

## Dates for your diary

Saturday 27 February

CCRA Ceilidh

St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road

See page 5

Monday 25 April

CCRA Spring Social

St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road

Full details to follow

Sunday 8 May

Open Gardens

Popular event – full details to follow

Sunday 5 June

The Big Lunch

CCRA residents will meet up in

Charlton Park to join in this national event

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## Letters



**Selling your home:** ('*Buying or selling? An expert advises*', *Grapevine vintage 35*) It is true that extending your home encourages people to stay long term and has a role in stabilising communities. However, it is creating a problem for the elderly who may wish to downsize. Not everyone wants to live in an apartment on a flood plain and the smaller housing units that used to be there are disappearing fast, and new stock isn't coming on tap. Very difficult to downsize when many of the properties on offer are bigger than the one you want to leave!

**Name and address supplied**

**Urban foxes:** The writer in this edition (*letters*, *Grapevine vintage 35*) is correct. No food=no foxes. However, you can get information from the Fox Project (there is a website) on keeping them off your property. I find chilli powder sprinkled in the borders is a deterrent.

**Name and address supplied**

### Update on our playing out scheme

Consultation has been completed and we are awaiting the necessary Traffic Management Order which needs to be agreed by an assistant director and a councillor. As soon as we get the final nod we will be sending out leaflets with full details.

### Stamps for Charity

Don't throw that envelope away. Used stamps (particularly those from overseas) can be used to support charities. CCRA now has a stamp collecting facility at Charlton Station. Please place stamps in the container attached to the community bookshelf and we'll send them onto the Royal National Institute for Blind People.

*Grapevine* reaches more than 1,000 homes and retail outlets in our designated area and beyond. To advertise, contact [grapevine@charltonresidents.org](mailto:grapevine@charltonresidents.org).

Rates for individuals and small businesses:

Small ads up to 15 words plus contact details cost £10 for 1 issue or £30 for 4 issues

Panel ads single column 8cmx8cm cost £40 for 1-4 issues or £35 for 5+. Other sizes please enquire.

Comments, feedback, queries or material for the next edition of *Grapevine* should be emailed to: [grapevine@charltonresidents.org](mailto:grapevine@charltonresidents.org) by Monday, 11 April. Alternatively, phone Joy Ogden on 0208 293 3034 or Bob Smith on 0208 853 2697



## Breath taking!

### How air pollution is a killer on our streets

Residents of central Charlton are worried about air pollution and its effect on our health. They are especially concerned about children who are at greatest risk. At CCRA's annual meeting recently national authority Dr Ian Mudway warned of its impact on people's lives.

Our MP, Matthew Pennycook, has taken up the issue and hopes to set up an all-party committee. CCRA has been monitoring air quality with diffusion tubes measuring nitrogen dioxide levels.

Now, new warnings have been issued by the World Health Organisation that show poor air quality is killing millions around the world. The organisation describes the impact of air pollution as a global public health emergency with rising levels of toxic gases. In the first few days of January, several streets in London exceeded the limit set for nitrogen dioxide emissions for the whole of 2016. Nitrogen dioxide gas, emitted largely by diesel engines, is responsible for thousands of premature deaths each year in this country.

A year ago we began our survey and, as reported last summer, final results were mixed. The legal EU limit is a reading of 40 (microgrammes of nitrogen dioxide per cubic metre). Unsurprisingly the highest readings of over 50 were obtained outside Fossdene School, at the junctions of Delafield Road with Charlton Church Lane and Inverine Road with Victoria Way. Although lower (between 21 and 38), other readings give rise to concern because overall levels are rising. A survey undertaken by the 'No to Silvertown Tunnel Campaign Group' in 2014 showed a 13% rise outside the school and a 36% rise at the junction of Delafield Road and Charlton Church Lane.

### STOP PRESS

Come along to our family ceilidh – dancing, live music, supper included in £5 ticket. Bar with reasonable prices. Full details on page 5.



Taking steps: CCRA's Linda Pound, Joy Ogden and Bob Smith installing a pollution monitor in Elliscombe Road

CCRA members have just repeated the survey, this time increasing the number of tubes to 20. Thanks to those who generously gave time and money to allow this to happen. Results will be published in the next Grapevine. In the short term we hope to highlight roads that are less polluted and where it is safer for you to walk. Longer term, we will be bringing our results to the attention of local councillors and our MP. This issue needs to be taken seriously.

Transport for London is consulting about two new road crossings connecting Beckton with Thamesmead and Rainham with Belvedere. They would like to know what you think. To find out more, or to air your views, go to the website [www.tfl.gov.uk/east-london-crossings](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/east-london-crossings). You'll need to be quick – the deadline is Friday, 12 February 2016.

### Our carol singing stars!

This Christmas, a record number of carol singers entertained our residents with festive songs. And a record amount was raised! £560 has been divided between Greenwich Food Bank and Greenwich and Bexley Dementia Carers. Thanks to everyone who contributed time and money so generously..



Members wanted! It's time to renew your CCRA membership. Still top value at only £5. See page 3.

# Welcome to the CCRA New Year

As Chair of CCRA I am delighted to wish all our residents a happy New Year with the hope that 2016 sees our neighbourhood become an even more safe and friendly place to live. We have a full calendar of events this year, all designed to bring our community together. If you haven't attended one of our functions before come along and meet your neighbours.

As well as old favourites such as the Big Lunch and quiz nights we have a new event for 2016: The CCRA Ceilidh on Saturday, 27 Feb (See Page 5 for details). I look forward to meeting you during 2016.

**Brenda Taggart**

# Here's how we get things done

Our association is dedicated to central Charlton. We have six main action groups. Full details of the planning, environment and community safety groups can be found on [charltonresidents.org](http://charltonresidents.org).

We also have a social group (managing events), communications group (editing Grapevine, website etc.) and a fund raising group (finding funds to support CCRA initiatives.)

If you would like to support your neighbourhood why not join one of our action groups? Email [chair@charltonresidents.org](mailto:chair@charltonresidents.org) or [secretary@charltonresidents.org](mailto:secretary@charltonresidents.org)

# The benefits of getting engaged...

Councillor Gary Parker came to January CCRA's Management Committee meeting to speak on community engagement and two new RBG initiatives: Community Engagement Panels and Community Funding. The panels are an opportunity for individuals and groups to meet with councillors and officers to discuss council work. CCRA will attend panel

meetings. Community Funding supports small-scale projects that enhance a community.

If you have a project that would benefit our area let us know by emailing [chair@charltonresidents.org](mailto:chair@charltonresidents.org) or [secretary@charltonresidents.org](mailto:secretary@charltonresidents.org) Look out for details on both initiatives on the RBG website or in Greenwich Times.



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# These lights just make you cross!

Whether you're a pedestrian, cyclist, motorist, or bus passenger you've almost certainly encountered the unpredictable traffic lights at the junction of Charlton Church Lane and Barney Close, and particularly on the pelican crossing outside Charlton station. Studies undertaken by a member of CCRA last year found that almost every car travelling down Charlton Church Lane was caught by the lights at the station, with consequent queues and exhaust fumes blowing into open shop doorways. There was also an extremely low average count of people using the pelican crossing and very few vehicles leaving Barney Close. These traffic lights are unnecessary. Pedestrians and motorists are surely sensible enough to navigate this area as carefully as they would any other uncontrolled junction

CCRA is backing the proposal that the pelican crossing should be replaced by a simple zebra crossing with prominent Belisha beacons and all four pairs of expensively run traffic lights should be removed. At the same time, the double yellow lines on the chevronned area outside the Post Office should be enforced to deter cars from parking and obscuring

## Membership of CCRA still only £5!

When CCRA began, you could join for £5. That was back when a family car cost £7, a house was £100, and coffee had yet to be imported to London - only joking! Amazingly, membership is still £5 and now is the time to renew or join up. Your £5 helps us produce Grapevine and continue to improve our neighbourhood. If you're an existing member, and we have your details correct (especially your email), just put £5 (or a cheque - yes, still) in an envelope with your name and address and leave it at 7 Elliscombe Road or 49 Delafield Road. If you'd like to join or update your details, there's a form at [www.charltonresidents.org/membership/](http://www.charltonresidents.org/membership/). Contact [membership@charltonresidents.org](mailto:membership@charltonresidents.org) with any queries. Don't put off till tomorrow what you can do today - join up before the end of this month and enjoy the rest of 2016. Happy New Year.

**Calling all GMAIL email account holders:** Please note that email notifications from the CCRA to members (such as the recent survey on the Silvertown Tunnel proposal) might be filed in your "promotions" inbox in your email account.



the crossing.

At a CCRA meeting in November Alex Djan, Traffic Group Manager of the Royal Borough of Greenwich Highways Department, agreed to put the proposals to TfL and their response is awaited. Your comments or further suggestions will be welcomed. Please email them to [secretary@charltonresidents.org](mailto:secretary@charltonresidents.org).

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# A Cleansweep of central Charlton's streets

**A**s part of CCRA's ongoing campaign to clean up our streets two of our members met with James Cooper who is in charge of Charlton environmental services and Amy London, a representative of Greenwich council.

We raised issues such as littering, fly-tipping, food waste bags ripped apart by foxes etc.

We also discussed problem areas such as the corner of Delafield Road/Charlton Church Lane and the inadequate red bins provided by Southeastern Rail at the station.

James assured us that environmental services (formerly Cleansweep) have a new approach to street cleaning in Charlton. They have done a 'deep clean' then - as well as weekly sweeps - some streets,

such as Charlton Church Lane and Floyd Road, will have a daily clean.

At any time of the week, there will be two members of staff assigned to our area to inspect and clean up any littering/fly-tipping. He encouraged us to use the environmental services website to report issues or to use 'FixMyStreet'.

He acknowledged that there had been problems with fly tipping and leaves in the autumn, and that Charlton home match days continue to be a challenge.

Some businesses have been targeted by environmental services to ensure they follow regulations regarding their use of private companies to remove waste. Watch this space!

## Monitoring the Masterplan

Our Planning Action Group continues to monitor applications within the SE7 postcode, as CCRA has consultee status. PAG met with the council's planning and enforcement on 14 January to discuss current issues, including possible dates for the publication of consultation documents for the revised Charlton Riverside Masterplan and the Charlton Conservation Area Review.

PAG met with the developer and builder at 111-113 Victoria Way on 6 January. Concerns remain about the extent of tree felling and these are being followed up. There is no start date for the project, but it has been confirmed that there will be no weekend working and there will be a 24-hour resident security pres-


ence. At the developers' request, a meeting is being organised to hear their revised proposals regarding Valley House, prior to any submission to the borough. There is an indication of a reduced height for the building, but little else is known at this stage.

## Put on your skates...

Greenwich Council is about to publish its Planning Application to build a 900sq m concrete skatepark in Charlton Park, an English Heritage site: look for notices on lamp-posts near the park, ask your local councillor or go to the Council's website <http://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200074/planning/> to check. Love it or loathe it, there will be just three weeks for public consultation to have your say.

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Musicmakers: The string section of our Ceilidh band preparing for the big night. Left to right: Chris Harrison, Greg Loops, Dinah Moro, Lisa Chillingworth and Liz Somerville

## Barn dance with a difference

It's a long time since CCRA held a ceilidh. You might know it as a barn dance but this will be a barn dance with a difference! Everyone, from youngest to oldest will have the chance to dance. CCRA has its very own caller – experienced, kind and skilful so no need to worry about whether you'll know what to do. Chris Harrison will soon put you right. As well as dancing (with some time to gather your breath thrown in) the evening will involve fun, live music, good company and a slap up supper. Local singers and musicians will entertain you throughout the evening – so even if you don't think you'll be dancing

come along anyhow just for the craic (which in case you don't know is Irish for fun and enjoyment especially when mixed with alcohol and/or music).

The great event will be on Saturday 27 February and so that families can enjoy the fun it will run from 6.00 to 9.00 pm and tickets are £5 for adults and £1 for children up to and including the age of 11 (under 3s free). Where else can you get supper for the family for that price? The ceilidh will be held at St Richard's Hall in Swallowfield Road – so you won't have far to travel. There'll also be a bar with drinks at very reasonable prices. Come and join us.

## Sign of the times?

Many residents like shopping at Sainsbury's but the shop's signage remains a vexing issue. The current sign was denied planning permission and Sainsbury's were served notice to remove it but have failed

to do so pending another application.

The issue is currently with RBG's planning/legal department who are determined that any signage should adhere to planning conditions. Watch this space for further developments.

## TARINI YOGA

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| WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY   |
|--|--|
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# How happy is my valley?

## ...A view from the terraces

**W**elcome to the Valley, football's Fawcety Towers, where management turmoil and disruption are the norm. Systematically eviscerated by owner Roland Duchatelet, the side shamefully boasts the worst goal difference of the entire 92 league clubs. When I wrote in November, we had just sacked yet another manager and were on a desperate slide. Then, with 30 games to go, I felt there might be hope of a revival. Sadly, not so.

Now, in late January, there are 19 games left and we have almost hit rock bottom. Only Bolton, also in dire straits, separates us from that unenviable slot. And we have yet another new head coach – our third this season. It will come as no surprise to anyone that he is a network choice. What is remarkable is that Duchatelet appointed him once before then promptly sacked him when he saved us from relegation in the 2013/14 season.

Jose Riga at least has the benefit of knowing the English football league. He takes over from Karel Fraeye (Riga's deputy when he was last at the club!) after only two wins in 13 games. We lost 5 – 0 away to Huddersfield and the embarrassed players offered to reimburse fans who travelled to watch that debacle. Worse was to come. The following week Charlton went to high-flying Hull and were thrashed 6 – 0! Eleven goals conceded in two games. Appalling. We have now lost seven out of our last 11 matches and won none of them. I could go on with the drab

statistics but it's too depressing.

There is a tangible schism between fans and management. Supporters don't aim their anger at the players; it's the owner and his chief executive Katrien Meire who are under fire. An organisation named CARD – Coalition Against Roland Duchatelet has been formed with the aim of trying to persuade the Belgian billionaire to sell the club to someone who cares. There are rumours Ms Meire may be about to quit, though I suspect this is wishful thinking.

We have one of the smallest squads in the division and that means disaster when a team suffers unprecedented injuries, as have Charlton. As a result our Academy players are being pitched in at the deep end and, although they acquit themselves well, they are frequently found out when set against seasoned pros. Now come a host of loan players and the team has to try and readjust to new (and sometimes) old faces.

Tony Watt went on loan to Cardiff and the plan was for him to sign full time. That didn't work out and he's back. Talented youngster Diego Poyet who signed for West Ham two seasons ago is back and we've just signed a central defender, Jorge Teixeira... from Standard Liege!

Riga did it once before and there is still time for miracles to happen, though I think the smart money is on water being turned into wine. Crongersfissed. COYR's.

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# *I heard it on the Grapevine*

## Community interest groups

### Singing Group

At the end of last year, we gave our first performance for some time at the CCRA Christmas Social. This was followed by two very successful carol singing evenings, where we raised £560 for local charities. It was great to have so many people taking part, and thank you to everyone who helped to make them such enjoyable evenings. Our group meets once a fortnight, alternately on Mondays and Thursdays and the remaining dates for the spring are: Mon 15 Feb; Thurs 3 Mar; Mon 14 Mar. We are always happy to welcome new members, whatever your level of experience. Although we do give occasional performances, the group is really about singing for our own pleasure, and there's no pressure to attend every session. If you are interested in joining, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.

### Music Group ('SE7')

Members of the group performed at the Christmas Social on 5 Dec, and then we rounded off the year with a special Christmas performance at Cattleya, featuring our guitar quartet, open mic performers and a finale of everyone singing seasonal songs. The group continues to meet fortnightly on Mondays, and our remaining sessions for the spring are: 8, 22 Feb; 7, 21 Mar. We are always interested in gaining new members and would especially like to hear from players of melody instruments – strings, woodwind or brass. If you are interested in joining the group, whatever your level of experience or expertise, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.

### Knit and Natter

The Knit and Natter Group are delighted to accept sponsorship from Rowan, the UK's best known wool supplier. With their sponsorship, the 'snuggle bunnies', bears and incubator blanket for Queen Elizabeth Hospital's neo-natal unit are now made from silky soft Alpaca and Merino wool. The group are grateful to David MacLeod (Design and Publications Manager) and Charlotte Briggs (Garment Co-ordinators) of MEZ Craft for arranging this sponsorship. To find out more about the group email [brendataggart49@gmail.com](mailto:brendataggart49@gmail.com) or come along

to one of our monthly sessions (see <http://www.charltonresidents.org/groups/knit-natter/> for details).

### Walking Group

In winter our walks are directed towards paved surfaces. We don't mind mud but like to ensure it's firm underfoot and won't take long to get home again! So December took us to the East End, a trendy area with much evidence of its former life centred around the river.

The group is a splendid resource. Members suggest areas, topics or their own favourite walks and urge us out of doors in the face of lethargy, seasonal excess or uncertain weather. In January we set off in the rain for a walk through 'Green Charlton', finding megaliths, a WW1 VC winner's commemoration plaque, the site of sharks teeth finds, happy ducks and sunshine!

February's walk will be to the Dickensian areas around Borough High Street; and March will (if spring has arrived!) be to Scadbury Park. All walks start at 10.30 from Charlton Station on the first Sunday of each month and everyone is welcome but if you'd like more information, including a monthly reminder email, please contact Jill at: [jillmo@btinternet.com](mailto:jillmo@btinternet.com)

### Book group

The book group continues to meet regularly and welcomes new members. If you're interested in joining us contact [zoe31well@hotmail.com](mailto:zoe31well@hotmail.com).

### Charlton community gardens

Once it's growing season again Gardening Parties will be held at Charlton Station from 2pm–4pm on the first Sunday of the month (unless it falls within a bank holiday or on a Charlton home match day). Do join us on Sunday 6 March; Sunday 3 April and Sunday 8 May. From June when the garden requires more attention we will be meeting both the first Sunday of the month in the afternoon and the third Wednesday evening. The group is making a presentation to the Charlton Society in September. We'd be delighted to talk with anyone whose memories and family stories tell us what it was like to be gardening or eating vegetables grown in Charlton in years gone by. Please get in touch with us by ringing 0208 858 8299 or sending a message to [charltoncommunitygardens@gmail.com](mailto:charltoncommunitygardens@gmail.com) and we'll arrange a time to talk.