

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Councillor Alison Butler

January 2020

LATEST NEWS

New Croydon council homes unveiled

The first council homes built for Croydon residents by local developer Brick By Brick have been completed and unveiled on the 16th December 2019.

Three borough residents who had been on the council housing waiting list have now moved into the brand new one-bedroom flats in Thornton Heath and will pay council rents.

Named Flora Court after local First World War soldier Flora Sandes, the development in Chipstead Avenue was unveiled by the council's deputy leader Councillor Alison Butler alongside one of the new council tenants, council staff and Brick By Brick's development team.

New resident Blanche Takwi, 46, had to move into temporary accommodation last year because a serious illness meant she could no longer continue her job as a qualified care support worker or stay in her old flat. Her new council home in Flora Court means she is close to the hospital and her GP as her recovery continues.

She said: "I'm so excited and so happy to be here today; I never thought I would be in a flat like this."



Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Councillor Alison Butler

January 2020

In addition to the three newly-completed council homes, Flora Court also has 24 shared ownership homes due to complete early in the New Year. Anyone buying a 25% share in one of these shared ownership flats costing £315,000 will pay £78,750 and put down a 5% deposit costing £3,688.

Ensuring people have affordable homes to live in is a top priority for the council. These new council homes are spacious, top-quality places to live and they underline why we set up Brick By Brick in the first place.

Brick By Brick's first homes for private sale in Upper Norwood launched earlier this year, and its contractors are building dozens of other housing developments across the borough. More are in the pipeline, including plans for over 300 affordable homes in New Addington.

Winter provision for rough sleepers

Croydon is fortunate to have a long established winter floating shelter - the Croydon Churches Floating Shelter (CCFS), which with a number of churches and many volunteers providing a bed, warm meal, breakfast and friendship shelter seven days a week from November to March. Effective rough sleeping services rely on the spirit of partnership - referrals to the hub are made by a number of agreed referral partners, with Croydon's outreach team overseeing the final guest list and Croydon Council compiling and sending out the guest list, and risk assessments. CCFS guests attend Crisis at Christmas, which opened in Croydon for the second year running during Christmas week.

The Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) operates when the night time temperature is forecast to fall to 0 degrees or lower. This is a humanitarian response to extreme weather and whilst SWEP is in operation, Councils across London commit to provide shelter to any rough sleeper, irrespective of their eligibility for services. Croydon Council partnered with Crystal Palace Football Club (CPFC) in winter 2018/19, to provide a SWEP night shelter in the grounds at Selhurst Park, staffed by volunteers from CPFC and Croydon Council. The shelter can accommodate up to 10 individuals, with the catering staff preparing a hot meal for the guests.

If you have concerns about someone sleeping rough, please contact www.streetlink.org.uk 0300 500 0914, providing as much information about the individual as possible and the location of their sleep site. Your referral will be passed onto Croydon Council's outreach and the London wide Rapid Response Team

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Councillor Alison Butler

January 2020

service provided by Thames Reach. The teams are out seven nights a week looking for street link referrals, and helping them to access routes off the street, including emergency assessment hubs.

A community approach to increasing the uptake of Healthy Start retailers in Croydon

Parchmore Methodist Church and Community Centre are working closely with the Council's Gateway team and have become a Community Connect/Food Stop hub.

Community Connect involves various work streams such as employability, Healthy Start and food poverty. Parchmore Methodist Church and Community Centre are a key part of this. They've not only set up a Food Stop shop, but they've gone one step further and their Food Stop shop is now also a registered Healthy Start retailer. This means that Food Stop members who are eligible for Healthy Start can redeem their Healthy Start vouchers at the Food Stop shop at Parchmore Centre and benefit from additional fruit, vegetables and milk.

In partnership with the Council's Gateway team, Parchmore Centre is helping to raise awareness of the Healthy Start scheme with the aim of increasing the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers in Croydon.



AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Councillor Alison Butler

January 2020

Residents facing crisis/affected by any of the below issues can join the Food Stop and are also introduced to Community Connect services:

- Welfare reform
- Rent arrears
- Financial or employment difficulties
- At risk of homelessness or homeless
- Wanting to better their situation

This is one of three Food Stop Hubs which have been set up across the borough....

The Family Centre - Fieldway, New Addington, Croydon, CR0 9BS

St Francis Church - 146 Tedder Road, Monks Hill, South Croydon, CR2 8AH

To make a referral please email: GCC@croydon.gov.uk

Extra Care update

Decorations to the communal lounges at all six schemes are now complete, all lounges have been painted in a more neutral tone of cream or grey as chosen by residents.

New hard wearing laminated flooring has been laid throughout the communal lounge and dining room areas at Brookhurst Court and Toldene Court and is currently underway at Freeman Court. Work will start at Truscott House and Frylands court this week (wb 6th January) and at Southsea Court on 20th January following the completion of the remedial fire safety work on the ground floor. (picture of flooring and decoration at Brookhurst Court attached)



AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Councillor Alison Butler

January 2020

The tender process for the procurement of replacement lounge and dining furniture across all six schemes is complete, with the award made to Teal Living (part of Senator International Ltd). Consultation with residents regarding styles and colours has already taken place as part of the procurement process and selection and ordering of this will start within the next two weeks.

Christmas lunches were held at all six schemes during December, sponsored by Repairs & Maintenance partner Axis Europe and Capital Delivery contractor Mulalley, with a real Christmas tree donated to each scheme by the Cherry Hub Garden Centre.

These were co-ordinated by members of the Repairs & Maintenance team supported by officers from Health, Wellbeing & Adults. Staff from across the two services volunteered their time to decorate the lounges and serve the buffet food provided to residents and staying on afterwards to chat to residents and even lead a Christmas sing song. The lunches were very well attended, even by residents who don't normally join in with other organised events. To make sure that nobody missed out, where residents weren't able to attend on the day volunteers present made up plates of food and delivered these to individual flats.



Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Councillor Alison Butler

January 2020

Comments by staff on the day: “This is such a special time of year to give and share with our elderly residents. It was good to meet and work alongside colleagues to support others who need a helping hand.”

Comments by residents on the day: “We weren’t really expecting all this. It’s been lovely to get everyone together and see residents who haven’t come out for things like this before.”

Free household items for families in emergency accommodation looking for a new home

In November, Axis Europe provided 80 ‘family packs’ containing toothpaste, toothbrush, washing items, hand gel and treats at an event organised by the council’s bed and breakfast interventions service for families in emergency accommodation looking for a new home. In December, another 30 packs containing toiletries were given to the Turnaround Centre in Croydon for young care leavers who are at risk of eviction, living independently and considered vulnerable, or have young children.

Resident scoops special award at resident Christmas buffet

Yaw Boateng, Chair of the TLP (Tenant and Leaseholder Panel) picked up a Special Recognition award for Resident Involvement at this year’s annual Christmas buffet organised by the council’s resident involvement team. The award, which was presented by the Mayor of Croydon, Councillor Humayun Kabir, recognised Yaw for his hard work and commitment to resident involvement in a wide range of areas over a number of years.

The resident Christmas buffet is an annual festive celebration to which all Croydon’s involved tenants and leaseholders are invited to thank them for helping the council to improve its housing services. Residents get involved in many ways; some are participants of our lively panels, while others monitor services more locally where they live through our neighbourhood voice scheme. The evening, which was fully funded by the council’s repairs contractors Axis Europe, included a festive buffet, mulled wine, a prize raffle and quiz. Guests were entertained by Coulsdon based

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Councillor Alison Butler

January 2020

Surrey Harmony, a group of female barbershop singers who sang a festive mixture of carols and popular songs.

If you're a Croydon Council tenant or leaseholder and you'd like to find out more about getting involved, visit www.croydon.gov.uk/residentinvolvement or www.facebook.com/croydonresidentinvolvement. You can also email the team on residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk or ring 020 8726 6100 ext. 47350.

Gateway Link Update

Set up approximately 3 years ago as a special project to reduce current and future costs to the local authority by working directly with residents known to multiple services in Croydon and where traditional approaches to practice had not resulted in long-term positive outcomes. Last year Gateway Link directly helped more than 400 families and provided specialist support to practitioners on more than 300 advice cases.



As we move into 2020, we are looking forward to increasing the number of families we support and build on some fantastic feedback we have received from our customers and peers. Here's a small snapshot:

Referrals into the service come from internal and external partners. If you want to refer a case, please email Gatewaylink@croydon.gov.uk with the family or residents contact details, a short summary of the main issues and what outcomes you are hoping to achieve.

Brick by Brick

Completions on the for sale homes have been gathering momentum into the new year, with handovers now underway at Auckland Rise & Sylvan Hill in Upper Norwood, Ravensdale & Rushden in Upper Norwood and Windmill Place in Old Coulsdon.

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Councillor Alison Butler

January 2020

January 2020 sees a number of new schemes launching to the market across the borough, as well as another wave of public consultations on new sites across the borough taking place, with community events being held to share ideas before they go to planning.

With financial year-end approaching, Brick By Brick are preparing their new business plan for the year ahead together with a wrap-up of the value achieved for its sole shareholder Croydon Council. This will be published in March 2020.