

## Celebrating our Older People



One of the most enjoyable events of last year for me was an awards ceremony aimed at recognising the contribution of older people to life in Lambeth and Southwark. In

collaboration with Age Concern Lambeth and Southwark, Lambeth and Southwark's Pensioners' Action Groups and the South Asian Elders Association based in Peckham, local people were asked to nominate an older person they felt had made an impact through areas such as volunteering, caring, work to enhance intergenerational work, work by a group and simply outstanding achievement. We met some wonderful people and the awards ceremony was a fantastic afternoon at City Hall. There isn't space to mention everyone by name here but you can find out more about the awards and winners on my website at

[www.valshawcross.com](http://www.valshawcross.com)

I would like to thank everyone who helped with the event including all our guest award presenters, including Lambeth and Southwark councillors and Simon Hughes MP.



Val with winners Brian Moughtin (l) and Prof. Stanley Davies.

## Saturday schooling

I recently joined Vauxhall MP Kate Hoey on a visit to the Queen Mother Moore Saturday school to meet voluntary teachers and children. The school teaches self esteem and confidence to youngsters and provides a happy club like atmosphere for children to learn in. There is emphasis on teaching black history so that children learn about the contribution of the black community to Britain. We met some impressive youngsters and answered stretching questions!

Many thanks to Headteacher Rev Hughie Andrews, and Committee chairman Clarence Thompson MBE for their forty years of dedicated work.



## Surveys & Scrutiny

- As part of my role on the Environment Committee I recently did some 'rapporteur' work on noise nuisance from car stereos and 'mini-motos'. The full report, 'Fuming & Booming', can be found at: [www.london.gov.uk/assembly/reports/environment/fuming-and-booming.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/reports/environment/fuming-and-booming.pdf)
- There are growing concerns about the number of attractive, family houses which are being converted into flats or bedsits, along with a growing trend for building flats and houses in back gardens. If you think this is a problem in your area? Visit [www.valshawcross.com](http://www.valshawcross.com) and take my survey!

every community where women and girls are forced into sex slavery. We should be doing more to make men who use brothels understand that they are implicating themselves in torture, brutality and kidnap and may even be committing rape.

The symposium gave a clear message that it is time for councils and the police to start working together to tackle the issue.



Val and Mary were joined by Vernon Coaker MP and politicians from across London.

## Calling for an end to the trafficking of women and children

I was pleased to join forces with London MEP Mary Honeyball in January to host a symposium on the growing problem of the trafficking of women and children to the UK who end up being forced to work in the sex industry.

Politicians including Home Office ministers Vernon Coaker and Fiona McTaggart, and campaigners from across London joined us in the Chamber at City Hall for an extremely interesting day of discussion. Trafficking should be an issue for us at a local level. There are brothels in

News from

Winter 2008



# Valerie Shawcross

Lambeth & Southwark's Labour Voice on the London Assembly

# Cash promise for local youngsters

I was delighted in October last year, to be able to join Mayor Ken Livingstone and Children's minister, Rt Hon Ed Balls MP to launch the Mayor's Youth Offer for London.

The London Development Agency and Department for Children, Schools and Families have joined forces to provide a massive £78million to provide facilities and services for young people across the capital.

**£7.8million**

Lambeth and Southwark boroughs have been allocated a total of £7.8million which will be dedicated to providing alternative activities for young people with a focus on those who are at most risk of becoming excluded and turning to crime and gang culture. I was particularly delighted that the Mayor and Ed announced the funding at the Salmon Centre in Bermondsey. The centre was chosen as an example of a provider of excellent facilities for young people.

### Encouragement

The Youth Offer is seeking to fulfil three main objectives: providing more things to do and places to go for young people, encourage young people to get more involved

positively in their community and improving the quality of and access to services and activities for young people.

### Further details

The funding will be distributed through local authorities. If you are interested in applying for funds or want to find out more, you should contact:

**In Lambeth**, John Readman by emailing [jreadman@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:jreadman@lambeth.gov.uk), telephoning 020 7926 1000 or writing care of Lambeth Council, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton Hill, London, SW2 1RW.

**In Southwark**, Karl Murray by emailing [Karl.Murray@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:Karl.Murray@southwark.gov.uk), telephoning 020 7525 5000 or writing care of Southwark Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE15 8UB.



Deputy Mayor Nicky Gavron AM, Mayor Ken Livingstone, Rt Hon Ed Balls MP and Val at Salmon Youth Centre.

## Get in touch:

Here's what I think about:

If you do not wish to be kept informed about Val's work at the London Assembly, please tick here.

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### More news inside:

Crystal Palace — Park life

Celebrating our Older People

Better Police facilities

Protecting Homes and Gardens

Up the Junction?

Booming and Fuming

## New policing needs new police stations

**T**he new focus on community based policing, along with new technology has changed the way the police work with a focus on more local services. The Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) is conducting a review of all its premises to work out how its buildings can best suit the modern services it provides.

Amid concerns about the future of some of our stations I invited MPA Chair and my London Assembly neighbour Len Duvall AM to visit East Dulwich and Streatham police stations with me to look at the facilities and meet the staff.

### East Dulwich and Streatham police stations visit

It is clear that some police buildings, often built a long time ago, are no longer sufficient for modern policing. For example, East Dulwich's 60s built block in Lordship Lane has developed 'concrete cancer' and is surrounded by scaffolding to ensure that masonry does not fall onto the pavement.

Streatham police station has a high number of staff based there but the public entrance is not accessible for those with disabilities and staff are briefed in a portacabin. These are just some of the difficulties local police are dealing with in these buildings.

### Small and inhospitable

The counter areas are of particular concern. At both stations the reception areas are small and inhospitable spaces, where members of the public and victims of crime can end up queuing alongside offenders.



Len and Val outside one of the Streatham Police portacabins.

However, changes to police premises will not result in any reduction of services or police availability. As Len said at East Dulwich "It's clear that no further changes can take place until we have found suitable replacement buildings in the general locality. Londoners need easy access to their local police which is why - whatever is decided about the future of our premises - the current opening times and counter services will be maintained. The ultimate aim is that they will be available in much more pleasant environments. We also hope that each Safer Neighbourhood Team will have a base in or very close to the area they serve."

# Park *life!*

## Up the *junction?*

**F**or years, pedestrians and motorists in Herne Hill, both visitors and residents alike, have found negotiating Herne Hill Junction a fraught affair. The area is persistently congested, offers few safe ways for pedestrians to cross the road and gives a poor impression of Herne Hill for both residents and particularly visitors.



How the improved Herne Hill Junction might look.

### A Safer Herne Hill

I've been pleased to have been involved with discussions on how this might be improved and firmly believe the option illustrated here offers the best compromise in terms of better traffic flow, safer pedestrian access and

making Herne Hill more attractive. I'm particularly pleased that pedestrians will be able to more easily and safely access the beautiful park on their doorsteps.

### Benefits

There have been concerns raised about

the need to use a small strip of parkland in order to widen the road. Using green space for any kind of development is always a difficult decision and something to be avoided if possible. However, I believe that in this case the benefits of the scheme outweigh the loss of a tiny portion of the park.

### Welcoming

The plan is the result of several years discussions and hard work and I think it is the best option for Herne Hill making it a more pleasant and welcoming place. Lambeth Council are currently looking at the planning application for the scheme.

Please let me have any comments, using the form on the back page.

## Up the *Palace!*

**P**lans for the regeneration of Crystal Palace Park continue. The LDA's masterplan for the park has now been submitted to Bromley Council as local planning authority and we await the outcome. Bromley are now consulting on the plans before a decision is made.

### Courses

An exciting development currently underway at the park is the reopening of the farm at Crystal Palace under the management of Capel Manor College.

### Animals

Capel Manor offer courses and training in horticulture

and animal care and will be moving into the restocked and refurbished farm centre in the park in the next few weeks. Not only does this mean that South London students who wish to undertake courses in animal care will now be able to do so without needing to travel to Capel Manor's north London campus, but the farm, run by the students, will be open to the public once again giving local people, including young people and schools the opportunity to visit and learn about a range of animals.



Artist's impression of the new look Crystal Palace Park.

### Website

The Crystal Palace Park website is also set for a relaunch shortly so watch this space:

[www.crystalpalacepark.org](http://www.crystalpalacepark.org)

## Transport update

### Trains:

**South London Line.** Following Network Rail's controversial plans to divert the South London Line away from Peckham Rye and Denmark Hill, I tackled the Mayor about the detrimental effect this would have on local commuters. As a result TfL London Rail will be undertaking a full passenger survey on the line to get a better indication of passenger numbers and why people use the line i.e. to get to Kings College Hospital. The results will be used in the case to keep the line running.

### Tube:

**East London Line.** As people will be aware, the East London Line has now closed in order to be upgraded and extended as part of London Overground and will run northwards to Hackney and south to Crystal Palace and West Croydon when it reopens in 2010.

### Buses:

**Route 343. Camberwell & Peckham.** TfL Buses believe that current service levels on the 343 route are acceptable despite many reports to me of overcrowding. I have been doing some of my own monitoring of this service and will be taking the results to TfL. Many thanks to everyone who has taken the time to return my survey on this.

## A better Brixton

I'm delighted that Transport for London are about to start a revamp of Brixton Town Centre to make the area a more pleasant place to visit, work and shop in. TfL's measures aim to tackle safety and security and make the whole area more pleasant. They plan to:

- Widen footways between the Tube station and the Acre Lane / Coldharbour Lane junction so it is less crowded
- Add new bus lane sections to reduce bus journey times
- Add new or improve existing pedestrian crossings and paths

Brixton is one of the most vibrant and exciting areas in my constituency, but unfortunately also suffers from problems with drug dealing and anti-social behaviour, particularly outside the tube station. These works will make the area feel more spacious and make it less easy for perpetrators to go undetected. More details can be found at [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)



A better Brixton!