

Doing battle with the plague of plastic

It's time plastic was sent packing. It's versatile but so difficult to get rid of and so damaging to the environment.

Plastic particles are being found in the stomachs of fish at the bottom of the deepest oceans.

China is no longer ready to take shiploads of our plastic waste. Only 1% of millions of hot drink cardboard mugs coated inside with plastic get recycled. And the Prime Minister is suggesting plastic free aisles in supermarkets.

Supermarkets now account for over half the plastic consumption in this country, mostly in the form of packaging. Then shoppers use it and get rid of it. Greenwich has a good record on waste disposal: it's in a minority of councils that still provide weekly collections and has recycling facilities better than most. But, along with emissions from diesel vehicles, dealing with plastic waste is fast becoming a top priority in greening the environment.

Council guidance on waste bin usage is regularly updated but on plastics it could be improved. NO plastics should go into the Green bins; so, none of those plastic plant

pots this spring, nor the empty compost bag. Waste food must be wrapped in newspaper or in genuinely compostable bags. Defining what can go in the Blue bin is more difficult and needs an update in the council's leaflet. The only yes is plastic bottles, which must be rinsed (drinks, milk, toiletries, household fluids etc.) The web site is more extensive but there is now so much material, which contains plastic it can never be totally comprehensive.

As a rule, if it is fairly thin and light and it's clean and dry, then packaging is OK. So yes to ice cream, butter and margarine tubs, to yoghurt pots, fruit packs, cling film and carrier bags. A card or paper container with a plastic window is acceptable. If you come back from the dry cleaners with a film covering clothes, that can go in the blue bin, but not the wire hanger, and not polystyrene. If in doubt put it in the Black bin and bulky items like the broken plastic garden chair need to go to the Reuse and Recycling centre at Nathan Way.

What happens to plastic waste after the refuse bins are emptied? More about that next time.



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Lights, camera, action!

The streets of central Charlton became the location for a film last month when students from Greenwich University embarked upon their third year project. Georgette Karram – Georgie to her friends – is studying for a BA in Film & TV Production and aims to work as a producer in TV drama. Georgie says she chose to study at Greenwich because of the excellent facilities such as their TV studios and camera equipment. She says: “Over the course we learn all the important components that go into creating a film – which is far more than I realised! We put this teaching into practice with our graduate film. I am the producer of ‘Bye Bye Brian’, a 10-minute dark comedy about a petty criminal coming to terms with the decisions he’s made and deciding to turn his life around. He revisits old memories from his childhood through negotiating his life with his ‘Guardian Angel’ and ‘Death’ herself. We hope to show that individuals can change and take responsibility.

“On 23 March we filmed one of our flashback scenes in Elliscombe Road and Wellington Mews and it was a great



Georgie Karram, (centre) with the crew and cast of Greenwich University students filming in Charlton

morning of shooting! It’s due to be completed by 30 April. For updates on the film and its screening you can find us on both Facebook (@ByeByeBrian) and Instagram (@byebyebrianfilm).”

War on air pollution begins but don’t hold your breath

By Jill Austen

After three years of air quality monitoring in our CCRA area, residents must be pretty clear about the standard of the air that we breathe – some roads are better than others and all are better than those just outside our area; but each February that we have monitored we have been shown to be at, or near, the legal limit of 40 micrograms per cubic metre, this has the greatest detrimental effect on the most vulnerable amongst us.

Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London, has introduced measures he believes will counteract some of the pollution across London. The first of these started last October when a £10 Toxicity charge was introduced for the most polluting vehicles. Together with the Congestion charge, it would cost those vehicles £21.50 to travel in the congestion zone during peak hours. He believes that by reducing central London’s concentrations it would benefit those of us outside the zone – I’m not so sure – the proposed Silvertown Tunnel (decisions for which are currently on hold until May) would lie outside the Congestion and Ultra Low Emission Areas so no controls would be imposed on drivers travelling into and through our area.

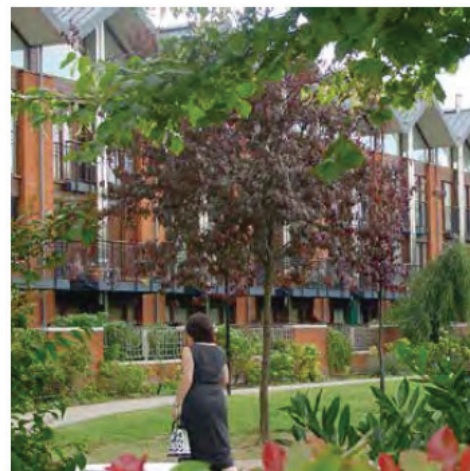
The ULEZ will replace the T-Charge in April next year for those vehicles not meeting the required standards but will apply 24/7. The Zone is currently only proposed to cover the

same as the Congestion Zone but you can have your say on this by responding, before 28 February, to a TfL consultation which can be found on its website; there you can also find out if your car would be eligible for the charge.

The retrofitting of buses is well underway throughout London with our own 380 receiving the first five hybrids in 2011 and the latest additions last year; only zero emission or hybrid buses will be purchased from this year and any diesel-only buses will be phased out. The Mayor also announced 10 new Low Emission Bus Zones, the nearest to us being from Blackheath Hill to Peckham and another from Lewisham to Catford, and all new taxis registered from April must also be zero emission.

I’d like to think these measures will eventually improve our air quality but the only real way is to reduce vehicle use in London and improve public transport – but with the Government reducing the amount of funding to TfL so (they say) restricting some routes and frequency, and train fares rising – more out-of-London commuters are being encouraged to use their cars and travel through our area. What do you think? In the meantime, perhaps we must all consider ways to reduce our own exposure to the worst pollution – walking rather than driving, the routes we take, even ensuring children walk furthest away from the curb can all help.

Compare and contrast. On the right are projected designs for the masterplan. But below is an example of Rockwell's revised application published in February this year



Riverside rumpus: Now Charlton unites

Deliberations on the Rockwell proposals for 771 housing units on land adjacent to Anchor and Hope Lane continue; it is the first planning application for the near 300-acre Riverside site.

First consulted on in December 2016; their re-application in January this year came in without any fresh consultation. Though there are no powers to compel developers to make any public presentations, the council strongly requested it, and Rockwell organised an event at the Valley football ground on two snowy days in early March.

The council extended the time during which local people could comment and rescheduled a planning board meeting for early April. That has now been cancelled, and the date of Tuesday 17 April at 6.30pm in the Town Hall is now potentially the planning board meeting when it will be considered. Many people are expected to be there and speak on the proposals.

One of the reasons there have been lengthy discussions is the coming together of about seven different community organisations. Charlton Together, as they are now called, had its first meeting in St Richard's Hall, led by Jodie Coughlan, CCRA's chair. Together they have been lobbying for improvements in the percentage of properties that will be 'affordable' or designed as 'family housing', i.e. three bedrooms or more, and a reduction in the height of the mostly 9 or 10 storey blocks proposed.

As recently as June last year the council agreed a masterplan for the area which was to be based on "a different model of development (from Greenwich Peninsular and Woolwich Arsenal) ... focused more on larger, family dwellings set within a different type of urban environment"

The contrast between the masterplan and Rockwell's proposals is huge. If they go through in their present form they will dash the hopes of a human scale development on the riverside helping to address the housing needs of so many local people.

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A problem shared...

Many young people, those on low incomes and others who have moved into the area have no chance of being allocated a council property and cannot afford to rent or buy a place of their own. Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs), sharing with others not in their family, is often the only option. The Housing Act of 2004 recognised the need to protect vulnerable people in our community and introduced the licensing of larger HMOs, which are properties, three storeys or more high, with five or more people making up more than one household.

The Act also gave council's discretion to license smaller HMOs; in simple terms* these are properties with three or more unrelated tenants, in two or more households, sharing facilities such as bathrooms or kitchens. Greenwich decided from October last year to exercise that discretion and now has a team of staff aiming to ensure all landlords of such properties are licensed. Before a licence can be issued, landlords must ensure their properties are safe and healthy, which means fire safety measures and checks on gas and electricity supplies and equipment. Basic facilities should be adequate, they should be maintained in good repair and bins or bags for rubbish should be provided.

No one knows how many HMOs there are in Greenwich, but in February the council sent out 6,000 letters to properties they had identified. Unfortunately, mistakes were made in the drafting and circulation of the letter, and some residents, not operating HMOs, received a copy. They have received an apology but the letter points out that "We are doing this because of the poor housing con-



ditions and management standards that we have repeatedly identified in a number of HMOs". The council also recognises that "many landlords operate responsibly".

Some landlords exploit tenants, denying them basic rights. Equally, some HMO residents have been associated with anti-social behaviour that is not the direct responsibility of the landlord, such as undue noise, litter and dumping, though HMOs are by no means the only culprits. CCRA has been pressing for a good neighbourhood agreement to be developed as part of the process of HMO licensing. This would provide the landlord with guidelines to pass on to tenants as well as clarifying the landlord's responsibilities. It would form part of the contract with tenants and assist enforcement in the five-year period covered by a licence.

HMOs are a vital part of housing provision in our community. If this wide extension of licensing, and follow up enforcement, succeeds in getting rid of rogue landlords, and tenants better know their rights and responsibilities, it could be a big step forward.

*The precise definition of all HMOs that should be licensed is complicated: for more information contact Residential Services on 020 8921 8157 or email: Residential@royalgreenwich.gov

Charity begins at homes

There are homeless people living on the streets of Charlton. Last month a resident encountered a man sleeping on the steps of Warren Walk. Should you come across someone, the best thing to do is to contact the charity funded by the Council to support street homeless people. Members of the public can contact a national co-ordinating service, Homeless Link, on 0300 500 0914 or <http://www.streetlink.org.uk>. London Street Rescue will take the referral and try to find the person, perhaps coming back to you for further information. If the person is new to the streets, they can be taken to one of the various No Second Night Out hubs and the local authority with the duty to support this person will be contacted.

Local churches are part of the Greenwich Night Shelter Project which takes referrals from the Council. St Alphege church contributes to the 999 project at 21 Deptford Broadway which provides emergency help during office hours Monday to Friday along with a night shelter, but the main drop in centre still seems to be St Martin in the Fields at Charing Cross. Whilst the appeals for donations come mainly at Christmas, this is a year-round issue.

The Old Cottage Coffee Shop

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How happy is my valley?

...A view from the terraces

Just when you thought the traditional shooting in the foot had been achieved, after eight games without a win and the manager walks the picture, Charlton go and win again. Emphatically. Now, instead of drifting quietly down Disappointment Boulevard, all the angst is back. The ‘will they, won’t they get into the play offs and even achieve promotion?’ stress is still with us.

Former player Lee Bowyer takes over and we turn in a convincing 2-0 home win against Plymouth who were three places above us. Now we are eighth on 55 points. Plymouth are one above with 57 points but we have a game in hand. It’s still all to play for.

Karl Robinson’s departure was no surprise. It was mutual and Robinson has now joined rudderless Oxford. I have sympathy for the 38-year-old. Throughout his 16-month tenure – something of a record in recent years – he has had to work with the burden of a club under siege from frustrated fans, angry at the misrule of Belgian owner Roland Duchatelet.

In the middle of our current bad patch Robinson finally lost patience and declared: “I’ve been put in a very difficult situation on a daily basis.” Not difficult to read the sub text of that remark, especially when the manager was prevented from entering the January transfer window with anything like the financial framework he needed to pump new blood into the depleted squad. And the loss of star player Ricky Holmes to

Sheffield United only made matters worse.

Finally, Duchatelet agreed to sell, but negotiations with various consortia have been protracted and despite promises of a resolution by the end of February, nothing has yet been finalised. At one point, Red Bull were in the frame but the likeliest contenders seem to be an Australian group of whom little is known. We all await an end to this debilitating club crisis. All, that is, except Robinson.

I liked his style of football, attractive attacking stuff with young, fit players given rein to take the initiative and create havoc with defences. It seemed to be working but a horrendous run of injuries thwarted his plans and, as ever, the team wobbled and started to slide.

His critics point to a reluctance to change tactics when results were poor. His insistence on one man up front didn’t pay off when workhorse striker Northern Ireland international Josh Magennis lost his scoring touch and seemed incapable of finding the back of the net.

Hopes flickered when Arsenal loanee Stephy Mavididi returned to the club and promptly scored on debut, only to crash out with injury a few games later. Maybe Robinson had run the gamut of his talents but I wish him well at Oxford.

Meanwhile Charlton are left in the safe hands of Lee Bowyer and ever-faithful player-coach Johnnie Jackson. If you cut him he’d bleed red and white. They become joint caretaker managers until the end of the season. Something of a poisoned chalice but crongers they can steer us back to a position of credibility.

On the evidence of the home match against Plymouth we have a chance. Full back Lewis Page, back from a season of crippling injuries, scored a season’s best cracker three minutes into the game and Michal Zyro showed his credentials with a snappy low header from a Joe Aribio cross. At that point Plymouth boasted a record beating success in the division. This was a wake up call to the other teams around us.

The season is not over yet. There are still nine games to go and although two of them are against the top teams in the division, Bowyer believes six wins would seal a top six place and a shot at promotion. By then we’ll know who is running the show. Let’s hope they have deep pockets and a genuine passion for the club. COYR’s.

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I heard it on the Grapevine

Community groups

Knit and natter

From novice to experts all are welcome to come along and join the group. We specialise in charity knits (currently experimenting with Fiddlemuffs for dementia sufferers) but anyone can bring their own project. We guarantee great natter, good cake and of course plenty of knitting. Sessions are: 2pm – 4pm - Tuesdays – 24 April, 29 May, 26 June, 24 July. All sessions in St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road. We look forward to seeing you.

Walking group

February's walk found us in the peace and quiet of a Sunday morning in Clerkenwell. Arriving at Farringdon was a surprise for some who had not seen the new Crossrail station across the road from the tube station which had been opened with a grand banquet in 1863 - 155 years of train travel! But it was easy to imagine mediaeval London when we came to the arch to the Priory of the Knights Hospitallers of St John and then a glimpse of the original Clerk's Well hiding behind a modern office window. Clerkenwell Green is home to the Marx Memorial Library and the London Masonic Centre; we then made our way to the House of Detention before heading along Exmouth Market and on to Charterhouse where the museum told the story of this monastery, mansion, boys' school and almshouses.

Our March walk was on Mothering Sunday and with all mums in mind, a tranquil green walk in Deptford was perfect - we took a route through new green corridors between modern homes and older Victorian parks with their up-dated play equipment, keep fit tracks and community engagement initiatives. Then we found ourselves amidst the eighteenth century buildings of the remains of the Royal Victualing Yard

- now homes, a women's library and a play space that includes a very tempting slide! Our next walk on 8 April will be after the clocks go forward for British Summertime so we will revert to meeting at 10am each month at Charlton Station.

CCRA Singing Group

So far this year we have looked at a range of songs, from popular, folk, jazz and classical traditions, as well as songs to celebrate Burns Night, St David's Day, International Women's Day and St Patrick's Day. Our regular sessions this year will continue fortnightly on Mondays. We will start up again on 16 April with further sessions on 30 April, 14, 28 May, 11 & 25 June. We are always keen to welcome new members, so if you are interested, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.

CCRA Music Group ('SE7')

The Music Group has been busy! First of all we provided the music for the CCRA Family Ceilidh on 10 March, followed by a St Patrick's Night ceilidh for GFMA on 17 March and yet another one on 19 March for the University of Greenwich choir. We will resume our regular Sunday evenings at Catleya on 22 April. Our group meets on alternate Mondays, and we always welcome new members. If you are interested in joining us, whatever your level of experience or expertise, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.

Book group

The CCRA Book Group continues to thrive, and welcomes new members. At our last meeting we discussed Josephine Tey's book about Richard III, whose skeleton was discovered in a council car park, and who was reburied in state in Leicester Cathedral in March 2015. The Daughter of Time investigated his role in the death of his nephews, the princes in the Tower, and his own death at the Battle of Bosworth. Written in 1951, we felt the book and the evidence exonerated Richard. Next dates and books are: Wed 11 April for Colson Whitehead's The Underground Railway; Wed 16 May for Reservoir 13 by John McGregor; Wed 6 June for The Franchise Affair by Josephine Tey. If you're interested in joining us contact zoe31well@hotmail.com.

Playing out

Sundorne Road from 4.00 pm onwards, Wednesdays 4, 18 April; 2, 16, 30 May; 13, 27, June.

Spot fines for spitting

Several residents have noticed an increase in spitting on our streets. Whilst some people find this offensive, others think it is OK. Whatever your view, spitting in the street is actually an offence. Waltham Forest recently brought a successful prosecution, carrying a £80 on-the-spot fine, under their anti-littering legislation. RBG lists spitting as an environmental crime (along with dropping litter, dog fouling etc.) and can issue fixed penalty notices. If you know of a persistent offender then they can be reported to the authorities.

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Fighting back

Residents unite to stop the conmen

The conmen who plague our streets preying on unsuspecting and vulnerable residents are on the increase. Crime is ever-present and several residents in the CCRA area suffered the anguish of break-ins over the Christmas period.

Cold calling and rogue trading are becoming particular problems. But CCRA is fighting back.

While it is not an offence, cold calling can be associated with rogue trading which is criminal behaviour. Rogue traders have been operating in our area. They can be aggressive and often persuade residents to undertake work that is unnecessary, over-priced and shoddy. We have also had cold callers who have fraudulently taken money from residents.

To combat this Charlton Central Neighbourhood Watch (CCNWatch) are about to launch a NO COLD CALLER – NO ROGUE TRADERS ZONE in our area. The zone will be most effective if everyone works together to protect themselves and our more vulnerable neighbours. This is how it will work. Join us at St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road on Tuesday 17 April at 7.30 pm. We will be launching the scheme with an evening that will focus on how we can better protect ourselves.

At the meeting we will be hearing from Tina Gibbons of RBG's Trading Standards Dept and Daniel Bygrave from Victim Support. Tina and Daniel are experts at safeguarding. Come along and learn how to stay safe.

Following the launch you will see signs going up round our streets. This sends a strong signal to anyone coming into the area, that we do not tolerate cold calling and rogue trading. Streets signs have been proven to act as a deterrent and will make villains think twice before entering our neighbourhood.

The final part of the scheme will be the delivery of a door sticker to your home. With a sign on your door you have extra protection. If someone does try to cold call you then you can legitimately point to the sign and tell them this is a recognised No Cold Callers/Rogue Trader Zone and you cannot engage with them. Once this is pointed out then whoever is at your door has to leave or they will be committing an offence.

STOP PRESS

Don't forget this year's Spring Social, live music and refreshments, on Tuesday, 17 April at St. Richard's Hall from 7.30-9.30 pm



Greenwich Mayor Peter Brooks and gardener Ruth Yeo complete the planting

Treemendous!

Community planting scheme bears fruit

Hardy volunteers from Charlton Community Gardens planted 13 more fruit trees in a second area of the community orchard by the children's playground in Charlton Park in March. The Mayor Councillor Peter Brooks came along to lend a hand with a spade. The trees we bought with our grant from Greggs the bakers. Four apple and cherry trees were donated by Michael from the Old Cottage Café which also kept us supplied with tea and refreshments during the planting. Our thanks to them and the parks staff who made the task run smoothly. The mayor planted a Greensleeves apple tree and brought thanks from the Council for the community-minded volunteers involved in the orchard.

Visit our annual plant sale at Charlton Station on Thursday, 17 May from 5pm. Vegetables, herbs and flowers will be available. Profits support our work in Charlton Park and at Charlton station.

Help us to help you and help to protect others. Come to the launch, display your sticker on your door and join CCN-Watch. Membership is free and you will receive instant alerts to crime in our area and our regular newsletter:

UPDATE. You can join by emailing your contact details to brendataggart49@gmail.com or to find out more about the Watch visit <http://ccnwatch.org/index.html>

Let's work together to make Charlton Central a safer and friendlier place to live.

✿ **Hustings for local council elections have been confirmed. Charlton ward candidates will be at a Q and A session in the Assembly Rooms, Charlton Village on 28 April at 11am**

Dates for your diary

Tuesday, 17 April

Spring Social

St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road

7.30-9.30pm

Sunday, 3 June

Big Lunch

Charlton Park

12.30-4pm

Sunday, 10 June

Antiques Roadshow at Eltham Palace

9.30am-5pm

Saturday, 7 July

Community Day

St Richard's Hall

10am-4pm

Saturday, 15 September

Flower and Produce

St Richard's Hall

Remember you're a member!

Delafield Road leads the way in membership renewal with Elliscombe Road not far behind. Drop off your membership form with membership fee of £5 as soon as possible to either 83 Swallowfield Road (Jacqui) or 4 Delafield Road (Jodie). If you have lost your membership form email membership@charltonresidents.org or visit our website to download a copy of the 2018 form www.charltonresidents.org. Or ring one of the numbers in the Comments, feedback section, bottom of right hand column. Thanks to all who have renewed already; we appreciate your support. The fee is vital for CCRA's work. It enables us to produce Grapevine as well as support community events and groups associated with CCRA.

Comments, feedback, queries or material for the next edition of Grapevine should be emailed to: grapevine@charltonresidents.org by 21 May. Alternatively, phone Joy Ogden on 0208 293 3034 or Bob Smith on 0208 853 2697

Grapevine reaches more than 1,000 homes and retail outlets, in our designated area and beyond. To advertise contact grapevine@charltonresidents.org. Rates for individuals and small businesses: small ads up to 15 words plus contact details: £10 for 1 issue, £30 for 4. Panel ads single column 8cmx8cm: £40 for 1-4 issues, £35 for 5+. Other sizes please enquire.

Dear Editor



I am about to renew my membership of CCRA. I believe the organisation provides useful services to the community and I support activities such as the playing out scheme, greening work and support for local charities. However, I am concerned that some of the views put forward in Grapevine and, presumably shared at public meetings as the views of local people, may be misrepresentative.

The latest Grapevine (GV46) states on the front page that CCRA objects to the development of new homes on Victoria Way. In my view the article fails to give good reason for those objections. Later in the issue, you address concerns about other developments, citing lack of affordable housing and associated infrastructure as reasons to object, points on which I agree. However, I find the potential NIMBY-ism of your lead article disturbing and worry that my membership of CCRA implies I agree with this position.

I wonder if, in addition to meetings of the local group, you might consider canvassing the wider opinions of your members as a starting point for the position which CCRA takes on individual issues? This need not be onerous - online surveys for example are cheap and easy to run - and could help more actively engage local residents, who may not be able to play a more defined or time consuming role in your organisation, to ensure that CCRA's views are properly representative of its members. I would be grateful if you could raise this point at your next meeting.

Name and address supplied

CCRA chair, Jodie Coughlan, replies:

Our Planning Action Group checks RBG's Planning Portal for new applications, meets monthly, and sends emails to residents interested in planning to alert them, not to advise on how they should respond. RBG's Planning Portal is used to object, support and give neutral comments on applications. CCRA wouldn't discourage those wishing to support an application.

CCRA is not anti-development, but is keen that major developments having impact for future generations, are done well, with consideration, and residents are fully consulted by the council. We have a record of consulting, through residents' surveys, face to face and during membership renewal when members indicate their interests.

We work with other local organisations to build a more inclusive community. We are keen that all residents feel welcomed into the neighbourhood, have a good quality of life and know they can make a positive difference. CCRA area covers 800 households, so opinion will be varied.

I don't believe your membership would imply you agree with the position in the article. People join CCRA for different reasons. I would like to offer you an open-ended invitation to future PAG meetings. Thanks for engaging with CCRA.



Charlton Central Residents Association