

Dates for your diary

Saturday 1 March

CCRA Quiz Night 7.30 – 10.00 pm

St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road

Monday 28 April

CCRA Spring Social 7.30

St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road

NB Venue to be confirmed.

Saturday 17 May

Open Gardens – members only.

Further details to follow – don't forget if your garden isn't at its best in May you can also open it on Sunday 14 September.

You might also like to make a note of the following events:

Big Lunch	1 June
Community Day	5 July
Flower and produce show	13 September
AGM	6 October
Quiz Night	8 November

Classified Ads

Grapevine reaches more than 1,000 homes, and retail outlets, in our designated area and beyond. To advertise, contact Sarah Roseblade on 07779024226 or sarah.roseblade@ntlworld.com

Rates: small ads up to 15 words plus contact details: £10 for one issue or £30 for four issues; panel ads containing up to 20 words, contact detail and an image/logo cost from £30 for one insertion or £100 for four.

'Say no to the Silvertown Tunnel!'

Residents who started a campaigning group called 'No to the Silvertown Tunnel', are surveying air quality in Greenwich and parts of Bexley and Lewisham boroughs. A survey last year showed high levels of nitrogen dioxide in the area of Woolwich Road that are significantly above EU recommendations. Air diffusion tubes are in the CCRA area to record NO₂ and results will be available in March. The group wants to prevent the construction of an additional tunnel that will exacerbate air pollution rather than alleviate the traffic problem. They also aim to inform people about the effects of air pollution on the health of the most vulnerable. They have evidence that shows additional roads do not relieve traffic problems because, within months of construction, they are again congested. More information: www.silvertowntunnel.co.uk

Funding joy for toy library

Charlton Toy Library secured funding last November to run its outreach programme for the next three years.

Help a Capital Child kick-started the programme with a grant of £2,178 and *BBC Children in Need* has pledged to fund the project with a grant of £27,959 over the next three years.

The toy library will now be able to visit four women's refuges in the area taking clothes, books, toys and games to the children. The toy library will also be attending play sessions at four HomeStart groups where families who might not be able to come to Charlton House can take advantage of the wealth of toys, children's books, parenting books and safety equipment supplied at very low cost.

There are regular sessions at Charlton House three times a week 09.30-12.30 on Tuesday, Thursday and Fridays along with free music and craft sessions for users and a low-cost borrowing service of toys, books, DVD's, CD's, baby safety equipment, dressing up clothes, games and puzzles.

Join CCRA, it's the best value you'll get for a fiver

If you haven't already done so, please join CCRA for 2014. We hope you continue to find Grapevine informative and useful. As a member, you'll also benefit from our bulletins. We hope, too, you have enjoyed CCRA's social events. We need your continued support to maintain and extend our activities and to ensure CCRA has a powerful voice in representing your views and concerns. Membership is still only £5.00 and will last until 31 December 2014. Do it today and spare yourself my repeated pleadings. If you're already a member, just put cash or a cheque (payable to CCRA) in an envelope with your name and address and leave it at 7 Elliscombe Road or 49 Delafield Road. If you'd like to make a direct payment or have any other queries, you can email membership@charltonresidents.org. If you are joining for the first time, we'd be grateful for an email address and a contact number.

Duncan Alexander, CCRA Membership Secretary.

Comments, feedback, queries or material for the next edition of Grapevine, should be emailed to grapevine@charltonresidents.org by 17 March. Alternatively phone Linda Pound on 0208 858 7377, Bob Smith on 0208 853 2697 or Joy Ogden on 0208 293 3034.





Christmas cheer: members of our own singing group performed a variety of songs at the Christmas social. The repertoire included a song by William Byrd, a favourite carol, Gaudete, a Spanish song and, to mark Nelson Mandela's death, Nkosi Sikelel iAfrika. See Page 5

Everybody needs good neighbours

One of the great strengths of central Charlton residents is their willingness to help others, especially older people. One of the signifiers in judging a community is how well, or indeed how poorly, it cares for and supports the older people who live there.

Some CCRA members have long wanted to move beyond the level of informally popping in to next-door neighbours, perhaps to see if they are OK in bad weather, to a more organised volunteering set-up.

In a bold initiative, CCRA has begun discussions with Age UK Bromley & Greenwich to explore the possibility of becoming an organisational member of

their Community Volunteers' Time Bank (CVTB). Talks are at an early stage but there is a strong possibility that, working in partnership with Age UK B&G, CCRA will be able to deliver time banking activities, initially for the thirteen streets in our area.

CVTB is a different way of volunteering, that involves both giving time and getting it back. It is based on the skills, abilities and knowledge of those who take part, who would earn credits for their efforts. These credits can then be spent on something you want or need. Perhaps an hour spent shopping for a housebound person could later be traded for some gardening lessons from another CVTB member.

You can donate your credits to a friend or family member if you do not want to use them yourself. Len Weir, who is leading the project for CCRA said: 'I am excited about this new initiative. The fact that we will be partnered with a national charity can only give the project added credibility and increase the chances of its being a success.'

If you are interested in exploring this stimulating initiative further or might like to help set it up or act as a CVTB volunteer in the future, please contact Len Weir on 8858 4920 or 07583 759917.

STOP PRESS

CCRA Quiz Night: Saturday, 1 March.

Doors open at 7pm. Quiz starts promptly at 7.30. St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road. Members £2, non-members £5. New members joining on the night will be admitted, on receipt of membership fee, saving £2. Drinks and nibbles available. To register or join a team, email events@charltonresidents.org or contact Chris on 0208 858 7377. Maximum team size, eight.



The editorial team at Grapevine wish all our readers a happy and prosperous New Year and remind everyone that it is time to renew your membership. See page 8 for details.

Team changes but the work goes on

After three dedicated years as CCRA chair Linda Pound has made way for other members to play their part. We'll miss Linda's energetic and good humoured contribution in making the association the vibrant, community organisation it is today.

In fact no one felt able to take on the role single-handedly, so we held a specially convened extraordinary general meeting to agree that officer roles could be held jointly by two or more people, to be proposed and elected in the normal way.

And now we have three co-chairs who are helping to steer CCRA forward, along with a vibrant band of committee members to help. Linda continues to be active in CCRA.

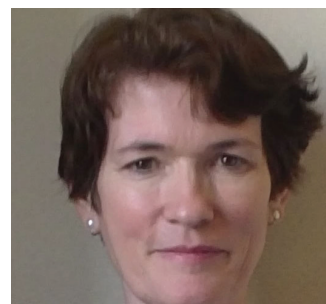
Our three co-chairs are:

Annie Galloway

This part of Charlton has been home to my family for 17 years. Although our three children are older now, my husband and I share our time with them and my parents who also live locally. I am very proud to have set up a well-regarded SEN provision for pupils with severe and complex needs in an east London secondary school, which I have headed up for 27 years. I love living in Charlton and have made some great friends here. I worked with Brenda Taggart to set up the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme locally to give something back to the locality. I think our area is becoming safer and friendlier, cleaner and greener and increasingly like a real community, thanks to a number of people's hard work. I hope we can continue and include more local people in all our activities.



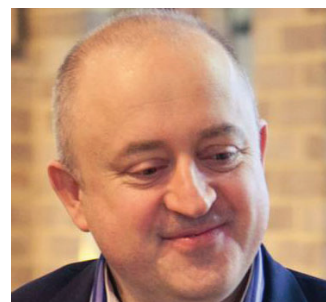
Linda Pound



Annie Galloway



Brian Kriss



Jason Palmer

Brian Kriss

Brian has been resident in Swallowfield since 1981. He thinks our parks and leisure services are great, cleaning services are a wonder, that parking services should serve themselves less and us more, that CCRA should give out a strong message to our authorities that 'we are watching you', and provide feedback that is positive as well as negative. We live in exciting times for development in Greenwich and Charlton. Brian says: 'Since 2011 nearly one third of the households in our neighbourhood have subscribed to CCRA. Its presence as a residents' group, aiming to improve the quality of our living environment through collective action, is a good thing. We need to stay sociable, look outwards and loosen our bureaucratic ties.'

Jason Palmer

I have lived in Charlton since '97 and although my work frequently takes me away, it's good to come back home. When friends visit they always comment on the friendliness and amount of activity in the area. The ability to say hello to neighbours and find others with similar interests - be that social activities or regarding the area in which we live - is not common elsewhere, and it is something that makes me proud to live here. People in this area are working hard to make it a safer and better place to live and one that's more fun. I hope that CCRA can assist in achieving these ambitions and help all our residents to be glad to live in Charlton.

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If you go down to the park today...



Mural maestro: artist Stuart Hughes at work on his latest creation in Charlton Park

Go down the path by the mulberry tree outside Charlton House and you'll find Henry VIII looking out onto Charlton Park. Catherine of Aragon sits in the next window and Cardinal Wolsey in a third. All are nursing a comforting china cuppa. And that's the giveaway. Last summer Stuart Hughes, a talented local artist, struck up a friendship with Michael and his partner Mimi Speak, who run the Old Cottage Coffee Shop. Stuart, who has worked closely with the 2004 Turner Prize-winner Jeremy Deller and the internationally acclaimed architect Richard Rogers, agreed to adorn the walls of his new friends' café with his stunning airbrushed mural in return for an endless supply of their bacon sandwiches - some of the best he's ever tasted, he says. And now he's planning to help his friends out again.

Michael and Mimi have plans. They see the cafe as a community resource. It is furnished with old-fashioned,

comfy chairs and tables, books to read in the café or take home and a box of second hand books with a charity tin for Children in Need, which raised £337.50 last year. With home-baked cake and delicious food on offer, too, the café is already a favourite with the locals who have discovered its charms. Mervyn and Iris Warner, visiting their son and daughter in law in Sundorne Road, are among them and entertaining their granddaughter, Stephanie, at the café. Iris said: 'We come here every time we're in Charlton. It's just like sitting in my auntie's front room. It's a gem.'

Now, Michael is waiting to hear if Greenwich council will allow him to rent half the pavilion next door, which has been empty for several years. He wants to turn it into a venue for 'art-in-the-park' to give the whole community a chance to unlock their creativity with the help of his local arts and crafts friends. Stuart, who also teaches part time at Cardwell primary school in Woolwich, hopes to participate. He plans to work with adults in the new project. But his philosophy is the same: to encourage his pupils. He says: 'It's for adults who are just interested. It isn't about being able to paint it's about having a go. I hate it when people say they can't draw or paint. Everyone can draw and paint. You just get better.'

Frank Salmon, a pottery expert who writes and publishes books on pottery and makes pots, also plans to be part of the new project. He, too, is keen to encourage people to explore their creativity. He will provide the plain white biscuit ware and coloured glazes so people can choose, say, a mug, teapot or plate, and decorate it with their own design. He will fire it and they will return a few days later for their personal creation. He says: 'The aim is to open it up as a small craft and art coffee shop, too. We want to make use of local artists' and potters' skills to provide entertainment and education for the local community to enjoy.'

Visit Stefan, the German Master Baker in his mobile shop just outside 84 Wellington Gardens, every Saturday between 8.45 - 9.10 am.

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Shopping or shocking?

Mixed reaction to Charlton's rapidly growing retail park



New stores are going up in Charlton faster than your gas bills. Blink and there's another one. Matalan opened up on the old Comet site last month but only for a year. That's when Ikea take the site over and combine it with the current Sainsbury's store. Sainsbury's will then move further down Bugsby's Way to a new location – next to a double storey Marks and Spencer's.

Is it shopping heaven or retail madness? Either way it will have a big impact on us as residents.

Back in November, Ikea mounted an event at Christchurch Forum to gauge public opinion on their plan to open a store in Bugsby's Way. Of the people who visited their exhibition 68% were, they say, broadly in support of the plan. Issues raised as potential difficulties however include traffic, loss of green site, air quality and the loss of the familiar 'teletubby' building.

Documents submitted by the developer (available online at <http://publicaccess.royalgreenwich.gov.uk:81/online-applications/> reference number 13/3285/0) suggest that 35% of customers will travel on public transport and that the change of use will

actually mean less traffic in the area. They further indicate that air quality will therefore be improved. The 1,000-plus parking spaces are thought to be adequate.

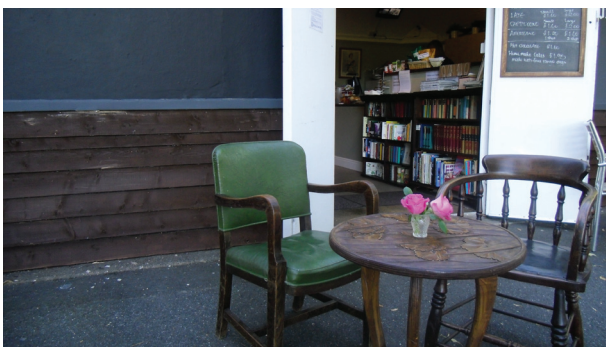
While the existing Sainsbury's building included state of the art 'eco' features when it was built, new and more efficient technologies are now available. Ikea claims that by 2020, nationally, it will meet all its own energy requirements through the use of wind and solar power.

The green features incorporated in the Sainsbury's building will be replicated in the new building which Ikea suggests, despite being what some residents describe as "a big blue box" will include some green roofing and a green wall. The closing date for comment on this proposal is 11 February.

But change does not stop there! The building of a new Sainsbury's and Marks and Spencer's is moving on apace. If, and when, Ikea move to their new site, Matalan will move back to their original site, where a two storey shop will be built.

Other retailers are in discussion to take up shops alongside this new Matalan. These could include Home Sense, Wren Kitchens, Mothercare or Hobbycraft – or perhaps a larger Next store. Debenhams showed interest but decided that there would be insufficient parking space for their needs.

All of this leaves Charlton, our neighbourhood, facing important changes. There have been significant concerns about the impact on traffic. Despite claims that we can expect less traffic overall and improved air quality, we all know what happens at Blackwall Tunnel. We can expect the area beyond the station to be heavily congested for much of the day and night. Are we content that we'll have a shopping heaven on our doorstep or do we have some concerns that Charlton will become one vast shopping centre? CCRA continues to monitor the development and will keep members informed. Grapevine would appreciate your views. See back page for details of how to contact us.



The Old Cottage Coffee Shop
Charlton Park

Winter time opening hours
Mon and Tues 10:00-2:00 (school term)
Wed-Sun 10:00-4:00
All day breakfast now available

Power to the people

For years the electricity sub station at the top of El-liscombe Road has been a monument to schoolboy pranks and vandalism with the added risk of serious injury. But street resident Peter Somerville, who has campaigned tirelessly for many years to get the site cleaned up, has seen his efforts rewarded.

Recently workmen have been at the site to clear debris and tidy up the area. They have strengthened security fencing and made it a safer place.

Peter said: 'The barbed wire was rusty and dangerous and the water pipes on the roof were leaking. There was also Japanese Knotweed on the site. But I'm pleased to say that at last it has now been cleaned up and the Knotweed has been eradicated.'



Music, mulled wine and merriment

The final months of 2013 saw some exciting social activity for CCRA. Our regular and popular quiz night was well-attended. A new quizmaster, Rachel Taggart-Ryan, kept proceedings going at a good pace. The rounds included some tricky dingbats which left participants groaning.

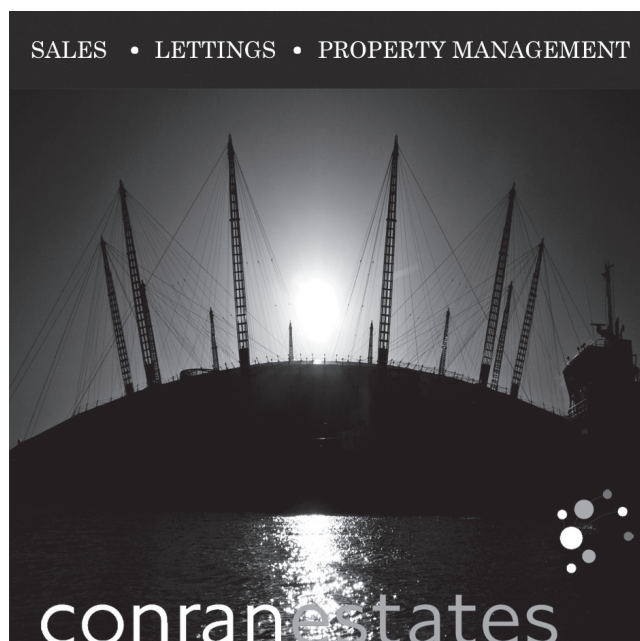
The Christmas social was also well-attended. Mulled wine, carols and mince pies gave the event a festive flavour while SE7, our own band of local musicians, provided lively background music throughout. Laraine and Keith of Wellington Gardens won the hamper, a traditional element of our Christmas raffle. As well as being enjoyable events, the quiz night and Christmas social raised enough money to pay for

this edition of Grapevine which was a helpful bonus. Our carol singing raised £271 which has been sent to Greenwich Young Carers to support their work. The weather was against the carol singers this year – virtually the money was raised on the first night. On the second night, singers not only had rain, but thunder, lightning and hail. After enduring for at least half an hour, singers adjourned to a warm house in Delafield Road where we enjoyed soup, mulled wine and other delicious food. Sweets offered at various houses were very welcome and special thanks must go to the young boy in Delafield Road who put money in the bucket but also pressed two of his three chocolate coins into the bucket-shaker's hand.

A growing concern

Congratulations to Charlton Community Gardens Group for the transformed station garden: herbs are thriving and the newly planted insect-friendly area between the raised beds will come into its own next summer. Our group formed with hopes of a community garden on part of the unused land opposite Highcombe allotments, but plans have been submitted for a replacement primary school, more housing and a re-located parish hall there, not allowing public access to a designated Community Open Space. More than a dozen residents and community groups, including CCRA, registered objections. Forthcoming events: plant-a-pot for children and families on the station concourse during the Easter holidays on 14 April from 1.30 – 3.30; plant sale at the station on 15 May from 5.30; Open Gardens across the borough, weekend of 14-15 June in aid of Greenwich and Bexley Hospice.

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I heard it on the grapevine...

How happy is my valley?

We didn't get a Russian oligarch to save us from relegation. We didn't get the American billionaire. But we did get a Belgian multi-millionaire. Roland Duchatelet, who owns top Belgium side Standard Liege, bought the club in January for a reported £20million after months of unsettling speculation.

At least that's all over but has it come too late? We've acquired a new keeper and a playmaker from the Belgian club and both got their first outing at Middlesbrough. As I write, we are in the relegation zone, though we do have games in hand. Sometime when you are down nothing goes right. The injury list makes for depressing reading. The squad looks like it's been in the front line of a battle zone and I suppose that's what it is. The championship is a tough place to play football and it takes no prisoners.

As fast as one player gets fit two more fall by the wayside. At least player of the year Chris Solly is back after months on the sidelines, though Chris Powell is using him sparingly. It's no coincidence that his return saw better results. The pitch has been a disaster; two matches had to be cancelled – the one against Barnsley less than three hours before kick-off. Our 1 – 1 draw at home against Sheffield was more mud wrestling than football. It seems the under-pitch drainage has failed and now the pitch is waterlogged. I watched the worst 45 minutes of football I've ever

seen at the Valley on a rainy Tuesday night last month when we gifted Oxford two goals in a cup match. We booed the team off at half time. They returned having been subjected to a manager's lambasting and turned in a decent performance in the quagmire that is our turf. How can they be so infuriatingly mercurial? Halfway through Danny Green came on and changed the game. He shamed many players who looked tired and lethargic, and energized the front line. Morrison responded with a clinical header from a corner then Green weaved his way through the Oxford defence, nutmegged the full back and put in an inch perfect cross that Yann latched on to and buried. Harriott would have clinched the winner but for a brilliant goal line clearance. We replayed at Oxford and won 3 – 0. The following Saturday we travelled to Huddersfield and ran out 1- 0 winners in a hard fought game that saw yet more of our Academy players get a start. We have been drawn against Sheffield Wednesday in the next round. Win that and we are into the quarterfinals and the prospect of a visit to Wembley appears on the horizon. The transfer window is about to close and the new owner has hinted that we may buy more players. Survival is in our own hands. We can play well enough. Our Boxing Day performance against Brighton, a home win 3 – 2 is proof of that. We've just got to deliver in every match. Congrats fished. COYR's!

IN MEMORIAM

Doris Ada Kirby 1909-2013

Doris Ada Kirby was born on 11 June 1909 at 24 Delafield Road and lived there all her life, latterly with the help of some very good carers. Both her parents were from Charlton, her father having worked at Johnson & Phillips in Victoria Way. She went to Fosssdene Board School but later won a scholarship to a school in London. She made her career as a skilled seamstress, making soft furnishings, curtains, chair covers, etc and teaching these skills at evening classes. After getting married she lived in the same house where she brought up two sons - Robin and Jeffery - only leaving it for a short while, during the second World War, to live in Newcastle. She had a little seaside

home in Eastborne that she enjoyed visiting with her sister on summer weekends while she was driving, loved tending her garden and enjoyed dancing. It was usual to see her driving her little Datsun car around Charlton until she was well into her 90s! Mrs Kirby died in the QE Hospital after a few weeks' stay, on Thursday, 5 December 2013, aged 104.



Community interest groups

Walking group

New programme soon to be agreed. In the meantime if you're interested please email walkers@charltonresidents.org, phone 07984121761 or check the website www.charltonresidents.org.

Book group

The CCRA Book Group continues to thrive - fuelled by good reads, lively conversation, debate and a couple of glasses of wine. We've just finished Robert Graves's autobiography 'Goodbye to All That', which gave us a vivid account of what WW1 was really like, with unsentimental descriptions of the horror of life in the trenches. We were frustrated by the general stupidity of war with its entrenched traditions, lack of kit and equipment, blinkered orders, hierarchies and social snobbery and the lasting effects on a generation of people.

On 25 February we're meeting to discuss Donna Tartt's novel 'The Goldfinch' about a young boy in New York who survives an accident that takes the life of his mother. Alone and determined to avoid being taken in as an orphan, Theo scrambles between nights in friends' apartments and on the streets but is drawn into an art and antique underworld, and eventually crime.

On 2 April we'll be reading an American novel, 'As I Lay Dying' by William Faulkner, a harrowing account

of the Bundren family's odyssey across the Mississippi countryside to bury Addie, their wife and mother. Interested? Do join us: zoe31well@hotmail.com

Local history group

Our collection of the details of the first residents of the CCRA area nears completion and with it the hope that we shall use this information, not just as a picture of those who came to live in our area when our houses were first built, but also to link with the forthcoming commemorations of WW1 and perhaps find out more about those named on the Charlton War Memorial. This is part of a project that the Greenwich Heritage Centre is involved with and we were pleased to accept a personal invitation to meet Tracy Stringfellow, the new Centre Manager, and discuss how we might contribute to their project as well as finding out about the proposal for the Heritage Centre to become part of a Heritage Trust along with Charlton House and the Tudor Barn.

The Heritage Centre, in conjunction with the Greenwich University, has a series of interesting, free talks planned that we hope to take advantage of - the next one being Wednesday, 5 March entitled 'Northern Nature and Exploratory Science c. 1790-1830', we will alternate our meetings with these talks.

Singing group

Our carol singing just before Christmas raised £270 for Greenwich Young Carers, and this despite the fact that our second evening was severely curtailed by some very bad weather. Congratulations and a big thank you to all involved. Our regular sessions began again on 9 January and the remaining sessions until Easter are: 6, 17 February; 6, 17 March; 3 April. We are always happy to welcome new members, whatever your level of experience - the group is about singing for pleasure. If you are interested in joining, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.

Music group ('SE7')

Our regular group sessions start again on 27 January and will continue on alternate Mondays after that, so the remaining dates until Easter are: 10, 24 February; 10, 24 March; 7 April.

We will be performing at Cattleya on Sunday, 9 February - the first of our regular evenings there this year. We are always interested in gaining new members, so if you are interested in joining the group, whatever your level of experience or expertise, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.



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