

Riddlesdown Recorder

Spring 2020



Editor's Notes

Neil Tarrant

Due to the coronavirus, we are unable to run a normal version of the Recorder. We have decided instead to produce this stripped-down, online-only edition, which includes many of the usual reports and local updates. Please note, however, that views expressed in reports from elected representatives do not necessarily reflect those of the RRA committee.

The ongoing situation is a timely reminder of the importance of our local community. Like many Riddlesdown residents, my family and I have been joining in the Thursday evening applause for the NHS and other key workers. It is heartening to listen to the sound of so many people clapping rippling across the local hills. On a local level, I know many are also offering assistance to friends, neighbours and family. The RRA has drawn together information about the coronavirus, and sources of local support and opportunities to become involved in supporting vulnerable community members on our website;

<http://riddlesdownresidents.org.uk/coronavirus.html>

I hope that you are managing to stay safe and well during this difficult time, and that this edition of the Recorder will provide a welcome diversion.

Chairman's Report

Brian Longman

Welcome to the Spring 2020 edition of the RRA's Recorder magazine.

I have to say the last six months has been one of the busiest in terms of workload for the RRA since I took over the Chair some 20 years ago. However, the good news is, the Association has an excellent team of dedicated committee members who willingly shoulder the ever-growing workload between them. Top of this list is the many planning applications to demolish good size family homes and build blocks of flats.

As I said back in 2018, the only Council rule appears to be, forget the character of the area, forget the quality of design, forget the lack of infrastructure and ignore the negative effect on the neighbourhood but concentrate on just how many flats you can squeeze onto a small plot of land! Not content with just building flats on every corner, Croydon Council has now turned its attention to our local Green Belt.

The 2018 Croydon Local Plan Review presented three options for the delivery of 46,040 homes between now and 2039; this included the release of Green Belt land in New Addington, Selsdon and Sanderstead to deliver a total of 5,300 homes in place of a radical redevelopment of the Purley Way. For Riddlesdown this could result, if approved, in the building of between 680 and 780 homes, on the Green Belt farmland between Mitchley Hill, Rectory Park and Borrowdale Drive. At this point I would like to thank the large number of local residents, who in answer to the call to defend our Green Belt, objected strongly to Croydon Council's attempt to threaten our local Green Belt. We now await the outcome of the next phase of Croydon Local Plan review.

Last year and early this year, saw the Association having to constantly chase the Council over the flooding in Lower Barn Road (on this see also Phil Thomas and Councillor Redfern's reports) which blocked the road and pavement to the railway station for commuters and residents access to the shops. There is also a foul water sewer that continues to overflow into some gardens of properties at the rear of Brancaster Lane during heavy rainfall. When will the Council learn that you cannot just build more and more flats, without ensuring that the basic infrastructure – foul water drains, sewers and soakaways – is fit for purpose? One can only imagine the additional effect of up to 780 new houses on the Green Belt land at Rectory Park/ Mitchley Hill would have on the existing foul water drainage system.

The list just goes on, including for example, the time-consuming Public Inquiry for the 17-storey Purley Tower and the two-year formal complaint against Croydon Council for the construction of a dropped kerb at a property in Riddlesdown Avenue, which has resulted in the creation of a steep crossfall to the footway. Both the RRA and Disability Croydon consider this is a safety issue, especially for the elderly, disabled and wheel chair users. We are told by residents that it was virtually impassable for some pedestrians during the winter with the ice and frost on the slope. At this point, I would like to say a big thank you to Phil Thomas our Planning & Environmental committee member. Phil incidentally also manages the RRA website, our Facebook page and our new monthly E-Blast (e-mail) to keep residents updated on new issues in the area. We are indeed extremely fortunate to have Phil on board and indeed the rest of the team; Linda Bevin our excellent treasurer, Neil Tarrant our Recorder editor and children's party organiser and John Rapp our transport and membership secretary. The list goes on.

I am sure by now that many of you will realise where this is going. Since 2014 we have lost six committee members who have either moved away or retired and we have managed to recruit only five new members. However, the RRA is now busier than ever and while we cannot report success in all areas, I do believe the Association can be proud of its achievements in helping to make Riddlesdown a better place to live. If this is to continue, we need more people to step forward especially those with energy, enthusiasm and a community spirit. If you are interested, please e-mail me via the RRA's e-mail address; RiddlesdownResidents@gmail.com

In my last report, I mentioned that the Association had teamed up with the City of London Corporation and St Edmund's Care Group to provide a new 'Active Ageing Health Walk' on Riddlesdown Common. The walk is aimed at those who have not walked for a while and might need a little support. The short circular walks of 30-45 minutes maximum are taken at your pace and finishes with tea, biscuits and access to the toilets at the Ranger's office close to the starting point in the car park. Please check the dates and time on the RRA website, our Facebook page, or on the local notice boards before attending (due to Coronavirus these walks are temporarily suspended).

Continuing with the social prescribing model, which enables GPs, nurses and other primary care professionals to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services, these services can involve a variety of activities that are typically provided by voluntary and community sector organisations. To this end, the RRA has, together with St Edmund's Care Group, submitted a funding bid to provide a local film club for the elderly in the Goddard Room at St Edmund's Church. If successful, we will be looking for a volunteers who can help us with the technical side and assist with the initial equipment installation and any ongoing technical support that you can provide. It might not be the Imax, but if you are interested and like to help, please give me a call. For information, St Edmund's was built in 1955 as a church/hall and used as a community resource during the week but converted into a church when services were held. With the church services now stopped (hopefully not for good), we all need to work hard to ensure the halls at St Edmund's develop new services and continue to be at the very centre of our local community.

Finally, crime and anti-social behaviour in Riddlesdown remains low when compared to other areas of Croydon. However, as highlighted in the crime statistics provided by both our Safer Neighbourhood Teams, burglary and motor vehicle crime still remains stubbornly high and a priority for both teams. Currently Riddlesdown is covered by two Safer Neighbourhood

Teams, Sanderstead and Purley Oaks & Riddlesdown. I have to say although the meetings are open to all, with the dates and locations of the meetings published on the RRA and the SNT websites, very few residents attend. This is your chance to have your say. If you are interested, why not come along to the next meeting, for either the Purley Oaks & Riddlesdown, or Sanderstead teams? The dates are on the RRA website in the Police section. However, due to Coronavirus outbreak, the meetings are currently suspended.

Planning Matters

Phil Thomas

The relentless surge of planning applications and decisions continues! We summarise the latest applications and also the decisions made on some others that were reported in the last edition.

89 Hyde Road

Another planning application for 9 flats, opposite the site of 98 Hyde Rd and on the corner of Copthorne Rise, was validated by the Council on 10 February. The application is for the *"Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a four / five storey building comprising of 2 x 1 bedroom, 6 x 2 bedroom and 1 x 3 bedroom flats together with undercroft and external car parking, internal refuse store, internal bike store and landscaping."*

This is a large-scale development with the building and parking taking over virtually all of the steeply sloping plot. The amenity land will be on the flat roofs. In our view, it is a gross over-development of the site and the RRA have objected. It will also result in the loss of an existing family home which is less than 130 square metres as originally built. The Council's CLP 2018 policy states that a property must be in excess of this figure for it to be acceptable for demolition and redevelopment. It is unclear how the Council can approve this application as it will be in breach of that policy. The one 'replacement' 3-bedroom flat is smaller. We await the Council's decision.

4 Rectory Park

It appears that the new developer who has constructed these flats has not built them in accordance with the approved planning drawings, and has submitted an application to vary the condition and rectify the issues. Aventier (the original applicant) have sold on to another developer. The drawings submitted aim to address the following issues: *"alterations to the pitched roof heights; window sizes within the gable ends; doors and windows on all elevations;*

velux windows within the roof; relative levels within the rear garden – and the implications for cycle and refuse storage; rooflights on flat roof; boundary treatment; photo Voltaic cells on the roof; external soil pipes and rainwater pipes."

The original drawings submitted by Aventier on elevations and plans also do not match up with external doors/windows etc. We believe this should have been picked up at the planning application stage. The RRA have objected as, amongst other things: the building is higher than approved; it has a sloping and virtually unusable amenity land; there is no level disabled access to the front and rear doors, just steps. **At the time of publishing, this application has surprisingly has been granted by the Council.**

r/o 38 (and 40) Riddlesdown Avenue (79j Riddlesdown Rd)

I reported last time that an application was submitted for the: *"erection of a three bedroom detached house at the rear of No 38 and 4 x flats the at rear of No 40, formation of vehicular access onto Riddlesdown Road and provision of associated parking."*

This application was approved by the Planning (Minor Applications) Committee on 6 November 2019. However, it still has not been shown as being 'granted' on the Council website. This is because a section 106 agreement has not been signed yet in respect of a contribution from the developer for improving the standard access road. But the two properties are built and possibly occupied!

r/o 34 & 36 Riddlesdown Avenue (79k & 79l Riddlesdown Rd)

In relation to the above site, another application was submitted to the Council on 16 December for the *"construction of a 2-storey 3 bed 6 person detached dwelling house and 2-storey building comprising 2 x 1 bed 2 person and 2 x 2 bed 4 person flats"*.

The RRA objected to this application. This is a further infill of houses and flats at the rear of the Riddlesdown Ave properties and this infill would link into the previous new build r/o 32 Riddlesdown Ave. The RRA raised concerns about the Council's policy of 18 metre and 15 metre separation from the host properties, bearing in mind the new builds are much higher due to the sloping gardens. We are also concerned how the soakaway for roof drainage will discharge as the Building Regulations state they must be 5 metres away from a building; the rear gardens to the new dwellings are only about 6 metres deep. We raised concerns that the access road is not being upgraded by the Council to meet highway safety standards, there is a lack of drainage and no street lighting on the access road and that a contribution should be paid

by the developer. However, it was a bit of a surprise the Council refused this application in early March.

The reason(s) for refusal are:

1. The proposed flatted development, by reason of the failure to retain sufficient garden space for the donor property No.36 Riddlesdown Avenue would result in harm to the outlook, openness and amenity currently enjoyed by the host property No.36 Riddlesdown Avenue, contrary to the Policy DM10.4(e) of the Croydon Local Plan (2018) and the Supplementary Planning Document: Suburban Design Guide (2019).
2. The proposed development, by reason of the failure to enter into legal agreement to secure localised improvements to the service road would be likely to result in unacceptable pressure on the road condition and access to the site, and could result in a detrimental impact on the safe operation of the adjacent pedestrian areas and highway, contrary to Policies 6.1, 6.7, 6.12, 6.13 of the London Plan (2016) and Policy DM30 of the Croydon Local Plan (2018).

We await with interest what happens next.

141 Brancaster Lane

A second planning application for the: *"Conversion of existing dwelling house to a 6-rooms HMO (C4) following the construction of a two-storey side extension, a loft conversion and amendments to existing fenestration; in addition to the construction of a detached two-storey dwelling house (C3) with associated car parking spaces, hard and soft landscaping"* was validated by Croydon Council on 26 November. The RRA did object and this application was refused by the Planning Department in late February. This was primarily for its siting, scale, form and design and would fail to relate to the street scene and would be out of character with the vicinity and detrimental to the visual amenity of the surrounding townscape.

However, the first planning decision still stands, for the: *"Erection of two storey side/rear and roof extensions and conversion into 6 flats with associated parking, balconies and landscaping."* The property was also put to an Allsops auction on 13 February by the current owners/property developers but failed to sell. However, we believe it was sold after the auction and building works are expected to commence soon to the design of the first planning application.

14 Mitchley Ave

This development is still ongoing and an application has been submitted in February to discharge certain conditions on the original Aventier plans, which was approved by the Council. Aventier have now sold on to another developer. The site is now boarded up, so we expect works to commence sometime soon when the discharge of conditions is approved.

Proposed mobile phone mast in Mitchley Ave, adjoining 152 Riddlesdown Rd

A full planning application has now been submitted and validated by Croydon Council on 3 February for: *“The installation of a 20m monopole, 12 no. antenna apertures, 9 equipment cabinets; the removal of the existing 9.7m monopole, 3 no. antennas, redundant equipment cabinets and development ancillary thereto on Mitchley Avenue.”* This is a second application, as the applicant on the first application in October 2019 had an incorrect address and it was invalidated by the Council after the RRA pointed this out.

The proposal by agents acting for EE and 3, is to remove the existing shrouded mast and equipment adjoining 95 Downs Court Rd and install a new 20 metre high unshrouded mast beside 152 Riddlesdown Rd but still situated on Mitchley Ave. They say the reason to double the height of the mast is for the new 5G roll out for EE and 3. The existing green and shrouded 9.7m high mast and all equipment will be removed. The reason why it is in a different location is so both masts will operational until the changeover.

The RRA realise that phone masts are vital for our community and we do not object just for the sake of it. Some EE and 3 service is very poor in parts of Riddlesdown because of the topography, so anything to improve mobile phone coverage would be good. However, we believe that this mast is too tall and unsightly and too near houses. The RRA have been asked by a number of concerned nearby residents to object and we have done so.

The mast will be located about 4 metres to the west of lamp column 003 on the back edge of the pavement. The RRA have raised concerns about the positioning of the nine cabinets associated with the mast (between 400 and 600 mm wide), on the back of pavement with this new mast and that some will reduce the gap substantially between this lamp column and the new cabinets, especially for blind and visually impaired. The Council, TfL and the Govt all say there should be a de-cluttering of highway street furniture now and not make it worse with all these cabinets. The 20m high mast will be exactly two and a half times higher than lamp column 003 (which is 8 metres tall). The mast will only be 9 metres from the back wall of the house at 152 Riddlesdown Rd.

The RRA believe in this case that the applicant should consider, in view of the close proximity of houses, installing a new mast no higher than 15 metres in the exact position of the current mast and should also consider shrouding the new mast. And, if necessary, a temporary mast should be erected nearby, to provide ongoing mobile phone coverage during the construction works. **At the time of publishing this application has been refused by the Council.**

116 Riddlesdown Rd

I reported last time about an application for the: *“Demolition of existing 4 bedroom, two storey detached house. Erection of new 4 storey building including basement and roof accommodation to provide 8 units including associated access, and parking.”* This application was approved by the Planning Committee on 7 November.

88 Riddlesdown Road

As I reported last time, an application has been submitted to the Council for the: *“demolition of the existing house and erection of a block of flats comprising of 21 units with parking, landscaping and other associated works.”* This application was refused by Council Officers on 20 December. Unsurprisingly, the main reason for the refusal were lack of affordable housing (which should be provided when the development comprises more than 9 units), lack of family housing and *“by reason of its scale, massing, bulk, form and design the development would be visually dominating and harmful to the character of the locality and detrimental to the visual amenity of the surrounding townscape.”* We await to see if it goes to appeal, or if another application is submitted.

Purley Town Centre – 17-storey tower and associated developments

The second Public Inquiry for the 17-storey Purley tower and associated development took place for 4 days between 3 and 6 December 2019 at Purley Baptist Church. The RRA and six other local Residents' Associations again acted as the Rule 6 Party.

The Rule 6 Party held two useful meetings with the Purley Baptist Church and the developer Thornsett before the Public Inquiry and we agreed a certain number of points to try and shorten the length of the Inquiry. However, the main matters of dispute that were not agreed were:

1. Effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the area;
2. The height of the tower, together with overshadowing to Purley District Centre and wind tunnel affect to surrounding streets; (the Rule 6 Party does not agree that some of the

residential units should be housed within a 17 storey tower. But the Rule 6 Party considered the units should be spread over both sites, without the need for a 17 storey tower);

3. Consistency with Development Plan policies;

4. Impact on heritage assets;

5. Vehicular access/exit to and from Russell Hill Rd on the island site - our preferred location is in and out, off Banstead Rd;

6. Air Quality – principally in relation to 5 above, associated air quality with traffic movements to and from the island site.

The RAs have been advised in mid-February that the Planning Inspector's report has now been sent to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for consideration. It is expected a decision will be issued on or before 15 May 2020.

Threat to the Green Belt in Riddlesdown

Croydon Council's consultation on the Croydon Local Plan 2018 closed on 20 January 2020. The RRA delivered many flyers to RRA members along with the last Recorder magazine and also to nearby Sanderstead homes not in the RRA area. So a big thank you to all residents who sent in their objections to the Council to save our Green Belt farmland and also to those who copied in the RRA on their correspondence to the Council. The RRA's submission to the Council can be found on our website.

We must now wait for the next phase of the Council's consultation later in the year.

Environmental Issues

Phil Thomas

Litter Picks in Riddlesdown and 'laughing gas' canisters

Thank you again to all those who turned up to the last RRA litter pick on 2 November.

We were not expecting that many to attend because of the appalling weather in the morning, but 40 people including a number of children and also members of the 19th Purley Scout group attended. Fortunately, the weather just about stayed dry for most part of the 90 minutes (it started raining near the end) and about 40 bags of rubbish, and a tyre were collected. We even ran out of litter picks and had to urgently get some more from the RRA's stock cupboard! The RRA committee believe that with these regular 6-month litter picks we are gradually getting on

top of the litter/rubbish issue on local Green Belt land and local main streets. Thank you again to Tracey Bellamy from the Council for also attending and supplying the equipment.



Unfortunately due to the Coronavirus outbreak, the next litter pick 25 April has had to be cancelled. Hopefully we can re-arrange another litter pick in November.

Many residents may have noticed the small silver nitrous oxide (laughing gas) canisters lying around in many places. The matter was raised at a recent Purley Oaks & Riddlesdown SNT Ward Panel meeting and the SNT have issued this information: *"It is not illegal to use/take the silver canisters, however, if the individual is in charge of a vehicle they can be dealt with under Section 4 of the Road Traffic Act, which is unfit through drink/drugs."*

It would be nice if these users from disposed of the canisters correctly and did not just dump them on the ground. The Council do have powers to fine those caught littering!

But on a more serious level, according to the anti-drugs campaign 'Talk to Frank', the risks of inhaling nitrous oxide include:

- Dizziness, which might make you act carelessly or dangerously,
- Heavy regular use can lead to a deficiency of vitamin B12 and to a form of anaemia,
- Severe B12 deficiency can lead to serious nerve damage, causing tingling and numbness in the fingers and toes. This can be very painful and make walking difficult,

- Regular use can stop you forming white blood cells properly,
- It can be hard to judge the amount to use safely,
- If you have too much you can end up fainting, having an accident or worse.

Leaders at the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) have said there is a lot of ‘naivety’ around the risks from nitrous oxide – which has been involved in the deaths of 36 people since 2001 in England and Wales and is the second most popular drug among 16 to 24 year olds. The RCN have also said: 'It might give a short-term high but the long-term damage is no laughing matter.'

Mitchley Ave - Speed Camera

Motorists Beware! After about 6 years, the damaged speed camera (30 mph) virtually opposite the shops in Mitchley Ave has now been replaced, the sensors installed in the road and the white distance lines marked. However, it is not clear if it is operational as yet. We have asked TfL for an update.

Flooding under railway bridge in Lower Barn Rd and Mitchley Ave

As many residents will be aware, flooding has occurred a number of times since late November by the station and under the railway bridge in Lower Barn Rd. This has caused issues for both rail commuters and also residents trying to access the shops as the road and pavement are completely flooded. The detour if residents and/or commuters do not want to get wet feet, is about 1 mile walk via Coombe Wood Hill. The RRA have been in regular contact with senior Council Officers and local Councillors about this and we have been told after the flooding on 21 December, that the Council have now instigated a section 19, of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 at this location.

This basically says, Local authorities:

- (1) On becoming aware of a flood in its area, a lead local flood authority must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate
 - (a) which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions, and
 - (b) whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood.
- (2) Where an authority carries out an investigation under subsection (1) it must-

(a) publish the results of its investigation, and

(b) notify any relevant risk management authorities.

The RRA have sent our comments and views to the Council as part of the Section 19 review, as to why we think the flooding is occurring at this location. Hopefully, the Council may take some of our comments on board!

In addition, flooding is also occurring across the whole road and pavement on Mitchley Avenue (A2022) by the zebra crossing and St Edmund's Church. The Council are aware of the flooding at this location and hopefully something will be done here soon to clear gully sumps and the soakaways. I have also recently met with the Head of Highways at Croydon Council about all this flooding and we walked around the area. We must hope the Council act soon to reduce the risk at both locations.

A22 update

I have reported previously that Transport for London (TfL) consulted with residents and stakeholders in the summer of 2017 about changes to the double and single line red route on the A22 (Godstone Rd) from Foxley Hill Road to Old Barn Lane (at the Borough boundary to Whyteleafe).

They also proposed other works which included changes to bus stop facilities, improved zebra crossings and changes to road layouts at some side road and designated parking areas. Following careful consideration of the responses received, TfL have decided to proceed with the scheme but with the some minor alterations. We understand there have been some design and land ownership issues since and this is the reason for the delay. These works are due to commence at some time in 2020. But TfL have advised recently that it is still not possible to confirm a start date as yet, as they need to take into account a number of factors, such as roadworks elsewhere, planned or unplanned, via Surrey County Council and the London Boroughs of Croydon and Sutton. As we are also in extraordinary times with coronavirus they also need to take into account staff availability. We will update more in due course.

Transport Report

John Rapp

Recently, it seems that hardly a month goes by without an announcement affecting the quality

of one of the transport services that impacts our lives.

I am starting with a service still being provided. Many of us will remember the Woolwich Building Society, a name no longer with us. Woolwich House (corner of George Street and Wellesley Road) is a lovely 1930s building, and its impressive clock still shows the correct time. Something worth remembering.

Following Transport for London's Central Croydon Bus Changes implemented in November 2019, our 412 bus service has been reduced in frequency and no longer reaches West Croydon. This makes journeys to St George's Hospital, Croydon University Hospital, and Selhurst Park (to take just three of many examples) more difficult. These decisions appear to run contrary to The Mayor's Transport Strategy, which is intended to make using public transport more attractive. We are taking every opportunity to tell TfL that bus provision needs to be reviewed, in order once more to provide a service that people can use without worry or concerns. I have also urged Riddlesdown Collegiate to communicate directly with TfL about this matter and results from their input are being seen.

On the railway, the wet weather has caused landslides at Holmwood, Godstone, and Dormans. The result of these is that rebuilding of the railway has to be done. Talking of rebuilding, we are waiting to find out how much Passenger Benefit Fund will be spent at Riddlesdown Station, but we can report that it has been decided that solar panels are not to be funded from the PBF.

Talking of making public transport more attractive, Akil (who looks after the Riddlesdown ticket office) – and is happy to sell advance tickets – has been planting flower bulbs making our station more attractive.

Membership Article

John Rapp

We all live in a challenging world. One example is a group of ten items being numbered from one to ten, yet although we are in 2020, the last number in ten, we are in a new decade.

In the 1930s, people moved to the newly built Laing estate in Riddlesdown. The Riddlesdown Residents' Association was founded in 1937, as those first residents recognised opportunities to get the best out of the challenges they faced.

Those challenges still exist. We have the largest school in the borough, yet a prospective teacher arriving at West Croydon Station is unable to use a displayed map to find how to get to Riddlesdown by bus. Thankfully we have our station.

A new year is a good time to think about new personal challenges. People from many parts of the world are moving to Riddlesdown, and I am proud of the fact that our community is so inclusive.

Talking of challenges, permission has been given for a number of homes to be replaced by flats. This means we have many new residents. We need new road stewards to welcome these new residents into our community and I will be happy to hear from anyone who would like the challenge of welcoming them to membership of RRA, or indeed anyone willing to take on some of the existing homes.

I end by wishing you health and achievement in 2020.

MP's Report

Chris Philp

I am very grateful to have been re-elected as our MP last December, with an increased majority of 12,339. To the 30,985 people who voted for me, I would like to say thank-you for your trust and support, which I will endeavour to repay with continued hard work for our area. I will try to work in all our community's interests, whether you voted for me or not.

I hope that the decisive election result nationally means that we can move on from the divisive atmosphere of the past few years, and come together as a country. The Government has already made national investments that will benefit Croydon. There is funding for 20,000 extra Police Officers across the UK over the next three years. I calculate that Croydon will receive over 100 new officers – an increase of around 15 percent.

The NHS is seeing the largest funding increase in its history – an extra £23 billion (+18%) a year by 2022 starting with £6 billion (+5%) next year. These are after-inflation figures. This means that the brand new A&E at Croydon University Hospital that has just opened and the £12m for a re-vamped intensive care unit there are just the start of the further improvements we will see in Croydon.

Schools are getting substantially more money. This will help all Croydon schools and comes on top of improvement over the last two years.

Extra police, NHS and education funding are things that I hope everyone can get behind.

Locally, I am supporting the resident run campaign for a Directly Elected Executive Mayor (DEM). Currently the council run by a committee and a leader made up of the largest party locally. This means a party can win the town hall based on a few marginal seats in the centre of the Borough. This has a negative impact on the rest of the borough, especially in the south, where many residents feel ignored.

A group of residents' associations from across the Borough wants to fix this by changing the way Croydon is run to a Directly Elected Executive Mayor model – where we directly elect an Executive Mayor. This means all our votes would count equally, and whoever runs the town hall will have to listen to everyone if they want to win. If about 14,000 signatures are collected, the council has to hold a referendum on adopting a DEM. Please go to the Residents' Group's website and donate to their campaign and/or download their petition sheet (it has to be done on paper). We have around half the signatures needed already, and I will be working closely with residents in this year to get the rest. There is more information at <https://www.democ.org.uk/> This is being run by local Residents Associations and I am fully supporting them.

Councillor's Report

Helen Redfern

Flooding at the bottom of Lower Barn Road by Riddlesdown Railway Station has been an ongoing issue which has worsened in recent years; the flooding is so deep on occasion that the southbound platform at Riddlesdown Station is inaccessible unless you happen to have packed your waders, and with no bridge across the platforms you can have rather a wet exit from the station and a significant additional walk home if you live on the other side of the rail bridge. There will have been times when commuters have struggled to get to and from work, children have been late to school, and just before Christmas when it flooded, I am sure some festive treats were missed.

The primary cause suggested by the Council has been freak winter weather conditions but that would imply that this happens rarely and only in the winter months; we know that this is not the case. I suspect that the real causes include gullies not being cleaned regularly enough or not

well enough - including roads higher up the hills as far as Honister Heights or Hyde Road - too many cars parked across the drains and too many new homes being built in the area with insufficient drainage. Local residents suggest that the building of Riddleah Court between the shops and the bridge has had a significant affect as the existing woodland had acted as a run-off for the water flowing down Lower Barn Road. I am sure that the residents of this building can feel trapped in their homes at the worst of the flooding as it is right outside their front door.

After several flooding incidents within the space of a month towards the end of 2019, and having seen a great deal of communication between residents and officers since becoming a councillor, I contacted Council officers to propose that all relevant parties meet to determine what is causing the problem and agree an action plan. This isn't just about reducing the flooding but finding a way for residents to access the Station and the other end of Lower Barn Road if flooding does continue. Do we need a foot bridge built connecting the platforms, should there be a change to the pedestrian access on the east side or a change to the footpaths? I asked that the Council to consider who should be part of that conversation because it would be disappointing to have a meeting that flounders on the basis of the problem being within the remit of an organisation that was not in attendance.

The response to this request was the instigation of a Section 19 Flood Investigation Report, to be completed by a third party. Three months on, we are still waiting for the Report to be published and it is only once this has happened that we can start to make some progress. Nevertheless, I know that possible suggestions include more soakaways, reprofiling of some of the junctions and possibly raising the footway to provide a safe and dry passageway for residents and users of the railway station.

There has been a suggestion though that what is needed may not be affordable. However, there is a budget for flood works and I would expect it to be made available as having flooding immediately next to a Railway station and near the local shops affects a wide area of local residents. I also note that the developments across Purley Oaks and Riddlesdown are contributing a disproportionately high level of Community Infrastructure Levy, from which our ward is receiving very little investment. It is time that we received something back.

The topography of this area means that we will always have an element of flooding. However, I will continue to push to have a plan in place to mitigate the risk and to look at steps that can be taken to ensure access to the Station and through the bridge.

Riddlesdown Collegiate

Soumick Dey, Principal

As another academic year is racing ahead, Riddlesdown Collegiate continues to provide an outstanding quality of education, whilst looking carefully to the future and planning ahead to ensure continued success for many years to come.



*Cast Members from "Oliver!",
Collegiate Production February 2020*

Earlier this term, we were delighted to stage five performances of our Collegiate production, "*Oliver!*". Just like the title character, audiences were asking for more after each performance and the students also demonstrated their ambitions by raising the bar once again – the acting, the singing, the dancing, the orchestra, the set design, the lighting, the sound, the costumes – in every way, the show was a resounding success and I must again congratulate all those involved. As always, the production not only showcased our students' amazing talents, it also served as a reminder of the strength of our community and what we can achieve when we work together in partnership. Look out for details of next year's production later in the year!

In the same week, *The Collegiate Trust* published the admissions criteria for entry to Riddlesdown Collegiate in September 2021. Following a period of consultation before Christmas, the Board of Directors approved the proposed changes which remove the feeder primary schools and the ability test from the admissions criteria. These new criteria, which apply to pupils currently in Year 5 and below, will make it more likely that children who live very close to the Collegiate will be offered a place and so our local community will be better served and, hopefully, over time, we will see other linked benefits, such as more children being able to walk to school and less traffic in the vicinity. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the consultation. I hope that the outcomes will be seen as good news for the majority.

Unfortunately, the week after was not as positive as *Storm Dennis* hit the Collegiate badly at the start of the half term break! The high winds caused a part of the roof in our College VI building to be blown away and the heavy rainfall then flooded the first floor, as well as part of Aquila College where a flat roof could not cope with the volume of water accumulated above it. Thankfully, with it being half-term, we did not have the challenge of trying to open as normal the next day, but thanks to the remarkable efforts of our Facilities Team, rooves were repaired, new ceilings and lights were installed, damaged carpets were replaced and classrooms were restored all in time for students' return! We are very fortunate to have the facilities that we have, but in a school building that is now more than sixty years old, it is a constant challenge to maintain our site to the standards that we require. As always, we are looking at capital projects and prioritising the most urgent works: this year, we will complete the College VI refurbishment programme and the development of outdoor social spaces, whilst commencing work on washrooms and larger learning spaces.

19th Purley (Riddlesdown) Scout Group

Liz O'Brien, Group Scout Leader

Since our summer report we have been busy again with lots of community and fundraising projects. Here is a summary to date, we hope you enjoy reading about our adventures.



On Saturday 2nd November we joined the Riddlesdown Residents' Association litter pick, which all goes towards their Community Challenge Award badge.

On Monday 4th November we held our annual fireworks and bonfire night. This event gets bigger and bigger every year with other Scout Groups attending along with the local community and community groups. We had approximately 140 in attendance and once again the fireworks did not disappoint. The kitchen worked extremely hard to feed everyone with their hot dogs and soup and the hot chocolate went down a treat in the cold. We are having some grounds work done at the moment so we will be able to hold even more spectators this year!

On Sunday 10th November we marked Remembrance Sunday with our second parade from our HQ to St Edmund's Church where we had a beautiful service and laid our wreath. The weather was much kinder this year and we had a great turnout. We are working closely with St Edmund's now. The Cubs have been working with them on their World Challenge and Faith badges.



Saturday 16th November was our Family Quiz fundraising event which was a huge success with 60 people in attendance making up 9 teams. Lots of fun was had by all, rounding it off nicely with fish and chips from the Fish Bar on Mitchley Avenue.



On Monday 9th December our Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Leaders and parents joined forces and donned our Christmas headwear to carol sing outside Sanderstead, Riddlesdown, Purley Oaks and Purley train stations. The children (and adults) were in good voice and had a very productive hour raising a great amount for the Group. We also had lots of lovely comments from the commuters and think we put a smile on their faces.

On Monday 16th December I took 2 cubs to the Food Hub in Purley to deliver the boxes of donations we had collected as a group over the month of December as part of our World Challenge Badge. Purley Food Hub had previously been to the hut to speak to the Cubs about the amazing work they do and we are going to visit them next term to see them in action and help out.



Monday 10th February was a very special day for two of our leaders and also for the 19th Purley. Ellen Tilbury our Assistant Beaver Leader and William Cauthery our Sectional Assistant for Cubs were invited to St James' Palace to receive their Duke of Edinburgh gold awards from the Earl of Wessex. Congratulations to them both and to their proud families.



Refurbishment project

Our on-going refurbishment project continues at the 19th Purley. After finally fixing our leaking roof last year thanks to the National Lottery money we managed to obtain, our small hall ceiling was literally falling down with all the damp that had damaged it over the years. We have therefore had the boards replaced in there and have ear-marked funds for the large hall to be done during the summer holidays. Obviously all these works cost huge amounts of money that we, as a charity, do not have. Therefore, we have some upcoming fundraisers this year and will be applying for more funding from various sources. If anyone can help us in anyway, we are always looking for funding, materials, expertise, etc so please do contact me. To find out more about our Group, my scout email address; GSL@19thpurley.org.uk or visit our website <https://19thpurleyscoutgroup.org/>