

THE CHARLTON SOCIETY

# CHARLTON VILLAGE ACTION PLAN

ISSUE 1

21 October 2017



## CHARLTON VILLAGE ACTION PLAN

Issue 1 - 21 October 2017

The Charlton Society Planning Group have been looking at ways of improving the Village, enhance its public presence as 'a village' and incorporate ideas that have been raised during various public consultative events such as the 'Have Your Say Day' that preceded the completion of the Charlton Village Conservation Management Strategy.

### 1. TRAFFIC CALMING

The route through the Village suffers from being a main arterial road carrying heavy traffic. As a result some bad crashes have occurred at entry points to the Village (x3 at Hornfair Road, x1 at the westbound bus stop near Charlton Lane and x1 at the Fairfield Grove junction; all were the result of speeding.

*Suggested improvements:*

- Explore benefits and ways of introducing a 20mph zone (possibly between Charlton Lane and Hornfair junctions) on basis of latest TfL advice and avoiding vertical deflection as far as possible.
- Revisit the layout of the junction between Charlton Road and Charlton Church Lane, including extending the shared surface around the war memorial towards Charlton Road and the Summerhouse, as advised by consultants to RBG decades ago.
- Encourage food outlet owners to discourage punters from parking outside their shops.

### **ACTION**

**1.1 Develop detailed traffic calming plan based on TfL "Guide to Streets" and (possibly) "Living Streets".**

**1.2 Set out proposed measures in order of priority; aim high. Cross check proposals with TfL (which has prior ownership of street?) before presenting to RBG.**

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### 2. VILLAGE SERVICE ROADS REVIEW

Both Fletching Road and Torrance Close service roads were developed in the 1960s by Greenwich Council to pedestrianise the Village by putting in parallel one-way roads to north and south. The roads were built, abandoned as

through roads and then established as service road cul-de-sacs. Today the north service road (Fletching Road) also serves as a residential road and has become an unsightly combination of the two. If the International Supermarket planned redevelopment goes ahead, it will set a new, much-improved standard of access between private properties and the road; In addition the recent planning application to replace Fred Styles House proposes an attractive and useful pedestrian connection between Fletching Road and Charlton Church Lane as well as to its north- and south-bound 486 stops.

Some other properties are characterised by neglected back gardens. Often used by drinkers, etc, the bleak rear of the Co-op also needs urgent attention. In this connection It is worth bearing in mind that the Conservation Area extends to the rear facades of buildings in the Village.

### **ACTION**

**2.1 Develop an overall Fletching Road and Torrance Close improvement strategy to integrate pedestrian security and parking requirements (revised entrance to car park, trees, mini-roundabout, etc.)**

**2.2 Enlist the help of Janet Gillman and Quentin Marsh in connection with improving the rear of the Co-op.**

**2.3 Investigate the suitability of providing public toilet facilities for the Village.**

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### 3. CAR PARKING

Currently the eastern end free car parks are difficult to use, unlit and badly signed. As a result many service vehicles and shoppers park in the Village itself, if necessary on the pavements, causing difficulties for other transport.

#### *Suggested improvements:*

Review car parking arrangements in both Torrance Close car parks and Fletching service road. Improve the layout, entry points and lighting to existing free car parks. Allow loading/drop off point for wheelchairs in recessed bay outside Greengrocer.

Encourage traders to make use of the service roads to prevent tailbacks and delays to bus services.

### **ACTION**

**3.1 Discuss the use of service roads with the traders.**

**3.2 Define physical proposals and timetable and agree with RBG.**

**3.3 Agree a strategy with RBG that prevents delivery vehicle parking for loading in the Village and enforces use of the service roads.**

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#### 4. "WELCOME" and OTHER SIGNAGE

Provide east and west entry zone "welcome", "drive carefully", "free car parking" and "service roads" signs (the latter two particularly important to traders, who complain about the fact that parking along the main road is restricted / prohibited).

##### **ACTION**

**4.1 Specify signage [linked with traffic calming measures?]**

**4.2 De-clutter existing signs. Suggest possible amalgamations. Proposals to RBG must be based on a TfL-approved solutions.**

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#### 5. BUILDING OWNERSHIP (1): MAINTENANCE

Village properties are owned by a variety of landlords.

Assemble ownership list and tenancy of buildings to push for better maintenance (and see 7, below).

##### **ACTION**

**5.1 Compile a Village properties list (RBG ownership, Lord Gough ownership and covenant issue, and other).**

**5.2. Determine if RGB have distributed a synopsis of the Village Conservation Management Plan to those listed. Work with RGB to ensure this is achieved.**

**5.3. List façade/frontage defects and corrective measures and circulate.**

**5.4. Society to remove unsightly shop front sticky shutter labels – or ask traders to remove.**

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#### 6. BUILDING OWNERSHIP (2): RESIDENTIAL TAKE-UP

Research the numbers of empty residential accommodation (above shops) and if necessary devise strategy to seek remedies.

##### **ACTION**

**6.1 See 5. MAINTENANCE (above).**

**6.2 Contact RBG valuation office.**

**6.3 Check Rightmove.** [Rightmove plc is a UK-based company that runs [www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk), the UK's largest online real estate portal and property website.]

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#### 7. TRADERS

Enlist the support of traders in Village improvements. Circulate letter and documents to them to explain nature and aims of a Conservation Area, and also why unique service/residential roads must be used for delivery vehicles.

**ACTION**

**7.1 Circulate incentivising letter, Conservation Management synopsis and RBG's "Design Guidance for Shopfronts". Meet all traders.**

**7.2 Many shops without wheelchair ramps. List and pursue with RBG. Funding sources?**

**7.3 Pursue High Street Renaissance project. This is predicated on encouraging successful businesses in the Village by increasing footfall.**

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**8. SHOP WINDOW AND SIGNAGE COMPETITION AND AWARDS**

Award an annual prize for most attractive and best-kept shop front (make this Charlton-wide?).

**ACTION**

**8.1 Establish criteria, approach and procedures.**

**8.2 Establish a funding source. (Ward Budget?)**

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**9. ESTATE AGENTS**

Tenants and leaseholders should be made aware when signing their contracts that specific Conservation rules apply in the Village affecting signage, shopfront lighting, etc.

**ACTION**

**9.1 Contact RBG Conservation Dept (Rebecca Duncan) to confirm that estate agents and their clients are aware of the Conservation requirements in the Village.**

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**10. EARLE HOUSE/SUMMER HOUSE PAVEMENT FOR STALL HOLDERS**

Foster the use of Earle House/Summer House Pavement for market stallholders. Bear in mind that the RGH Trust is (a) starting renovation of the Summer House and is investigating opening up a gateway and pathway between the Village and the House, avoiding the narrow and dangerous footpath in front of the Summerhouse.

**ACTION**

**10.1 Hold preliminary discussions with RBG, RGHT and residents concerning this proposal.**

**10.2 Remove evergreen tree and planter to increase pavement area.**

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## 11. PAVEMENT PLANTERS

Rethink raised pavement planter contents with a view to possible improvements and targeting expenditure to better effect.

### **ACTION**

**11.1 Assess existing planting strategy with RGB Parks department.**

**11.2 Research alternative species and planting needs; define strategy.**

**11.3 Obtain help from Charlton Community Gardens or the Charlton House Garden project.**

**11.4 Work with RGB Parks department and traders to enter the Village in the Greenwich in Bloom competition for 2018 – also the Charlton Society 50 years anniversary.**

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## 12. TREE PLAN

Create a short, medium and long-term tree plan.

Research where additional trees are required, such as in front of the parade of shops at the south-eastern end of the Village, to soften impact of the very large and unsympathetic Council flats.

Check safety of plane trees relative to Summer House roof (liaise with RGHT).

Seek to improve the way trees are currently pruned (Greenwich's preference for pollarding is regrettable).

Seek solutions to root pavement damage where this could affect wheel chair users.

### **ACTION**

**12.1 Comprehensive recce with RBG Street Trees Dept (Bob Charlton) covering entire Village, service roads and war memorial [COMPLETED OCTOBER 2017]; develop Tree Plan.**

**12.2 Draw up and agree final plan and priorities with RBG.**

**12.3 Agree proposals with residents and shop-keepers.**

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## 13. "LANSDOWNE PLACE/ROAD"

Make Lansdowne Place – pedestrian area between Co-op and International Supermarket – more of a social space but in a way that avoids the loitering that previous attempts at placing benches here resulted in.

### **ACTION**

**13.1 Develop strategy/design. Confer with RBG.**

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#### 14. STREET FURNITURE

Discuss a Village 'style' as distinct from the borough style.

##### **ACTION**

**14.1 Confer with and propose options to RBG.**

**14.2 Research bench and bin suppliers and costs.**

**14.3 Share results with traders and others before taking action.**

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#### 15. YORKSTONE PAVING

Start a consistent, RBG budgeting-friendly phased insertion of Yorkstone paving throughout the Village, as and when concrete pavements need repairing/replacing.

##### **ACTION**

**15.1 Hold preliminary discussions with RBG.**

**15.2 Make sure all pavements are fit for wheelchair use, especially round trees.**

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#### 16. CO-OP

Confer with Co-op headquarters to:

1. Improve its huge, dysfunctional appearance at the rear of the property (note that the conservation area extends to the rear face of the buildings facing the Village). The rear steps are a favourite spot for tramps and drunks. We attempted to obtain Co-op cooperation a few years ago but the Manchester office rejected the approach and our proposals. Given the Co-op's current business situation, it will probably be even more difficult to achieve today.

2. Do something about the store's very large 1<sup>st</sup> floor, which apparently remains empty. The Coop made an attempt at letting it a while ago but we need to check what happened (insurance?). Might the space be made available for community use?

##### **ACTION**

**16.1 Link with Service Roads Review (2, above).**

**16.2 Discuss the problem with Janet Gillman and Quentin Marsh, who might be able to activate the Coop links to help.**

**16.2 Once a solid case has been established with RBG/Conservation backing, develop strategy to obtain Co-op cooperation.**

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## 17. STREET NAME UPDATES

Obtain official naming for, e.g., "Lansdowne Place" (different from and no longer part of Lansdowne Lane after pedestrianisation and bollard and planter barriers installed) and, e.g., "Earle Pavement (or "Summerhouse Place"?) for wide pavement/plaza between Earle House and Summer House opposite war memorial. Differentiate from the traditional Village "high street" pavements.

### **ACTION**

**17.1 Set strategy.**

**17.2 Approach RBG.**

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## 18. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The Society has made attempts in the past to develop a strategy but traders disliked costs involved. Subsequently RBG has wrapped two trees in LED ribbons. In the Society's view, this is a good start and could be further developed and improved.

### **ACTION**

**18.1 Confer with RBG to establish constraints.**

**18.2 Develop strategy**

END

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NB: Any follow-up *ACTION* items should refer to the numbering system established in the VAP document.