



## Churchfield Community Association

### **Annual report 2015**

The CCA has seen a number of changes this year, with some additions to and changes of roles in our executive. We have continued our involvement with planning applications, ward forums and neighbourhood forums, and have also continued to increase our response to alcohol licence applications. We are pleased to have followed up our local elections hustings meeting in 2014 with a hustings meeting before the general election in May 2015.

The CCA's involvement with issues of public concern, as well as an appreciation of local successes has shown the value of having an identifiable community group.

The great value of our association lies in bringing people together with a sense of belonging and commitment, and in providing a forum in situations where the community can act as one. There has been hard work, and also a range of social events which have been great fun and well attended. Many people have expressed their appreciation of having such a group.

We continue to see many positive developments along Churchfield Road which makes the area more attractive to potential residents and businesses, especially when they discover that we have such a strong engaged community represented by this association.

This is my third and final report as chair. I would like to thank members old and new, especially those who serve on the executive, for putting so much effort into improving our part of Acton. Special thanks go to Sara Nathan for serving on the exec for many years and who is now resigning from the committee. We hope to welcome new exec members in the next few months. If you are interested in joining our exec committee, please contact Linda Taylor, [linda@poetshouse.net](mailto:linda@poetshouse.net) or Chris Hurley, [actonhurleys@aol.com](mailto:actonhurleys@aol.com).

### **CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

#### **Acton Arts Centre**

Ealing Council decided to turn down an application for an Arts Centre in the Old Library in Acton High Street and, instead, granted the property to Curzon cinemas to run a small multiplex. Many Actonites were quite pleased about this and reconciled to the loss of the Arts Centre. But, in the many months since the decision, nothing has happened and, although the CCA has asked for further information several times, there has been no communication about when or if the cinema will actually open.

#### **Acton Central ward forum**

This meets every four months or so and the CCA is usually represented there. The forum has funds which groups and individuals can apply for in order to improve the local area or benefit local people.

## Ark Byron School

The consultation on the new Ark Byron primary school in Acton Park closed on October 23rd. Concerns have been expressed about the access/drop-off points and about noise impinging on neighbours who are used to a quiet outlook. But, as the Ark School has already taken a whole first year of young pupils who are supposed to move into the new school in September 2016, it seems likely it will go ahead quickly, whatever the reservations.

## Friary Park Group

The CCA are pleased to note the emergence of the Friary Green Residents Association (FGRA) which has taken responsibility for holding to account Catalyst Housing (the developer and planners of Ealing Housing) for the proposed regeneration of Friary Park Estate. The CCA is supportive of this group. Many CCA members have joined FGRA, with Joanna Barrett, Chris Hurley, Maire Lowe and Nancy Duin acting as ex officio members of their committee. A planning application has not yet been submitted, but FGRA have submitted questions on the environmental impact of the proposals, the welfare of vulnerable tenants and the possible changes to roads, car parking and public transport.

## Health issues

Individual members of the CCA are supporting the call for a public health enquiry into the effects of the Horn Lane Industrial Estate on the health of residents. We were concerned to hear that all staff working on the estate have compulsory six month health checks, but there is no formal monitoring of residents' health. A report from the Director of Public Health Ealing is expected in late November.

Maire Lowe is representing the CCA to the Imperial Trust, which provides the bulk of secondary care to Acton residents. She has accepted an unpaid voluntary position on their Quality Steering Group and will join their Transport Review team as a lay representative.

## Hustings meeting for General Election



The CCA hosted a very well attended hustings at the Town Hall in April, a week before the General Election. About two hundred people packed the hall, which was full to capacity with many having to be turned away. Eight of the nine candidates standing for the Ealing Central and Acton seat attended; the other candidate sent apologies. Three independent candidates made opening statements, though they were not invited to sit on the platform. Opening statements consisted of a combination of party manifesto reminders and points about local issues. The audience was a mixture of interested bystanders and passionate party members.

The hustings was felt to be a worthwhile pre-election event given the number of people who attended. We will need to find a much bigger hall, though, for any such future occasion, so that the large numbers who were unable to get into the event could be accommodated.

## **Licence applications**

We continued this year to monitor alcohol and late night food licence applications in the town centre, making representations to the council, when appropriate, to encourage responsible licensing practices and reduce problems with alcohol-related anti-social behaviour (ASB). Maureen Colledge continues to lead for the CCA on this, attending and speaking at licensing sub-committee meetings on our behalf, and liaising with the police and other local community associations.

This year we made eight representations: Tesco (twice, Uxbridge Road and North Acton); Sainsbury's (twice, Horn Lane and North Acton); The Convenience Barn; Bereket; Apple Tree and Mini Biedronka. In most cases we ask for core hours from Ealing's licensing policy to be applied, and for conditions to be applied, such as: no sales of cheap high-strength beers and ciders and no single cans or spirit miniatures; safe storage of alcohol; adequate and trained staff especially at night.

Overall, we have been successful in getting most of our conditions accepted and hours limited to core hours, including deterring two applications for 24 hour licences from going ahead – Tesco withdrew them faced with opposition from us and other associations.

## **Neighbourhood forums**

The CCA exec officially agreed that it supports the establishment of one or more neighbourhood forums, as defined by the Localism Act 2011. By law, the council and developers have to involve a neighbourhood forum when new developments are proposed. With all the new projects being announced in our area, this is the only way that we can ensure that our voices are heard and taken seriously.

At the time of writing, two neighbourhood forums have been proposed in Acton: CANForum Acton and Acton Main Line Neighbourhood Forum.

## **Planning application – Chatsworth Pub**

Along with Mill Hill Park Residents' Association and Acton History Group, early in the year we submitted objections to a planning application for replacing the Chatsworth Pub with an ugly housing block. We sought to preserve the historic frontage of the pub, improve the design and retain it as a community asset. While we were not successful in this, ours and others' objections did lead to improvements in the building design and a promise to retain a pub at ground level.

## **PROJECTS**

### **Acton Central Station book swap**

The Acton Central Station book swap has entered its third year, with a continuing rapid turnover of large numbers of books. The CCA was grateful for a grant from Ealing Council's 'Bubble' project which has financed the printing of labels asking readers to return the books they borrow. We have had a few challenges with bulk removal of donated books, either to stock school libraries or sheltered housing bookshelves, but mostly the book swap has been successful and trouble-free.

## **Acton Christmas Fair and Acton Carnival**

The CCA had stalls at both the Acton Christmas Fair in December and the Acton Carnival in July. At the former, profits were £225.31 and, at the latter, they were £247.05. The majority of the profits were given to children/young people's charity APPLE in Acton Park.

## **Good Acton Neighbours Group – GANG**

Good Acton Neighbours Group (GANG) had a major project this year, supporting a member who doesn't drive and whose husband was in hospital for twelve weeks. We used Doodle polls to arrange schedules for transporting her to and from hospital to visit him. At least ten CCA members were involved. It made a huge difference to both of them and really enhanced our sense of community.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Community noticeboards**

We maintain the noticeboard outside Acton Central Station. Members can request that notices be put up for community events such as concerts, walks, charity events, etc. There is a contact phone number on the board. Please allow a few days for us to put up a notice. If anyone has design skills and could offer to help improve the appearance of the board and its notices, please call: 020 8992 0287.

### **Email list**

This Yahoo! Group is officially known as [actoncentralemailgroup](#). It currently has 117 members (households and businesses) – about half the membership.

The manager was unable to add members for almost a year because of Yahoo's ineptness but, in recent months, it has been working fairly well. It is a relatively low-traffic list – from October 2014 to September 2015, there was an average of 32 messages a month. If you haven't already joined the list, you can do so by getting in touch with the manager Nancy Duin, [nduin@nancyduin.net](mailto:nduin@nancyduin.net).

### **Newsletter**

We have produced the Churchfield Community Association Newsletter three times so far in 2015, and hope to continue producing it as a quarterly. The editor is very grateful to those who help in its production by suggesting items and writing features, and to those who take photographs. Contributions to the newsletter and ideas for articles are always welcome. Thanks to Picot Cassidy for producing address labels for recipients and to Susanne Hickmott for organising distribution, as well as those who help with delivery. Special thanks to Tom Doran who is responsible for so much of the newsletter distribution, as well as regularly taking photographs.

### **Online newsletter**

New this year, this is sent to 214 subscribers (virtually the entire CCA membership) via MailChimp. It is issued about every six weeks or so and generally contains time-sensitive information about events and other things. Members are automatically subscribed to this, but can easily unsubscribe by clicking on the link at the bottom of the newsletters.

## Social media

The CCA has a **Twitter** account: [@CCAssoc1](#), which now has 626 followers and takes part in events such as the weekly Ealing Hour between 2000 and 2100 on a Tuesday. Our **Facebook** page has 136 members and links to many other local groups. CCA social media will be under new management after the AGM. Keith Dowling, one of our new exec members, has offered to be in charge of it. If anyone else is keen to be involved, please contact Keith, [keith@postandpackinguk.com](mailto:keith@postandpackinguk.com).

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Over the past year, the CCA has held a variety of enjoyable social events. These provide a great way for members, friends and anyone thinking of joining, to meet others in our neighbourhood.

In December 2014, we once again held a **CCA Christmas Party** enjoying the atmosphere in the restaurant area of The Rocket, with about thirty people attending. We are grateful to Filip Filipovic and all the staff at The Rocket, for their help with this, including preparing a delicious buffet supper.

Our '**First Wednesday**' **pub socials** have continued throughout 2015. These drop-in evening events last a couple of hours and are held in various pubs and eateries in our neighbourhood, including The Rocket, The George and Dragon, L'Oriental and The Aeronaut. All CCA members are welcome to attend, as well as anyone thinking of joining the CCA. We are grateful to Susanne Hickmott, Picot Cassidy, Roger Foreman, Ian Green and Jill Williams who regularly attend these First Wednesdays, welcoming new members.

The ever popular **supper quizzes**, created and run by Paul Talbot and Philippe Bruyer and held three or four times a year, continued throughout 2015. The venue is L'Oriental restaurant on Churchfield Road where they serve a wide selection of tasty mezze. The self-funding quizzes are designed for all, with a wide range of questions and challenges to suit everyone. They are a great way for new and existing members to get to know each other in a friendly and fun social environment. Do come along!

We organised a successful **wine and snacks tasting** at *Vindinista!* wine bar in Churchfield Road on 12 May 2015, just after it opened.

In July, we enjoyed another **summer garden party** in Goldsmith Road. Guests brought tasty food and drink to share, and the sun shone. Thanks to Mike and Linda for hosting what has become an annual event in their lovely garden.

## MEMBERSHIP

We currently have around 240 members, much the same as last year. However, we have discovered that many standing orders have stopped over the past twelve months or so. We have sent emails to all those members and businesses, whose payments have stopped, to inform them to check with their bank and, if need be, to rejoin by using the form on the CCA website.

Recruitment has been sluggish, as we have not undertaken any specific recruitment exercises this year. We should aim to undertake some in 2016, with perhaps a couple of stalls in Acton marketplace. As well as recruiting new members, this helps to get our name known in the area. One new business in Churchfield Road has joined, bringing the total number of businesses to twenty-two.

We value the support and commitment of our members, who we look forward to meeting at our future events. All are welcome – please join us.