

EARL'S COURT SQUARE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

*Protecting and enhancing Earl's Court Square and
the lives of the people who live and work here*



ANNUAL MAGAZINE | AGM | 2021

On behalf of Earl's Court residents, we:

- ◆ Monitor and address environmental issues including pollution, rubbish and recycling.
- ◆ Comment on planning applications and transport issues.
- ◆ Liaise with Police, Council and Earl's Court Garden Sub-Committee.
- ◆ Organise 4 annual social events for the residents of Earl's Court Square.
- ◆ Produce a magazine annually with local news, distributed to all residents.
- ◆ Publish a website with lots of local information and a dedicated members section.

Social Events for 2021:

24 February:	Annual General Meeting online by Zoom.
12 - 13 June:	London Open Gardens (Two virtual tours due to Covid-19).
19 June:	Earl's Court Square BBQ and Disco.
Summer:	Commemorative Plaques Event.
Autumn:	Members' Social Evening.
12 December:	Annual Christmas Tree Lighting.

Check for further information on www.ecsra.co.uk

Our thanks to John D Wood & Co. for printing our magazine to support ECSRA.

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The Earl's Court Residential Association is a beacon of partnership and solidarity to the community it serves. Now more than ever does this ring true, from the award winning gardens that are perfect for fresh air, to the relationships built over the years. John D Wood & Co. are truly delighted to sponsor the association. We believe that property is a people business, we care deeply about our clients and customers, and about each other. Our common purpose is to bring people and property together, across generations. We hope to see you again soon.

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SALES

Charlene Williams



SALES

Simon Hardie



LETTINGS

William Saunders

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earlscourt@johndwood.co.uk

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2020/2021

Dear Residents,
2020 has been an extraordinary year in so many ways. Our Summer/Autumn events were cancelled due to Covid-19, but we started the year with a well-attended AGM and ended with a socially distanced “Lighting of the Christmas Tree” in the Garden. Singers from the Royal Opera House and the West End stage sang a mélange of festive songs, illuminated by a gold and silver Christmas Tree - and Christmas spirit overflowed from windows, balconies, doorsteps and pavements heralding better times ahead.



It's been a year of ECSRA Executive Committee Zoom meetings and attending RBKC Residents' Association Engagement Network virtual meetings – a welcome attempt by the Council to involve the Borough's local communities in these difficult times.

At the start of the first lock down I emailed Members, seeking volunteers and asking whether residents needed assistance. 14 members volunteered and three residents asked for help. We now have a 'Register of Volunteers', so please email me (in confidence) if you or your neighbours need a hand with shopping, collecting prescriptions or would just like a friendly 'phone call from one of our volunteers.

There have been antisocial behaviour (ASB) problems in the Square with people sitting on the steps of buildings drinking and taking drugs which residents have found increasingly intimidating. I have been liaising with our MP, Felicity Buchan, who has raised our concerns with Chief Superintendent Helen Harper and the local Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT). Earl's Court, with its ASB problems, has been recognised as an 'enhanced' Ward and, after much local lobbying, we now have an Earl's Court SNT comprising one Sargent, four PCs and one PCSO.



Life under lockdown! Meet the neighbours - clapping to support the NHS

The Kenway Road Police Hub closed in October when our SNT re-located to Kensington Police Station. Earl's Court (EC) has had a 19% reduction in crime with 1,180 crimes reported (Dec 2019-Nov 2020) compared to 1,459 in the preceding 12 months with the peak month being June 2019 (159 crimes). EC had 90 drug offences during the last 12 months, with a 30% reduction from 128 offences in the previous 12 months. There was also a 33% reduction in burglaries and a 36% reduction in robberies.

The Police are now working with the new RBKC Wardens and you should notice an enhanced Police/Warden presence on our streets. Despite the above, Felicity advises that most of her correspondence during the Covid-19 lockdown had been about the NHS, Planning and Environment/Pollution. However, Crime/Policing remains a priority for her and she can still be contacted by constituents if they have concerns for specific crimes.

ECSRA has applied for RBKC funding for two projects within the Square. The first is for City Living Local Life (CLLL) funding for four

racing green plaques to commemorate past residents whose lives have made a difference in Earl's Court Square. We hope these stylish plaques, which will bear the RBKC crest, will link people of the past with buildings of the present. (see page 6).

The second project is for six bespoke chamfered corner slate grey planters to close the gaps between the bollards in the SE arm of Earl's Court Square, repainting the bollards and ongoing maintenance. Besides environmentally enhancing this area, the works will help prevent motorbikes, mopeds and cyclists taking shortcuts through the bollards onto Earl's Court Road and improve pedestrian safety.





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We applied for the Council's Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) to fund this project. Both funds are financed with local developers' contributions and we are delighted both our projects have now been approved for funding by RBKC.

During the summer I attended a virtual RBKC Licencing Hearing in support of Krystals, our local convenience store/Post Office on Earl's Court Road, who had applied for a 24/7 Licence to sell alcohol. The Licencing Committee granted the Licence, with the various conditions ECSRA requested, and we continue to work with Krystals and support their business.

ECSRA has also supported other local RA's Objections to Planning proposals outside our area, such as the proposed redevelopment of the Underground Station in South Kensington, and we have opposed the cycle lanes in Kensington High Street as we believe they are dangerous, create more traffic and pollution and make it difficult for emergency services to circulate in the event of an issue. We were delighted they were removed although this decision is now subject to ongoing discussion within the Council.

Since lockdown, I have been approached by several residents regarding the provision of secure bicycle hangers in addition to the

Planters designed by Charles Wood to prevent cycles and motor bikes taking a short cut through the bollards

four extra bicycle hoops RBKC has already installed at our request. Initially ECSRA was against bicycle hangers but, with ever more people avoiding public transport and cycling to work, and increased bicycle theft (a resident has had two expensive bicycles stolen) a sub-committee identified three different areas where bicycle hangers could be sited without having an impact on existing buildings or take away residents' parking spaces.

This award-winning product, already located throughout the Borough, stores six bicycles within half the space of a car parking bay. We have avoided suggesting the areas surrounding the Garden to maintain the integrity of the Square. RBKC has recently ceased directly funding bicycle hangers and the Council advises that we need to apply for NCIL funding. If successful, the funding does not actually leave RBKC as it is passed to the Council to action the hangars.

We were relieved to see that no management is required by ECSRA and rental fees will still apply to anyone wishing to take up a space within each unit. Requests for hangars should go to cycling@rbkc.gov.uk with a copy to ecsrachair@btinternet.com.

Spaces are issued on a first come first served basis. The Council keeps a record of these prior to installation. After installation this list is passed to the company managing the hangars and they then maintain the waiting list going forwards.

<https://www.cyclehoop.com/product/shelters-canopies/bikehangar/>.

Sadly, our income is down in 2020 due to the cancellation of our summer BBQ/disco, which is our main fundraiser, and finances expenses such as our contribution towards the Christmas Tree.

We now have 101 Members made up of individual, household/family and Life Members. However, we would really appreciate your help with recruiting new Members and renewing annual ECSRA Memberships.

We have updated our website www.ecsra.co.uk and now everyone can access it easily (without the need for passwords) to find out about our activities, with photos of past events, archives and lots of interesting local information about Earl's Court Square and Earl's Court.

Finally, I would like to thank all my colleagues on the ECSRA Executive Committee for their help and advice during 2020. We're also grateful to Councillors Hamish Adourian, Malcolm Spalding and Linda Wade and Katrina Quinton, Chairman of the Earl's Court Square Garden Management Sub-Committee, for

their continued support. Wishing you all a very Happy and Healthy New Year - and we look forward to resuming "service as usual" in 2021.

With best wishes,



Chrissie Courtney - Chair

Earl's Court Square Residents' Association

A Gold Standard RA awarded by RBKC

COMMITTEE ROTATION

ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2021

Currently serving, retiring by rotation and offering themselves up for re-election under the rules:

Chrissie Courtney – Chair
Alex Tullett – Hon. Treasurer
Andrew Foster
Christine Powell

Currently serving and continuing under the rules:

Heidi Bradner
Shailesh Katyal
Sue Lupton
Mariaclara Vilona
Maria Xirou
Magda Zawisza

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Membership of the Earl's Court Square Residents' Association is open to everyone who lives within the Earl's Court Square Conservation Area. A membership form, to renew your subscription or to join, is included with this Annual Newsletter.

We are pleased to report that the subscription rates remain unchanged at £8 for an individual and £12 for a family / household. Membership subscriptions for 2020 were 101, comprising 33 individuals, 31 family / household and six life members. We are very grateful to those members who kindly included a donation when renewing their membership.

Maria Xirou has stepped down as Membership Secretary and we thank her for all her hard work. Christine Powell has once again taken on the role of Membership Secretary, and she can be contacted on ecsrasmembers@talktalk.net



COMMEMORATING PEOPLE in Earl's Court Square

Earlier in the year, the Earl's Court Square Residents' Association Executive Committee decided to apply to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea City Living Local Life fund in order to erect plaques within the Square to commemorate notable people who have lived here.

These include Jennifer Ware and Douglas Eaton who have made a contribution to the protection and betterment of Earl's Court Square and the local area as a place in which to live and to creating a community spirit. We will also commemorate Dame Ninette de Valois and Fuad Rouhani, both of whom have made an impact in the international sphere.

Research was undertaken about the work which each had carried out to support our application. We sought agreement and backing from the four families concerned as well as permission from the freeholders of the relevant properties where each lived.

The three Ward Councillors supported the application which was submitted during the summer. Due to the Covid crisis and staff shortages within the Council, we have only just heard that our application has been successful.

Preparations are now being made for the plaques to be made and to arrange for their erection around the Square which is hoped we shall be able to achieve during the early part of the year.

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DAVID RAMSDEN

The Last of the Originals

We are sorry to announce that David Ramsden died in April this year. He had been in the Chelsea and Westminster hospital but went home to be cared for by his partner, Tom Reidy. He was buried near his country retreat in Sussex but unfortunately, his planned Memorial Service has not yet taken place due to the Covid restrictions.

David was a founder member of the Earl's Court Square Residents' Association from its inception in 1974. He is the last of the original committee, having served on it for 46 years. Based in Queens Court at the time, David attended all the parties in the Square and when he left to live a few miles away, continued to do the accounts for the RA. Simone Smith remembers he would bring his tux to their flat to change into after the committee meetings, being a guest at many dinner gatherings. His charm, good manners and human touch were most welcoming. He attended virtually every Committee meeting, travelling from his home by public transport, even in the worst winter weather.

He was for many years the Manager of the Piccadilly branch of Barclays Bank which is why he deftly fitted the position of Treasurer for us. He was involved with the Friends of the Chelsea and Westminster hospital, as a board member, and a member of the Rotary Club. He took these roles seriously and was a special person giving freely of his time as a volunteer with whatever he got involved in.



Many will remember him at the annual BBQ. For decades he was at the south gate doing collections with Alex Tullett, who took over from David as ECSRA Treasurer.

David was an accomplished pianist and an ardent follower of opera. He has our thanks as the 'ultimate' committee member and will be remembered for his warm smile and as a very caring person.

ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Earl's Court Square Residents' Association is represented on the Environment Round Table Committee. Unfortunately, due to the Covid crisis, only one meeting could be held. The following are some of the environmental issues which have been announced during the year:

- ◆ Pollution along Earl's Court Road has been reduced by a half following the move from diesel to hybrid / electric vehicles.
- ◆ Since the Idling Engine Action Volunteers Group started in late 2019, of the over 700 drivers who were spoken to across 31 London boroughs, 85% turned off their engines when asked.
- ◆ Cllr. Johnny Thalassites has become the new Lead responsible for Planning, Place and Environment. A 20mph speed limit is being introduced on all roads within the borough.
- ◆ Acoustic cameras have been erected within the borough which take photographs of vehicles emitting an exhaust noise of over 74 decibels. There have been over 500 triggerings in the space of a month, with over 130 warning letters being sent to drivers.

The sale of house coal and wet wood will be banned from February 2021. Only bags of certified coal and seasoned wood will be available. The use of both coal and unseasoned wood will be banned by February 2023. This is to help reduce air pollution.

ELECTRIC CAR CHARGING POINT 1/1A Earl's Court Square

ECSRA has raised residents' concerns with the Council that, although they held a residents' parking permit, they would have to pay again to use a Pay-by-phone space to enable them to use this charging point for their electric vehicles. ECSRA has been advised by RBKC that "the lamp column charger is at the end of the last residents' space and is usable both by a car parked in the last residents' space, or by a car parked in the first Pay-by-phone space.

Chargers that are usable by both residents and visitors are often more beneficial overall, as residents with electric vehicles are more likely to find the visitor space free for overnight charging than the residents' parking space (and outside the hours of control, they do not have to pay any charges to park in the Pay-by-phone space)." RBKC plans to re-paint the separation markings between the faded residents' bay and the bank of 5 Pay-by-phone spaces in this area in January.



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A YEAR IN PICTURES - by Alan Malcom

It has been a good year for Biochemists. (ECS has long been highly regarded for the quality of its Biochemists). At long last the public has been roused to recognize their value – unlike Philip Green and his ilk.

For most, life in ECS has continued Teflon coated, almost as if the chaos surrounding us was invisible. No other catastrophe could have accelerated the uptake of the Internet like Covid. One 79 year old resident with grandchildren in Seattle has upgraded her Zoom account so that she can teach them Mandarin from 5,000 miles away. Such has been the admiration for her knitted tea cosy in the background to her transmissions that she has increased

output. She knits every evening, and is now exporting 25 cosies per week to the US under new WTO regulations. Remember, they scoffed at Anita Roddick.



One local Estate Agent is using the bonhomie which is the ECS trademark as a major selling point – BBQs in summer, and mulled wine in winter. Our garden was never faint hearted and stayed open, (like the Windmill Theatre) throughout.

A fabulous spring meant the garden has rarely looked better. Sadly we could not enter it in the RBKC competition, or show it off in the Open Gardens Weekend. We felt totally confident of a Gold Award. The background noise of friendly chats has nearly drowned out the parakeets. We have also had some lovely music, although we have had to string around the railings to hear it.

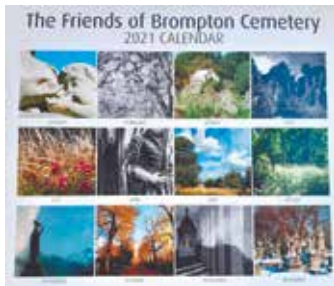
We have stood on doorsteps and applauded our NHS staff, and even glimpsed neighbours whom we had not seen for weeks. The Christmas tree went up as ever, and looked glorious. These LED lights are a BIG bonus. Must be what these scientific boffins get up to! How do we get more of them?

The Farmers' Market on Sunday mornings has been a real tonic. It provides a chance to bump into neighbours. It is always good to recognize new stalls, and we have recently seen indoor plants and Sri Lankan cuisine – not that we would dream of advertising.

Our local church – St Cuthbert's – has arranged seating so that we can once again enjoy lovely music in a spectacular setting. Your correspondent has enjoyed two such events, although the absence of a glass of wine afterwards means that critical discussion has had to be postponed.

Earl's Court Road has been diminished by the erection of barriers to provide extra width for pedestrians to ignore each other. It has not affected traffic flow, which is still trickling through, although the absence of easily visible edges has led to several elderly persons tripping.

Friends of Brompton Cemetery has produced a delicious calendar, which is not full of tombs and gravestones (although there are one or two) – but celebrates wildlife, and the environment. Strongly recommended.



The Brompton Cemetery calendar, and food on display at the Farmers' Market



Our new MP, Felicity Buchan, has made a good impression on Boris, and is tipped for a senior post in the near future. Nice to have a Tory MP who has not previously been a Cabinet Minister.

It was with delight I discovered that even after Brexit, we will be represented in the National Assembly in Paris. The latest Member, Alexandre Holroyd, was educated in Kensington, lives in Kensington and he now represents our views on mackerel fishing (amongst other topics) to the French. ECSRA is currently discussing our position on mackerel and scallops. At present the declared status is that we are in favour of eating them.

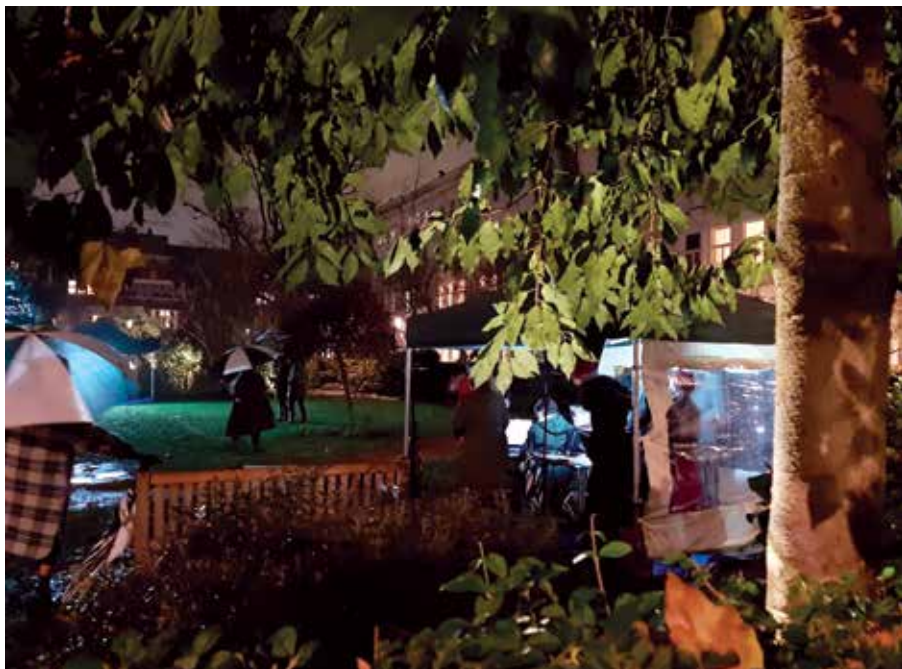
It is now two years since the RBKC local history archive department gratefully received ten boxes of Jennifer Ware's papers describing the evolution of the Residents' Association. The last 45 years of Agendas of the Garden Committee are now on their way to Hornton Street. Both sets of papers are available for any local historian who wishes to delve.

Our local hospital, Chelsea and Westminster, has done miracles throughout the Covid assault and well deserves our gratitude.

Many of our favourite restaurants have opened and then shut again like a Swiss weather house. We have done our best to support them while open, and to patronize "take away" when not. Let us hope that they can all pull through this awful challenge. As I write, Boris has promoted London to a new Premier League.

As Mark Antony put it: "If you have Tiers, prepare to shed them now". Shakespeare always got in there first. Happy New 2021. Fingers crossed.

CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING



We thought it would be nice if we broke with tradition this year and ran the lighting as a joint event with the Garden Management Sub-Committee since it would be a different event to our usual ECSRA mulled wine and mince pies evening. The show went on, albeit with only the singers and a few committee stewards inside the garden.

Some of us watched from the railings and others from their doorsteps and balcony, as 'twinkles and cheer' came to Earl's Court Square with singers from the Royal Opera House and West End stage. Named for the occasion, the Earl's Court Festivers, sponsored by tlc, they trouped the Christmas spirit with some of our favourite carols throughout the evening in the Earl's Court Squares. We were the first port of call and thanks to Toby for the 'magical listening' and joint faultless organizing with the committees.

It was arguably the nicest Christmas tree we have had and always brings a sense of occasion and round up to the year. So, when we had the huge wind overnight on Boxing Day and our tree fell to the ground, a signal went around for help to lift it back. It didn't take much time to right the lovely tree and its lights. It's taken years of patience and prayers to make sure the lights go on and stay on and having out foxed Mr. Foxy (who chews the light cables) and the rain and now the big wind, we give a cheer!! It was great to see 20 odd people turn up to help, but hero Kevin Colgan (Mr. Fixit) had it sorted in a thrice. To add a smile to one's face, young Benedict offered round mince pies to all, which incidentally, he helped to make.

FROM PARLOUR GAMES TO PARADISE

Keith Mortimer Clancy - our local guest writer

How boring can it get walking up and down the same streets every day, not really going anywhere, all the shops closed and not able to meet anyone. When in March 2020 the pandemic hit and we found ourselves with no gym, no swimming pool, walks in the country strictly forbidden, and the prospect of walking up and down the local high street for two hours a day not filling our household with cheery frivolity, we took to the scientific approach of inventing street parlour games.



Starting off at 5am, we began with 'Spot the dog', refusing to come home until we had spotted a minimum of five chocolate Labradors. The rules were rapidly revised when having walked for three quarters of an hour in the freezing deserted streets we had met only one dog called Denis, a cross between an old man with a lung condition and an overused floor mop.

Our second day began with another childhood game - 'Step on a crack you break your mother's back' or, seeing who could complete the entire two hour walk without stepping on a pavement crack. This game lasted somewhere between Boots and Marks & Spenser's on the Earl's Court Road when accusations of cheating broke out.

Our third game, 'Find the croissant' was a quest to find a bakery that was (a) open in a pandemic and (b) would sell us a piping hot freshly baked almond croissant. To our absolute joy and amazement, we did find the sole baker in North Kensington, surprised to see a large Irishman and an Italian scientist banging excitedly on his window at 5a.m. Later we embarked on more refined games including researching tree and plant species in Battersea Park; taking walking tours supplied by a Blue Badge Guide friend, including great actors of K&C, great musicians, and notorious great lovers; and, avoiding as many main roads as possible, using as many mews as we could manage.

As March moved from April into May our morning walks morphed from our great creative effort into a routine of something necessary and lovely. It became unimaginable not to be out first thing on the streets. Now we were part of a community, meeting the same dog owners, getting to know the professional athlete types whizzing by in their aero-dynamic clothing, observing the older couples sincere in their love and care for each, determined to keep fit, and carrying their thermos flasks and breakfast treats. Our biggest love became the swans of Hyde Park born in the spring, floating like miniature fluffy miracles. From May to September, first thing every morning we hand fed the bonny, bobbing children watching them grow into teenagers. What had started out for us as parlour games in a desperate attempt to use humour to help us keep fit, turned into a year where we learnt to love the treasures of Kensington & Chelsea in a totally new way. Our advice – Be silly, you never know where it will take you.

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ECSRA VOLUNTEER WORK: *Here is some of the work we do:*

Rubbish Update by Heidi Bradner

Due to the pandemic, the dumping on the square has decreased in 2020 compared to previous years. We think this is due to fewer rentals and short lets operating. Many residents also left during the various lockdowns.

ECSRA and RBKC Enforcement meet regularly to do walks around the square to monitor and stop rubbish dumping. We arrange with the Council to remove abandoned bicycles, locks and other items such as shopping trolleys.

Good results from 2020 include less dumping in front of 312. However, this spot remains problematic. The corner near 69 remains a hot spot, since the building does not have a rubbish vault. Residents at number One created a designated rubbish storage area for their building, which helps avoid rubbish being put on the pavement.

Aims for 2021 include involving local residents in the battle to stop rubbish dumping on the square. We formed a group of volunteers who stay in touch with each other and with RBKC to chase and stop rubbish dumping. The goal remains to have strong investigation and enforcement combined with outreach to stop dumping.

REPORTING

When you see illegally dumped bags, please help us and report them. The council prefers you use the online form to report the incident. <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/global/report-it/waste-and-street-environment>

This generates a case report for the resident. This works well as the Council informs

the resident directly of their investigation results. If unable to report via the online form, call **Streetline on 020 7361 3001** or email: streetline@rbkc.gov.uk

RECYCLING

Please dispose of expired, unused, medications at a local chemist, so they do not get into the landfill or the local water system. All chemists in the U.K. are required to take back expired or unused medicines. Lids are now accepted by RBKC recycling. Put plastic lids back on clean and empty plastic bottles- after you squash them. Take metal lids off glass bottles and put them loose into your recycling.

Top Recycling “No’s” for our Borough

NO carrier bag or thin plastics that can be scrunched in your hand. Only plastic that is stiff and hard should go into your recycling bag

NO shredded paper. It cannot be effectively recycled and causes problem for the machinery. Please put in your black bin liner with normal rubbish.

NO pizza delivery boxes that have food waste on them. If the top of the pizza box is still clean, please cut this portion off and put in recycling bags.

NO greasy or food-contaminated plastic, paper or cardboard.

Earl’s Court Square Rubbish collections are MONDAY and THURSDAY mornings. Please put rubbish in your vault. Collections begin from 7 am, so if bags are left on the pavement at night, foxes break into the food waste and spread rubbish over the pavement.

Please advise any new residents and cleaners what the collection times are. We are fortunate to have two collections a week.



RBKC offers a Bulky Household Waste collection for £22.70 for up to 10 bulky items. This service is now operating again (having been temporarily suspended) and taking bookings. However, due to Covid-19, they can only collect bulky waste items from outside your property. Please make sure you leave items on the pavement, outside of your property on the day of your collection. Unfortunately, RBKC cannot provide a collection service for items classified as “heavy” on the booking system at this present time.

Please call 020 7361 3001 or visit RBKC website: <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling/rubbish-and-recycling/bulky-household-waste-collections>.

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

If you think someone else or a neighbour might want an item you want to get rid of, don't dump it, 'Freegle' it free of charge! Freegle is a charity and enables you to exchange unwanted items for free. To find out more, and to see what is currently available, visit Kensington and Chelsea Freegle. If you have good quality items that you would like to donate for re-use, please go to the Freecycle website. <https://www.freecycle.org/>

The Freecycle Network™ website says it is a grassroots and entirely non-profit movement of people who are giving (and getting) stuff for free in their own towns and neighbourhoods. It's all about reuse and keeping good stuff out of landfills. Each local group is moderated by local volunteers. Membership is free.

USEFUL NUMBERS

Streetline: 020 7361 3001 or

streetline@rbkc.gov.uk

Streetline's “too big for the bin” collections:

Up to 10 bulky items £22.70

Online reporting for waste and illegal street dumping <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/global/report-it/waste-and-street-environment>

Earl's Court Safer Neighbourhood

Team: Kensington Police Station, 72 - 74 Earl's Court Road, Kensington W8 6EQ.

PS Nick Hamer

PC Steve Dell

PC Matt Bantick

PC Hinal Devkaran

PC Marcus Lyndon

PCSO Danny Wright

Contact No: 020 7161 8861

Earl's Court Mobile No: 07843 291 149

Non-emergency:

dial 101 textphone 18001 101

Emergency:

always dial 999 textphone 18000

Street Outreach Team RBKC – in case you have any rough sleepers on your doorsteps. Tel: 020 7341 5210 or 020 7361 3008 email: streetoutreach@rbkc.gov.uk. They have asked that you contact them before the Police.

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HISTORY QUIZ: researched by Christine Powell

How good is your memory? Or you may be interested in how some buildings looked before you knew the area. Over time, ECSRA has gathered together photographs of time past, some from the Borough's archives and some from the Pembroke pub. Below are some photos of places from by-gone times. Can you identify them?

If you would like to know where they are, you will find the answers on the History/Quiz page of the website: www.ecsra.co.uk

No. 1

Ballards, the undertakers.
A largish funeral and note
the horse drawn hearse.



No. 2

A watchmaker and jeweller.
This photo was taken fairly
recently when the fascia was
exposed during redevelopment.



No. 3

A Mansion Block.
This photo was used in the
re-establishment of some
of the exterior features.



No.4

Earl's Court Underground Station.
This photo was taken in 1907.
Do you know which entrance it is?



HISTORY QUIZ

No. 5

Earl's Court Post Office. Where was the Post Office before it was moved to the corner of Earl's Court Road and Earl's Court Gardens? It eventually closed, to be replaced by Paul's, the patisserie. In the summer, a new Post Office opened as part of Krystal's redevelopment.



No. 6

A swimming pool. Although no longer in existence, the structure is still intact.



No. 7

A quicker mode of transport.
Do you recognise where this is?



No7

A roof top view.
Do you know where this is
and what additions have been made?



The cut-off date is Saturday 28th February, after the AGM.

www.ecsra.co.uk/history.

Prize: A bottle of Champagne or chocolates if you prefer, for the first correct answer.

Reply by email to the editor: sue@suelupton.com. Answers to be available on the History/Quiz section of the ECSRA website, www.ecsra.co.uk when the Prize is won.



As I write this on a very chilly December afternoon, I continue to look at the world through Pollyanna's eyes, and I am so aware of how much there is to be grateful for. The cold weather is welcome to the garden, the micro-climate that is Earl's Court Square Garden has seen camellias out since November, roses still producing buds and coming into flower in December, bulbs well and truly poking their noses through the soil, and some of the trees continuing to hang on to their leaves, at least they were until storm Bella hit us on Boxing Day night!

The cold allows the garden to rest, and put its efforts into matters underground which for plants is almost more important than the show they create above ground. The garden sub-committee thinks about these things and there is ALWAYS something to enjoy in the garden and the camellias are as fabulous as ever this year – with the palest and most perfect pink one coming out on Christmas Day!

The garden this year has been a wonderful gift to us all. It is something that we all cherish and it is such a focal point for our community. The extra space it gives us as our world seemed to close in on us because of the pandemic has been a wonderful opportunity to meet neighbours and make new friends, albeit at a distance. It has been a glamorous luxury in a rather pared down existence and reminds us all that there is much to take hope from on our doorstep.

When so many of our community were coping with problems raised by the virus not just at home and at work, but also with families all over the world and loved ones suffering and our ability to travel curtailed, our garden square provided respite and comfort. The spring

bulbs seem a long time ago, but the summer's lilies (especially the giant ones in the central flower bed) and the roses this year were very lovely. The hollyhocks were phenomenal and we hope that they will continue to come back year after year. The Japanese anemones continued to wave their perfect white flowers long into the autumn and the roses planted around the obelisk for Victor Smith poked their heads through, although it was only their first year in the garden, will be more prolific in 2021.

We started an Instagram page (#earls courts square garden) in the hope that it might bring pleasure during the lockdown and beyond, and show the variety of plants we have in the square and a few other avian and feline visitors too. The Thursday evening applause for



In honour of Victor Smith

carers and the VE Day celebrations reminded us all of the sacrifices and efforts made for us all by so many people and the community involvement of caring for our neighbours and friends made a difference. Greeting each other, smiling with eyes as well as mouth – especially now that mask wearing is so common – can only be for the good and let us hope it continues when the vaccine takes effect.

Our sense of community continued in the repair of the water feature after it was damaged one evening. Summer jazz helped lift the spirits on a Friday evening and we were able to enjoy Christmas songs and carols as the tree was lit. We all missed being able to have everyone in the garden (not least to appreciate the hours of labour that had gone into spreading the mulch over the flower beds)! Our Spirit of Christmas Present was in good form and thank you to everyone who answered my crie de coeur to help

right the Christmas tree after Storm Bella tipped it over on Boxing Night. It was so lovely to be able to share mince pies around the tree at some point over Christmas and was probably a worthwhile workout too! Congratulations are due to Charlie Woods and his team whose fixing of the tree in the barrel was so secure that the barrel with all the gravel bags went over with the tree!

Anna, Eyre, Andy and of course Charlie from Charles Wood Landscapes have been heroic doing so much for the garden taking national and international travel and working restrictions into account. The hedges are looking stronger and healthier than ever and we even managed to catch the privet bugs before they attacked this year. The rust bug got the almond trees in the early spring but they recovered and although they did not fruit as well this year it could well have been a rest year for them anyway. The apple trees flourished, the grape vines produced fruit and the myrtle has finally settled in well. The topiary in the north-west corner is looking more and more like a bird. The loss of the elm tree was very sad, but its removal

has meant that the south-east corner has now opened up and is a lot lighter which will help the grass and the flower beds in that little evening suntrap. The stump will come out in due course.

Of course the frustrations of households living, working and schooling within the same four walls had to have a release somewhere and at times the noise levels from the Garden were unbearable. As parents we have all had to find the extra emotional and physical energy to entertain our children and monitor them in the garden when all you want is five minutes to yourself and not to have to police them and their actions with regard to our neighbours and the garden itself.



Equally several personal trainers have only looked to see how they can get their clients in shape, rather than look at the flowerbeds under their feet and the poor trees that have been pulled and pushed and used as support structures which is not what they are in the garden for – especially when several personal trainers a week think it isn't a problem! Fortunately, it seems that the collapse of the stone benches after too many people had been using them for step ups and the like seemed to make my warnings that they were not solid and stable finally take hold. Members of the sub-committee are not the only people who can see that behaviours such as these damage the garden and its structures – and that such behaviours affect everyone. I am sure we could coordinate personal training sessions with a garden fork and lunges which would aerate the lawn and work wonders on the legs too. I learned today that there is a Tai Chi movement which is very similar to lifting piles of leaves so maybe we can combine that with raking the leaves up and everyone benefits?

Let us look forward to 2021. We have planted lots and lots of bulbs not just tulips and daffodils which with lilies, alliums and more will bring joy to the garden as spring warms up and melts into summer. We are looking at replacing the gates and making access easier for those less able to enjoy the square. We are going to do a complete key audit in the spring so for those who are keyholders, please expect a request to provide us with sight of your council

tax bill and a secondary proof of address so we can verify your key and give you a tag with its number on it! We are also looking at how we might set up a parent and child gardening club too

Thank you to everyone who enjoys the garden, to everyone who has abided by the Covid restrictions put in place to try and restrain transmission of the virus, to everyone who is aware of the by-laws and who has reminded others and their own children of their inconsiderate behaviour! The garden is a luxury and a blessing. We are fortunate to have it on our doorsteps and have it as such a part of our community and we need to remember that our neighbours, our community and our garden all deserve our consideration and respect.

Let us all hope that 2021 will be a more restful year for us all.

BROMPTON CEMETARY

Arthur Tate, former Chairman of the Friends of Brompton Cemetery, was awarded the BEM (British Empire Medal) in the Queen's New Year Honours for his work in improving the Cemetery for all visitors as well as those who live locally. During the summer, he stood down as Chairman and has been made President of the Friends of Brompton Cemetery.

At the start of the first lockdown, visitors to Brompton Cemetery almost doubled, some of the new regulars staying on.

Silver numbered discs are now dotted around in front of particular graves. They mark the top 100 notable people, trees and buildings across the cemetery.

Unfortunately, the Annual Open Day was cancelled due to the Covid crisis.



ECOLOGY CENTRE



During lockdown, the RBK&C Ecology Centre held several Zoom lectures including one on Swifts and one on Urban Foxes.

NEIGHBOUR PROFILE - Sue Lupton: Duggie Fields



In the 1970's Harpers & Queen carried an article called 'THEM' and last year before lockdown the Redfern Gallery in Cork Street curated the article and, using the same name, displayed the artistic works of Duggie Fields, Zandra Rhodes, Kevin Witney and Andrew Logan amongst others. With great acuity, it sought to unravel an aesthetic sensibility apparent in young Londoners of the time, through the prism of art.

To be 'THEM' was to be part of 'a mysterious aesthetic conspiracy' prepared to sacrifice almost anything to 'look interesting rather than sexy'. Duggie's painting was seen as a masterclass in exuberant, post-Pop figuration. Duggie had a strong involvement in fashion too and his t-shirts, watches and ties, paintings and prints were very recognisable.

As a boy he always 'made things'. Having embraced the contemporary art scene in the 1960's, he attended Chelsea Art School. Having decided to change over from Architecture, Duggie set about creating art in different forms. He left with a scholarship that took him for his first visit to the United States. His work progressed through minimal, conceptual and constructivist phases to a more hard-edged post-Pop figuration. Comic books in part gave inspiration.

In 1968 he moved into Earl's Court Square and shared a flat with Syd Barrett, who had just left Pink Floyd. It was a hive of creativity. Duggie still lives in the same flat with Barrett's former room as his studio. In fact, the studio and apartment are so much part of his identity, that it was replicated in 2018 by an art gallery in Glasgow which recreated his flat, featuring his works of mannequins, recycled art pieces, paintings and recordings for an exhibition.



“It was surreal. They got it so right,” says Duggie.

Duggie makes music and film as much as he paints, the computer opening so much virtual space to do digital albums, animation and voice. “The more you try, the easier it gets to do more,” Duggie says. He has been asked by an American musician who is doing a music album of the lesser-known Bob Dylan songs for release in 2021, to do a ‘song cover’. He chose to do his interpretation of the Dylan song Masters of War. “It’s an interesting challenge with powerful lyrics, he says, to put random music direction and capture the feeling without having a melody.” He has done a track with Marianne Faithfull, with a mix of his and her voice side by side. Two years ago, at the Olympia in Paris, along with a great French performer, Etienne Daho, he was asked to appear on stage, repeating sentences of his album, which was a marrying up of theatre, song, and art.

One could go on, but to round off, I asked Jonathan Ross of Gallery 286 in Earl’s Court Road to encapsulate Duggie. Jonathan was delighted to do so. “During his 50 years in Earl’s Court, Duggie has evolved an immediately recognisable look which incorporates his work as a painter, composer and video maker, and extends to the décor of his much photographed flat and his unmistakeable personal style, leading to his being equally well known as a fashion icon and an artist. Having admired him from afar since the 70s I was delighted to find that he was a neighbour when I moved to Earl’s Court in 1994.”



IN RECOGNITION OF JULIE COOPER

Julie Cooper, 60 years a resident of Earl's Court Square, who has died two days before her 90th birthday, was very appealing and very tall. A smoker from the age of 11, she had a devoted and lifelong habit. Curiously, it was her father who encouraged her, to help stunt her growth, as many believed it did in those days.

After school she went to the Guildhall School of Music to study the piano. She became very skilled. and was expected to become a concert pianist but she hated playing to an audience and the idea of an entire concert hall filled with strangers failed to move her. Her piano playing received lots of awards and she was entitled to have letters after her name, but she never applied them. But when Julie's name was mentioned, Frank Phealan, long-time resident of Earl's Court Square, said 'ah the concert pianist'. She didn't really need the letters.

On the steps of Guildhall, she met student actor Terry Cooper, whom she married. They settled in Earl's Court Square where her grandfather found them a lovely flat at no18, and the square became her stomping ground forever. The rent then was £4 a month!

She taught piano for a while until she became a mother to three daughters Frances, Tracey and Lisa and they took up most of her time. Terry was away quite a lot and Julie became adept at running the home and raising her children. The family moved to a larger apartment across the square to Wetherby Mansions and remained there. Julie installed a grand piano and if the windows were open, she could be heard in the street, but that was nearest the public came to hearing her beautiful music.

Julie found various little jobs to keep the family going during her husband's absences and to help pay for an au pair. She was a receptionist at a hairdresser for a time and then at Keats restaurant in Hampstead where there were lots of famous customers especially on their gastronomic nights when folk like David Frost and Ringo would come and feast, and she often brought home delicious treats for her girls from the sweet trolley. Julie was six foot and had the longest legs; she was tall, elegant, stylish and completely gorgeous and glamorous. There were lots of parties, populated by a diverse group of revellers. Julie had masses of friends and was the party queen of London; every now and then she would say to

the girls “It’s time to have a party” and there would be a fantastic knees up lasting three days. In the eighties her flat was known as ‘The Nightclub’. She ran a very happy household welcoming everybody and dodging bailiffs. And throughout all the merry making, her children were in bed at the right time and off to school at the right time. It was a period of huge fun and adventure, there was always something going on at Julie’s. Between parties she provided huge Sunday lunches for all the waifs and strays.

Julie was a kind, and hospitable woman and she had a sort of open-door policy. Many found sanctuary with her, many just turned up at her door having nowhere else to go and all were greeted with “come on in”, some stayed for years. Folk would flock to her with their problems and there was often someone weeping in the kitchen. She offered accommodation to anyone who needed it and there was always someone sleeping on the sofa. Everyone knew she was a safe place to unload their problems. Christine Keeler was a regular and considered a good friend.



Julie’s husband stayed in Australia and eventually their marriage ended. David Case an old friend was widowed and in time he and Julie got together and were the best of companions and had lots of adventures. These were done in a quieter way after the bereavement of her daughter Lisa’s premature death in 2001. Her world was shattered again when David was run over in the street and sustained some serious injuries and never really recovered. Julie nursed him with love and compassion until his death three years ago. She missed him

terribly. She carried on, her great joys being reading the Daily Mail, smoking and the news, though not necessarily in that order. She was interested in the world and still had her finger firmly on the pulse. Her fantastic sense of humour motored her along, she loved a good laugh and there were many along the way. Friends popped in and out, so she was rarely alone or lonely. Julie treasured her friends. And her navigation through the trials and tribulations, the ups and downs of life were processed at the piano. She appreciated all kinds of music, but Chopin was her thing and what her daughters remember her playing the most. Sue Lupton her neighbour across the hall said, “She was a beautiful and generous human being right to the end. It has been a privilege and comfort knowing her for nearly 30 years.”

THE SUNDAY FARMERS MARKET - by Sue Lupton

Many of us look forward to the Sunday Farmers Market in the grounds of St. Cuthbert with St Matthias school.

It's been a really useful asset to the community all through the year of COVID. In fact, for some it has been one of their rare outings and opportunities to talk to other people. Neighbours are delighted to bump into one another. The recent increase in the variety of food has been a real bonus.

What is making it so much nicer as a neighbourhood rendezvous is the personal effort of the manager, Emma Kendall. When the market was threatened with closure by London Farmers Market (LFM) earlier this year, Emma, who ran the bread stall, stepped up to manage the market. She had come to feel a real attachment to the Earl's Court community. Her experience running the Brixton market for a time has assured us a very smooth operation.

It's good to give support to local fruit and vegetable farmers by buying their fresh food. Local people are being encouraged to set up stalls, providing much needed income. The local chef's



food stand is one example. Bygram, the 'Planet conscious store' on the Fulham Road has a stand for dry foods and encourages you to bring your own containers for refilling. We are also delighted to have stands with creative vegetarian dishes, homemade pasta and sauces, cheeses to die for and a huge range of mushrooms. The artisan bread is a fixture, thank goodness, as are eggs, meat and poultry. I make a beeline for most of the above for my weekly shop, and then head for breakfast of an egg and caramelised onion 'hopper' from the local Sri Lankan ladies' stand.

With regards to safety, the Market has been following government recommendations regarding The Covid-19 pandemic. It aims to provide a safe environment while ensuring the critical mass necessary for the market to thrive. ECSRA supports the Market because it is a community amenity. We meet regularly with Emma to discuss residents' comments and find solutions for concerns when they are raised.

We are very appreciative of the enormous input and hard work Emma and her team put into our Sunday Market. It enables and strengthens people to people connections in our neighbourhood and we look forward to it continuing.

TO LIFT THE SPIRITS - by Sue Lupton



As plans for many at Christmas were dashed with level 4 lockdown, and families became nervous of welcoming London based folks with the advent of the new Covid, people had to rethink their plans.

To cheer up the situation and with thoughts of home in Tipperary, where brass bands and carol singers gather at Christmas, my neighbour Orla had the bright idea of hiring a brass band. A friend was able to give details on what permissions would be needed and the deal was struck to play in different corners of the Square for an hour, bringing levity and joy throughout the neighbourhood.

It was a generous and fun initiative. It gave the musicians who had amazing CVs from the Barbican, RAH, and the BBC Orchestras an opportunity to play to a live and appreciative audience. It also provided some income for their efforts, a portion of which was donated to a music charity.

Orla remarked that she and her husband have met so many nice people in the Square since they moved in, and their little daughter has made friends. With thoughts on the Christmas camaraderie back home in Ireland, she wanted to do something very Christmassy for neighbours while cheering herself up.

I have to say, it was a delight to suddenly hear brass band sounds playing Christmas music waft through my flat. Dashing down, it was a wonderful occasion following the band playing in four areas of the Square. Thank you Orla!

OUR NEWSLETTER: holding a mirror to the community's history



The working team in 2007: Sue, Judy and the late Douglas Eaton - our inspiration

In these COVID days, much thought is being given to how we can refocus our lives and communities. ECSRA has been working for the community for nearly 47 years. A look at our archive of 60 odd newsletters shows how we have developed into a vibrant community organisation that is the envy of other London neighbourhoods. The newsletters are a wonderful source of information and musings for Earl's Court Square residents. The earliest archived newsletter is dated June 1988, and includes a report of the January AGM held at No. 21, in those days the home of the famous London Poetry Society.

Key social events have featured in the newsletters including the annual summer barbecues, the Spirit of Christmas tree lighting, AGM social events, and other parties bringing neighbours and friends together for special occasions.

Planning and conservation items have been central to coverage, as have licensing, rubbish, pollution, policing and local Council decisions which impact us. From sinking holes to foxes, to lobbying and making recommendations to RBKC, all efforts were aimed at making the Square a better place to live. 'News Roundup'

has covered stories on conversions and restoration work on buildings and railings, the closing of the south east arm of the Square, rerouting traffic flow and parking. The stories show also how our efforts have had an impact outside our Square including ECSRA's request to save the historic original coal hole covers which led to a borough wide decision to save them.

Profiles of our key ECSRA leaders over the years have highlighted their volunteer time and their impact illustrating how the key to ECSRA's success has been its people.

The archive of 60 newsletters is full of fascinating stories and wonderful photos. It is available for perusing, for doing research, for local history interest and generally for getting a better understanding of how our community has developed. Committee Member Sue Lupton who has coordinated and edited the newsletters, now a magazine for nearly 20 years, ably assisted by Judy Head with layout, holds the archive and is happy to arrange a viewing. It is a great credit to Sue that she always manages to get all the costs of ECSRA's annual magazine covered by local advertising with its printing being kindly sponsored by John D Wood & Co.

SOLIDARITY SPORTS

Solidarity Sports says thank you to The Earls Court Development Company

Solidarity Sports is a small charity, born in Earls Court, that supports children recovering from severe trauma. Families are referred by social services, schools and refuges. The children thrive during the time they spend with the charity. Through play, sports, games and lots of adult attention, their confidence grows. Schools report that many children perform better academically, and parents tell how happy they are to see their children engaged, motivated and with big smiles on their faces.



Solidarity Sports was created 13 years ago; however, until recently they did not have a space of their own. Now, thanks to the generosity of The Earls Court Development Company, they were offered one of the units at West Brompton Crossing on Lillie Road. Solidarity began referring to its new office as ‘The Hub’ until one cold autumn day, a little boy and his mum came in. He looked at the toys, he stared at the books, he banged on the drums and picked up toy cars. He felt at home and laughed. The office became: ‘NELSON’S HOME’.

Nelson’s Home has become a sanctuary, a safe place for many. Staff meet there to plan and research projects. Volunteers have found a quiet space, where they can concentrate and study. Parents attend for a hot drink and to get practical advice. Children enjoy making smoothies and watching a film on Fridays. They regularly pop in to play, chat, and pick up a book to take home and read. Nelson’s Home is now their home. One of Solidarity’s main focuses this past year, with the ups and downs of COVID-19 lockdowns, was to ensure each child in its sphere of care had a laptop, so that they could continue to be connected with each other, do exercises, follow healthy eating lessons and take advantage of other important opportunities via Zoom. Solidarity’s ambassadors and supporters came to the fore and helped achieve this goal.

As Sean Mendez founder of Solidarity Sports puts it, “This past year out of any other year showed how important it is to have support from the community and a base to operate from. For The Earls Court Development Company to sponsor our base has been a godsend”.

Further to this Rob Heasman, CEO of The Earls Court Development Company says, “We are delighted to be able to support the great work being undertaken by Solidarity Sports. More than ever, supporting the wellbeing of children, particularly those who are vulnerable, is a critical mission. Sean and team have proven their commitment to this over many years, always with great energy and empathy. Long may it continue.”

PERSPECTIVE ON PROPERTY: market round up by John D. Wood & Co.

John D Wood & Co, our ECSRA magazine print sponsors, has offered an assessment of the property market. Charlene Williams, Manager at our Earl's Court Branch advises, "We witnessed a paused market for property in central London during the first lockdown, with new transaction levels almost at zero".

"Previously agreed sales continued to move to successful exchange on the whole, and the market picked up broadly where it left off, when we reopened for business in May. The recent reintroduction of lockdown allows estate agencies to continue, taking the necessary precautions to minimise risks for everyone concerned".

She continues, "In a post-Covid world we have experienced changes in buyer

behaviour and priorities. With many now working from home, buyers are looking for comfortable, convenient and flexible spaces to work. Specifically, for Earl's Court, flats located on private garden squares such as Earl's Court Square, offering access to well-maintained communal gardens, are in high demand and we predict this will continue for the foreseeable future".

Overall, Charlene maintains that London looks relatively well placed to weather the storm with the positive news on the vaccine roll out, the opening of international travel, return to the workplace, and with life returning to some semblance of normality including the brilliant social events organised by the Earl's Court Square residents!



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EARL'S COURT SQUARE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Protecting and enhancing Earl's Court Square and the lives of the people who live and work here

MEMBERSHIP FORM 2021

I/we * would like to become /remain a member of Earl's Court Square Residents' Association.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Please let us have an up-to-date email address to enable us to contact you

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE:

£8 * FOR INDIVIDUALS

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To become/remain an ECSRA Member please pay electronically to Metrobank:

Account Name: Earl's Court Square Residents' Association

Sort Code: 23 05 80

Account No: 10942594

Please use your house number as your reference and email Christine Powell (Membership Secretary) on ecsrasmembers@talktalk.net to confirm your details and how much you have paid.

For further information regarding ECSRA or Membership, or if you would rather pay by cheque/cash, please contact:

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY - CHRISTINE POWELL

ecsrasmembers@talktalk.net

CHAIR - CHRISSIE COURTNEY

ecsrachair@btinternet.com

www.ecsra.co.uk

* Please delete as appropriate

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Online by Zoom

WEDNESDAY 24 February 2021 at 6.30 pm

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the Minutes of the 2020 AGM
3. Chairman's Report and Questions & Answers
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of the Executive Committee
6. Amendment to the Constitution
7. Any Other Business

ECSRA Members, who are qualified to participate and vote at the AGM and wish to do so, should register at ecsrachair@btinternet.com by 17:00 on Tuesday 23 February. They will be emailed a link to the Zoom website, Meeting ID and Passcode on the morning of the AGM, Wednesday 24 February, together with a copy of the 2020 AGM Minutes, Chairman's and Treasurer's Reports.

All Non-Members can participate and vote by joining ECSRA before 17:00 on 17 February 2021. Please use the membership form on the reverse of this Notice or on our website to renew your membership for 2021, or to join if you are not a member.

Subscription rates are: £8 for an individual or £12 for a family/household.

Chrissie Courtney

Chair - Earl's Court Square Residents' Association

A Gold Standard RA awarded by RBKC



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