



# Churchfield Community Association

## Annual Report 2010

The CCA celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and continues to flourish and expand. It was created to fight graffiti and vandalism in and around Churchfield Road and these issues have almost vanished off our agenda – so we have largely attained our original objectives.

But Acton is not devoid of challenges!

We still have a role in promoting the local area and its people and businesses and in contributing to the decisions made about Acton Central and its environs.

We feel the association fills a genuine need: we combine policy and community engagement with a commitment to local people, the ideals of neighbourliness and a desire to have a good time in the process.

This year we have also had to deal with changes in both council (from Conservative to Labour) and MP/government (vice versa) This has meant losing some colleagues, welcoming new ones and adjusting to a changing political and economic reality.

The CCA executive is committed and works hard, and has welcomed a new member this year. But we need more people to become involved either in specific projects or more generally running the association.

You will be made welcome and appreciated. Do please feel free to volunteer.

The more people who do so, the lighter the work.

### **Consultations and public involvement**

#### **Closure of London Overground**

It emerged at the beginning of 2010 that the suspension of services by London Overground through Acton Central station was going to be much more extensive than had previously been assumed. There was a total closure of the system planned for six weeks in the spring, shorter total closures over Christmas at least and suspended Sunday service until some time in 2011. The CCA organised a meeting upstairs at The Rocket so that members and other concerned residents could question representatives of London Overground, TfL and Network Rail. More than 70 people – including councillors, parliamentary and council candidates and a London Assembly member – turned out on a wet winter evening to hold the transport companies to account.

Since then, there has been a slightly better flow of information, and executive members have also worked to get the bumpy level crossing at the station repaired. This was completed in October 2010. Your executive is now lobbying to shorten the projected closure time for the underpass – currently stated as being till spring 2011.

### **Town Hall regeneration**

Two executive members have worked hard as part of the Acton Town Hall regeneration team, attending all the meetings and participating in all the visits to model sites. The options for bringing the Acton town hall complex back to life are beginning to clarify. We still strongly support efforts by the council (Labour having taken over from the Conservative initiators of the project) to develop this key site in the town centre to enable better use of the buildings and revitalise the whole of Acton High Street. We are pleased that the council remains committed to maintaining facilities for the Priory Centre groups during the development, and that an enthusiastic and experienced design and delivery team seems to be in place. We recognise that there will be finance and political challenges ahead but hope that the new council will pursue the options vigorously. We will continue to participate in the decision-making process.

### **Derwentwater School: expansion protest and summer fete**

Before the May election, the executive supported – through advice and petition-circulating – the successful efforts of the Derwentwater PTA to overturn the council's proposals to add an extra form entry, accommodated in Portacabins, to the already overcrowded school. The executive was happy to work with another local volunteer organisation to achieve something for the community as a whole.

The CCA also ran a couple of stalls at Derwentwater's annual PTA fete, which, it's hoped, will help build bonds between the two groups.

### **Ward forums**

These are run by the ward councillors and have a budget of £40,000 to deploy in capital improvements to Acton Central ward. CCA executive members are among the most regular, persistent and engaged attenders and have helped get funds allocated for improvement to the environment in and around Churchfield Road. They have also been campaigning for a reduction in the hours of the CPZ in and around Churchfield Road, to make parking easier and so help local businesses. We hope to get an outdoor gym in Acton Park (part) funded by the ward forum very soon.

### **Licence applications**

The executive has responded to consultations on behalf of the CCA on the licensing of sex shops and extensions to alcohol licences.

### **Projects**

**Winter Fair** We took part in the disappointing Acton Winter Fair. Although we were represented on the organising group, the leadership was confused and unfocused and arrangements were made far too late. At the time of writing, the organisation for this year's fair has yet to begin, so we have decided to opt out of participating this year.

**Carnival** We ran our customary stall at Acton Carnival on 10 July, with profits of £398.29 shared between our funds and the APPLE children's charity in Acton Park. Carnival organisation was again much better, including the noise level, compared with a couple of years ago (though the noise was worse than last year). The event was attended by at least 12,000 people, and our stall was large and really successful.

**Community noticeboards** Ros Fisher has maintained the noticeboard at Acton Central station with a constantly updated display promoting the CCA and local events and themes. This is seen by a wide audience and acts both as a recruiter and a permanent presence for the CCA at a neighbourhood focal point. We have replaced the noticeboard at the Meadow.

**GANG (Good Acton Neighbours Group)** Although we have the structure in place to help out members of our community in need, no one has requested our services this year. The scheme really requires a pro-active person who would like to take it on as a project, to publicise it and, if demand arises, to organise it. The executive would welcome any proposals or nominations.

**10<sup>th</sup> anniversary art project** Executive member Nancy Duin is leading a group of interested members, plus a project manager/artist, to try to create a work of wall art to commemorate the CCA and Acton. The group has been offered a location and is exploring funding and commissioning.

**Graffiti** has been mercifully a non-issue in the Churchfield Road area, though we stand prepared to take up the cudgels – or at least the brushes – if it reappears on any scale.

### **Newsletter**

Our newsletter has gone from strength to strength this year under the able editorship of Linda Taylor. We have published 4 issues at fairly regular intervals. Linda commissions news and features from different contributors and is responsible for editing, design and layout, and organising printing, all very efficiently.

We have a new printer who has given us good service at a reasonable price.

We debated converting the newsletter from print to a solely online 'e-newsletter', to save on distribution and the cost of printing. However, we concluded that, because a significant minority of members and potential members are not yet online, this would be seen as an excluding step when we want to be more inclusive, and so we shelved the idea for now.

### **Social**

We held a third **summer garden party** at 34 Goldsmith Road on 20 June, which was very well attended. It appears to have become an annual event – which we hope to continue for as long as Mike and Linda are happy to host us. We are very grateful to them for their generous hospitality and to the jazz musicians from St Mary's Church – including, on saxophone, the Reverend David Brammer – who entertained us so well.

We organised a **picnic** in Acton Park on 11 September. Although this was held later in the year than the previous spring picnic, it was just as chilly, but quite a few people turned up and had a good time. We may revert to May or June in 2011 in an attempt to find a fine weekend.

We have returned to having our monthly **socials** on a Wednesday this year. Sometimes they are well attended – more than 20 people came to one this summer in the front courtyard of the Station House – but more often attendance is sparse. The executive would like to hear ideas for other regular social events that more members might like to attend. For now, the venues and dates of the weekly socials continue to appear on the website: [www.churchfield.org](http://www.churchfield.org)

We have held 4 quiz events in the basement of Kalinka's restaurant this year, with up to 40 people taking part each time – and fierce competition between teams. Thanks to Paul and Philippe for organising them so well.

Last year's Christmas party, at l'Oriental in Churchfield Road, was very well attended. This year we will be upstairs at The Rocket on Friday 10 December. Please book early with the social secretary Philippe Bruyer.

### **Membership**

Membership has been growing steadily. The chair's target of exceeding 200 members has been well and truly attained, with 70 new recruits this year. We now have more than 200 members, including 17 businesses – the most ever. The vast majority pay by direct debit, which helps the CCA to have a steady revenue stream and enables us to retain members far better than before. Our larger membership numbers give us a greater influence in local decision-making.

We have held the occasional recruitment stall at the market on a Saturday over the last few years, which has been our main method of recruitment. We may need a new strategy now and are exploring ways of encouraging current members to recruit their own neighbours.

Sara Nathan

Chair

November 24<sup>th</sup> 2010.