



The faithful singers of CCRA all came together again this Christmas to entertain residents with carols. They raised money for Woodlands Farm at their Christmas Fair and on their tour of Charlton streets collected £357 for BIG, Blind Independence, Greenwich. Congratulations to all concerned.

## A site for store eyes

**R**emember where Wickes used to be? Well, that sad collection of empty shops and warehouses at the junction of Woolwich Road and Gallions Road is finally to be transformed. At a packed council planning meeting in November local residents were both surprised and disappointed to be told that councillors had not had enough time to visit the site.

The meeting was rescheduled for January and then a scheme was agreed to build a new Sainsbury's, replacing the existing store in Bugsby's Way. The new store will include a much wider range of goods. In addition, there will be a new, two storey Marks & Spencer superstore which will sell food, clothing, homeware and furniture. Some small shops will also be opened on the site.

While development of a down-at-heel site is good, serious concerns have been expressed about traffic and the needs of pedestrians. There will be 700

parking spaces and the plan is that traffic should enter from Woolwich Road – but only turning left. This means that everyone coming from the Woolwich direction will have to drive up to the roundabout – increasing the already unacceptably high levels of air pollution.

Parents of children at Fossdene Primary School are particularly worried. Heavy goods vehicles will have to use Bugsby's Way but it had been hoped that most traffic would be directed to that route. A review of traffic arrangements in Woolwich Road has been promised after the stores have been open for a year.

Negotiations are apparently proving difficult with Transport for London so no plans have been made to alter bus routes. It is anticipated that money will be set aside to extend north/ south bus routes.

There has also been some pressure to create a western entrance to Charlton station and to make cycling to the new retail park a more attractive option but there are as yet no firm plans to make changes. Money has been promised to improve signposting in the area and to review road safety and traffic management.

Meanwhile, at a planning meeting in December, the council agreed that the pavement in Charlton Church Lane outside the new Sainsbury's local convenience store opposite the station is to be widened.

### Tabletop sale

There will be a tabletop sale at St Richard's Hall on Saturday, 2nd March. Doors open at 2.00. Tables are £10. You can book one by contacting Len on 020 8858 4920; Liz on 020 8265 5454 or emailing [events@ccra.org.uk](mailto:events@ccra.org.uk) Entrance free. Refreshments available.

**STOP PRESS**

# South London Healthcare NHS Trust to be dissolved

**H**ealth secretary Jeremy Hunt has announced that the South London Healthcare Trust (SLHT), which is losing more than £1million a week, is to be dissolved by 1 October 2013 at the latest, in line with the special administrator's report.

Hunt has accepted all the report's recommendations except for the one to close the A&E department at Lewisham Hospital, which is not part of the Trust, and turn it into an urgent-care centre for less seriously ill patients.

Matthew Kershaw, the report's author, argued that the plan was necessary to guarantee the financial and clinical viability of NHS care in the area.

The Health Secretary asked the NHS's medical director, Professor Sir Bruce Keogh, for his advice on the proposed service changes. On that basis and in the face of an estimated 25,000 people who marched in protest, Lewisham's A&E department has been saved from closure.

But Hunt has still come under a barrage of criticism from local campaigners, that the accident and emergency department will be downgraded.

On Sir Bruce's recommendation, Lewisham Hospital will retain a smaller A&E with 24/7 senior medical emergency cover.

He says that should result in about three quarters of patients currently seen in Lewisham A&E continu-

ing to receive complete care at Lewisham Hospital, including frail elderly patients arriving by ambulance but not as blue-light emergencies, and those needing shorter, more straightforward treatments. About a quarter, with more serious illnesses or injuries, would in future be transferred for more specialist treatment elsewhere.

With the dissolution of the Trust, each of its three hospitals – Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Woolwich, Queen Mary's, Sidcup and the Princess Royal, Bromley – will be taken over by a neighbouring hospital trust. A new trust will be created combining QEH and Lewisham Hospital

Local health chiefs must still make the £75 million savings identified by the special administrator. But the Department of Health will pay off the Trust's PFI debts of almost £200 million at the Queen Elizabeth and Princess Royal Hospitals.

The local health chiefs stress that all services at Lewisham Hospital and the three SLHT hospitals are operating as normal.

These plans, together with changes in the local commissioning of services planned from April, have been controversial. CCRA is holding a meeting on 28 February at 8pm at St Richard's Hall to discuss what the changes might mean for us. Come along and have your say.

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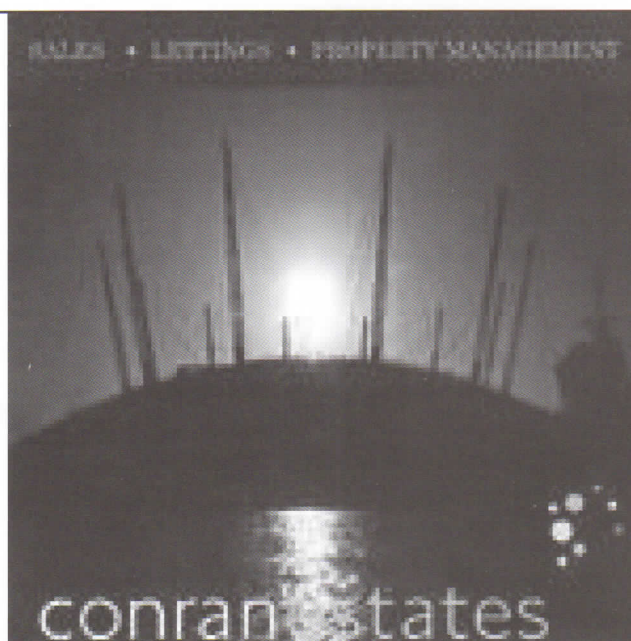
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# Crossing the Rubicon? Ferry, tunnel or bridge...

If you put off giving your views on the relative merits of crossing the river by tunnel, ferry or bridge, on the grounds that anything would be better than nothing, you've missed your chance as consultation closed on 1 February.

But one CCRA resident who attended a Greenwich meeting about what a big new tunnel would mean to us, told Grapevine she left 'shocked and reeled' by what she heard about the serious impact of air pollution on health.

London mayor Boris Johnson and Transport for London (TfL) want to build a £600million dual carriageway Silvertown road tunnel starting near the Dome and surfacing in Tower Hamlets.

The aim is to allow people to cross more easily between north and south London by reducing delays at the Blackwall Tunnel, lessening the impact on surrounding roads, and to encourage development and jobs.

But local campaigners have petitioned to reject the scheme, saying it would add to the already high levels of pollution and generate even more traffic through Charlton and Blackheath along the A102 and A2. Others, however, point out that slowing, stop/start traffic also causes high levels of pollution.

Dr Ian Mudway, from the Centre of Environmental Health, Kings College, told the Greenwich meeting on Road River Crossings that people don't see air pollution as a big issue, but it's a killer.

If you live in a polluted area your lungs will not reach their full capacity and people die of lung disease later on, so even if you leave the area you will have stored up a problem for the future, he said.

John Elliot, head of a transport consultancy who has modelled London traffic for 30 years, said the tunnel could carry as many as 30,000 cars and lorries a day. His calculations suggested the proposed new tunnel would worsen traffic jams and air pollution and lead to widespread congestion. Using tolls to regulate traffic would not be a solution: no tolls would double traffic, too expensive and there would be no point in building a tunnel.

Transport for London's consultation on ways to make it easier to cross the River Thames in the east of London follows one last year, when over 90 per cent of nearly 4,000 respondents agreed there was a need for more river crossings in east and south east London. Over 80 per cent of them then supported the Silvertown Tunnel; over 60 percent supported the alternative proposal of a Gallions Reach Ferry and some suggested building a bridge or tunnel at Gallions Reach instead of the ferry.

Once the results of the consultation have been collated and the responses reviewed, the findings will be reported to the Mayor's Transport Strategy team. If it is decided to proceed with some or all the projects there will be a more detailed consultation, probably in late 2013 at the earliest.

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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# Big changes to policing Charlton

**H**ow do you cut police services AND cut crime? The Metropolitan Police think they know, and have published their first ever 'Police and Crime Plan' for the capital. At a lively meeting in Greenwich on 30 January, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Stephen Greenhalgh and senior Met officers presented the Plan which is now out for consultation.

Residents and councillors wanted to know what this might mean for Greenwich and Charlton. The scheme aims to reduce crime in seven priority areas – burglary, vandalism (criminal damage), theft from and theft of motor vehicles, violence with injury, robbery and theft from the person, while making cuts to the service. They plan to sell off buildings and close police stations at Thamesmead, Woolwich and Greenwich, leaving only Plumstead and Eltham stations in the borough. The Met would prioritise 'bobbies over buildings'. They would relocate services into shared accommodation such as post-offices. A different structure (fewer management tiers) will mean 64 extra police in Greenwich.

What this would mean for our Safer Neighbour-

hood Team (SNT) was unclear. Despite an increase in police numbers, details of their deployment were vague. In the CCRA area we currently have one full time sergeant, two full time police constables (PCs) and three part time Police Constable Support Officers (PCSOs).

The new model would see Inspector-led teams work in local police areas (clusters of wards) with every ward having only one sergeant, one PC and one PCSO. Other PCs and PCSOs would work across local police areas according to need. This was the most controversial proposal and many people feared it would result in a poorer service.

These changes will definitely impact on services in Charlton. For a copy of the plan and information on responding to the consultation see: <http://www.london.gov.uk> and go to 'Policing plan consultation' to see details.

For more information on law and order in the CCRA area why not join the Charlton Central Neighbourhood Watch. It's free and will keep you up to date with safety and policing in our area. Email [b.taggart@ioe.ac](mailto:b.taggart@ioe.ac) or [thegalloways28@hotmail.com](mailto:thegalloways28@hotmail.com)

## A growing concern

Charlton Community Gardens group holds its annual general meeting on Monday, 25 February at St Richard's Hall when there will be updates on adopting the Highcombe and Charlton Station sites. We would welcome more people onto the Management Committee. To indicate an interest or nominate someone, contact [charltoncommunitygardens@gmail.com](mailto:charltoncommunitygardens@gmail.com). There will be a raffle and the ever-popular plant sale and seed swap.

## Time to focus

There's still time to enter our 2013 Photographic Competition. Closing date is Monday, 15 April and judging takes place a week later at CCRA's spring social (see p8 for details). The theme is Celebrations in 2012. You may enter as many photographs as you wish but you must be a paid up member of CCRA. The rules are simple:

- ✂ photos must be your own work and not previously published
- ✂ they may be black and white or colour, but should not employ photo manipulation
- ✂ the minimum size of photo allowed is 8" x 10" (20 x 25 cms)
- ✂ photos should be mounted on stiff card
- ✂ on the back of each card mount print your name, address, contact details and, if relevant, the title of your work. You should also indicate which category you are entering; under or over 18 years of age.

Entries should be delivered to Linda Pound at 26 Wellington Gardens by Monday 15 April. Please contact Linda on 020 8858 7377 or email [chair@charlton-residents.org](mailto:chair@charlton-residents.org) with any queries. The judges are local resident, ex-Fleet Street journalist and Grapevine editor Bob Smith; Blackheath photographer Fergus Noone; and Carol Kenna of Greenwich Mural Arts.



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# Park life

## Grapevine joins the café society

**E**arly morning mist meanders over Charlton Park, wafting with it the unmistakable aroma of newly baked cakes – a sure sign that Mimi has begun her day.

As the shutters go up and the doors open the first customers drift in, eager to try Mimi's carefully crafted confections.

Regulars to the Park already know about the Old Cottage Coffee Shop tucked away down the main path behind Charlton House. Every day new customers arrive to discover the delights of this quaint establishment. Most return, for the welcome offered by Mimi Peak and partner Michael Lauricourt is, like their food, irresistible.

Entering the café is like coming home to a family sitting room; comfy chairs and tables; old-fashioned lamp standards, books, knick-knacks and artifacts bedeck the interior, giving it a lived-in feel. Add in the food and you have the perfect combination for café culture.

There's no rush; people call in for a coffee and to read the morning papers. Others tuck into a full English (free range eggs, thick-cut bacon) and at lunch-time there is the temptation of a Japanese pork belly curry, testament to Mimi's Oriental origins.

Creating such an ambience wasn't easy. When



**Grapevine's Bob Smith chats with cafe owners Michael and Mimi**

Michael and Mimi took over the lease from Greenwich Council last May they had to gut the place and embark on a complete refit. They bought new kitchen equipment and took advantage of Gumtree and charity shops to help with the furnishings. Michael is a builder by trade so he took charge of the rebuilding which helped the strain on the budget.

Getting established was a challenge. "The weather has not been kind to us since we started," said Mimi, "and we really depend on it. At first we only had a few customers and I remember one day when we took just 90p! But word got around and now we have many regulars." Mimi is a self-taught cook and seems to have found her métier in baking, for her mouthwatering creations sell like... well, hot cakes!

In the summer the café handles catering for cricket matches and they are hoping to extend their catering services to other functions.

"We love our café and we want everyone to enjoy it," says Michael. "This is a great park, a wonderful local amenity. People come from all round the area to walk, exercise themselves and their dogs and jog or train. We get to know them all. Our aim is to help make this a better place for everyone."

## Sign of the tomes

The residents of central Charlton are both erudite and educated according to a quick survey of books brought in and taken out of the open bookcase at Charlton station.

The scheme has proved very popular since it started six months ago, turning over at least 200 books every month. So far all books have found a new home and not only in English, but in German, Japanese and Russian, and on topics ranging from Justin Timberlake to philosophy

Until now the books that were added and extracted have kept A Fine Balance. But now there are a few empty shelves, so if you have the definitive work on Chinese rice flails or any other books that you don't need please add them to the bookshelf. Thank you!



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# *I heard it on the grapevine...*

## How happy is my valley?

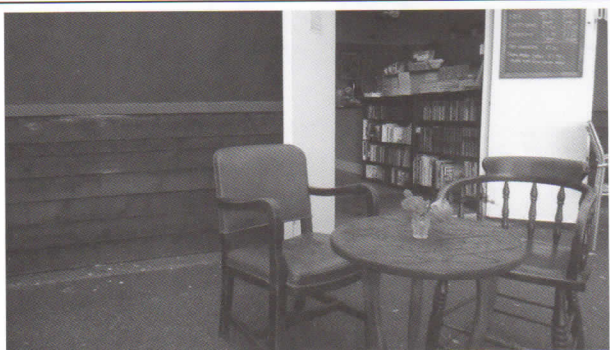
**T**he switchback, see-saw season rolls on for Charlton like an AC/DC graph. Up one minute, down the next. We're well over half way now (as I write we've played 29 and have 17 to go) and are currently placed 12th - exactly in the middle. This year started well with three wins in a row 'til lowly Sheffield Wednesday ended the run by beating us at home 1-2, their goals coming in the last six minutes.

If you took away form only as a guideline we would be fourth now. Why we struggle to deliver at home remains a dilemma that Chris Powell must solve if we are to progress. We beat Watford away 3-4 and lose 1-2 at home. These days I look to the tough away games for three points. You can't say 'never a dull moment' at the Valley because there are often periods when the team's performance is about as exciting as watching planks warp. Still, supporting a team that has less consistency than a runny rice pudding, is always a challenge.

We've lost our loan players now and are sorely missing Frimpong and Hulse who added bite to mid-field and upfront. But Kermorgant has been ploughing a lonely furrow as the single striker for several games and scoring consistently. Against Wednesday his aerial abilities were remarkable but he tired towards the end and why Powell did not ring the changes

and bring on subs to add energy and options, will remain a mystery. Fuller is fit again and can be a game changer. Yet Powell waited til Wednesday had banged in two late goals before bringing on subs. Far too late to make a difference. The post-match Buge Inquest Committee did not meet. Instead we traipsed straight home, not wanting to discuss the gory details.

On the more positive side Solly continues to impress, quietly producing the goods week after week and Dale Stephens has gone from strength to strength. His midfield performances are improving with every match and he combines intelligent distribution with tenacity in and around the box. His 25-yard left foot screamer against Blackburn (yes, it was an away match) was a candidate for goal of the season. Scot Wagstaff is back in the first team and playing well and Morrison and Taylor are holding firm at the back. So it's not all gloom and doom. Three more points should make it impossible for us to be relegated and Chris Powell always said that his first priority would be simply to stay up. I think we can safely say that has been achieved. Two more wins could put us in with a play-offs shout. Two more defeats and we are back in the danger zone. So it's all to play for. COYR's!



### **The Old Cottage Coffee Shop**

Charlton Park

Winter time opening hours

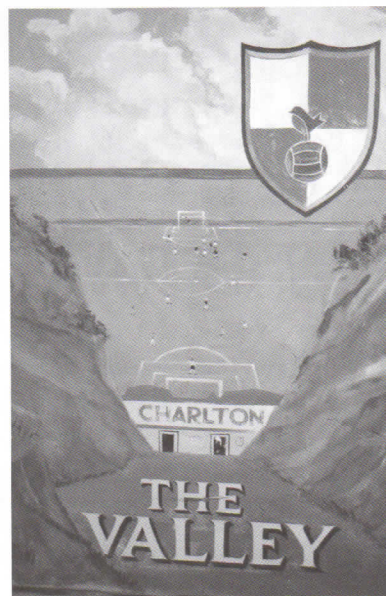
Mon and Tues 10:00-2:00 (school term)

Wed-Sun 10:00-4:00

**All day breakfast now available**

### **Signed off**

The old Valley pub sign has finally been sold off to a devoted Charlton fan and an amazing £297 was received which CCRA will be using to support our greening project. Thanks are due to Elliscombe Road resident Peter Somerville for his sterling efforts.



# Community interest groups

## Book group

The CCRA Book Group meets about once a month, and reads books suggested by its members. We've had some real winners – Bring up the Bodies by Hilary Mantel was a particular favourite, not least because we'd read the prequel, and The Garden of the Evening Mists by Tan Twan Eng, another Booker Prize shortlist.

We're not too embarrassed to admit we've struggled with some of our reads – NW by Zadie Smith was judged to be stereotypical and formulaic. We toasted finishing the 600+ pages of Maria Duenas' The Seamstress with a Spanish themed evening of drinks and nibbles!

Our next book is Back to Blood by Tom Wolfe, which we'll review on 5 March – and then we'll discuss Barbara Kingsolver on 9 April. We welcome new members, so do get in touch: zoe31well@hotmail.com

## Singing group

December was a busy month for us, with a number of performances as well as our regular sessions. Our two carol singing evenings raised £357 for Blind Independence Greenwich, so a big thank you to all involved.

We began 2013 with a performance on 20 January at the Meridian Sports & Social Club in aid of Help for Heroes. Now it's back to something like normal, with regular sessions until Easter. Future dates are: Monday 4 Feb; Monday 18 Feb; Thursday 7 Mar; Monday 18 Mar. 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')

The band is now back in business after the Christmas break. We have already given two performances in January. On 19 January we played at a Help for Heroes charity event at the Meridian Sports & Social Club alongside the singing group. The following day, we were back at Cattleya for our first session of the new year. Our regular sessions started again on 28 Jan and we will be meeting fortnightly thereafter. We will be back at Cattleya in February – look out for details! If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.

## Walking group

The new walking group has got off on the right foot and a series of events is planned for the next few months: on 3 March walkers may be testing out the Thames Trail Photowalk App; on 21 April there is an open day at the magnificent Victorian Crossness Pumping Station and will include a chance to view the building. The programme is subject to change but you can get full and up to date details of starting points, times and routes from Palvinder on 07984121761 or by emailing palvinder.banwatt@gmail.com. Or check the website [www.charlton-residents.org](http://www.charlton-residents.org). It is hoped that routes will appeal to walkers with different levels of stamina - so don't be shy - just turn up.

## Daytime events

Before setting more daytime dates we'd like to hear from you. What time and day would suit you? What type of activities would you like to see or offer? Please contact Katrin on [k.bain@gmx.de](mailto:k.bain@gmx.de) or 020 8858 7422.

## Wobbling to West Wickham – the CCRA bike ride

On the weekend of 11 and 12 May you can rediscover the fun of cycling. On Saturday Dr Bike will be in his surgery in Elliscombe Road, complete with bicycle pump and a really big tin of WD-40. He'll nurse your bike back to health.

With your bike ready, Sunday's ride will be on traffic-calmed roads and bike routes suitable for anyone who can remain upright on a bicycle. Bring your children, your grandparents, your neighbours. Once we've managed Wyndcliffe Road, we won't see a hill for hours. We'll pootle across the heath, riding at the speed of our least urgent rider, and sidle silently along until we pass close to a railway station. That may be enough for some, especially small people, and they may decide to take the 10-minute train journey home. Otherwise, we'll carry on, over the only cycling helter-skelter I know, and past the echoing barks of ghostly greyhounds, across parks and through meadows. Eventually a country park will beckon, after which we can refresh and come home on the train, or reverse our pedals for a different way home. wear hi-viz and a helmet if you like, but it's just a bike ride. Note that we won't be indoors if wet. Email [bikeride@charlton-residents.org](mailto:bikeride@charlton-residents.org) if you'd like to join in.

## Dates for your diary

### Monday, 25 February

Charlton Community Gardens AGM  
7.30 at St Richard's Hall

### Thursday, 28 February

Health meeting  
8.00 at St Richard's Hall  
see p2 for further details.  
All are welcome.

### Saturday, 2 March

Table top sale  
2.00 – 5.00 St Richard's Hall.  
Entrance free £10 per table  
Contact Len on 020 8858 4920;  
Liz on 020 8265 5454  
or email [events@CCRA.org.uk](mailto:events@CCRA.org.uk).

### Monday, 22 April

Spring Social  
7.30 at St Richard's Hall  
Full programme to be confirmed  
refreshments available; music of local musicians  
and photographic competition (entry details p4)

### Saturday and Sunday, 11/ 12 May

Cycling event (see p7 for further details)

### Saturday, 18 May

Open Gardens.  
If you'd like to open your garden please  
phone Liz on 020 8265 5454  
or Palvinder on 07984121761  
or email [events@CCRA.org.uk](mailto:events@CCRA.org.uk).

## Classified Ads

Grapevine currently reaches 1000 homes in our designated area and beyond. It can also be found in a wide variety of retail outlets in the vicinity. If you would like to advertise goods or services cheaply, effectively and locally, contact Sarah Roseblade on 07779024226 or [sarah.roseblade@ntlworld](mailto:sarah.roseblade@ntlworld). Rates for individuals and small businesses:

- small ads up to 15 words plus contact details cost £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.

### Lewisham Choral Society

Choral concert: beautiful sacred works by Tavener, Pärt and Górecki. 23 March 2013, 7.30 pm  
Goldsmiths Great Hall, New Cross SE14 6NW. Tickets £15, £10 (conc.), £2 (under 14's)  
[www.lewishamchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.lewishamchoralsociety.org.uk) tel: 020 8309 0439 or on the door



[www.charltonresidents.org](http://www.charltonresidents.org)

## Tyred out?

Do you have space in your dry cellar, shed or garage that you could rent out? We are looking to store two sets of car tyres all year round. We need access two days a year to change them. If you can help please contact Katrin on: 020 8858 7422, [k.bain@gmx.de](mailto:k.bain@gmx.de)

## Join in the fun

By now, we hope most of you will have joined CCRA for 2013. In January one of your neighbours who is a committee member may have knocked on your door or left you a letter and a membership form. If you haven't paid yet, please do so now. All this for just £5 per year (that's less than 10p per week). What a bargain and it's your fivers that pay for Grapevine, the bulletins and the website. If you don't have a form but you're already a member, just put a note with your address with your payment, and drop it at 7 Elliscombe Road or 49 Delafield.

## 10 good reasons to join the CCRA

1. You get six free copies a year of The Grapevine – a unique publication.
2. You can keep up to date with local planning issues such as the new Marks & Spencer's and Sainsbury's development.
3. You can have a direct line of contact with the Council's Cleansweep service.
4. You can meet and work with new neighbours, old and new friends at community days.
5. You can find out about crime and law and order in your neighbourhood – and you can join the Charlton Central Neighbourhood Watch.
6. You can join a wide range of social groups such as book discussions, walking, singing, etc.
7. You can keep abreast of important local issues, through our public meetings.
8. You can hear all about the unsung 'heroes' and 'heroines' who help our community such as Yvonne, in the station and Gary, our postman.
9. You can have fun at our social gatherings such as Quiz Nights and ceilidhs.
10. Finally you can help to make central Charlton a safer and even friendlier neighbourhood.

Comments, feedback, queries or material for the next edition of Grapevine, should be emailed to [grapevine@charltonresidents.org](mailto:grapevine@charltonresidents.org) by 12 April. Alternatively phone Linda Pound on 0208 858 7377, Bob Smith on 0208 853 2697 or Joy Ogden on 0208 293 3034.

Charlton Central Residents Association