

PLANNING

our future together ...

Imagine you're at a party and someone starts talking about 'Planning' – not planning what to do with their lives – but what the council is planning to build. If, like most local people, your eyes glaze over and you make your excuses to join another group, you are not alone.

BUT if you are looking to find somewhere to live, as many local people are, you might just listen. So – listen up!

The biggest planning issue in Greenwich is the lack of social housing and genuinely affordable housing. The thousands of flats built along the riverside have not even dented the problem, it has got worse. And many of the 'affordable' properties being built for rent require incomes well above the local average, while those that are part rent/part buy require an income of £60,000 or more.

The current borough plan has a target of 35% 'affordable' properties, but in practice a much lower figure is often negotiated, often less than 20%. Although the council has strong policies on the environment, the new riverside areas are now deemed deficient in open space, and what were once family-centred policies about the heights above ground level at which young children should live, seem to have become meaningless.

The borough plan, which sets out the whole range of



Computer generated impression of a 28-storey tower proposed for the Riverside site in 2016

policies and guidance that must be followed in making planning decisions, is the most important planning document a local authority produces. The last review in Greenwich was in 2014 and the formal process has now started for a new plan aimed at 2025. Consultation on which important issues to include is under way, to be followed this autumn and winter by more consideration of major development sites: this will be crucial for Charlton's future, because our riverside is one of the most important remaining sites. Next spring and summer, a first draft

of the new plan will be subject to widespread consultation.

There are suggestions that the Charlton Riverside Masterplan, agreed in 2017, which is on a par with the borough plan, should be 'updated'. That outlined a mixed development of low/medium-rise homes and employment opportunities. Housing up to six storeys was to be the maximum height of most of the flats or houses. But in a consultation on major sites at the end of 2021, it was proposed that eight should replace six, and many locations – not just a few – could be up to ten storeys high. Very modest open space, play and sports facilities were suggested and reference to a health centre disappeared, along with any idea of houses. And the 2017 figure of 3,500 to 5,000 homes has become 7-8,000 in the London Plan.

The Masterplan should be updated to meet the needs of local people, NOT the developers. We want a riverside which is socially mixed and that requires a major insertion of social housing and generous open space. We need decent homes for everyone. We may be told to "Get real" but for thousands of local residents, the reality is – not being able to find and afford a decent home – and that MUST change, so, we must make sure Charlton voices are heard loud and clear in the next year or so.



HOLD THIS DATE:

Saturday 11 November at St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road

Following the success of last November's Concert for Ukraine, CCRA is planning another concert in support of refugees fleeing from the war in Ukraine and other conflict zones.

We cannot do this without your help. In particular we would welcome:

- Performers (musical and readers) including Ukrainian and other refugees
- Volunteers to help at event

Call Chris on 020 8858 7377 or Jacqui 07717 742886 or email membership@charltonresidents.net

STOP PRESS: CCRA's annual Flower, Craft and Produce Show has finally arrived. See the back page for more details, scan the code, or visit bit.ly/CCRA-flowershow11



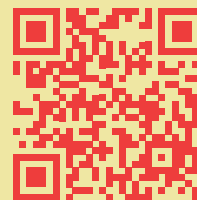
MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Many thanks to all who have renewed for 2023.

Your support is really appreciated

If you have not yet renewed, there are three ways to do this:

1. Scan the QR code
2. Visit forms.gle/Gs7DHHzGDsdFieN58
3. Call or text 07717742886 to request a paper membership renewal form.



CCRA AGM - followed by the ever-popular
QUIZ NIGHT

St Richard's Church Hall, Swallowfield Road
Saturday, 7 October Everyone welcome!

CCRA AGM and Quiz Night!

CCRA will be holding our AGM, followed by our ever-popular Quiz Night, at St Richard's Church Hall, Swallowfield Road on Saturday, 7 October 2023. Everyone is welcome!

Our AGM will start at

6pm. It gives us a chance to meet friends and neighbours, to hear

what's been going on and to discuss our plans for the future. Full members also elect officers and members of our management committee

for 2023/24.

Our Quiz Night will then kick off at 7.30pm. Come as a team or join a team on the night. There will be a licensed bar selling refreshments and prizes for the winning teams.

If you plan to come to the Quiz, why not come early and join the AGM which is guaranteed to be both interesting and informative. You'll find out more about your community and if you

would like to propose a resolution for consideration at the AGM, or any changes to our constitution, please contact our Chair, Jonathan, at chair@charltonresidents.net or on 07875 054597.

Please send any proposed resolutions by midnight on Friday 15 September and any proposed amendments to our constitution by midnight on Friday 22 September.

The Old Cottage Coffee Shop

A traditional tea shop serving high quality tea, coffee and snacks

Open every day from 10am in Charlton Park



GRAPEVINE

Comments, feedback, queries or material for the next edition of *Grapevine* should be emailed to grapevine@charltonresidents.net by 31 October 2023.

Alternatively, phone Joy Ogden on 020 8293 3034 or Bob Smith on 020 8853 2697. *Grapevine* reaches 900 homes and retail outlets in our designated area and beyond.

TO ADVERTISE, contact grapevine@charltonresidents.net. Rates for individuals and small businesses: small ads up to 15 words plus contact details: £10 for one issue, £30 for four. Panel ads single column 8cm x 8cm: £40 each for 1-4 issues, £35 each for 5+. Other sizes, please enquire.

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

High quality theatre – live and local

About 70 years ago, the Bramshot Avenue Congregational Church (now the URC) held a concert and the Friendship Club performed a one-act play called *Tea-Time Tempest*.

Later the club put on an evening of its own with two plays, and from these small beginnings, The Alexandra Players were formed.

The Players' records show that, since 1966, over 100 different plays have been performed with only three repeats

– *Blithe Spirit* (1975 and 2003), *Absurd Person Singular* (1979 and 2009) and *Play On!* (1988 and 2011).

The Alexandra Players aim to bring live theatre of the highest possible quality to the local area, with a mixture of drama and comedy which is sometimes amusing, sometimes frightening, often thought provoking, but always, they hope, entertaining.

The group's next play *Beyond a Joke* by Derek Benfield will be performed

during half term week for four nights only from Wednesday 25 October until Saturday 28 October.

The box office opens two weeks before opening night.

For more information see alexandraplayers.org.uk. If you would like to be kept informed about future productions, please send an email with your details to alexandraplayers@gmail.com and they will add you to their mailing list.



The Alexander Players in rehearsal

Community stalwart Rita Yardley dies

On 26 June, Rita Frances Yardley died peacefully at the age of 87 in the home where she had lived for more than 50 years.

Her funeral on 18 July was well-attended and was conducted by Liz Newman. It was followed by a wake at The Bugle, in Charlton Village.

Rita had been ill for a number of years, throughout which she was cared for by family members, with the support of carers.

She was born in Plumstead and grew up in Stratheden Road, moving to Swallowfield Road in 1959 where she brought up her three sons – Paul, Philip and Neil.

She supported her family through work as a cleaner, a housekeeper and latterly as the church caretaker for 28 years. Throughout her life she gave invaluable practical support to the church and to the community.

A local resident told Rita's sons that without their mother's support in clothing them and getting them rehoused, she and her young family would not have survived.

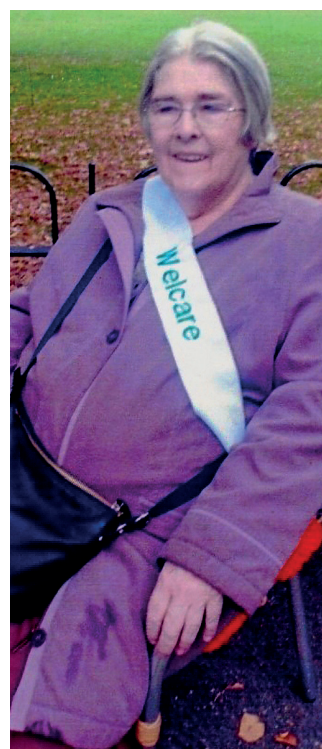
Fund-raising was Rita's forte! CCRA members may remember Rita combing through freecycle events for soft toys which she repaired and refurbished for her soft toy tombolas.

But this was not all she

did: she raised money for local Cubs and Scouts, for the church and for Welcare.

Perhaps her most high-profile fund-raising activity was her involvement in getting the fountain in Charlton Village reinstated after a motorist crashed into it. This took not just money but organisational skills in getting the right local people to do the tasks that were needed – and Rita was the woman for that!

Rita is survived by her three sons and two grandchildren, and by her sister Sandra. She will be missed not just by them but by the community that she loyally served and generously supported for so much of her life.



A new Community Café for Charlton

CCRA are embarking on a new venture with Charlton C of E (St Luke's/Thomas/Richard's Churches) to provide a new community service.

On the last Tuesday of the month, between 2 and 4pm in St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Road we will be running a new Community Café.

The Community Café is more than just a pop-in place to have a cuppa. It is a place to meet up with old friends

and make new ones. The café will be warm, cosy and entertaining. It is a place to indulge your interests in a convivial atmosphere.

Come along and have a cuppa whilst chatting, knitting, crocheting or carving, having a game of chess, cards, or Scrabble. Following on from the success of CCRA's Spring Social Games Night we know there are some keen games players in our area. We will provide

some board games but you can always bring along your own. Alternatively, you can just pop in for some cake and conversation.

The Café will be launched on Tuesday, 26 September and will then run on 31 October, 28 November and 19 December.

Come and join us at the Community Café. All are welcome so come along and meet your neighbours.

Linking up the loops

The Superloop fast buses providing a link between outer London stations and other key points are to be brought into service quickly and final consultations are already under way.

Though we're not claiming responsibility, our suggestion that the bus from Bromley to Bexleyheath should continue to Abbey Wood has been picked up and will go on to Thamesmead; it will be route SL 2. Across the ferry, on the other side of the river SL 3. will now start at North Woolwich, with first stops at Barking and Ilford, going on to Walthamstow.

If they prove to be clean, reliable and reasonably quick, they will soon get picked up by London's commuters and shoppers and be an important addition to integrated public transport in the capital.



TFL

THE RIVER
ALE HOUSE

131 WOOLWICH ROAD



Twice SE London Camra pub of the year
Four times SE London Camra cider pub of the year
SPBW Greater London pub of the year 2019

THE WHITE SWAN COULD DISAPPEAR

There's a new planning application for the White Swan public house in Charlton village, which would result in the pub disappearing altogether, in spite of earlier promises from the owner to retain it as a pub.

The whole of the ground floor and most of the garden would be used to create a large shop; two floors would be built on top of the existing building providing a total of seven flats of different sizes.

Meanwhile efforts continue by a community group to raise funds to establish an arts centre and reopen the pub.

You can anticipate the planning application will come before a public committee at some point in the next six weeks. If you want to comment on this idea, scan the code or go to bit.ly/white-swan-planning-0823



ULEZ SAVES LIVES

OPINION by
Dave Picton

Ten years ago, a nine-year-old girl, living in Lewisham close to the South Circular Road died.

In 2020, the coroner attributed her death to air pollution.

Ella Kissi-Debrah's mother set up a foundation whose aim is to ensure that the coroner's recommendations are adhered to.

The coroner's concerns were addressed to central government, Lewisham council and to medical professionals and he advised that the World Health Organisation's guidelines on particulate levels should be seen as minimum (rather than safe) standards; that people should be made more aware of the dangers from particulates in their area; and that medical professionals should focus more on the impact of poor air quality on people's health.

Better information would enable people to make better decisions about steps they could take to protect themselves and their children.

At present in London, poor air quality in many localities greatly exceeds the limits set out, and this was reflected in air quality monitoring undertaken in

the CCRA area some years ago, before the introduction of London's Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ).

Reducing air pollution can save lives; that is what ULEZ is all about.

Dirty exhaust fumes from old diesel and petrol engines are particularly poisonous and cause thousands of Londoners to suffer serious respiratory diseases and death.

Children are especially at risk, as the particles can stop the proper development of their lungs, affecting them for the rest of their lives.

And there is evidence that ULEZ is working. Since October 2021 when ULEZ was extended to include our area, harmful polluted emissions are down in inner London by 26% and by nearly a half in the central zone compared with what they would have been without ULEZ.

The level of particulates is down 41%, while in outer London, where restrictions have not yet begun, pollution levels remain the same.

The controversy that arose about the further extensions of ULEZ in the recent Uxbridge by-election raises questions.

Without doubt, the cost of ULEZ most impacts Londoners who are already the most disadvantaged.

The government is ready to finance car scrappage schemes in other parts of the country but has refused such support to London. Happily, the mayor has responded by finding additional resources to expand his scrappage scheme to all Londoners with non-compliant cars. He has also increased the possible payments, picking up some concerns about small businesses and charities. For full details see bit.ly/TfL-ULEZ-scrappage.

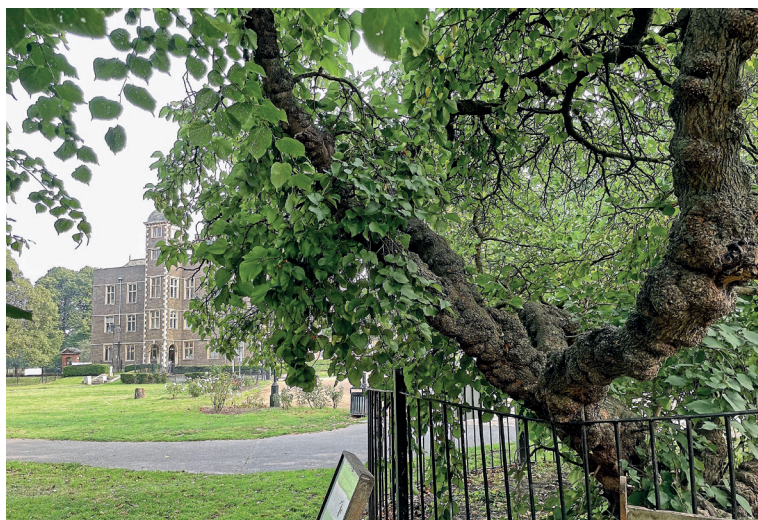
Nowhere in London yet meets standards for clean air. There is still a long way to go and gradually introducing electric vehicles is a step forward.

Even more important is public transport. In both respects London is fortunate. The borough of Westminster alone has more charging points than Greater Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool combined and London's transport system (despite our gripes) is the envy of the rest of the country.

But we should recognise what is being done.

Fewer will die; fewer will suffer from asthma, cancer, lung disease, and dementia.

Credit where credit's due for a mayor prepared to take difficult decisions. What's your view?



Charlton House's mulberry tree is said to have been planted around 1608, at a time when James I was attempting to encourage landowners to plant 100,000 mulberry trees, so that homegrown rather than imported silk could be used. Sadly the mulberries planted were black rather than white – the latter being the ones that silkworms feed on!



The Upbeats fly to Belfast

The Upbeats: flying onwards and upwards

In our last edition we featured the good news story about the Upbeats – Charlton's Down's Syndrome football team, sponsored by Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT).

We reported that supporters had raised a staggering £49,000 on this year's sponsored walk. We can now report that some of that money has been spent in sending the Upbeats to Belfast, to participate in the George Best Community Cup, a pan-disability tournament organised by the Irish Football Association.

Successful fund-raising has meant that record numbers of Upbeats were able to travel to Belfast, who were then able to reach a record-breaking stage in the competition. It has also meant that CACT has been able to purchase new equipment and increase staffing at the team's weekly coaching sessions.



CHARLTON NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM Green spaces workshop 14 October – it's a date!

This community group was created to allow people living, working or studying locally to have a say on development taking place in our neighbourhood. The group has been officially designated by Greenwich Council which gives legal status and formal recognition, giving Charlton area residents a voice on planning matters.

In order to accurately reflect these views, the Forum has embarked on a number of events to find out what locals would like to see in the future in SE7. We've run several successful walks exploring our open spaces, residential areas and those areas identified for development.

At the Get-Together in Charlton Park, people from across SE7 gave us feedback. They told us they loved being in Charlton because 'It's one of the nicer parts of London, not too posh, with a good social mix'. They loved the 'transport links' and 'people are friendly'. Everyone loved the

parks, particularly Charlton Park. They had strong views on how to improve our area: 'it would be great to see the White Swan in use again', 'Improve the streetscape/public realm' and do something about the 'traffic and pollution'.

But the Forum needs to hear more from you. We are planning a series of focussed workshops so we can better understand how we can champion what matters most to those in Charlton.

The first workshop will focus on Green Spaces – what do we value, what works, what needs improving? If you want to help shape the future of Charlton, then come along to St Richard's Church Centre, Swallowfield Road, SE7 7NR at 11am–1pm on Saturday, 14 October. Take the opportunity to meet the Forum's Committee, talk to people who care about SE7, and have your say.

You can find out more at: charltonneighbourhoodforum.org and twitter.com/CharltonNForum

Do you want to be part of the Charlton Neighbourhood Forum?

Do you know anyone living in Troughton, Rathmore, Fairthorn, Rainton, Gurdon, Hardman, Dupree Roads and Feltram/Ramac Way and the houses north of the railway line in Victoria Way? If you do, then share this information with them.

When the Charlton Neighbourhood Forum was designated, these roads were excluded from the 'Area' by Greenwich Council, even though they had been democratically included. The exclusion was largely based on a recommendation from three Peninsula councillors – two of whom are no longer councillors there.

We would like to restore these roads to the 'Area' giving residents living there a legitimate voice. If you live in one of these roads and would like to be included, sign our petition at charltonneighbourhoodforum.org/index.php/petition. We need as many signatures as possible to show the Council that local views count.

Losing our PCSO

Our delight at being fully staffed on our Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team sadly has been short lived. We are very sorry to see our dedicated Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Mike Rabin leave the Ward. Mike has been an exemplary PCSO and has got to know our area very

well, pounding the beat, attending public engagement events, providing crime prevention advice and supporting victims of crime for a number of years. He will be sorely missed. We wish Mike all the very best in his new role, at New Scotland Yard, working on initiatives to bolster public engagement.



CENTRAL CHARLTON COMMUNITY MEMBERS GET TOGETHER ...

Thanks to everyone who took part in the CCRA Community Day. Amazing support on so many levels, from the lovely volunteers throughout the day, to the donations of scones which were really enjoyed by all.

Fantastic numbers of local residents, and Good Gym volunteers, turned up to spruce up our streets.

This hard work was rewarded with a brilliant community lunch in St Richard's Hall. Thanks also to all who organised the Big Clean-Up and lunch. Everything was superbly organised and the food was delicious.

In the afternoon we held our third Arts, Crafts and Jumble Trail. Thanks to all who ran a stall and everyone

who attended the Trail. Lots of lovely crafts available as well as all sorts of items, old and new, and delicious baked goods.

Altogether a wonderful afternoon: an opportunity to meet people and enjoy our neighbourhood, as well as get presents and find some great treasures.





Michael John
Partner at Conran Charlton

The Benefits of Improving Your Home Energy Efficiency Before Selling

Are you a homeowner thinking of putting your property on the market this year? Don't forget to consider energy efficiency upgrades before listing it, as these can make a huge difference in how much prospective buyers are willing to pay. Not only that but also residences with improved energy efficiency have lower utility bills for years to come – win-win!

Why Make Energy Improvements Even When You're Selling?

Even if you're planning on selling your humble abode, investing in home energy efficiency improvements is a no-brainer. Not only does it make your property more appealing to potential buyers, but it also increases its overall value. Plus, with rising energy costs, buyers are becoming increasingly interested in properties with energy-efficient features, such as double-glazed windows, insulation, and modern heating systems. And let's not forget the environmental benefits – reducing your carbon footprint is always a good thing. So, don't let your home energy efficiency fall by the wayside when it comes to selling your property – your bank account and the planet will thank you!

Increase Your Property's Value With Minimal Investment

The potential of increasing your property's value with minimal investment is huge when you make green upgrades. By making eco-friendly improvements, you can reduce your carbon footprint, save on utility bills, and boost your home's value when it comes to selling. You can acquire a green mortgage with help from Conran Mortgages for the project.

Practical Ways of Improving Your Home's Energy Efficiency

Here are some cost-effective approaches to boost your property's energy efficiency and leapfrog the competition:

Install LED Lighting: Switch to energy-efficient LED bulbs that not only provide ample illumination but also consume 90% less energy than traditional incandescent bulbs.

Insulate your Home: Insulation is the key to keeping your home warm in winter and cool in summer while reducing energy consumption by 30-50%. Invest in affordable insulation solutions, such as spray foam, cellulose, or blown-in insulation.

Upgrade to Energy Star Appliances: Energy Star appliances consume up to 50% less energy than standard models, saving homeowners over £1000 during their lifetime.

Seal Air Leaks: Air leaks are a big energy waster, accounting for 25-30% of your home's heating and cooling loss. Use caulking or spray foam to seal gaps around doors, windows, and vents, and save up to 20% on your home's energy bills.

Invest in Smart Thermostats: Smart thermostats help optimize your home's HVAC system, adjust temperature settings, and learn your heating and cooling habits. They can help lower your energy bills by up to 10% and fetch an ROI in just a few months.

Get Green Accreditations to Further Boost Your Property's Market Value

Green technologies such as solar panels and smart heating systems can add value to your property in the long run, making it more attractive to buyers. So not only are you helping the environment, but you're also investing in your property's future by getting green accreditations. In fact, according to a recent study, green homes in the UK are worth up to 14% more than traditional homes. "Going green" never looked so good.

To Sum Up...

If you're looking to save money on energy bills and foster a healthier living environment, increasing your home's energy efficiency is the way to go. It's a smart move when looking to sell your property too. While financing improvements may seem daunting, strategic budgeting and green mortgage opportunities make boosting your home's value a breeze. Want to really impress potential buyers? Consider getting green accreditations for an added market value boost. ! Not sure where to start or how to finance these changes? Give the knowledgeable advisors at **Conran Mortgages** a call to know more about acquiring a **Green Mortgage**. Our services are completely free.

BROCKLEY | FOREST HILL 020 8629 8164
CHARLTON | WESTCOMBE PARK 020 8293 0454
LEE | ELTHAM 020 8378 5450
GREENWICH | BLACKHEATH 020 8312 8312
ASSOCIATED PARK LANE OFFICE 020 7409 4693
LAND AND NEW HOMES 020 8658 4642
LETTINGS MANAGEMENT DEPT 020 8312 8316
MORTGAGE ARRANGING DEPT 020 8528 2251

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conran
a refreshing change



VICTORIA WAY, CHARLTON

GUIDE PRICE £450,000- £475,000

An unexpectedly perfect apartment! Super high ceilings, magical living space, lots of natural light and a huge bedroom. EPC: D



RATHMORE ROAD, CHARLTON

ASKING PRICE £625,000

If you're looking for a home to add your own mark, this spacious Victorian terraced house offers the potential to improve and extend to create the perfect family home. EPC: D



FRANK BURTON CLOSE, CHARLTON

OFFERS OVER £250,000

With excellent views of Canary Wharf and Docklands, this is a super top floor apartment in a private development close to Charlton rail station. EPC: D



CHARLTON CHURCH LANE, CHARLTON

GUIDE PRICE £575,000- £600,000

Offering over 1,300sq ft of space, we highly recommend an internal inspection of this brilliantly located end-of-terrace home! EPC: E



WILLIAM CLOSE, CHARLTON

ASKING PRICE £785,000

An impressive three-level end-of-terrace townhouse in a private gated cul-de-sac with off-street parking. Built only several years ago, it has superb family accommodation and offers flexible living.

This house has a large open-plan living space with modern kitchen units and doors out to a wrap-around garden plot. There is a handy downstairs cloakroom and four bedrooms with three bathrooms over the upper two floors. The master bedroom has a lovely balcony as well

as an ensuite.

Currently tenanted, the house is completely chain free and ideal for access to local primary schools, The Village, parks, and the station.

With an incredible super energy efficient EPC rating of 'A', this house is highly recommended!

EPC: A



How happy is my valley?

... A view from the terraces

More than 18,000 fans thronged the Valley for Charlton's first home game of the new season against London rivals and league one newbies Leyton Orient.

It's more than a year since so many supporters turned out to watch the team. Full of hope for the future and with new owners, a relatively new manager and a lot of new faces in the side, optimism was high.

The Boys duly obliged with a confident display and captain George Dobson led from the front scoring the only goal of the encounter. Have we turned the corner? Is promotion beckoning? Sadly, we flattered to deceive. All that early belief is quickly turning to scepticism as we demonstrate yet again that we are not likely to be contenders this season.

Why? Well, it's the usual suspects; no squad strength in depth and an over reliance on youngsters and a slew of injuries to key players.

This was quickly demonstrated the following week when we went to Newport in the first round of the Carabao Cup. Remember, we made the quarter finals last year and took on mighty Man United at Old Trafford?

No such heroics this time. We took the lead through Academy graduate Daniel Kanu in the first half and were dominant for most of the match but three defensive errors late on in the second half cost us dearly and we ended up 1-3 down. Disappointing.

Even more frustrating was our first away outing to Peterborough, stalwarts of league one, and tipped to be in the top six at season's close. No goals from us and again we were dominant, but a defensive slip cost us the match, Peterborough running out 0-1 winners.



Worse was to come with a 1-2 home defeat to Bristol Rovers. Conclusion: just not good enough. Yes, there are good youngsters, but we can't rely on them all the time.

The current tendency is to hope winger Cory Blackett-Taylor will produce the goods and he frequently does, whipping crosses over and taking shots himself.

But we are so evidently lacking up front. Alfie May, our signing from Cheltenham is a proven striker (he scored 20 goals last season including two against Charlton) but he is not tall enough to get on the end of high crosses. We need Miles Leaburn (another Academy grad) to do that. Unfortunately, he was injured in the first outing of the season, the traditional opener against Welling. He doesn't start training until the end of the month.

Birmingham striker Sam Cosgrove is looking for a club and Charlton are interested. But so are Blackpool, Derby and Barnsley. The new consortium of Americans who now own the club have to open their wallets if they are to clinch

this deal.

Hardly worth mentioning that we have a game changing striker on the books. Chuks Aneke. Remember him? Yes he's still with us and if we are lucky he might play a game or two and might score a goal or two. But, despite his robust build he is as fragile as a porcelain figurine and seldom lasts more than 15 minutes of any game before going off injured.

As it stands, Chuks, Leaburn and now Fraser are all out and all are key players. Four games in and already we are in the grip of an injury crisis which can only be solved by recruitment. Crongers fessed the new owners realise that the path to success comes with quality players who cost money and that they are prepare to cough up the spondulix. Failure to do so will see us feeding on the thin gruel of mediocrity yet again.

The defeats hurt and nowhere is it more palpable than in Dean Holden when he faces the press. He remains positive and says he is actively seeking new players. We are currently 15th but there's still time to turn this around. COYR's!

■ Charlton's Women's team started their campaign on Sunday, 27 August against Sheffield United. In a pre-season friendly they took on Women's Super League opponents West Ham and Karen Hill's side romped home 5-0!



On the Grapevine ...

Walking Group

In July, we went for a walk just a stone's throw from the Thames! Originally a small Saxon village, East Tilbury was developed in the early 1930s by the Bata Shoe Company, providing it with not just the factory but with housing (probably influenced by the Bauhaus and many of which still stand) and a full range of amenities.

A small village fete was being held in the village hall but we were there for a walk! A long straight road took us past



fields and wild flowers towards Coalhouse Fort (above) – built in the 1860s as a later protection against seaborne attack on the lower Thames after other earlier fortifications from the 15th century. More recently it was used in the film *Batman Returns*. A number of families were sailing boats on the old 'ditch' – a half-moon-shaped lake protecting the fort. This stretch of the Thames is rich in wildlife. We finished the day in the local pub – The Ship – of course!

The weather was kind to us again in August when we took an idyllic country walk starting in Hayes and ending in a pub in Keston Village; taking in en route possibly the smallest hamlet in London (still within the London Borough of Bromley) called Nash – blink and you would miss it!

Walkers meet on the second Sunday of each month usually at 10am in summertime and 10.30am in winter. To find out about upcoming walks please contact Jill at jillmo@btinternet.com. Not all walks suit everyone but you're welcome to join those that do interest you. Suggestions of particular favourite walks are gratefully received.

Playing Out

Every two weeks, from February to August, and September to end of November, Sundorne Road becomes a Play Street for local children to come and experience street play. We have scooters, bikes, skipping ropes and even hula hoops to play with and a gentle incline to the road which makes it fun to ride

a scooter or bike down. We would like to thank all the children and parents who attended so far in 2023 and we hope to see you again in September.

If you have not been before why not join us in September? We would also like to say a very big thank to all the amazing stewards who keep the children safe whilst they play in the street, and the residents in Sundorne Road for their co-operation.

Playing Out will start up again on 13 September, and on the subsequent dates 27 September, 11 and 25 October, 8 and finally 22 November depending on the weather.

We really could do with some more stewards to cover all the sessions. If you have some time available on a Wednesday afternoon for a couple hours, your help would be greatly appreciated. You will receive an induction and work initially with an experienced steward. If you can volunteer contact Nerida on 07395 282974 or PlayingOutSe7@gmail.com.

Singing Group

After a break over the summer, we start up again on 4 September and our regular fortnightly sessions will continue until December, on alternate Mondays at 7.30pm. In December we hope to perform at the Christmas Social and organise our annual carol singing evenings.

Dates for the rest of this year are: 18 September; 2, 16 and 30 October; 13 and 27 November; 11 December. If you are interested in joining the group please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377 – or just come along to one of our sessions.

Instrumental Music Group ('SE7')

We will resume our regular sessions at Cattleya in September, playing our usual mix of music from around the world as well as some jazz, folk and popular standards. We will be holding these sessions approximately once a month (please check the CCRA website for details) and hope to continue including some guest appearances from other local performers. We are always interested in gaining new members, whatever your instrument or level of experience, and reading music is not essential. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.

Book Group

We loved the June read of *Demon Copperhead* – which has since been awarded both the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the Women's Prize for Fiction. It was a highly rewarding read.

At our August meeting we discussed Natalie Haynes' retelling of the Medusa story: *Stone Blind*. Discussion was wide-ranging, with much interest in the performative style in which it is written, since Natalie Haynes is not only an academic and author, she is also (as Radio 4 listeners may know) a stand-up comedian.

In September we'll be reading *The Offing* by Ben Myerson. The group is currently full but if you would like to go on the waiting list please contact Linda on 020 8858 7377.

Dates for your diary

Flower, Produce and Craft Show

Saturday 9 September
St Richard's Hall,
Swallowfield Road
Further details on this page



Launch of Community Café

Tuesday 26 September
2.00 – 4.00pm

St Richard's Hall

See page 4 for details and future dates

CCRA AGM & Quiz Night

Saturday 7 October
St Richard's Hall
See page 2 for details

Charlton Neighbourhood Forum Workshop

Saturday 14 October 11.00 – 1.00 pm
St Richard's Hall
See page 6 for details

Fund-raising concert. Free entry

Saturday 11 November
St Richard's Hall
See page 1 for details and call for volunteers

Christmas Fayre

Saturday 9 December
St Richard's Hall
Full details in next edition

Carol singing

Monday and Tuesday 11 and 12 December
Dates and venues to be confirmed



Jasbir Dhesi holding her award for Best in Show 2022

Final countdown to Flower, Craft and Produce Show – Saturday 9 September

Bring your entries along to St Richard's Hall in Swallowfield Road between 8.00 and 10.30 am. You've still got time to grow, bake or craft!

This is your annual opportunity to show off your skills and, along with your neighbours, have some fun.

This year's show has all of the favourites: photography, roses, Victoria sponges and jam, but there are also some new events. If you can make a quiche, arrange flowers in a wine glass or make a Christmas decoration then bring along your entries.

If you have a youngster at home, then encourage them to enter several of our children's categories. We are delighted to have an opportunity to showcase the work of the children of Fosdene School and their prizes will be hotly contested, as will those in our Best in Show award (The Len Weir Perpetual Trophy), which is the highlight of the show.

This will not be the only trophy awarded this year. New to the show will be trophies presented for the Best Flower (The Mr Ming Perpetual Trophy), the Best Craft Item (The Brenda Taggart

Perpetual Trophy) and Best Grown Entry (The Village Greengrocer Perpetual Trophy). Bring along your entries and it could be you standing on the podium at the award ceremony.

We are always grateful to the Blackheath and Greenwich Women's Institute, who will, once again, be scrutinising entries for skill, design and execution. They are bringing along an expanded team this year in order to train up new judges to ensure fairness and consistency.

We hope this year's show will be the biggest ever and our new publicity, courtesy of Conran's Estate Agents, will help to ensure that you don't forget the date or venue.

We are grateful to Conran's for their support and to those residents who have hosted a board, their community spirit is very much appreciated.

For more information on entering including the list of categories and hints and tips go to charltonresidents.net.

Good luck and remember if you are baking – no soggy bottoms! And don't forget to come along at 2.30pm when prize winners will be announced.



Charlton Central Residents Association