

ECSRA CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2019/2020

Good evening and welcome to our AGM with a special welcome to our Guest Speaker, David Elavia, Chairman of the Earl's Court Safer Neighbourhood Team Ward Panel, and our three Ward Councillors, Cllr Hamish Adourian, Cllr Malcolm Spalding and Cllr Linda Wade - and a huge thank you to all our Councillors for their continued support this past year.

Last year I spoke about ECSRA's main focus being on persuading the Council to strengthen their planning and waste disposal enforcement procedures. With this in mind, I attended the Council's Resident Conference on joined-up enforcement in January. The Council has listened to residents and is funding a new enforcement team of 14 uniformed Wardens and 3 PCs who will be out and about on a daily basis in key problem areas. These problems could include fly-tipping, breaches of busking, Public Service Protection Orders, low level Anti-Social Behaviour and other issues. The Council is keen to receive residents' suggestions as they develop this new enforcement team. These Wardens are not meant to replace the Police and will not have the power to arrest. They should be seen as providing a bridge between the Council and the Police (who remain responsible for maintaining Law and Order). The Council are intending to employ local people and offer apprenticeships and the Wardens will not be responsible for specific areas but will cover the whole Borough. These arrangements replace the previous contract RBKC had with the Police, in which they funded 17 Police Officers. However, the Council didn't feel that they were getting value for money from this arrangement, as they didn't control the activities of these Police, who could be diverted to other areas outside the Borough .

Despite the best efforts of our Rubbish and Recycling Team (led by Heidi) hotspots for rubbish dumping remain on the pavement outside the back exit of 312, and on the pavements outside 69, 45, and 1. We have been lobbying for the CCTV cameras, located in the Square, to be used to identify these fly-tippers and for the CCTV monitoring hours to be extended to 24/7 (as is the case in Hammersmith and Fulham) to act as a deterrent for this Anti-Social Behaviour. Unbelievably, the Council has only issued 3 Fixed Penalty Notices for rubbish dumping during 2019 in Earl's Court Square. On Saturday morning, Heidi and I did a walkabout around the Square with John-Paul Ramsey, from the Council's Waste and Street Enforcement

Department, looking at our hotspots and voicing our concerns about the apparent lack of enforcement. With our beady eyes upon him, the Officer found 3 items of ID evidence and assured us that all 3 offenders will receive warning letters. However, it has to be said, would this have happened if we hadn't been there? We were advised that the best way to report rubbish dumping is via the Council's new App - which is easily downloaded on your devices. John-Paul has suggested we use this App, to which photos can be attached, rather than send emails to Streetline, as progress on your complaint can be tracked and you will be able to see what enforcement action has been taken.

Another problem area is the corner near 51 - where there are usually around 10 bicycles fixed to the railings. Because of this, the Council has agreed to install an additional 4-hoop bike stand (to accommodate 8 bikes) on the pay and display bay opposite 41. Sadly, there was insufficient room for the 5th hoop we requested. ECSRA has suggested this should ideally be located on the corner of 51 opposite 33 - and we await a response. Residents will have noticed an additional single bike loop was installed in 2019 opposite 69 - after lobbying from Heidi.

Alex and I had a very constructive meeting with Stafford Lancaster, the Project Manager working for the new developer of the Exhibition Site. We reiterated ECSRA's view that this gives the Council and the new developer the opportunity to provide the homes we need for our low paid key-workers or young professionals who wish to buy and rent and the elderly, who need residential care or need to downsize. We reported that the community had lost an Exhibition Centre, to which local people attached a certain sense of pride and joy, which brought business and funds into Earl's Court. It was a place "to go" right on our doorstep and we felt that this should be replaced with a new world class Exhibition Centre. We also discussed the "meanwhile" use of the apron area as residents would like to see green areas designated for community use - as there is a lack of local public playing space for children. This area would also be an ideal location for the Sunday Farmers' Market (enabling it to expand) and the plays and films the Earl's Court Community Trust stage for residents during the summer, which would relieve the pressure of hosting these in the Garden Squares. Specifics should be clear and agreed with the community and not for exclusive use of residents of the site. The new Earl's Court project team has an Open Morning for residents to share their views on Saturday 7th March from 10am to 12:30pm and I have leaflets here if you are interested.

We held our 4 annual events for residents in 2019. The AGM at The Gojk, the BBQ/Disco in the Garden (which commenced at 5pm so younger children were able to enjoy the evening) a USA-themed “Night in Nashville” in The Bottlery (exclusively for Members and their friends) and “The Lighting of the Christmas Tree with Carols” in the Garden - to which all residents are invited. All these events provided an opportunity for residents of the Square to get to know their neighbours. We would like to thank Katrina Quinton and The Garden Sub-Committee for their continued support and the use of the beautiful Gardens of Earl’s Court Square to host our events.

A special thank you must go to John D Wood & Co, who once again printed our magazine “free of charge” and sponsored the Country and Western band for our “Night in Nashville”. Their very generous low-key contribution to the community is much appreciated.

We have an exciting project in 2020, which we hope to start shortly. The Executive Committee is planning to erect plaques for notable people connected with Earl’s Court Square, which we hope will be funded by City Living Local Life (CLLL). The plaques will be in racing green, with a white border and white writing and permission is being sought from the De Vere family/RBKC for their crest to be embossed on each plaque. It is proposed that the first 4 plaques will be for Ninette de Valois (who founded the Royal Ballet), Fuad Rouhani (who served as the first Secretary-General of OPEC), Douglas Eaton (a past Chair of ECSRA - known for his stand against the selling of council housing) and Jennifer Ware (who sadly passed away last year). Jennifer was a founder member of ECSRA, was fondly known as the “mother of Earl’s Court” and her obituary is featured in our annual magazine and on our website.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our amazing Executive Committee Team for their support this year and for all the “behind the scenes” work they do to ensure our events run smoothly. Alex (our Hon Treasurer) who looks after our finances and is responsible for Planning, Traffic and Licencing matters. Alex also represents ECSRA on the Earl’s Court Society. Heidi, who supervises the Rubbish and Recycling Team of volunteers. Mariaclara, who monitors and reports fly-tipping and makes the most delicious choc-chip cookies for our Christmas event and Sue, who

edits our annual magazine. The magazine is a huge commitment for Sue and takes hours to put together. It is fully financed by its adverts, which Sue sources, so there is no cost to ECSRA. Sue is looking for a volunteer assistant - so do let her know if you or anyone else would be interested in helping her with the magazine next year.

Christine reports on environmental issues and represents ECSRA on the Environmental Round Table and the Kensington Society. Andrew brings his political (with a small "p") and commercial expertise to the Committee. Maria is our Membership Secretary and Shailesh, keeps us on track regarding air pollution and the Exhibition Site. I would also like to thank David Ramsden, an original founder member, whose experience and long service is much appreciated. Unfortunately, David is not able to be with us tonight as he is in C&W Hospital.

Finally, I am pleased to report that ECSRA is in good shape and we have a very active Executive Committee who ensure the RA runs smoothly. We are always looking to increase our membership to enable us to continue "to protect and enhance Earl's Court Square and the lives of the people who live and work here". We deliver our magazine to 600 households in the Square - and wouldn't it be wonderful if they were all ECSRA Members.

DAVID ELAVIA

I am delighted to welcome David Elavia, the Chairman of The Earl's Court Safer Neighbourhood Team Ward Panel - which sets and monitors local policing priorities. David has stepped in at short notice as PC Steve Dell is not able to be with us tonight for operational reasons. Earl's Court is one of the areas with the most crime in the Borough and we have watched drug dealing on our doorsteps and experienced theft from motor vehicles - so I am sure we are all very interested in what David has to tell us - as the increase in criminality in Earl's Court is of concern to us all.

Chrissie Courtney