

ECSRA CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – AGM 2017

Good evening to you all – and welcome to the AGM of the Earl's Court Square Residents' Association. We are delighted to welcome Councillors Fenella Aouane and Malcolm Spalding. Unfortunately, Cllr Linda Wade is unable to be with us tonight and sends her apologies. All our Ward Councillors have been such a great help to us in resolving so many local issues during 2016.

We are also delighted to welcome Earl's Court's Dedicated Ward Officer, PC Andy Clough, who has recently taken over from PC Ben Palastanga, who has moved on within the Metropolitan Police and PC Christine Denny.

The Earl's Court Square Residents' Association was formed over 40 years ago with the following 4 objectives:

1. The preservation of the architectural integrity of the Square.

In 2016 we were asked to comment on the Earl's Court Square Conservation Area Draft Appraisal - which outlined the historic and architectural significance of Earl's Court Square Conservation Area and described the area's character and appearance. Many thanks to past Chairmen Rodney Brangwyn and Christine Powell for scrutinizing and commenting on the proposals. It was a very exacting task and a very lengthy document!

2. Easing traffic and parking problems.

The RA was very involved in 2016 - with the Traffic Management Plan for the re-development of the Three Garages Site which we felt would impact on the Square. As you are aware works have started and our Ward Councillors are making sure that RBKC monitors the developer to ensure they keep to the agreed Traffic Management Plan as there have been some initial problems with construction lorries blocking the road and slippery pavements.

The problems with double-parking by parents outside the school persist. During 2016 PC Palastanga spoke with the Head of the school and from time to time organised a police presence to act as a deterrent as double-parking restricts vehicular access to Earl's Court Square especially in relation to access for emergency vehicles and I hope, Andy, that you will continue to monitor this for us.

During 2016 we commented on Transport for London's proposals for changes to the road layout of the Earl's Court Square area - and have recently responded to RBKC/TfL on a proposed voluntary trial scheme for Earl's Court Road to see if moving deliveries to off-peak times is feasible and, if so, whether it has any congestion benefits. One of our main concerns - is about the noise impact of deliveries - as TfL are keen to see more early morning deliveries - and deliveries taking place after the evening rush hour up to 11pm.

The CapCo re-development of the Earl's Court Exhibition site is progressing with 1000 homes due for completion on RBKC's site (90 of which are classified as "affordable intermediate" housing). The Mayor of London and the London Borough of Fulham and Hammersmith are attempting to increase the level of social housing on their part of the site. Plans have been approved by RBKC for the Flagship Building which will accommodate a 90-bedroom hotel, offices and a 1,400 square metre cultural space with flexible seating (which could be used as a theatre or cinema). It is anticipated that this and a further 3,000 square metres of cultural space in LBHF including a creative enterprise hub and an artisan boulevard will generate a footfall of 750 thousand customers per annum to support the local economy.

3. The enhancement of residential amenities.

The main problem the RA has faced during 2016 is the increase in fly tipping and short-term tenants dumping their rubbish on the pavements on the wrong day. Photographs are sent to RBKC/Streetline almost daily but it has proved difficult for enforcement action to be taken without ID in the rubbish bags. ECSRA has been instrumental in successfully lobbying our Ward Councillors and RBKC to install a CCTV camera to cover the worst hotspot on the Square which we hope will prove a deterrent and lead to successful prosecutions. RBKC has also recently provided an A Board, which seems to be having the desired effect. We are, however, trying to find a permanent solution to this problem, which will benefit the residents of the South East Arm of the Square.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Heidi Bradner, Mariaclara Vilona and the team of residents who take the time to monitor the Square and report rubbish dumping to RBKC/ Streetline. We are grateful to you all.

One of the problems that many of us have encountered in the Square is the proliferation of short-term lets. The Council has commissioned a study on this subject - as there are an estimated 300 properties on short term lets in the Borough. This has resulted in an increase in fly tipping, prostitution, crime, parties and noise all of which the Police have had to deal with in Earl's Court. I'm pleased to report that RBKC are addressing the problems and are setting up a working party on "Short Term Holiday Lettings" which will be chaired by Cllr Spalding. They will be taking evidence, employing expert researchers, liaising with residents and trying to come up with solutions. So, if you are aware of any short-term lets in the Square, please speak with Cllr Spalding or, if they are causing you hassle, please speak with PC Andy Clough – as both of them are with us tonight.

The weekly Farmers' Market, held on Sundays in St Cuthbert and St Matthias School, has been another new development in 2016. It is proving to be a popular place to buy fresh food and for residents to socialize. Although the RA was not consulted or made aware of the siting for this Market, we were initially involved with addressing the concerns of some residents who backed onto the school playground. These mainly

centered on market traders and visitors parking in residents' bays noise from the setting up of the stalls and cooking smells. The first two concerns we feel have been addressed - and we managed to get the barbecue stall relocated to alongside the Warwick Road. Unfortunately - a few residents continue to experience problems. As the Market was established with the permission of the Council the RA felt these concerns should be referred to our Ward Councillors, who are in a better position to bring them to the attention of the relevant RBKC Committees/Officers, and Cllr Wade and Cllr Spalding are already liaising with residents and the market organisers to try to resolve these outstanding problems.

4. Providing social events for the residents of the Square.

During 2016 ECSRA held several events for residents. The AGM followed by drinks and canapés, a tea party in the Garden to celebrate the Queen's 90th Birthday (in association with the Garden Sub-Committee) a summertime BBQ/Disco and a Members' Only Spanish Evening in Jonathan Ross' delightful garden with our MP Victoria Borwick as our guest speaker. In December, all residents were invited the "Lighting of the Christmas Tree" in the Garden with carols, mulled wine, mince pies, hot chocolate and cookies. This year's events are on our website and also on the front page of our magazine and we hope you will all become members of the RA if you haven't already done so and support them all.

2016 saw the revamp of the ECSRA website and I do hope you have all managed to have a look. Thank you to Sue Lupton and to Judy Head for all their hard work during the summer to get our new website up and running. Although available to all residents, there is a "Members Only" section with lots of additional information, such as the monthly crime figures for Earl's Court, kindly supplied by Andy Clough, rubbish and recycling reports, local information, details of our RA's events, archives and photographs. With lots of information now available on our website, we took the decision to have an annual magazine to replace the 3 newsletters which were beginning to be very onerous to produce. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sue Lupton for the many hours she has spent producing a magazine we can all be proud of that has been fully financed by advertising and the generous support of Faron Sutaria, now John D Wood & Company, who printed over 700 copies - for distribution to all the residents of the Square. And a big thank you also to all who helped hand-deliver the magazine.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Executive Committee who have been such a help and support to me personally and who work so hard behind the scenes to run the RA. Alex Tullett our Hon Treasurer, who also monitors Planning and Licencing, Heidi Bradner and Mariaclara Vilona, who work with the Rubbish and Recycling Team, Christine Powell, our Membership Secretary, Sue Lupton who Edits our magazine and works on Events with me, David Ramsden, a long-standing Committee member and Jennifer Ware, who I always think of as our "guiding light". Thank you for all your hard work for ECSRA during 2016