

COULSDON

WEST

RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATION

Autumn
2025



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Newsletter Editor
Planning, website
Ecology

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Durgesh Vyas
Keith Watkins

Committee member
Committee member
Committee member

Transport

Supported by
Yvonne Walker
Paul Ford

Membership
Social Media

General email:
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Our Elected Representatives

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Ian Parker
Luke Shortland

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MP for Croydon South

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London Assembly Member for Sutton and Croydon

Neil Garratt

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Disclaimer:

The views expressed in this newsletter are personal views of the contributors, and do not indicate endorsement, or otherwise, by any of the current CWRA committee.

Cover photo: Thanks to Gill Hickson

From the Chair

Welcome to the autumn edition of our newsletter. We held our AGM on 3 July, with presentations from Chris Philp MP; Mario Creatura, local councillor; and Roger Packham of the Bourne Society, a local history group. The minutes of the meeting can be found on the website: www.thecwra.co.uk

The Metropolitan Police has produced a new website to promote local participation and feedback. In Coulsdon we like to feel safe and be aware of the latest alerts: further information on www.metengage.co.uk

An exciting development which is currently in its preliminary stages, is a regeneration project for what might be called the Coulsdon High Street, ie the Brighton Road section. Representatives of local residents associations and local councillors attended the first meeting in July, and some suggestions were put forward, relating to the greening of the road, lighting, bins and street furniture. Further discussion will take place in September.

The pocket park next to Coulsdon South station is progressing. Water butts should be installed shortly and more planting is due to take place. The Hive garden team has agreed to take over the maintenance of the park, once everything is complete, and it is hoped to engage with Croydon Voluntary Action and Croydon College. Coulsdon Art Trail hopes to instal two more finials near to Coulsdon South station, which will bring the total to twelve.

Please check our **What's On** page for upcoming events, and support as many as you can. We are always looking for new members of CWRA, the cost is a modest £3 per year, payable by standing order or cash. Details opposite, and on the website.

Help with delivery of newsletters would also be appreciated, and check when the next litter pick is taking place: this is a very successful event and raises the profile of the CWRA.

Feedback on any issue is always welcome: please contact us via info@thecwra.co.uk

Jennifer



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Account type: Business

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& NOTARIES

The Rain in Spain

(with apologies to Lerner & Lowe)!

“Now once again - where does it rain?”... ♪ on a plain, on a plain ♪
.....”and where’s that soggy plain?”....well not in the UK it would seem.

Having said goodbye to a generally overcast and wet winter, our spirits, raised by an unseasonal period of fine weather, are set to be dashed by doom and drought courtesy of the water companies. I was taught at school that energy could not be created or destroyed. We can burn fuel to get heat and power, but then the fuel itself is gone; water is not like that. In general, we only borrow it for a while – to drink, wash, clean, defecate etc. - and then we give it back dirty, not in some scattergun way but down specific pipework which has special destinations.

Where I am going with this argument is that I do not accept we are short of water; but we may be short of clean water. This situation is no new phenomenon. It was known even before Bazalgette came along (and thank goodness he did). The water companies were sold off to private industry in 1989. Water UK says that the water industry was in a bad way at that time due to under-investment by government and £160b has been spent since then, with further large sums pledged in the future to improve infrastructure.

In short, the water companies think they have done OK over the last 30+ years. I’m not sure the consumers feel that is the case, especially when they hear cries of “drought” at the first sign of decent weather amid requests for higher water rates. Unfortunately, there is a permanent tension between the interests of consumers who view water (and other energy) as one of life’s essentials and the investors who control these private companies charged with managing what the population regards as a public resource. As the consumer sees it - the water companies willingly accepted a long-term contract but every year they complain that it hasn’t rained enough and they need more money.

Join neighbourhood watch, it’s free.

Julian

Any Bird Spotters?

Name the five birds opposite, all photographed in Scotland this May.
See foot of page 13 for the answers.

Let's Go Ride a Bike!

It was announced on the nighttime TV news that Lime Bikes and another hire company had been fined for not retrieving their abandoned machines, a problem which a member of the committee had also raised as it was affecting the CWRA area too.

Forgive me if I show naivety on this subject, but surely these companies collect more information about the would-be hirer of their machine than just the fee? Equally, there must be some place where it must be returned to, signalling the end of the hire period, rather than it just being dumped? Surely the terms and conditions of hire require the hirer to be responsible for its safe return or face a penalty surcharge? I infer that the company's reluctance to pick up the abandoned machine is a financial decision (retrieval cost versus value) but these recent fines have cost them dearly.

Am I correct to assume this whole situation derives from a (green/health) initiative to get people out of their cars, thereby reducing congestion and pollution on our roads and encouraging them to engage in some cardiovascular exercise at the same time? Has that been a failure? As a business venture, has hiring bikes been a failure?

Well, the jury is still out on these matters and no one seems interested in the verdict.

Julian



Your Councillors

A good summer for Coulsdon – with big improvements in our town centre, fresh investment for the future, and plenty of opportunities to meet with residents. We've been out and about listening to your concerns, celebrating our community spirit, and working to make Coulsdon an even better place to live, work and visit.

Coulsdon Town Centre Blitz Clean

At the end of July, Coulsdon Town was the latest area to receive Mayor Jason Perry's "blitz clean" treatment – and what a difference it's made! Multiple council teams and contractors descended on the town centre in one coordinated effort: pavements are being repaired, trees trimmed, lines repainted, graffiti and fly-posters removed, and streets jet-washed. Businesses were also given free graffiti-removal kits to help keep shopfronts looking neat and tidy. The blitz cleans are all about restoring pride in our local high streets, tackling a host of small but important jobs in one go. We're delighted to see Coulsdon looking cleaner, safer and more welcoming for residents and visitors alike.

£150k UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment in Coulsdon

Coulsdon is set to benefit from a £150,000 investment through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund - an initiative to boost local places. We've been working with community leaders, including the CWRA, and council officers to identify the most impactful projects for our area. The aim is to ensure every penny helps improve Coulsdon's environment, facilities and vibrancy. This funding is a real opportunity to build on recent successes and deliver lasting benefits for residents. If you have ideas for projects that could make a difference, we'd love to hear from you...

Please email: coulsdowntown@croydonconservatives.com.

Your Next Chance to Meet Us

We run regular street stalls in Coulsdon Town to give residents the chance to speak directly to us – no appointment needed. Whether you want to raise a concern, share an idea, or just have a friendly chat about the community, you're very welcome.

We'll be outside Aldi, 11am–12noon, on the following Saturdays:

- 13th September
- 11th October
- 8th November

Chris Philp MP

It was a pleasure to speak with Coulsdon residents at the CWRA's AGM in July, about various issues affecting Coulsdon, which I work on with residents associations, local councillors Ian Parker, Luke Shortland and Mario Creatura and Mayor Jason Perry.

There's a new threat to our area as London Mayor Sadiq Khan is proposing to allow some of Croydon's Green Belt to be built on. Much of our local green was due to be incorporated into the Surrey Hills National Landscape. We should not be destroying family homes, which local families need, or concreting over the green belt in Coulsdon to provide more new flats. These are much better suited to places like Croydon town centre, city centres and brownfield sites. It's not necessary, because Croydon is anyway meeting its housing targets already.

Our green spaces are particularly important for many Croydon residents who don't have access to a private garden. They're vital for our wildlife, for biodiversity, for carbon capture and for our mental health. I responded formally to the London Plan consultation to register my objection to Sadiq Khan's plans to concrete over the green belt in our area and I will keep you updated.

Planning and Transport

132 St Andrews Road has a new application. Both this one, and an application at 22 Brighton Road, are for multiple homes in what was a house. These conversions are usually not thought out (except for profit), and result in poor internal arrangements, because they have been shoe-horned into wrongly-shaped or sized rooms. More front gardens will be lost to a sea of rubbish and recycling bins.

A new one for me – the electricity board (or whatever they call themselves now) is installing a substation on a patch of grass where Woodmansterne and St Andrews roads meet. Amazingly, no real details have to be supplied by the board, and the council has few powers to object. No height, no 'kind of finish', no detail about the voltages inside the 'thing' (125,000 Volts, if you're interested). These applications aren't searchable by map, but there is a real application, 24/00192/PDO, which has been passed by the council, in spite of the lack of details. Whether by design or incompetence, the application is logged against 49 Woodmansterne Road, rather than the nearest house, which is number 55.

Coulsdon South may be disconnected from the Marlpit Lane roundabout from time to time during work to strengthen the railway bridge against wayward lorry collisions. Work is scheduled for most of September and October.

Google "**Coulsdon South bridge repairs**" to keep up with road and car park closures.



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Friends of Farthing Downs and Happy Valley

The Friends will be 'coming of age' this year. Formed in 2005, this small community group came into being as the Coulsdon Green Belt Action Group in 2003, under my leadership, to try to prevent the sale, by Croydon Council, of three fields immediately adjacent to Farthing Downs. Two fields lay on the western side of Woodplace Lane, the other on the east, close to Farthing Way.

The campaigning to raise substantial sums to buy the fields, and prevent their sale, was successful, and the City of London Corporation negotiated purchase, matching the campaign's contribution. Sadly, the eastern field, close to the bypass was lost, with risk of development.

The Friends now meet with a City Consultative Committee to continue close liaison over wider community matters. Recent key initiatives are summarised here:

2006. A grant from English Heritage to extend archaeological work on the Downs.

2007. Refurbishment of the Millennium Cairn installed in 2000 AD.

2008. Library talks by the City Rangers at local schools on 'Family Learning'.

2009-11. Dialogue with the city and the community about the car park on the Downs and associated buildings.

2011. Sponsorship of a replacement Beech tree close to the Folly and provision of a wildlife night time camera.

2012. Help The Association of Croydon Conservation Societies with leafleting and artwork, including the open spaces map of Croydon.

2013. Helping 'green' Coulsdon South Station.

2021. With leadership from the Warden of Happy Valley, and grant aid from the City, the Friends have developed a self guided nature trail across the Downs and Happy Valley. This is in three languages, each spoken by a famous personality and accessed via smart phone – and with a distinctive companion handbook.

Sales have exceeded 7000, with a re-print in progress.

Graham Lomas

Birds (from page 9)

Clockwise from top left:

Barn Swallow; Stonechat; Chaffinch; Lapwing; Oystercatchers.

What's On

Chipstead Players: 16-20 September Dracula; 3-8 November The Unfriend: comedy. More information: www.chipsteadplayers.org

Friends of Farthing Down and Happy Valley: AGM Wednesday 12 November 7.30pm Old Coulsdon Centre for the Retired, Grange Park, Old Coulsdon CR5 1EH

Coulsdon Club: 18 September and 20 November: stand up comedy. Other events: www.coulsdonclub.co.uk

Bourne Society: local history society with a range of talks and other events: full details on bournesoc.org.uk/whats-on/

St Andrews Church: Sunday 28th September 4 pm in the church - St Andrew's Choir Concert 'Just Good Friends' - a mix of secular and sacred music. Tickets £10 for adults, £5 children, available from the parish office:

020 8676 2966 standrewsoffice@yahoo.com Sunday 5th October 3 pm - A Celebration of Animal Creation for St Francis' Day - Family friendly service in church with petting zoo. Come and cuddle an array of furry friends and bring a photo of your pet for a blessing! All welcome. Contact the parish office for more details, or visit standrews.coulsdon.net

Coulsdon Library: Reading Retreat: Mondays 1.30pm -3pm People welcome to read poetry and stories aloud: listening results in a deeper enjoyment of reading for pleasure. Monthly adult reading group: Second Thursday every month 2-3pm. Next one: Thursday 11 September. Tuesday 23rd September 10:30am-11:30am: free talk by Jayesh Patel, Croydon Council's Healthy Homes initiative, on **understanding utility bills**, help available with any debts associated with them and discounts available. Also information on heat loss from, and insulation for, properties. Tuesday 21st October 10:30am-11:30am: free talk by Beth Alton, Barclays Bank, about **Fraud and Scam Awareness**. See: libraries.croydon.gov.uk/events for more details of Croydon libraries' talks.

Purley Lit: New programme of talks begins on Thursday, October 9th. See the back cover and the website for details: purleylit.org.uk/

Community Litter Pick: Sunday 14 September. All equipment provided. Meet 11am at **Lion Green car park (free on Sundays)**.

If you would like to borrow our kit, let us know via the 'Info@' email.

Coulsdon Community Partnership: Find out more about the activities: <https://coulsdonpartnership.org/pages> and visit The Hive garden.

Rickman Hill Park: planting of saplings in November: details to be announced.

RSPB Croydon: talks on 2nd Monday of month group.rspb.org.uk/croydon



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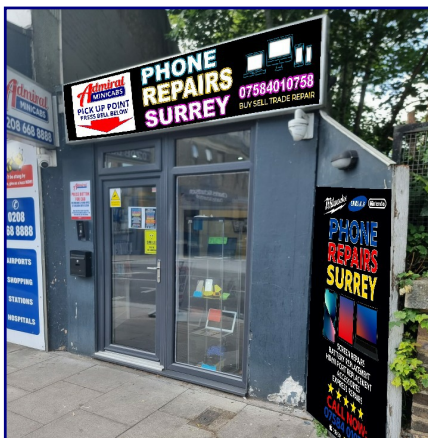
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A brief history of anaesthesia

The birth of modern surgery might fairly be traced back to an operating room at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston on October 16th, 1846. Gilbert Abbott underwent surgery performed by Dr JC Warren to remove a tumour from his neck. Before the operation commenced William Morton, a dentist, had Abbott inhale a substance, which he initially kept secret, from the nipple on a glass globe. Abbott inhaled deeply for a period, before he was rendered unconscious. Warren then stepped forward and cut deeply into his neck, then scraped out the tumour, with no reaction from Abbott.

Dr Warren was said to have been astonished. This was unsurprising as just over a year previously, January 1845, he had witnessed another dentist, Horace Wells, attempt to extract a tooth after having a patient inhale deeply from a rubber bag. This patient also appeared unconscious but as Wells grasped the infected tooth with his forceps, the patient let out a piercing scream of pain.

Wells had used nitrous oxide, commonly known as laughing gas, which can be an effective analgesic (pain killer) in the right circumstances. Morton on the other hand had administered ether, a substance that rendered Abbott unconscious and insensible to pain.

Whilst there had been many previous attempts to eradicate pain from surgery over centuries, using different techniques, and in different cultures, Morton was the first to demonstrate, and crucially, share his discovery with the medical world.

Word reached England by December the same year. On December 19th James Robinson removed a tooth from a Miss Lonsdale under the effects of ether. There is a Blue Plaque at 24 Gower Street London to commemorate this momentous occasion. A witness to those proceedings was one Robert Liston, who we met in a previous article. Two days later, December 21st, Liston performed the first public demonstration of the technique, amputating the infected leg of a Coachman named Frederick Churchill.

Present at this demonstration was James Simpson, an obstetrician from Edinburgh. He became an advocate of anaesthesia and in 1847 had discovered the anaesthetic effect of chloroform in childbirth. On April 7th, 1853, Queen Victoria gave birth to her 8th child, Prince Leopold, with chloroform administered by John Snow. Victoria's experience did much to promote the use of chloroform in childbirth.

A brief history of anaesthesia (cont)

It is near impossible now to imagine those days before 1846, although even after many surgeons resisted the use of anaesthetics. Some claimed that 'a good healthy scream' was beneficial to the poor person under the knife.

I'll leave readers with the words of Sir Edward Morris from his History of the London Hospital (1910):

"There are still ghastly relics in the hospital of those terrible days; the great wooden operating table with its straps; the bell which was sounded before an operation to call assistants to hold down a patient, a bell whose terrible clank could be heard by every shivering person in the building, including the patient, often a little child; a bell with a voice loud enough and harsh enough to make all Whitechapel shudder".

Bill Kilvington FCODEP FRCA

Patient Safety Lead – The College of Operating Department Practitioners



Morton's ether apparatus

Purley Lit

2025

09 Oct	The Bourne Society	Roger Packham
23 Oct	The Architecture of the CZWG group	CZWG
06 Nov	Cancer Research at the Crick	Crick Institute
20 Nov	The Surrey Iron Railway	John Sheridan
04 Dec	Medieval and Renaissance Musical Instruments	Michael Withers

2026

15 Jan	778 years of Bethlem Royal Hospital	Amy Moffat
29 Jan	Tibet, Roof of the World.	Sue Henning
12 Feb	Jane Austen: The Woman and the Writer	Maureen Stiller
26 Feb	RAF Kenley: Women at War	Linda Duffield
12 Mar	Re-wilding	Sam Thomas
26 Mar	The Weird and Wonderful World of the Law	David Allen

Talks start at 8pm, at Christ Church, Purley.

Visit purleylit.org.uk for program notes and more information.



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