

## BUSINESS AS USUAL AT THE COTTAGE CAFÉ AFTER BREAK-IN

The smiles that say “Welcome back, we are open again.” When callous thieves broke in, stole the takings and wrecked the place Michael and Mimi, pictured right, owners of the Old Cottage Coffee Shop in Charlton Park, reluctantly closed while repairs were carried out. But undaunted, they reopened two weeks later, helped by a massive crowd-funded cash boost.

**Full story: Page 3**



## Mayor rejects Rockwell plan and sends developer back to the drawing board

Communities across the borough and beyond are celebrating after a massive development at Charlton Riverside was turned down. CCRA, who have been opposing the plans for fifteen months, were prominent among objectors who packed a City Hall planning hearing headed up by London Mayor Sadiq Khan.

Nearly 100 people attended the hearing “called in” by the Mayor, and eight were given the opportunity to speak for four minutes each, 32 minutes in all. The usual rule at such hearings is a total of 15 minutes.

They included CCRA chairperson Jodie Coughlan and vigorous campaigner David Gayther, both members of CCRA's Planning Group;

Phil Connolly, a representative of the Residents Association at Derrick and Atlas Gardens; Carol Kenna from the Charlton Society; and Yann Leclercq, a Charlton resident and town planner.

Lifelong Charlton resident Glenn Tilbrook, lead singer of Squeeze, who has a recording studio adjacent to the site, made an impassioned plea for the application to be turned down.

Greenwich Council first rejected the development last July. At the hearing on 29 January the Mayor rejected the proposed VIP Trading Estate (Rockwell) development.

This was to build 771 homes, densely packed into a small area of land down Anchor and Hope Lane and followed the unanimous rejection

by Greenwich's planning board last July. Many Charlton residents had expressed their objections to the plan, which went against the Charlton Riverside Plan.

But because it had been called in by the Mayor on the recommendations of Greater London Authority officers, it was felt the application was likely to be accepted. So there was great rejoicing when he announced his decision.

Also celebrating the decision was local MP Matthew Pennycook who has opposed the plans from the outset and worked tirelessly behind the scenes to help bring about a successful outcome.

**(Full story: Page 4)**

**STOP PRESS** Jump into Spring with CCRA's Springtime meet-up, on Tuesday 2 April, 7.30-9.30pm at St Richard's Hall. Get together with neighbours and friends and play board games, make-your own at arts & crafts demo stalls, live music and reasonably priced savoury snacks, cakes, wine, beer and soft drinks, at our pop-up café.

### IKEA OPENS – BUT WHAT'S IN STORE?

After months of discussion, consultation and construction, IKEA's flagship store finally opened in Charlton on 7 February. Thousands have already explored the £100million development that has brought 500 jobs to the area, introduced many “green” innovations and stirred up a traffic controversy.

**Full story: Page 5**

**Our popular Open Gardens event takes place this year on Sunday 19 May.  
Full details to come. To open your garden, email [events@charltonresidents.org](mailto:events@charltonresidents.org)**

# Heathrow airspace: the plane facts

Heathrow has revealed plans to operate an additional 25,000 flights a year as it launches a consultation on airspace change and future operations. These additional flights are in advance of a third runway being built.

The consultation runs until 4 March and invites your response on a number of topics: Runway Alternation; Airspace changes; Westerly Preference; Night Flights; and Extra flights as all of these will impact airspace over London.

Heathrow noise reduction campaigning group HACAN have produced a four-page consultation summary which you might find helpful. See <https://hacan.org.uk> for more details.

A number of exhibitions are taking place: details on the Heathrow consultation website <https://afo.heathrowconsultation.com>. Local residents attended the first one covering SE London to understand how the proposals could affect us. A further SE London consultation is being planned.

Under the proposals, new technology will allow the creation of new, additional flight paths in airspace away from Greenwich. This should also reduce stacking and

circling, which affects South East London. This is good news for Charlton and could help mitigate the impacts of additional flights when a third runway opens.

In line with new Government policy, the ban on night flights will be extended, meaning that early morning arrivals will not start until 5.15 or 5.30am, compared with the 4.30am start at present. This is also good news.

'Westerly preference,' which reduces the number of relatively more noisy take-offs eastward from Heathrow over London, is under review. The proposal is set out on pages 28 and 29 of the 'Airspace and Future Operations Consultation Document,' available on the consultation website.

In addition, some SE London areas also get overflowed by London City aircraft. They are not subject to this consultation but some of the changes proposed for the Heathrow planes could ease the burden on these areas too. To respond to Heathrow's consultation online, via email and by post, details are:

- online, via [www.heathrowconsultation.com](http://www.heathrowconsultation.com)
- email, via [feedback@heathrowconsultation.com](mailto:feedback@heathrowconsultation.com)
- post, via Freepost, LHR AFO Consultation

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**Michael (right) and Crowd Fund organiser Simon Short**

## Community rallies to support much loved café after devastating break-in

Huge numbers of devoted regulars of the Old Cottage Coffee Shop in Charlton Park rallied to its support after burglars trashed it, raising more than six thousand pounds in four days and pitching in to help clear up the damage.

Michael Lauricourt and his partner Mimi, who own and run the café, have made it a genuine hub of the community that is much valued by local residents, who often take family and friends when they visit.

When Michael turned up around 8am on Sunday, 27 January, he was planning to hold a breakfast for the family of one of his customers on the anniversary of her death. He was shocked when he arrived and saw the wreckage.

He says: 'By the time the police arrived lots of people walking past wanted to help. Somebody put it on Twitter and when the police had left, all the customers helped to secure it and clean up.'

The thieves had trashed the kitchen, smashing all the crockery, stealing the till with the previous day's takings and causing extensive damage.

Simon Short, a regular customer, saw pictures of the devastation via Twitter. He says: 'It's always been a lovely place to go. My wife got in the habit of going there when she was on maternity leave – it's a café, but as everyone says, it's like being in somebody's sitting room. When we saw all the stuff they'd smashed I set up a fund raising page. I figured that if people became aware it had been burgled they'd be keen to help out and we might raise a few hundred pounds.'

Simon's original fundraising target was £1,000. That was surpassed within 24 hours.

Simon says: 'The page went a bit crazy and at one point my phone was pinging every ten seconds with new donations. The owners do so much for the community and that's why people want to support them now. Every year they do a free meal on Christmas Day for elderly people and those on their own, and they support local charities. I hope seeing the responses to this awful thing shows them how much they are valued.'



**Callous thieves smashed the crockery**

*Here are just a few of the hundreds of comments by donors, (mostly anonymised by Grapevine):*

- 'The Old Cottage Cafe has been very supportive of us. Now it's our turn ... From all at Charlton Community Gardens.'
- 'I've donated, but also happy to chip in with a half day helping out with repairs if needed.'
- 'We were so sad to see Michael and Mimi's wonderful creation so senselessly destroyed. The Cottage Cafe is the heart and soul of Charlton and without it Charlton's heartbeat is missing. Sending you both lots of love and positive thoughts.'
- 'I hope nothing but good comes out of such a pathetic crime/attack on a local coffee shop. I regularly visit you with friends and relatives. Not only are you the kindest, most giving people in the area but you have the sweetest coffee shop and the best cakes! We will do anything to support you back. Stay strong. Xx'

Michael says: 'The response has been incredible. Without the customers we would probably have said: 'We won't carry on'. I think they know we'll always be there for the community and we want to thank them from the bottom of our hearts for their continuing support.' He adds that he wants 'to give something more back to the community.'

There is now hope for a secure future for the Old Cottage Shop, with a word of warning to would-be burglars. He has installed remote access cameras with mobile Broadband, which record and alert him to activity at any time so he can see it as it happens on his mobile phone. He says: 'Even if thieves got into the shop and damaged the camera it would be too late because the image is sent to the cloud and saved there.'

Anyone wishing to donate can still do so on:

- <https://www.gofundme.com/get-the-old-cottage-cafe-charlton-back-on-its-feet>
- Anyone with information on the burglary can contact police on 101 (quoting CAD 2001/27JAN) or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111)



# Riverside: how we fought and won

Special report by **Dave Picton**  
and **Jane Bland**

It was a nervy time waiting for the mayor's decision at City Hall. Many months of campaigning had come down to this moment and we were not expecting it to go our way. Our fight began over a year ago with concern about this very high and dense development. It brought together members of Charlton residents' associations and community groups, including CCRA, to form 'Charlton Together'. This organisation has met regularly since, working together against the proposal. There is little doubt that this combined action strongly influenced the result.

Local residents organised themselves to attend the hearing. A band of 20 met at Charlton station and by the time they were seated in the Chamber at City Hall there were 50 plus and another 40 interested individuals.

Among speakers against the proposal were Councillor Sarah Merrill, Chair of Greenwich Planning Board and Len Duval, our GLA representative.

At the end of the two-hour hearing the mayor retired to consider the proposal. Forty-five nail-biting minutes later he delivered his verdict against the proposal. There was a huge sense of relief for everyone involved.

But, while we are delighted with the mayor's decision, we do want to see housing developed on Charlton Riverside, which will meet the needs of the local community and not just line the pockets of developers.

A few days after the hearing the Mayor published his reasons for rejecting the application. These included: poor design; concern about layout and massing; failing to ensure a satisfactory relationship with Imex House, the recording studio; failing to provide floorspace suitable for the relocation of existing local businesses; and failing to provide the maximum reasonable level of affordable housing. In Sadiq Khan's words: "If we are to deliver the socially rented

and genuinely affordable homes Londoners urgently need I am determined to ensure that we thoroughly explore all options for building new and affordable homes across the capital." In conclusion, he said: "I've listened carefully to the concerns of residents and considered the substantial amount of work done on the Charlton Riverside Masterplan. I consider this is the wrong development for this site. I urge the applicant to go back to the drawing board". Pretty much what we've been saying for the last 15 months.

Voicing his objections, Glenn Tilbrook had told the hearing of the impact the development would have on his £1.5million studio, which is right next door to the site. He and his band, Squeeze, have used the studio for many years and the building work would, he said, have rendered the building unusable because of the noise and vibrations caused by construction work. It would also leave inadequate access for his tour bus.

**He told the hearing: "The ideology that created 'unaffordable affordable' housing is perpetuated by allowing buildings like these – a lacklustre design that creates little except the promise of density and overshadowing and a kick in the teeth for local people. Where's the hope and where's the love in this development?"**

## Community safety

After a massive increase in reports of people tampering with parked cars, finding car doors unlocked, and stealing anything left inside, the Safer Neighbourhood Police Team has asked us to share the following advice: **Leave it on show – expect it to go!!** Remove everything from your car and wipe away suction marks on the windscreen that suggest you use a satnav. Ensure doors are locked and windows closed. Consider installing a visible disabling device. Register vehicle equipment with immobilise.com, the UK national property register. Let's try to beat the thieves.





# Busy times for the new store

Ever since Ikea announced plans to build in Charlton, the store and its development have been firmly on the local agenda. For some it's a step too far, too big and inviting too much traffic. For others it's heaven sent and a welcome addition. Now it has finally opened its doors to the public and everyone has a chance to judge for themselves. Grapevine's **Joy Ogden** took her pen and a large shopping bag down to see for herself

You might have seen signs encouraging customers to go to Ikea's new store on Greenwich Peninsula by public transport. They are not asking you to struggle on to the bus with your Billy bookcase, but have lined up ways to make deliveries easier.

Representatives of CCRA were among local groups invited to a preview before opening day on 7 February. Helen Aylett, Ikea store manager, outlined efforts to deal with the community's concerns about potentially high levels of traffic by providing a range of delivery options. Complaints about delays and traffic problems have been rolling in since opening day, and we shall have to wait and see whether Ikea's plans work. Helen said: 'We have a vision for Greenwich – we want this store to be a place to meet, share, learn and shop – very, different from what we normally do.'

To ease deliveries, the store has partnered with Zedify, a paid-for bike courier service (same day delivery times to be agreed with the rider), that will be available to anyone living within three miles of the store, plus 50 bike stands for customers who choose to cycle.

Helen added: 'There will also be a minicab service and a subsidised price on home delivery (down from £35 to £15) for the first ten weeks of opening, for people who live within 40 minutes of the store by public transport.' And there are 50 buses from several bus routes each hour (25 one way and 25 the other) that service the store.

There are a range of community facilities, including a roof garden, rooftop pavilion, restaurants and a Learning



Lab, that will offer activities and workshops (free to IKEA FAMILY members), including demonstrations on how to repair or recycle old furniture (which doesn't have to be from Ikea), grow food, and live a more sustainable life.

Charlton is Ikea's leading sustainable store in the UK, and is incorporating green technologies such as rainwater collection for toilets, solar panels, renewable construction materials and a geothermal heating system, with the aim of achieving 100% renewable energy. The store has also shifted from plastic bags to recyclable bags made from sugar cane.

Helen said: 'We have a strong people approach, a strong co-worker approach. We have a team of over 500 here – co-workers were recruited before the management – they are all Londoners and had a part in appointing me. as the new store manager. We're committed to being a good neighbour in the local community and to create real, impactful change. We want this store to be a hub of the community.'



Store manager Helen Aylett

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# How happy is my valley?

... A view from the terraces

## All to play for

It's what Lee Bowyer didn't say at his post transfer window press conference that was interesting. From rebel to tactician and diplomat, he has remained tight-lipped on his feelings about Roland Duchatelet and his train-wreck theory of ownership, though it's easy to guess what they are.

Questioned as to why we hadn't been able to clinch a last minute deal on a striker, the manager announced: "I didn't have any money." He said other promotion chasing teams were recruiting top quality players and paying high prices. "That," he said "was something I was not able to do."

Hen's teeth are more accessible than spondulix given the pusillanimous Belgian's Success by Scrooge tactics. It was Bowyer and his crafty Head of Recruitment, Steve Gallen, who selected four key players to add to the team. "We only selected players we think will bring something special to the squad," Bowyer said.

He moved quickly to sign up Jonny Williams, a Welsh international and former Palace attacking midfielder; back-up keeper Chris Maxwell from Preston, left back Ben Purrington from Rotherham and Josh Parker, a striker from Gillingham. Parker was secured just two hours before the deadline. Bowyer says he is still looking at possible strikers through free transfers.

The need for more fire power was brought home with a thump in late January when, in quick succession, Lyle Taylor was red carded and Karlan Grant left for Huddersfield.

Grant's departure was no surprise. Bowyer advised him to stay 'til the end of the season, gaining experience and

scoring more goals. Then he could have cherry-picked a better club. As it is, he will almost certainly see his new side relegated and face the prospect of playing against Charlton next season. He was pitched in straight away but failed to reverse another Huddersfield debacle as they went down 0-5 to Chelsea. Virtually his last act for Charlton was to miss a penalty.

Taylor's red card was a travesty and part of a fiasco-fuelled ten minutes of mayhem at Charlton's home game against Accrington Stanley in late January.

It was a bruising tussle with the home side outwitting Accrington's bullyboys with skilful football.

Ten minutes from time we secured a corner and managed to head the ball home. The ref had already blown for a perceived offence when Taylor was hauled to the ground by their keeper Jonny Maxted only for a host of other Accrington players to pile on top. Crushed beneath this melee, Taylor kicked out in an attempt to free himself. That was enough for the ref to hand red cards to Maxted and Taylor.

Two minutes later we were awarded a penalty for a clear handball and it all kicked off again. Chris Solly stood between the linesman and three angry Accrington players while pushing and shoving went on all over the pitch. Grant had to wait a nervous five minutes before calmly stroking the ball home. Both sides appealed the red cards. Maxted was reprieved, Taylor wasn't.

Two games later and Patrick Bauer was shown a red card at Fleetwood for two yellow card offences and Bielik picked up another ban for accumulated yellows against Southend.

We can ill afford fit players being sidelined while other key members of the team are still recovering from long term injury. Captain Pearce is still out and Joe Aribio's scheduled return against Southend was delayed to give his troubled knee more time to recover. His absence and Taylor's were keenly felt as we could only manage a draw against Chris Powell's side who were down to ten men for 75 minutes.

Where does that leave us? At the time of writing we are fifth with fourteen games to go. We have 55 points and Luton, who are currently top have 68 points. Barnsley are second with 62, Portsmouth third on 59 followed by Sunderland on 57. Peterborough, who are sixth, have also played 32 and are on 49 points.

So it's all to play for. Five wins and we could go top. Bowyer believes in his squad. He has brought them to a position of great fitness and skill and he is convinced we can secure the top two finish which would guarantee promotion.

Who am I to argue? Crongers fished. COYR's.

### The Old Cottage Coffee Shop

*A traditional tea shop serving high  
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*Open everyday from 10am in Charlton Park*



*Closes 4pm in winter  
and 5pm in summer*



# I heard it on the Grapevine

## COMMUNITY GROUPS

### Knit and Natter

Do you know what a fiddlemuff is? Want to learn to knit, have an afternoon crafting or simply have a great cuppa? Then come along to the K&N group. We have needles and yarn and while we specialise in charity knits, you can bring along your own project. The group meets on the following Tuesdays in St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road, 2.00-4.00 pm: 26 Feb, 26 March, 30 April, 21 May, 25 June, 30 July. All welcome. The group, who normally knit for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital neo-natal unit, have been knitting for neighbours at the other end of the age range. Elderly dementia sufferers can often have something called 'fidgetty/restless hands'. Providing them with something to fiddle with can bring great relief. A fiddlemuff is a knitted tube which has attached zips, buttons, textured fabric



and 'dangly bits' for the elderly to engage with. Having knitted a range of fiddlemuffs we presented them (*above*) to our local care home, The Four Seasons in Cemetery Lane, Charlton. The manager Harriet Kobusingye and the activities co-ordinator Chloe were delighted with the gifts.

### CCRA instrumental music group (SE7)

We've missed a few of our regular Monday sessions recently, but have made up in part with performances at the Christmas Social on 8 Dec and at Cattleya on 18 Dec. Our next evening at Cattleya is on Sunday 17 Feb and we hope to be there again in March. 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.

### Walking group

Recent walks have been especially enjoyable due to the pleasant, mild weather. In December we sauntered through three London parks (St James's, Green and Hyde), then went along Oxford Street to take in the Christmas lights; thanks to a tip from one of the group, we went into St Christopher's Place where we saw an even more spectacular display. The amazing blend between old and new

at King's Cross provided the background to our January walk: the perfect curve of the Georgian Keystone Crescent to Thomas Heatherwick's stunning design for the roof of Coal Drops Yard (including its sparkly water fountains); St Pancras' Old Churchyard containing Thomas Hardy's tree (did you know he was an architect student in the area before writing became his main source of income?). The gas holders, which have been converted into upmarket apartments, would make an excellent model for our Greenwich one if it wasn't going to be demolished. Our standout place of interest was the Canal Boat Museum, sited on the Regent's Canal, where the history of the boats, canals and people whose lives were centred there, made it a fascinating place to visit.

### CCRA singing group

Our two evenings of carol singing around the local area raised just over £600, which we divided between Greenwich Food Bank and the local Night Shelter. A team including some CCRA members won the White Swan pub quiz just before Xmas and decided to add their £60 winnings to our collection, taking our total for the two charities to £670. Our thanks to: Sarah Hornsey, Cathy Boorer, Zoe Jestico, Pippa Koszerek, David Gayther, Malcolm Clack, Gavin Hadland and Ilona Hadland. This was a magnificent achievement, and a big thank you to all who joined in, and of course to all who gave so generously. We resumed our regular sessions on 7 Jan, and the remaining dates up to Easter are: 25 Feb, 11 and 25 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.

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## Dates for your diary

### Tuesday 2 April

Jump into Spring!

(CCRA Spring Social)

St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road

7.30-9.30pm

### Sunday 19 May

Open Gardens

CCRA area

1-5pm

### Sunday 2 June

Big Lunch

Charlton Park

12-4pm

### Saturday 6 July

Community Day

Meet at St Richard's Hall

10-4pm

### Saturday 14 September

Flower and Produce Show

St Richard's Hall

Entry drop off from 8-10.45am

2.15-3pm (prize giving)

Knit and Natter and Playing Out run all year round

Check CCRA's website

([charltonresidents.net](http://charltonresidents.net));

Twitter (@ccra\_se7) and Facebook

([www.facebook.com/centralcharlton](http://www.facebook.com/centralcharlton)) for details of past and future events.



# A warm invitation to join us

Our spiritual home, St Richard's Hall, has had a makeover. The stage lighting is now warm and bright, and spotlights add to the atmosphere. New internal double doors have been fitted, enhancing the ambience, and the outside has had a spruce up.

Quiz Night was a sell out as eight teams took part. Huge thanks to all those who came along on 17 November. It was very lively, and Quiz Chief Rachel was on the ball. Congratulations to the winners, the aptly named Brexit Secretaries (winning a case of wine). The Christmas Fayre and Social (7 December from 4-6pm) made for a lovely late afternoon event, where, approaching the doors, the aroma of mulled wine beckoned you in. There were delicious mince pies and snacks, while our musicians played jazzy festive tunes, aided by our singing group. Some residents booked stalls to sell homemade merchandise.

Special thanks to Social Group, who helped with all aspects of the different events put on by CCRA.

CCRA's local events are a great way to meet up with neighbours, reconnect, and make new friends. Our events are varied and attract residents in Charlton, as well as members of other local organisations and I very much hope to see you at some of them. If not, I'm sure we will catch up for a natter sometime! – Jodie Coughlan, chair of CCRA

## Charlton Community Gardens

The season started on 3 February with our first gardening party of 2019. We were pleased that the good weather engendered a fruitful afternoon for all who attended. Understandably February is too early to start growing vegetables and fruit, but preparation of clearing and tidying the beds for the season ahead was all worthwhile. Storing the tools in the unit on the Dartford bound platform certainly saves time as all is to hand and clean.

Admittedly there are limited vegetables in the raised beds at the moment, but the spring flowers in the bed running along the platform and the newly planted Memorial Bed, near the bike shed, add a welcome touch of colour to the often grey, dull days of this time of year.

The orchard bed, near the first orchard in Charlton Park, is progressing well with the combination of spring flowers, bulbs and some of the fruit bushes coming into leaf.

**Comments, feedback, queries or material for the next edition of *Grapevine* should be emailed to: [grapevine@charltonresidents.net](mailto:grapevine@charltonresidents.net) by Monday, 18 March. Alternatively, phone Joy Ogden on 020 8293 3034 or Bob Smith on 020 8853 2697.**

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**Check your local noticeboard, the next *Grapevine*, our website (please note new address [charltonresidents.net](http://charltonresidents.net)); Twitter (@ccra\_se7) and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/centralcharlton](http://www.facebook.com/centralcharlton)) for details of CCRA events.**

# In memoriam

## Sam Coughlan

It is with sadness we mark the passing of Sam Coughlan who, for most of his life, lived in Delafield Road. Sam will be missed for his mischievous sense of humour and his care for our community. He would often be seen picking up litter whilst walking his beloved dog, Chelsea. Sam always had a cheerful word for everyone and our thoughts are with Jodie and his family at this sad time.

## Val May

Eighty-nine years ago Val May was born in Delafield Road. She was to spend all of her life, apart from some later years, living in this road. Val was a great neighbour and was well known in our community. We extend our sympathy to her family and friends. She will be sorely missed.



**Charlton Central Residents Association**