

Councillor Chris Best Sydenham Newsletter

Autumn 2010

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- p 1 Sydenham Assembly
- p 2 Drinking Control Zone
- P 4 Sydenham Road
- p 5 Sydenham Library
- p 6 Sydenham Road
- p 7 Forest Hill Pools
- p 7 Planning
- p 9 Links, events and meetings

My aim is to build a stronger community in Sydenham as well as across the borough through developing:

- **healthy and caring communities**
- **safer and secure communities**
- **vibrant, active and inclusive communities.**

Since this isn't the place to go into any topic in too much depth please contact me if there is an issue you would like to pursue with the Council on cllr_chris.best@lewisham.gov.uk. Please have a look at my web site on www.lewisham.gov.uk/cllrchriscrist and also [my photos](#) for a range of images. You can text me on my mobile 07725 143020 or call me on my landline 020 8659 6445.

Sydenham Assembly

The Assembly met on the 11 September and the first part of the meeting was the presentation on **"Our Lewisham Our Say"** – the consultation question was 'Where will the council be able to save £60 million?'. The breakdown of the councils overall budget of £1,100m was presented to illustrate the relatively small budget from which the £60m must be found: £187m schools, £93m council housing, £124m capital projects £424m income and Government grants - leaving **£271m** and the **£60m** saving must come from this **£271m**.

One of the proposals is to close five of the twelve libraries – and Anthony Scully, Chair of the Save Sydenham Library campaign spoke about how Sydenham Library helps bring the community together, with a number of groups operating from the library such as mother and toddler groups, reading groups etc. The library ties into all the issues on Sydenham's priority list.

The meeting received a presentation from Andy Frazer on the improvements to Sydenham Road and Station Approach. This was followed by an update on the youth centre by Jo Hunneybell.

Locality Fund

The £10,000 Sydenham Locality Fund projects are for 2010/11 are:

- Children's play area for Brasted Close/Peak Hill - £2,500
- Prevention of flytipping on alleyways either side of Sydenham Road - £2,500
- Sydenham Arts Festival 2010 - £2,000
- Contribution to the concessions for The Three Musketeers - £500
- Sydenham Music outreach - £2,500

Mayor's Fund

The Mayor's Fund of £25,000 is now open for bids and will be decided at the December Assembly meeting. Each application will assist with the development or completion of actions on the

www.lewisham.gov.uk/cllrchriscrist

Sydenham assembly action plan. For more information and the priority plan please visit www.lewisham.gov.uk/LocalAssemblies/SydenhamAssembly.

Update on local priorities

Priority One - More activities for children and young people

Sydenham Well's Park Youth Centre

We are waiting to hear whether the **Myplace funding** has been cut by the Coalition Government

Sydenham and Forest Hill Youth Forum

The Sydenham and Forest Hill Youth Forum <http://sfhyouthforum.org.uk> gives a voice to young people in the area. The next meeting is on Friday 19th November 2010 where future fundraising will be discussed.

Hillcrest estate

Hillcrest Estate was awarded £50,000 from the 2009/10 Playbuilder Funding to refurbish the existing play area using natural materials and local residents have submitted their proposals. Following the grand opening in July a fire destroyed the structure in September. Lewisham Council have now used the final £25,000 of the funding to rebuild the structure.

Priority Two – Improving community safety and tackling anti-social behaviour

Controlled Drinking Zone

A Designated Public Place Order (DPPO), commonly known as a drinking control zone, has been put in place across the borough of Lewisham following consultation with residents and businesses during the summer.

The scheme will run until the end of February 2011. The Order will give police discretionary powers to stop people and confiscate and dispose of any alcohol within the boundaries of Lewisham borough.

Following the end of the DPPO, Lewisham Council and Lewisham Borough Police will review the effectiveness of the Order to see whether it should be introduced permanently across the borough. The DPPO is not a ban on alcohol consumption in a public place, and does not make drinking in public an offence, but it is a measure that can assist in tackling street drinking linked to antisocial behaviour. The intention is to provide police with a tool to address alcohol-related disorder in a quick and effective way. Failure to comply with a request from the police to hand over alcohol can result in arrest and/or a fine of up to £500.

New signs are currently being installed in Sydenham Road and areas around the borough to remind people they are in a controlled alcohol zone.

The powers are not intended to disrupt peaceful activities. They will be used to tackle nuisance, or annoyance associated with drinking alcohol in a public place. It is not a criminal offence to drink alcohol within the designated area (within the boundaries of Lewisham borough). An offence is committed if a person refuses to obey a police officer's request to stop drinking.

Priority Three – Vibrant high street

Public Art at the Greyhound

The developers of the Greyhound site in Sydenham have incorporated in their plans a bespoke design and installation of a piece of public art to cover the north elevation wall of the refurbished Greyhound pub. This wall will form one side of a public walkway from Spring Hill to the public space around the pub.

A competition to design the public artwork is being organised by the Sydenham Arts Festival (Visual Arts Team) in association with the Sydenham Society. The design competition is open to anyone who lives or works or studies within 2km of the pub, in other words, local people, artists, designers, family and friends. This area includes all of Sydenham and most of Forest Hill, Penge & Crystal Palace.

Each entrant may submit up to three entries. The final date for registration to enter the competition is 22nd December 2010. The final date for entries to the competition is 9th January 2011. The winning design will be chosen by a judging panel by January 31 2011.

Sydenham Mosaic

The front of the Naborhood Centre is going to be redecorated and embellished with a mural representing scenes from Sydenham life. The design is planned to cover the two white cement bands across the front of the building which contains the Naborhood (Sydenham) Centre, and the Post Office. It will have a background in swirling neutral colours creating a feeling of movement, and fourteen or fifteen roundels or “spheres” in coloured mosaic. Designs for the spheres are currently being developed. One of the spheres has been completed in mosaic– the design for the Croydon Canal below; another, of Pissarro, with his painting of St Bartholomew’s Church, is currently being made. The design work and the Croydon Canal sphere will be on show at the Sydenham Assembly at Grove Centre, Jews Walk on Thursday, 2 December and we hope you will come along and see for yourselves. Following this it is planned that the designs and spheres will be on display at Kirkdale Bookshop.

Other spheres depict Sydenham buildings such as the Crystal Palace (with Joseph Paxton), Livesey Hall and the Cobbs building as well as well-known Sydenham residents – W G Grace, Ernest Shackleton, Sir George Grove, Sir August Manns, and Sir Arthur Sullivan. There is a sphere celebrating Sydenham’s association with music, and the Sydenham Music Festival, and one hinting at our Hollywood connections.

Sydenham Arts Festival

As the 2010 Summer Season finishes plans are already underway for the 2011 Sydenham Arts Festival which will take place between 1 and 17 July, next year. If you would like to get involved in any way please contact Festival Director Jonathan Kaufmann (07904 505923) or Assistant Festival Administrator Pat Trembath (8659 4903).

Priority four – Environmental improvements to provide a cleaner greener Sydenham

Sydenham has access to three parks although only one is situated in Sydenham ward which is Wells Park. Friends of **Home Park** have developed the community garden with Groundwork

London. **Sydenham Wells Park** has again retained a green flag and the Wells Park Improvement Group meeting will be held on 7 September 2010.

Sydenham Green Waste

The free seasonal garden waste service at Girton Road car park on Saturday and Sunday mornings from 9am to 12 noon will end at the end of November.

Priority five - Transport improvements for Sydenham

Sydenham high street

Funding has now been received from TfL for the Phase Two (detailed design and tender) stage of the project. Commissioning of the required specialist consultants for Phase Two is completed and resources are in place. A fully resourced design team is working on the project. The detailed design will be completed by October of this year. Tender will then commence followed with an announcement the intended start of works and an outline programme for construction.

For further information on the £3.6 million improvements please see [Sydenham high street](#) and the update presented at the September Sydenham Assembly.

Lewisham Council is currently working on a £310,000 renovation of Sydenham Station Approach which will greatly improve access to the station.

Sydenham Road East The Council has included in the 2011-2014 Local Implementation Plan (LiP) funding to pursue a 'corridor' scheme for the length of Sydenham Road between Mayow Road and Bell Green. This project is intended to follow on from and to complement, the planned 'major' works in 'High Street' area of Sydenham Road.

In 2006 the Council bid to TfL to fund a 'Local Safety Scheme' for this stretch of road. It had a poor casualty record (5 times the average for similar roads across London) therefore grant money was allocated for 2007 – 08 to study the above length of road in more detail and to implement safety measures. Due to the major gas/water works that have occurred along this length of road from 2008 onwards the project never got beyond the draft proposals stage and the safety scheme funding was postponed. Funding mechanisms from TfL have changed in recent years and Local Safety Scheme funding is no longer available to us. A more comprehensive bid was put to TfL for 'Corridor' funding to:-

- a install accident remedial measures
- b take these proposals further and implement other traffic and environmental improvements e.g. resurfacing, lighting, paving, signal alterations, bus stops, cycling measures.

Programme - The Council has received £25K in 2010 – 11 to re-visit the original project and prepare a consultation document outlining our ideas and requesting comment/suggestion for the bigger 'Corridor' scheme. This leaflet is at the design stage at present and will be distributed in the new year.

£60K has been granted by TfL for 2011 – 12 to undertake detailed design of final proposals. Thus the Council can give an informed estimate and programme for implementation in the following 2 years. The figures for 2013 – 15, as shown in the LiP document, are indicative of our initial ideas and demonstrate to TfL our future intentions.

The **footbridge over the railway between Dacres Road and Sydenham Park** (close to the Dietrich Bonhoeffer German church) is to be given a major make-over in 2011. A sum of £330,000 has been allocated to be spent in 2011-12 on repairing the Sydenham Park rail footbridge.

Forest Hill Underpass

Back in January 2010 the Council and Network Rail (who own the Forest Hill underpass) agreed a programme of improvements to the underpass. These included measures such as re-surfacing the floor of the underpass, an improved water-drainage system, cladding the underpass walls with easily cleaned de-mountable panels, re-painting, and improved lighting. Network Rail planned to start the works in April 2010, once the station footbridge had been installed.

Long-awaited improvements to the underpass at Forest Hill could now be within sight thanks to a decision of Lewisham's Mayor and Cabinet on Wednesday 20 October where we agreed to provide up to £104,000 from money allocated to improve access to the East London Line stations in the Council's capital programme to renovate the subway. Together with funds from Network Rail it looks at long last as if local residents may soon have a decent underpass to walk through on their way to and from Forest Hill Town Centre. Let's hope this long saga will soon come to an end.

Full details of the Mayor and Cabinet decision here

<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/NR/ronlyres/4BCCEDF5-B895-493B-A722-5C69FF7C10DF/0/caba4551fbc0493d93c1522ff16b637eltem7ForestHillAssemblyResponse220October2010>

Sydenham Library

Following the Mayor's decision to defer the proposed closure of five of the borough's 12 libraries to allow time for community solutions to be explored we now have the information packs available. Lewisham Council is seeking organisations and community groups that may be interested in taking over one or more of the five library buildings being considered for closure. The libraries affected are Blackheath, Crofton Park, Grove Park, New Cross and Sydenham.

We would like to explore ways in which community library services could continue to be provided from these or other buildings. The Council would continue to provide books as well as providing visiting library services, such as storytelling, homework sessions and reading groups. If we were to agree to these closures we would prefer to retain most of the buildings in community use. We are looking for vibrant organisations to take over the management of the buildings and ensure that they continue to stand at the heart of the community.

The Council is prepared to transfer buildings to organisations on a lease or, exceptionally, freehold where possible. Anyone interested would need to prepare a business case setting out how the ongoing running costs would be funded. Continued community use will be a requirement, but the buildings could also be used for other purposes that could generate revenue.

A full information pack is now available and **the deadline for expressions of interest is 20 January 2011**. To register to receive a pack please email librarybuildings@lewisham.gov.uk. I will present the report at the Mayor and Cabinet meeting on the 16 February.

If you want to read more below is the link to the Libraries report prepared for the Mayor and Cabinet on the 17 November -

<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/NR/ronlyres/460C5BA8-995C-42AF-8957-5E3D18225035/0/13b5cc3934c34b8b9d3d6f27bf8a66feltem8Appendix617November2010.PDF>

Forest Hill Pools

I am really pleased that the project has consistently met milestones set:

- Appointment of design team (November 2009)
- Planning approval (July 2010)
- Shortlisting of contract (June 2010)
- Approval of open space changes (September 2010)

To date we have been working to an assumed completion date of the end of 2012.

On the 3 November the contractor award report was agreed at Mayor and Cabinet with a 68 week construction programme. With the award of the construction contract, it is now possible to be clearer about when the pool could be open. The current assumptions are now as follows:

- Willmott Dixon take possession of the site (early Jan 2011)
- Construction begins (mid/late Jan 2011)
- Construction is complete (May 2012)
- Commissioning period (June – August 2012)
- Building is complete and open (September 2012)

At the recent Stakeholders meeting Willmott Dixon set out the timetable and how they planned to build the new pools which still remains a highly complex project. Everyone would like the building to be operational by Autumn 2012 to benefit from the legacy of the 2012 Games.

Please visit www.lewisham.gov.uk/foresthillpools to keep up to date.

Update on Planning

Planning applications can be viewed online

59 Sydenham Road

The application for the change of use of 59 Sydenham Road SE26 from retail (Use Class A1) to Financial and Professional Services (Use Class A2) has met with local objections. The applicant is The Money Shop, a national chain and I support the Sydenham Society in their view that the loss of such a prominent retail unit to The Money Shop would be detrimental to the health of Sydenham Road and is counter to planning policy ST4 for the following reasons:

1) Policy ST4 states units undertaking financial and professional services should not be concentrated in a row. In fact, if permission is granted, there will be 3 such units in a row - The Money Shop, the NatWest Bank and Mann's Estate Agents. The applicant (in the accompanying Design & Access statement) states that the corner location at the bottom of Queensthorpe Road provides a break in the row. The Society strongly disagrees with this view - in fact the proposed pedestrianisation of the bottom of Queensthorpe Road will have the effect of improving the linkages between the two corners as there will not be any traffic to impede the flow of pedestrians and shoppers. The grouping of 3 such businesses together will harm the appearance of Sydenham Road in that there will be 3 potentially very bland shopfronts adjacent to each other - the opportunity for a 'lively' shopfront on this prominent corner will have been lost.

2) The applicant's own 'health check' of Sydenham Road in April 2010 has revealed that the level of A1 retail units in the Core Shopping Area currently stands at 61%. Planning Policy ST4 does not favour less than 70% A1 in the Core Shopping Area. Granting planning permission for this change of use will exacerbate the preponderance of A2 in Sydenham Road and be counter to national policy.

3) Queensthorpe Road is the main entry into the Thorpes Conservation Area, and the views from the bottom of the road into the Conservation Area are particularly important (and are noted in LBL's character appraisal of the Thorpes). The prominent shop at 59 Sydenham Road is located within the Sydenham Road CA, part of the southern extension of the Thorpes CA (this extension occurred in 2007). The proposed improvements to Sydenham Road (which were approved in January 2010 after lengthy consultation) and the creation of a 'pocket park' at the bottom of Queensthorpe Road will not only enhance the pedestrian environment but will make the retail unit on the corner even more important in terms of the improved streetscape. For this reason, the Society takes the view that 59 Sydenham Road should have a 'lively' frontage and be occupied by a business which will benefit from the pedestrianised environment.

4) The Sydenham Society notes that a change of use in Sydenham Road from A1 to A2 has recently been refused: DC/09/71237/X - 83 SYDENHAM ROAD, LONDON, SE26 5UA (May 2009) for the following reason: "The proposed change of use to a betting shop (Use Class A2) would result in the loss of retail floorspace within a designated core shopping frontage, detracting from the range of retail services available within the defined district centre, which would have an adverse impact upon the vitality and viability of the area, contrary to Policy STC 4 Major and District Centres - Core Shopping Areas in the adopted Unitary Development Plan (July 2004)".

83 Sydenham Road

The installation of two condenser units to the rear of 83 Sydenham Road (Subway) and the installation of external lighting above the existing fascia sign. (Amended Description) has still not been decided and again has local objection to the noise of the condenser units.

Update on redevelopment

The Greyhound

The developers Purelake Limited have submitted details of facing materials, site investigation/contamination, cycle parking provision, and dust mitigation scheme submitted in compliance with Conditions (1), (6a), (10) and (16) of the planning permission dated the 24 May 2010 for the partial demolition of The Greyhound Public House, 309-315 Kirkdale SE26 and full restoration to create a self-contained, Use Class A3/A4 unit in the centre of a new public square, the construction of two new, part three/part four/part five-storey residential blocks, containing 40 residential units, with commercial uses (Class A1, A3 and A4) on the ground floor, restoration of the Spring Hill building, including removal of the existing pitched roof and the addition of a second storey, together with the provision of associated private amenity space, 11 parking spaces, motorcycle parking, storage for 56 cycles, refuse storage facilities and servicing, plus alterations to the existing access from Spring Hill and closure of the existing access from Kirkdale. Work has now started on the demolition.

Building is now underway on the key Greyhound site at Cobbs Corner. The work entail the refurbishment (and partial demolition to the rear) of the Greyhound public house, the construction of two apartment blocks containing 40 residential units, with commercial units on the ground floor, and

the restoration of the Spring Hill building (including removal of the existing pitched roof and the addition of a second storey).

In total the amount of commercial floorspace is 9,43sq m, of which the pub comprises 2,86sq m. The former drinking corridor (which some residents may remember) is one of the elements of the pub scheduled for demolition but the tiles have been stored and will be reinstated in the refurbished pub; in addition, there will be new stone greyhounds on plinths to replace those which disappeared some years ago, together with the construction of a new public space adjacent to the pub which will include hard and soft landscaping.

The residential mix will be:

- 12 one-bedroom
- 11 two-bedroom and
- 17 three bedroom units
- 14 of the units will be affordable housing

The ground floor will have three units and meet SEHLP standards for adaption to accommodate wheelchair occupiers, being 1 one-bedroom flat and 2 two-bedroom flats. Eleven car parking spaces will be provided; four for residents, two commercial parking spaces, one disabled parking space and four parking spaces for car club use. There will be provision of a motorcycle parking area and cycle parking facilities for a minimum of 56 bicycles.

68-70 Kent House Road

Details of Facing materials; Landscaping; Provision for Cycles; Layout of Retained Trees & Provision for Renewable Energy submitted in compliance with Conditions (1), (3), (4), (6) & (7) of the Planning permission dated 11 February 2010 (DC/09/73136) for the demolition of existing buildings at 68-70 Kent House Road SE26 and the construction of a part three/part four storey block, incorporating balconies/terrace comprising 1 two bedroom, 7 three bedroom and 1 four bedroom self-contained flats, together with the provision of 9 car parking spaces, 10 bicycle spaces and refuse/recycling storage.

2-4 Trewsbury Road

This is an exciting new development just behind the Mexican restaurant (the old ice cream parlour) on the corner of Sydenham Road and Trewsbury Road. Permission was granted in November 2007 for a 3-storey building plus basement housing commercial space (Use Class B1), plus 2 x 1 bedroom and 7 x 2 bedroom flats incorporating balconies and roof terrace.. There will be landscaping, the provision of 3 car parking spaces, 9 bicycle spaces and a refuse store The building was designed by local architects Thomas Ford and mirrors the redeveloped former church hall on the corner opposite.

22a - 24 Sydenham Road

Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of the existing B2 use buildings on the site of 22A-24 Sydenham Road SE26. The demolition of existing buildings at 22a - 24 Sydenham Road SE26 and the construction of a part one/part four storey building incorporating 475sqm ground floor commercial floor space (A1/A2) and upper floor residential accommodation comprising 9 units (8, two bedroom and 1, one bedroom self-contained flats) including associated amenity space and a meadow to the rear.

278-280, Kirkdale

Planning permission was granted in November 2007 for the demolition of the existing building at 278-280 Kirkdale SE26, and the construction of a five storey building with basement to provide a public house at ground and basement levels, together with 7 one bedroom self-contained flats with balconies above. There was an auction on the 28 October 2009 and according to the auctioneer's site the last bid was £422,500 so it remained unsold but is available at £430,000. Up for auction again.

Recent Planning decisions

Planning permission has been granted for the change of use of 215 Sydenham Road SE26 from a hostel and the construction of a two storey extension to the rear and excavation to provide basement area, including the formation of light wells to the front and rear, to provide 6 two bedroom self-contained flats and 1 one bedroom self contained flat, together with the provision of 4 car parking spaces and cycle store to the rear, bin store to the front and associated landscaping.

Planning permission has been granted can be seen online

Enforcement of planning permission

87 Sydenham Road

The alteration and conversion of 87 Sydenham Road SE26 to provide 1 one-bedroom self-contained flat and 2 two-bedroom self-contained maisonettes, together with the construction of an extension at first floor level to the rear and the provision of a bicycle store. I am currently working with officers to ensure the enforcement of the planning conditions. The developer is changing the facing bricks to comply with the planning condition of bricks in keeping with the Conservation Area.

65 A And B Sydenham Road

Removal of original windows and replacement with UPVC without planning permission on a Conservation Area.

Links, events and up and coming meetings

Christmas in Sydenham:

Friday 3 December - The Kirkdale Bookshop will be open until 9pm with mulled wine and mince pies, a lucky dip for children and various discounts; all welcome.

Friday 3 December, 7.30pm, St Bartholomew's Church, 2 Westwood Hill SE26 4NP - A Celebration of Friendship - a Christmas concert by the Elm Singers in support of Sydenham Garden with pieces by Tchaikovsky and Lauridsen, solos, duets, readings and traditional Advent carols. Entry is free but there will be a fund-raising collection in support of the garden.

Saturday 4 December, 11am-2pm, St Christopher's Hospice, 51-59 Lawrie Park Road, SE26 6DZ; adults £1, children free Christmas Festival at St Christopher's Hospice - Santa's grotto, a children's fancy dress competition, a raffle to win a car - plus festive food and drink - there is something for all the family at St Christopher's Christmas Festival! For more information go to www.stchristophers.org.uk

Saturday 4 December, 3pm at the German Church, 50 Dacres Road SE23; admission £3; all proceeds to Lewisham Voluntary Care Centre - Formerly known as the Horniman Recorders, the Bonhoeffer Recorder Consort give a concert annually around Advent. The programme will include music by: Holborne, Telemann, Bariola, Monteverdi, Weelkes, and Bach, plus a collection of

medieval music arranged for recorders and various Christmas favourites. There will be a raffle for a handmade patchwork quilt and other prizes.

Sunday 5 December, 12-4pm, Mayow Park community garden, Mayow Road entrance to the park; admission free Mayow Park Christmas Fair - Come and visit the community garden for stalls, food, gifts and wonderful crafts including Christmas wreaths.

Sunday 5 December, 7.30pm; Medieval Christmas at the Dolphin with Joglaresa - tickets £36 from the Kirkdale Bookshop and the Dolphin. The evening combines a three-course dinner, Christmas carols and seasonal music from Joglaresa, a dynamic ensemble who combine intoxicating elements of medieval, Middle Eastern, Flamenco and Celtic music.

Sydenham Assembly - www.lewisham.gov.uk/LocalAssemblies/SydenhamAssembly

Sydenham and Forest Hill Youth Forum - www.sfhyouthforum.org.uk

Sydenham Society – www.sydenhamsociety.com

Sydenham Garden – www.sydenhamgarden.org.uk

Sydenham Music Festival – www.sydenhammusic.org.uk

Sydenham Arts Festival – www.sydenhamartsfestival.com

Sydenham Town – www.sydenham.org.uk

St Christopher's Hospice - www.stchristophers.org.uk

Concerts on the first Thursday of the month – Thursday 6 January – Cellist Robert Cohen with Elizabeth Burley on piano – Bach Suite, Schubert Arpeggione, Beethoven Sonata Op.69

Please subscribe to the Arts Service [ebulletin](#) on the web site for the range of events coming up over the next month.

Surgery details: from 10.30 to 11.30 on the 1st Saturday at Sydenham Library, 3rd Saturday at the Naborhood Centre, 44a Sydenham Road (next to the Post Office) and 4th Saturday at Hillcrest T.A. Club Room, High Level Drive, SE26

Please email onto others and if you'd like to receive information this way please let me know of any changes to your email address