

Selsdon Residents' Association Annual report 2016

The SRA is one of the oldest serving residents associations in Croydon (perhaps even in the UK!), formed in 1926 (90 years ago) to advance and protect the interests of the residents of Selsdon. There have been many changes to Selsdon since its beginnings as a greenfield site. From a handful of houses to over 4,000 households.

The SRA Committee

The Committee of 14 elected volunteers meet each month to discuss Selsdon issues. They also attend council, police, transport and other meetings on our behalf and organise local events. In 2016 Fred Crosskey, who was a Committee member for 48 years, stepped down. Fred's legal knowledge has been of great benefit to Selsdon over the years particularly in the times of the Sainsbury development. This leaves 2 vacancies on the Committee. Any Selsdon residents who would like to offer their services please make yourself known to the Chairman. You would be very welcome.

SRA Activities in 2016

SRA Anniversary

A special anniversary 'Tea' was held in March to celebrate these 90 years which was attended by the Mayor of Croydon, longstanding volunteers and friends of the SRA including the Police, Air cadets and local church representatives. The 2nd January 1926 was the SRA formation date and one Selsdon resident shares this birthday - Barbara Barker who has lived in Selsdon since she was 4. She was there to cut the celebration cake, as well as Pam Fox who has lived longest in Selsdon (born in Selsdon in that same year) and Lettice Nichols whose father in law was the first Chairman of the SRA and her husband Harold was also a Chairman.

As part of the anniversary celebrations special floral arrangements were placed in the highstreet. In addition to the hanging baskets paid for by the SRA, were four troughs paid for by Selsdon Funeral Service, Co-Op Funeral Service, Blooms Opticians and Vintage 62 Hair Salon. The Village club and the Sir Julian Huxley pub also placed their own floral arrangements. (If we would like to see such displays in future we will need to look for more sponsorship to cover the costs.)

A free 'bring your own' Community picnic was held in July in Selsdon Wood for all Selsdon residents. The weather was glorious and those who came gave good feedback. Next year it is planned to arrange another but with some organised old fashioned games to play (egg and spoon perhaps).

A community bench was placed on the 'Triangle' near Sainsbury's'. This was paid for by the Councillors Community fund to which the SRA had applied last year. Hedges were removed and 2,500 crocuses were also planted in this area as part of the same funding.

The Selsdon Gazette

Saira Brown took the position as Editor for 2016. We are very grateful to her and sad to say goodbye at the end of 2016 as she is now in the process of emigrating! We are very grateful to Heather Govier who stepped forward to cover the position and ensure the Gazette could continue without a break. Thanks to Carlo Rappa who has undertaken the busy role of Advertising Manager as well as to our volunteer deliverers and distributors continue to help bring 'The Gazette' to your door each month.

The Selsdon Christmas Lights

The Christmas lights are paid for by the donations of residents and traders. This is costly but looks great and really puts Selsdon on the map. This year we are grateful to the Councillors for giving residual money from the 2015 Community fund towards the lights which meant that despite diminishing donations we were able to cover the costs. In 2016 'Health and Safety' meant that the switch on ceremony road closure, needed for the Sleigh, became a problem. Thankfully Father Christmas still managed to get to his highstreet 'grotto' to meet the children of Selsdon via the Village club chimney! We hope to see his sleigh next year. Thanks to all who volunteered on the night including the Baptist Church and the Sir Julian Huxley for refreshments, to the Air Cadets, the Yorkshire Bank employees and the Greenvale School choir and the Police.

Accounts

A full balance sheet for 2016 will be presented at the next AGM which will be held on 30th March at St John's Hall, Upper Selsdon road. The continuation of the SRA depends on your voluntary annual subscriptions which has not been increased with inflation and which remains at £3 per household. Donations are also gratefully received. Thanks to the Treasurers Iris Jones (SRA) and Dick Adamson (The Gazette) and to Angela Jones who audits the Accounts. Dick has covered the role of Gazette Treasurer for many years and will be looking for someone to take his place in 2017. Volunteers with suitable skills please come forward!

This year £250 was granted by the SRA to the 1st Selsdon Scout group for repairs to their Scout Hut.

2016 Local news

The Fairfield Halls closed this year for refurbishment for a minimum period of 2 years. This concert hall has great acoustics, a proud past and if all goes to plan, an exciting future. Fingers crossed it can be achieved on budget and in the timescales stated!

The National Trust held 'behind the scenes' tours of the Fairfield Halls before the closure as part of its 'Edge City' tours. These tours were 'highlighting' Croydon's brutalist architecture. Whilst celebrating the concrete heart of Croydon let's hope they remembered to mention to visitors Croydon's history prior to the 1960's as well as the green spaces of Croydon. This is particularly relevant as 2016 was the 80th anniversary of the National Trust's being gifted the 200 acre Selsdon Nature Reserve (Selsdon Wood) by a group of philanthropists. Furthermore in 2016 the 'Friends of Selsdon Wood' won the London 'Community Woodland Management Award' from the Forestry Commission.

It is great that our outdoor spaces are used and appreciated. Littleheath Woods are visited once a week by Elmhurst School as part of a Forest School experience. In May this year nearby Frylands Wood Scout camp held a Centenary event which Selsdon cub packs attended with children from all over Croydon. They enjoyed a fantastic camping and outdoor experience.

Purley Hospital minor injuries unit opening hours were extended after a fight by campaigners. Remember - we must use it or lose it. However that said, stay well and look after yourself and your neighbours.

Janet Sharp, SRA Secretary