

we are croydon this is our vision

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Preface

Croydon isn't a place that can be captured or defined easily. It is different - a place that has evolved uniquely over time.

A bridge between London and the South East, full of energy and opportunity but also a place of quiet respite and reflection. Local in its perspective but with a global outlook. Proud of its heritage but celebrating modernity and innovation. And boasting a wide range of ethnicities, cultures and beliefs that unite in a genuine sense of local pride and optimism.

This difference and diversity is one of our greatest strengths and one that characterises Croydon's enterprising and creative spirit – the seam that runs throughout our vision.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the tens of thousands of local people and partners who contributed their time and energy to the process of developing a long-term vision for Croydon. What came through more clearly than anything else in our discussions with you is the confidence that we all share for our borough's future. This book is a testament to our ambition and is the first step on our journey to achieving our vision together.

We are Croydon and this is our vision.

Why a vision?

'If you don't know where you're going, you'll probably end up somewhere else'

Most successful towns and cities across the world have an agreed vision of what they want to be. Croydon should be no different - and while there have always been ambitious plans in place - until now there has never been a single vision that says clearly what the borough's shared priorities for the future are and what Croydon's public agencies and organisations should be working towards.

We embarked on our journey to Imagine Croydon's long-term vision in September 2008. People from all the major public, private and community organisations in Croydon attended a workshop designed to encourage wide ranging debate on the major challenges and opportunities facing the borough.

To make the right choices about that future, and to have these choices supported by local people, we also engaged in the largest consultation exercise ever undertaken in the history of the borough - asking more than 20,000 local people to 'Imagine Croydon' in 2040. Your responses were creative, ambitious and inspiring.

The outcome is a compelling plan that explains what type of place we all want Croydon to be. It describes a place, which by 2040 will be a city, that is a completely changed place, ready to meet any challenge. But it does not end there. The process to create a vision for Croydon has motivated organisations and the community to recognise their place in the wider picture of Croydon's future. There is now a real sense of the commitment and energy that exists to help Croydon realise its long-term vision and wider place in the world.

Our vision statement sets out the quality and scope of change that is sought over the coming years. This is now the point of reference for all other strategies and plans in the borough - ensuring that the same vision and priorities are met and that we are consistent and act together to create a better place in which to live and work.



What did people say?

Imagine Croydon has been a radical process; the biggest and most exciting engagement exercise in the history of the borough. Everyone who has taken part can feel proud of their contribution in shaping Croydon's long-term vision. The range of different people that we spoke to was vast – covering all ages, ethnicities, backgrounds and interests. And even though they all contributed an astonishing range of ideas and opinions, there was real consensus around what should be the key priorities for Croydon's future.

One thing that has been clear from talking to local people is that they share a real pride and passion for the borough – its rich diversity, its distinctiveness, its heritage, its green spaces, its connectivity, its enterprise, its inherent confidence, its humour and much, much more. It is these attributes and assets that have helped to define Croydon's long-term vision together with a shared desire and determination to make a positive difference in the future.

In the following pages we have attempted to set out more specifically the type of place that local people want Croydon to be. Seen through a lens focussed on Croydon in 2040, it paints a picture of what life might be like. Whether viewed in 10, 20 or 30 years, the ambition is that Croydon will gradually change to become the place that we all want it to be.

We are Croydon

In 2040 we will be London's most enterprising borough - a city that fosters ideas, innovation and learning, and provides skills, opportunity and a sense of belonging for all.

From market town, to dormitory suburb, to major commercial centre to city in waiting, Croydon has without doubt undergone a series of bold and exciting transformations throughout its history. With only a church, a mill and 365 inhabitants at the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066 to today - one of the UK's major commercial centres and London's largest and best connected borough.

Croydon has undeniably been shaped by a legacy of innovation and enterprise, and by trade and tenacity. Its innovative and inventive spirit will secure Croydon's future as one of the UK's most enterprising and sustainable cities in 2040. It will be a unique place within the United Kingdom, a true city, with its own distinct identity but also an important economic contributor to the wider metropolis of London and the greater South East.

Croydon will be known as a healthy, vibrant and safe place to live, work and visit, where everyone - no matter where they are from - is given the best possible chance throughout their lives to make the most of their abilities.



The borough's innovative nature and enterprising community will ensure that it enjoys a highly deserved reputation as a modern, vibrant city – with a leading role in London and the south east's economy.

We are Croydon

People will be empowered and energised. They won't rely unnecessarily on the state, rather they will be given the support and tools needed to help them realise their potential and ability. In other words, people will be given a hand-up before they are given hand-outs.

In 2040 the borough's highly-regarded university and education system will help to unleash and nurture this talent and lead to a workforce and community in Croydon that is better skilled, more adaptable and able to achieve greater productivity and wellbeing than ever before.

The borough's innovative nature and enterprising community will ensure that it enjoys a highly deserved reputation as a modern, vibrant city – with a leading role in London and the south east's economy. It will be a hub of knowledge and creativity with a local economy that is diverse and quick to respond to opportunities.

The borough's unique location, excellent transport connections, first class business infrastructure and natural environment will help to reinforce its position as a leading city.

We are Croydon

Above all, though, Croydon's highly skilled and active community - its people - will be the heartbeat of Croydon's vision.

Croydon will generate its own culture and creativity – and become one of the best creators of artistic and sporting talent in the country. It will be celebrated as a borough with a welcoming 'buzz' and energy, with streets and open spaces across the borough that are a hive of activity. It will also be a place that is defined by its green beauty - with parks, heaths and woodlands offering quiet reflection and respite from the hustle and bustle of modern life.

People, young and old, will be motivated to get involved in shaping what happens in Croydon. They will take on responsibility for managing public spaces and community facilities, and will organise a whole host of community events, providing plenty of opportunities for residents, workers and visitors to participate in and enjoy Croydon's 'scene.'

People talk about the borough's vibrancy and dynamism and how well Croydon's communities get along with each other. Croydon people will recognise and respect each other's differences. They will be united by the values of freedom, opportunity, fairness and responsibility and will work collaboratively and innovatively with the public, private and voluntary and community sectors to ensure that Croydon is one of the most welcoming, creative and enterprising places to live and work in the UK.



In 2040 we are...



An Enterprising City – a place renowned for its enterprise and innovation with a highly adaptable and skilled workforce and diverse and responsive economy.

A Learning City – a place that unleashes and nurtures local talent and is recognised for its culture of lifelong learning and ambitions for children and young people.

A Creative City – a place noted for its culture and creativity - one of the best incubators of new artistic and sporting talent in the country.

A Connected City – a place defined by its connectivity and permeability, with one of the best digital, communications and transport networks in the country.

A Sustainable City – a place that sets the pace amongst London boroughs on promoting environmental sustainability and where the natural environment forms the arteries and veins of the city.

A Caring City – a place noted for its safety, openness and community spirit, where all people are welcome to live and work and where individuals and communities are supported to fulfill their potential and deliver solutions for themselves.



from home working to service hubs...

An Enterprising City

In 2040 Croydon will be known as London's centre of knowledge, creativity and innovation.

Building on its long tradition of trade and enterprise, it will have a highly deserved reputation as a desirable and competitive business destination, home to international companies and small start-up businesses.

The borough's influence and reach will grow and expand beyond the region as it both cleverly complements the London economy and capitalises on its links to the international gateway of the modernised Gatwick airport. As substantial investment is put into developing transport and communications infrastructure along the London to Gatwick corridor, Croydon will play a pivotal role in London and the south east's economy.

Croydon will become a modern, vibrant city defined by its enterprising economy – diverse, innovative and quick to respond to opportunities and challenges in the global marketplace. As a trading place it will use its diversity as a strength, becoming renowned for the vitality of its business relationships with the growing economies around the world. The borough's unique location, excellent connectivity and first class business environment will help to reinforce its position as a leading city, and a crucial contributor to the wider London economy.

An Enterprising City

Croydon's highly skilled, talented and enterprising workforce will underline the borough's competitive edge. Croydon's university and schools, colleges and adult training centres will enjoy close links with the borough's businesses. Together we will generate a workforce in Croydon that has the skills, knowledge and adaptability needed to excel in the global economy. The increasing number of companies choosing to locate in Croydon particularly in leading edge technologies and high value growth sectors - will reflect the borough's growing reputation as a highly skilled and enterprising business destination.

But it's not just about inward investment and attracting business into the borough. In 2040, Croydon will be known for the way it promotes an innovative and enterprising environment that creates a sustainable future for everyone. People in Croydon will be motivated and given the support they need to think and act like entrepreneurs and innovators from an early age. The spirit of enterprise will infuse all parts of the education system.

Neighbourhood enterprise centres and incubator units will provide the space for ideas, innovation and creativity to flourish and new ways to do business will be embraced with new technology enabling a greater number of virtual business ventures and home workers. The rich cultural diversity of the borough's entrepreneurs will also provide opportunities for new products and services to be developed. As a result, Croydon will enjoy some of the highest rates of new business start-ups across London and the South East.





An Enterprising City

In 2040, social enterprises will be seen as vital to the delivery of a range of services in the borough. Private, public and the voluntary and community sectors will work together to drive new schemes forward and ensure new talent and opportunities are maximised for the benefit of the wider community and the economy.

Such an enterprising place must also have a thriving retail, leisure and evening sector for those who work in, live in or visit the area. The regeneration of the town centre will help drive this forward. In 2040 Croydon will be regarded as an iconic, safe and modern mixed-use European city. It will enjoy a reputation comparable with other major commercial centres thanks to a raft of new, modern office developments. It will provide the principal retail and leisure offer in outer south London (including for visitors and workers arriving from Gatwick Airport) and its tree-lined streets will look more attractive than more sterile shopping and leisure malls in other parts of London and the immediate south east.

And it is not just the town centre that will change. Thanks to sensible planning between local residents and the business community, Croydon's district centres will also boast a distinct style and character that will help to reinforce our reputation as a diverse and interesting place. The districts' independent shops, specialist markets and high quality facilities will meet the needs, tastes and ambitions of local people and pull visitors into Croydon who want to enjoy the borough's unique and eclectic offer.



from nursery to

university to work...

A Learning City

Croydon has been known for many things over the years, but as the borough continues to realise its longterm vision, its education facilities will be propelled forward.

Croydon will be renowned as a city of lifelong learning in 2040 – a place that unleashes and nurtures local talent and generates a workforce and community that is better trained, more enterprising and adaptable and able to achieve higher productivity and wellbeing.

A high quality and modern education system that works with the business sector and wider community will foster an innovative learning environment that gives people greater freedom and choice over how and where they learn. The education system will be responsive and flexible, and noted for its excellence in accommodating the different learning styles, needs and aspirations of people- whatever their age.

All schools and colleges will be high performing - becoming vital community hubs that create a culture of lifelong learning. Students and their families will be supported to excel and to develop the skills, knowledge and capabilities they need to prosper in the future. Instilling a culture of enterprise, enquiry and initiative will be a key part of Croydon's learning curriculum so that local people are better equipped to respond to rapid changes in society, the economy, technology and the environment in an increasingly complex world.

A Learning City

Children will be given the best possible start in life because early intervention and investment in education is critical in ensuring their overall development and wellbeing. There will be high expectations of parents, ensuring that wherever possible, children are born into loving, nurturing families. Professionals will work together with parents, families and communities to provide the help and support needed so that young children – particularly those that are vulnerable – do not fall behind before they even reach school. In these early years, a focus on wellbeing, including physical, social and emotional development will be made a priority. Parents and teachers will be given a strong foundation on which to build and avoid many expensive problems further down the line.

However, learning will not only be confined to childhood or the classroom - it will take place throughout life and in a range of situations. An integrated learning network will link schools, colleges, businesses, libraries and community centres, giving easy access to learning for people of all ages. Whether for professional or personal fulfillment, developing new skills and learning as an adult in Croydon - whether you are 18 or 80 - will be the norm as people retrain and look to build their knowledge, confidence and self-esteem. Young and old will learn together. Adult learning and training centres will cultivate a culture of lifelong learning and attainment, offering thousands of full and part-time courses, in a range of venues and locations across the borough. In these early years, a focus on the wellbeing, including physical, social and emotional development will be made a priority.



A Learning City

Croydon University will strengthen the learning potential of the borough, forged by its schools and further education colleges, and raise the reputation and profile of the borough even further. It will rank as a highly-sought-after university attracting students from across the UK, reflecting the dynamism and aspiration of the borough. It will be more than just a building, however. The university campus will be fully integrated into the borough - welcoming and open to all residents with a mix of community facilities. There will be specialist links with the borough's international business base and creative sector.

An integrated learning network will link schools, colleges, businesses, libraries and community centres, giving easy access to learning for people of all ages.



ISIC VENUES

from local club to

world stage...



In 2040 Croydon's high quality and innovative cultural and creative offer will snap hard on the West End's heels.

In fact, Croydon will become the 'Little West End' for people visiting from across south London and the southern counties who no longer feel the need to venture so often into central London for their cultural fix. Popular attractions and events, organised through a single Arts Trust working out of the re-developed Fairfield Halls, will gain a national reputation and will regularly feature a diverse range of high guality arts, cultural and musical events that cater to every age and taste.

Croydon will be celebrated as a borough with a distinctive sense of place - boasting a creative ambience and enterprising attitude that is inspired by, and finds expression in, the energy and talent of its diverse and multicultural community. This distinctive sense of place will be manifest in the borough's eclectic mix of cultural and community events, its striking architecture, its animated public realm and its parks and open spaces.

LOCAL PLACES TO PLAY AND PRACTICE





A Creative City

It will be famous for its own culture - as one of the places where new artistic and sporting talent is uncovered. The Brit School and other arts organisations will forge close links with the community and will work with schools, colleges and the university to help nurture a thriving collective of artists, designers, film-makers, writers and musicians who contribute a vital creative energy to the city - helping to place it firmly on the cultural map.

The creative sector in Croydon will be a key component of the local economy, fuelling the growing number of arts and cultural enterprises that will help to lead the borough's regeneration and reinforce its reputation as London's most dynamic and enterprising place.

Croydon's service providers will be renowned for their holistic vision of healthy living - encompassing both physical health and cultural, spiritual and intellectual wellbeing. We will promote and support participation in the arts and sport for both health and recreational purposes but also for excellence and accomplishment. Nowhere will this be more true than in the sporting field where our schools and clubs, public and private, will work together to provide a supply line of sporting talent, with a particular Olympic focus on athletics and gymnastics, as well as on team sports. At the heart of this will be Crystal Palace Football Club, by then an established top-half Premier League team playing in a new state-of-theart 35,000 seat stadium.

A Creative City

Local people will be at the heart of Croydon's creative vision, with vastly expanded and well-resourced opportunities for all to participate and socialise in a network of programmes in community sports, drama, music and the arts, as well as less traditional forms of expression. Informal spaces for people to have fun, meet each other and learn will be a central part of Croydon's town and district centres and will themselves be opportunities for demonstrating our creative talent through a commitment to public art.

Within a borough that prides itself on its work/life balance, there will be plenty of opportunities for everyone to get involved, however casually, in the 'Croydon scene' in 2040 maybe by singing or dancing at one of the community's many cultural events, playing football in the park, entering an open competition in one of the borough's art galleries or - just as importantly - simply taking time to enjoy the fun on offer.

...A varied network of programmes in community sports, drama, music and the arts, as well as less traditional forms of expression.





from walking to

international connectivity...

A Connected City

In 2040 Croydon will be a place defined by its connectivity. Its modern, state-ofthe-art communications infrastructure and technology will be on a par with central London and Canary Wharf, offering greater flexibility and benefits for residents and businesses.

It will be renowned as a borough that pioneers technological advancements and enterprise. Its modern communications infrastructure will ensure that Croydon is a leading centre for digital and creative industries, and their future equivalents – with a workforce that has the skills and capabilities necessary to match the best in a digital economy. More and more people will work from home in Croydon, in 2040, with virtual business ventures and Internet entrepreneurs making up a significant proportion of the local economy. Service providers will also be much more responsive in the way that they deliver local services, ensuring they keep pace with young and technologically savy citizens and the ever-evolving communications landscape.



A Connected City

But its not just virtual connectivity that Croydon enjoys. Its transport links are also the envy of many places. The fact that Croydon was home to to the world's first public railway in 1803 and the first main London airport at the start of the 20th Century has set the foundations for its unparalleled connectivity in the 21st Century.

Increased numbers of passengers arriving into Croydon via the high speed rail services from London, Brighton or Gatwick in 2040 will be able to enjoy one of the capital's most integrated, sustainable transport systems with the widest range of options open to them to complete their journey. These options include a reliable, comfortable and sustainable bus and tram service, which by 2040 will have been extended to connect to the town, district centres and neighbouring suburbs.

Passengers arriving into Croydon via the high speed rail services from London, Brighton or Gatwick in 2040 will be able to enjoy one of the capital's most integrated, sustainable transport systems.

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A Connected City

An integrated network of safe walkways and cycle paths will connect residents to the borough's public transport hubs and expanse of open and green spaces - encouraging some of the highest levels of cycling and walking in the capital. By 2040, there will be fewer cars and other vehicles in the city. More people will walk, cycle and travel by public transport, reflecting a healthy shift in the way that people move around and inhabit their environment. The need to travel will also be greatly reduced with public amenities and local services close to where people live.

With excellent communications infrastructure and sustainable transport, all of Croydon's residents will be connected. From an early age, Croydon residents will be empowered to think globally and act locally - exemplifying Croydon's sustainable approach as a modern 21st century city. As people and businesses embrace the entrepreneurial opportunities and connectivity that the borough provides, they will build their own connections to both the developed and developing world, which in turn will increase the wealth - material and cultural - of our communities.





lifetime community...

A Caring City

Croydon will be held up as a European example of a cohesive, safe and compassionate community - where everyone belongs.

Above all, people in Croydon will get along with one another. They will recognise and respect each other's differences and will be united by a sense of shared values around freedom, opportunity, fairness and responsibility. It will be a place that reaches out to all of its communities to provide the support needed to help them lead independent, healthy, and productive lives. The people of Croydon will get the help they need, but they will also recognise that giving back is equally as important. We will place a strong value on freedom of expression and sense of safety for all.

Croydon will be characterised by its different neighbourhoods - each with a distinct identity and responsive mix of services and facilities that meet local needs. They will boast strong, mixed communities with varied housing opportunities, a diversity of uses and healthy and active social lives. More people than ever before will take on responsibilities in their neighbourhoods resulting in some of the highest levels of community involvement in the country.



A Caring City

Residents will also feel empowered and motivated to get involved in shaping what happens locally, including taking on responsibility for managing their local public spaces and community facilities. Allotments, street parties, local arts events and community fun days will be commonplace, bringing people, young and old, together. The borough's rich tapestry of community resources, including streets, schools and places of worship, will be opened up and will form vital neighbourhood spaces for people to enjoy and interact with each other.

Young people and new families will be helped to bring out the best in themselves and integrate into their communities. We will promote the diverse range of cultural identities but we will strongly discourage groups who seek to separate themselves from the rest of the community and its shared values.

There will be more young people becoming community volunteers in the borough, which will give them a better understanding of the views of older people as they engage in activities together. The wide range of communications options in place will allow both young and old to integrate into the borough's political and consultative structures in different ways, be it through hi-tech communications, face to face contact or through other inter-generational schemes or projects. Everyone will be inspired by the belief that they have a right to be heard, and feel assured by outcomes of local debate that they hold influence in local decision-making.

A Caring City

Croydon will not be a place where people rely unnecessarily on public services. But public services and public servants will be there to provide support and opportunities so that everyone - in particular vulnerable people and those around them - can develop and contribute to society within their means and ability. People in Croydon will also recognise that while they have the freedom to adopt the lifestyles they choose within clear boundaries, the choices they make will have consequences for them and the wider community. A tough stance will be taken against those who are given a chance but continue to threaten the harmony of the borough. The police will work in partnership with a wide range of agencies and local community and voluntary sector groups to ensure there is no tolerance of antisocial behaviour.

Croydon will be known as a pioneer in the way it provides services. There will be no orthodoxy around who is delivering support and interventions – government, business, the voluntary or community sectors. Instead, we will be totally pragmatic, focussed on the needs of people. What counts is what achieves the most effective outcome for the resources available. Croydon will demonstrate to others the success of a modern localism and how decentralised decision-making and services shaped by local people leads to innovation and success in meeting local needs.

The police will work in partnership with a wide range of agencies and the local community and voluntary sector groups.

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from home composting to

global climate change leader...

A Sustainable City

Croydon is committed to sustainable economic growth. In 2040 more people will be living and working in Croydon.

The borough will, however, have planned its growth carefully so that areas such as the town centre benefit from regeneration while local areas of character are conserved. There will be sustained investment in core infrastructure to enable this growth while also helping to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Development will be concentrated near public transport hubs, open spaces, town centres and local community organisations, such as schools and health centres, so that people will not have to travel far to local services. This will result in a pattern of growth in Croydon that is much more sustainable. The majority of development, including new homes and businesses, will be situated around the city centre, linked directly to significant investment in East Croydon station.

This new development will complement, rather than overshadow, the existing local character and history of Croydon. A diverse range of high quality architecture in the city centre, including new tall buildings, will be embraced, provided they reflect the borough's urban design framework and principles. Developers will be aware of the high expectations Croydon will have for renewable energy, district energy schemes and other green initiatives. This will help bring nature back to the borough's urban areas through an array of green and brown roofs and a higher quality public realm with more trees and shrubbery.



A Sustainable City

But sustainability is not just about development. Residents and businesses will also be inspired to take greater pride in their environment and to take responsibility for their environmental impact. People will be more aware of the need to 'reduce, reuse, recycle and recover' thanks to greater promotion of the impact of environmental degradation, increased peer pressure and stronger enforcement action locally. This will significantly help to mitigate the impact of climate change and ensure that Croydon sets the pace among London boroughs on realising environmental sustainability.

There will be a borough-wide commitment to ensure existing homes and buildings are also made more energy efficient; new homes and neighbourhoods will use renewable energy devices to regularly sell energy back to the national grid. More district energy networks will also be in place, with waste being processed for use to generate power locally.

The natural environment in Croydon will also help to facilitate healthy and sustainable lifestyles. Through the band of 'green corridors' that embrace and encircle the town centre to the green belt and heath-lands further south, all residents will be within walking and cycling distance of quality open spaces.

A Sustainable City

The major boost that the borough's parks have received will see these spaces revitalised and given a much clearer purpose. An impressive mix of spaces will be set aside for quiet reflection and respite, as well as for more active and sporting lifestyles. Improved accessibility and lighting will see these spaces reclaimed by local people with everyone feeling safe and secure. In fact, local communities will be more involved in owning and maintaining these spaces as the borough shifts to a greater mix of ownership between voluntary and community organisations and the public and private sector.

Croydon will also lead the way in using suitable green belt land for agricultural or forestry projects that reduce food miles, improve health and foster community cohesion. Residents of all ages and backgrounds will come together to grow food and learn about food production on allotments and urban farms. "Working the land" will be seen as a popular form of exercise for many in the future. Local food markets and retailers will be linked into these projects to ensure that supply chains are shortened and the amount of miles our food travels is drastically reduced. Trees will play an important role in capturing carbon emissions, providing shade in summer and enhancing our urban areas.





A Sustainable City

The borough's focus on an integrated and intelligent public transport system, including rail, buses, trams, cycling and walking, will help to significantly reduce travel - related carbon emissions. The city's trams and buses will use lowpolluting fuels to minimise or eliminate emissions, making them clean and quick, reliable ways to travel, while the improved public realm and chain of open spaces will encourage more walking and cycling. Croydon will also be ahead of the curve in promoting the most sustainable private transport options. Cars will still be used but much more sensibly as part of large network of park-and-ride and car-sharing schemes resulting from heavy promotion of travel plans for all local companies.

The improved public realm and chain of open spaces will encourage more walking and cycling. Croydon will be known for an innovative and enterprising environment that creates a sustainable future for everyone.























Mayday Healthcare NHS







