



The Selsdon Gazette

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November 2020

THE SELSDON GAZETTE

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There is no August Gazette.

The view expressed by contributors to the Selsdon Gazette are their own and are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Selsdon Gazette or the Selsdon Residents' Association. All letters printed as received.

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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 November edition of the Selsdon Gazette! As I write this, Croydon has just been classed as a Covid-19 high alert level area and subject to Tier 2 restrictions as the rates of new infections and hospital admissions have rapidly increased. We must all follow the new rules which are aimed at reducing our social contact to prevent the virus spreading in our community. Nevertheless, please remember to shop locally whenever possible to help our local shops and businesses through a very difficult time.

These are challenging times and I would love to hear from you about how your lives have changed. Please consider writing an article for the December Gazette. This could be sharing your experiences of the pandemic or stories about the festive season, both past and present. Any contribution whether it is a recollection, poem or activity to try can be sent to me by email to (selsdongazettesra@gmail.com).

Our cover for the Gazette this month is a photo of a family I met one damp Saturday morning doing a fantastic job picking up litter along the Addington Road. They had volunteered as Street Champions with Croydon Council to improve the environment in our local area. They told me that they lived at Monk's Hill and were members of Selsdon Baptist Church. Croydon has now signed up 510 volunteers as Street Champions doing a brilliant job for us throughout the Borough. If you are interested in joining get in contact with the team on champions@croydon.gov.uk / 0208 726 6200 / 07825 103788.

In this issue we have many articles about the great outdoors that, fortunately living in Selsdon, we can all enjoy. There is also a Christmas preparation theme with 'Stir up Sunday' on the horizon and our gardening feature looks at plants available in the Christmas period. I hope that you enjoy your read.

Best wishes, keep safe and I do look forward to hearing from you!

Chris Jones

✎ SUBMISSIONS FOR THE DECEMBER 2020 EDITION
SHOULD BE WITH THE EDITOR NO LATER THAN
20TH NOVEMBER - PREFERABLY BEFORE! ✎

SRA NEWS 'n' VIEWS

Hawthorn Crescent

We received amazing good news that the development by Brick by Brick on the green space in front of Hawthorn Crescent was refused due to the hard work of Andy Stranack and Ali Ball. This gives hope to other developments that residents object to.

Purley Pool

This is threatened with possible closure by Croydon Council and if anyone would like to object, they can do so at a non-political site as follows
<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/croydon-council-please-re-open-purley-leisure-centre>

Gazette Finance Manager

Our present Finance Manager is leaving her post at the end of December and we have placed an advert in this edition and posters around Selsdon but if anyone could help, we would love to hear from you. I or Linda are happy to answer any questions and our details are at the front of the Gazette. The Gazette Delivery team are always looking for volunteers so if anyone can help either on a regular basis or temporary to cover holidays (what are those?) or sickness please contact Wendy Mikiel whose details are on the back of the cover.
Look forward to hearing from you.

Post

A number of residents have said they have missed postal deliveries so we contacted our MP, Chris Philp, and he sent us the response from the Post Office which just said it was all due to sickness and holidays but apologised for any inconvenience. Another consequence of Covid!

Christmas Lights

These should be shining brightly as you read this as we decided to have them switched on a little earlier this year to cheer us all up hopefully. To help raise funds you can order goods from several major retailers via
<https://easyfunding.org.uk/causes/selsdonchristmaslights>
Money is donated to the lights every time you shop at no cost to yourselves. Either download the app or use the site as your starting point.

BBC News

The website has a very interesting article which I recommend you read about our borough.

It reports that research carried out recently found that Croydon and Camden are in the top 20 places in England and Wales with the most tree cover. A third of the borough is covered in trees with tree lined streets and gardens helping to push up numbers. It said “60,80,100 years ago a lot of this area was open heathland and was managed and grazed”.

Just proves what a lovely place we live in for outdoor spaces. Enjoy!

Sheila Childs, SRA Chair

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COUNCILLORS' NOTES

SELSDON COMMUNITY PLAN

There was another meeting of the Selsdon Community Plan Steering Group on 16th September. The Group is working towards the production of a Selsdon Plan which can be the basis of future investment in Selsdon. Work started on the plan last year and there was a consultation exercise in late 2019/early 2020. Over a thousand people were consulted through five community events and an online survey. They were asked what they liked about Selsdon, how they thought it could be improved and their priorities and ideas for the future. Based on this work, a set of ‘quick-win’ projects have been identified.

The next step is to refine the draft plan, that has been developed by the Steering Group, by the end of the year. A follow up document, Part Two of the Selsdon Community Plan, will be developed focusing on longer term priorities and projects.

We will include a link to Part One of the completed plan when it is finalised later this year.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Selsdon Community Plan so far. We look forward to using this work to enable future investment in Selsdon.

HAWTHORN CRESCENT – SAVED FROM COUNCIL’S DEVELOPERS



Cllr. Andy Stranack, Cllr. Stuart Millson and Ali Ball (Resident of Hawthorn Crescent) held a socially distant celebration on the green space at Hawthorn Crescent in September. This followed a famous victory at the planning committee on 24th September when plans to concrete over the precious green space were firmly rejected. This was the first time that an application by the Labour Council owned Brick by Brick property company has been rejected by the Labour controlled planning committee and represents a significant victory for residents and the local Councillors.

Cllr. Andy Stranack said: - “This has been a tough fight to save this green space but it shows what can be achieved when we all work together. On Thursday night I thought Mr Ball’s speech outlining the impact the loss of green space would have on residents’ mental health was particularly powerful.”

Cllr. Stuart Millson added: - “We now need to work with residents to make sure that this green space is preserved for future generations,



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residents are already putting forward plans for a memorial bench and more ambitious plans to open up the air raid shelter that lies beneath the ground. I look forward to working with residents as these plans move forward.”

COUNCIL PLANS TO INCREASE PARKING CHARGES

In September the council reopened its consultation on introducing “emissions-based charging” to streets around the borough. From January 2021, the Labour Council plans to introduce a sliding scale of parking charges on streets and parking bays across Croydon. Ostensibly, the scheme is designed to penalise cars with higher emissions. The consultation also proposes to remove 30 minute and one-hour free parking bays, despite clear oppositions from local businesses.

Concerns have been raised about the impact on local businesses at a time when the council should be doing everything in its power to support traders:

- **Detrimental for local businesses**, at a time when the council should be doing everything to support traders – not only will this discourage people to shop local, it could encourage people to jump in the car and drive to shopping districts in neighbouring boroughs. This will be detrimental to local traders and, ironically, worse for local air quality. The removal of free parking bays could seriously harm attempts by businesses to get back on their feet.
- **Discriminates against low earners** – this policy disadvantages those who lack the cash to change car quickly.
- **Unlikely to deliver improvements in air quality** – mileage is not considered in the new charging scheme. Many people will be penalised by this scheme despite being responsible for only minimal emissions.
- **No way to measure success or failure** – it’s very unclear what difference these changes will make to air quality and the council has no mechanism for measuring whether it has had any impact.
- **Conflicting aims of the scheme** – the council has cited this policy as one which will help them recover from their financial crisis by raising an extra £1m. This suggests they do not really expect behaviour change to result from it. Questions have been raised as to whether it’s really been designed to raise money.

Cllr Gareth Streeter, Conservative spokesperson for Transport, Environment and Regeneration says, "Despite this being a consultation, the revenue the Labour Council hope to raise from this has already been written into the budget. As such, it's hard for residents to trust that their objections are going to be taken seriously. We welcome the aim of improving air quality but it's very unclear how this scheme will contribute to that objective. Croydon does not exist in a bubble and the most likely outcome is that local traders will see business disappear to nearby boroughs. Labour is failing to support local enterprises at a time when they really need the council to be on their side."

The consultation closed on 22nd October 2020 but local councillors made their objections known to the Council.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

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

If you have any issues you wish to discuss with your councillor please get in touch by email:

Helen.pollard@croydon.gov.uk

Robert.ward@croydon.gov.uk

Stuart.millson@croydon.gov.uk

Andy.stranack@croydon.gov.uk

PLANNING APPLICATIONS OCTOBER 2020

20/04285/FUL – 147 Addington Road, South Croydon, CR2 8LH
Change of use from existing barbers/tattoo studio to full use as a tattoo studio.

20/04162/HSE – 23 Ballards Way, South Croydon, CR2 7JP
Erection of a single storey rear extension, extension to the existing garage and conversion of the garage into a habitable room.

20/04100/LP – 1 Chapel View, South Croydon, CR2 7LG
Erection of an outbuilding for use as a gym in the rear garden.

20/04381/HSE – 113 Farley Road, South Croydon, CR2 7NL
Demolition of garage and erection of a two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, hip to gable roof extension including rear dormer extension, and a porch extension.

20/05061/LP – 1 Selsdon Park Road, South Croydon, CR2 8JE
Erection of outbuilding.

20/05335/HSE – 4 Sundale Avenue, South Croydon, CR2 8RY
Alterations, erection of a single storey rear extension

20/05031/HSE – 21 Sylvan Close, South Croydon, CR2 8DS
Proposed single storey rear extension and single storey side extension to rear of garage.

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

~~

Collection of Bulky Household Waste

Croydon Council has begun charging for the collection of bulky household waste items from homes. Household bulky waste includes large or unwanted household items such as furniture that cannot be re-used or recycled. From Friday 9 October residents can book collections at the following costs:

- £31 for one to three items.
- £51 for four to six items.

The council will continue to offer this service year-round. Residents can find more information, including which items can be collected, and book a slot at www.croydon.gov.uk/bulkywaste.

Roadworks

Selsdon Road 19 October to 15 January

Network Rail will be closing Selsdon Road between its junctions with Chelsham Road and Sussex Road southside from 19th October to 15th January. This is to facilitate bridge replacement and enabling works

– cable bridge installation and removal, track lift and slew, piling for abutment extension, removal of existing bridge, installing new bridge. The signed diversion for displaced traffic will be Brighton Road/ A22 / Downs Court Rd / Mitchley Avenue / Rectory Park / Addington Rd / Selsdon Park Rd / Gravel Hill / Coombe Lane / Coombe Rd / St Peter's Road/ Croham Road.

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MP Chris Philp's Report

Member of Parliament for Croydon South Purley Pool not re-opening



Despite several council-run pools having already been re-opened, Purley Pool remains closed, and the council has given no time frame to re-open it.

There are fears that this is a precursor to plans to close the pool permanently, as nearly happened a few years ago.

The council says its decision to keep the pool closed is based on cost – but I believe that the cost of re-opening the pool would be small compared to what the council has spent elsewhere. Residents and families throughout the south of the borough rely on the pool. Losing it will deprive residents – including hundreds of school children who use the facility – of an important place for exercise and healthcare.

A petition has been set up to campaign for the pool to re-open. This petition can be found here -

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SavePurleyPool>

Please do fill in the petition, and also please share/forward this to your friends and neighbours in the area, either by email or on social media. If we get enough signatures it will trigger a formal debate at a Council meeting.

Planning in Croydon

I have stated for some time now that I believe that the council is building too many flats in our area. This usually involves the demolition of family homes for inappropriate blocks of flats. The Council provides a site for you to comment on or object to any existing applications here – https://new.croydon.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/planning/comment-or-object-planning-application?utm_campaign=redirect&utm_medium+alias&utm_source=onlineplans

I also provide regular updates on planning applications on my website, chrisphilp.com

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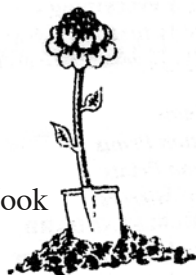
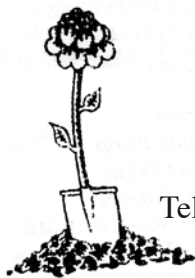
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(Editor) I did ask Chris Philp's office about his work in the government as I felt that Selsdon residents would like to know about the responsibilities of their MP. Here is his reply.

I am the Minister for two departments. In my role as a Justice Minister I am working hard to ensure that the court system returns to normal after the Covid-19 pandemic. Courts are currently conducting over 4,000 video hearings across the country, and the number of hearings in Magistrates Courts are above the levels they were before lockdown. However, it is much more difficult to ensure safe proceedings in the Crown Courts, which have jury trials. I am hopeful that we can have this back to normal levels some time in November.

My other role is in the Home Office, and involves helping to protect our borders. This includes supporting the UK Border Force, who in mid-October seized £2.5m of cocaine as part of their efforts to keep our communities safe. I am also working to put a stop to the dangerous and illegal boat crossings that are taking place in the Channel. Despite facing vexatious legal claims, we are returning people who come here illegally and who have no right to be here to the appropriate countries.

Chris Philp

Member of Parliament, Croydon South: 020 7219 8026
chris.philp.mp@parliament.uk

The Selsdon Gazette would like to clarify that it is a non-political publication. We do take great care to review articles by our elected MP and Councillors prior to publication to ensure that, in the course of updating our readers on events with relation to Selsdon and Croydon, any comments/criticism of the current Council or Government's practices are measured and in context. **Editor**

~~

Message from Jack Killian Police Community Support Officer

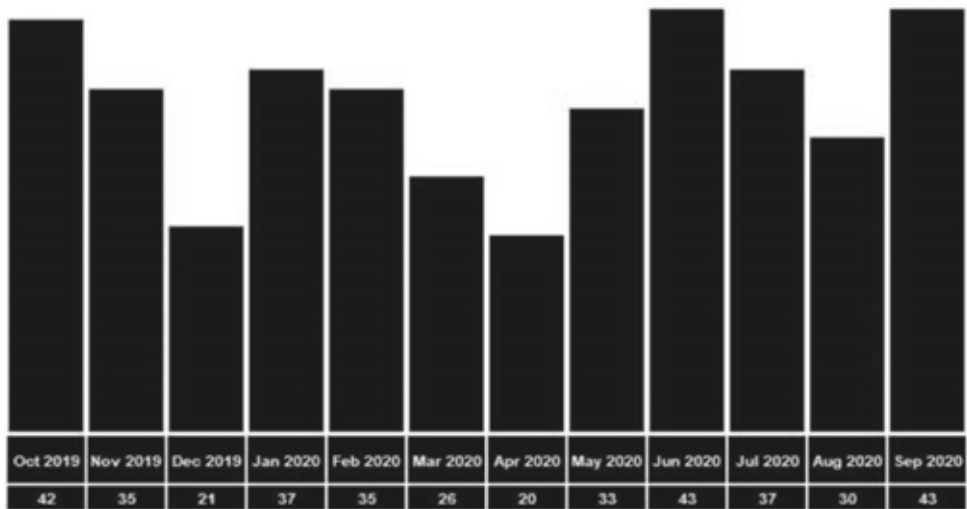
Hello Residents,

Theft from motor vehicles continues to be the most common crime in the last month.

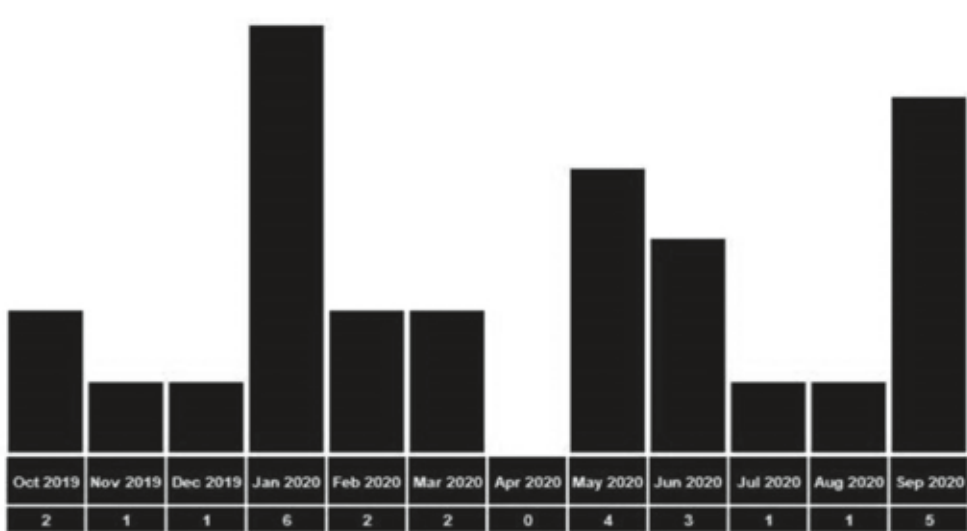
As we have been unable to have a ward panel meeting due to

Coronavirus this year, I thought I'd add the crime statistics over the last 12 months. It shows the overall crime statistics for Selsdon and Forestdale as well as the 3 main crimes we are focusing on in order to try to reduce. These are burglary offences, motor vehicle offences and drug offences.

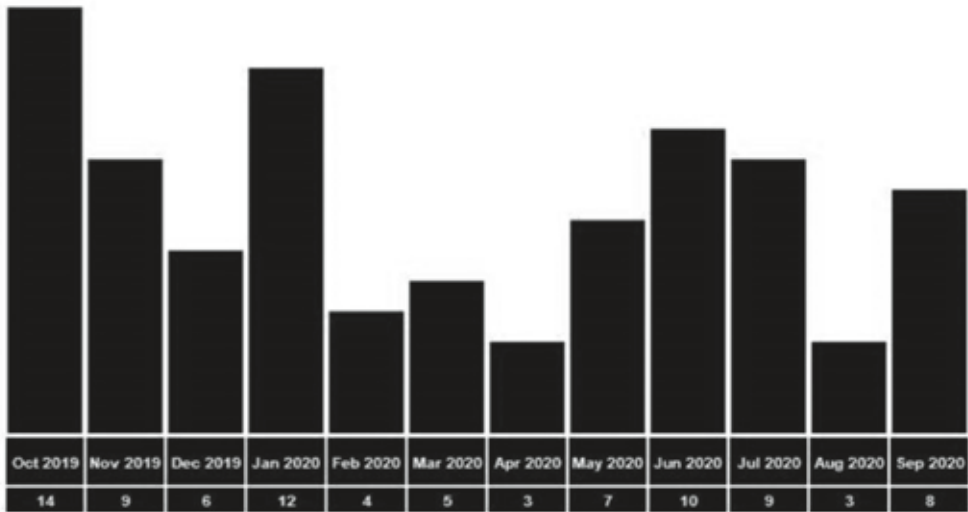
You can see all crime that was reported to police below.



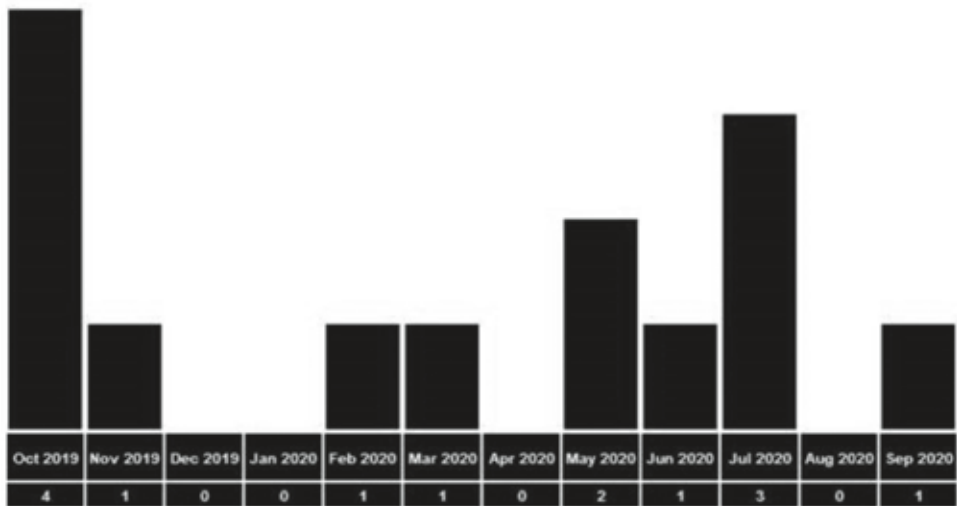
Below are the Burglary offences that have occurred over the last 12 months.



Below are the vehicle offences that have occurred over the last 12 months.



Below are the drug offences that have occurred over the last 12 months.



Hope you are all well and safe. 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.

Kind Regards,

Jack Killian 7114SN

Police Community Support Officer

Telephone: 020 8721 2464

Email: SNMailbox-Selsdonand ForestdaleSNT@met.police.uk

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

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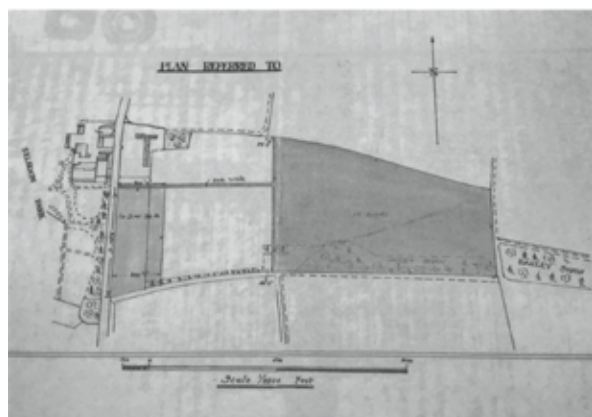
Hawthorn Crescent – Now and Then

Now:

A recent planning application by the Council's in-house developer, Brick by Brick (BxB), to build a terrace of 8 dwellings on the green at Hawthorn Crescent was refused. This is a notable feat as hardly any BxB applications have been refused by the Planning committee to date. Although we were unable to get the green registered as an Asset of Community Value (ACV), hence saving it from development, well-honed objections at the planning meeting managed to persuade even Labour councillors to vote to throw out the plans.

Then:

Back in June of 1927 the then Urban District Council of Coulsdon and Purley (UDC) approached a local landowner, Mr Arthur Edward Creswell



who had Selsdon Park Farm, to purchase 2 parcels of his land, off Old Farleigh Road. The land was notable for being relatively flat in a very hilly area. The UDC wanted to use 10 acres for the creation of a Recreation Ground and, on a plot of just over 1 acre fronting Old Farleigh Road to build

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Council houses for rent by council tenants. Mr Creswell was paid £2,400 on 31st October 1927 for his land, which included access from Old Farleigh Road to the Recreation Ground, now Woodland Gardens.

Plans were drawn up in March 1928 for 20 3-bedroom houses in 6 blocks facing on to a pleasant open space and Tenders sought in November 1928. Twenty tenders ranging from £8,200 to £14,073 were received and a contract was awarded to Thompson and Sons of Grimsby in the sum of £9,010 (that is not per house). The houses, completed in late 1929, had two heater points each: 'one for a radiator in one bedroom and the other for a cooker in the kitchen' – modest by today's standards! The UDC borrowed the cost on a 60-year loan.

Forward to 1939 and war threatens. How to keep the population safe if they are under aerial bombardment? Build Air Raid Shelters. Under the green between the houses of Hawthorn Crescent and Old Farleigh Road there is still a large air raid shelter which ground penetrating radar shows to be an 'H' shape. The shelter was built prior to the second world war and is a similar H shape to the one found at Whitgift school, however the one at Hawthorn Crescent is much bigger and has the capacity for 100 people. At each end of the shelter is a toilet and step access leading down into the shelter. The centre section of the H would have had benches for seating.



The older residents of the Crescent used to play in the shelter after the war, but it was bricked up when the council introduced parking bays in the

close that cut into the green. There are numerous chalk drawings inside drawn on the walls, some not suitable for a family Gazette.

Ian Leggatt

I am grateful once again for the journals of Ted Frith which provide much detailed local information. I am also grateful to Ali Ball, who not only spoke in objection to the plans at the recent (remote) Council Planning meeting but has also provided the information and pictures above about the 2nd World War air raid shelter and details of the 1927 land sale. Any errors in translation are mine.

~~

Volunteer wanted for Post of Finance Manager for the Selsdon Gazette

Have you got a good head for figures? Can you spare a few hours monthly to keep the Gazette's finances running smoothly? Could you take over from our current Gazette Finance Manager from January?

If your answers to these questions is YES please look through the following roles and responsibilities of the Gazette Finance Manager:

- Control the finances of the Gazette for the SRA with the aim of it being a self-supporting publication.
- Maintain an up to date record of the Gazette accounts month by month.
- Issue invoices to the advertisers and receive their payments.

You will be trained by the outgoing Finance Manager and be supported by the Advertising Manager, who deals with new advertisers and enquiries.

Please contact Sheila Childs (020 8651 2285) if you feel that you might be able to help.

Rising Crime – Catalytic Converter Theft

In a catalytic converter, the catalyst's job is to speed up the removal of polluting gases, such as carbon monoxide and oxides of nitrogen.

As the gases from the engine fumes blow over the catalyst, chemical reactions take place on its surface, breaking apart the pollutant gases and converting them into other gases, like carbon dioxide, water vapour and nitrogen, that are safe enough to blow harmlessly out into the air.

However, the "catalyst" portion of a catalytic converter is expensive stuff! Inside the converter's steel/ alloy shell is a core (metal or ceramic) covered with a layer of rare metal catalyst, which is a blend that can include platinum, palladium, rhodium, and other expensive elements. In recent years, catalytic converter theft has risen dramatically. It is believed that this is driven by the value of the metals inside. In a matter of minutes, thieves slide under the car and use high-powered cutting tools to detach the converter box from the exhaust pipes. They then sell them on to scrap metal dealers.

Taller vehicles (4x4s) are particularly vulnerable as the converters are more accessible. In addition, because they tend to have larger engines, they contain more of the precious metals. Hybrid cars also find themselves a target. This is because they have two power sources (electric and petrol/ diesel) so the catalytic converter is used less frequently to process pollutants and the metals are less likely to corrode, meaning they are worth more. Once an unmarked converter has been removed from a vehicle it's quite difficult to match it to that vehicle as there are not any distinguishing marks.



To reduce the risk of having your catalytic converter stolen, you should:

- Park your car in a locked garage where possible, but if this is not an option, then park it in a well-lit and well-populated area.
- Park close to fences, walls or a kerb with the exhaust being closest to the fence, wall or kerb to make the theft more difficult.
- Avoid parking your vehicle half on the pavement and half on the road, as this may make it easier for thieves to access the catalytic converter.
- If parking in a public car park, consider parking alongside other cars and facing your bonnet towards the wall if possible. With the catalytic converter positioned at the front of your vehicle, this will make it

harder for thieves to get close enough to steal it.

- If your catalytic converter is bolted on, you can ask for your local garage to weld the bolts to make it more difficult to remove.
- Alternatively, you can also etch a serial number on the converter.
- You can even purchase a 'cage clamp' which is a cage device that locks in around the converter to make it more difficult to remove.
- Speak to your dealership about the possibility of adding a tilt sensor that will activate the alarm should any thief try to jack the vehicle up to steal the converter.
- If there is a fleet of vehicles, park the low clearance vehicles to block the high clearance vehicles. This will obstruct access underneath.
- If you see someone acting suspiciously under a vehicle, report it to the Police. Obtain as much information as possible, including any vehicle registrations.

CJ

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Get Your Flu Vaccine

More than ever this Winter it is important to stay fit and healthy when in addition to the usual illnesses there is the threat of the coronavirus.



One easy way to protect yourself is to get the flu jab, which is offered free of charge on the NHS to people who are at risk. This is to help protect them against catching flu and developing serious complications. Some local pharmacies even offer a walk-in service.

While we are on the subject of pharmacies, why not use your local pharmacy more often? Pharmacists are experts in many aspects of healthcare and you don't need an appointment and many have private consultation areas, so they are a good first port of call.

Who can have the flu vaccine?

The flu vaccine is given to people who:

- Are 65 and over (including those who'll be 65 by 31 March 2021)
- Have certain health conditions
- Are pregnant
- Are in a long-stay residential care
- Receive a carer's allowance, or are the main carer for an older or disabled person who may be at risk if you get sick

- Live with someone who is at high risk from coronavirus (on the NHS shielded patient list)
- Frontline health or social care workers

Flu vaccination is important because:

- If you are at higher risk from coronavirus, you are also more at risk of problems from flu
- If you get flu and coronavirus at the same time, research shows you are more likely to be seriously ill
- It will help to reduce pressure on the NHS and social care staff who may be dealing with coronavirus

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CHRISTMAS @ ST JOHN'S



Christmas at St. John's Selsdon, brings hope that Christmas will bring joy and celebration after a uniquely difficult year with an acknowledgement that – for those who have lost loved ones or livelihoods, or who are potentially still not able to be together with loved ones – it may be the Church's role to provide consolation, rather than assume

everyone will be ready to join in jubilation.

We are hoping to go ahead with the following services over Christmas but, due to Covid-19 restrictions, numbers will have to be limited. Tickets, for one of these services only, will be available by contacting the Parish Office by email on bookingsstjohns@gmail.com or by phoning 0208 6579466. Tickets available from 1st December.

Nine Lessons and Carols Sunday 20th December at 6 pm. Come and hear the Christmas story and listen to some beautiful Christmas music and carols. Regrettably there is no congregational singing.

Midnight Mass Christmas Eve 24th December at 11.30 pm. The traditional Christmas celebratory Eucharist

Christmas Day Christmas Communion 25th December at 10 am.

Remembrance Tree The opportunity to remember those we never forget by completing a label to go on the Christmas Remembrance Tree in St John's from 6 December - 3 January 2021. Full details from Gill Salter 0208 405 9971 or email salterg@outlook.com

PLEASE REMEMBER that there may be changes to the above services due to further Covid-19 restrictions. Check our website or our Facebook page.

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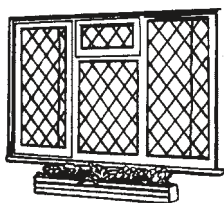
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A Good Time for Gardening

November/December 2020

Not so much time spent outside at the moment, but you may be thinking about plants/greenery to have in the house over the next few weeks. Why do we bring the likes of holly, ivy, mistletoe or evergreens into our houses?

To the pagans, evergreens were symbols of continuing life when all other trees were bare and brown, and it even seemed that the sun was dying. Those which bore berries through the worst weather were particularly venerated for their fertility. At the time of the Winter solstice, when the sun was at its lowest, they were cut and brought indoors to help the sun to rise again. Northern Europeans brought branches into their homes as refuges for the wood spirits through the worst days of Winter.

Over the years, mistletoe has been credited with a strange assortment of powers. It was said to be a remedy against poisons, (it is a poisonous plant itself!), to aid fertility (is this why kissing underneath it is encouraged?), to banish evil spirits and to protect homes against thunder and lightning. It is a symbol of peace, love and friendship.



The early Church tried to stamp out the heathen custom of decorating homes and even churches with pagan greenery but was forced to submit and try to attach a Christian significance to each plant. Holly was associated with the Passion, the leaves representing Christ's crown of thorns and the berries the drops of blood.

Ivy was thought to be the symbol of Bacchus, the lord of misrule, and remained pagan, long after holly became sacred. Holly blooms in late Autumn and Winter and so is ideal for the insects that are still around and about. Both holly and ivy are poisonous to animals.



The tradition of hanging wreaths of evergreens, pine cones, spice, dried fruit on the front door probably originated in Scandinavia, as symbols of renewal, peace and friendship. Their round shape discouraged wicked witches and evil spirits from paying a seasonal visit.

The legend that on Christmas Eve trees blossomed and bore fruit led

to the old practice in parts of Europe of cutting and bringing indoors branches or even small trees and encouraging them to bloom at Christmas time – forcing hyacinth bulbs or buying hot house plants is a development of this practice.



The poinsettia originates from Mexico and came to be associated with Christmas via this legend. A small boy had nothing to give but wanted to take part in the custom of putting gifts beside the creche in the church on Christmas Eve. He knelt to pray in the snow outside the church and where he knelt a beautiful plant with red leaves grew, which he took inside and presented at the creche. The plants are mildly toxic to animals.

Apologies if this is scarily early, but this article comes with our very best wishes for the best Christmas possible to you all and the hope that you gain great enjoyment from your garden and all the other local green spaces in 2021.



Bill, Ben and Little Weed

www.sandersteadhorticulturalsociety.org.uk



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- You can also donate using the previously delivered gift aid envelope and attaching this to your front door
- If you wish to donate directly to Rotary Sanderstead and Selsdon you can use our Charity bank account (a/c no. 0001 5450, sort code 405240, reference Santa)
- You can also donate through www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/fatherchristmas2020
- Children and adults are welcome to come and see Father Christmas but must observe social distancing

Father Christmas is hoping to visit his usual areas. His planned evenings out will be Wednesday 2- Friday 4 December, then Monday 7 – Friday 11 December and Monday 14- Friday 18 December. There will a finale on the green in Elmfield Way (observing social distancing) on Christmas Eve morning. Don't miss out, visit our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/rotarycroydonsouth> or our website, <https://www.rotarysandersteadandselsdon.com> for details of routes each day.

~~

Obituary for Pat Crooke – Local Environmentalist



Pat was born in 1933 when Selsdon was a fledgling community on the far outskirts of the big city, London. Her early years were spent in the family home in Kingswood, which was at that time a poultry farm, and she moved up to the village of Selsdon in 1965. As a Pharmacist she worked at many local hospitals including Warlingham Park and Mayday. I first met Pat not long after she had been instrumental in helping to set up the Friends group for Littleheath Woods, one of the first 'Friends Of' groups in the Borough of Croydon.

I quickly realised that although she was in the background, she was the strategist of the group, directing us to which plants and trees to nurture and to which to destroy because they were outcompeting the rest and threatening to turn the woods into a monoculture. Her green credentials extended to helping out the Friends of Selsdon Wood with eradicating stands of Laurel which dominated many areas of those woods. She could also sometimes be found with her shopping trolley replete with water containers tending to the street trees planted by the council. She was a Guerrilla Gardener, long before the role became fashionable, planting wild flowers in suitable spots of bare ground. She was also a stalwart supporter of many charities and gave practical assistance to the Meals on Wheels service at the Selsdon Contact Centre, and attended the centre's social events for many years. She will be sorely missed.

Pat Crooke 1933 – 2020 RIP

Ian Leggatt, Friends of Littleheath Woods

~~



Great Selsdon Bake Off Quiz

With the 'Great British Bake Off' now in full swing on our televisions I have compiled a short baking quiz for you to try to test your baking knowledge.

1. If you were given a 'baker's dozen' of doughnuts how many would you have?
2. This cake traditionally has pink and yellow sponge squares and is covered in marzipan. What is its name?
3. What term is used to describe baking a pie crust empty before filling it later?
4. What name is given to sweetened egg whites beaten until they are stiff, light and airy?
5. What gas is given off by yeast during baking, forming bubbles to make bread lighter and fluffier?

6. Which of these terms does NOT refer to the process of baking bread?
Scarp, Starter, Proof or Bloom
7. What is the French term for the dough used to make eclairs?
8. What type of icing is commonly used to assemble gingerbread houses?
9. A macaroon is typically made from which nut?
10. When preparing puff pastry, a thick layer of butter is folded in a sheet of dough. It is then rolled thin, folded over, and rolled again. The last two stages are repeated several times to create thin layers. What is this process called?

Answers after Nature Notes

~~

Seasonal Food in November

Fruits in Season

Apples (Cox, Red Pippin, Golden Delicious and Empire are all in season), clementines, cranberries, elderberries, passion fruit, pears, pomegranate, quince, satsumas.

Nuts in season

Almonds, brazil nuts, cob nuts, hazelnuts, sweet chestnuts, walnuts.

Vegetables in season

Artichoke, beetroot, brussels sprouts, butternut squash, cabbage (savoy, spring green, red and white), carrots, cauliflower, celeriac, celery, chicory, horseradish, jerusalem artichoke, kale, kohlrabi, leeks, onions, parsnips, potatoes (maincrop), pumpkin, shallots, swede, swiss chard, turnips, watercress, wild mushrooms, winter squash.

Do not forget Stir-Up Sunday

Stir-Up Sunday is the last Sunday before Advent and because the dating of Advent varies a little from year to year, it can fall anytime between November 20th and 26th. This year it will be on Sunday November 22nd.

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Traditionally, the Christmas pudding is made on Stir-up Sunday, and in its modern form as a dried fruit-based dessert, it would have been wrapped in a cloth and boiled. On Stir-Up Sunday, families gather together to mix the pudding. Each member of the family takes a turn in stirring the mixture whilst making a wish. The pudding should be stirred from east to west, in honour of the Magi (Wise Men) who came from the east to visit the baby Jesus.

Traditional Christmas Pudding Recipe (serves 6-8) for you to try.

Ingredients

- 450g/1lb dried mixed fruit (use a mixture of sultanas, raisins, and snipped apricots)
- 1 small cooking apple, peeled, cored and roughly chopped
- 1 orange, finely grated rind and juice
- 3 tbsp brandy, sherry, or rum, plus extra for flaming
- 75g/3oz butter, softened, plus extra for greasing
- 100g/3½oz light muscovado sugar
- 2 free-range eggs
- 100g/4oz self-raising flour
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 40g/1½oz fresh white breadcrumbs
- 40g/1½oz whole shelled almonds, roughly chopped



Method

1. Mix the dried fruit and apple with the orange juice. Stir in your chosen spirit and leave to marinate for about an hour.
2. Either using a wooden spoon or a hand-held whisk cream the butter, sugar and grated orange rind until it is light and fluffy. Slowly beat in the eggs and add a little of the self-raising flour if the mixture starts to curdle.
3. Fold the sieved flour and mixed spice, breadcrumbs and nuts into the creamed mixture. Add your soaked dried fruits with any liquid and stir well.
4. Generously butter a 1.4 litre/2½ pint pudding basin. Cut a small disc of foil or baking parchment and press into the base of the basin.
5. Spoon your mixture into the prepared pudding basin and press it down with the back of a spoon. Cover the pudding with a layer of baking parchment paper and foil, both pleated across the middle to allow for expansion. Tie securely with string and trim off excess paper and foil with scissors.

6. To steam, put the pudding in the top of a steamer filled with simmering water, cover with a lid and steam for eight hours, topping up the water as necessary.
7. To boil the pudding, put a metal jam jar lid into the base of a large pan to act as a trivet. Place a long, doubled strip of foil in the pan, between the trivet and the pudding basin, ensuring the ends of the strip reach up and hang over the edges of the pan. This will help you to lift the heavy pudding basin out of the pan of hot water when it has finished cooking. Lower the pudding onto the trivet and pour in enough boiling water to come half way up the side of the bowl. Cover with a lid, bring the water back to the boil, then simmer for about seven hours, until the pudding is a glorious deep brown colour, topping up the water as necessary.
8. When cooked through, remove the pudding from the pan and cool completely. Discard the paper and foil and replace with fresh. Store in a cool, dry place.

To serve, on Christmas Day, steam or boil the pudding for about two hours to reheat. Turn the pudding onto a serving plate. To flame, warm the brandy or rum in a small pan, pour it over the hot pudding and set light to it. Serve with brandy butter – delicious!

(Thanks to Dame Mary Berry)

~~

Kirsty MacColl – Selsdon girl

As we approach Christmas time you will undoubtedly start to hear Kirsty's voice on repeat as 'Fairy-tale of New York' is a perennial Christmas favourite. It is hard to forget the dancing tune, the wry lyrics and Kirsty's warm and distinctive voice.

Kirsty Anna MacColl was born at Mayday Hospital in Croydon on 10th October 1959. She grew up in Selsdon, with her older brother Hamish and mother - in Beech Way opposite Selsdon Wood with views over Kingswood. Her mother was the dancer and choreographer Jean Newlove. Her father was the folk musician Ewan MacColl, who had separated from her mother by the time Kirsty was born.

The home in Beech Way was designed by architect Eric Mayne in 1965 to take maximum advantage of the secluded setting, with the ground-floor living areas set above the bedrooms, and with all rooms benefitting from unrestricted views into the valley. The house was sold some years ago. Kirsty attended Monks Hill High comprehensive school (now Quest



Academy) and John Newnham school (site now houses John Ruskin college) (at the latter school she played lead in a school production of 'Oh what a lovely war!'). She played violin and oboe in the orchestra. She began writing and singing songs from an early age.

In 1978, she sang with a band called 'the Drug Addix'; she dubbed herself 'Mandy Doubt'. The group made an EP called 'The Drug Addix Make A Record', which came to the attention of Stiff Records. However, Stiff were only interested in Kirsty, and invited her to record a debut solo

single, 'They Don't Know'; it was released in June 1979, after she had dropped out of art college. The song became a substantial hit for Tracey Ullman four years later.

Whilst hampered by a fear of live performance it is said she had perfect pitch and a knack for recording harmony vocals on the first take. As well as writing her own songs she covered songs brilliantly and appeared regularly as a backing singer and featured on discs by Simple Minds, Happy Mondays, The Smiths, Talking Heads and Robert Plant amongst others.

She made many guest appearances on TV shows. Check out some of the performances with Jools Holland on YouTube and she can also be seen on a 1991 Byline/Horizon TV Documentary. She wrote a song called 'Don't go near the water' about pollution and in this show of the same name she gives up her Ealing garden to become a rain and sewage recycling reed bed, cistern, and pond complex. By retaining rain and wastewater within her property, she would take responsibility for it and consequently reap the benefits. The Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems concept (SUDS) that Kirsty had championed is now the normal requirement for any major new housing development. Its inventor Julian Jones still campaigns to improve water management today.

One of her biggest UK hits was a cover of 'Thank You for the Days' by "The Kinks" -which became more poignant after her death. Tragically Kirsty was killed aged 41 by a speedboat in Mexico (18/12/00) whilst swimming and diving in the sea with her sons. They were in a designated safe area for divers and it was an accident that should never have happened. Her mother fought for years for the truth to be told and justice for Kirsty and her family.

She was honoured in 2002 with a memorial concert in London at the Royal Festival Hall featuring a number of musicians who had worked with her

or been influenced by her. A similar memorial concert took place on her birthday in 2010 at the Shepherd's Bush Empire, to support her favourite charity, The Music Fund for Cuba.

In 2001, a bench was placed by the southern entrance to London's Soho Square as a memorial to her, after a lyric from one of her most poignant songs: "One day I'll be waiting there / No empty bench in Soho Square". Every year on the Sunday nearest to MacColl's birthday, 10 October, fans from all over the world gather there to pay tribute to her and sing her songs.

Janet Sharp

~~

Winter Work in Littleheath Woods

The Autumn/Winter/Early Spring season is a busy time in the woods for our volunteers. With trees dormant and spring flowers still safely underground, coppicing, clearing and invasive species control can be undertaken along with other, more specific projects.

The article in last month's gazette detailed the Ride creation scheme and we are awaiting confirmation of a start date for the contractors but there are other projects planned for the season.

CCF Along the Vanguard Way

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 sections of these and replant with a sessile oak, scots pine, hornbeam and rowan. We are hopeful that the first group will be removed this coming season.





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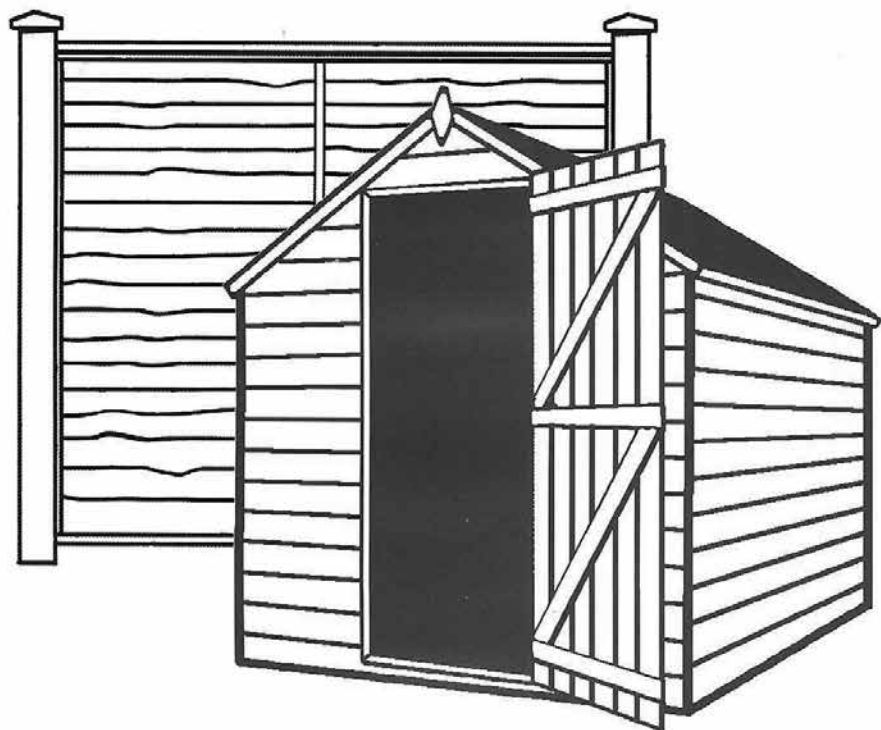
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Hazel Coppice Area

The Friends group have already started clearing the strip between the path and the gardens along Croham Valley Path with a view to creating a hazel coppice area. This will be a long-term project but the first tranche of hazels should be planted early next year.

Coppicing is an historical method of managing trees as a crop which can be harvested on a regular cycle. The tree is cut down to the base of the trunk, creating a “stool” from which multiple stems or “poles” grow, this is done every 5-9 years depending on the thickness of the stems required. In the past much of the rural economy was based on coppicing, the product being used for building, fencing, fuel, furniture and tools to name but a few. Although there is limited demand for such products these days, the practice of coppicing is of great value in terms of biodiversity as it opens up the woodland floor on a regular basis and this is very beneficial to the ground flora and wildlife which will vary depending on the stage of the regrowth.

If you think you would like to be involved in these projects, we have work parties every Tuesday morning (weather permitting). Check out our website for more information or give me a ring beforehand.

Chris Hyde

Work Party Co-Ordinator, Friends of Littleheath Woods - 020 8651 4914

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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.

Dear Editor,

(A further instalment from Jessica about 'life under lockdown'.)

Keeping up Appearances – of the lawn!

Although 2020 has been a strange year with many disappointments and some sadnesses, yet the weather really has been wonderful. It has been

marvellous to work in our gardens or just get out and walk -carefully keeping socially distanced, around public parks and gardens.

Now it is Autumn, and it is beautifully colourful, however the sun has burnt holes in many lawns. There tends to be conflicting advice what to do about it, but by sticking the advice into the bowls of our memories, stirring in a bit of common sense, slapping in a bit of pot luck, we are now seeing the holes in our lawn greening over, phew!! Turfing seemed a step too far so we struggled with a couple of bags of top soil and mixed it with some nice, freshly bought grass seed. The idea was to firstly rake out the dead grass and then stir fresh soil and plenty of seed into a bucket and pile it thickly onto the bare patches. However - and here is the cunning bit - stage two was then to cover all of that with a thin layer of soil and complete with a sprinkle of lawn seed. It was a bit like icing a cake and then decorating it. The wildlife steals the top layer of seed but fail to notice the seed growing beneath it, until its green shoots pop up. Well that is the theory.

Now for real life. The very first day after planting we awoke to a long straight line of verdant green herbage disappearing up the lawn and into a flower bed. On walking carefully onto the lawn, to see what it was, the green line was apparently what some bird had “dropped?” when it must have been dangling from a fox’s mouth. The flowerbed was liberally coated with feathers and there was no trace of any bird bones. We assume Mr. Fox had a most enjoyable dinner and left the feathers as a present for us. The final straw came when we looked out of our window and saw a brown “lump”. It was sitting in the middle of a brown patch. We wondered whether Mr. Fox had left his more normal calling card, but then we saw the lump move. It lifted its little head and we glimpsed the chocolate coloured ears. We had ourselves a feasting dormouse. My husband opened the window and called out “shusssh”, but it didn’t move. Then noisy hand clapping failed too, and he walked all the way up to the feasting dormouse clapping his hands loudly as he went. Mouse kept on chewing. Even when my husband stood towering over the little creature, it just looked up at him, whilst chewing happily, with a “do not disturb” look on its face, and fortunately my husband couldn’t bring himself to do anything, but turn on his heel and return indoors.

Fortunately, even that patch of lawn is beginning to green. We have never seen the dormouse before or since. I wonder if it died of over eating?

Jessica Blake

I wanted to hear about any local coronavirus heroes you had come across so I am pleased to include this mention.

Dear Editor,

The pandemic has caused enormous problems and impacted on everyone's lives. It was shocking to see supermarket shelves completely cleared of basic items during the first weeks, leaving many people totally bewildered as to how they would cope.

Luckily, I was able to use the small privately run shops in Elmfield Way. I would particularly like to mention Elmfield Foods. The husband and wife owners have bent over backwards to provide customers with a very good selection of both fresh and packet/tinned food and offered a delivery service to those who were unable to visit the shop personally. They have worked very long hours to maintain this service and deserve the thanks and admiration of all who have shopped there.

Bashford butchers very quickly organised their shop to be in line with the Covid regulations and they too are only too pleased to take orders for delivery to those unable to visit the shop in person. Needless to say, their meat is superb. Finally, a big thank you to McDermotts at Forestdale. They soon organised a takeaway service at their shop which was run very efficiently. When they were able to open their restaurant their superb young team of waiting staff swung into action. The restaurant is spotlessly clean and the service is totally efficient. It is a pleasure to dine there.

My thanks to all these people for making life less difficult.

Mrs C Griffiths

If you have you any similar experiences of coming out of lockdown please share them with us by emailing me at selsdongazettesra@gmail.com

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Dear Editor,

I read Chris Philp's report in the October magazine with astonishment. You might think that as our MP he would say something about the national crisis caused by the handling of Covid-19, about the Brexit negotiations. Not a word. It was the same in September's report. It's all about the Council's finances, its planning decisions, and the campaign for a directly elected Mayor, for which there are apparently 20,000 petitioners, but which works out at less than 10% of Croydon's electorate. It would be yet another expensive layer of bureaucracy, yet another potential for conflict of voters' local interests. The example of London's Mayor, who would rather nobody travelled anywhere in our city, is hardly encouraging.

It would be better for our MP to speak to us about the cost, nationally and locally, of Covid-19 stop-start-stop lockdown measures, the heavy restrictions on our freedoms, the ruin of lives, livelihoods and businesses, the damage to the education of our children, the neglect of more serious health issues, the destruction of our cultural heritage, and perhaps worst of all, the isolation and near-imprisonment of our older people in care homes.

The local issues to which Chris Philp devotes so much energy and space in the Gazette aren't unimportant, but they are, frankly, pretty small beer by comparison. It's time he gave more attention to the parliamentary oversight of the difficult decisions which need to be taken in order to lead us out of this collective madness.

Bill Gale

Editor - I have contacted Chris Philp's office about your concerns. They have sent me details about Chris's work in the Government and I have added this information to his report.

Secondly, they wanted you to know that Chris does comment on national issues like the Coronavirus. The difficulty is that with a local publication like the Gazette, Chris wants to try and keep to local issues. There are obviously incredibly important national issues going on at the moment - but that doesn't mean that Chris doesn't still have duties as a local MP or that local issues should be ignored. They pointed out that more can be heard from Chris by visiting chrisphilp.com, or by signing up to his newsletter, which covers both local and national issues (there is a box on the right of the website to do this). You may also be interested in this BBC interview from Sunday (18 October) in which Chris spoke about the Mayor's congestion charge expansion <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ObsHGQTcgLs>



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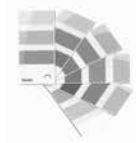
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Dear Editor,

Selsdon Wood Pool

The Friends of Selsdon Wood agree entirely with the sentiments expressed in Pauline Dolling's letter (October) to the editor. The restoration of the pool has been a project that has frustrated our efforts for many years. The main problems are that its concrete base has been cracked over the years by roots, weather, and subsidence. Also, it is too shallow for lining repair.

The Friends prepared a proposal to Croydon Council. The Council replied 'We are in principle happy for the Friends to investigate options to turn the old pond into a bog garden and create a new pond in the wood. However, there are a number of factors that need to be carefully considered – location, design, liner and how to make it work/protect it for wildlife. The construction of a new functioning pond will require some considerable resource. Once the Friends have had time to further investigate their options, we would welcome an update to discuss any new or more detailed proposals.'

It is now up to the FSW to prepare their proposal in more detail. In the present financial climate, it is certain that the Friends will have to find the finance required. Pauline's letter referred to the Esmee Foundation as a possible source of funding. Unfortunately, they do not consider our pool a suitable project for them. The FSW will be making 'The Selsdon Wood Pool and bog garden' their main fund-raising theme, and will be grateful for your support.

David Malins (for FSW)

~~

Nature Notes from Ted Forsyth – Fungi 2020

When Covid-19 lockdown was introduced at the end of March there was a drastic reduction in road traffic and fewer aeroplanes were overhead. This must have reduced aerial pollution and might have had an effect on the numbers of fungi found later.

July was blisteringly hot, not weather we would normally associate with fungi, but this was followed sometime later by a prolonged thunderstorm which dropped large quantities of water on the local area.



Late July and throughout August and into September fungal species we had not seen in any number in Selsdon Wood for several years began to appear almost common. Amanita species – Blusher, deadly Panthercap, and

a new one, Grey Spotted Amanita, were being reported frequently in different parts of the wood. Larch Boletes appeared under the Larches in Middle Gorse and other bolete species sprang up in the grassy area. Orange Oak Bolete was found at the top of Langford's Way. In Beech Grove another new species was found when we discovered a group of small reddish mushrooms which were identified as the relatively uncommon *Aureoboletus gentilis* – Gilded Bolete. Russulas (Brittlegills) were initially represented by the yellowish Ochre Brittlegill but later one of the red species was found. Off Bluebell Grove, near a large conifer, was a group of False Chanterelle which in previous years we have found in Middle Gorse and Stevens Larch. Further along Bluebell Grove at the junction with The Wend a few of the usual Common Earthballs were found and in The Wend nearby Toby Flecchia discovered another new species – the bright yellow Lion Shield. The much more common Deer Shield was visible in several places. Stevens Walk produced the common Weeping Widow by the side of the track and a huge display of Oyster Mushrooms on a fallen tree trunk.

Species mentioned so far were mostly growing on the soil but tree trunks and roots also had species to display. Two specimens of the large Shaggy Bracket were found – one near the badger sett in the tree belt between fields 2 and 3, and the other at the junction between Addington Border and Avis Grove. As Vale Border leaves field 3 to enter the woodland, Heather found a truly spectacular fungus growing from the roots of an old Beech tree – the Giant Polypore.

On several occasions slime moulds were found, usually on tree stumps or logs and most frequently the yellow *Fuligo septica* but at least two of the white species were seen.

We can expect more species during September, October, November and even December. If conditions are right waxcap species can appear in David's Crook and in Gt Field. We might get a return of Meadow Coral, Crested Corals and others in Greenhill Way and Pool Grove. Jelly fungi have generally been conspicuous by their absence but some rainy weather should help us to find Purple Jellydisc, Leafy Brain, Yellow Brain, White Brain, Crystal Brain and, hopefully, others.

~~

Answers Great Selsdon Bake Off Quiz

1. 13 2. Battenburg 3. Blind baking 4. Meringue
5. Carbon Dioxide 6. Scarp 7. Choux 8. Royal icing
9. Almond 10. Lamination

Poetry Corner

A poem from Mary Gill to commemorate Remembrance Day, Sunday 8 November.

HEROES

Harried by the horrid clamour of battle;
Hardly time to think of the fear –
Yet filled with it-
They press forward.
Too proud to retreat,
Too scared of defeat
To give up.
OD'd on adrenaline
They surpass their own expectations.
Overriding the terror



That threatens to overwhelm them.
They fight on –
Some to victory
And some to oblivion.
But, victors or vanquished,
All are heroes.
Their duty done,
Their hardest battle won –
The struggle with their own fearful hearts.

~~

In remembrance - ordinary people, extraordinary lives

Do you read the obituary pages? If you do, you will find extraordinary stories of heroism in the most frightening of situations, wars or natural disasters. The most amazing are of people who simply did the right thing in a situation for which nothing could possibly have prepared them.

This is the story of Hermine 'Miep' Gies, who died several years ago aged 100. She was one of a Dutch couple who hid and sustained the Jewish family of Anne Frank for more than two years in an Amsterdam attic. Later on, she helped to save Anne Frank's diary for posterity.

By the outbreak of war, she was working for Otto Frank, the owner of a company in Amsterdam. After the Nazi invasion in 1940, Otto prepared a secret annex behind a bookcase in a room above the firm's offices and in July 1942 the family of four went into hiding – Otto, his wife, and their daughters Margot and Anne.

For two years Miep Gies and her husband risked their lives to smuggle in provisions and news from outside. Miep acted as a confidante for the adolescent Anne, bringing her paper for her diary. For two years the family's presence remained a secret, but in August 1944, a neighbour informed on them to the authorities. The Franks were arrested and were later sent to concentration camps.

At considerable personal risk, Miep went to Gestapo headquarters to try to secure their release – but to no avail. Eventually she returned to the family's hiding place and found Anne's diary. She intended to return it to its author and locked it away without reading a word. Nearly a year later, Otto Frank returned from Auschwitz. He knew his wife and friends had not survived, but hoped that his two daughters had been spared. However, two months later, it was confirmed that both girls had died in Bergen-Belsen in March 1945, a month before the camp was liberated by British soldiers.

Miep was with him when he received the news. She remembered the diary and gave it to him, saying: "Here is your daughter Anne's legacy to you." Otto Frank refused to seek revenge and declined ever to identify the neighbour who had betrayed them, telling her: "Miep, that man may have children. Those children should not have to live with such a thing."

In 1987 Miep Gies published a book, *Anne Frank Remembered*. In it she observed: "I am not a hero. I stand at the end of the long, long line of good Dutch people who did what I did and more – much more – during those dark and terrible times years ago, but always like yesterday in the heart of those of us who bear witness." On August 4 every year, the day of the arrest, Miep would shut herself away in her house and see no one. "It is my personal memorial to my people," she explained.

Miep was not alone and her story speaks of the courage of those Dutch people who refused to surrender to oppression and pressure to report their neighbours to the authorities.

Her story tells us also of the tragedy of Anne Frank and the millions like her who perished in the Holocaust. It also reminds us of the Allied airmen, sailors and soldiers who fought and gave their lives to defend their own country and liberate the captive peoples of western Europe, and the unquenchable spirit of those who risk their lives to defend the persecuted.

POST-SCRIPT

Many years ago, the name of Anne Frank meant very little to me, and the effect of the Nazi invasion on the Jewish communities of the Netherlands, Belgium and France was, to my mind, a small part of the bigger picture of the Holocaust in the Second World War.

I was 20, and a guest for a few days at the home of a Dutch girlfriend in The Hague whom I'd met at an international working camp in the south-west of France. Tanja's mother (divorced from her father) made me very welcome and I was taken to some of the tourist attractions of The Hague and Amsterdam. Though Jewish, the family was secular in outlook, and I don't remember them ever talking to me about the Jewish community, but when her father visited the home, he was evidently keen that I should see more than just the tourist hotspots. He asked if I would like to visit the 'Anne Frank House' in Amsterdam. I cannot recall if he explained anything about its significance but at that time it didn't sound interesting and I said no.

Even now I shudder to think of the effect on him of my profound ignorance and disinterest in the story of Anne Frank. It meant also that I missed the opportunity to ask how he and his family had been affected by the Nazi occupation.

I hope that nowadays the younger generation is better informed about the extent of the Holocaust than I was in 1970. Since then, I have more than once visited the Anne Frank house. Her story and her father's example are an inspiration and will never be forgotten.

The website is www.annefrank.org.nl.

Bill Gale



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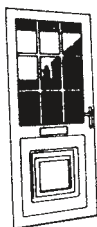
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A SELECTED LIST OF SELSDON ORGANISATIONS

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)	Andy Stranack	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: www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk	
Rainbows, Brownies, Guides & Senior Section		
Girlguiding UK: http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get_involved.aspx		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 st Selsdon & Addington Scout Group:	Website: www.1stselsdon.org.uk	
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 nd Selsdon & Addington Scout Group:	Website: www.2ndSandAScoutGroup.org.uk	
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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