

Thornton Heath Community Action Team



Annual Report 2021-2022

Introduction from the Chair, Andrea Perry:

My first year as chair of THCAT has been difficult for me personally with the loss of my dear mum but it has also been a rewarding one.

In the last couple of months I have attended two events which have shown how as a community if we work together we can make great strides.



The opening of the Grangewood Park playground was the culmination of many years of campaigning, petitions and lobbying. The new playground is in much demand with parents and children and shows how investment in the area's infrastructure is

so needed.

I was also honoured to speak at the unveiling of a memorial outside the home of the late Cédric Monvoisin on Brook Road. The plaque is on one of an avenue cherry trees dedicated to Cédric paid for following a local crowdfunding appeal.

I hope we can build on the legacies of these two projects.

This year also saw an opportunity for change on our council with the election of Croydon's first directly elected mayor.

THCAT organised the borough's first public hustings to hear from the mayoral candidates.





Thornton Heath Community Action Year

**CROYDON
MAYORAL CANDIDATE
HUSTINGS**



We also held the only hustings for candidates standing to become councillors in the May elections.

After spending so much of the last seven years working towards a better Thornton Heath and being frustrated by the lack of progress I stood as an Independent candidate in Thornton Heath Ward. Fellow THCAT member Graham Mitchell also stood as an independent in Bensham Manor ward.

For me people should always come above politics and my desire to represent the community was driven by an ambition to bring change and solutions to long term problems. While we were unsuccessful it opened up my eyes even further to the desperate need for better funding to tackle systemic problems particularly in housing and mental health locally.

THCAT'S New Logo

Tilly Pollard, who joined the THCAT Committee at the last AGM as our new design and social media co-ordinator, created our dynamic new logo to mark the start of a fresh era for THCAT.



The abstract-coloured hands represent how diverse and vibrant the Thornton Heath community is and that if we work together we can improve our area and support each other. Tilly has been busy throughout the year working on common branding across all our communications and has been proactively promoting THCAT on all our social media platforms. We would like to thank her for all her hard work since taking up the role.

Thank you

I would also like to pay tribute to our outgoing secretary Chris Milton (pictured centre in red) who has volunteered so much of her time over the last seven years to meticulously recording THCAT's meetings. As secretary, she also maintains the mailing list, deals with our incoming and outgoing email and services the THCAT meetings with notifications, agendas and minutes for both the general membership and the Committee. She will be sorely missed.



Both Chris and Tilly deserve extra praise for going above and beyond in their coverage of the mayoral and council candidate hustings.

We also said a fond farewell to THCAT stalwart Peter Lawrence and his wife Angela who moved to Dorset but not before finishing off, with the help of many volunteers the beautiful mosaic at The Pond.

It's also with sadness that we say goodbye to Major Paul and Louise Wood who have been so supportive to both THCAT and the community during their tenure at The Salvation Army on Thornton Heath High Street. We wish them well with their next challenge in Plymouth.



THCAT'S Graffiti campaign

When Thornton Heath's historic Clock Tower was vandalised it was the last straw for residents. With the anti graffiti team axed in the wake of the council's financial troubles THCAT organised a clean up day.

The words 'Sheemz' written in red were daubed over the 121 year old masonry as well as trees, walls, and a large rock targeted.

THCAT paid for a special graffiti removal solution and a mobile pressure washer to remove the majority of the graffiti from the landmark.

The other tags were also removed and volunteers bagged up litter and weeded overgrown raised beds.

It was part of our campaign to get the anti graffiti team reinstated which the new Mayor Jason Perry and his administration committed to.

We look forward to seeing graffiti also removed from commercial properties in and around the High Street.

Over the past few years the Clock Tower has become a magnet for anti social behaviour with drinking, shouting and fights breaking out.





We are also supportive of plans to reinstate the PSPO (Public Space Protection Order). THCAT also organised other action days targeting



graffiti tags on the Vân Dang's Peacock mural outside the Sakthy Ganapathy Temple and the cleaning of other murals designed by Vân on the steps on the Ambassador House forecourt. We were also grateful to Enigma Environmental Solutions, created by ex council employees who had worked in anti graffiti removal and removed graffiti from the Salvation Army building for free with THCAT making a donation on their request to the Ukrainian relief fund.

Mayor of Croydon Civic Awards 2020

We were delighted to be chosen as a finalist for the Mayor of Croydon's Civic Awards 2020 in the category "Stronger Together" for all the work done in our Street Action project (funded by the People's Health Trust).

We were truly looking forward to the Awards Ceremony in March 2020 which unfortunately was cancelled when the first Covid lockdown was announced.

We did finally receive recognition of our achievements with this certificate signed by the then civic mayor Cllr Humayun Kabir.



Streets and Flytip Ambassadors

The introduction of ambassadors to tackle more specific problems in a more focussed way was a priority for me in my first year as chair.

During the last year, THCAT's ambassadors Gaetane Jones and Barbara Benjamin supported by THCAT member Paul Voden, have worked tirelessly prioritising efforts on checking the HMO's Houses of Multiple Occupancy in the Bensham Manor Ward, against the council's own register and identifying possible unlicensed HMOs during regular monthly street walks. We are pleased to say that this task was completed in March 2022, following eight months of hard work by the team, sometimes without either an Neighbourhood Safety Officers or local ward councillors.

They established that the majority of properties on the Council's licensed HMO list were accurately detailed and many of the HMO properties seemed to be in very good order, but similarly, there were far too many which were clearly in a poor state of repair.



THCAT committee members, Gaetane and Barbara, supported by Gill Borthwick, then started on monthly walkabouts in the Thornton Heath ward. On one of the walks they were accompanied by Val Shawcross, who was at the time, one of the Mayoral candidates. The walkabouts in Thornton Heath ward were halted in April 2022, because of the impending Local and Mayoral elections, but we hope to resume in September 2022.

The team reported vast amounts of flytipping, unkempt front gardens, and issues regarding commercial businesses during our street walks - in total 160 items were reported and we are very proud to confirm that the vast majority of issues were sorted out, and those which we classed as persistent offenders, were followed up on a regular basis with the ward councillor or council officers, and I think it is fair to say that we are 'very proud' of our achievements thus far, said Barbara.

She said: "Whenever the opportunity arises, we tell local residents about THCAT and encourage them to get involved if they are able to. "

Going forward, Cllr Humayan Kabir has agreed to continue to carry out regular street walks, with the help of Paul in Bensham Manor, whilst Gaetane and Barbara focus on the Thornton Heath and West Thornton wards. Paul and Gill will continue to play a huge part in the team, by providing the vital extra support needed.

On 25th May, Gaetane and Barbara began to familiarise themselves with the West Thornton Ward. Whilst on this "informal" walk, they still managed to report ten incidents of concern, the worst being Raymead Passage.



Whilst walking along Meadowview Road, they decided to knock on a couple of residents door and luckily, both residents were really keen to get involved in THCAT and we will be contacting them again on our next West Thornton walkabout.

Barbara said: "Given that Croydon council now has a new administration, under the leadership of its first Democratically Elected Mayor, we are hoping that an NSO will still accompany us but we will no longer be inviting local councillors, instead our summary report which is compiled after every street walk, will be sent to the relevant council officer(s), their manager and the relevant cabinet member for the service. The DEM - Jason Perry, will also be copied in, if the team feel that matters are not being dealt with in an appropriate/timely manor.

"We are really looking forward to continuing and building on our achievements, and we hope that we can quickly establish a cohesive working relationship with officers and management within Croydon's new administration."

In the last week the team did a walkabout with the new Cabinet Member for Streets and Environment Scott Roche and hope to resolve many long standing issues on flytipping, parking, planning, public hygiene and ASB.

Chair: Thank you Gaetane, Barbara, Paul and Gill for your hard work.

Cédric's Legacy – Brook Road. The official unveiling.



After a long year of uncertainty, the wish of a 45-year-old man who died too young was finally unveiled with a memorial plaque on 18th June 2022. Cédric Monvoisin, a resident of Thornton Heath and active member of THCAT sadly passed away in November 2020 at

Croydon University Hospital following a short illness.

Covid restrictions meant that his funeral in France was a small affair and no service could be held in the UK. So, in order to celebrate Cédric's life and to create a legacy that reflects his love of the area and his commitment to community activities, his partner Craig worked with THCAT to create an avenue of cherry trees in Brook Road.

Very generous contributions from family, friends, colleagues and Brook Road residents raised the funds on a GoFundMe page to make Cédric's wish a reality. With the help of THCAT, Croydon Council created new tree pits and planted 18 cherry trees in November 2021.

On Saturday 18th June 2022, the Civic Mayor of Croydon, Alisa Fleming, uncovered a memorial plaque outside the house in the presence of Cédric's parents and sister who came over from France for the occasion, as well as his long-term partner Craig Bailey. Past and present local councillors, Jamie Audsley and Callton Young, as well as THCAT Committee Members and Brook Road residents attended the ceremony. Fr. Emmanuel of St. Andrew's church in Brook Road, as well as Sister Jenny were also in attendance.



The unveiling was attended by 60 guests who gathered round to mark the occasion with short speeches from the Mayor, responses from the Leader of the TH Action Team, Andrea Perry, as well as Cynthia Maxwell who was a close neighbour and friend. The event was a celebration of a young man's life but also tinged with sadness at his untimely passing.

From now on and every year in spring time, when the cherry trees are in full bloom, our community and visitors in the area will enjoy the beauty of their pink blossoms. We will remember Cédric who was much loved by his family, friends, colleagues and the people of Thornton Heath.

In Bloom 2021

For the sixth year running, and despite Covid, we managed to hold our annual In Bloom competition in 2021 with over 90 entries. This time we added 2 extra categories - dustbin planters and nature gardens to the previous ones of front gardens, concrete front spaces, street planters/tree pit planting, children's planting and business/groups/organisations. Streatham and Croydon Rugby Football Club kindly hosted the Awards Ceremony in their stands - an ideal venue during the



pandemic offering plenty of fresh air but with a roof covering in case of rain! A team of THCAT members used bunting, ribbons and fresh garden flowers to decorate and welcome around 70 of the entrants.



Former chair Linda Watson opened the evening by thanking all the entrants and saying: "If you don't actually win a prize tonight, please don't be discouraged because you are all winners".

She went on to explain that they have won on behalf of nature, (providing for birds, bees, bugs and butterflies), the environment (helping to

clean the air), and neighbours and passers-by, some of whom have been inspired to start planting and whose well-being has been positively affected by



the beautiful gardens and planters.

Those attending enjoyed drinks and nibbles prepared and brought to their seats by THCAT members whilst 4 of the 5 judges (below) who were able to attend the evening announced the winners.

Thanks also goes to Averil Courtinho who does the spreadsheets of entries for the In Bloom competition and this year is doing all the admin work for the contest.

Thornton Heath Chronicle



The Chronicle underwent a redesign last July and October marked the fifth anniversary of newspaper but lack of funding meant that the last printed edition went to press in December.

In our last few editions, said Editor Andrea Perry we were able to highlight our amazing

community of talented individuals and campaign for much needed improvements to the way services are delivered locally.

The website continues and perhaps a local benefactor will come forward to support the future of local news in Thornton Heath in years to come.

Get in touch if you want to help editor@thorntonheathchronicle.co.uk



THCAT supports cancer fundraiser

The community rallied to raise worthy funds for Guys Cancer Centre across various events in CR7 including a Charity fun day at a local pub with a Bake off competition, art workshop, fabulous raffle and sponsored head shave.



To date the fund has raised £4,346 which will be matched by an anonymous sponsor.



THCAT sponsored the CR7 fundraiser walk in Thornton Heath Rec on 24th of April and paid for the advertising banners for displaying in the Park prior to the event. Some members of THCAT took part in the event and some others selflessly gave up their free time to help steward the event, which was a success, raising around £800 to add to the fund that will be matched by an anonymous sponsor.

Organiser Sue Ahmed said: "Andrea Perry and Graham Mitchell were both instrumental in planning the event, of which I'm very grateful, and thank you to everyone who played a part."

You can still donate via the [JustGiving](#) page

Ambassador House gardening club



Since Croydon Council's contract with the charity Urban Growth to maintain the planting at Ambassador House ended last October, a few THCAT members have been determined to keep the garden in good shape despite some truly awful weather! The gardening club, advertised on THCAT's social media and by poster on the

AH shed noticeboard, meets on the first Saturday of every month from 1-3pm.

In the autumn months we tried to plant as many spring bulbs as possible, a number of them donated by local people, followed in late spring by seed planting, including sunflowers and forget-me-nots.

The water butt gives a good amount of water (even from just half the shed roof) and each session usually includes watering (especially the planters situated under the building), plus weeding and litter picking. When the weather is dry we are grateful for an arrangement allowing us to run a hosepipe from inside the empty building to water all the planters thoroughly.

Many people enjoy using this space for a coffee and chat and many have been complimentary about how the garden is looking. If you are able to help, please email [action @thorntonheath.net](mailto:action@thorntonheath.net)



Valentine's Day

To celebrate Valentine's Day 2022, THCAT invited members to tie tokens of love, such as a red ribbon or heart, to the railings opposite the station.

It was wonderful to see the huge heart made by children from Thornton Heath Nursery and to witness the smile all the contributions brought to the faces of those passing by!

Local organisation ASKI attached a poster with the message "Dear Thornton Heath, Warm Hugs".

Unfortunately it was one of the windiest weeks we'd seen for a while so the tokens took quite a battering! Many thanks to all who joined in and looking forward to an even bigger display next year!



Planters and The Pond

For many years THCAT has been behind the popular planter project in the streets around Thornton Heath. The wooden planters have really cheered up street corners which were often the site of fly tipping.



Going forward we hope that local guardians will have renewed inspiration to look after and ensure the planters are maintained, planted up and watered as they have a real positive affect.



Graham Mitchell has kindly continued to look after the planter stock renovating

and moving planters when they are in need of TLC.



THCAT members were also involved in a litter pick and tidy up at The Pond in the spring overseen by Graham.

Christmas tree 2020



In December THCAT carried on the tradition of providing and decorating a Christmas tree for the community as it had always done over the years. It was a more low key affair and this year it was positioned by Ambassador House.

The Christmas tree was kindly donated by the garage on Beulah Road and secured in place surrounded by security

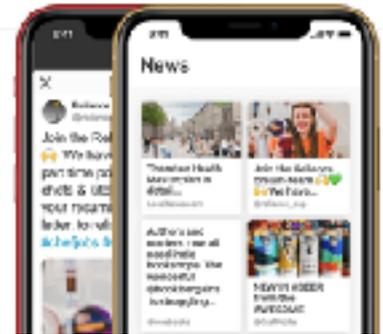




fencing, kindly provided by the council. Committee members and other volunteers decorated the tree with baubles, tinsel and fairy lights as well as real holly and ivy.

WE ARE THORNTON HEATH

We Are Thornton Heath app



THCAT supported the creation of the We Are Thornton Heath app which aims to generate economic growth for Thornton Heath

The launch of the Digital Town Hub, developed by tech company Loqiva based in Crystal Palace was accompanied by short film showing the best of Thornton Heath and featured some of what we love best about our hometown; the



diversity, community, eclectic food and how while we live in an urban environment we are never far away from nature our green spaces. It was accompanied to a poem written and spoken by Croydon's poet laureate Shaniqua Benjamin, who is herself a Thornton Heath resident.



Residents can download the free app <https://wearethorntonheath.app> to find out what's going on locally and benefit from local discounts.

THCAT Finances Thank you to our Treasurer David Fell for overseeing our accounts during the last year. The table below summarises THCAT's financial position as of 20th July 2022. Budgets are in order of grant date and those struck out have been fully exhausted.

Date	Funder	Cash in	Spent to date	Remaining	Project
2015	Capital Cleanup	£ 1,490.00	£ 1,490.00		Clocktower
2015	Paddypower	£ 500.00	£ 244.37	£ 256	Christmas t
2015	Wetherspoons	£ 250.00	£ 192.00	£ 58	Planting
2015-2016	Govia Thameslink Gra	£ 799.58	£ 799.58		Station
2015-2019	Donation	£ 81.83		£ 82	Unspecified
2016	Brewers donation	£ 150.00		£ 150	Clocktower
2016	Humayun 2016	£ 2,275.00	£ 2,034.06	£ 241	Chronicle +
2016	Jamie Audsley 2016	£ 3,750.00	£ 3,750.00		Highstreet,
2016	Thornton Heath Arts V	£ 721.16	£ 721.15		Arts week
2017	CVA	£ 390.00	£ 390.00		Unspecified
2017	Jamie Audsley 2017	£ 2,000.00	£ 1,000	£ 1,000	Hotspots to
2017	Job Centre Cash	£ 38.00	£ 38.00		Job Centre
2017	Karen Jewit 2017	£ 350.00	£ 350.00		Planters
2017	Matthew's Ward Budge	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00		Chronicle
2017	Pat Clouder 2017	£ 100.00	£ 99.85		Job Centre
2017	Simon Carter	£ 100.00	£ 100.00		Chronicle
2017	Stuart King 2017	£ 500.00	£ 500.00		Pond planti
2018	Alison Butler 2018	£ 750.00		£ 750	Brigstock H
2018	Jamie Audsley 2018	£ 7,500.00	£ 4,723	£ 2,777	Highstreet,
2018	Pat Clouder 2018	£ 400.00	£ 400.00		Planters
2018	Stuart King 2018	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00		Pond planti
2018	Unknown	£ 77.30		£ 77	Unspecified
2019	Jamie Audsley 2019	£ 7,500.00	£ 7,500		Improving Th
2019	Janet Campbell 201	£ 700.00	£ 560.02	£ 140	The Pond
2019	Stuart King 2019	£ 500.00	£ 476.04	£ 24	The Pond Mo
2019	Alison Butler 2019	£ 2,500.00		£ 2,500	Ambassador
2019	Jewett & Clouder 20	£ 400.00		£ 400	Planters
2020	Jamie Audsley 2020	£ 6,500	£ 6,500.00	£ -	Ongoing acti
2020	Stuart King 2020	£ 20.00		£ 20	Pond donati
2020	Pat Clouder 2020	£ 200.00	£ 189.68	£ 10	Free Art
2020	Karen Jewit 2020	£ 200.00	£ 200		Free Art
2020	Janet Campbell 2020	£ 100	£ 88.00	£ 12	Free Art
2020	Alison Butler 2020	£ 250.00	£ 132	£ 118	Planters
2021	Cedric's Legacy	£ 8,537	£ 3,051	£ 5,486	Brook Road T
2021	In Bloom 2021 donati	£ 280	274.74	£ 5	In Bloom
2022	Govia Thameslink G	£ 199			Station
2017-2018	Market	£10,125.56	£10,092.73	£ 33	Thornton He
2017-2020	People's Health Trust	£ 26,028.00	£ 26,027.95		Terms of bid
	Grand Total	£92,762.19	£78,424.11		£14,338.08

