



The Selsdon — Gazette —

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March 2021

THE SELSDON GAZETTE

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Front cover image credit: Robert Mitchell / Littleheath Woods in Winter

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Councillors for Selsdon & Addington Village Ward

Cllr Helen Pollard Helen.pollard@croydon.gov.uk 07941 573727

Cllr Robert Ward Robert.ward@croydon.gov.uk 07783 152363

Councillors for Selsdon Vale & Forestdale Ward

Stuart Millson Stuart.millson@croydon.gov.uk 07783 152376

Andy Stranack Andrew.stranack@croydon.gov.uk 07816 123204

Councillors for Sanderstead Ward

Cllr Lyn Hale Lynne.hale@croydon.gov.uk 0208 405 6721

Cllr Yvette Hopley Yvette.hopley@croydon.gov.uk 0208 404 3462

Cllr Tim Pollard councillor@timpollard.co.uk 0208 251 8500

Full details of the roads falling within each of the Selsdon wards can be found on the home page of the SRA website <http://selsdon-residents.co.uk>



Editor's Note

Welcome to the March edition of the Selsdon Gazette.

As we enjoy warmer temperatures, longer daylight hours, snowdrops, crocuses and daffodils starting to bloom and an accelerating vaccine programme I feel more optimistic about this year.

I am happy to report that some readers have answered my call for photos taken during their daily walks, to be used for the Gazette cover. However, as we approach the anniversary of the first lockdown in the UK, I am still looking for articles reflecting on this unusual year and what you are most looking forward to when we emerge from restrictions. Any contribution, however short, can be sent to me by email to selsdongazettesra@gmail.com.

In this edition we have the SRA report for 2020 as we unable to hold our Annual General Meeting, news of the Purley Way Transformation Consultation and details about the forthcoming Census. We also learn about the work carried out by the SRA volunteers at the Selsdon Triangle and the progress of establishing Rides in Littleheath Woods. We have news of the SRA Scarecrow Competition to brighten Selsdon streets in May/June. As usual there is our gardening contribution, a poem for World Poetry Day and Riddles for those needing a workout for their brains!

I hope that you enjoy your read, keep safe and I do look forward to hearing from you!

Chris Jones

☞ SUBMISSIONS FOR THE APRIL 2021 EDITION SHOULD
BE WITH THE EDITOR NO LATER THAN
20TH MARCH - PREFERABLY BEFORE! ☞

SRA NEWS 'n' VIEWS

A big thank you to the volunteers who helped to trim the shrubs on the triangle; they hope to do more cutting back soon. The Council have agreed that we can do some work ourselves as this will be done less frequently by the Council due to cutbacks.

AGM

Once again this will not be held but Janet, our Secretary, has written a report which you will find in this edition. The accounts will be printed next month. You can always contact us with any issues or questions by email (mail2selsdonresidents@gmail.com) or by phone (numbers at the front of the gazette).

Gazette

Our fabulous volunteers continue to deliver the paper copy of the Gazette and we are very thankful but one of our distributors is retiring after many years in the role. So, we are asking if anyone can help. A distributor collects the gazettes mid-month from Wendy, our Distribution Manager, in Addington Road by car and then bundles them up to be delivered to our road deliverers. (Approx. 8-9 "drops").

This round centres on Sundale Ave, Greville Ave, York Rd but you don't have to live in this area as a car is essential.

Also, one or two of the rounds have increased and we would like another distributor so we can split these up to make life easier for our present volunteers. Please, if you can help once a month (any day /weekend) we would love to hear from you, (Wendy is on 020 8651 0470), and help our volunteers having to double up.

Transport

Weekend work to modernise the tracks and signalling between East Croydon and Victoria Station, Streatham Hill and Victoria will mean no trains will run on the following dates: 1-3 May, 22-23 May, 29-31 May. There will be replacement buses that will stop at all stations and all tickets will be accepted. Trains will still be going to London Bridge. Hopefully this will not affect too many of us but check before you travel (if allowed by then!!).

Planning

Our MP, Chris Philp, has written to inform us that the proposed crematorium on Old Farleigh Road has been refused by Tandridge District

Council as an inappropriate development in the Green Belt that would cause significant harm to the landscape.

We still plan to have the Friends of Selsdon Wood Open Day and Selsdon Community Fun event on 5 September by which time, hopefully, we will be able to meet each other in a social setting. Meanwhile stay safe and take care.

Sheila Childs, SRA Chair

~~

COUNCILLOR'S NOTES

BIN COLLECTIONS

We are still receiving emails from residents who have not had their bins collected. We have even heard from residents who have booked (and paid for!) bulky waste collections which are then not collected. If this happens to you and you can't get hold of anyone at the Council to help you, please let us know and we will do what we can to make sure your bins are collected.

SELSDON COMMUNITY PLAN PUBLISHED

Now that the Seldom Community Plan has been published (details available on https://issuu.com/smarterreach/docs/selsdon_community_plan_design_v1?fr=sOTA2ZjI0NTk2NDU) work has started on implementing some quick wins projects. These will rely on funding being found, so the Community Project Team is looking at potential sources of funding. More news on this to follow when we have details of which projects, we can move ahead with.

REPRIEVE FOR FREE PARKING ON THE HIGH STREET

Following the last-minute reprieve which prevented higher parking charges from being implemented in January 2021, Cllr Robert Ward has put forward a strong case for not increasing charges in Selsdon High Street. This has been sent to the Council's Labour administration and we will let you know what the outcome is when we get a response.

BRICK BY BRICK

Brick by Brick, which is the Council's wholly owned subsidiary company, has not delivered the building programme that was expected. After ploughing millions of pounds into the company, the Council is not getting the loan repayments it expected and this has been a major contributor towards the fact the Council is effectively bankrupt.

Brick by Brick was driving through a number of unwelcome housing developments on green spaces in various places in Croydon, including Selsdon. An investigation has been carried out into the activities of Brick by Brick and it is recommended the company is wound down. This will result in losses of at least £100m for Croydon Council but it seems it is likely to be the best way to 'cut its losses'.

It is proposed that some of the schemes that were proposed by Brick by Brick should be halted, and this means that three on Monks Hill will no longer go ahead. The land would be handed back to the Council who could choose whether to develop it at a later date. Given that the smaller sites would give a very poor return on investment, it is hoped that they will decide to leave these precious green spaces alone.

GOOD NEWS FOR THE RUFFETTS

It is hoped the regime that approved so many insensitive and dense developments around Croydon, is coming to an end. The first sign that this might be the case came on 20th January when the Council refused permission for the erection of two buildings comprising five new flats and a pair of semi-detached dwellings at 1 The Ruffetts.

Let's hope this is a sign of things to come, and that other proposed dense developments are refused.

THE COST OF CLOSING A SCHOOL

In February there was a meeting to scrutinise the decision made by the Council to close Virgo Fidelis School in Upper Norwood. There are many reasons why this school is closing, but there is a significant cost to Croydon Council as a result of its closure. Over the last few years, the school has been building up an increasing deficit and the Council will have to pay that deficit once the school closes. This will amount to over £2.5m.

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In the Scrutiny meeting there was no satisfactory answer to the question of why the school was allowed to remain open for so long without intervention from the Council to reduce this deficit. Ultimately, the Croydon Council tax payer will pay for this as it will add to the Council's increasing debt mountain. This can only be covered by a loan from the Government which will have to be paid back.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

PLEASE NOTE: DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS, COUNCILLOR SURGERIES ARE SUSPENDED.

We are happy to 'meet' residents online so if you have any issues you wish to discuss with your councillor please get in touch by email:

Helen.pollard@croydon.gov.uk	07941 573727
Robert.ward@croydon.gov.uk	07783 152363
Stuart.millson@croydon.gov.uk	07783 152376
Andy.stranack@croydon.gov.uk	07816 123204

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

20/05627/HSE – 82 Farley Road, CR2 7ND
Alterations including the erection of a single storey rear extension

21/00420/FUL – 133 Littleheath Road, CR2 7SL
Erection of two storey side and rear extension

21/00169/GPDO – 11 Rawlins Close CR2 8JS
Erection of a single storey rear extension projecting out 6 metres from the rear wall of the original house with a height to the eaves of 2.4 metres and a maximum height of 3.6 metres.

21/00229/HSE – 28 Sylvan Close, CR2 8DS
Erection of a single storey side and rear extension

21/00330/HSE – 53A Upper Selsdon Road, South Croydon CR2 8DG
Erection of a detached garage to the rear of the property, fronting Arundel Avenue.

20/06592/HSE – 99 Upper Selsdon Road, South Croydon CR2 0DP
Proposed extension to the porch and garage frontage including pitched roof and the erection of a part single, part two storey rear extension.

*(Remember that you can use this website to view planning applications
http://www.localplanningapps.co.uk/croydon/sra/anupdate/planning_table.html)*

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Purley Way Transformation Survey and Masterplan Consultation

The A23 Purley Way opened in 1925 as a Croydon bypass and it grew rapidly between the 1920s and 1930s, becoming home to the world's first international airport, retail and industrial development. This included Croydon "B" Power Station, which opened in 1950 and later became an Ikea store.

The Purley Way is one of the areas earmarked in the Council's Local Plan Review for future transformation and growth, including housing, jobs, improved transport access, more public open spaces and social infrastructure. Croydon residents can help shape a 20-year sustainable development vision for future homes, businesses and public spaces along Purley Way by answering a new online survey and engaging with the consultation.

Open from 9 February until Tuesday 16 March, the new online consultation (<https://getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/project/685>) is an opportunity for residents, businesses and visitors to feedback on the draft masterplan, proposals, and outline their priorities around sustainable growth for the Purley Way area, which stretches from the boundary with Purley up to Valley Park.

The council consultation will also include three online seminars in February and March which will give the public a chance to participate in a presentation and Q&A workshop to discuss the proposals. Details can be found <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/purley-way-masterplan-seminars-tickets-139938189893>. And for residents who are not online they can phone this number and have their say: 020 8726 6000 ext 63094.

The feedback received from this five-week consultation, as well as early feedback last summer, will help to shape the final masterplan.

Councillor Oliver Lewis, cabinet member for culture and regeneration

~~

MP Chris Philp's Report

Member of Parliament for Croydon South



Residents to gain from Passenger Benefit Fund

In 2018 the Government fined Govia Thameslink Railway £15 million for its unacceptable performance in delivering for passengers. This money has been reinvested in a Passenger Benefit Fund to provide tangible improvements for passengers.

A large portion of this fund has been invested in improving stations in Croydon South in order to benefit passengers. This has been specifically allocated after I and other MPs called for the funds to be focused on making travel better for passengers.

Almost 90 per cent of the improvements will be completed in April this year, with the remainder being delivered in September. The affected stations are Coulsdon South, Coulsdon Town, Kenley, Purley, Purley Oaks, Riddlesdown, Sanderstead and Waddon.

Investments are between £30,000 to £80,000 and offer clear improvements including more seating, information screens, shelters and better toilet facilities.

This is fantastic news for passengers. When GTR were forced to pay £15 million for their abysmal service a few years ago, I was clear to the Government that this was money that ought to be spent making the lives of passengers better.

The Government's improvements will improve the quality of life for passengers, as well as provide important additions like defibrillators and new Customer Information Systems to keep passengers updated. I am especially pleased to see that these improvements have been delivered

despite the difficulties from Covid, and will be implemented by the time life returns to normal.

Call for over 70s to apply for vaccinations

The Government is calling on anyone aged 70 and over who has not received a Coronavirus vaccine to contact the NHS to arrange one.

Alternatively, you can call 119 free of charge between 7am and 11pm.

People over 70 are an at-risk group to the Coronavirus, so please do make sure that you share this information with your friends, neighbours or family members who are over 70 or who know someone over 70 who may not have been vaccinated.

Thank you to our incredible healthcare workers and NHS staff who are doing so much during these difficult times. Thank you also to everyone for doing so much to keep vulnerable people safe and to protect the NHS by staying at home and following the guidance.

Directly Elected Mayor Campaign

Following the petition for a Directly Elected Mayor of Croydon, the Council has now confirmed that a referendum will take place in October. The Council are currently awaiting a report on the cost of the referendum as a result of the Council's bankruptcy, however a referendum in October is now very likely.

Chris Philp

Member of Parliament, Croydon South:

020 7219 8026 chris.philp.mp@parliament.uk

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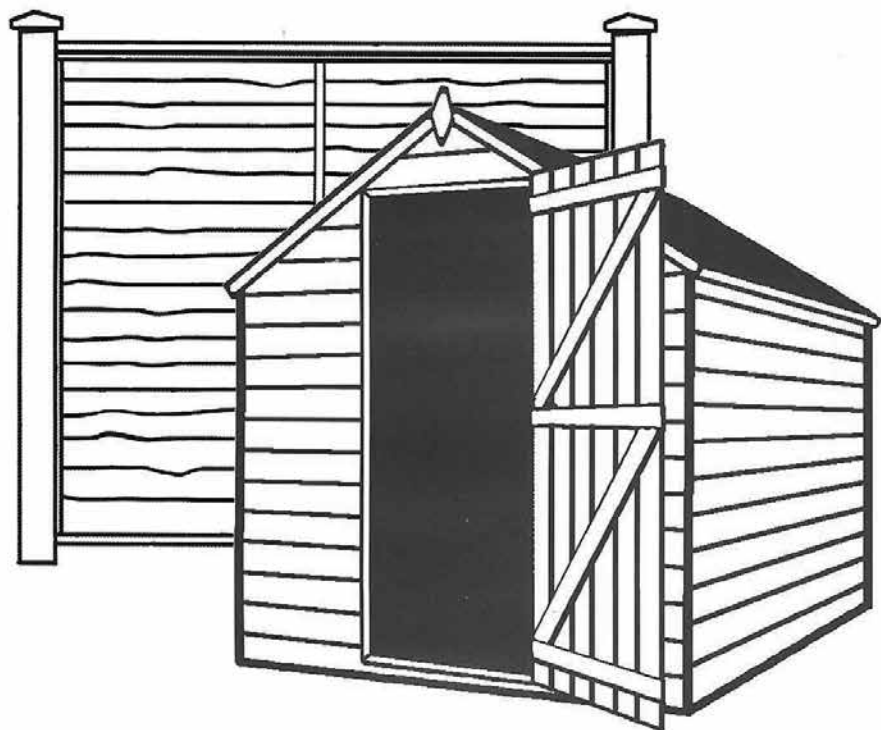
census
2021

Let's Get Croydon Counted

The Census 2021 is drawing close and every household will soon receive a postcard, explaining what the census is, and in early March letters will arrive in the post inviting people to take part in the digital-first census. But

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don't worry if you can't complete it online, you can still request a paper copy and you can access all types of help to complete it. Census 2021 will be key to making sure the big decisions on the future of our hospitals, schools, transport and other public services (following the pandemic and EU exit) are based on the best information possible. In light of the coronavirus pandemic, this up-to-date information is vital to help shape services for the years to come more urgently than ever before. Running the census in times of a pandemic has naturally thrown up some challenges and the ONS' focus is ensuring the safety of the public. Census field officers will only follow up with households after Census Day on March 21 if householders have not yet completed their questionnaire. They will never enter a household, they will always be socially distanced, be equipped with PPE and work in line with all government guidance. Some questions also have updated guidance to reflect our changed living and working circumstances. For those on furlough, there is updated guidance on how to answer questions on work, along with guidance on where students should be counted and included.

Once you get your letter and access code (and if your circumstances aren't going to change prior to the 21st March), then you can fill it in straight away. If you need any help or to request a paper copy, then a Central Support Line will be available on 0800 1412021 from the 1st March 2021.

Lisa Atik, Census Engagement Manager South Croydon, Office for National Statistics'

+44 (0)7452 934577, lisa.atik99@field.census.gov.uk

~~

Love Clean Streets app

The SRA has heard that the Love Clean Streets smartphone app for reporting fly-tipping and other issues on Croydon's streets has proved very effective. You can use the app to report the following issues:

- Abandoned vehicle
- Dead animal
- Dog Fouling
- Drug related litter
- Empty property
- Fly-posting
- Fly-tipping on public land
- Loose or damaged pavements

- Potholes or damage to roads
- Problems with skips
- Road surface drainage problems
- Streets - issues with benches, bollards, signs
- Streets – new or relocation of street litter bins
- Streets – overflowing street litter bins
- Tree or high hedge obstruction on public land
- Waste on private property

To report an issue is simply done by selecting Croydon as the home local authority, then setting the location, taking a photo, picking a category and submitting a report. This report will automatically get sent to the related team at Croydon Council to deal with.

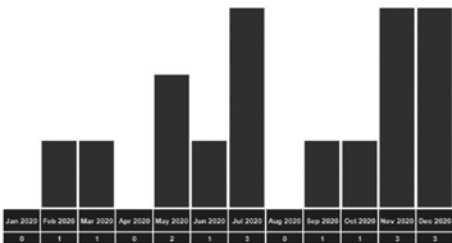
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Message from Jack Killian/ Police Community Support Officer

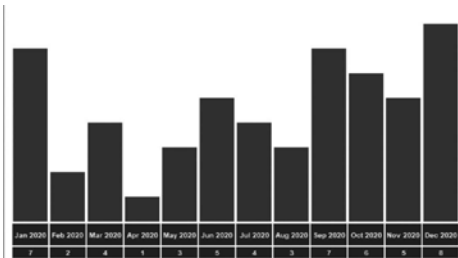
Hello Residents,

Here are the crime statistics from 2020 for Selsdon Vale and Forestdale.

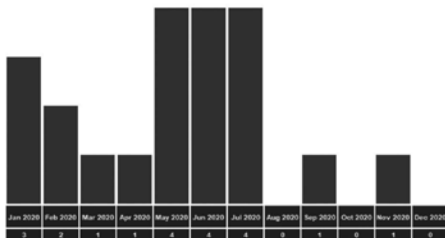
Selsdon Vale and Forestdale Statistics 2020



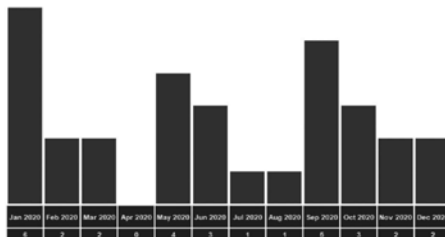
The drug offences throughout 2020



The theft from motor vehicle offences throughout 2020

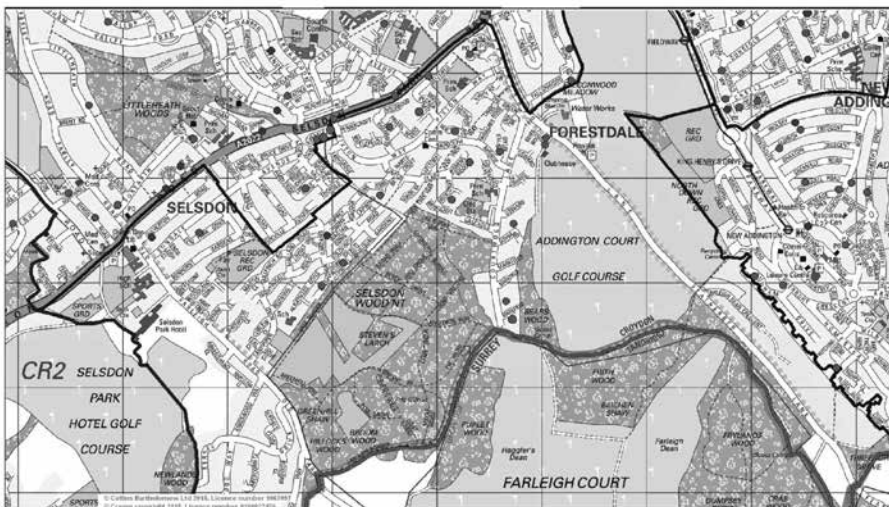


The theft of motor vehicle offences throughout 2020



The burglary offences throughout 2020

Thefts of motor vehicles and from motor vehicles are still problematic in the area. Here is a map of such crimes in the 12 weeks preceding the beginning of February.



Hope you are all staying safe and well.

As always, any information you feel is helpful for us to know, drop me an email or give us a call on the phone number below.

Jack Killian 7114SN Police Community Support Officer

Telephone: 020 8721 2464

Email: SNMailbox-SelsdonandForestdaleSNT@met.police.uk

Address: Addington Police Station, Addington Village Road, CR0 5AQ

SELSDON RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION, 2020 Report

Using the 2020 SRA AGM headings we update you on our local activities.

1. April AGM 2020 - Apologies for absence!

Due to the Covid 19 crisis and the subsequent lockdowns that took hold from March the advertised 2020 SRA AGM (due 1st April 2020) was cancelled. Notices were placed in the Gazette, on local noticeboards, via the SRA website, Facebook and Twitter feeds and other local social media platforms. In that Notice we re-elected the Committee and raised the Subscription rate to £5 per household per annum. The SRA email was given for residents to contact with any queries or objections. No objections were raised. (Sadly the 2021 AGM will also be cancelled but we hope to update you here!)

2. Police report -

The SRA membership is now largely split over two Police wards: Selsdon and Addington Village (PCSO Tina Nash) and Selsdon Vale and Forestdale (PCSO Jack Killian). During the year the SRA Committee stay in contact with the local Police teams attending meetings where possible. We are grateful to PCSO Killian for his regular reports. The main crimes during the year were thefts from vehicles, notably catalytic converters. Crime stats and prevention advice can be viewed at www.met.police.uk/a/your-area/met/croydon

3. MP Chris Philp –

The SRA has published regular reports from our MP in the Gazette. He gave praise for the community spirit of residents during the lockdown and the good adherence to the distancing rules. We look to him to fight Croydon's corner on a national level and step in on local issues when help is needed e.g., the bankruptcy of Croydon Council and the inevitable effect on services! (e.g., Purley leisure complex and Sanderstead library to name but two!) See www.chrisphilp.com/contact/ Email: chris.philp.mp@parliament.uk

4. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 13th March 2019. –

These were placed on the SRA website in March 2020. The SRA email was given for residents to contact with any queries or objections.

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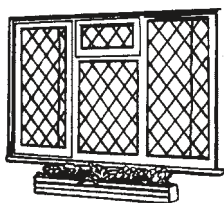
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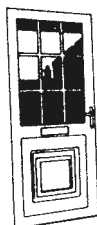
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5. Matters arising from the 2019 Minutes – None raised.

6. The Annual report for 2019 – this was printed in the March 2020 Gazette. No comments received.

7. Treasurers Report with adoption of the Accounts for 2019. –

These were placed on the website and printed in the Gazette. Thanks to the Treasurers Iris Jones (SRA) and Choi Kim (The Gazette) and to Jeff Bayton who reviews the Accounts. No comments received. There was a deficit of spend over income for both the SRA and the Gazette which has been covered by money held in a Savings Account. It was decided to increase the membership subscription rate slightly in 2020. (As the 2021 AGM is also cancelled, the 2020 Accounts will be circulated in a similar manner. The savings associated with the cancellation of the High Street switch on event, room hire savings and the short shut down of Gazette printing plus an increase in donations has allowed the Accounts this year to remain stable.)

8. The Selsdon Gazette and Social media -

The Selsdon Gazette is a non-profit publication delivered to the door (with grateful thanks to all volunteers involved, particularly Wendy Mikiel) to about 4000 households in Selsdon. Gazette printing costs are (almost) covered by the advertising with special thanks to our Advertising Manager Carlo Rappa. We would like to give thanks to our advertisers for sticking with us in 2020 - we are always looking for more! Thanks to Choi Kim for working as Gazette Treasurer, she will step down from the role at the end of the 2020 and hand over to Jenny Bradley for 2021. In 2019 Heather Govier stepped down as Gazette Editor and in 2020 we welcomed Chris Jones to the role (with interim editions from Derek Barnes and Janet Sharp). Paper copies of the Gazette were halted for April, May, June and July 2020 but editions were still published on our website www.selsdon-residents.co.uk (with thanks to our new Web administrator Trevor Stotten). Doorstep deliveries resumed from September 2020. We welcome your contributions of local stories or news. Email: selsdongazettesra@gmail.com Paper copies of The Selsdon Gazette are available at Selsdon Library for reference and an archive is also held by the Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society (to which the SRA pays an annual subscription).

The SRA also now has accounts on Twitter and Facebook (thanks to Ian Leggatt, Trevor Stotten and Peter Underwood) for 'breaking news' see <https://www.facebook.com/selsdonresidentsassociation/> and '@selsdonresassoc' Please 'like' and subscribe!

9. Christmas Lights –

The 2020 Christmas Lights shone brightly on the High Street but the usual public celebration and gathering in November had to be cancelled due to the ongoing virus threat. As usual we need to raise the funds for this as a Community. In 2020 some of the lights and safety fixings were replaced. We were given donations by residents, high-street traders, local churches and groups and from the Councillors' community fund. To aid this (and capitalise on all the lockdown online purchasing) we joined 'Easyfundraising' so that if residents choose to shop online they can raise a donation with their usual retailers, at no cost to them, by using the well trusted 'Easyfundraising' app or site, as the starting point. Our cause name is 'SelsdonChristmaslights'.

10. Annual Subscription –

The continuation of the SRA is reliant on continuing membership subscriptions and donations! In 2020 the membership per household was raised to £5. No-one raised an objection to this. To aid the process we gave the option for people to set up an online banking payment or create a standing order. Any donations for our Christmas lights can also be given in the same way. We also delivered the usual envelope for those preferring to give cash. Find out how to donate at www.selsdon-residents.co.uk/about-the-sra

11. Election of Officers and Members of the Executive Committee -

In 2020 the Committee continued as in 2019 and for 2021 will be joined by Trevor Stotten. The SRA Committee is Chaired by Sheila Childs and the Vice-Chair is Linda Morris. The Secretary is Janet Sharp and the Treasurer is Iris Jones. The other Committee members are; Ernie Sweeney, Yvonne Huber, Sara Bashford, Su Yates, Peter Underwood, Ian Leggatt, Phil Roberts, Jenny Stawman, Arthur Wilson and Trevor Stotten. The SRA can be contacted on mail2.selsdonresidents@gmail.com or via Chair, Sheila Childs 0208 6512285.

The SRA's aim is to advance and protect the interests of the residents of Selsdon. It was formed in 1926 and in 2021 is 95 years old! It is run by volunteers on goodwill and funds raised by subscription and donations (no-one gets paid!). The Committee act as a point of contact for external bodies, can add collective weight to any individual resident concerns about the area and are a useful 'watching eye'. They meet once a month to discuss Selsdon issues and respond and take action where necessary. They also plan special events and community improvements if possible. Individual representatives will also attend council, police, transport and other meetings on our behalf. SRA news is passed to the community via public noticeboards (by the library and on the High Street) social media and via The Gazette.

12. Adoption of the Hon. Accounts Reviewer –

Thanks are given to Jeff Bayton for reviewing the accounts in 2020/21 and for continuing in this role for 2021/22.

13. Any other business

SRA Activities:

a) Lampposts and railings on the High Street were enhanced by floral baskets. To save costs these were filled and watered by members of the Committee. The large planter near Iceland needs refurbishment and the Council have now 'offered' this job to the SRA for 2021. Volunteers to help with this when the weather improves are welcome.

b) The 'bring your own' Community picnic usually held in conjunction with the Selsdon Wood Open Day was cancelled in 2020. It is hoped that in 2021 it can continue as before with fun games, refreshments and stalls on Sunday 5th September. Save the date!

c) The remembrance Poppies returned to the High Street Lamp posts in November. Some of 2019 Christmas decorations made by Greenvale Primary school craft group made a return in 2020 to the Selsdon Triangle to increase the festive cheer in addition to the High-Street lights.

d) We are fortunate that even in lockdown we were allowed to get outside to walk/run for exercise. We have placed some ideas of local areas to go on our website www.selsdon-residents.co.uk/places-to-walk-and-visit

e) The SRA continues to pay for access to an online planning app

designed to summarise the Council Planning site to aid our residents seeing for themselves in good time what relevant local planning applications have been made. Find the link from the 'About the SRA' page of our website or from <http://www.localplanningapps.co.uk/croydon/sra/anupdate/planningtable.html> keep checking this and if you can see a problem with an application make your suggestions/objections known in good time. Sensible changes to plans will save a lot of grief later! In 2020 The SRA have created a planning sub-Committee (Chaired by Ian Leggatt) to try and combat the increasing planning applications and understand the legislation and documentation. Email: selsdonplanning@gmail.com

Selsdon Councillors:

The four Councillors who cover the north and south Selsdon wards work together well and take turns to attend the monthly SRA meetings. Councillor Helen Pollard writes the monthly update in The Gazette. A notable victory was gaining the rejection of the unsightly planning application at Hawthorn Crescent. The ongoing development plans for the derelict site at Bailey's/Selsdon Garage seem to have halted at the end of 2020. This continues to be an eye-sore and source of contention for all! Our Councillors have been trying to re-invigorate the High Street with ideas from the Community. Christmas 2019 saw the first Christmas market on the High Street but sadly this could not be repeated in 2020 due to the Covid risk. A new Selsdon village walk has been created and can be accessed from the Council website croydon.gov.uk/neighbourhoodwalks. A Selsdon Plan has been written and it is hoped that this document can be the basis for external funding applications (particularly given the lack of finance available from the Council). If you would like to consult your local Councillors please see the Gazette or SRA website for their details: www.selsdon-residents.co.uk/about-the-sra

Last but not least...Covid 19:

2020 has been a very difficult year, particularly for those working on the frontline or who have lost a loved one. Thanks to each and every one in Selsdon who has supported their neighbours during the crisis with friendship and/or practical help. Praise is particularly due to **Jaz Potter**, from the Croydon Jubilee Church, together with **Andy Stranack**, formally of Selsdon Contact, in the setting up of the '[Selsdon Covid-19 Support Group](#)'. This brought different organisations and volunteers together to ensure the most vulnerable were looked after. Jaz was recognised for a special 'Crisis Response' award by Mayor Sadiq Khan in December.

In total the 'Selsdon COVID-19 Support Group' provided: - Over 400 Emergency Food Bags, more than 2000 weekly ready meals (delivered by volunteers and the local Fire Brigade), 60 volunteer Street Champions in every street in Selsdon, in excess of 5000 'befriending' telephone calls to 23 elderly and vulnerable Selsdon residents and a weekly 'Zoom' Quiz to keep the community entertained. Jaz received £5000 in funding to support the continuation of such work which she has handed to 'Selsdon Contact' who support the elderly and vulnerable.

Many local businesses, charities, churches, arts venues and voluntary groups have struggled during 2020 with the lockdown and with the effect on their membership and finances. We hope that you will continue to support them with your money, time and attention. Use them or lose them! The vaccines have given us hope that the lockdown will end sometime in 2021! We hope, therefore, to see you in person either at our Community Day in September or at our next AGM in 2022! If you have an idea or would like to volunteer to help the community in some way, we would be glad to hear from you. mail2.selsdonresidents@gmail.com

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Greening Selsdon – Update

Despite being rained off on the first planned 'Triangle tidy day', a (very!) small band of determined Selsdon residents worked there the next day and finished the job (for now!). We pruned the shrubs into tidier shapes thus providing fewer hiding places for the rats. We removed the dead shrubs and the small seedling yews, hollies and other unwanted saplings, so the remaining established trees and plants (including some struggling cyclamen) had room to grow but were not all competing for the limited available light there. We picked out a lot of the weeds. We left the grass so the soil was not completely bare. We plan to scatter wildflower seeds in the area along the footpath under the yews and holly tree to try to fill in this dull spot. We realise the chances of getting 'a riot of colour' are slim though, but anything is better than nothing! As we are uncertain what is in the seed mix, it will be difficult to garden the area effectively so it will just be a question of keeping it looking tidy and interesting by removing litter and general dead-heading etc. We will gradually try to plant some evergreen ground cover too.

There is a bad crack in the wall surrounding the clock base; we have asked the Council to repair this before we plant anything in the adjoining



beds. Hopefully, it will be done as part of the rat control programme which is being undertaken by Sainsbury's and the Council; it seems that this is the site of the old public toilets which makes a good nesting place. If you see any rats in the Triangle area or around Sainsbury's shrubs etc, do please report them to the manager and/or to the Council so they are aware that the problem is still there.

Although cutting back, (excuse the pun), on care for the Triangle, we understand the Council should still be maintaining the hedge along the slip road as that would be a traffic hazard if allowed to grow any larger. Weeding at the base of it though is probably something we will have to do if we don't want it left looking untidy – any offers to adopt this job as your bit to help the community, please? You can go to do it whenever convenient for you as it can't really be done as a group exercise anyway due to the lack of space there.

We have also asked the Council once again if the trees can be trimmed (lower branches removed) so more sunlight gets through them. We also asked that the telephone mast fitters take care not to damage the daffodils if they turn up to do the work before they have all died down again. The crocuses are blooming bravely this Spring, although not easy to see through the long grass!

At the time of writing, we have had no offers of paint or help to smarten up the two planters outside Iceland. We had some words of thanks from passers-by when we were working on the Triangle (plus a can of drink and a Kit Kat each from a kind young man) but no offers of help! Come on Selsdon – please do not leave it to the same group of people all the time to do these jobs!

We will be planting the summer displays in the railing troughs and the Iceland planters, probably in late May, and they will need watering and tending from then onwards. Please let us know if you would help with that occasionally too.

Finally, just a note that we fully support the various sites around the Selsdon/ Addington area that are part of a London wide butterfly initiative this Summer. This is mentioned on the FSW website. Do take a look and perhaps make a butterfly corner in your garden too.

Linda Morris

P.S. The SRA would welcome any surplus trailing geranium plants for the railing displays along the High Street. If you could spare a few from those you are growing please contact me in May via mail2.selsdonresidents@gmail.com.

Reminder



British Summer Time starts this year when the clocks go forward at 1am on Sunday 28 March. On the last Sunday of March, the **clocks** "spring forward": they go forward by one hour. There may still be a chill in the air but remember the saying "Spring forward, Fall back".

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RIDE PROJECT IN LITTLEHEATH WOODS

If you have ventured into Littleheath Woods recently you may have found what appears to be areas of desolation with felled trees and broken branches and brush strewn on the ground.



This work was planned and follows the woodland management plan produced by the Friends of Littleheath together with The London Borough of Croydon, and supported by the Forestry Commission. The work was not funded by Croydon Council so was unaffected by their current financial situation. The work to create a Ride took place in the week commencing Monday 8th February, 2021.

As you may remember from the article in the October Gazette, Rides are open, sunny corridors through the woodland, where taller trees have been removed to allow more light in, helping a wider variety of wildlife to flourish. Short plants like grasses/herbs are at the edge of the path, they then give way to shrubs like brambles, followed by small trees and eventually taller mature trees. The Forestry Commission estimates that a greater number of species inhabit the first 10 meters of any woodland

edge or ride edge than inhabit the remainder of the woodland as they are sunnier and warmer than the woodland proper.

Where are the Rides?

The Council's Forestry Advisor proposed that two Rides be created in Littleheath Woods. One along Fields Path which links Clears Croft to Fallen Oak Field and the other on the section of the Vanguard Way which runs from the bottom of Fields Path towards the Croham Valley entrance. Contractors have taken down a number of canopy trees along the eastern edge of Fields Path but not all trees were felled; a few good specimens were left to provide wind breaks or "buffers". Sadly, many of the large trees here were not in good health – there were some very old Silver Birches, which are not particularly long-lived trees, a few unhealthy oaks and some ash which suffered from Ash Die Back. The second Ride Project (Vanguard Way towards Croham Valley entrance) will be a separate, future, project.



What Maintenance is Required?

No one can fail to notice the extensive bramble ground cover in Littleheath Woods and, whilst bramble does have great benefits in terms of shelter, nesting sites and food supply to a variety of species, it is possible to have too much of a good thing! Bramble does tend to be invasive and smothering, so in order to maintain a good "herb" layer at the Ride edge, the bramble will be cut once a year. The Friends group will regularly remove anything of any size that emerges in the herb layer as well as coppicing the hazel on a rotational basis.

Additional Contractor Work

CCF (Continuous Cover Forestry) is a process whereby groups of very old, failing and/or diseased trees are removed to open up the canopy and allow light in for new saplings to be planted and grow up as replacements.

The section of the Vanguard Way which goes uphill from Fallen Oak Field to Foxearth Path is surrounded mainly by very old sweet chestnut trees. The plan over future years is to remove a number of these in sections replant with a sessile oak, scots pine, hornbeam and rowan. Whilst on site, the contractors made a start on this process by opening up two sites which will be planted up next year.

Ian Leggatt/ Friends of Littleheath Wood

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## **LET'S MAKE SELSDON SMILE**

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## **CHEERFUL SCARECROW**

## **COMPETITION**

**May 2021**

**Closing date for entry receipt is 17th May**



## **A message from the SRA Committee**

We hope that by the time you read this, Lockdown will be at (or nearing) its end and we will all be looking forward to happier times. To help with this, the SRA is running a Cheerful Scarecrow Competition. We invite you to design and make a figure to make us all smile as we walk past your porch or front garden. The figure can be a traditional styled model or perhaps a 'depiction' of a celebrity/film or book character/animal. You can make one, a pair or a family if you feel really creative! The only rule is that the scarecrow(s) have to be completely home-made from items you have at hand or have foraged elsewhere – no ready-made ones allowed! Purchases of some items of clothing and accessories are permitted if made locally from our traders and charity shops, if needed to complete your figure of cheerfulness.

The scarecrows will be judged from the pavement or your driveway (to maintain social distance, if that is still needed) between 24<sup>th</sup> – 31st May. It would be nice if the scarecrows could be left in place for some time after then to carry on bringing more smiles to Selsdon. There is no entry fee but we will need an entry form to be submitted to

[SRAscarecrow@gmail.com](mailto:SRAscarecrow@gmail.com) so we know where to find the entries, their name and who made them. A prize will be given to the best of the entries.

The entry form, below, will also be downloadable from our website [www.selsdon-residents.co.uk](http://www.selsdon-residents.co.uk) and again in the April Gazette.

Alternatively, please deliver to any of the committee addresses or c/o the Selsdon Co-Operative Funeralcare, 178 Addington Road, CR2 8LB if you do not have access to the internet or email.

**Please show us your support by joining in the creative fun!**

| Closing date 17th May to be in time for judging 24th-31st May                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Resident's name:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |
| Address:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  |
| Telephone number:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  |
| Email address:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  |
| Scarecrow's name<br>(if it has one!)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |  |
| <p>If not printing it, please copy this form layout to help us sort the entries for the judges' route.</p> <p>Please send it, duly completed, by email to <a href="mailto:SRAscarecrow@gmail.com">SRAscarecrow@gmail.com</a></p> <p>If you do not have email, please deliver to a SRA committee member or to the SRA c/o Selsdon Co-Operative Funeralcare, 178 Addington Road, CR2 8LB.</p> |  |

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## Gone for Ever, but a Clue to the Past

I was very interested to read the item in the January Gazette by Ian Leggatt about the origin of many road names in Selsdon. Perhaps I can add another to the list - Cowley Close. This was a 1960s development off the Addington Rd. You might just be able to read the road name, on the corner by the 20mph sign, seen on following page.



In my young days this area was Cowley's Nursery. It was a fairly big area on both sides of the Close and stretched down to the houses in Sundale Ave. There had originally been two Cowley Nurseries. The other one was down in Addington, adjacent to Gravel Hill. These two nurseries were originally owned by a Mr Cowley. Poor Mr Cowley died in the 1940s so the nursery at Addington was sold off for housing.

The Selsdon nursery was then run by Mr Hart. Several years later, as a young teenager, I got a Saturday and school holiday job at the nursery. Planting, weeding, watering, picking fruit, cutting flowers, and much more, but I really enjoyed my varied tasks.

Mr Hart was by then a very old man who dressed like a tramp. In all the time I worked for him, I never once saw him not wearing his battered flat cap and ancient corduroy trousers. He always had a rolled-up cigarette in his mouth, which kept going out but remained glued to his lower lip, to be re-lit with his Zippo lighter. The only time he didn't have it in his mouth, was when he was drinking a mug of tea in the back office/storeroom.

His one and only fulltime employee, was a young lady, named Ruth. She did virtually everything. She ran the shop, made us copious mugs of tea, always had a huge cauldron of boiling beetroots simmering on a gas ring, opened up, locked up, etc, etc. She was a gem! Although Mr Hart was on the face of it, a grumpy old man, he did have a softer side once you got to know him, and I look back with fond memories to those days as his dog's body.

One of the major parts of the business was growing tomatoes in the several greenhouses. There, I spent hours, watering to fatten them up.

These tomatoes were much sought after by Selsdon's more discerning housewives. However, there was a much-guarded secret to Mr Hart's delicious tomatoes, which I will reveal later!

One of the perks of my job was getting rides in Mr Hart's old Ford Anglia van. (My Dad never had a car, so a ride in this old van was a real outing for me!). In late summer it was fruit picking time and I would be driven to orchards in the local countryside to pick apples, pears and Victoria plums. One orchard was at the ancient St Mary's Church at Addington.



Its equally ancient walled garden dated back to when it was part of the grounds of a country palace belonging to the Archbishop of Canterbury. One of the old flint walls of the garden, flanking the side of Spout Hill, had a drinking fountain built into it - very handy for me on a hot fruit picking day. And so now you know why Spout Hill is so called. The spring feeding the drinking fountain was spouting water!

My favourite van rides were our weekly deliveries of fruit and veg to the club house restaurant of Addington Palace golf club (the old Archbishop's Palace). The sacks of spuds, cabbages, etc were too heavy for Mr Hart to lift, hence my job before forklift trucks were invented. Leaving the golf club, we had two options, either down the very steep part of Gravel Hill, or the much longer and steeper hill going down towards Addiscombe and Croydon. To save petrol Mr Hart always free wheeled down hills. With these two steep hills the battered old van got up to warp speeds, it was just like a ride on a roller coaster!

And now I come to the secret of Mr Hart's delicious, home grown tomatoes.

Mr Hart had to maximise his sales, so during the weeks when they were in season, after the golf club run, instead of going back to Selsdon via Gravel Hill, Mr Hart free wheeled in the opposite direction into Croydon and its



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**Roy Brady MCiphe**

Surrey Street Market. Here, Mr Hart had a long-standing arrangement with a barrow boy who sold – yes, you’ve guessed it Dutch tomatoes! My job was to spirit the heavy crates into the back of the nursery to unpack and take these “lovely home-grown tomatoes” into the nursery shop to supplement the genuine home-grown crop. I can always remember one of the regular customers who would say, plucking the stalk off a big juicy tomato, “You can always tell a home-grown tomato by the way the stalk comes off. Not like that Dutch rubbish!” I could hardly contain my stifled chuckles. But gone forever is Cowley’s Nursery. Just the street name plate remains to remind me of the old fraudster, Mr. Hart!

**Des Donohoe** ( [des.oldselsdon@gmail.com](mailto:des.oldselsdon@gmail.com) )



## A Good Time for Gardening – March 2021



There has been snow on the ground as we have been contemplating what to include in this month's article. Sitting behind the glass in the sunshine is quite lovely. Let's think about when, hopefully, the sun will be shining on us as we work in the garden.

Here are a few jobs to be doing outside, weather permitting:

- Prune roses to encourage strong growth and then give them a feed with special rose food or a balanced fertiliser
- Cut back early flowering clematis, once their flowers have finished. Also cut back the coloured dogwood (cornus) stems right down to their bases, to encourage new stem growth for next winter
- Cut back dead foliage from ornamental grasses to make way for this year's growth
- Prune over wintered fuchsias, back to one or two buds on each shoot. This will encourage a bushy growth habit
- Trim winter-flowering heathers as the flowers disappear, to prevent the plants becoming leggy
- Cut old leaves off hellebores to make the spring flowers more visible
- Deadhead winter pansies to stop them going to seed. This encourages new blooms throughout the spring
- Keep an eye out for slugs as the weather warms and deal with them

- Give the grass its first cut but only on a dry day and with the mower blades on the highest setting



### **Daffodil** – the iconic spring flower

The daffodil symbolizes rebirth and new beginnings. It became associated with new beginnings (and the coming of spring) because it is one of the first perennials to bloom after the winter frost. ... The Latin name for daffodil is Narcissus. It is believed to be named after the son of

the river god from Greek mythology. In the myth, Narcissus was very handsome but also vain. He so loved looking at his reflection in a pond that he was turned into a flower whose head looked down at his reflection in the pond.

A few facts about daffodils:

- There are more than 50 different wild daffodils.
- Daffodils provide 'galantamine' which is used in the treatment of Alzheimer's Disease.
- They are the national symbol of Wales and are worn on 1<sup>st</sup> March, St David's Day.
- Cut daffodils, in a vase, will kill any other flowers due to natural poisons.
- The shortest daffodil grows to only 10cm (4") high and the tallest is 80cm (33").
- After flowering, dead head the bloom but don't cut back the stem or leaves for up to 6 weeks. This enables the plants natural nutrients to feed the bulb for the following year.

**Frederick, Cedric and  
Sunflower Sid**

**[www.sandersteadhorticultural  
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## Riddles – What am I?



1. I have a head and a tail but no body. What am I?
2. I have a tongue but cannot talk, I don't have legs but can run and walk. What am I?
3. The drier you get the wetter I do. What am I?
4. I have a face and hands but I cannot hold anything or smile. What am I?
5. I do have a spine but don't have a face, although I'm not clothing, I'm stored in a case. What am I?
6. Tall when young and short when old. What am I?
7. I go in dry but come out wet, the longer I'm in the stronger it gets. What am I?
8. One way I'm loose, one way I'm tight. Out with the left and in with the right. What am I?
9. What do you go in through one hole and come out through two?
10. I go around the world but never leave the corner. What am I?

### Answers after Nature Notes

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## Recollections on a Wintry Day

The recent wintry weather reminds me of when we moved to Selsdon in January 1982. That winter there was a severe cold wave that formed in early December 1981 and lasted until mid-late January 1982. It brought some of the coldest, snowiest and severest weather ever recorded in the UK.

There was also a rail strike in January and February meaning no trains on some days of the week. I was working in London at the time and a six-month season ticket from South Croydon cost around £240. On strike days, I took the 234 bus from Selsdon to Hackbridge and then another bus to Tooting

Broadway to pick up the Northern line. There were two other bus routes serving Selsdon back then, the 12A and 64. The 64 was operated with Routemasters (remember conductors) and went via Coombe Road and Park Lane into Croydon instead of over Park Hill. The 12A terminated at Selsdon and was operated by single deck vehicles, running through Croydon to Forest Hill.

Selsdon was quite different back then. For example, there were several banks and building society branches, ironmongers Hubbard and Nash and Barnett's hairdressers above the Co-op (now the Sir Julian Huxley). A little further afield, there was a large garden centre/nursery opposite Sanderstead Church and Marleys (later Payless) for DIY needs in the old farm buildings on Limsfield Road in Sanderstead.



Selsdon's focal point, as now, was the Triangle where there were below-ground public toilets at one time. (were they still there in 1982?). A watering can was also kept there to top up bus

radiators. Which brings me to the large public library which stood on what is now the Sainsbury's site on Addington Road and dated from the 1960s. Next to the library and in the same building was the community facility, the Selsdon Hall.



Near to the library and in a separate building was the Centre for the Retired, opened in 1979. A large public pay and display car park (40p for an hour) was situated between the Library building and Croydon High School, accessed from Old Farleigh Road.

During the 1990s, the whole site started to be looked at for retail development and, eventually, Sainsbury's submitted a planning proposal for a new



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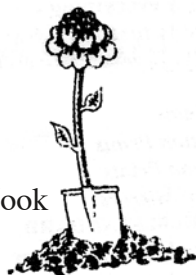
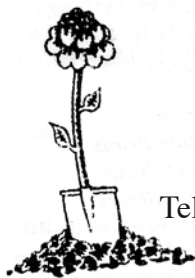
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supermarket, incorporating a replacement library and communal facilities, opened in 2003. I took some photographs of the site shortly after work started.

**Robert Mitchell**

*If you know any hard facts about the Selsdon Triangle underground toilets please email the editor (selsdongazettesra@gmail.com).*

~~

## **St. Patrick's Day Wednesday 17 March 2021**

One of the most well-known patron saints of a country is St. Patrick of Ireland. He was born to wealthy parents in Northern Britain about 385AD as Maewyn Succat. When he was only sixteen, he was kidnapped by Irish pirates and for the next six years he worked as a slave shepherd in Ireland. He felt that the Lord protected him during this time and he became a devout Christian. He managed to escape his captivity and he spent the next 15 years or so in a monastery, eventually training to become a missionary, converting pagans to Christianity. The Christian name that he adopted was Patricius.



When he was appointed as the second bishop to Ireland he returned to the land of his captors. At the time Ireland was largely pagan so he faced an enormous task. He travelled from village to village and proved very successful at winning converts. Many churches, schools and monasteries were set up, laying the foundations for Ireland to become a Christian country.

Patrick's missionary work in Ireland continued for thirty years. When he retired it was to County Down in North East Ireland. He died in 461AD on 17 March, hence this is the day that we celebrate St. Patrick. It has become the day to recognise Irish heritage and is celebrated by people in many parts of the world, such as the United States, Canada and Australia.

People wear a shamrock on St. Patrick's Day because, legend says, St. Patrick used its three leaves to explain the Holy Trinity (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) in his teachings.



We welcome your letters so do **please get in touch** if you have something to share with Selsdon residents.

Please remember to state your name, address, contact number and publication anonymity

requirements in **all** correspondence to the Editor. Anonymity can be granted on request, but anonymously sent letters/e-mails will not be published. Publication dates may mean a delay between receipt of your letters and when they appear.

*I received a letter from two residents who wanted to tell others about their favourite charity.*

Dear Editor,

### **Médecins Sans Frontières**

I am reading a thank you card. It's a card with a difference, sent by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), an international, medical humanitarian organisation working in 65 countries around the world. Their medical teams act fast to save people's lives in conflict zones, natural disasters, and other emergencies. MSF are independent and impartial; they go where they are most needed.

On one side of the card there's a photo of a little girl of 10, smiling as a nurse beckons, encouraging her to come towards her. Aya Omar, 10, is attending a physiotherapy session in Aden, Yemen, after she lost her leg when a bomb was thrown at her family's home. The girl's courage and spirit are deeply moving.

On the reverse of the card, I read how Hannah Thompson, a British midwife working in a remote part of north-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, is called to assist a woman in labour who has atypical eclampsia and is in convulsions. Hannah writes:

*"We immediately started giving magnesium sulphate, and I was so grateful yet again that, thanks to MSF, my patient has access to these drugs. After a tense night she was stabilised and by morning she was sitting up, eating and breastfeeding her new-born baby. Some things are the same whether you're in the DRC or Newcastle-upon-Tyne. And that is ultimately the reason why I work for MSF, because women deserve excellent care and the best chance of success the world over. Thank you for being part of the team that makes this possible."*

She is thanking us for being part of the team! All we have done is respond to the request from the family of a friend who died recently, that donations

should be sent to MSF. We are simply thankful that we are able to support her vital work.

Although we have been MSF supporters for some time and have been inspired by the examples of their work in their quarterly 'Dispatches', we never cease to be moved by the selfless and dedicated medical professionals who provide their services free of charge to help others in dire need, often in dangerous situations the world over.

Donors' money pays for millions of consultations, operations, treatments and vaccinations every year. MSF delivers care directly rather than through local partner organisations. They set up and run medical services, train local staff and respond to fast moving emergencies, as well as longer-term crises.

Everyone has their preferred charitable organisation, but we strongly commend MSF to your readers.

***Bill and Sue Gale***

Dear Editor,

*(A personal reflection of the past year living in fear of contracting coronavirus)*

Hooray, I've had my first Covid injection! When a small child I could never have imagined being delighted to ever receive an injection. But with this particular injection there appears light at the end of a very long dreary tunnel. Now please give me the second one as soon as possible, and I will be able to see and hug the members of my family for real, which hasn't been feasible for months! There must be people feeling as I do, all around the world. At least it is a shared longing worldwide, the same as the worry is. It amazes me that people chose not to have the vaccination. Don't they have people they cannot visit, people they love who are out of reach? Different if there is a medical reason of course. Once this is all over, I want to put all thoughts of Coronavirus in a rocket and fire the thoughts into space, and never hear another word about it!!

When this snow melts, I shall rush like a rocket into my garden and begin weeding, cutting down what is dead and further planning my colourful summer garden with the odd pot with vegetables and fruit to experiment with, tucked into the quieter parts. I wish to be able to pick fruit that is home grown and freeze it, or make jam! Fortunately, it is still possible to buy Kilner jars and modern versions too. When a tiny child I visited

my granny and she sometimes had an entire cupboard filled with jars of home-made jams and bottled fruit. As I grew older, she let me assist her in jam making during the school holidays. Both my mother's generation, my own and the younger generation went out to work, but it must be great to pass on a skill like that to the upcoming generation.

It's not just women passing on domestic skills, grandpa had an awl and cobbler's last and he mended our shoes. He could make things from wood and repair broken things, fix a leaking tap, etc. He grew loads of vegetables too. Working hard for academic skills is wonderful, but recently we have been reminded that some of the old skills are necessary too. Additionally, they can be therapeutic to do.

There has been quite a peaceful element in not having to rush to catch a train, rush to get to a meeting on time; to just sit quietly and not be disturbed is wonderful too. Or to sit in an armchair watching, via the internet, somewhere in a distant country far away, with a person who knows about it, explaining to you in English, while you sip a drink, but you do not need to queue for an aeroplane, or wait for one endlessly in an airport lounge to get there, or develop an upset stomach when you arrive. It is fascinating to visit distant places and full of interest, and you can put the programme on hold while you go to eat a meal, and to continue where you left off on your return.

This Christmas just passed we, in our family, all Zoomed a pantomime to share. "Oh yes we did"! The baddy was behind them - but socially distanced of course, there were great gaps in the seating and the audience wore masks. Not quite as much fun as normal but still a laugh without the especially happy atmosphere, usually provided by the very excited children calling out in the audience.

Spring is nearly here, hooray and three cheers!!! I shall grow some rocket plants on the kitchen window sill.

**Jessica Blake**

*As the Selsdon Gazette aims to be a non-political publication, I include this response to Dudley Mead's article in February's edition to give an opposing view to his about the Council's finances.*



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Information is also available from our website – **[www.eldonhousing.org](http://www.eldonhousing.org)**

Dear Editor,

I was delighted to find the February Gazette on my return from hospital. It contained many interesting articles and historical items of interest to a long-standing resident of Selsdon and helpful adverts. I was, therefore, shocked to come to the "Dear Editor" section at page 37. The very well-known Mr Dudley Mead had contributed an article "History Repeats Itself" quoting from a book written by David McKie.

Mr Mead's horizons undoubtedly extend beyond Croydon, but to bring some context it is necessary to confirm that, as announced recently by our very own BBC, 148 out of 173 Local Councils contacted by them had confirmed they were in severe financial difficulties with serious shortfalls. Amongst others Barnet, Tameside, Trafford, Wiltshire, Liverpool, Nottingham and Leeds are all in dire circumstances and S114 Notices are under consideration. Birmingham stated their situation was so severe a S114 Notice would not make any difference. Leeds is unfortunately having to consider selling over 60 bowling greens to any takers to raise vital funds, much to the outrage of their large older bowling population.

Indeed, the Local Government Association, the umbrella body for all councils, says by 2020 councils will have faced a reduction of core funding from our government since 2010 of nearly £16bn - a loss of 60p in every £1.

The fact that most LAs in England are suffering a similar plight following 10 years of Tory Austerity and cuts to every facet of our society is indisputable. The pandemic on top of this is disastrous. Croydon Council appear to be taking a pro-active stance and actively dealing with the problems. It is inevitable cuts to non-essential services will have to be made in Croydon and other boroughs across the UK, even to the extent of Croydon Council not contributing to Selsdon's Christmas lights.

Surely anybody paying attention other than to themselves will realise with so many now unemployed, furloughed or for those 3M unfortunates without any income at all, little tax is being paid. Not only will we have to tighten our belts locally but before long we will have to do so nationally. What is left to be sacrificed after 10 years of Austerity? We will just have to find our famous Dunkirk spirit, keep calm and carry on.

***Name and address supplied***

## Poetry Corner

March 21 is World Poetry Day, so Mary Gill thought this appropriate

### OLD POEMS

I strive for originality, yet  
I only have old poems: reused rhymes;  
Old rhythms that have certainly been met  
In other people's work a dozen times.  
The words I use are not unique to me.  
The themes are not original – not new.  
They all have been reprocessed endlessly-  
Despair and love and loss to name a few.  
Great poets conjure fresh words from thin air.  
Will Shakespeare gave us hundreds, so 'tis said.  
My metaphors aren't startling or rare,  
But hackneyed, commonplace – even inbred.  
I only have old poems – patchwork verse;  
Recycled scraps that someone else wrote first.



*Following January's Poetry Corner, I had a note from Penny Chew about the coronavirus poem that I had attributed to Pam Ayres. Apparently, it was written by Jan Beaumont but even Pam Ayres acknowledges that it sounds like one of hers!*

~~

### Nature Notes from Ted Forsyth – Missing Fungi

A glance at any Fungi Field Guide will show hundreds of fungi which have not been recorded in Selsdon Wood but that is not entirely what concerns me. Many of these fungi require particular habitats such as very sandy soils, very acid soils, or decaying Elm or Willow trees which are not found in the wood. We do have a few Elm but they currently seem perfectly healthy. There are other green spaces around Croydon where fungal species can be found, either regularly or occasionally, like Littleheath Woods, Addington Hills, Lloyd Park, Croham Hurst, Coulsdon Common, Hutchinson's Bank and Chapel Bank. Habitat does not seem to differ too greatly from that in Selsdon Wood so it might be worth looking at a few fungi which have been found on some of these sites. Fungal spores are generally very light and can be carried to great heights in the atmosphere

and could be deposited anywhere. Is this how various places in England, including Selsdon Wood, acquired **Crimped Gill** – *Plicatura crispa* – which looks rather like Turkeytail but is usually confined to Scotland?

**Wrinkled Peach** (*Rhodotus palmatus*) has recently appeared on a collapsing Elm in Lloyd Park so it could be one to watch out for when our Elms show signs of decay. A very small specimen, thought to be this species, was found on a fallen tree trunk in Three Corner Grove at the southern end of Hutchinson's Bank.



White Saddle

I have found **White Saddle** (*Helvella crispa*) in leaf litter in two places on Chapel Bank and along the roadside in Farleigh Court Road.

The relatively uncommon **Violet Coral** (*Clavaria zollingeri*) was recorded in grassland on Hutchinson's Bank.

**Parasitic Bolete** (*Pseudoboletus parasiticus*) may not be entirely parasitic

but it grows in close association with Common Earthball. I have found dozens of them on Coulsdon Common and one specimen on Croham Hurst.

**Porcelain Fungus** (*Oudemansiella mucida*) grows particularly on Beech, sometimes high up on the tree, and has occurred in Littleheath Woods.

**Beechmast Candlesnuff** (*Xylaria carpophila*)

as its common name suggests looks like a thin version of the normal Candlesnuff but is confined to growing on Beech mast. This one has always eluded my attempts to find it though I suspect it is common where there is a lot of beech mast.

Rotting wet wood can support various fungi. One such is **Common Grey Disco** (*Mollisia cinerea*) which grows in large groups of small whitish discs.

I found a similar species **Snowy Disco** (*Lachnium virgineum*) by turning over a wet piece of bark. For species like this it is probably necessary to make a deliberate attempt to find them. If you do turn over bark or branches always replace them in the same position.



Parasitic Bolete



Common Bird's Nest

The same is true of several species which we have recorded but on only a few occasions. The small **Common Bird's Nest** (*Crucibulum laeve*) on fallen twigs and other plant debris, found once in the part of Vincent Avenue between Jubilee Plantation and Greenhill Way, and nearby was the even smaller orange disc surrounded by dark filaments which was **Common Eyelash** (*Scutellinia scutellata*). Brown Cup (*Rutstroemia firma*) on dead branches of Oak and Hazel, and a

relative with no common name (**Rutstroemia echinophila**) which can be found by examining old Sweet Chestnut husks.

**Pipe Club** (*Macrotyphula fistulosa*) is a pale upright fungus usually growing on woody litter but has been seen on attached thin branches.

A relative, originally thought to be a variety of this species, is now considered to be a separate species (**Macrotyphula contorta**) and has no common name. It is highly distorted and was found on a thin Hazel branch which was still attached to the tree though it is usually thought to appear on fallen woody litter.

There are many, often small fungi waiting to be found by any sharp-eyed optimist willing to look. See what you can find this year, even in winter conditions!

*Please take photos of your finds and we will see if Ted can name them - Editor*

~~

## Answers to What Am I?

- |                    |                     |                       |
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| 1. A coin          | 5. Book             | 9. A pair of trousers |
| 2. Shoe or trainer | 6. Candle or pencil | 10. A postage stamp   |
| 3. Towel           | 7. Tea bag          |                       |
| 4. Clock           | 8. Screw            |                       |

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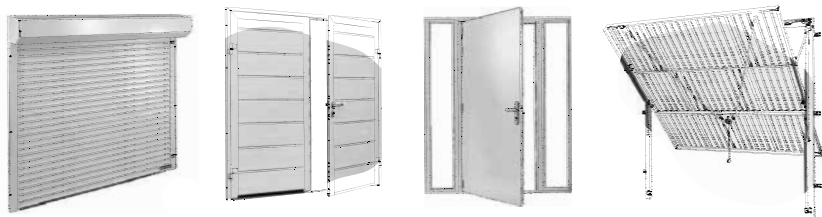
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# **A SELECTED LIST OF SELSDON ORGANISATIONS**

The information provided is, we hope, accurate, but we cannot take any responsibility for any mistakes. Any alterations should be sent to the Editor.

## **CHURCHES**

|                                                   |                |              |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Forestdale & Selsdon Community Church             |                | 8657 0078    |
| St John the Divine (Church of England)            | Parish Office  | 8657 2343    |
| Selsdon Baptist                                   | Office         | 8651 4308    |
| St Columba's (Roman Catholic)                     |                | 8657 3747    |
| St Francis (Church of England)                    | Monks Hill     | 8657 7864    |
| Croydon Jubilee Church                            | Office         | 8651 2807    |
| Upper Selsdon Road Hall (Christian meeting place) |                | 8657 2417    |
| Church of Jesus Christ of LDS                     | Bishop Hawkins | 01883 349914 |

## **DOCTORS, DENTISTS & EMERGENCY CARE**

|                                                                               |           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Farley Road Medical Practice                                                  | 8651 1222 |
| Queenhill Medical Practice                                                    | 8651 1141 |
| Selsdon Park Medical Practice                                                 | 8657 0067 |
| Croydon University Hospital (formerly Mayday Hospital, 24/7)                  | 8401 3000 |
| New Addington Minor Injuries Unit (Mon-Fri 14:00-22:00/Sat-Sun 12:00-22:00)   | 8251 7225 |
| Purley War Memorial Hospital (Urgent Care Centre, 08:00-20:00, 365 days/year) | 8401 3238 |

## **CLUBS, GROUPS & CHARITIES**

|                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                 |               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| CONTACT (neighbourhood care)                                                                                                  | Jasmine Singh                                                                                   | 8651 4944     |
| Selsdon Centre for the Retired                                                                                                | Craig Anderson                                                                                  | 8651 1111     |
| Croydon Hearing Resource Centre                                                                                               | Office                                                                                          | 8686 0049     |
| Bourne Society                                                                                                                | Roger Packham                                                                                   | 01883 349287  |
| Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society                                                                                  | Brian Lancaster                                                                                 | 8668 6909     |
| Croydon Recorded Music Society                                                                                                | Liz Brereton                                                                                    | 8656 7382     |
| Croydon Voluntary Association for the Blind                                                                                   |                                                                                                 | 8668 2486     |
| Cruse Bereavement Care Helpline                                                                                               |                                                                                                 | 8916 0855     |
| Friends of Littleheath Woods                                                                                                  | Ian Leggatt                                                                                     | 8651 1140     |
| Friends of Selsdon Wood                                                                                                       | see website: <a href="http://www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk">www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk</a> |               |
| Rainbows, Brownies, Guides & Senior Section                                                                                   |                                                                                                 |               |
| Girlguiding UK: <a href="http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get_involved.aspx">http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get_involved.aspx</a> |                                                                                                 | 0800 169 5901 |
| Parkinson's UK Croydon & District                                                                                             | Jacky Green                                                                                     | 01737 355487  |
| Police (Selsdon & Ballards SNT)                                                                                               | Beat Officer:                                                                                   | 8721 2464     |
| RSPB, Croydon Local Group                                                                                                     | John Davis                                                                                      | 8640 4578     |
| Rotary Sanderstead and Selsdon                                                                                                | Wendy A Parr                                                                                    | 07774 186792  |
| Probus Club of Croydon South                                                                                                  | John Barker                                                                                     | 8657 2093     |
| St John's Dramatic Society                                                                                                    | Caryl Rapps                                                                                     | 8651 1326     |
| St John's Wives                                                                                                               | Jane Guglielmi                                                                                  | 8657 6672     |
| Sanderstead Plantation Partners                                                                                               | Michael Lishmund                                                                                | 020 8651 2760 |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Selsdon & Addington Scout Group:                                                                              | Website: <a href="http://www.1stselsdon.org.uk">www.1stselsdon.org.uk</a>                       |               |
| Beaver Colony (6-8yrs)                                                                                                        | Maddie Dunn                                                                                     | 07703 531652  |
| Cub Pack (8-10yrs)                                                                                                            | Louise Baker                                                                                    | 07737 404668  |
| Scouts Troop (10-14yrs)                                                                                                       | Douglas Gordon                                                                                  | 07514 651711  |
| Croham Valley Explorers                                                                                                       | Anthony Woodin                                                                                  | 020 8651 3780 |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Selsdon & Addington Scout Group:                                                                              | Website: <a href="http://www.2ndSandAScoutGroup.org.uk">www.2ndSandAScoutGroup.org.uk</a>       |               |
| Selsdon Art Group                                                                                                             | Mrs F Hooper                                                                                    | 07973 412952  |
| Selsdon Bridge Club                                                                                                           | Tony Cherrett                                                                                   | 01883 730304  |
| Selsdon Community Hall                                                                                                        | Tim Potter (Centre Manager)                                                                     | 8657 4300     |
| Selsdon Afternoon Townswomen's Guild                                                                                          | Elizabeth Veasey                                                                                | 8657 1092     |
| Selsdon Floral Club                                                                                                           | Maureen Browning                                                                                | 8651 5821     |
| Selsdon Social Club                                                                                                           |                                                                                                 |               |
| Selsdon Tennis Club                                                                                                           | Geoff Littlewood                                                                                | 8651 4748     |
| 66 (Selsdon) Squadron Air Training Corps                                                                                      | Rob Cleeter                                                                                     | 8651 5958     |



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