

CHARLTON GRAPEVINE

VINTAGE 11 ☁ OCTOBER 2010

the newsletter of the Charlton Central Residents Association



'Going Green' Community Day



Greening Charlton: Wellington Mews



CCRA is greening Charlton

On Saturday 18th September, an enthusiastic group of residents worked hard to transform three neglected areas in Nadine Street, Wellington Gardens and Inverine Road. The pictures on this page show the great improvement that they achieved in just one morning of hard work! We're hoping to continue this work and would welcome suggestions. You might for example have some plants to contribute or you might have some bright ideas such as planting around the base of trees as a neighbouring group have done. Contact Linda Pound on 0208 858 7377 or email events@charltonresidents.org.uk if you would like to help our CCRA area to become greener.

'Going Green'



Before and after in Nadine Street



Luisa Bain, resident of Wellington Gardens makes her contribution to the Junk Band

Farewell Michael - Weclome Purvee



It all happened very suddenly this summer. One day Michael Totty was downstairs at the back of his chemists shop, on the corner of Sundorne and Charlton Church Lane, preparing a prescription as he had done for over 40 years. Next day there was a note saying he was retiring at the end of the next week.

Many came to say thanks and a sad farewell before he left. Others returned from holiday to find him gone or found out too late to say goodbye. Michael gave help, advice and expertise to two or three generations of many families throughout Charlton. He was a very professional pharmacist and very good at communicating at every level. In fact he is only half retiring and will continue to work part time in his wife's shop on the one way system in Greenwich. I know Grapevine readers will want to pass on our best wishes for the future to him and his family.

Michael will be a hard act to follow, but the new owner Purvee Patel is determined to do just that and has made a great start. She aims to maintain the same service, the same hours and the same warmth that Michael always conveyed. She also will continue to have a full time driver, delivering medicines to many housebound people in the area and picking up their prescriptions from doctors' surgeries.

New ownership

Purvee grew up in East London but has been a Greenwich resident for several years and lives with her husband on Shooters Hill; she is planning to keep the name 'Totty's'. Helping to maintain that high quality service, Diane Boston, who has been behind the counter for the last 16 years, will still be with us, helping to ensure continuity.

A local chemist shop is a vital part of our local health service; especially vital for the elderly and anyone with a mobility problem. But it is also a small business, potentially at risk from recent developments in local supermarkets. Perhaps we should resolve to make as much use as possible of the local chemist shops to make sure that such a valuable community resource is maintained for future generations.

New Regime at Post Office

The long running saga at Charlton post office is hopefully moving towards a happy ending. From a few weeks ago it has become a family business in which two women have the franchise from the Post Office as sub- postmasters, Mrs Saima Arif and Mrs Amna Ahmed. Their husbands, Faizan and Umer, are also part of the team.

There top priority is to improve the quality of service for post office services. At peak times they plan to have staff on all five counters and have also got agreement to sell first and second class stamps on the shop counter for customers who only want to buy stamps. This should considerably reduce the length of queues which have already been reorganised inside the building; no more queuing in the rain!

The post office counter will be open for the same hours as before: 8.30 to 5.30 Monday to Thursday, 9.00 to 5.30 on Friday and 9.00 to 1.00 on Saturday. But as we go press the interior is being re-arranged to accommodate new shop services which will be available seven days a week, from 6.30 or 7a.m. to 8 p.m. in the week and a little shorter at weekends.

They plan to sell stationery, cards, sweets, newspapers and magazines and those stamps seven days a week. The dry cleaning agency will remain and they will install a hot drinks machine. They have also applied to operate an ATM machine. They would welcome any other suggestions.

And the Flats Upstairs?

The development upstairs was stopped for a few weeks by the council because they had departed from the design and conditions agreed as part of the planning permission. Those matters have now been resolved and work is underway again. We can expect the external work upstairs to be finished and the scaffolding taken down in a couple of weeks or so, and completion about a month later, when there will be repainting of the ground floor frontage. We understand that the two Sandhu brothers, who own the property freehold, will then move into the new flats with their families.

Charlton Rail Users Group

The next meeting of the rail users group (CRUG) will be on Tuesday 26th October at 7p.m. in the rear room of the Charlton Liberal Club on Charlton Church Lane. All Grapevine readers will be very welcome together with any friends from the wider Charlton area.

CCRA's Annual General Meeting

On Wednesday 22nd September residents met at St. Richard's Hall for our 4th AGM. Dave Picton as chair and Kevin Harrison as treasurer stood down as officers after two very busy and successful years in those posts but will remain on the committee. Anne Waite, who has been a highly effective and hard-working secretary, has also stood down. At the meeting three officer appointments were made. Linda Pound (Wellington Gardens) became chair, Martina Keating (Sundorne Road) became secretary and David Gayther (Inverine Road) became treasurer. Full details of the new committee will be included in the next members' bulletin.

Questions and suggestions

Two of our local councillors, Janet Gilman and Gary Parker, together with Lee Motuel from Cleansweep attended a questions and suggestions session. The session was ably led by CCRA member Barbara Smith, whose day job is community development! Topics under discussion included wheelie bins, fly tipping, sewage and drains! The possibility of applying for a 20mph speed limit in our area was also raised. If you have a view on this or other topics related to the quality of our environment do contact any member of the CCRA committee known to you or contact Linda Pound on 0208 858 7377. Lee Motuel praised the work of CCRA and has offered to liaise with CCRA over environmental issues.

'Noticed something different in your street'

Saturday 10th July saw the successful launch of the Central Charlton Neighbourhood Watch (CCNW). Over 50 residents met together, along with representatives of the Greenwich Neighbourhood Watch and our Police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) to discuss how we can make our area a better and safer place. (See page 5 for pics).

Following the meeting a team of volunteers went out to erect signs that clearly show that we now live in a Neighbourhood Watch (NW) Area and to deliver window stickers to our 800 households. The aim of the Watch is to improve communication between residents and the SNT and have a greater say in how we are policed. Other neighbourhoods that have introduced a Watch have seen reductions in crime and better community cohesion. To help communications CCNW have already produced and circulated the first 'UPDATE' newsletter which lets residents know what's going on in our streets. Already over 100 residents have signed up for the Watch. So want more information? Why not join the Watch. It cost nothing. By working together we can make Central Charlton a safer place to live. To join the watch fill in the slip below or get in touch with Annie or Brenda for more information.

I wish to join Charlton Central Neighbourhood Watch (Contact details will be held confidentially and only used to circulate information about CCNW.)

Please print clearly:

Name(s)

Address

Telephone number Email

Signed

Return the completed slip to:

Annie – 28 Delafield Road (0208 305 1484) or email thegalloways28@hotmail.com

or Brenda – 49 Delafield Road (0208 853 3354) or email b.taggart@ioe.ac.uk

SUMME

Since the last issue of Grapevine there have been a number of exciting community events. Photos and accounts on these two pages give a flavour – were you there?

The Great Charlton Get-Together goes South African!

The grand finale of the Great Get Together held in Charlton Park, in July, was a concert of local talent, culminating in the one and only public performance of the specially formed Greenwich Township Choir, joined by local school choirs and the amazing MBAWULA band, with their South African singer, Joyce Moholoagae. The show followed six weeks of learning songs in African languages (including how to “click”), in rehearsals led by Joyce, and Paul Bartholomew, of Mbawula, a band that fuses jazz and African music styles. The African theme reflected the interest in the World Cup being held in South Africa.

On the day, the choir of nearly 300 voices, surrounded the band, on stage. It was the most fantastically uplifting feeling, to be a part of this concert,

and to see the pleasure and enjoyment amongst the audience.....many joining in with the familiar African songs, clapping and dancing. Even the sun mimicked the intense African heat, making this a great day to remember!

On the same day a CCRA ceilidh, with music provided by local residents was held. Our local singing group also provided entertainment.



Greenwich Township Choir

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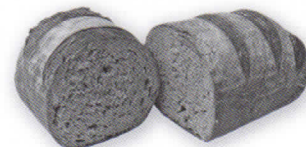
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ER in Charlton



Launching central Charlton neighbourhood watch

CCRA Open Gardens, 2010



Thank you to all the CCRA members who hosted the nine open gardens, this year. Gardens were opened to members, over a weekend in July, and were very well attended, by visitors who shared ideas, advice and expert knowledge, and the odd drink or two!

It is interesting that every garden, from new to well-established, had a wealth of plants, fascinating corners and points of interest, making each one individual, although most gardens are of a similar shape. Plans were made to instigate plant swapping and sharing, as and when appropriate. The weekend finished in grand style, with a members only barbecue, kindly hosted by Dawn and Andrew.

Having Problems **RENTING?**

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**Classes now open in Blackheath Standard
(Fridays) & Charlton (Tuesdays)**

I heard it on the grapevine...

How happy is my valley?

Charlton are currently hovering on the fringes of the play-off positions after a season which has so far consisted of one step forwards followed by another step backwards. The strikers are having trouble finding the target, while to the unbiased eye of a Charlton supporter referees seem to be applying a regular handicap against our team. Perhaps they are only trying to keep the games interestingly balanced. At home we have seen Charlton dominate but fail to score with enough regularity, but fortunes away from home have dipped alarmingly since the early victory over Leyton Orient. At least the bookies still have confidence in Charlton's ability to get promoted, even if the fans have their doubts

Swan Song?

Many residents were sorry to hear that the new landlord at the White Swan had left since he was unable to agree terms with the brewery Punch Taverns. In the short time that he had been there, Vito Marino had begun to make a significant difference and showed great interest in becoming increasingly involved in the community. Punch Tavern's London operations manager and their business relationship manager met with local residents recently. It is clear from that meeting that Punch Taverns are exploring ways of ensuring a brighter future for the pub. We await further developments.

42 and 44 Wellington Gardens

They must have looked magnificent when they were first built. Now, boarded up with steel shutters, plants starting to grow on the balconies and the tree in front as high as the houses, they are a sad sight. The two linked properties are owned by the Council which a few years ago decided to sell them. Since then they have been put up for auction three times and have been withdrawn three times, not having reached the reserve price. The buildings are deteriorating as their value must be. A court hearing is due on October 6th to remove squatters. If successful, additional security will be put in place until the sale goes through. We know the council has a duty to secure the maximum market price when disposing of properties but with the property market in the doldrums, forking out for security and legal fees and maintenance costs does not seem to make much financial sense. We'll keep you informed on future developments.

Concert at St. Luke's

On Friday October 8th at 7.00pm there will be a fund-raising concert by the Colfe Swing Band. Tickets are £8 and will include a glass of wine and refreshments. Proceeds will go towards restoration work at St. Luke's Church. For reservations and further information phone 0208 856 9386.



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Poetry corner

Local resident Chris Benedict (preluddite@googlemail.com) was inspired to send in one of his poems following the anonymous poetry contribution printed in the last edition of Grapevine:

*The Wizard stood between two Rocs
As He spoke with god
He spoke with god for seven years
His ayes were full of tears
Then god whispered into the Wizard's ear
And his face became full of cheer;
The angels sang
The witches danced
The flowers grew with grace
A ladybird crept from beneath a leaf
And she stared in utter disbelief*

*What a magical world it is
She said*

*What a magical world
She said.*

Local community interest groups

Beer tasting 'from grape to hop'

On October 2nd at 8.00pm the inaugural meeting of a new beer tasting group was held in Charlton. The event included expert advice exploring world beers. For information about future events please call Andrew on 07917 080362.

Book group

The Charlton book group is back underway from September, following a summer break to allow us to take a break from prescribed reading and indulge our personal tastes, whether it be for some furtive 'poolside' fiction, or for more esoteric material. Over the coming months, we hope to explore a wide range of fiction and non-fiction, trying out new authors alongside the classics and taking in current topical issues such as the environment, the economy and modern psychology.

We're a lively group, and members bring a wide variety of personal and professional interests to the discussions. We all tend to have busy schedules so we operate on flexible and user-friendly lines which includes welcoming new people who want to drop in for a trial session, or those who don't want to commit but would like to join in when they fancy the latest book. So do get in touch if you'd like to find out more. For more information contact Diana on 0208 293 6431.

Gardening group

For details of the gardening group contact charlton-gardening-group@googlegroups.com. Alternatively ring Linda Pound on 0208 858 7377 to register interest and Linda will pass on details to the group.

Music group

The group meets fortnightly on Mondays and continues to develop a repertoire of pieces from different musical traditions. Our main project during the second half of the summer was to devise and perform a composition with Rachael, one of our saxophonists, for her course at Guildhall. As a starting point, Rachael brought along some poems by Walter de la Mare (who was born in Charlton) and we chose to work on one called Arabia. We developed a partly-improvised piece using a theme from Arabian classical music and enlisted the services of three of the singing group to add some vocal textures. Our performance, at Bishopsgate Institute on June 28, was both enjoyable and very well received. Our remaining dates for the autumn are: October 11, 25; November 8, 22; December 6. If you are interested in joining us – whatever your level of expertise – please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.

Local history group

Watch this space! Due to pressures of work and ill health, there has been a delay in organising further meetings for this group. However, Jill Austen has agreed to take over the the group and will soon be contacting people who have been to earlier meetings. If you are interested in coming along to a meeting please contact Jill on 0208 853 4366.

Singing group

We have continued to hold regular sessions throughout the summer, singing a wide range of songs, many of which are suggested by members of the group. We have now made our first recording – a version of Country Roads, with new words, commissioned by Fylde Rugby Club. At the ceilidh in July we performed three songs with an African theme and we rounded off the summer with a joint session with the music group. We meet fortnightly, alternating between Mondays and Thursdays. Our remaining dates for the autumn are: October 7, 18; November 4, 15; December 2, 13. We will also be organising carol singing again in December. Although we now have a regular core of singers, we are always ready to welcome new members – no previous experience necessary! If you are interested, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.

Wine appreciation

The next meeting, on November 27th, will focus on wines to see you through the cold winter evenings. Contact Elizabeth on 0208 305 0872 for information about the wine group and for details of future events.

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SPECIAL – 10% discount for CCRA members

Dates for your diary

Pre-Christmas open house

Sunday 5th December 3.00 – 5.00

84 Wellington Gardens

Entry for adults £2 - all proceeds go to CCRA.

(Children are welcome and free but as space is limited please leave buggies at home if possible.)

Details of the events below are provisional and will be confirmed in the next familiar yellow members' bulletin and on the website:

Christmas social

Wednesday 8th December 7.30-10.00

St. Richards Hall

Carol singing

Week beginning 13th December

Meeting at 7.00 pm at 26 Wellington Gardens

Quiz night

Saturday 26th February

St. Richards Hall

Classified Ads

Grapevine currently reaches 1000 homes and other outlets in the local area. If you would like to advertise goods or services cheaply, effectively and locally contact Sarah Roseblade on 0208 2442405 or sarah.roseblade@ntlworld.com. A form can be found on our website, rates for individuals and small businesses 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 of £70 for four. Space is limited so get your ad in soon.

Whitstable Weekend!

Escape to 'Ostrea'. This beautifully refurbished 3-bedroom Victorian house is only a few minutes walk from Harbour Street, the beach and lovely eateries.

Call Patrick on 07974 150850 or full details and online booking at www.whitstableholidayhomes.co.uk

CCRA's website – www.charltonresidents.org.uk

A new CCRA website has been launched. The new site is designed to be more interactive and become a community tool where residents can share information. Do have a look and play at www.charltonresidents.org and let us know what you think – feedback to info@charltonresidents.org. Your feedback will help shape the site.

Areas such as the calendar allow local events and activities to be published and our action groups can update their own sections to keep residents informed of the latest news. We now even have a forum section for residents who register on the site. The topics on the forum are down to you. Drop in and take part.

The site would not be possible without the expert help of Marty McAllister and Guy Richardson. Many thanks.

Buglary Advice

At the last Safer Neighbourhood Panel meeting your CCRA's representative came away with the following message from the Police. There is a new pattern of burglaries emerging in the Charlton area. The success of scheme which reminded householders with UPVC to 'lock up tight' resulted in a reduction in burglaries through this route. However, the most recent burglaries have been speculative with burglars going for items visible from front windows. There are some simple things residents can do to prevent this type of crime: close your curtains at night, have nets or blinds that make seeing into your property more difficult and never leave valuables such as laptops, jewellery, keys etc. visible. Residents working together can beat crime.

Charlton Central Residents Association



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

Linda Pound, Chair Wellington Gdns, 0208 858 7377

If you would like to have Grapevine, the regular bulletin or updates on CCRA events emailed to you please email info@charltonresidents.org.uk