

Dates for your diary

Saturday, 6 July

Community Day (full details on pages 1, 4 and 5)
All events take place at St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road.

Sunday, 14 July

Walking group: Shoreham and the Lavender
Fields of Castle Farm
Leaving Charlton at 11 am

Sunday, 8 September

Walking group: treasure hunt.
Get your team together now (details on page 7)

Saturday, 14 September

Flower and produce show (see page 7)

Sunday, 15 September

Open Gardens (further details soon)

Monday, 7 October

CCRA Annual General Meeting
7.30 pm at St Richard's Hall

Digging for Victory

Calling all CCRA gardeners and residents who want to take part in our second Flower, Produce and Craft show. September may seem a long way off, but you need to be thinking about those prize-winning entries now.

So here's a gentle reminder; the date is Saturday, 14 September; the place St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road. We are pleased to announce a new and expanded list of classes, which also includes separate categories for younger residents.

An entry form and list of classes was circulated in the last Grapevine (go and get it out of the recycling pile now!) and are also available from Len Weir in Elliscombe Road (8858 4920/07583 759917) and to download from the CCRA website (see address below.) A 'Hints and Tips' document is also available to offer guidance on what the judges will be looking for in a successful entry.

Why not give it a go?

• www.charltonresidents.org

News in brief

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. 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.

Small ads

Watering garden: would anyone be willing to water our garden when we are away at weekends or on holiday? We could do the same for you? David and Dania (tel: 07894702272)

Good home needed for a piano: John Broadwood square piano c1794. Decorative but in need of renovation. David (tel: 020 8305 1737)

Hover mower and strimmer: we have no use for these but if you have please ring Chris on 020 8858 7377. No charge but buyer collects.

Station Books

Yvonne at the station tells us that she received a parcel containing a selection of new books direct from the publisher for CCRA's station bookshelf. Don't forget that you can always add to the collection. On Saturday, 6 July there will be a book swap as part of our community day. Bring your books and see if anyone else's treasured volumes suit you – they are all free!

Air pollution

A recent YouTube video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPTN75z86JI>) describes the actions of a group in Putney who were concerned about high levels of air pollution in busy streets. A local group has picked up this idea and is in the process of monitoring air quality in parts of our borough. Results, which could affect us all, are due in the summer - watch this space for more information!

Comments, feedback, queries or material for the next edition of Grapevine, should be emailed to grapevine@charltonresidents.org by 26 August. Alternatively phone Linda Pound on 0208 858 7377, Bob Smith on 0208 853 2697 or Joy Ogden on 0208 293 3034.



CHARLTON GRAPEVINE

VINTAGE 25 ☁ JULY 2013

The newsletter of the Charlton Central Residents Association



Food for thought

The weather was good and so was the food as CCRA members met at Charlton Park last month for the Big Lunch. This event, started in 2009 by the Eden project, aims to get people across the UK to have lunch with their neighbours, once a year, in a simple act of community, friendship and fun.

And so it was in Charlton, where families and friends brought their blankets and chairs for a bumper picnic in the park. As usual, CCRA musi-

cians were on hand and a good time was had by all.

A total of £70 was raised which will be donated to the Greenwich foodbanks. If you'd like to contribute you can leave a food donation at 26 Wellington Gardens or 8 Elliscombe Road and we will ensure it reaches them.

For full details visit their website <http://greenwich.foodbank.org.uk/> Suggested donations include Milk (UHT) or powdered; sugar, tinned food, rice or pasta, teabags, instant coffee.

Making a clean sweep

Every year a band of local residents volunteer to help CCRA on its Community Day. We focus on cleaning and making general improvements to our streets. In the morning we need people to help clear litter – it might not sound much fun but we provide a nifty litter-picker and a high-vis tabard!

STOP PRESS

Coming up roses?

Channel 4 is looking for Charlton residents to take part in a brand new TV series with Mary Portas. If your garden needs a makeover or just some horticultural expertise, contact Plum Pictures, a London-based TV production company at work@plumpictures.co.uk

This year it's on 6 July and our main focus is on community safety – one of CCRA's key aims. With the disturbing recent events in Woolwich in mind we are privileged to have members of the Metropolitan police to give a presentation on community safety and counter terrorism. What do the police do to make us safe? How can we help the fight against terrorism? How do we go about reporting anything suspicious? Come and find out from the experts. In addition there will be information about local community safety issues (anti-social behaviour, noisy neighbours etc) and a representative from Trading Standards will also talk about doorstep crime and the Nominate a Neighbour Scheme to help vulnerable residents.

See page 4 for details.



Volunteers are urgently needed on Saturday 6 July to help make our Community Day a success. Join us at St Richard's Hall at 10 am to help clean our streets. Working together makes a difference!

How we fight for SE7...

We residents of central Charlton are proud of our neighbourhood. It's SE7 to some, but for us it's SE Heaven. Keeping it a good place to live is often a struggle against others less concerned about our environment, and requires constant vigilance. That's one of the reasons why CCRA was formed and that's why we fight so hard to keep planning development in check.

Our Planning Action Group is kept pretty busy. Recently for example, you will have received a flier outlining changes being made to the documents which determine the council's policy for planning decisions. CCRA made an extensive response on your behalf, highlighting several concerns including air pollution and the amount of green space in our area.

The council doesn't favour 'garden-grabbing': building on what has been garden space is not popular with residents. Being close to good transport links makes SE7 a popular area for intensive development – but we need room to breathe and we need the trees to help us do that.

Any planning application should be brought to the attention of close neighbours. The council is sup-

posed to notify neighbours – either by letter or by attaching notices to nearby lamp posts. This does not always happen, so CCRA monitors the situation to keep you abreast of proposed developments.

This is not easy. Greenwich Council's website is hardly ever up to date – council officers sometimes blame their workload and sometimes indicate that delays are due to problems with the website itself. And although Greenwich undertook to keep CCRA informed of all planning applications in our area, this does not always happen.

In the regular meetings that have now been set up with planning officers this has been identified as a problem and will continue to be raised with them.

We remain concerned about Greenwich's frequent failure to enforce planning conditions. Usually, for example, conditions are imposed on hours of work, finishing materials etc, but failures, although reported, are rarely followed up. We continue to raise this issue with our local councillors and with council officers. In a future issue of Grapevine we will include details of ways in which you can respond to planning applications.

...and what you say about the planners

Continuing our regular reports on results from last year's CCRA survey of residents' views: Planning

There have been many changes in our built environment in the last 10 years and the new development along Woolwich Road makes it more important than ever that we know how the council's

decisions will impact on our lives.

The 2009 CCRA survey of residents' views showed high levels of dissatisfaction with the planning process. Fifty eight per cent of residents thought the Council wouldn't listen to their views and were concerned about the Council consultation process. Originally, planning was our environment group's responsibility. But because of the vast amount of work involved in tracking, challenging and calling the Council to account on planning applications CCRA decided we needed a separate planning group. The planning group has become a strong voice for Charlton's residents that the Council cannot ignore, doggedly pursuing information on large and small developments. Our 2012 survey showed only slight improvements in residents' confidence in the planning process (44% satisfaction rating). As well as the consultation process, multiple occupation (28%) and poor planning enforcement (25%) remain of concern. If you're interested in planning issues contact Linda on 0208 858 7377. Join us in making Charlton a better place to live.



SEWING TIME

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An intrepid group of cyclists set off on CCRA's first cycle ride on 12 May. With ages ranging from 6 to 60+, we were expertly guided by Duncan and Jane through the back lanes of Charlton and Blackheath down to the River Ravensbourne at Lewisham, which we followed as far as Bell Green before returning for a well-deserved lunch in the Guildford Arms. Many thanks to Duncan and Jane for organising what we hope will be the first of many such expeditions.

The power of flowers

Residents got their bi-annual chance to peep behind the scenes last month and enjoy the kaleidoscopic splendour that is the gardens of Charlton. Our ever-popular Open Gardens event was well attended as CCRA members popped in and out of the designated gardens to admire and maybe steal horticultural secrets from our array of proud gardeners.



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

Treat yourself to his delicious breads, cakes and delicatessen.



How does the garden grow?

After three Working Party days the Charlton station site is partially cleared and with Greenwich Community College we ran a Family Learning event on the con-course in early May. At the end of the month the raised beds arrived, built by Men in Sheds (Age UK Greenwich and Bromley) and we planted out our seedlings grown by members. With our volunteer watering rota and some sunshine, there will soon be produce to share - the salad crops are up already! Our website is under development but use the email contact if you'd like to get involved: charltoncommunitygardens@gmail.com More clearing is needed before additional raised beds arrive in September. And many hands will make lighter work of the watering rota.

Join us on Community Day



Programme All events take place at St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road, on Saturday, 6 July

10 am Volunteers for litter picking gather, then disperse in teams

12 noon Free lunch for volunteers

1 pm onwards Teas, coffees and soft drinks for sale, plus a free book swap. Bring books you don't want and take home books you do.

1.30 pm The Metropolitan Police's presentation on counter-terrorism (There will be a space set aside for children, with toys etc)

3 pm Presentation from Jackie Watson from Trading Standards on doorstep crime and the Nominate a Neighbour Scheme.

3.15 -4.30 pm Throughout the afternoon a range of stalls with information on community safety, eg. women's safety, anti-social behaviour, noise nuisance, transport safety etc

How we can help keep our streets clean

In the last edition of Grapevine we reported people's concerns about the appearance of our streets. Community Day provides an opportunity to do something about the way our streets look but we need to work together on a day to day basis by: getting dog fouling cleaned up - phone 020 8921 4661; returning bins left on the street after rubbish collections to front gardens, to avoid obstructions; (if

your neighbour is away or unable to do this you might return theirs too); by removing graffiti or any rubbish dumped in the street by ringing 020 8921 4661; by using the borough's blue, black, green system for rubbish system for rubbish. we save money for the council - and therefore for us all. Food and garden waste goes in the green bin; dry recycled goods in the blue and all other non-recyclable in the black top bin.

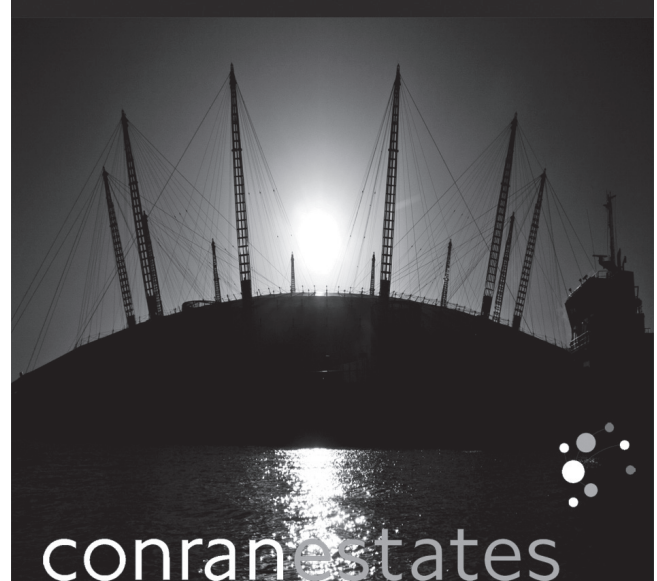


On the road to enlightenment

CCRA has had serious concerns about poor road and pavement surfaces and inadequate lighting. While we hope to continue monitoring in some form it has proved difficult to get enough volunteers to make this work. However, Greenwich Council has suggested that everyone can help by logging onto www.lovecleanstreets.org/. You can either download a free app for your smartphone or register online to report problems on your street.

Guidelines on how the reporting process works are on the website. The Environment group wants to monitor how effective the Council's response is to reported issues, so we would be grateful if you could let us know about any problem you encounter. You can either e-mail environment@ccra.org.uk or call Palvinder on 07984121761. CCRA hopes this will be a more efficient way of reporting, as the council will be informed of the problem immediately rather than at the end of each month.

SALES • LETTINGS • PROPERTY MANAGEMENT





Watch out! CCRA residents send out an emphatic reminder that we are a Neighbourhood Watch area

Working together for a safer neighbourhood

CCRA Survey of Residents' Views: Community Safety

Continuing our regular reports on results from last year's residents' survey

How safe do you feel living in Charlton? When did you last see a 'Bobby on the beat'? How do our crime rates compare to similar neighbourhoods? In the Metropolitan Policing figures for crime, Charlton is an 'average' crime area with below London averages for many types of crime (muggings, etc.).

So what aspects of Law and Order concern CCRA residents and how have perceptions changed in three years? In the 2009 CCRA Survey of Residents' Views only 42% of residents thought the police would respond quickly if they needed them. In 2012 however, 56% of residents were happy about the policing of our area.

Our front line policing is done by the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) – that is the one Sergeant, two Police Constables (PCs) and three PC Support Workers) who walk our streets. In 2009, the lack of police patrolling was a concern for 89% of residents, but this has reduced dramatically to 36% in 2012, so it is clear that our SNT has a much greater 'presence' on the streets.

During the last three years there has been a steady decrease in burglaries, although this still comes top of

the list of residents' concerns, with 36% reporting it a problem in the 2012 survey. Residents also reported the following as problem issues: 30% - anti-social behaviour (down from 56% in 2009), 29% felt unsafe at the corner shops (down from 34% in 2009), 18% felt unsafe at the station (down from 34% in 2009), 16% drug use (down from 36% in 2009) and 14% drunks on the streets (down from 27% in 2009).

The 2012 survey shows marked improvements in residents' perceptions of community safety. During this period CCRA have supported the setting up of Charlton Central Neighbourhood Watch (CCNW). It's free to join and the current 200 members receive regular UPDATES and INSTANT ALERTS about safety, law and order. If you want to know what is going on in our streets then join the Watch by contacting Annie (thegalloways28@hotmail.com) or Brenda (brendataggart49@gmail.com) for membership. While all of the crime stats in the CCRA area are heading in the right direction we are not complacent and by working with the Police, alongside the community, we can make a significant difference to safety in our area. CCRA and CCNW are working together to make Charlton a safer place to live.

I heard it on the grapevine...

How happy is my valley?

Well done Charlton for finishing a creditable ninth in our return season in the championship. It was up and down for many months, but when it really counted we came through, finishing unbeaten in our last seven games and delivering a convincing death blow to already relegated Bristol City at the Valley with a 4-1 win.

We ended as the inform team and wiser pundits than me suggested that if the season had gone on for a couple more games we would have got into the play offs and should have won them and thence to the Premiership! But that honour went to local rivals Palace. We had poor results against both Palace and Millwall, failing to win against either of them. The Bugle Inquest Jury met following the final match and, after lengthy discussions, concluded it had been a good season in the circumstances. And they were that we were fielding a relatively raw Championship side spearheaded by a relatively raw manager. But all came through the test well. Chris Powell goes from strength to strength, learning from mistakes and maximizing his squad. I questioned some of his late substitutions. Putting on a new front man with eight minutes to go and expecting him to make a difference is asking an awful lot. But Powell did start to bring on subs earlier and that did make a difference. He changed his squad when our home form stuttered

mid-season and he gave Hamer a timely reminder to pull his socks up by dropping him for a couple of games when he seemed to quite literally take his eye off the ball.

Plus points for me were the continuing brilliant form of Player of the Year Chris Solly, the second year he has clinched the title and the inspirational leadership of captain Jonny Jackson, runner up Player of the Year and, with Yann Kermorgant, the joint top scorer.

My favourite game was our 5-4 win at home over champions Cardiff when, after our lacklustre early performance, Jackson, took the game by the scruff of the neck and slammed in two quick goals to get us level at the interval. It was the catalyst the Boys needed and they came out and played a 20 minute purple patch when Cardiff stood mesmerized as we smashed in three more goals before Cardiff came back again and scored two more. Exhilarating stuff. Sad to see Scott Wagstaff is among those not offered a new contract. Midfielder Mark Gower, who joined us on loan at the end of last season, has signed a one-year deal and Andy Hughes, Dorian Dervitte and youngster Callum Harriott have also signed new deals. I'm sure there will be more squad changes to come and I look forward to the new season with anticipation. 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



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Community interest groups

Book group

We have just finished Mo Yan's 'Red Sorghum', a challenging and horrific account of the battle between the Chinese and their Japanese invaders in the 1930s. Although there were some poetic and colourful descriptions of landscapes, it was difficult to get away from the interminable descriptions of flaying, beheading, beatings, rape and general 'war' - not for the faint hearted...

So much so that we decided to go into recovery mode and read Kate Atkinson's 'Life after Life' which is billed as her stunning new novel, about a woman who lives through the most turbulent events of the 20th century, including the London Blitz, and which asks: What if you had the chance to live your life again and again, until you finally got it right?. Intriguing?



On 23 July we'll be holding Pimms and Print, which will be an opportunity to share summer holiday reading and celebrate the sunshine. We'd welcome some new members or anyone interested in finding out more, so do come and join us.

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Walking group

Event: Shoreham and the Lavender Fields of Castle Farm Date: Sunday, 14 July. Leaving 8 Elliscombe Road at 11am. Bring a picnic. If you would like further information or to be added to the mailing list, please contact Palvinder on 07984121761 or events@ccra.org.uk. Treasure Hunt, Sunday, 8 September.

If you would like to join us for an afternoon of fun, adventure and intrigue, why don't you get together with friends and family in a team of 3 - 4. Get your entries in to: events@ccra.org.uk or drop a note at 8 Elliscombe Road. Information needed: Name of team; contact number and e-mail address of team leader. Cost per person: £1.00. For further information call either Jill on 020 8853 4366 or Palvinder on 07984 121 761.



Singing Group

The singing group continues to be well attended, and we hope this will continue through the rest of the summer. Our regular sessions take place alternately on Mondays and Thursdays. Our remaining dates are: 11 and 22 July. 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')

We are continuing to play our usual mix of music in our regular fortnightly sessions. Meanwhile, the 'core' band played at Cattleya on 21 April and 12 May, and three of us provided music for the Big Lunch in Charlton Park on 2 June. Our remaining sessions are: 1 and 15 July. We will be back at Cattleya in July – dates to be confirmed shortly. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.