

FAREWELL YVONNE!

It's that familiar smile that every Charlton commuter knows. Along with a cheery word our elegant booking office clerk has been handing out tickets and advice for local travellers for nearly 20 years.

But Yvonne, 66, will bring down the shutters in October for the final time. "I love my commuters," she said. "They are like family to me. We have been like an advisory service to so many people. I am going to miss them all."

And we will certainly miss Yvonne. During her time at Charlton, she worked with CCRA to introduce a book swapping scheme, persuaded her bosses to provide a bench for weary travellers and dispensed tea and sandwiches in times of need.

It hasn't always been easy, though. She said: "A couple of years ago, before COVID, a drunk man was on the platforms, attacking pregnant women, school children, with a broken bottle. I ran downstairs to help – at least I released the children from him. The police, the REOs (rail enforcement officers) had problems putting him on the ground and handcuffed him."

"There was a gentleman, also before COVID, who fell, unconscious on the track, just as the train was arriving. Some customers helped to lift him from the track. He was unconscious, diabetic. We found he was living on Delafield Road and had a wife, who we found



Charlton Station's
favourite lady
calls time after 20
first class years

on his phone. There are many more such cases: about 10 years ago a very aggressive group of youths were coming every day to Charlton station. The girl of the group was threatening me with a knife. So, for two weeks my management decided to have REOs guiding me from home to work and work to home."

Some years ago, the card reading machine failed and many of her regulars didn't have cash on them. So, Yvonne bought tickets for them. She had £3,000 in cash ready to pay her builders and spent nearly all of it on her customers. "I just had receipts," she explained, "But the customers were amazing. I got everything to the last pound back from them."

Is Yvonne going to put her feet up and relax in retirement? No way!

Travel is first on her list with a visit to her native Poland to catch up with relatives. And then on to Canada, America and Australia to see yet more family. Oh, then there's her plans to brush up on her languages – French, German and Russian. And if there is time sewing, crotchet and knitting. She might even take up the piano again.

Yvonne, who lives in Abbey Wood said: "I want to say a big thank you to all my customers for being patient with me. I know my English wasn't clear enough, especially at the beginning. I'm pleased for their patience."

STOP PRESS: CCRA's Flower and Produce Show was a blooming success! Pictures and full story on page 3



DON'T MISS CCRA'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND (TRADITIONAL) QUIZ NIGHT

CCRA's AGM, followed by our ever-popular Quiz Night, is at St Richard's Church Centre (corner of Swallowfield Road and Sundorne Road) on Saturday 4 October. Everyone is welcome!

The AGM starts at 6.15pm (doors open at 6pm). It's a chance to chat with friends and neighbours, and discuss

our plan for the future. Full members also elect officers and members of our management team for 2025/26. This year we'll also be offering an online dial-in option for those who can't be with us in person – look out for an email with details nearer the time.

If you would like to join the management team, but are not sure what it might

entail, get in touch with our Chair, Jonathan, for a cuppa and an informal chat. It doesn't require a large time commitment and it's fun. Jonathan is at chair@charltonresidents.net or on 07875 054597.

Quiz Night follows the AGM and kicks off at 7.30pm. There will be a licensed bar and prizes for winning teams.

Sorry to disappoint Quizingo fans but by popular request this will be a traditional Quiz Night with rounds on general and local knowledge, history, geography etc.

Teams of six can be pre-arranged or come along and join a team on the night. If you don't win the quiz, be lucky with the raffle.

How to save a life

Would you know how to use a defibrillator asks **Annie Galloway**

Do you know where there are defibrillators in the Charlton area?

These were the questions that I wanted to be able to provide answers to when I responded to an invitation to CCRA committee members to attend a defibrillator and CPR training course at St Luke's Church, Charlton.

The church had recently acquired a defibrillator, kindly donated by a local person keen for people in The Village to have access to this potentially lifesaving piece of equipment. Since being installed, the defibrillator had already been used to help a runner during the recent marathon.

So it was with some trepidation that I walked up the hill and entered the church on a Wednesday morning to be warmly greeted by organisers and members of the community taking part.

The training was delivered in a clear, sensitive and practical way by the care agency Home Instead. Never had I thought I would be lying prostrate on the church floor arms akimbo, so that others could demonstrate their newly learned skills on me. We all had a chance to show how we would assess



the situation and check for breathing before deciding on a plan. Our trainer impressed on us the need to call 999 immediately or ask any bystanders to do so. The pressure was on as we had

to try and get our dummies' chests to click when we worked at our cardiopulmonary resuscitation. With breathing restored, we placed each other in the recovery position. We were shown what to do if our patient were to be unresponsive – how to access and prepare the defibrillator pads for shocking the person, making sure everyone was clear, of course. We were relieved to know that the box talked us through exactly what to do until help arrived.

The defibrillator at the church is on the side of the church next to the shops. When you call 999 the operator will tell you where your nearest box is and give you the code to open it. They will stay on the line and give you the relevant instructions. Also inside there is a razor to remove hair, wipes to clear away sweat and a bleed kit in case you need to apply pressure to a wound.

However, the church is not the only defibrillator in the area. Just recently a kit was brought out of a gym on the Woolwich Road to aid a person who had collapsed on the pavement outside. It is worth locating the ones in our area. A quick look at www.defibfinder.uk will show you where they are and ensure that, as our trainer said, should the situation arise, 'You can only do your best'

Exceptionally high standards

Saturday 6 September saw St Richard's Hall busy with growers, bakers, crafters, photographers and children all eager to enter our Flower, Craft and Produce Show.

This year's show saw some outstanding entries, echoed in comments made by the Blackheath and Greenwich Women's Institute who once again judged the competition. One judge said: "the standard, particularly in the baking section is exceptionally high this year". In many of the categories they had some tough decisions to make when awarding First, Second and Highly Commended certificates and prizes.

With 29 entries, the photography section was the most popular. One highly esteemed judge said: "some of these photos could be featured in a glossy photography magazine".

The vegetable class, with 24 entries had some highly

contested categories.

The ever-popular preserves section with 15 entries had a winning marmalade described as 'divine'. The organisers were particularly impressed by our younger competitors. Some entered adult categories and won!

The prestigious Perpetual Trophies, which are for exceptional entries, were awarded as follows:

- Isaac Morgan won the WI Trophy for 'Excellence in Baking'.
- The Mr Ming Trophy for 'Best Flower' went to Brenda Taggart.
- The 'Best Craft' Trophy was won by Ali Endean and the Village Greengrocer Trophy for 'Best Fruit/Veg' was awarded to Krisztina.

The highlight of the show is always the awarding of the 'Best in Show' which for the first time was won by a photographer. Lisa Chillingworth for her outstanding picture 'Along the Thames'.

■ For a full list of prize winners, go to charltonresidents.net.



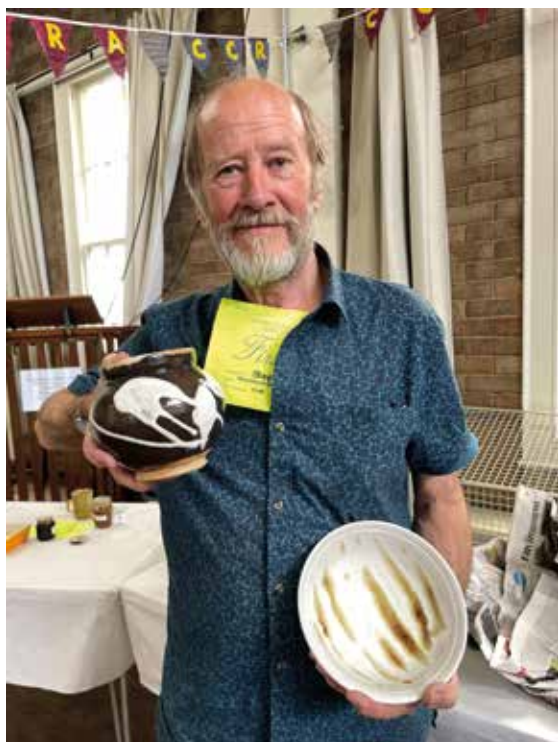
Along the Thames – Lisa Chillingworth's 'Best in Show' award photograph

START PRACTISING THOSE SCONES AND GET CRAFTING

So, after our successful event this year, now is the time to start thinking of the 2026 show. Start practising those scones and get crafting.

Thanks to all who supported the show by entering, judging, working backstage or just coming along to enjoy a really special day.

We look forward to receiving a bumper number of entries next year.



Stephen Brayne, of Priolo Road, with his prize-winning pottery.

Applause for Truepenny's

Another star of the show this year was undoubtedly the estate agents Truepenny's in Charlton Village.

Past shows were sponsored by Conran's (Charlton Church Lane), before they were taken over by Dexters, who no longer support our local events.

So, we are delighted to have been generously supported this



year by Truepenny's. Walking around the area recently you must have seen their colourful advertising boards.

They also sponsored a banner for the hall (pictured below). Their generosity is gratefully appreciated and CCRA look forward to further collaborations with their friendly staff. They received a round of applause on the day.



CCRA volunteers who worked hard to set up and manage our Flower and Produce Show

Sustainable streets or a comedy of errors?

Greenwich council calls it “listening” to residents – but many others are describing it as a Comedy of Errors. We are talking about the debacle of the consultation for RBG’s Sustainable Streets Initiative.

Since starting the consultation, RBG has completely withdrawn the scheme in Shooter’s Hill and Plumstead, following massive protests by furious residents, extended the consultation period as they planned to run it in August when people were on holiday, changed the venue from Charlton House to the town hall, given the number of residents opposed to the scheme.

Why are residents worried? The most contentious element is the widespread introduction of paid-for parking. This will mean streets that currently have no problem with current parking arrangements, will see their visitors having to pay to park.

There is little evidence this will achieve the council’s ambition to significantly reduce car usage. This scheme will put pressure on our finances and could create community tension on residents, workers and visitors competing for parking spaces. Benefits of the scheme such as extra car club spaces are small compared to the impact. For more information visit royalgreenwich.gov.uk/sustainable-streets.

The consultation finishes at the end of September, and it is important that residents let the council know what they think. Have your say!

It’s that Wall again ...

For all keen Wall-Watchers, the Wall in Sundorne Road is finally inching towards a resolution. The owner has finally rendered the Wall, and we hope the Council finds this an acceptable procedure which will make the Wall secure and safe for pedestrians. We look forward to celebrating the opening of the pavement after over two years of it being inaccessible to all. Watch this space.

**IF YOU
FANCIED
A PINT ...**



ROYAL OAK



THE VALLEY



HORSE & GROOM



ANTIGALLICAN



THE VICTORIA



ROSE OF DENMARK



THE PICKWICK



THE BUGLE HORN



WHITE SWAN



ANCHOR & HOPE

IMAGE CREDITS: VALLEY/WHATPUB.COM; HORSE & GROOM CREATIVE COMMONS/ EWAN-M; VICTORIA (2007) STEPHEN CRAVEN/CREATIVE COMMONS; ROSE OF DENMARK/ ROSE OF DENMARK; PICKWICK 2007 /FLICKR/MATT MARTIN; BUGLE-HORN/ BUGLE-HORN; ANCHOR AND HOPE/ CAMRA; OTHERS/CCRA

Nothing so lonesome as a beer with no pub

Where have all the taverns gone – long-time passing? Used to be you were spoiled for choice if you fancied a pint in Charlton. Want to celebrate Charlton’s promotion to the championship? Your choice today is pretty limited.

Once upon a time you could pop up to the top of Elliscombe Road and sink a pint at the appropriately named **Valley** pub, complete with its iconic Valley pub sign. It’s long gone to be replaced by housing, and you can’t get beer anywhere. Nearest pub to the football ground is the cosy **Royal Oak** in Charlton Lane, which still offers a warm welcome, but the **Horse and Groom**, which used to be at the bottom of the Lane is now a church.

The **Antigallican**, once the away fans’ pub of choice, is still there but is no longer a boozer. Conditions of change-of-use laid down by the council stated that the ground floor reopened as a pub but the owners have failed to find a tenant and have now removed the name from the building’

Further along the lower road **The Victoria** has been restored and kept its name and the Truman’s brewery livery, but the only thing you can buy there

is a pizza. Turning left at the bottom of Charlton Church Lane you will find the **Rose of Denmark**, that continues to thrive, but the other pub along that stretch of road, **The Pickwick**, is also closed and awaiting site development.

In Charlton Village the **Bugle Horn** remains ever popular, especially on home games, though they have started charging a premium on pints on match days.

Walk along the High Street, and there you find the ruin that used to be the lovely **White Swan**, now a monument to squatters and vandals. A support group campaigned to reopen it but the owners, a property company in the Isle of Man, show little real interest in engaging with them.

And now another closure: the **Anchor and Hope** down on the riverside is gone.

Pub lifestyle has changed, and most people simply want a friendly location where you can take a family and enjoy a pint and a bite to eat. We need to find a way to keep pub culture alive locally. We can’t expect governments or local councils to do it.

We must organise as a community and do it ourselves.

Hot and dry summers: are they here to stay?

2025 has been the hottest summer since records began and autumn came early.

In the southeast, apples were ready to pick about a month earlier than usual and British vineyards are expecting high yields and good quality wine.

But some farmers are not having a good harvest, many parts of the country have hose pipe bans and several reservoirs are at record low levels.

So far climate change has not

brought devastating floods, fires or famine to our shores but it's coming closer.

We've not experienced the forest fires which have spread across much of Europe this summer.

But the North Yorkshire moors were on fire for several weeks before rain came, and scientists are worried by sea temperatures rising round our coasts and its effect on fish. If this summer becomes the new normal, the

most immediate threat may come from shortages of water and pollution.

We have had no new reservoir built since privatisation and are still waiting for a serious clean-up of lakes, rivers and the seashore, in spite of big increases in bills.

Climate change action is now being undermined by some vested and political interests. But if we really care about the future for our families, getting to net zero use of fossil fuels is urgent.

Autumn came early ...

... this summer. The heavy rain in Spring followed by a hot summer has led to a bumper crop of early-ripening apples. We'd love to hear how you're making use of them.



TUNNELS ON TARGET– BUT WAIT FOR WINTER

Many people predicted chaos and congestion from building another road tunnel and putting a toll on both the new Silvertown and the old Blackwall crossings.

But so far, it's good news. As a result of the toll, the combined volume of traffic using both tunnels is below what was previously

using Blackwall, and the number of passengers using public transport to cross the river has increased dramatically.

Though the numbers are small in comparison, traffic on the Woolwich Ferry has also gone up. There is less congestion, particularly in the morning rush hour going north,

and most journeys are quicker and more comfortable. With some lorries re-routed, there are fewer snarl-ups in the Blackwall tunnel, because traffic can be diverted through Silvertown.

All this should lead to an improvement in air quality and in time may help to ease congestion

on Woolwich Road. But it is still early days. In the five months since the new tunnel was opened it has been good in spring and summer weather, holiday time, and light in the rush hours; motorists will still be adjusting to the new situation. A dark dirty winter may yet blunt the good news.

How happy is my valley?

... A view from the terraces

A championship reality check

No one said it would be easy. After all the celebrations as we finally prised ourselves out of League One, we now must prove we can make it at the higher level. It started well with a 1-0 home win against Watford, the winning goal coming in the dying seconds much to the delight of the 20,000 plus fans who packed the Valley.

And then to Bristol where the strongly fancied home side found themselves struggling as we pressed for the win.

In the end there were no goals, but Les Garçons acquitted themselves well and were more than worthy of the draw. We took on Cambridge in the Carabao Cup second round and went down 1-3, a very disappointing result though Nathan Jones had fielded his very-much second team.

Back at the Valley another 20,000 fans were there to see us play Premiership relegation side, Leicester. Charlton had most of the possession and looked by far the most likely to score, but it took one moment of pure class for Leicester to slot home and take three points. We were beginning to

wake up to life in the championship.

We were hoping for a turnaround in fortunes when we travelled to QPR. You would be forgiven for thinking that a team that was beaten 7-1 the previous Saturday ought to be fair game for a result. Alas, not. In our poorest performance of the season so far, we

went down 1-3. Our defence,

so strong last season, has started to leak goals and is no longer impenetrable, though Lloyd Jones still stands tall and powerful as centre back.

The difference seems to be up front. Despite many changes in personnel, we have lost our scoring mojo.

In part that is because the Sniffer Dog Mattie Godden, our top scorer, has yet to set foot on the pitch. His unerring ability to snatch goals from nothing is badly needed if we are to turn this glitching season around. Godden is back in full training and is set to return very soon. His season debut can't come soon enough.

One of the last players in the door during the transfer season was striker Charlie Kelman. He, it was, who nearly

denied us promotion with a hatful of goals for Leyton Orient. Charlton paid top dollar for Kelman beating several other clubs to get his signature on the contract, but so far, he has shown little of his scoring talent. Miles Leaburn is showing promise and came very close to a goal against QPR, but we need to see more of him on the scoresheet.

Several of the newbies are showing promise. Rob Apter came in as a wingback to replace Thierry Small who chose to go to Preston, and he is looking like the real deal. He loves to get forward and whips in pin sharp crosses. He was rewarded for his endeavours against QPR by scoring our only goal.

The break for the internationals left us facing a home game against Millwall as Grapevine went to press. It's years since we chalked up a win against our southeast London rivals and I'm hoping this time we will be our moment. There's still plenty of time for us to regroup, tighten the defensive line and come bouncing back.

We did it last season. I don't think anyone is expecting promotion. Survival is our primary aim, and a mid-table finish would be great. We can do this Crongers fished. COYR's!



No more cop shop in Greenwich

In future in the whole of London's 32 boroughs there will be only 20 police stations open to the public and only eight of them will be open 24 hours a day. The aim is to save £7 million.

Greenwich will be one of those affected, with

Plumstead police station scheduled to close this autumn. The nearest police stations will be in Lewisham High Street and in Bexleyheath.

This is not good news. Contact online or by telephone is often the best and quickest form

of communication, but sometimes when issues are complex or sensitive, face to face contact is necessary. We may need someone ready to listen and give reassurance before we can fully explain the reason for our visit.

This sort of approach

should be part of 'community policing' and developing trust which the police recognise is needed.

Surely in some of the buildings where police are based, arrangements can be made to welcome an occasional member of the public seeking help.

On the Grapevine ...

Charlton Community Gardens

The fruit in the Community Orchard in Charlton Park, next to the children's playground is not quite ripe. Please do not pick it yet. When the fruit is ripe, it will come away with a gentle bend of the stem. It's so dispiriting to see green apples with one bite out thrown down on the ground.

At the Station Garden, perpetual kale and rocket are always available. It's a garden by the community for the community. Duncan in Elliscombe Road has made some delicious rocket and walnut pesto. The website (charltoncommunitygardens.org.uk) can always take more recipes. Happy growing!

Charlton On the Move

The hot weather may have made for a lethargic summer but now is the time to 'get moving'.

Our weekly exercise class is a great way to start the week. We are offering a free 'taster' session, to be taken at your convenience by contacting: chair@charlton-residents.net or 07939 090 676 to arrange.

With our expert instructor's guidance, you will be stretching muscles you had forgotten you had. Especially designed for the over-60s this enjoyable workout is followed by light bites. Every Monday 11.00 – 11.30 (meet St Richard's Hall, Swallowfield Rd), 11.30 – 12.30 (exercise), 12.30 – 1.00 (social and refreshments). Come along and enjoy the fun on 22, 29 September; 6, 13, 20, 27 October; 3, 10,

17, 24 November; 1, 8, 15, 22 December.

Walking group

Sadly, the walking group activities have been constrained now for some time by our excellent leader's injury for which she is still awaiting physiotherapy. We wish Jill Austen a speedy recovery and hope she'll soon be back leading our walks. If you're interested in joining the group in October or November contact Jill on jillmo@btinternet.com.

Singing group

After a break for the summer, fortnightly sessions will resume as normal from September. Dates for this autumn are 22 September; 6, 20 October; 3, 17 November; 1, 15 December: all Mondays at 7.30 pm.

The last of these will be one of our annual carol-singing sessions, with another one later in the week.

We sing a wide variety of songs, and new members are always welcome. There is no audition process, and the aim of the group is just to enjoy the opportunity to sing together.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377 – or just come along to one of our sessions.

Instrumental music group SE7

The group return to Cattleya in September and will continue with monthly sessions after that. Further information will be published in the usual channels. We are always ready to welcome new players of any instrument. We have a

very varied repertoire which allows a degree of freedom to individual players. If you are interested in joining the group or finding out more about us, please contact Chris on 020 8858 7377.

Book group

Our most recent read was *The Safekeep*, by Yael van der Wouden. It was short-listed for last year's Booker Prize and was winner of the 2025 Women's Prize

for Fiction.

Despite some elements of the story being improbable, the book is interesting in that it raises issues which many group members felt don't get wide coverage. It's set in the 1950s in the Netherlands and involves the plight of displaced Jews.

Our next read is *The Marriage Portrait* by Maggie O'Farrell. If you're interested in joining us, contact Linda on 020 8858 7377.

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

Following an exceptionally long hot summer, now is the time to take a good long look at the outside of your property and get out those secateurs.

Give that overhanging vegetation a good trim so it doesn't inconvenience pedestrians.

Keeping your stretch of pavement clear of vegetation is not only good neighbourliness – it is also a council requirement, and they can intervene if you obstruct the pavement or make it difficult to traverse. So, get snipping!



The Old Cottage Coffee Shop

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

Open every day from 10am in Charlton Park



Dates for your diary

Saturday 4 October

CCRA AGM and
Quiz Night Doors
open at 6pm
See page 2 for details



Saturday 6 December

CCRA Christmas
Fayre
St Richard's Hall
Swallowfield Road
Details in the
next issue



Monday 15 December

Tuesday 16 December
Carol singing. Schedule
in the next issue.

THUMBS UP



... to those who recognise
asylum seekers' experience
of trauma and exhaustion
and do their best to help
them

THUMBS DOWN!



... to those who fail to
understand the needs of
desperate people looking
to Britain as a place of
tolerance and integration

Contributions to this column welcome!

DECK THE HALLS ... FOR OUR CHRISTMAS FAYRE

This year's Christmas Fayre is on Saturday, 6 December at St Richard's Hall. It's always a lively event. We have a limited number of stalls for local vendors to sell festive wares, if you're interested then call Jonathan at chair@charltonresidents.net, or on 07875 054597

GRAPEVINE

Grapevine reaches 900 homes and retail outlets in our designated area and beyond. Email comments, feedback, queries or material for future issues to grapevine@charltonresidents.net by **Monday 3 November 2025**.

Alternatively, phone Joy Ogden on 020 8293 3034 or Bob Smith on 020 8853 2697.

TO ADVERTISE, contact grapevine@charltonresidents.net.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION on CCRA events check your local noticeboard, our website (charltonresidents.net), Twitter/X (@ccra_se7) and Facebook (facebook.com/centralcharlton).



Happy Birthday Charlton Station

2025 marks 200 years of British rail travel. The first journey was on the Stockton and Darlington Railway on 27 September in 1825. Closer to home, Charlton Station opened in 1849. Yvonne, seen above cutting the cake, decided to celebrate the station's 176th birthday in style, with a cake, balloons and music (including a number of songs about trains and stations sung by local singers.) It was also an early goodbye from Yvonne to local residents she has served so well (see page 1).



Charlton Central Residents Association