



Churchfield Community Association

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Chair's overview

The CCA has had another productive year with membership staying stable and plenty of events and activities for members to enjoy and/or participate in. Since the AGM last November, we have continued our involvement with ward forums – although sadly we understand these may now be under review. We have also continued to represent the CCA in responding to alcohol licence applications.

The great value of our association lies in bringing people together with a sense of belonging and commitment to improving our part of Acton, and in providing a forum in situations where the community can act as one. Bringing this about has been hard work, but we have also held a range of social events which have been great fun and well attended.

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.

We would love to see similar improvements in Acton High Street and are hopeful that the Old Library cinema project, which we have strongly supported since the start, will help with its regeneration.

I would like to thank members old and new, especially those who serve on the Executive, for putting so much time and effort into improving our part of Acton. We welcomed David Wootton to the Executive this year – David has taken responsibility for various projects and campaigns and is already proving to be a great asset.

I particularly want to thank the two members who are stepping down this year. Jan Gayle-Farlow, after much thought, has decided to concentrate on the Central Acton Neighbourhood Forum (CANF) and her other charity work. Jan has been a helpful bridge between the CCA and CANF and we will miss her expertise on all matters Acton.

Susi Kirkwood who has organised most of our social activities for the past few years, has also indicated that she wants to step down – but luckily not until the AGM in 2020. She will be doing a long handover with Annie Evans who will be taking over the social functions arrangements in due course.

I have also informed the Executive that I plan to step down from the Chair at the next AGM in 2020. This will be my fourth year as Chair (I only planned to do three!) and I think it is healthy to have a change from time to time.

We still have a couple of vacancies on the committee and would welcome anyone who wants to get more involved. If you are interested in joining our exec committee, please contact me, Chris Hurley, on actonhurleys@aol.com.

MEMBERSHIP

Our membership has remained static at 224 households and 257 members. This includes individuals, households and businesses in Churchfield Road. If your neighbour is not yet a member why not ask them to join? They can do so online here: <http://www.churchfield.org/how-to-join>

CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Lighting the main path in Acton Park

With the opening of the Ark Byron Primary Academy in Acton Park, the main path through the park from Uxbridge Road by Bryant Court to Acton Central station has become much more heavily used, not just by parents, children and teachers but by commuters and others who notice it is open for longer. Last winter we became aware of just how dark and unsafe it was for those collecting children or walking through so we decided in February this year to approach the Ward Forums to ask if they would use some of their budget to light the path.

We took our proposal first to the Acton Central Forum and then to the East Acton Ward Forum who hold the budget for that area. There was support at the Forums but the proposal was at odds with Parks Service's overall policy of no lights in parks, although there are some exceptions to this already, such as Southfield Recreational Ground. We were asked by the Council to show we had support for the proposal to light the path for a few hours during late afternoon and early evening in the winter only.

Many thanks to the 340 plus people who signed our online or paper petition and to Ark Byron Primary and the local East Acton police and the Parks Service, who were all able to support the proposal, particularly once it was clarified that the lighting would only be in winter, when bats are already hibernating. With a few modifications, the Council have now agreed to light the path and we are hoping this will be in place at least for the second half of the winter

Licensing Scrutiny

Alcohol and late night food

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 alcohol-related anti-social behaviour (ASB). Maureen Colledge continues to lead for the CCA, liaising with local licensing officers and the Metropolitan Police when appropriate and working with Ann Brennan of the Mill Hill Park Residents Association (MHPRA) who monitors applications and makes representations for the MHPRA.

Since last November, we made three representations – all Off Licences in Horn Lane whose licences were under review or objected to by the police or licensing officer as a result of infringements of licensing regulations or failure to abide by conditions. Our representations and those of other residents associations and residents supported the police action and in all three cases the licences were revoked or refused. Since then one of the Off Licences has gained a licence under new management and much stronger conditions. Another is currently reapplying.

Gambling

The proliferation of betting shops and gambling establishments in the High Street in recent years is very evident and not a welcomed development. This year for the first time, we and the Mill Hill Park Residents Association tried to tackle this issue. We both made representations on a new application in the High Street for an adult gaming centre. Our investigations and pro bono advice indicated that there were no grounds to prevent the venue opening but, as with alcohol licences, we could ask for conditions. This we did and the applicant agreed to extra measures aimed at protecting young people and the vulnerable, as well as the safety of staff, customers and passers by.

The Council has just started a consultation on its Licensing, Gambling and Sex Establishment Policy and we will be reviewing and probably making an input to the consultation. If you have views and suggestions you would like to bring to our attention, please email Maureen Colledge on bayscolledge@talktalk.net by 4 December 2019. Alternatively, you can make your own input to the consultation via the Council website by 10 December 2019.

Other campaigns

Closure of Acton Main Post Office

Sadly, the Post office is now closed. We are aware that the post office is a major link for many local residents and the closure is detrimental to their daily lives. We have continued to support efforts to put pressure on Royal Mail to open a post office counter in a suitable central Acton location. I must thank CCA member Jill Sinclair who has continued to pursue the issue, along with our MP Dr Rupa Huq. Jill and Rupa have organised various meetings with Royal Mail, with possible business representatives within the Oaks (where a unit at a reduced rent for an outlet with a PO counter is still on offer) and with various charities. We are hopeful that some fruit will soon be borne from all of this activity.

Acton Central ticket office closure

We reported last year that members had campaigned to keep open ticket offices on the London Overground, including Acton Central station. At that time, due to the overwhelming response to the consultation, London TravelWatch put closure plans on hold. However, we have now heard that London Overground wants to cut the opening hours at 45 stations to the bare minimum. This would include Acton Central, where the proposal is to reduce the opening times to just 12.5 hours a week from the current 84.5. We are asking members to object to this closure in all but name by writing to the Mayor. There is a model letter here: <http://bit.ly/2oSasjk>

Acton Central station book swap

The Acton Central station book swap continues to thrive. It is now in its 7th year. Please continue to donate any books you have spare, and many thanks to those who already donate. It needs a constant steady supply.

COMMUNICATIONS

We continue to maintain the large notice board 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.

Newsletter

The Churchfield Community Association Newsletter continues to thrive and has been published twice this year. Special thanks go to Linda Taylor for her continuing role as Newsletter Editor. We know she 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 Ziggy for producing the address labels for recipients and to Susanne and Maureen for organising distribution, as well as to all those who help with delivery.

CCA email list

All members can use our email list to communicate with each other. Now known as the 'CCA email group', about three-quarters of our membership are on this list. Please use 'cca.email.group@cca.simplelists.com' as the address to email CCA members en masse if you are looking for a builder, to advertise an event or anything else (within reason of course!).

Please remember to notify us if your email address changes.

Social media

The CCA has a 'public' **Facebook** page, which now has 223 members and links to many other local groups.

Social Activities:

CCA social events are open to CCA members and their friends, as well as to people who are thinking of joining the CCA. Our aim is to offer sociable opportunities to meet and get to know others who live and/or work in our neighbourhood. Over the past year, the CCA has run several enjoyable events.

On Sunday 9th December 2018, we held our annual **CCA Christmas Party** at the Mendes Restaurant, at the top of Churchfield Road. Some 20 people attended, and the Portuguese food was delicious. Particular thanks go to Paul and Philippe for creating and running a fun Christmas quiz after our meal.

Our annual **CCA Putt in the Park and Supper** was held on Thursday 15th August 2019 when eleven of us met after work at Putt in the Park in Acton Park. In groups of three or four people, we had a fun time tackling the ups and downs of the 15 hole putting course and trying to avoid the hazards! We then made our way to the Chapati Club restaurant on Acton Vale, where we were joined by two more people, and enjoyed a very tasty supper.

The annual **CCA Garden Party** was held on a beautiful Saturday evening in mid-July 2019. For the fourth year running, the party was generously hosted by Sarah and Rich in their wonderful and immaculate Cumberland Park garden: our grateful thanks to them both. Everyone brought delicious contributions of food and drink to this bring-and-share event, and we very much enjoyed a relaxed atmosphere. As a thank you to our hosts, a collection was again made to raise funds for The UK Sepsis Trust, which Sarah and Rich are closely involved with.

Our popular **CCA Supper Quizzes** were again held several times during the year, at L'Oriental restaurant on Churchfield Road. Huge thanks both to Tony and Paola who always prepare a great selection of Lebanese mezze food and serve this at our tables, and to Paul Talbot and Philippe Bruyer for creating such great general knowledge quiz rounds and brain-teaser puzzle sheets! The range of quiz questions ensures that everyone feels included, and as with our other social events, these quiz evenings are a fun and friendly way for new CCA members to meet others living and working in our area.

If you haven't already attended our CCA social events, it would be lovely to see you if you would like to try them out! Moreover, if you have any ideas for future social events, please let us know.

Compiled by CCA Chair Chris Hurley – thanks to Exec members for your contributions

The Executive 2019/2020

Chair Chris Hurley
Secretary Maureen Colledge
Treasurer Matthew Stower
Membership Ziggy Uszkurat
Social activities Susi Kirkwood/Annie Evans
Campaigns David Wootton, Susanne Hickmott

