

COULSDON
PARISH
CHURCH
St. John



50p

February 2025

A proud tradition of care, understanding and trust



Rowland Brothers your local family funeral directors have been serving the families of Old Coulsdon since 1873. Our staff are friendly and professional and will do everything they can to help you at a difficult time.



Rowland Brothers

Independent Funeral Directors

Old Coulsdon branch
01737 555 202

Croydon
020 8684 1667

Purley
020 8660 5547

Warlingham
01883 623 067

New Addington
01689 842 046

www.rowlandbrothers.com



Ask about our inflation proof Pre-Paid Funeral Plans

**Always
a warm
welcome
for everyone
at St. John's
however chilly
it is outside**



February

1—Saturday

10.00 a.m. Gardening Group, in the Garden of Remembrance

2—FIFTH SUNDAY of EPIPHANY

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in the Old Church

9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church (*and live-streamed*)

11.15 a.m. Contemporary Service for all ages, in Church

4—Tuesday

7.30 a.m. Prayer Meeting, on Zoom

10.00 a.m. 'Little Ones', in the Church (11.30)

5—Wednesday

10.00 a.m. Churchyard Working Party

7.00 p.m. 'Alpha', in Church

6—Thursday

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in the Old Church

7.00 p.m. 'Alpha', in Church

9—FOURTH SUNDAY before LENT

9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church (*and live-streamed*)

11.15 a.m. Contemporary Service for all ages, in Church

11—Tuesday

7.30 a.m. Prayer Meeting, on Zoom

10.00 a.m. 'Little Ones', in the Church (11.30)

12—Wednesday

10.00 a.m. Churchyard Working Party

7.00 p.m. 'Alpha', in Church

13—Thursday

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in the Old Church

16—THIRD SUNDAY before LENT

- 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in the Old Church
- 9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church (*and live-streamed*)
- 11.15 a.m. Contemporary Service for all ages, in Church

18—Tuesday

- 7.30 a.m. Prayer Meeting, on Zoom
- 10.00 a.m. 'Little Ones', in the Church (11.30)

19—Wednesday

- 10.00 a.m. Churchyard Working Party
- 7.00 p.m. 'Alpha', in Church

20—Thursday

- 11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in the Old Church

23—SECOND SUNDAY before LENT

- 9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church (*and live-streamed*)
- 11.15 a.m. Contemporary Service for all ages, in Church
- 2.30 p.m. 'Has St. John's Got Talent?', in the Church

25—Tuesday

- 7.30 a.m. Prayer Meeting, on Zoom
- 10.00 a.m. 'Little Ones', in the Church (11.30)

26—Wednesday

- 10.00 a.m. Churchyard Working Party
- 2.00 p.m. Pray, Knit & Chat, in the Old Church
- 7.00 p.m. 'Alpha', in Church

27—Thursday

- 11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in the Old Church

March

1—Saturday

- 10.00 a.m. Gardening Group, in the Garden of Remembrance

2—SUNDAY next before LENT

- 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in the Old Church
- 9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church (*and live-streamed*)
- 11.15 a.m. Contemporary Service for all ages, in Church

4—Tuesday

- 7.30 a.m. Prayer Meeting, on Zoom
- 10.00 a.m. 'Little Ones', in the Church (11.30)

Zoom Prayer Meeting

We would love you to join our new weekly prayer meeting every Tuesday 7:30-8am to pray for our church and our area.

Zoom ID: 890 1552 2159 Passcode: stjohs

PRAYER
TIME

Jono writes...

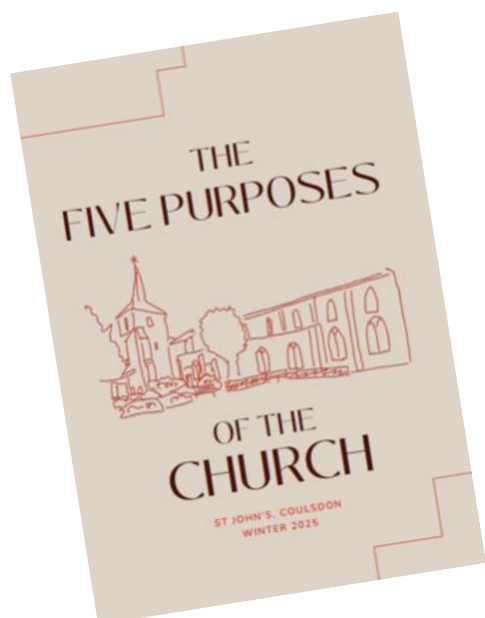


February

Have you ever wondered what your purpose is? Why you exist or for what reason? Or maybe you've asked, 'what is the purpose of church?'

Why do we bother with all of this? Well, you're not alone if you have! The Bible shouts through all its pages that you are uniquely made for an incredible purpose and a life full of meaning.

There is nothing quite as potent as a focused life, one lived on purpose. As we step into this new season at St John's we want to remind ourselves of the purposes of our church. We are doing a series on the five purposes of the church: worship, ministry, evangelism, baptism and discipleship. The home groups are going through a booklet on the topic together, though if you're not in a home group yet you might consider working through a booklet yourself? They are available from church.




The term is now well underway and our three new initiatives have started to help us meet our vision of

helping people meet Jesus - to **invite** everyone to explore faith, **equip** disciples, and **transform** our community. **Little Ones**, our new toddler group, started on Jan 14th with around 50 children and adults having fun and making lots of noise in the old church. **Alpha** started with a real buzz on Jan 15th with two small groups. Then on Sunday 19th we launched the new **11:15 service**, which 90 people came to. Thank you for everyone's help and support in practical ways and in prayer which enabled these to come to fruition. Ultimately we thank and praise God for all his work and look forward to how these will develop and grow. These initiatives are in a start-up phase and I value people's feedback so we can improve things - please send me any thoughts (revjono@yahoo.com).

With love

Jono



A space for parents, grandparents, carers, babies and toddlers to catch up and have fun!

Tuesdays 10am to 11.30am

Hot drinks, soft play, singing, Bible story and kids snack time.

£1 suggested donation

Children must be accompanied at all times.

Open in the Church every Tuesday morning during term-time

'a really welcoming and fun space for grown-ups and little ones.'

Everybody welcome – we'd love to see you! Just come along ... but if you want to know more first, please email stjohns@coulsdon.net and we'll tell you all about it.

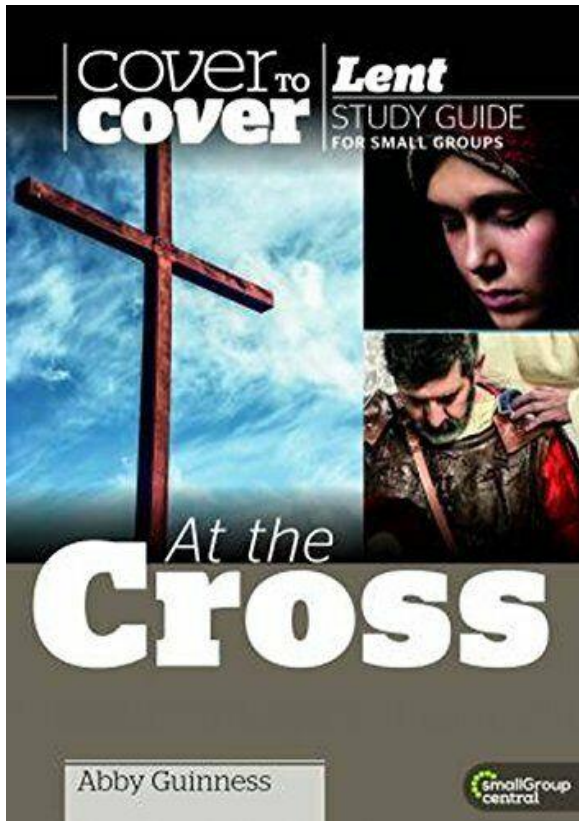
SUNDAYS @ 11.15... have changed!

We used to have Family Service (*see left*) at this time on just two Sundays a month.

Now we have a 'Contemporary Service' for ALL AGES at 11.15 EVERY SUNDAY. So what else is different? The main thing is that the children—from tinies to teens—have fun in their own groups during the service while the adults can relax and enjoy lively worship and follow the talk of the day in peace. One week a guitarist led our praise and

Jono would love to hear from other musicians who

would be interested in joining us. As you can see - something for everyone—ALL AGES—so bring the family or come on your own and give it a try. And by the way, there's tea and coffee before **and** after the service! .



EXPLORE WITH US in a group or by yourself

Come and join us 'At the Cross' as we consider the different perspectives of six people who witnessed the crucifixion themselves.

- 1 The Centurion: Finding Truth
- 2 The Criminal: Finding Forgiveness
- 3 Joseph of Arimathea: Finding courage
- 4 Mary: Finding Trust
- 5 Thaddaeus: Finding Faith under Fire
- 6 Martha: Finding Life

Each week we have a bible reading, an imagined monologue written by the author of the series, Abby Guinness, questions, and prayer. It is a creative approach to explore the crucifixion of Christ in a new way. Do join a group for Lent to share in this Lent journey, or order the booklet and study it yourself. If you

would like to be part of a group or would like to order a booklet to study at home, please contact the Parish Office (srjohns@coulsdon.net or 01737 552461).



SUE WRITES:

I'll be taking a three-month sabbatical, starting just after my holiday on 9th February. The sabbatical itself will run from February 18th to May 18th. This break comes at a good moment after a full year, and I'm looking forward to using this time for refreshment and reflection. I'm especially looking forward to a retreat at St Beuno's in North Wales. With my husband Peter's retirement beginning then, we will also be planning a few celebratory travels together—something we are very much looking forward to. Thinking of you all and praying for us all as I step away for this brief time. **Sue**



HAS ST. JOHN'S GOT TALENT?

Of course it has! Join us on **Sunday 23rd February** at 2.30 to find out. All ages invited to come and entertain us – could you sing, dance, make music, read poems & stories, do magic tricks, or surprise us with something else for 3-4 minutes? There'll be a list in church soon to sign up for entertainers' spots and audience seats. Free event but donations for the Spire Fund very welcome. Be sure to let us know you're coming—and bring some friends—so there's enough tea, coffee, squash and cake for everyone. See advert further on for full details.

BUILDING UP

I do not know if you were as entranced as me to see the opening of the reconstructed Notre Dame Cathedral. The symmetry and beauty of the completed Notre Dame was so perfect. President Macron of France said the rebuilding, after the fire destroyed it, would be completed in 5 years, and so it was. I imagined the architects initially picking up their pens for the first time to begin the design of the renovation; the genius of the stonemasons and everyone involved, working together in harmony and love.



The following day I watched on screen the first service at the newly-opened Notre Dame. At the end everyone poured out of the cathedral—first the clergy, all dressed in white robes, then the congregation. They all seemed genuinely happy, smiling, laughing. I don't usually like the sound



of organ music but the organ music being played there was different to anything I had ever heard before. I began to feel joy. As if joy had lifted me up here in outer London from there in Paris. I had never heard music like that which had such an effect on me. On talking with Sue Thomas about my experience, she told me that she had met someone who used to play the organ at Notre Dame and they told her that they were asked to let the Holy Spirit lead them on what to play. Somehow

the joy seemed to have radiated all the way from Paris. This rebuilding is a sign of hope—a perfect, beautiful reconstruction has been built up from the ashes.

What can we learn from this? With faith we can build up. Building up is a path to love. I remember going to a service at Salisbury Cathedral and the priest in charge said to me “remember your body is a temple”. As Christians we are told this is true. Think how you bloomed when someone said to you “I trust you” or “I believe in you” Our words can build up or destruct. We might not have the skills of the stonemasons or architects but we do have skills to lift people up. Think each day ‘am I making people happy and loved or am I stealing their joy? Am I being kind, understanding, listening, encouraging, or am I dampening?’

So the reconstruction of Notre Dame is a sign of love. We can lift anyone up no matter what they have been through, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit within. If



you sometimes tire of giving, take my advice and have faith like the renovators of that cathedral and lead yourself and others to joy and know you have the power to build up anyone with the love of Jesus.

With love
Elaine Gray



MAGAZINE DELIVERY

We have lovely people who deliver St. John's monthly magazine in many of the roads of the parish. We were wondering if there was someone who could join their band and deliver just seven copies in Chaldon Way. Please let the office (01737 552461) know if you could help with this.

Thank you.

By the way, if you don't already have this magazine delivered to your home or live out of the parish and would like to have it sent regularly, please contact the Parish Office (01737 552461 or stjohns@coulsdon.net)

GARDENING GROUP UPDATE

Since the gardening group started to meet every Wednesday in addition to the first Saturday of each month, you may have noticed changes in the Churchyard?

Ivy no longer trails over the lychgate wall, weeds no longer crowd the Yew tree and graves are being uncovered. The next strategy includes the removal of the brambles behind the Church along the boundary with the Deans Walk gardens. This does, of course, increase the number of bags holding garden waste, so I am grateful for those members of the congregation who kindly take them to the Dump for recycling. Also, those who come up at other times to work in the Churchyard. You know who you are?

New members are always welcome to join us. Bring your own secateurs and trowels if you can.

**Wednesdays from 10- 12.
1st Saturdays 10-12**

Fresh air, good conversation and refreshments are provided.

Thank you

Gill (01737 553596)



CHURCH SPIRE RESTORATION PROJECT – UPDATE



Since our last update in June 2024, the Spire Project has faced several challenges. The main issue has been around the conditions of the Planning Permission from Croydon Council, specifically the need for an Ecology Survey related to Bats. After months of delay, we finally have a report which fulfils our obligations.

We are now going to formal tender, which will give us more accurate costings. However, we face a further challenge as the government has limited the VAT rebate on works to places of worship at £25K. This means that the overall project cost will go up significantly, as we will no longer be

able to reclaim the full VAT amount on the costs of the works. We are re-assessing the total amount needed, and we will update you again soon when we have more information.

Thankfully, fundraising efforts have continued. **The total amount raised has increased by a further £11K in the past 7 months to £145K** - thanks to the talks by Mary Balaam and Trevor, events such as the Ride and Stride, the Scouts' Christmas deliveries and the picture raffle, and donations including over £2.5K from Old Coulsdon Bowling Club and £1.3K through Bright Funds. We continue to be extremely grateful for the immense support but would ask you to pray for the Spire project. **Thanks to all, from the Spire Restoration Working Group.**



THE COOK ISLANDS

This is not a culinary advert but an invitation to the World Day of Prayer service on **Friday 7th March**, which has been written by Christian women from The Cook Islands in the Pacific Ocean. They were given the phrase **'I made you wonderful'** and from it they have shown how wonderfully God created man, giving examples from their own experiences.

A global wave of prayer for The Cook Islands will wash over the world and you are very welcome to join with us. The Day of Prayer is celebrated in over 120 countries. It begins in Samoa and prayer in native languages travels throughout the world — through Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas before finishing in American Samoa some 38 hours later. A worldwide wave of prayer!



(Contd on p.12)

HAS ST. JOHN'S GOT TALENT?



**Come and take part or come and find out
Sunday 23 February**

2.30-4.30

in St. John's Church, Old Coulsdon

Book your spot or book your seat in advance

sign up in church or contact the

Parish Office (01737 552461) or stjohns@coulsdon.net

FREE ENTRY

Donations for SPIRE FUND welcome!

There will be Tea, Coffee, Squash & Cake for all!

Your local committee invites you to join them at 10.30 am in Coulsdon Methodist Church on **Friday 7th March**, and stay for refreshments afterwards, where we hope you will be full of praise for the 'floral nation' - a group of 15 islands in the South Pacific Ocean which has a rich and colourful Māori heritage and a deep connection to nature. Join with us as we pray together and reflect on the theme '***I made you wonderful***'.



Your local committee

YouVersion has announced the Bible verse that users engaged with most in 2024. Found in the New Testament, **Philippians 4:6** took the top spot, marking a shift from Isaiah 41:10, which had held the position for three consecutive years. The verse reads:

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

CATCHING UP WITH TONY

Writing this before the Christmas celebrations get in to full swing I am reminded how for Enid and I it has been good, throughout our married life to live on a hill – we never get flooded like so many poor souls around the country, but living in Old Coulsdon does still bring some sobering moments, like in February 2020 when we were battered by Storm Ciara and St John's lost its telephone line,



... and again this very morning (7th Dec) I watched as Storm Darragh wreaked its fury on one of the trees in the corner of the OCCC's grounds, as it came crashing

down, to damage the part of the Church Path cottages that has only just been renovated, and at the same time rip out telephone lines – but fortunately not St John’s this time.

If memory serves, I think it was Ciara that was the cause of Malcolm’s fence being renewed back then; and now it has to be done again. To bring down a tree like that when its branches were already bare just shows how powerful it was – just fortunate that nobody was underneath it – but one poor lady heading to the shops from the footpath, had to turn back as there was no way through.

Talking of leaves, the garden elves have already been hard at work clearing the churchyard during one of our brighter days; hard but satisfying work (so they tell me).



and elsewhere a couple of other hardworking elves – in the shape of Steve and Diane have transformed so much of our grounds into a real garden, complementing the efforts of Patricia, Graham and Sylvia beautifully – and also revealing long forgotten graves.





Whilst giving thanks for everyone's efforts we must again offer huge thanks to our neighbours Mel and Spencer Coleshill, owners of the Crossways Garden Nursery, who donated another lovely Christmas Tree. Their gift is so appreciated and is seen by many hundreds of people, children and adults over the Christmas period. Thanks Mel – and thanks to the driver who delivered it to the doors of the church – it was heavy when I carried it in!

This is a picture of the candle-lit high altar at Christchurch Cathedral on Vancouver Island where my sister volunteers.

Stunningly beautiful, and whilst we at St John's might struggle to find that many candles, our Christmas choir has been rehearsing hard under Karen Jackson's leadership, and we really did enjoy the most fabulous evening on Sunday 15th. Starting with the church in darkness, but for the candles we all held, the choir then processed in with lighted candles too. They were outstanding and the descants in 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' stood the hair up on the back of our necks – brilliant – well done.



Readers will know that from time to time I have been cross about a small number of students doing things they shouldn't in St John's churchyard. It was therefore a very pleasant surprise to receive an invitation from Fiona Brennan, Deputy Principal of Coulsdon College, to a relationship building evening at the college, to which Rev Jono, Churchwarden Ralph, and I were happy to attend. The three of us agreed that it was an outstanding event with 'eats', music, and entertainment, provided by the students. Unfortunately the Old Coulsdon Community's representation was disappointing with empty tables, and lots of 'spare' student hosts – although Councillor Margaret Bird was there, along with a couple of Lib Dem representatives. I spoke to several of the young people and must hold my hand up to say that I have seriously misjudged them. The young lady hosting Ralph and I was studying Maths, Physics and Fashion with a view to going on to study Astrophysics at university. Others were doing Psychology and Criminology, and another English Language and Literature. There were singers, an excellent poetry

reading, and a really lively young man who compered with 'Beat Box' introductions. We left, very hopeful of a fruitful and growing relationship with the college and its students.

With Christmas now fast approaching Enid and I have enjoyed more music; after Choral Evensong at The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Holborn, it was Holborn again to hear David and Carole Caddick's daughter Helen's composition; TRACES; performed by the Orchestra of the City in St Andrew's Church; and it wasn't just Helen on show either, David and Carole's grand-daughter Ruby – a trained soprano – soloed part of the piece. It was a lovely evening in a wonderful venue, being the largest Anglican parish church designed by Sir Christopher Wren, and still in regular use.



The pictures don't really do it justice, but as a retired churchwarden I marvel at the beauty of the building – and what it must cost to maintain it!

We've enjoyed a very different musical night at the Old Coulsdon Bowling Club with some big band jazz/swing. The band rehearses there every Monday and put on a great concert for us with lots of the old favourites by Count Basie, Glen Miller and others. Almost made me want to put on my dancing shoes!



But back to church – after the hiatus of the pandemic it was an absolute delight to bring back the Crib



Service - in the round – just like we used to. The attendance was excellent as always (296), and once more we were lucky enough to have a real live baby as the star of the show. Thank you to everyone involved – before, during, and after; it was a wonderful afternoon much enjoyed by everyone.

..... and a few hours later it was Christmas, as we gathered in church for the Midnight Communion, with carols; followed (for us) by the Christmas Celebration service at 10:00am on Christmas Day itself.

These last weeks have been great as St John's gets back into top gear, and we are so blessed to have Rev Jono, and his wife Lucy on board. Rev Sue has been able to catch her breath after some fourteen months with very little help from the diocese, and our churchwardens too have been able to relax – just a little as the pieces in the giant puzzle slowly fall in to place.

So thank you all, and I wish all our brothers and sisters at St John's and in the local community, a very happy, healthy, and successful New Year – one in which I hope to be able to zoom off with my next restoration project – and get stuck in to the forthcoming Alpha course; but more of that another day.



God bless us all
Tony

DOWNLAND CHORALE invites you to 'COME & SING THE BEATLES' . Join them on Sat. 22 February singing music from the 'Fab Four'. No previous experience required! Sanderstead Methodist Church—11.00 am—6.00 pm—Tickets: £20. Free informal concert for friends at 5.00. Full information: 07973 871951 or at chair@downlandchorale.org.uk

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, OLD COULSDON

CLERGY	The Rector - The Revd Jonathan 'Jono' Simpson (Email address: revjono@yahoo.com) <i>(Not available on Fridays)</i>	07704 650085
	The Rev. Sue Thomas (available Thursdays & Sundays)	020 8406 9300
READER:	Christine McCutcheon	01737 553681
WARDENS	Gill Thaxter Ralph Goodwin	01737 553596 020 8409 1662
TREASURER	Lynn Howell (Cheques should be made payable to: Coulsdon St. John's Church PCC)	01737 551652
PARISH OFFICE: Monday-Friday 9.30 a.m. - 12 noon		
Email stjohns@coulsdon.net Phone: 01737 552461		

ON-SITE VALUATIONS
 BESPOKE PEARL & BEAD STRINGING
 STERLING SILVER JEWELLERY
 HANDMADE JEWELLERY
WOODS
JEWELLERS
 ON-SITE WORKSHOP
 WATCH BATTERIES
 BESPOKE DESIGNS
 GIFTWARE
 ON-SITE REPAIRS
 WATCH & CLOCK REPAIRS
 CAD DESIGN SERVICE
 RESIDENT STRINGER



Woods
 JEWELLERS

5 - 7 Chipstead Valley Road, Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 2RB, enquiries@woodsjewellers.co.uk, www.woodsjewellers.co.uk, 0208 660 9069



WA TRUELOVE & SON LTD
 INDEPENDENT FAMILY FUNERAL DIRECTORS
 & MONUMENTAL CRAFTSMEN SINCE 1885

Serving the local community



- 24 hour call out service
- Home visits available
- Horse-drawn funerals
- Monumental masonry
- International repatriation
- Prepaid Funeral Plans

COULSDON 020 8660 2620
 55 Chipstead Valley Road CR5 2RB
 coulsdon@watltd.co.uk

Branches also in: Ashted • Banstead • Caterham • Cheam
 Dorking • Epsom • Fetcham • Leatherhead • Mitcham • Morden
 Motspur Park • Reigate • Sutton • Wallington • Worcester Park
 See our website www.watltd.co.uk or scan this QR code



We are grateful to all those who support St. John's by placing their advertisements in this magazine. If you would like to advertise your company or services here please contact the Parish Office at stjohns@coulsdon.net or call 01737 552461.



PAINTING & DECORATING

- INTERIOR & EXTERIOR
- FREE QUOTES & ESTIMATES
- COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL
- PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE

☎ 01883 744 327

☎ 07525 212 200

🌐 www.colourworks-info.co.uk

✉ info@colourworks-info.co.uk



PLEASE NOTE:

St John's Church uses a range of social media platforms to share photographs and information about events and services. If you come and do NOT wish any posts to include your photograph or your child's photograph, please tell the Church Wardens before leaving the church building.



Find us on Facebook:
St John's Church Coulsdon

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064881902322>

Find us on Instagram:
StJohnsChurchCoulsdon

https://instagram.com/stjohnschurchcoulsdon?igshid=NGVhN2U2NjQ0Yg%3D%3D&utm_source=qr

JB SHAKESPEARE LTD

**Independent Family Funeral Directors
and Monumental Masons - Founded 1877**

**SELSDON and SANDERSTEAD
175 Selsdon Park Road, South Croydon
CR2 8JJ**

Tel: 020 8657 3616 - Own Chapel of Rest

CROYDON

**1 Norfolk House, Wellesley Road, Croydon, CR0 1LH
Tel: 020 8688 1447 or 2003**

**24-hour service - Free parking in centre of
Croydon - Funeral plans - Monumental
works**

www.jbshakespearefunerals.co.uk



OLD COULSDON CENTRE

200 CLUB

**HELP KEEP THE CENTRE RUNNING BY
JOINING OUR CLUB**

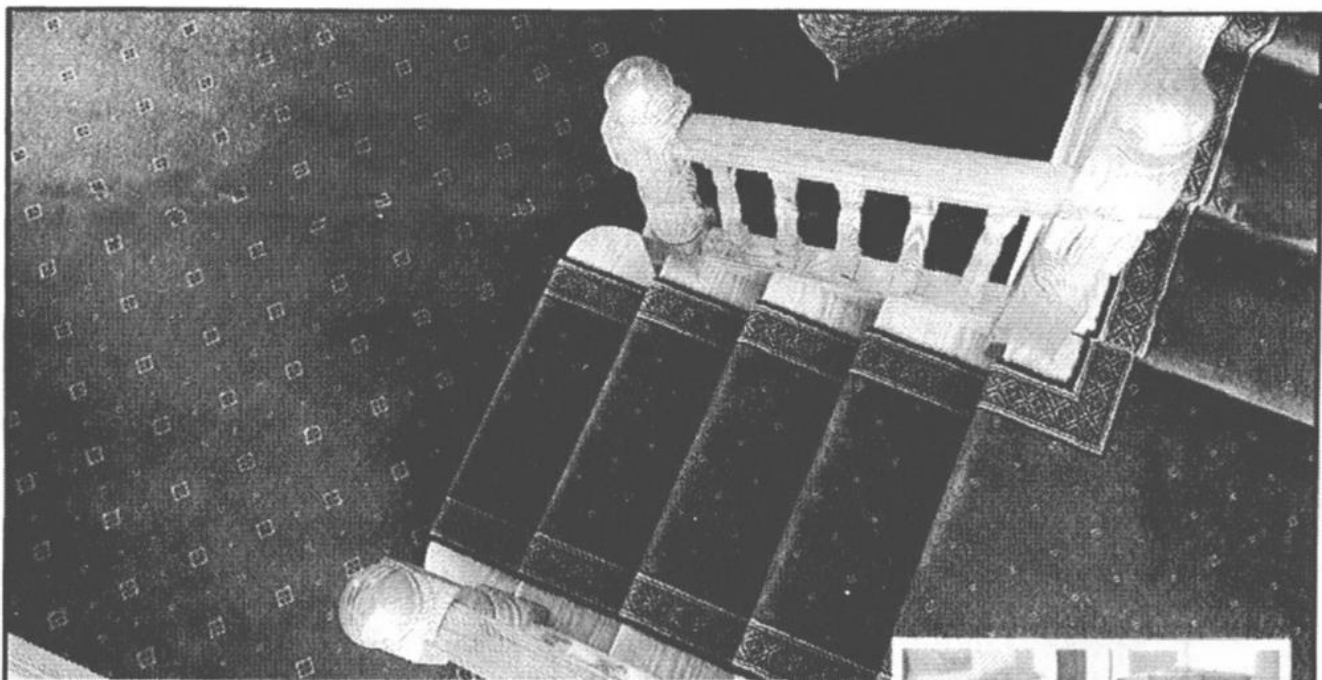
**for just £5 A MONTH per share
WITH A CHANCE TO WIN
PRIZES EVERY MONTH**

Top Prize so far this year £400

**Phone or text Janet on
07801 695832**

or email: janetstollery@hotmail.com

**HELP KEEP THIS FANTASTIC LOCAL
FACILITY RUNNING!**



for beautiful floors look for an outstanding retailer

Beautiful flooring provides the foundation for a beautiful home. Family owned Keith Harris Carpets & Flooring have specialised in all aspects of flooring since 1978.

Personal attention from experienced staff ensures that every customer receives valuable advice to match their needs and desires. Couple this with professional installation by fully qualified fitters, and your satisfaction is guaranteed.

Our membership of the Carpet 1st Buying Group enables us to offer truly competitive prices on like for like materials.

Our long expertise in the flooring industry, enables us to compete for demanding commercial contracts of all types and sizes.

If you seek the very best products for your home, provided by skilled and knowledgeable people, at competitive prices, it's time to speak to your local family owned retailer, Keith Harris Carpets & Flooring.



- Carpets
- Laminates
- Vinyls
- Parquet
- Solid timber floors
- Design floors

Antico
Approved Retailer

KEITH HARRIS
CARPETS & FLOORING

carpet^{1st}

established 1978

www.khcf.co.uk

Showroom: 935-937 Brighton Road, Purley. Tel: 020 8660 0473

All types of carpet & flooring on display - Monday - Saturday 8.30am - 5.00pm