

Merry Christmas to all our readers and a little festive food for thought.

We hope everyone will have a very happy Christmas with gifts, good food and a warm home. In the spirit of goodwill we would like to remind readers of *Grapevine* that not everyone will be so fortunate. Too many are homeless...

B&Q stores throughout the country sponsor Shelter, the Homeless charity, with fund-raising events all year long. The Greenwich store in Bugsby's Way is currently displaying its £10 Shelter Fairy by the checkout and £2 of every sale goes directly to support the homeless. It also has a timber donation scheme, where timber that has been cut or damaged (and sometimes paint and gardening products) is positioned in a box by the exit doors, which customers are encouraged to take for their projects, where, instead of paying B&Q, they make a donation of their choosing in the Shelter collection bucket.

Too many have to resort to a food bank. Conran Estates in Charlton Church Lane are aware of this problem and during 2018 they have been supporting Greenwich food bank. Managing director Simon Hughes told us: "It's such a needy cause and it's shameful there is such a demand for this service.

"It would be great to increase supplies. Every Conran's has a food cage where you are welcome to deposit donations." Items needed are: cereals, soup, rice, tinned goods (but not baked beans), tea and coffee, UHT milk, fruit juice, toiletries and toilet paper. Conran's are also collecting small wrapped Christmas presents which the food bank gives to parents. Last year one donor kindly wrapped 60 gifts for boys and 60 more for girls!

Churches in Greenwich have collaborated to set up the Greenwich Winter Night Network in order to provide beds, food and company for people without

a home. Each night right through the coldest months of the year until 12 March, there will be space for 15 people to sleep in warm surroundings, and to eat dinner and breakfast. On Friday nights shelter will be provided at St Thomas' Church in Woodlands Terrace.

Over Christmas those benefitting from the scheme will be included in residential arrangements made by Crisis at Christmas. All schemes would welcome financial support. There are currently sufficient volunteers at St Thomas' Church but other churches in Greenwich and a similar scheme in Lewisham, the 999 club, do still need extra help. Volunteers will be asked to provide the name of a referee and training is provided. The next training session is on Saturday morning 12 January.

Full details of the scheme from the project manager Helen Othen (gwnsprojectmgr@gmail.com).

Michael and Mim have their very own Christmas present to our local community, in opening the doors of their Old Cottage Shop in Charlton Park once again for Christmas Day dinner for older people, who might otherwise spend the day on their own. Last year 14 older people from sheltered housing in nearby Beacham Close joined in the celebrations. This year

everyone is welcome but space is limited so please pop into the Old Coffee Shop to reserve your seat. There will be a three course dinner on the day, which is free - donations of food, drink and willing volunteers to help will be very welcome.



One of B&Q's Greenwich store's Christmas displays with Snowman, Santa and lots of sparkling lights

STOP PRESS Join our carol singers when they take to our streets on Monday 10 and 17 December. See page 8 for details. Donations can be made to a local charity when the singers are in your road.

**Don't miss our Christmas social! Saturday 8 December 4-6 at St Richard's Hall.
Raffle, mulled wine, mince pies, live music, seasonal cheer and carols.
Free entry – full details on page 4**

The Riverside: We keep you informed

There are two major planning applications in the Charlton Riverside area: the 'Rockwell' scheme for 771 homes, on which *Grapevine* reported throughout last year, and, now, plans for 500 homes on the riverside, near the Thames Barrier, from a company called Komoto.

Greenwich's planning board unanimously rejected Rockwell's application in the summer stating: "the excessive height of the buildings, together with their massing and design would result in the overdevelopment of the site and would fail to adhere to the vision set out in the Charlton Riverside Plan".

London Mayor Sadiq Khan, used his 'call in' powers and is now responsible for determining the outcome. GLA officers have talked to Rockwell about revising their scheme, but that might not result in the major redesign we think necessary. In line with the masterplan, we want no buildings above six storeys on the site behind Atlas and Derrick Gardens.

We want big increases in the family housing on offer, plus much improved design. And we support the Mayor's call for a greater proportion of affordable housing.

We do not expect the Mayor's "Hearing" to happen until the new year, when Greenwich councillors and officers and Charlton representatives, should get time to present a united local view.

We hope the Mayor will not settle for minor changes

but insist on a low-medium rise mixed development in the riverside plan, before he even contemplates granting planning permission.

Despite strenuous efforts this year, there's a real risk we won't get any meaningful change. So we need as many people as possible to raise concerns with the Mayor.

If you are able to, please write to/email <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-applications-and-decisions/public-hearings/vip-trading-estate-public-hearing>

Komoto recently invited CCRA to discuss their two applications: a detailed proposal for 146 homes in two blocks of seven and nine storeys, and an outline plan for up to 354 homes in three adjacent buildings of nine and ten storeys.

They seem more sympathetic to the riverside masterplan than Rockwell, but we expressed similar concerns about the low level of family housing and affordable homes.

We also suggested some reduction in height and further use of staggered balconies. Komoto's response focused essentially on affordability, with hints of some room for manoeuvre. They hope their applications could go to the planning board in February or March.

Planning report by Dave Picton

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The new Curiosity Shop

On the corner of Bramshot Avenue and Sherington Road there's an intriguing little shop, which was closed and boarded up for at least two decades, until Louise Tomlins and her husband Ed bought it a couple of years ago. Louise is a ceramicist and an expert knitter, and when ill-health obliged her to give up full-time work, she thought of setting up a coffee shop and wool shop with an emphasis on community involvement: a place where local artists and craftspeople could display and sell their work.

This charming Victorian shop seemed the ideal place, and was named The Corner @ 96.

Its opening was unpremeditated. They'd just taken the boards down from the shop front, but the place was still bare with plain brick walls and no plaster ceiling. There were some electrical sockets, but otherwise just fairy lights and candles. Louise had some stock left over from a craft fair outside London, and decided to open the shop for a couple of days to gauge local interest. That weekend was a great success, and from then on the shop opened sporadically. Now, to ensure regularity, Louise opens on the first Friday, Saturday and Sunday of every month. Until she can open the shop daily, the pop-up arrangement works well, and the local community's response has been fantastic. One neighbour said: "It's like Aladdin's cave – an absolute revelation!"

The regular stock revolves around ceramics by Fiona Veacock Ceramics and Harbour Pots (Anne Richards and Louise), knitted items by The Accidental Knitter (Louise), pet portraits by Grace Ryder, and greetings cards crafted by Inky Blinders (Georgia Robinson). Anne uses porcelain to make beautiful cat and dog bowls, often to order, featuring your pet's name or breed. Fiona makes hand built functional stoneware pieces inspired by the local area. Louise also uses stoneware, wheel-thrown and designed for functional everyday use. And she makes a selection of yarn bowls: these link into her knitted work, that includes hot water bottle covers (complete with bottle) in Scandinavian and Breton designs, like miniature



Inviting: craftwork at The Corner @ 96

sweaters, chunky scarves, hats, gloves, babies' hats, and lined knitting bags. Every one a splendid serendipitous Christmas present!

For the pre-Christmas opening on Friday 7, Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 December, the regular stock will be augmented by Charlton postcards and photographs of Greenwich by Neil Clasper and hand-made silver jewellery in simple, bold, geometric designs from Leah Bryan Jewellery.

Louise Tomlins is thrilled at the response to the shop and the support of local people. She said: "It's been completely overwhelming. People are so happy that we're not turning the shop into part of our accommodation, and there's going to be something there for the community."

CCRA'S 2018 AGM: LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

A brainstorming session set the tone for our 2018 annual meeting at St Richard's Hall, when members discussed their hopes for the future of our organisation. Members revealed what they wanted the Association to become involved in including new social events and how they could contribute to making our area a safer, happier and healthier place to live. We are grateful to our three ward Councillors: Gary Dillon, Gary Parker and Linda Perks who were our Question Time panel. They successfully answered questions on planning, air quality, the work of the Council and other local issues. Thanks to everyone who attended and those who continue to support the work of the CCRA. We welcome our new Officers and

Management Committee members as follows:

OFFICERS – Chair: Jodie Coughlan (Delafield), Vice-Chair: Brenda Taggart (Delafield), Treasurers: Jas and Baljinder Dhesi (Caledon), Secretary: TBC. Membership Sec: Jacqui Mitchell (Swallowfield).

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – Wendy Barrington (Wellington Gdns), Michelle Beaumont (Elliscombe), Jane Bland (Sundorne), Annie Galloway (Delafield), David Gayther (Inverine), Matt Giddings (Nadine), Chris Harrison (Wellington Gdns), Martina Keeting (Sundorne), Joy Ogden (Elliscombe), Elizabeth Palmer (Elliscombe), Dave Picton (Wellington Gdns), Ana Sampaio (Delafield), Jonathan Sanders (Inverine), Peter & Liz Somerville (Elliscombe).

Read all about it

Ten years ago two people got together with an old photocopier and laboriously produced the first edition of *Grapevine*, our Association magazine. Linda Pound and Dave Picton are still on the editorial team but these days the process is much more slick.

Now we've got to 50 issues of *Grapevine*, nearly eleven years after *Vintage One* which came out in January 2008. That edition took many hours to produce nearly 800 copies. The second came out three months later and was eight pages long.

The main story in the first edition was about Thames Water replacing leaky water mains with plastic pipes and our efforts to get their contractors to keep us informed about their 'flexible' timetable. It also reported on new rubbish collection arrangements. And there was one paragraph on Charlton Athletic's progress the season after they were relegated from the Premier League.

Issues 3 to 7 were also photocopied – but not by hand. Those hard-pressed volunteers had begun to rebel and the local sixth form college was paid to do the work. *Vintage 8* was the first to go to our local printer Lynx Litho, off Anchor and Hope Lane, and number 35, a Christmas



Dave Picton and Linda Pound, both founder members of CCRA and *Grapevine*'s editorial team, celebrate the 50th issue with the first edition of *Grapevine* that they photocopied

edition, was the first to include colour. Cattleya and the German Baker were among our earliest advertisers. Conran's Estate Agent put their first advert in issue 17 and have continued to support us ever since.

Will we get to 100? It depends on maintaining a strong and active membership, (subscriptions are our biggest source of income and *Grapevine* is our largest bill), and on whether a printed magazine can provide something on-line media still cannot do.

A CHRISTMAS EVENT FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Our Christmas social is on Saturday, 8 December from 4-6pm at St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road. There's no entrance fee – just turn up.

The band will be playing and a variety of stalls will sell crafts and knick-knacks. Louise, a prize winner in this year's CCRA Flower, Produce and Craft Show, who will be selling paintings, jewellery and knitted goods, is bringing her mum and looking forward to the social.

Other stallholders, like Michelle from Wellington

Gardens, have attended several CCRA Christmas socials. You can buy light refreshments including mulled wine and hot cider, tea, coffee, mince pies and other seasonal nibbles. Children can make festive decorations or try the lucky dip. They will also have the opportunity to join the music-making.

Our local singers will sing and everyone can join in with carols and seasonal songs – words sheets provided. You might also get lucky in the Christmas raffle. Come and join the fun!

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We can beat loneliness

Loneliness can affect anyone. It makes you more vulnerable to criminals who target the socially isolated. But help is at hand from your friends and neighbours.

Last month the Government launched a strategy to combat loneliness, which underlines the importance of communities working together to strengthen our connections with each other. It can be viewed at www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-launches-governments-first-loneliness-strategy.

Charlton has a strong, united community, where we look out for one another through groups such as your Neighbourhood Watch and the vibrant Charlton Central Residents' Association, which has a busy programme of groups, meetings and activities, and welcomes new and existing members. Visit www.charltonresidents.net

If something is worrying you, contact your Charlton Watch street co-ordinator for a confidential chat: numbers at www.ccnwatch.org

IN BRIEF ...

FERRY QUIET INDEED

The Woolwich Ferry is closed and will not reopen before the new year. New berths, using magnetic technology in high-tech mooring systems, have to be completed on both sides of the river first. The 55-year-old ferries are being replaced by two new ones with increased capacity, that have quieter low emission engines and are more bicycle friendly. There has been a ferry across the Thames at Woolwich since 1308, before any bridge or tunnel in London. It became free by Act of Parliament in 1885.

ANTIGALLICAN MAKEOVER

There's a planning application under consideration to enlarge and upgrade the Antigallican at the bottom of Charlton Church Lane. The proposed changes will not mean it getting any higher but will see an extension on the Woolwich Road towards the alley way at the side and above the single storey section at the rear. The external appearance of this prominent local building, built in the early 19th century, will be retained and will provide 60 bedrooms with en-suite facilities.

PICKWICK PAPERS

There is an outline planning application for the redevelopment of the Pickwick Pub on Woolwich Road. It is for the demolition of the existing building but its replacement by a new public house and 14 serviced apartments, and the erection, at the rear of the site, of 5 three bed and 1 four bed terrace dwellings. There are over 20 objections to this which means it will be considered at a local planning committee meeting.

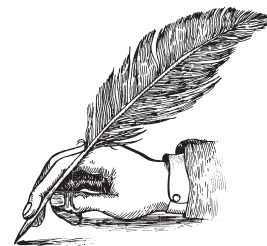
BIN THAT OLD TOASTER

We were surprised to see the following in the fortnightly Greenwich Info. "Small electrical items like kettles, toasters, radios, hairdryers and straighteners can all go in the blue recycling bin". But every bit of clarification is welcome and should help to increase the percentage of waste that Greenwich recycles.

CHICKENED OUT

The plans to open a chicken shop in Charlton Church Lane, either as a take away or a small restaurant, have been discarded. The premises, next to the Valley Café, will go back to being the local paper shop and the one across the road is being turned into a laundrette and possibly a dry cleaners as well.

Dear
Editor



Well, we did warn you!

In December 2011 the lead article in *Grapevine* vintage 16 was headed 'Retail therapy ... or traffic hell?' Seven years later it seems the latter option is reality for one reader.

Traffic nightmare

Living in the CCRA area means we are now very close to a whole range of food, clothing and other shops: that's great. But if you need to use a car to bring your shopping home, getting there and back is becoming a nightmare, especially at weekends. And in the new year, when IKEA opens, there will be new shoppers coming from further afield. I don't know what the answer is, but I hope CCRA will raise this with our local council. Something needs to be done, well before the Silvertown tunnel opens in a few years' time.

Worried from Wellington Gardens
(name and address supplied)

It's bananas!

I like bananas but don't often buy more than a few at a time as I'm not keen on over-ripe fruit. I was shocked, therefore, to find that our Sainsbury's local store opposite the station has increased its price from 10p earlier this year to a hefty 25p each! Their big store off the bottom road was charging 59p for five loose bananas, while M&S wanted 80p for a good sized bunch of five and on the other side of Floyd Road it was £1 for five very large specimens. What on earth's going on? I'd like to think the Free Trade producers are getting the benefit. Why do I doubt they are?!

Miffed of Elliscombe Road
(Name and address supplied)

The Old Cottage Coffee Shop

*A traditional tea shop serving high
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*Closes 4pm in winter
and 5pm in summer*

How happy is my valley?

... A view from the terraces

Injury crisis is a blessing in disguise for academy players

It must be as much a surprise to manager Lee Bowyer as it is to the Valley faithful that we are currently lying sixth and in a play-offs position. Not that Bowyer doesn't rate his team. Quite the opposite, he is often quoted as saying we have one of the best squads in the division.

The big issue is injuries. The fortunes of war have dealt Charlton a bad hand of late as one player after another gets sidelined, often for months at a time.

In early November two key players went off with dislocated shoulders in the same game. They'll be out for weeks. As fast as one comes back, another goes down.

Often the manager finds himself having to place players in positions they are not suited for.

But it has had at least one positive result: Bowyer has been forced to blood his young academy players early in their careers and so far they have all come up trumps. Some are now getting regular appearances with the first team.

And we've even begun a faltering Emirates FA Cup run. Charlton took on League Two's Mansfield Town in early November in an away match that ended in a draw.

The replay on 20 November at the Valley was played in atrocious conditions and saw the home side get off to a poor start. One good move brought them an early goal via the ever-keen Lyle Taylor but Mansfield proved worthy opponents and were unlucky to go in one goal down at

half time. I'd like to have been a fly on the wall for the half time dressing room talk, but whatever was said had its effect as a revitalised side took to the pitch for the second 45 minutes.

Taylor completed a hat trick and his third goal was a classic. Finding the way ahead impenetrable, he pulled back a couple of yards, looked up, saw a clear way through then, calmly as you like, lobbed the keeper who could only flick at the ball as it curled over his head. Brilliant.

Mark Marshall came on as a sub and scored and hard working Nicky Ajoose got reward for his efforts by slotting home a lovely solo effort.

In the end Charlton ran out 5-0 winners and now face a home tie against Doncaster in the second round.

Away from the pitch the never-ending saga of the sale of the club runs on and on.

Potential buyers crop up regularly but something always seems to go wrong. In a recent radio interview owner Roland Duchatelet blamed everyone on the planet for the breakdown of talks. No surprise there. But his caustic comments brought howls of derision from many Valley associated quarters.

We're sixth as I write but it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that a top two slot – and automatic promotion could happen.

Crongers fished. COYR's.

Playing Out: Having fun on our streets

By **Tim Rutherford-Johnson**

Now approaching its fourth year, central Charlton's Playing Out sessions continue to be enjoyed by children and parents from all over the neighbourhood.

On the warm late summer evenings this year more than 20 children have come to Sundorne Road to play in the street with balls, scooters, skateboards, chalks, skipping ropes, and more.

Playing out is a national initiative led by parents and residents – as it is in Charlton – to restore opportunities for children to play outdoors in the streets in which they live.

As we get more dependent on cars and screens, and more anxious about neighbourhood safety, it reclaims the streets for play and fun and security.

The children who come to Sundorne Road love it: it's a chance for them to catch up with their friends outside school, to ride down the hill on various wheeled toys, and to develop a sense of community and belonging.

Whenever we walk past, my two children refer to Sundorne Road as 'the playing out street'.

Safety is strictly maintained by at least four stewards, who control the movement of cars that need to park on or leave the street; the street is otherwise closed for through traffic, with the permission of the borough. We are always looking for parents who can help with stewarding.

It's not particularly onerous and can be carried out by a parent with a child or children attending.

There are two stewards at either end of the Playing Out area and (ideally!) one to look after the tea at the table outside the hall; this last can be done by someone with a younger, less independent child.

If you think this is something you could do, or you would just like to be added to our mailing list for future dates, please contact Tim at playingoutse7@gmail.com.

Sessions take place every other Wednesday and will begin again on 30 January, so please look out for more information.

I heard it on the Grapevine

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Walking group

The topics of our two most recent walks have been quite serious – but we were able to enjoy the walk and each other's company. In October we followed a nature trail through Peckham Rye Park finding American Oak and Ginkgo trees amongst many others.

We then walked the short distance to Nunhead Cemetery; this is one of the 'Magnificent Seven' Victorian London cemeteries. Despite the continuous rain, we were treated to a guided walk by one of its volunteers who told us about the significance of Cemetery Symbols.

The planned walk ended here but a few walkers decided to go on to the Queen Elizabeth Park at Stratford to see the amazing 'Shrouds of the Somme' display of over 72,000 figures devised by one man to represent those named on the Thiepval War Memorial in France.

Our winter walks start at 10.30 at Charlton Station: to be added to the contact list for information about each month's walk please email Jill at jillmo@btinternet.com.

Knit and Natter

We welcome knitters of all levels, including beginners. If you don't want to knit, then come along with your crafting or join us just for the nattering! Sessions are: 2–4pm on Tuesdays 22 Jan, 26 Feb, 26 March, 30 April, 21 May, 25 June, 30 July in St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road. We look forward to welcoming you to the group.

Singing Group

The group meets on alternate Mondays and we sing a wide range of songs. December will be a busy month for us – we sing at the CCRA Christmas Social on 8 Dec, and then have our two carol singing evenings on 10 & 17 Dec. These are open to anyone, not just regular members of the group, and we collect for local charities. 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.

Instrumental Music Group ('SE7')

The group meets fortnightly on Mondays and, since the summer, our repertoire has included some popular standards, folk tunes and renaissance dance tunes. We will be playing at the CCRA Christmas Social on 8 Dec, and also hope to arrange an evening at Cattleya one Sunday in December. We are always interested in gaining new

members, whatever your instrument or level of experience, and reading music is not essential. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.

Book group

Our latest read was *Normal People* by Sally Rooney. It was thought-provoking, focusing as it does on young people's relationships and how these change with time. At the beginning of December we'll be reading something completely different – Colm Toibin's book *House of Names*. If you're interested in joining contact Linda on 020 8858 7377. You can pick up a book at the station bookshelf for free and drop off books you no longer want. Keep reading!

Charlton Community Gardens

Thanks to all our volunteers, Charlton Community Gardens again did well in the RHS London in Bloom competitions. We maintained our Gold standing in the "Our Community" category and contributed to the Royal Borough of Greenwich entry in the "Cities" category where the borough achieved silver-gilt. Our Family Learning Events made bats for Hallowe'en and planted bulbs for Christmas. As well as holiday events next year, we will introduce an extra session in the community orchard at the end of August. The oval bed near the Old Cottage Café has been planted with soft fruit bushes and bulbs provided by the borough. Daniel Keating made a generous donation when he visited in the summer to cover the cost of replacing vandalised fruit trees. Together we will thrive!

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Dates for your diary

Saturday 8 December

CCRA Family Christmas Social

4-6pm St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road

See front page Stop Press and page 4 for further details

Monday 10 December

Monday 17 December

Carol singing

6.45pm from 26 Wellington Gardens

Refreshments for all singers

Dates for 2019 to be arranged.

Check CCRA's website

(charltonresidents.net); Twitter

(@ccra_se7) and Facebook

(www.facebook.com/centralcharlton) for details of past and future events.



Re-member re-member

As 2018 comes to a close, just a reminder that our membership year runs from January to December each year, so membership fees are due next month.

The fee is our main income. It funds *Grapevine* and supports social events and activities. At the AGM this year it was agreed that there would be a slight rise in the membership fee, the first in over 10 years. Fees will be set at different levels with the aim of increasing inclusivity and mitigating the rising costs of *Grapevine* and hall hire. Fees for 2019 will be: family/household £12; individual (full) £7; individual associate (those who live outside CCRA area) £7; student/unwaged individual (full) or associate £5 and business £10. We hope you will renew your membership.

We are interested in hearing from members or local businesses who would be prepared to offer other members a discount on any services of goods they may offer, as we are looking to offer members extra benefits for supporting CCRA. Our 2019 Membership Form will be available to download from 1 January 2019 at www.charltonresidents.net

Any queries about membership please contact Jacqui on membership@charltonresidents.net



In remembrance



Joining the walking group's Remembrance ceremony are Dinah Moro, Shirley Evans and, holding the wreath, Jill Austen.

In a poignant ceremony at Charlton War Memorial on 11 November, members of our Walking Group joined with others to lay a wreath to the Fallen. It was special because CCRA had, four years earlier, researched the Great War and found the names of many men from Charlton who died in the conflict. They had presented this information at a specially themed Spring Social. The fact that CCRA's walking group's November walk would coincide with the



exact centenary of the end of WW1 was

not lost to them, so they

decided to meet at Charlton

War Memorial. They felt it was appropriate to acknowledge the war's end and they laid

a wreath of poppies with the names of those men written on the poppies together with the

CCRA roads in which they lived. The group then

took a leisurely walk through Greenwich Park ablaze with all the colours of autumn to the Maritime Museum to visit its new galleries.



Comments, feedback, queries or material for the next edition of *Grapevine* should be emailed to: grapevine@charltonresidents.net by Monday, 14 January 2019.

Alternatively, phone Joy Ogden on 020 8293 3034 or Bob Smith on 020 8853 2697.

***Grapevine* reaches more than 1,000 homes and retail outlets, in our designated area and beyond. To advertise contact grapevine@charltonresidents.net. 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.**

Check your local noticeboard the next *Grapevine*, our website (please note new address charltonresidents.net); Twitter (@ccra_se7) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/centralcharlton) for details of CCRA events.

Charlton Central Residents Association