

from Labour Assembly Member

# News

**Valerie Shawcross**  
representing Lambeth and Southwark

## Contact me

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## Crystal Palace Park set for major revamp

Now that London has been awarded the 2012 Olympic Games, I am thrilled to be working on the LDA's plans for the revitalisation of Crystal Palace Park, on behalf of the Mayor.

A public consultation is currently underway on ideas to improve and reinvigorate the park. These include rebuilding the sports centre and sports arena, easier access from the station, more parkland, attractive entrances to the park and improved public facilities, pathways and security. Next year Transport for London also aim to bring forward ideas for extending Croydon's

Tramlink to the park.

This consultation is a major opportunity for you to give your views on how Crystal Palace Park should regain its rightful status as a must-see London attraction. The consultation will run until 20<sup>th</sup> December 2005 and can be accessed at [www.crystalpalacepark.org.uk](http://www.crystalpalacepark.org.uk) Please tell us what you think!



### Free Bus Travel for Under-16s takes off

Free bus travel for those under 16 came into force in September. This will be extended to teenagers under the age of 18 who are in full time education next year.

Free transport aims to open up free-time activity options for young people and enable them to access sports facilities, museums and educational attractions cheaply and ensure that children's activity choices are not restricted due to the cost of getting there.

Over 180,000 applications for Child

Oystercards have been made since the scheme began. I hope that Lambeth and Southwark's youngsters are taking advantage - remember though that free travel is a privilege, not a right and anyone found abusing this or committing anti-social behaviour will have their free travel rights removed.

Val welcomes free bus travel for under 16's



This is my first newsletter since the tragic events of 7th July, when 52 Londoners were killed and many more injured in the horrific bomb attacks on our underground system. I would like to pay tribute to the fantastic efforts of our Emergency Services who responded with courage and determination. As Chair of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, I recently took part in an awards ceremony for firefighters who demonstrated extraordinary professionalism and stamina on 7/7 and I can say that London is lucky to have such excellent people on its side. However, the aftermath of the bombings demonstrated that London has a great strength that comes from its very diversity. I believe that this attempt to sever our united communities has not and will not succeed. Londoners have shown that we respect each other because of our differences, not in spite of them. Terrorism will not defeat London or Londoners.



Celebrating diversity - at Black History Month with local residents Mary Foulkes (l) and Preeti Farouki

## TRANSPORT SHORTS

- ◆ Station Security Improved by TfL- stations served by Southern Railways are now monitored by a live control centre at Streatham Hill. Stations managed by South Eastern Trains will be served by other control centres.
- ◆ TfL have announced that funds have been made available to install 24 hour monitored CCTV at Denmark Hill, Brixton and Nunhead stations.
- ◆ Bridge strengthening work has now taken place under the A23 by Streatham Station and the road is set to be re-widened. TfL will also be improving the roads, bus lanes and general streetscape in the Streatham High Road area over the next few months.
- ◆ All Jubilee line trains are to be lengthened, with extra carriages being fitted over the Christmas/ New Year period. Along with four new trains, this move will increase the Jubilee Line's capacity by 17%.

## Rotherhithe Crime Survey shows Concerns for Local Youth



Visiting Albion Street in Rotherhithe

My latest crime survey focussed on Rotherhithe. Over 1,000 people responded revealing that a major concern for many residents is large groups of young people on the streets, particularly in the Albion Street area. I'm pleased to say that Albion Street was recently made Southwarks first 'Dispersal Zone' under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act and this situation has now improved.

I will be working with relevant agencies in the local area to improve facilities and increase activities for young people in this area. Rotherhithe and Surrey Quays now has a dedicated Safer Neighbourhood Police Team, funded by the Mayor, however, I will continue to work for even more highly visible police and community support officers in the area, along with more CCTV cameras as many respondents said that this would make them feel safer.

### ***The new 'mini-motorbike menace' - what you can do about it:***

I have received numerous complaints about these small scooters being ridden at great speed on walkways and in parks from across Lambeth and Southwark. If this is a problem in your street/estate then I want to hear from you - you should also be aware of the following facts and that the police and local council CAN take action against this anti-social nuisance.

- ◆ Riding mini-motorbikes on roads or footpaths is a **traffic offence**
- ◆ They can only legally be ridden on private property with the express permission of the landowner.
- ◆ The police can seize these vehicles and your local authority can issue noise abatement orders or even ASBOs for persistent anti-social use of mini-motorbikes.

## Southwark 1000 - We're Getting There With Community Policing



I joined Sir Ian Blair at the reopening of Camberwell Police Station

I am championing the campaign to increase the number of police officers in Southwark to 1000. This figure is formed from our base view of what would be realistically required in Southwark to provide adequate community level policing and a reliable response to incidents. The current strength of Southwark Police's Borough Command stands at about 890, plus 36 Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs). Camberwell Police Station has also re-opened after an effective campaign by local residents and every ward in London will be getting its own Safer Neighbourhood Team over the next few months. This is a significant improvement on the situation in 2002 (when we had 775 Southwark based police). However, I want to make sure that we hit our 1000 target.

# Be Safe and Sound



TV's June Whitfield recently joined me and Dockhead Firefighters to launch the 'Be Safe and Sound' campaign at City Hall. The campaign is part of a drive by the London Fire Brigade to cut fire deaths in the home by 20% by 2010 and urges people to take advantage of a free home fire safety check available from the Fire Brigade. Local firefighters will identify fire hazards in the home and the check includes installation of a free smoke alarm if necessary. To set up visit for either yourself, a friend or relative, please ring 0800 028 4428 or visit [www.london-fire.gov.uk/homesafetychecks](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/homesafetychecks)

## Supporting Cyclists

London's cyclists deserve better conditions and I am a strong supporter of cycling in the capital. I have always supported Southwark Cyclists and earlier this year I borrowed one of City Hall's 'pool bikes' to ride to their annual breakfast meeting for National Bike Week at the Globe Theatre.

Competitive cycling should also be encouraged, especially in light of London's Olympic bid success, so it is appropriate that the Herne Hill Velodrome has been reopened under the management of the British Cycling authorities. However, I have concerns about the long term future of the site and will continue working with the London Velodrome Trust to secure this valuable sporting facility.



Get on your bike! - a slightly drizzly National Bike Week!

## Lambeth shopkeepers face parking crisis

Small shopkeepers from across Lambeth's shopping parades, including Streatham Vale, Lambeth Walk, Black Prince Road and Wandsworth Road, have complained to me that their businesses are struggling and in danger.

Business-owners are being consistently ticketed outside their shops when delivering or unloading, and on some roads there is simply not adequate stopping time for this kind of vital work to be carried out. Others have raised the issue that shoppers are beginning to shop elsewhere for fear of getting a parking ticket, which is detrimental to their profits and the viability of their businesses. There is often a lack of short stay parking spaces for passing customers.

I have contacted Lambeth Council repeatedly over this matter, urging a fair attitude towards shopkeepers who are simply unloading deliveries, and the creation of short stay parking for shoppers. I hope that this may have some positive effects for small business-owners in the borough.



Looking at parking issues on Wandsworth Road with Cllr Helen O'Malley and local resident Christopher Wellbelove.

## Curtain up for Unicorn Children's Theatre - coming soon to Tooley Street!



The theatre has received grant aid from the LDA.

The Unicorn Theatre, which uniquely provides shows, education and outreach work for children, is set to open shortly. Having been involved in the Unicorn's highly successful fundraising events I had the privilege of visiting the site earlier in the summer (see above).

For further information you can visit [www.unicorntheatre.org.uk](http://www.unicorntheatre.org.uk)

## A SAFE JOURNEY - TEXT 'HOME' TO 60835

As the party season approaches I want to draw particular attention to the latest initiative to enable late night travellers to get home safely. Those travelling in the capital can now text HOME to 60835 and receive details of licensed minicab and taxi firms in the area they are texting from.

The Safer Travel at Night (STAN) campaign has worked hard to raise awareness of the dangers of using unlicensed minicabs, and since the campaign began, numbers of attacks by unlicensed drivers has dropped dramatically, however ten sexual assaults by unlicensed cab drivers are still reported each month. This is ten too many.

I urge anyone travelling in London, particularly women, to make sure that they only use Transport for London licensed minicabs or taxis and that they take advantage of the new text service if travelling late, particularly if in an unfamiliar area. All minicab vehicles have now been licensed and will display a disc like the one shown below so look out for it. And remember that a licensed minicab always has to be booked in advance and must not pick up fares in the street. Texts to the new service cost 35p plus standard network charges.



Keep a lookout for the distinctive licence disc which all licensed minicabs now have to display.

## DENMARK HILL STATION AND ACCESSIBILITY - LET ME KNOW YOUR VIEWS

I have visited the station to see the full extent of the access problems there.



Given that Denmark Hill station serves not one, but two major hospitals in South East London (Kings College Hospital and the Maudsley) it is a logistical nightmare for anyone with a mobility problem, and impossible for a wheelchair user to access. This is a real problem, as it deters patients from using the train to get to the hospital.

Both hospitals have contacted me to raise this matter, and I have instigated talks with them, Transport for London and the Department for Transport. I am delighted to report that TfL are now conducting a feasibility study into improving Denmark Hill station, including providing 'step free' access to the platform.

I would really like your views on this matter. What do you think of the station? What could be improved? Have you or a friend or relative ever had difficulty getting to hospital from the station? What do you think the best way of improving the accessibility there would be? Please let me know using the slip below.

# TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK

***"If you want any detailed information on any issue, to be put on the mailing list for regular reports, to invite me to a meeting or to talk to me personally, please fill in the form below or contact me using the details on the front page:" Return to Val Shawcross AM, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA***

Here's what I think about .....

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