

COULSDON

WEST

**RESIDENTS
ASSOCIATION**

**ONCE YOU'VE
READ ME,
DON'T
THROW ME
AWAY, PASS
ME ON TO A
FRIEND OR
NEIGHBOUR**



**WINTER
2021**

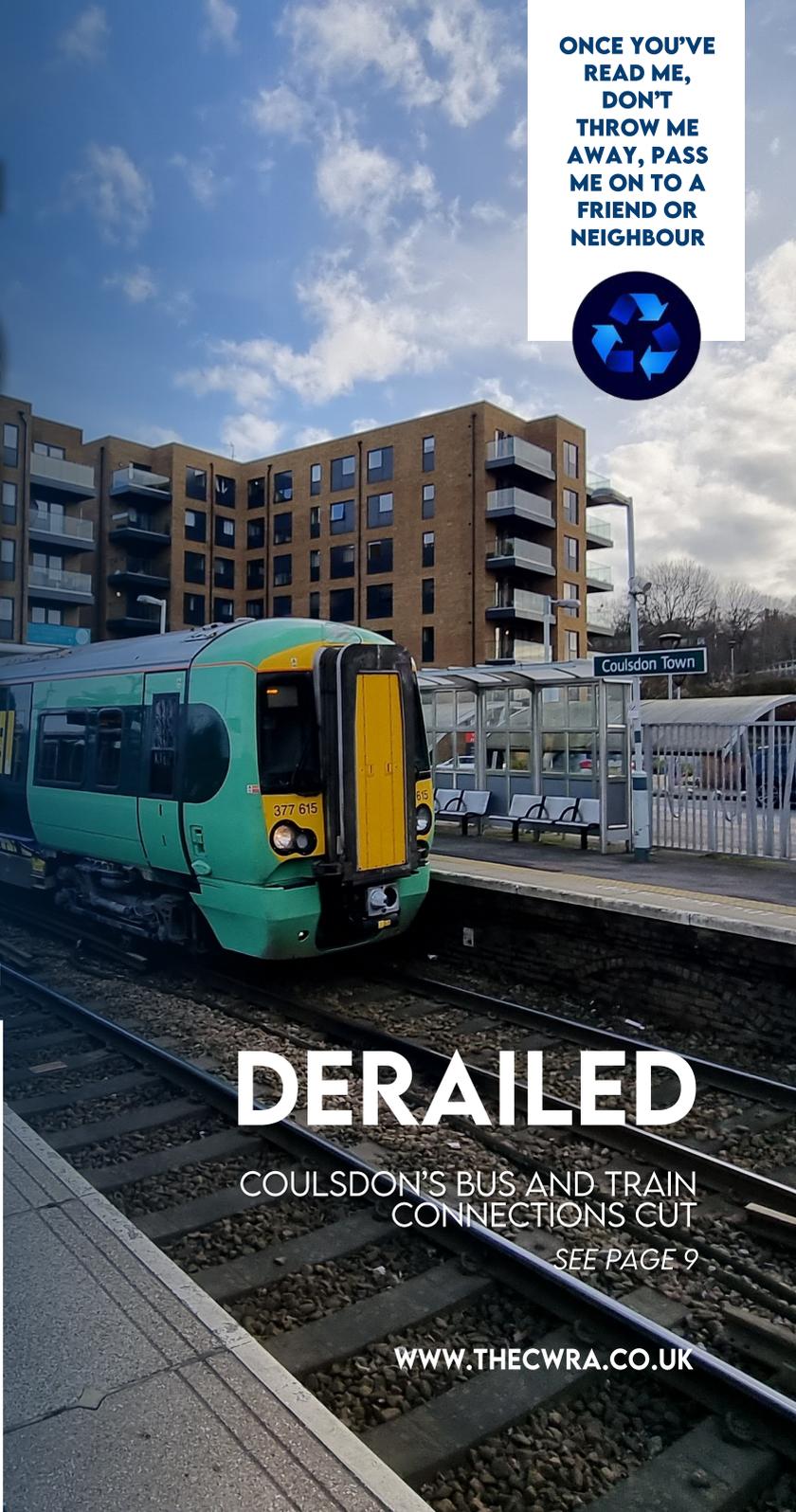


DERAILED

**COULSDON'S BUS AND TRAIN
CONNECTIONS CUT**

SEE PAGE 9

WWW.THECWRA.CO.UK



WHO'S WHO

YOUR CWRA COMMITTEE

RICHARD WALKER

CHAIRMAN

LOCAL PLANNING ISSUES, WEBSITE

LYNNE ROTHBERG

VICE CHAIR

COMMUNITY SAFETY / POLICE PANEL

KEITH EDWARDS

TREASURER

YASMIN DUBASH

SECRETARY

ROADS AND PARKING

YVONNE WALKER

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

PETER APPLEFORD

COMMITTEE MEMBER

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

PAUL FORD

COMMITTEE MEMBER

COMMUNICATIONS

KEITH WATKINS

COMMITTEE MEMBER

SOCIAL MEDIA

JEANNINE NEWHAM

COMMITTEE MEMBER

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

COULD YOU BE A ROAD STEWARD FOR THE CWRA?

HELP US DISTRIBUTE OUR NEWSLETTER IN YOUR STREET, JUST FOUR TIMES A YEAR.

EMAIL US ON

INFO@THECWRA.CO.UK

FOR MORE INFORMATION.

HOW TO CONTACT US

IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM OR QUERY FOR ANY OF OUR COMMITTEE JUST EMAIL US AT :

INFO@THECWRA.CO.UK

AND WE'LL RESPOND AS QUICKLY AS WE CAN.

PLANNING



The CWRA has raised objections to the following developments since our last newsletter

Whether it's due to a policy change or lack of funds, Croydon Council aren't sending out notifications to neighbours in as wide an area as they used to when a planning application is submitted. As the CWRA become aware of plans, we will post details on our Facebook page. However, if you want to take a more active interest we suggest looking at the council's planning website on a regular basis. Click on the 'View A Planning Application' and then the link to 'planning register'. The search function should then allow you to look at a particular road or postcode.

If you see something that concerns you, let us know as quickly as you can. It can take time to assemble an objection, and the more time we have, the more likely it will be an effective one.

21/03840/GPDO:

Sentinel House, 143 Brighton Road.
Change of use from offices to 42 flats.
Application refused

21/03755/FUL:

Adjacent 185 Brighton Road.
New four storey block with shops below and flats above.
Application refused

21/04028/FUL:

25, The Grove.
Demolition of existing family home, replace with apartment block, 8 flats.
Meeting postponed*

21/05084/FUL:

29, Hollymeoak Road.
Demolition of existing family home, replace with apartment block, 6 flats.
Awaiting meeting date

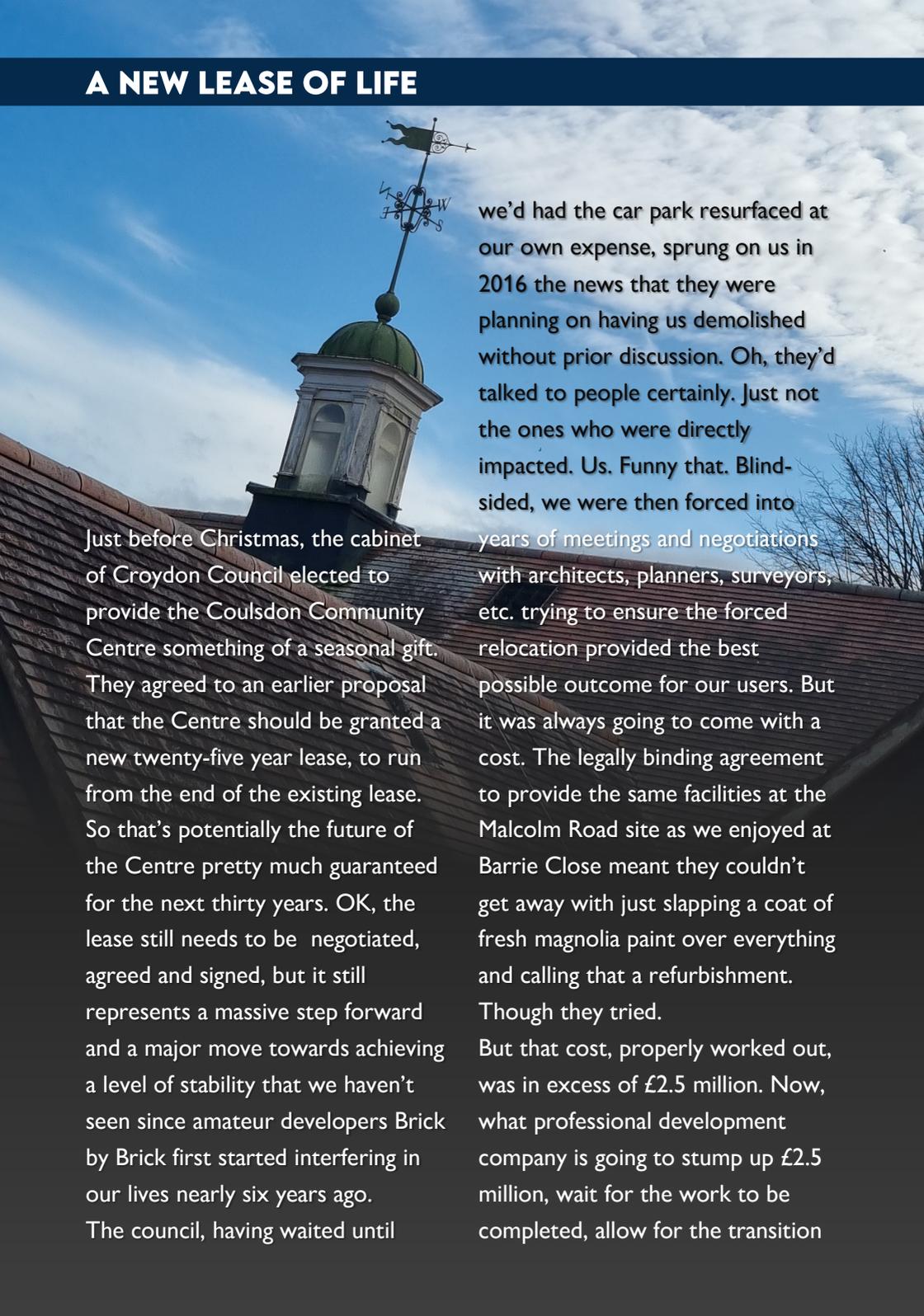
* 25 The Grove should have been discussed on Thursday, 16th December. As yet, no new date has been set.

Local Plan Update

Proposals have been made to amend the Local Plan, and numerous areas across Croydon will find themselves becoming the target of significant development if these changes move ahead. However, though there are plans for the whole borough, the south is bearing the brunt of this. Coulsdon generally, and Coulsdon South (in the area surrounding the station), are earmarked for 'Moderate Intensification' while Coulsdon Town Centre would become an area of 'Focussed intensification'. Now this is obviously an attempt to hide in plain sight, couching their intent in far from plain English. 'Intensive' literally means 'highly concentrated' So 'Moderately Highly Concentrated' means a lot of building, 'Focussed' means an almost absurd level of development. Full details have not so far been forthcoming, but the intention is to build a staggering 2160 new 'homes' in Coulsdon by 2039. How this can be achieved without a massive wave of demolition, replacing family homes with yet more apartment blocks (with insufficient parking) and completely changing the character

of the area, we fail to see, and expect to face a protracted fight in the future. This is particularly unfortunate, as in recent months there has been a seeming change in the attitude of Croydon Council's planning committee and a number of projects that once would have been thought to have been approved without much thought and little hindrance have actually been declined, and rightfully so. It appeared, that with the exit of the interest-conflicted husband and wife team Paul Scott and Alison Butler from the Council's ranks, a welcome, if slight, grip on reality had returned. If this Plan is approved, then our reality may start to look very different.

A NEW LEASE OF LIFE



Just before Christmas, the cabinet of Croydon Council elected to provide the Coulsdon Community Centre something of a seasonal gift. They agreed to an earlier proposal that the Centre should be granted a new twenty-five year lease, to run from the end of the existing lease. So that's potentially the future of the Centre pretty much guaranteed for the next thirty years. OK, the lease still needs to be negotiated, agreed and signed, but it still represents a massive step forward and a major move towards achieving a level of stability that we haven't seen since amateur developers Brick by Brick first started interfering in our lives nearly six years ago. The council, having waited until

we'd had the car park resurfaced at our own expense, sprung on us in 2016 the news that they were planning on having us demolished without prior discussion. Oh, they'd talked to people certainly. Just not the ones who were directly impacted. Us. Funny that. Blind-sided, we were then forced into years of meetings and negotiations with architects, planners, surveyors, etc. trying to ensure the forced relocation provided the best possible outcome for our users. But it was always going to come with a cost. The legally binding agreement to provide the same facilities at the Malcolm Road site as we enjoyed at Barrie Close meant they couldn't get away with just slapping a coat of fresh magnolia paint over everything and calling that a refurbishment. Though they tried. But that cost, properly worked out, was in excess of £2.5 million. Now, what professional development company is going to stump up £2.5 million, wait for the work to be completed, allow for the transition

of the Centre's user groups and then, and only then, be able to demolish the Centre to allow for the building of the new houses? Answer, none of them. Only Brick by Brick, who had, and still have no grasp of how business, or indeed money, works in the real world, thought it could be done.

Then reality bit. The Council, mainly through Brick by Brick's ineptitude, was brought to bankruptcy. Colm Lacey could no longer keep making promises the tax-payer would have to pay for. Forced into finding money fast, the Malcolm Road site, once a school (closed), once an adult learning centre, (closed. Are we seeing a pattern here?) was earmarked for sale to the NHS as a dialysis unit. With the western part of the site already due to become a new NHS Community Health Care Centre, this made perfect sense.

With nowhere for the Community Centre to relocate to, it seemed obvious that they'd have to acknowledge the plan to move us was dead and provide us with a new

lease. But even then, they held back. So this news, this acknowledgement that ultimately the last five years has been utterly pointless and we can finally be allowed to focus on the day to day realities of running the Community Centre is incredibly welcome.

We won't breathe easy until the lease is signed, but we're now more hopeful than ever that we have a real future. We can now undertake to properly upgrade the facilities and install better disabled access. We can apply for external funding for projects to help improve our user's experiences. And we can hold our landlords, the Council, to task for not doing what they're legally obliged to do in keeping the building safe and sound.

In 2035, just thirteen years away, the Centre will celebrate its Centenary. But right about now, we feel there's a lot to celebrate already.

Paul Ford writing as Trustee for the Coudsdon Community Centre Association

COMPLAINING SUCCESSFULLY

“Look at these shoes – I only bought them a month ago, and they're falling apart! They looked great in the shop, but now...”

We've all bought things with our hard-earned cash, only for them to quickly break, tear or fall apart – or simply not do what they're supposed to do, when they're supposed to do it – and at this time of the year, the sheer number of purchases being made is colossal. It's not just the presents either. It's holidays, repairs to your car or central-heating, meals out, theatre tickets, patent hangover cures... the list is positively endless. And every one might, just might, go wrong.

But what do you do if your purchase 'fails to give complete satisfaction'? Write it off to experience? No. You complain. Politely but firmly. Don't get angry. Don't be put off by any negative response that might greet your first tentative steps towards putting things right. Most reputable companies have a pretty good refund/replacement policy these days. But not everyone does. Some can be pretty awkward. Knowing your rights, and your facts, are vital if your claim is going to succeed.



The Complaining Cow

So, we'd like to recommend the book **“How to Complain”** by **Helen Dewdney**, who writes under the wonderful non-de-plume of 'The Complaining Cow!' Sub-titled 'The essential guide to getting refunds, redress and results', it's a compendium of sample letters, points of law, the practicalities of our legal system, and witty stories – with happy endings.

In the course of buying her book, our very own Richard Walker did engage Ms Dewdney in conversation about various things, including being a speaker at the Purley Literary Society next year, but the main outcome of their chat was her offering a discount to members of the CWRA for her publications.

Have a look at the website: **www.thecomplainingcow.co.uk** and use the code “COW15” to get a 15% discount. And she's on Facebook too!

Happy Complaining!



The u3a is a national organisation that caters for people of all ages that have finished either full-time work, or raising a family. The Croydon branch is bristling with different interest groups, ranging from active groups – like walking or keeping fit, to more sedentary groups – like mathematics or eating!

The u3a motto is “Learn, Laugh, Live!” Any learning element is learning for fun.

For a modest annual fee, you can join as many groups as you want. You can attend the monthly meetings and zoom talks, the outings, the study days, the lectures; or meet up with others for coffee and a chat. Interest groups are set up by members who wish to share their enthusiasm for their subject in a social setting. The u3a provides a framework for that setting, as well as giving access to national events like summer schools and subject matter resources via national subject advisors.

Richard Walker has been involved with the maths group and the walking group for a while, and is a part-time member of some of the groups that his wife Yvonne has joined – like 'Love Gardening'.

The subject advisor for maths and statistics publishes weekly puzzles on this public link, which CWRA members may wish to try:

www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/maths-challenge

Why not have a look at the full range of what's on offer here:

u3asites.org.uk/croydon/home



The 'Love Gardening' Crew

FROM THE CHAIR

TALKING ABOUT THE AGM, THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE AND MORE...

Since the Autumn newsletter we have had our first 'in person' AGM since 2019. Held on the 23rd September in the Coulsdon Community Centre (home to Theatre Workshop Coulsdon), there was a good attendance of about 30 people, no doubt enticed there by the promise of lashings of ginger beer and a biscuit or two. Maybe the appearance by our local MP, Chris Philp, also helped to draw in the crowds.

Chris spoke about local issues, and then took questions from the floor, before being whisked away to another meeting to campaign for a Democratically Elected Mayor of Croydon (DEMOC). Since the AGM, the DEMOC campaign has been successful, resulting in a Yes vote in the November election. We await local elections in May to see how all of this will pan out for Croydon and Coulsdon.

Close on the heels of Chris Philp, our two 'local' policemen, PCs Middleton and Hurst, addressed us; we learned that they are based at New Addington police station, and that buses are often the mode of transport used between New Addington and Coulsdon.

Mr Amish Patel from Valley Pharmacy explained how he, with the cooperation of Father Peter, had set up the Covid Vaccination Centre in St Aidan's Church hall. With booster and regular jabs being delivered there, thanks to an army of volunteers, Coulsdon is

well-protected, and enjoys one of the most efficient services going. Starting in February, they have now delivered well over 50,000 shots (as of December 18, 2021). Thank you, Valley Pharmacy, from all of us.

As well as our guests, we had the usual administrative business: the previous minutes were read out and approved, as were the examined accounts for the previous year, and a new Committee was formally elected. There are a few changes in personnel: we welcome Jeannine Newham and Keith Edwards to the fold, and we say goodbye to Dave Rothberg and to Rebecca Guildford and wish them well in their new activities. The full committee list appears elsewhere in this newsletter, and since the AGM, I am very pleased to report that Paul Ford has joined us as Newsletter Editor and help with Communications.

Public Transport: our representative on the East Surrey Transport Committee, Peter Appleford, received a round of applause for his 25-year stint as the secretary of the ESTC. Our local transport is failing to keep up with the huge increase in houses and flats that the Council is forcing on Coulsdon, and currently, the Tattenham Corner stations are only being served with a shuttle service to Purley. Competing strongly in the race to the bottom, is Coulsdon South, which now only

has one train per hour on a Sunday. Whoever is currently playing the part of the Fat Controller*, we urgently need a replacement, with new ideas on how to make the train set work for the passengers, not just the shareholders or bureaucrats.

Sadly, the buses are no better, as they are also under threat of pointless modifications which will only reduce the levels of service we see here in Coulsdon.

Following the formal business, we enjoyed an open question and answer session, and general discussions, about the concerns of the members and of the Committee. There were two main topics: trees and healthcare provision in Coulsdon.

It was noted that 2022 will mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee which we hope to mark in some meaningful way.

The suggestion was made that there are some tree-planting schemes which we might take part in: the Council can plant a tree in the pavement or a park for a fee of around £200 (if you water the tree itself for the first 3 years) or £350 (if the Council does the watering).

If, on the other hand, you know of some suitable land (which might be your own garden), and have the owner's permission, the Woodland Trust is practically giving trees away for individuals and to communities: there are two schemes - "The Queen's Green Canopy" and "The

Big Climate Fightback". More information may be found on their website:

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities

On the healthcare front, the discussions that have been going on for nearly five years about a medical centre being built in Coulsdon are coming to a conclusion. The parcel of land where Malcolm Road meets Woodcote Grove Road, which has a car park and a hut on it, today, is where the centre will be built. Some of you might have been to the public meetings at Coulsdon Methodist Church in November to see the plans. The idea is that Woodcote Medical would take one floor for their Coulsdon consulting rooms, with further consulting rooms being used by the Old Coulsdon practice. In addition, there would be other rooms available for physio/blood samples and similar offerings to all users. Having now been sanctioned by the Council it should see the light of day in a couple of years or so.

All that remains for me to say is to keep cautious over the festive period in and try not to catch anything!

In the words of Dave Allen "May your God go with you."

Cheers,

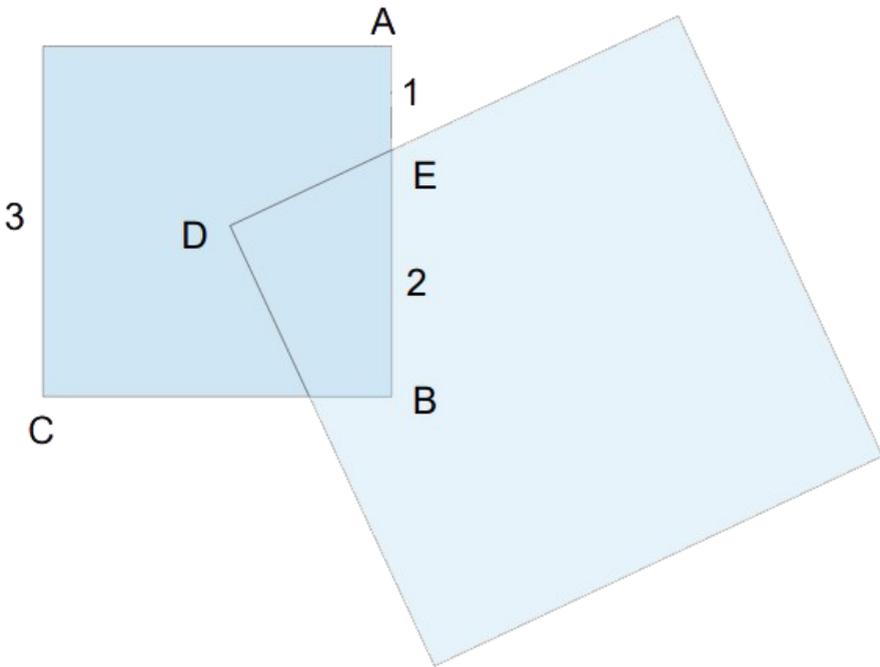
RICHARD

**Thomas the Tank Engine' reference. Just in case.*

MATHS BRAIN TEASERS

Question 1: The smaller square below has sides of length 3 units, the larger square has sides of length 5 units. The corner of the larger square is at the centre of the smaller square at D. The larger square is rotated until the side AB is trisected by the edge of the long square, so that AE is 1 unit long, and EB is 2 units.

What is the area of the overlap in square units?



Question 2: Françoise is driving her new car on a long journey, at a steady speed. At 19:00 on the car clock, the odometer shows 015.0 kilometres. She arrives at her destination at 22:10, and the odometer has just changed to show 300.0 km.

- At what speed is Françoise driving?
- At what time did the string of digits on the clock match those on the odometer?

(Hint... first work out in which hour this will happen.)



LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

THESE ARE YOUR REPRESENTATIVES AT CROYDON COUNCIL, THE LONDON ASSEMBLY AND THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. THEY'RE THERE TO GIVE YOU A VOICE. MAKE YOURSELF HEARD.

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