



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA



Information from the Community Engagement Team

August 2015 , Issue 3

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So grab a cuppa, put your feet up and find out what's going on in local life!



A Call for Residents' Associations Direct Contributors

We want you! A reminder that we are looking for volunteers to help plan and contribute to future editions of Residents' Association Direct (RAD). This newsletter exists to provide information from the Community Engagement Team (CET) for Tenants and Residents' Associations (TRAs), but also as a platform for TRAs to share news, stories and examples of good practice with peers across the Royal Borough.

Contributing to RAD provides a great chance to reach a wider audience, form links with fellow associations and build the profile of your own TRA. Please note that we are unable to promote campaigns and RAD must remain an impartial publication. The CET maintains editorial rights on submitted articles and reserves the right to edit all contributions.

In light of some personnel changes within the CET there has been a change in the release months of the newsletter, and so the next RAD is due out on 16 October. We will need contributions by 4 October to ensure inclusion.

If you are interested in contributing to RAD, please email communityengagement@rbkc.gov.uk with the subject line 'RA Direct'.

Residents' Corner

Residents' Corner is the part of this newsletter that gives you a voice!

You can write in to us at communityengagement@rbkc.gov.uk with news about your residents' association at any time and we'll help to turn it into an article that can be published in the next issue. Here are the contributions from this month:



Members make the TMO

Fay Edwards, Kensington and Chelsea TMO Board Chair



"The TMO is built on residents becoming members of the company. The reason for this is that at each AGM they are asked if the TMO can continue to manage the Council's homes.

In the last five years 1,200 members have joined. As a result, more members than ever vote at AGMs. In 2014 1,079 did so - the highest ever figure. Of them 97% said yes to the TMO's continue management of homes.

I would love to see more residents still become members. A growing membership represents a healthy company and it demonstrates to the Council that we are more closely involved with an ever growing number of residents in our communities.

Members' involvement can start from just taking the time to vote at the AGM; but it may lead to standing for Board election. We have great staff to support this process.

I can honestly say the journey from being a member to being on the Board was an exciting one for me. I believe it's very rewarding to get involved, support our company and help shape how we go forward. If you would like to become a member of the TMO do have a look at the membership [form](#) - it takes just a minute or two to complete."

The Council Tenant Board Member 2015 Election Results can be read about [here](#) and further information about the Kensington & Chelsea TMO can read on their [website](#).

Residents' Corner

Feedback on Residents' Associations Direct

By [Gillespie Robertson](#), Chair of Dovehouse Street Residents' Association

Dovehouse Street RA (DSRA) have written in to say how much they welcome this new Council initiative, and to invite opinions from and contact with any other RAs in the borough with whom they are not already in touch through The King's Road Association of Chelsea Residents.

"DSRA believe strongly that RAs can and should do more to: (a) canvass their residents' views on matters of local importance; (b) share views with other RAs who may hold similar views, and; (c) communicate views clearly to the Council, which should then and often does give extra weight to residents' opinions and priorities.

Recent examples of praiseworthy actions and decisions by our councillors, after hearing and clearly listening to residents' very strong views in reaching their decisions, range from the new Basements Policy to the rejection of a number of controversial planning applications, including some where approval had been recommended by planning officers. In our own neighbourhood, much-valued community assets such as the very large cinema auditorium on King's Road, the Colombier restaurant, and at least three pubs (the Trafalgar, the Phene Arms and the Cross Keys) have been saved in recent years and months thanks to a significant degree of community pressure. The same goes for the very recent decision in respect of the Odeon Cinema in Kensington.

Currently our RA is working very closely and actively with other RAs to influence the Council to modify or revise its early position on such major issues as Crossrail 2 and future development plans of the Royal Brompton and Royal Marsden hospitals."



Brompton Cemetery and Catacombs

The Kensington Society

On Monday 7 September 2015 at 2.15pm the Kensington Society are hosting a walking tour of Brompton Cemetery. Robert Stephenson will host a private tour of the Grade I listed park and gardens of the Cemetery.

Brompton Cemetery is the only cemetery owned by the Crown and one of London's Magnificent Seven historic cemeteries, which were designed in the mid 1800s to provide public recreation as well as burial space for a rapidly increasing London population.

Wine reception afterwards in the Chapel.

KS members £15; non-members £20

Meet at the north gate off Old Brompton Road (Near West Brompton tube station)

To book visit the Kensington Society [website](#).

Editor's note:

We are aware that there are concerns about the current proposed Crossrail 2 station at King's Road. There have been a number of claims made about it, which we know to be misleading or incorrect. So we asked Transport for London (TfL), as promoters of the Crossrail 2 scheme, to answer the [following questions](#).

Ask Us?

The Community Engagement Team is here to help support residents' associations to thrive. As a resident, you can, and often do, call 020 7598 4633 or email communityengagement@rbkc.gov.uk and ask us for advice on how to set up or run your residents' group.

Looking after the phone, we often hear the same issues crop up repeatedly. If you are asking it, there are probably a dozen others who are thinking it. 'Ask Us' is a section of Residents' Associations Direct where questions can be asked privately and answered publically so that we can all learn together.

Your Question

What benefits can a Residents' Association expect from the Council?

One of the first question that we are asked when a new Tenants and Residents' Association (TRA) is set up is enquiring about any potential perks received when registering the new association with the Council.

This is a legitimate question, as there must be a reason why associations register with the Council when registration is not required for a association to officially exist.



Our Thoughts

The primary reason of initially having a relationship with the Council is that your association will be included in the database of all TRA in the borough. This information is included on the TRA section of our [website](#), which is a useful source of contact information for new TRA members and other important stakeholders.

As well as this, the database allows the Community Engagement Team (CET) and other Council departments to notify TRAs on, and consult them on, relevant Council activity which might affect them and their members. This direct line of communication connects the Council with the community, enabling residents to voice their opinions and concerns in an organised and inclusive way.

The CET provides dedicated support to both established and developing TRAs, as well as to residents interested in starting a TRA from scratch. The CET brokers relationships between TRAs, Council services and other community groups, as well as offering bespoke guidance on issues from governance to communications. In this way, the Council is able to maintain mutually beneficial, constructive relationships with the Royal Borough's diverse associations.

Other benefits include an increased likelihood of being invited to Council events and meetings and recognition of groups and individuals, which would get others involved. A great example of this is the launch of the initiative Team Kensington and Chelsea in June 2015, which was a celebration of volunteering within the Borough.

Finally, TRAs have brought up the desire for a TRA peer-to-peer event, which could be a great opportunity for associations to swap good news stories and good practices. This is something that the CET are looking to facilitate and we will be in due course with further information and details.

News for You

'News for you' is where we share what we know that is happening around Kensington and Chelsea. If you know of any event resource you think would be useful for other residents, please do let us know and we'll put it in the next issue!

City Living, Local Life Annual Report 2014/15

The publication of City Living, Local Life's third Annual Report shows what a difference the programme is continuing to make at a local ward level.

This year has seen £197,000 allocated to setting up and supporting 112 projects including film clubs for older residents, workshops on employment training and local history projects.

Residents and local groups, including TRAs, have got involved in projects designed to strengthen community ties and improve local life in the borough, which address and meet different local priorities. These have included life coaching lessons, activities for isolated older people, community events, kitchen gardens and local heritage.

Each ward in the borough has funds of up to £20,000 (£14,000 for wards with two councillors) to support local projects, improve neighbourhoods and bring people together.

The third Annual Report sets out what sort of projects have been supported in 2014-15. The report includes a snapshot of activity across the wards and some key achievements for the initiative including approximately 3,500 residents taking part in CLLL supported activities. It also contains detailed case studies to show the difference CLLL is making across neighbourhoods, and what the future has in store.

Councillor Gerard Hargreaves, Cabinet Member for Voluntary Organisations and Resident Engagement, said: *"I am very pleased that the third City Living, Local Life Annual Report showcases some really exciting local initiatives. These are the result of close relationships between residents and their councillors and shows what can be achieved when people work together for the good of their community."*

Volunteering has been key to the success of City Living, Local Life this year and residents are encouraged to read up on the many ways residents can volunteer as part of the initiative.

Residents can also get also get involved by:

- becoming a community champion by supporting activity in your area;
- writing and contributing local information and stories as a community reporter;
- taking part in ward conversations generating new ideas or;
- submitting your own ideas for projects

City Living, Local Life will continue to strengthen with an active community behind it and encourages anyone who is interested read the annual report www.rbkc.gov.uk/clllreports or for more information about the initiative, visit www.citylivinglocallife.org.



News for You

Online Communication with the Police and Council

This is a notice for all residents in Kensington and Chelsea about an online communication system called Online Watch Link or OWL.



OWL is a two-way communication system enabling police to keep you updated and for you to keep in touch with the Police and Council. To sign up to OWL go to www.owl.co.uk/met.

OWL is used by a growing number of UK police services. It provides weekly updates on crime in the locality, rapid warning of local problems of safety or security, Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) notices and in-group correspondence. OWL's launch in Kensington and Chelsea, which was a first within the London Metropolitan Police Service, is a joint initiative by the Police and Kensington and Chelsea Council's Community Safety Team.

When signing up to OWL you provide your email contact for emails to be sent directly to you from Police or Council. Email addresses held by OWL are used solely for NHW purposes: they are seen only by your NHW coordinator and selected members of your neighbourhood policing team.

NHW Police Liaison Officer is Sergeant Jason May who can be contacted on Jason.may@met.police.uk.

Volunteer at the Kensington and Chelsea Talking Newspaper

The Kensington and Chelsea Talking Newspaper has operated in the Royal Borough for 30 years, providing news to those that have visual impairments.

The Newspaper is looking for one or two enthusiastic volunteers to become involved in helping to produce the Talking Newspaper.

If you are interest, or know of someone that would be, please contact the Chairman, Philip Black on philipjb17@gmail.com.

Check out The Mosaic Rooms in Earl's Court

The Mosaic Rooms are a non-profit cultural organisation dedicated to supporting and promoting contemporary culture from and about the Arab world.

The Rooms provide an international platform for the arts and create opportunities for interaction, collaboration and professional development between artists, collectives and organisations from the Arab world and the UK. This is achieved through art exhibitions, multidisciplinary events, artist residences and learning and engagement programme.

For further information and details of upcoming exhibitions and events, see their [website](#).



News for You

Have your say on proposals to restrict hours of noisy working

A consultation has begun on Council proposals that would reduce the permitted number of hours noisy construction work can take place in Kensington and Chelsea during the week, and to prohibit noisy work on Saturdays. This would mean that contractors would no longer be able to carry out building work which is audible at the site boundary, on the weekend.

These are just two of the proposals contained in a draft Code of Construction Practice produced by the Royal Borough, which also urges construction companies to improve the way they communicate with neighbours who will be disturbed by noisy and dusty works.

Comments on the draft Code of Construction Practice can be made until Wednesday 21 October 2015. At the end of the consultation period, all responses will be considered and the Code amended as appropriate prior to its formal adoption in late 2015.

For more information about the draft Code and to comment go to www.rbkc.gov.uk/draftcode.

Top Picks from the Planning Bulletin

Basements Planning Policy Legal Challenge Dismissed

The Council's Policy CL7: Basements had been challenged in the High Court by Zipporah Lisle-Mainwaring and Force Foundation (Basement Force) Ltd. Mrs Justice Lang dismissed the challenge yesterday.

There were three grounds of challenge: - (1) the Council had failed to take account of a material consideration; (2) The Council did not consider and/or assess the "reasonable alternative" of a "case by case" approach put forward by Basement Force. In not considering this alternative the Council had failed to carry out an adequate environmental assessment, as required by Regulations (3) In rejecting the Second Claimant's reasonable alternative, the Council belatedly relied upon a new "false objective" of "bearing down on the volume of excavation".

Mrs Justice Lang dismissed all three grounds. She found that the Council had referred to permitted development rights in various documents during policy preparation and had prepared the policy being aware of the extent of permitted development rights. The Council did not introduce a "false objective" rather this was "genuine objective" and was apparent from the outset. The assessment of alternatives and the conclusion whether these were reasonable was for the Council to make. The courts have a supervisory remit in this matter and can only intervene if an error of law had been made. The Council had complied with its statutory obligations.

Warwick Road properties get makeover

Full story about the improvement of the appearance and condition of several properties on Warwick Road in Earl's Court following advice and warnings from the Planning Enforcement Team can be read about [here](#).

News for You

Consultation on the Draft Air Quality and Climate Change Action Plan 2016 - 2021

The Council is planning to tackle the twin challenges of climate change and poor air quality together by putting in place a combined Air Quality and Climate Change Action Plan (AQCCAP). A draft of this Plan is available [here](#) with a questionnaire for residents, interested individuals and organisations to respond.

This Plan is a combination of measures aimed at reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and urban air pollutants. The key aspects of the Plan are:

- our aims and objectives for the next five years to tackle poor air quality and climate change
- a list of actions to meet these aims and objectives which are not set and will be dynamic with completed actions being replaced by new ones throughout the Plan's lifetime.

Once we have gathered in and considered the responses, a final draft of the Plan will be approved by Councillor Timothy Ahern, the cabinet member responsible for air quality and climate change, and then a Key Decision to adopt the plan is aimed to be taken by the full cabinet in January 2016.

See: www.rbkc.gov.uk/environment/air-quality/consultation-draft-air-quality-and-climate-change-action-plan-2016-2021



Health watchdog seeks residents views

Residents are being asked to give their views on the health watchdog, Healthwatch Central West London.

Funded by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster and Hammersmith & Fulham it acts as a consumers' champion, representing patients, carers and local people on matters concerned with health and social care services.

Healthwatch Central West London also provides feedback to the national consumer body for health and social care, Healthwatch England.

The councils are now in the process of re-commissioning the service, which has been running since April 2013, and want to hear what residents think of it and how they rate the quality of information and support that it provides.

To complete the survey go to <http://goo.gl/KvDwWE>

For more information on Healthwatch Central West London, go to www.healthwatchcwl.co.uk

News for You

Proposed changes to Earls Court Crown Post Office



The Post Office is consulting with local residents on its proposals to close the Earls Court Post Office and merge it with its Kensington High Street branch. Residents who want to question Post Office officials about these proposals can do so at a special meeting organised by the Council on Tuesday 8 September at St Cuthbert's Church, Philbeach Gardens, SW5 9EB. The meeting starts at 7pm and runs until 9pm.

Local ward councillors have already met Post Office officials to protest about the proposals. They stressed the closure will cause considerable hardship to many local residents, particularly those that are elderly, those living in supported housing, and people who do not have a car and pointed out that there are plans for a number of new residential developments in the area.

The Post Office says the proposed merger is necessary if it is to create a modern and sustainable network and that the number of customers using the branch has declined in recent years.

Council Leader, Cllr Nick Paget-Brown said: "I want to urge all residents to respond to this consultation and to come along to the public meeting at St Cuthbert's and make their views heard. This branch is a valuable community asset in an area that is home to a high number of supported and sheltered housing complexes."

To take part in the Post Office consultation, go to: www.postofficeviews.co.uk/liveconsultation.php and search 'Earls Court'. The twelve-week-long consultation closes on Wednesday 16 September. Residents can also email their view to the Post Office at comments@postoffice.co.uk or call 03457 223344.

Final Word

This is the third Residents' Associations Direct, so please let us know what you think because we will be making changes and adaptations in these early issues.

Please also let us know your news and we'll make sure it makes it into the next newsletter.

To find out more about the work that we do with resident's associations, visit : <http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/community/communityengagement/residentsassociations.aspx>

If you would like to unsubscribe from our mailing list, please reply quoting 'Unsubscribe.'

Questions or Comments? Or to let us know of any news, contact us on

communityengagement@rbkc.gov.uk

0207 598 4633



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