018. All the material regarding the Local Plan can be viewed via the following link –

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

Couple guilty of non-compliance with demolition enforcement notice

A husband and wife who jointly own a block of flats in Waddon have been found guilty of failing to comply with a council enforcement notice ordering that the block be demolished.

Derek Stansbury of Ponsonby Place, Pimlico, was found guilty, at Croydon Crown Court last Thursday (7) of non-compliance with an enforcement notice. His wife Susan Stansbury, also of Ponsonby Place, had earlier been found guilty of the same offence after standing trial in November 2015.

Croydon Crown Court heard the enforcement notice was first issued to the previous owner of the development – a block of nine flats in Theobald Road, Waddon – in April 2010 after it was found to not have been built in accordance with the planning permission granted by the council.

Despite repeated pursuing by the council, the former owners failed to comply with the notice before putting the property up at auction, where it was bought by the Stansburys in 2013. The council contacted the couple directly to inform them that, as the new owners, it was now their responsibility to comply with the notice and demolish the block of flats. However, this was ignored and no action was taken, leaving Croydon Council with no option but to take legal action.

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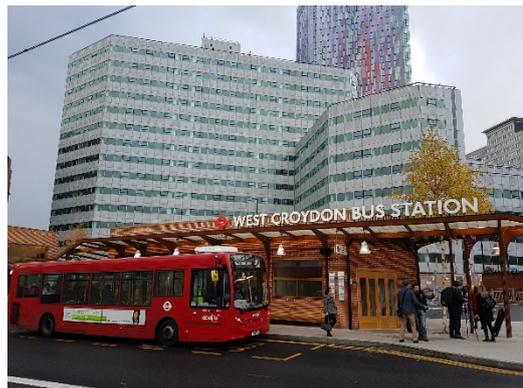
Judge Peter Gower, bailed the pair, adjourning the sentencing pending the outcome of confiscation proceedings under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

Growth zone infrastructure projects update

In December, the cabinet approved a programme of works for the Growth Zone in 2018/19. The schemes will support and enable growth in Croydon including increasing the capacity of the public transport network and improvements to the streets.

Grouped into 5 categories the schemes next year include:

- A package of measures to manage and co-ordinate the construction related traffic relating to development sites in central Croydon.
- Schemes that support improvements to the transport network including progressing designs for Fiveways junction and a tram route along Dingwall Road, cycling and walking schemes in and around the town centre, improvements along London Road, Brighton Road and Mitcham Road, bus priority measures and designs for a rebuilt West Croydon station.
- In the town centre work will continue to improve the streets and ensuring they link with proposals associated with major developments such as the redevelopment of the Whitgift Centre. Measures including more seating, improved lighting and events and activities are all planned.
- A review of the existing Controlled Parking Zone to reduce the impact of parking arising from the town centre on nearby residential streets.
- Development of energy projects including a District Energy scheme in Wandle Road and work with local communities to develop localised energy projects.



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Thornton Heath & South Norwood Regen update

We are continuing to deliver extensive public realm improvements in Thornton Heath and South Norwood as part of our regeneration plans for district centres. Works are currently underway in Thornton Heath to improve Whitehorse Roundabout, the library forecourt and Parchmore Road junction, with the latter phase due to complete this summer. Works include new paving, wider footways, better aligned pedestrian crossings, more street trees and planting, and the removal of redundant street furniture. 27 shopfronts have been fully or partially completed with final works underway now and four of the six major art pieces have been delivered on flank walls with the final two due for completion in 2018. The improvements to Station Road and Market Parade in South Norwood are almost complete,



creating generous, high quality public spaces with increased space for the monthly community led Clocktower Market and incorporating ideas that directly relate to South Norwood and its history.

We are also excited to welcome the Lumiere lights festival to Trumble Gardens in Thornton Heath on Saturday 27 January, which will coincide with the second community led CR7 market, alongside spoken word, dance and music performances as part of the festival. For more information on the festival see:

<http://news.croydon.gov.uk/festival-light-light-thornton-heath/>

Brick by Brick Housing award

On the 23 November, Brick by Brick, the development company set up by the council, was named as a winner at the Inside Housing Development Awards.

At the awards, which celebrate the very best residential developments across the UK from the past year, Brick by Brick was given the Best Architectural Design Award in recognition of its work on Croydon's Smaller Sites programme.

Set up to ensure people in Croydon have access to high quality and affordable housing, Brick by Brick is set to deliver more 1,000 new homes on sites throughout Croydon by 2019. Around 50% of the properties consented thus far will be affordable homes, with the remainder being private homes for sale.

The Smaller Sites project brings the best of architectural talent to bear on small, forgotten parcels of land and demonstrates that they can help address the housing crisis.

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The judges said: “Brick by Brick has a good and strategic approach to difficult and unloved sites. It has created varied architectural responses and good outcomes. There has also been a real sense of partnership.”

For more information on Brick by Brick projects see www.bxbdevelopment.com or follow @bxbdevelopment on Twitter.

Crystal Palace Football Club planning App

Croydon Council is continuing to work with Crystal Palace Football Club on its ambitions for Selhurst Park. A small number of properties on Wooderson Close will need to be purchased if the club’s redevelopment plans are granted planning permission.

If the scheme is given the go ahead, the council will work closely with affected residents to ensure they are provided with suitable alternative accommodation, prior to any work getting under way.

Latest News – Homes

Council and national charity team up against homelessness

Croydon Council jointly hosted an event with national charity Crisis on how to improve support for homeless people.

Have Your Say: A Plan To End Homelessness brought together representatives from dozens of organisations that have a role in tackling the problem, from Council officers and civil servants to academics and business groups.

The event was one of four nationwide that Crisis is holding to consult the public, private and charitable sectors on how best to support homeless people. In Croydon the focus was on those with complex needs, such as poor mental health, criminal convictions or a history of substance abuse.

A discussion took place to develop a homelessness prevention approach called Housing First, which has been used in countries like Finland to give rough sleepers accommodation first and then identifies how to provide the support that helps them stay there.

Recommendations arising from the event will form part of a Crisis policy submission to the Government next year.

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Better tenancies under new affordable housing partnership

Around 100 households now have longer tenancies after transferring to a new charitable partnership set up by Croydon Council to deliver affordable rental properties.

Croydon Affordable Homes (CAH) was set up last summer with the goal of renting out at least 340 local homes costing a maximum 65% of the usual private rent to borough residents by 2020.

Part one of this plan is complete, with 96 one-, two- and three-bedroom properties now having formally transferred from temporary housing to becoming part of CAH. The 96 properties are a mix of houses and flats in areas including New Addington, Selhurst and Sanderstead. Rents have not gone up as a result of the deal.

Borrowing restrictions mean the council cannot fund these developments through its Housing Revenue Account, so the creation of CAH allows the same outcome of delivering affordable rented properties across the borough.

The council is also looking into buying a further 250 properties and transferring them to CAH, which would then repay the council by attracting external investors and using Right To Buy sales money.

The new charity that oversees the running of CAH with council support will allocate a minimum of £20,000 per year to good causes, with a focus on preventing homelessness and contributing towards affordable housing.

Tenants Xmas party & community clean up

This year's Residents' Christmas Afternoon Tea was held at the Jury's Inn Hotel, Wellesley Road on Wednesday 13 December 2017.

It was an opportunity for council officers and councillors to thank tenant & leaseholders from across our housing estates for all the time and energy they have given to work with the council to improve housing services and their local communities during the past year.

The event was attended by The Worshipful the Mayor of Croydon, Councillor Toni Letts OBE, and a raffle was held on behalf of her two local charities –The Croydon Operatic and Dramatic Association (CODA) and the Samaritans of Croydon and Sutton.

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The event was sponsored by our repairs partner Axis, who also kindly provided some rather nice raffle prizes!

The Director of Housing Needs, Mark Meehan very kindly put himself up as a raffle prize, and will be taking the winner out to lunch.

The afternoon was thoroughly enjoyed by both the residents and staff, with refreshments including a buffet tea, cakes and mince pies.

The sum of £100.01 was raised for the Mayors charities.

Croydon in post-Grenfell funding warning to Government

In recognition of the unprecedented funding gap for councils in improving tower block fire safety unless the Government helps them pay for it Croydon Council has written to request a face-to-face meeting with the housing minister to discuss the “long-term financial burden” of implementing its £10m sprinkler programme without funding help.

In the months since the council committed to retrofitting sprinklers in 26 of its tallest residential tower blocks, the Department for Communities and Local Government has twice refused to either contribute towards Croydon’s programme or relax council borrowing powers.

Croydon was the first council in the country after the Grenfell fire to announce on 19 June it would pay for and install sprinklers in residents’ individual flats as part of its response. Work began in October on the first of 25 blocks with 10-12 storeys, and one eight-storey sheltered block.