

There have been a number of rumours circulating about the future use of our post office in Charlton Church Lane. CCRA has been in touch with our Councillors, council officers and our MP, who on our behalf contact the Chief Executive of the Post Office. We have also spoken with the Mr Sandeep Singh Sandhu who, together with his brother, have recently acquired the freehold for the building and plan to build two stories of residential accommodation above the post office. There are two parts to the situation.

Firstly, the post office is currently being operated under temporary management arrangements. On 11 September in a letter to Nick Raynsford, our MP, the Post Office said that these would continue, “Until a suitable permanent solution is found...we are currently advertising the vacancy”. We understand that the Post Office operates stringent measures to ensure the suitability of any future operator.

Secondly, but not directly linked to the operation of the post office, is the proposal by the Sandhu brothers to build two floors above the existing building, providing four two bedroom maisonettes. Mr Sandeep Sandhu says that he and his brother plan to use the accommodation for themselves and their families and

they have no plans to sub-let to private tenants. The Post Office will operate as usual.

Last May the Council approved a planning application but an administrative error has led to its withdrawal. The application will be resubmitted soon and could be considered at a planning committee on January 13th 2010. If all goes to plan Mr Sandhu says that work will begin in early spring. We understand that a steel structure will need to be put in place to support the two new floors. After getting some expert advice, CCRA did point out, last May, that a structural survey was likely

to show that this would be necessary. In order for this work to be completed Mr Sandhu says the Post Office will therefore need to close for between only one and two weeks. He has promised to work with CCRA so that residents are properly informed of plans and any inconvenience is minimal.

CCRA's concerns are to ensure the long term future of this vital community facility and, if it happens, that any closure is as short as possible. We will be pressing the Post Office to ensure that future arrangements to operate the post office will not bring any reduction to the range of services currently provided.

Forthcoming social events

Carol singing

Thursday 10th and Monday 14th December
Meet at 26 Wellington Gardens at 7.00 pm

Christmas Social for Members and their guests

Wednesday 16th December
St Richard's Hall at 7.30 pm

Quiz Night

Saturday 27th February
St Richard's Hall at 7.30 pm

Spring Meeting and Social

Wednesday 28th April
St Richard's Hall at 7.30 pm

Open Gardens

Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th June

Members' barbecue

Saturday 12th June

Community Day

Saturday 10th July
An all day event with something for everyone!
Further details will be announced in the new year.

CCRA's new committee

Chair	Dave Picton	Wellington Gardens
Vice Chair	Jason Palmer	Elliscombe Road
Secretary	Anne Waite	Wellington Gardens
Treasurer	Kevin Harrison	Sundorne Road

Other committee members are:
Robert Aldous, Lance Bohl, Annie Galloway, David Gayther, Martina Keating, Elaine Picton, Linda Pound, Andrew Rippingale, Peter Somerville, Brenda Taggart, John Tidy and Len Weir

Charlton Central Residents Association

Charlton Central Residents Association (CCRA) is committed to ensuring a safe and friendly community.
Please join us!



Classified Ads

The Grapevine currently reaches 800 houses in the local area. If you would like to advertise goods or services cheaply, effectively and locally contact *John Tidy* on 020 8853 0624 or *Jason Palmer* on 07850 775755.

A form can be found on our website, rates are as follows:

- Ads containing up to 15 words plus contact details cost £10 for one issue or £35 for four issues.
- Ads containing up to 20 words, contact details & an image / logo cost £20 for one insertion or £70 for four.

Space is limited so get your ad in soon.

CCRA needs your support

We need representatives for several streets: Calydon Road; Nadine Street; Priolo Road; Swallowfield Road; Frank Burton Close; Fossdene Road; Coombe Lodge and Gollogly Terrace are not currently represented on the management committee. We also need new members of action groups (law and order; fundraising; environment; and social).

If you think you could help in any of these roles, please get in touch with our chair or vice-chair (contact details listed below).

CCRA membership

Jacqui Mitchell, who has served as membership secretary since CCRA was formed, has had to resign due to additional work responsibilities. Her work has been greatly valued and she is already missed! Dee Beale of Wellington Gardens has kindly agreed to take on Jacqui's role. You will soon be hearing from Dee as memberships are due for renewal in January.

In the meantime, if you want to join or renew your membership please take a look at our website www.charltonresidents.org.uk



Dave Picton, Chair Wellington Gdns, 0208 858 4942
Jason Palmer, Vice Chair Elliscombe Road

If you would like to have Grapevine, the regular bulletin or updates on CCRA events emailed to you please email info@charltonresidents.org.uk
Grapevine's Editorial Team are:
Elaine Picton 12 Wellington Gardens, 0208 858 4942
Linda Pound 26 Wellington Gardens, 0208 858 7377

Residents’ Survey – law and order in Charlton

You said:-

Speeding is a big concern with parking being problematic mainly on match days. Residents mostly



feel that that their road is a safe place but would like to see much more police attention given to the area by the shops and the station. More than half of you feel intimidated by gangs, aggressive dogs and anti social behaviour. You overwhelmingly support on the spot fines for litter bugs. The tables below give the full %age responses to our survey

questions and your comments will help us to work with the local police Safer Neighbourhood Team to improve community safety in our area.



Bogus Callers

Do you know the caller? If the answer is NO, do not let them in. Ask to see ID and then contact the company they claim to be from and verify their credentials. Genuine callers will not mind being checked or calling another time. PC Bearryman, of Charlton SNT, states “These individuals appear very believable and primarily target the elderly and venerable persons. They frequently operate in twos and threes with one person distracting the victim whilst the other steals property. If still in doubt, call 999.”

Residents Survey – more results	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Speeding is a problem	23	47	29	1
Weekday parking is a problem	9	18	70	3
Weekend parking is a problem	12	29	57	2
Match day parking is a problem	42	35	21	2
I feel safe during the day	19	76	5	0
I feel safe at night	11	60	26	3
I feel safe outside Charlton station	6	62	26	6
I feel safe outside my nearest shops	5	61	28	6
Gangs are a problem	11	41	42	6
Drugs (taking/dealing) is a problem	7	29	57	7
Drunks are a problem	3	24	65	8
Anti-social behaviour is a problem	10	46	39	5
Vandalism is a problem	3	34	57	6
Aggressive dogs are a problem	12	37	45	6
I would support on the spot fines for littering	46	42	9	3

The CCRA survey said the following about Police Safer Neighbourhood Team patrols:				
The police patrol my street regularly	5	6	59	30

All figures are given as Percentages

CCRA goes on the beat



Our CCRA Law and Order reporter was invited to join the Safer Neighbourhood Team to see how business was done. Our reporter was able to get a full picture of community policing by shadowing PC Emma Knowles for a day and going on “the Beat”.

Emma was born and brought up in Charlton so knows the area and many residents well and like us, feels it is a good place to live. She works shifts with other members of the team, including nights, and street patrols are mostly on foot. Daily work programmes are set following checks on crime information from the Met and daily communications from local agencies and residents. She told us that local community policing importantly involves:-

- Working with schools, for example the “Stranger Danger” programme with young children
- Reassurance visits to victims of specific types of crime in the area, for example burglary
- Visiting people who are potentially vulnerable
- Responding to seasonal events, most recently making targeted patrols in the area surrounding the Mosque during Ramadan
- Giving a particular priority each month to an area where increased levels of anti social behaviour are reported or suspected.

BUT, the most important part of the shift is the foot patrol and our reporter went with Emma to deal with antisocial tenants who were throwing objects from a balcony, to confront a group of teenagers taking drugs, to talk to residents about protecting their property and to visit a resident who had recently been burgled. A busy day!!

Child protection issues, taking witness statements, issuing dog warrants, responding to local complaints and gathering information to prevent or assist in the investigation of crimes are all regular features of PC Knowles’ work.

CCRA is reassured to know that our local team is up to full strength and dedicated to only the Charlton area. Our roads are officially an area of average and mostly below Borough and London wide average crime statistics. So, let’s keep it that way. Most recently the Borough Commander, Richard Wood answered questions at our AGM and gave us an assurance that the SNT would listen to and act on residents’ concerns.

We would like to thank Emma, Sergeant Adrian Musgrave, PC Kris Bearryman and Police Community Support Officers, Ben, Dave and Janice for their hospitality and cooperation in making our “day” possible.

Your Charlton SNT is based at 3 Mar House, Springfield Grove, tel. 020 8721 2734 or 07766992585 and they can be reached by email on Charlton.snt@met.police.uk

The Metropolitan Police website shows monthly crime statistics for our area and you can access this on <http://maps.met.police.uk/>

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CHARLTON REMEMBERED

In the early eighteenth century, Charlton was described by Daniel Defoe as, “A village famous, or rather infamous for the yearly collected rabble of mad people at Horn Fair”. Whether or not you think this is still the case Charlton has a fascinating history and Grapevine has enlisted the support of a number of long standing residents who have shed some interesting observations on life in our area.

But first, a bit of ancient history. We think that Charlton is probably the oldest surviving London Village. Its name appears in the Domesday

Book and means the name of the free farmer, “Village of the Villeins”, (not Villains in case you are wondering about our spelling). In 1536 Henry V111 took over Charlton Manor and the lands remained in crown property until the reign of James 1 who granted them to



Sir Adam Newton. It was he who built Charlton House (1607-1612), the finest surviving example of Jacobean domestic architecture in the country. He also decided to rebuild St Luke’s Church, the burial place of Spencer Perceval, the only British prime minister to have been

assassinated whilst in office. Eventually, Charlton House passed to the Wilson family, the last member being buried in the family vault in 1869.

The bend of the Thames by the Anchor and Hope was once the haunt of smugglers, who, when apprehended,

were hung in chains on the foreshore as a deterrent to others ready to plunder the multitude of ships anchored there. It is believed that Hogarth used this site for his painting, “The Idle Apprentice”.

And now, some more recent history. The first industry was a tiny ropeworks , followed by a hand-blown glass works with the employees brought over from Europe and housed in Floyd Road. So people from overseas settled in our area over 100 years ago.

Longstanding residents, Doris, Cliff, Val and Vi (two of whom were born in the road they now live in) have given us quite a detailed picture of life in Charlton prior to and following the second world war. They remember thriving engineering works and factories, bringing many people to the area to work. Siemens, Johnson’s, Harvey’s, the ropeworks and latterly Airfix were some of the big names that set up along the river. The Woolwich Equitable Building Society provided secretarial opportunities for many women. Charlton Church Lane had a Co-op, 3 Butchers, 2 bakers, three grocers, two chemists and a draper’s. People collected milk from Coles, poured into bottles from a jug! Barclays Bank was in the building now occupied by Wing Shing and the post office was next door. A pawn brokers (where there was always a queue on Mondays) was a little further up, next to the Conservative Club. The Liberal Club was formerly the doctor’s surgery. There was a dressmaking business and a restaurant in Wellington



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For further details please call CCRA member Rosemary on 07974 450138

or Membership Secretary Hilary on 020 8989 8131 – or come along to any rehearsal



Pictures of Charlton by 'didimendum1', on flickr.com

The old orangery in the grounds of Charlton House dates from the second half of the 17th century. It has many features of the works of Inigo Jones as is believed to have been designed by him. Currently in the ownership of Greenwich Council, it is now vacant and was placed on English Heritage’s Buildings at Risk register in 2006.

Gardens. Our residents described the area as a close knit community with clean streets – quite “posh”. However, a lot of the houses were divided into flats as many people could not afford a whole house.

Fossdene was the local primary school and a girl’s convent school was on the site of St Joseph’s Court. This was used as a rest centre during the war, a really difficult time due to constant raids on the Arsenal. Many, many nights were spent in air raid shelters with sand bags for extra fortification. Residents remembered one particular flying bomb which made a direct hit on the station. The butcher’s shop on the corner was destroyed and the butcher and several customers were killed. The station master was, fortunately, on his lunch break.

The area was well served by public transport, train fares being tuppence all the way to Westminster! The 7.30 am was known as the “last workman’s”. There was little time for leisure but dancing, in Woolwich Town Hall, and the cinemas at the Standard and in Woolwich were popular venues. Residents remembered Charlton Road being packed on Sundays with people walking to and from Greenwich Park – always a good band playing there. Tickets for Charlton Athletic were sixpence!

If you have a story or remember something of interest please let Linda and Elaine know so we can publish your memories in Grapevine – contact details on the back page.

No telegram from the queen

It’s right there at the heart of CCRA’s social calendar; Scouts love it; the St Luke’s Players entertain in it. Many of us have partied within its walls; in the past it was home to redoubtable bodies such as the Girls’ Friendly Society! Where do I mean? And how did it come to be there?

It’s St Richard’s Hall, and to my knowledge it has been there since the 1950’s. I always thought it must have been built on a blitzed plot, so I was very surprised to discover that its history stretches right back to 1895, when Charlton was being developed as a commuter suburb.

A group of far sighted Victorian Evangelical Christians, headed by a Mr Ruffell, built the Sundorne Mission Hall at the junction of Swallowfield and Sundorne Roads, to serve the new and growing community. Like many Mission Halls of the day, it was built of corrugated iron and earned the nickname of “the tin tabernacle”. Its ramshackle construction resulted in a demolition order in 1909, but St Luke’s church came to the rescue and bought it as a Parish Hall for the princely sum of £180. Still going strong in 1935, the freehold was bought. The odd lick of paint and the occasional new iron panel kept it going until 1956 when it was finally demolished and a new building put up.

So, although this new building, incorporating a church (St Richard’s) rose window and was consecrated in 1958, the tradition of a community meeting place on this site is actually one hundred years old. I don’t think it will qualify for the royal telegram, but how well the two halls that have stood here have served us as a community over the past century, and long may that continue into the future.

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I heard it on the grapevine...

Cinderella comes to Charlton this Christmas!

This year, The St Luke's Players' Christmas Pantomime is 'Cinderella'. Those of you who have been to their productions before will know that a fun-filled evening of professional quality entertainment awaits. Held at the Assembly Rooms in Charlton Village on the 4th, 5th, 11th and 12th of December, tickets are available from Gwen Zammit, on 0208 319 8369. All proceeds go to The Demelza Children's Hospice.



St. Luke's Players: Albert O'Shea & John Chipperfield starred in last year's production of 'Snow White'

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'My Charlton' photographic competition



The competition winners:
'State of the Art in Charlton', and
'Charlton House' (below)



All entries for CCRA's photographic competition were displayed at the Annual General Meeting. Residents attending the meeting were invited to vote for their favourite entries. Eventually Peter Somerville of Elliscombe Road was declared the winner. In the 13-19 category, Jo Galloway of Delafield Road produced the winning entry.

Voice of the Valley

After the heartbreak the last time I wrote I am slowly on the mend. Charlton is returning to being a happy Valley though a recent couple of draws and injury worries mean that I cannot say I feel completely relaxed. Some very good football being played and evidence of good team work. In fact it has been so good at times you could almost believe you were watching Manchester United! We are, at the time of writing at the right end of League One looking at automatic promotion - but there is still a long way to go. League One is a funny old league. It has some good teams in it who are made of a mix of earnest young players and some seasoned older players as well as some absolutely terrible referees! Not sure if these refs are on their way up through the league but most I suspect are on their way down or have reached the limit of their capacity to referee a game fairly and to keep control. I know I complained about the Championship referees but really ...I could do better as I am a woman who does understand the offside rule. Well sort of!

CCRA social events

Recent CCRA Events

CCRA's second annual general meeting was held on September 23rd. There was a good turnout and a new committee has been appointed. As you can see from the back page we still need representatives of all streets for the main committee and members of the association's action groups.

Following the official business of the meeting, questions were directed to a panel, which consisted of Commander Wood, the borough's chief police officer; Janet Gilman, one of our local councillors; Councillor Alex Grant, representing the council's planning committee, and Dave Picton, re-elected as chair of CCRA.

Both safety and planning are key issues for residents. Commander Wood gave reassurances that his team would be deployed as effectively as possible and underlined his commitment to getting police officers away from their desks and out on the street. Planning was a major topic for discussion and will be featured in a future edition of Grapevine.

The evening was rounded off with an opportunity to talk to neighbours, sign up for residents' groups and listen to mellow music provided by Chris Harrison and John Stevens.

'Grapewine' Appreciation Group

A recent meeting of this group was hosted by Liz and Pete Somerville. They report: Sight, Aroma, Taste and overall impression were all experienced by those who went to this Australian wine tasting evening. After savouring several wines, the evening ended with what was considered favourite, the Kelly Country Shiraz. Very enjoyable, continuing until after midnight!

The next event will be on November 14th at 12 Wellington Gardens. Contact Dave and Elaine Picton on 0208 858 4942 for details. For general information on future events contact Elizabeth on 0208 305 0872 or Dawn on 0208 473 3212.

Book Club

The group's most recent read was On Chesil Beach by Ian McEwan. For further details of meetings contact Diana on 0208 293 6431.

Singing Group

Now the longer winter evenings are drawing in, why not join our friendly singing group? For full details of dates and times contact Chris Harrison on 0208 858 7377.

Local History Group

There's a lot of interest in a local history group. An inaugural meeting is being planned for January – further details in the next members' bulletin.

Forthcoming CCRA Events

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Christmas Fair planned for November 28th has been cancelled. Watch this space for future community events. Better still – tell us what you'd like and let us know how you can help!

Carol singing

Our carol singing event last year was a huge success – raising over £200 for Charlton Toy Library. As we were not able to cover all CCRA streets in that one evening, we have decided to have two. On Thursday December 10th and Monday December 14th, a group of carol singers will be in a street near you.

If you'd like to join us you simply need to meet up at 26 Wellington Gardens at 7.00pm on either or both nights. No special expertise is needed – just come along and sing. Song sheets provided. Money raised will go to the toy library. On both evenings, you will also be invited back to a neighbour's for warming and reviving refreshments. If you don't fancy singing – stay home and enjoy the joyful sound – and please give generously!

CCRA Christmas Social

A Christmas Social for CCRA members will be held on Wednesday 16th December, 7.30 at St. Richard's Hall. There will be a raffle with grand prizes; music including carol singing; a tombola; one or two Christmas stalls and some seasonal refreshments. We look forward to seeing you there for an enjoyable evening amongst friends and neighbours.



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