

**THE
CHARLTON SOCIETY
Annual Report 2024 - 2025**



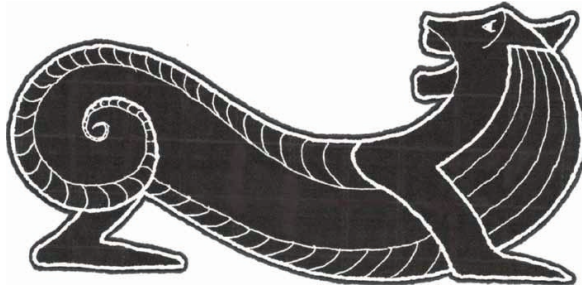
Old Cottage Coffee Shop Cafe



*Acknowledgements: Photos & layout: Carol Kenna.
Charlton Station by David Gardner
'Royal Iris' ferry by Gulle Stubbs
Front Cover: Old Cottage Coffee Shop Café, Charlton Park*

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To contact the Chair or Membership Secretary
Email: **charltonsocietysec@gmail.com**



The Charlton Society

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THE CHARLTON SOCIETY PRESIDENT

A three-legged stool is possibly the earliest of furniture, but it has stood the test of time being able to provide stability on uneven ground. Charlton is very much like that stool; it has existed for centuries and provided an interesting and safe haven. The three supporting legs are represented by Charlton House, St Luke's Church and the Village with the whole Charlton neighbourhood being the seat of the stool. Stability depends on sockets which interact and stabilise the three legs, with The Charlton Society being the glue holding the legs which support the community. It only requires one leg to come loose or be weakened by woodworm or decay and the stool is useless. Care and proaction preserve function and this is the importance of having a healthy Society which is well supported by the wider community and respected by The Royal Borough of Greenwich. Thanks to the Chair and the committee, along with the members, the community of Charlton can be proud of the work done by the Society, and I hope all the effort and time is properly appreciated and supported.

Cyril Young DL President



THE CHARLTON SOCIETY VICE PRESIDENT

I am very happy to congratulate the Charlton Society on another successful year. Members have been regularly updated on issues particularly relating to Charlton on planning, the ongoing concern about the future of the White Swan and the possibilities of new village retailers. The programme of talks has been one of the best and my particular favourite was ‘Lost Houses of Oxleas Wood’ by Dr Tom Wareham, to whom I issued an NUS card when he was a young student at Thames Polytechnic. It was great to see him again. I also enjoyed the ‘Thatcher Government versus Greenwich Council’ by Dr Michael Passmore – ‘the Right to Buy’, a controversial political struggle at the time in which my late husband, Jim was in the thick of it.

I was pleased and touched to see his photo on the screen.

Congratulations and thanks to the committee for their hard work throughout the year and their continued support of the officers.

Thank you also to the refreshment team for afternoon tea following the meetings. A Special mention and thanks to St. Luke’s staff for arranging and allowing the Society to meet in this beautiful church.

Janet Gillman, Vice President, The Charlton Society

THE CHARLTON SOCIETY COMMITTEE 2024–2025

Yet another busy year has passed marked by many changes within the Charlton Neighbourhood, stretching as it does from Hornfair Park in the south to Charlton Riverside in the north.

As last year Committee members have represented the Charlton Society on various other community organisations: the Charlton Neighbourhood Forum, Charlton Together, Charlton V&R Safer Neighbourhood Team Policing Panel, the Greenwich Planning Alliance and have worked with The White Swan Arts Group and Charlton House in its aim to maintain community access.

A subgroup of the committee has commented on numerous planning applications affecting the wider Charlton Neighbourhood

We thank them all for their time, enthusiasm and the commitment they have given to the Charlton Society over the years.

We also thank Rev. Liz Newman, Rick Newman, Joan and Alison for providing the Charlton Society with a home, where else would we meet once a month.

Carol Kenna, Chair, The Charlton Society Committee
September 2025



Greenwich Mayor, Cllr. Linda Bird ‘opens’ the Defibrillator
donated by Carol Haywood and located at the side of St Luke’s Church.
It was successfully used almost immediately after its installation
to help a runner in the 2025 Marathon who collapsed outside the
Church.

PLANNING MATTERS

This year has seen some large applications which will potentially have far-reaching changes to the Charlton area.

BUT first an update of Projects reviewed in our 2023 - 2024 Annual Report

OPTIVO & AITCH: Westmore / Eastmore Streets. The Optivo development, Evelyn House, of 67 affordable - rent homes which gained planning permission on appeal in 2023 is nearing completion. The most recent planning application covered details of the heating system, so perhaps this latest permission suggests the development will soon be fit for letting?



Evelyn House, Eastmoor Street, Charlton.

However neighbouring development Aitch also lying between Westmore and Eastmore Streets, off Woolwich Road with permission for 188 homes, reportedly was offered for sale in November 2022. But with no visible movement on site the area lies derelict; although an application was submitted to Greenwich Council in January 2025 to remove the provision for affordable housing. So, what is the real situation?

Hyde Housing: A scheme of 3 sites with a total of 1,200 homes, of which 40% would be affordable was given planning permission in 2022 on Herringham Road and New Lyndenber Street in Charlton Riverside. By September 2024 the sites had been cleared, thus fulfilling the terms of the planning consent (work must have started within 3 years of its permission being granted) but then nothing. An example of developers sitting on the site hoping for their value to increase resulting in ‘planning blight’. Or perhaps the proximity of the Tarmac site which would result in some of the new homes not being able to open their windows due to the noxious fumes has affected its development?



Hyde Housing site on New Lyndenber Street.

Faraday Works, Charlton Riverside: May 2025 the developers U+I and Galliard pulled out after spending 5 years refining a development of mixed residential and business including repurposing the listed Siemens Factory Wire shop. Together with the undeveloped Hyde Housing sites this leaves a huge expanse of the Charlton Riverside Masterplan area at risk.



Planning Applications the Charlton Society commented upon in this year.

Woolwich Garrison Masterplan: The Society made comments on the MoD's Masterplan proposals. The consultation set out the key issues, constraints and opportunities that will need to be considered when bringing forward proposals for redevelopment of the Woolwich Barracks site. (We hope to put our statement on the CS website).

2B Rathmore Road: Charlton Society commented on this application as it involved replacing a working garage (who were unaware of the application) with residential units above a business outlet. Our proposals to reduce the heights were accepted and we noted that the loss of a successful business was regrettable.

33 The Village: There have been three applications for this property over the course of the year, all building onto the back of the existing property, similar to the International Stores, developed by the same owner. So far, all applications have been rejected first by Greenwich Council and once on appeal. Currently there is an application in to replace independent flats with an HMO – people sharing basic facilities but each with their own bedroom. The first of 5 bedrooms was rejected and the second, now under consideration for 4 bedrooms.

Stadium Road: The Society submitted comment in March objecting to the proposed demolition of 54 mature trees along Stadium Road as part of a programme to upgrade the road and include a cycle path. This application was refused by Greenwich council and has now been resubmitted. The main change is to replace the demolished mature trees with younger trees. The Society has yet to comment on the revised application, but the general feeling is that the proposals are still unacceptable as the trees are within the Woolwich Common Conservation Area and the cycle path has no conclusion – in fact it goes nowhere.

Greater London Investment (GLI): Charlton Together met the developers to discuss their proposals for a logistics site on the ex -VIP trading Estate. (You may recall that a major development by developers Rockwell, including a 27 storey block of flats off Anchor & Hope Lane was successfully rejected by Greenwich Council, Greater London Mayor and Charlton residents). The GLI application was approved in early 2025.

Millennium Car Park: Despite considerable opposition to this application, including from IKEA, Greenwich Council accepted the development proposal. This will see B&Q demolished to make way for a car free residential neighbourhood with only 80 parking spaces for drivers with disabilities, all of which are of considerable distance from residential entrances.

The Assembly Rooms Car parks: Despite Charlton Society arguing strongly against Greenwich Council's assessment that the car parks serving the Charlton Assembly Rooms were unused; the car parks were

sold, we don't know to whom, feature pay parking and are monitored by parking supervisors. As a result, the car parks are sparsely used.

Charlton Church Lane Hairdressers: The Council approved an application to turn the hairdresser's shop on Charlton Church Lane into residential use. The application proposes minimum living space and takes yet another shop away from a parade that could do better for being improved.

One we missed: Segregated Cycle Way (C4)

The Charlton Riverside Masterplan envisaged this difficult cross-over near Charlton Station as a place-making transport hub; better transport interchange links, pedestrian crossings linking north and south with an extended cycle route.



The existing cycle way runs from Tower Bridge, through Deptford to Gallions Road, Charlton except for Greenwich Town Centre. At present cyclist can cycle through the University of Greenwich Campus re-joining Trafalgar Road beyond the University. This section has not been without its critiques, particularly of the dangerous pedestrian crossings at bus stops where passengers would alight directly onto the cycle path, at risk of being mown down by cyclists, averse to using their bells to warn of

oncoming traffic. The problem was partially addressed by Transport for London adding a verbal warning on buses to watch out when leaving the bus! (See Annual report 21022-2023)

So, Cycleway 4: Work is due to begin at the end of this September to be completed by Spring 2027. Greenwich Wire informs us that Transport for London are encouraging travellers to “plan ahead and expect delays, particularly at the Woolwich Ferry roundabout”. This to add to the delays already caused by gas works on Charlton Road, traffic stacking up across Blackheath and Woolwich Road due to side-road restrictions.

With the completion of Cycleway 4 there will be a segregated route from Tower Bridge to Woolwich Ferry, apart from Greenwich town centre.

The main changes:

Which side of the Road? The current section runs along the north side of the A206. The new section will run along the south side, involving a change over at the Anchor & Hope Lane junction. Replacing the present crossover at Gallions Road, removing some sections of the bus lanes.

Additional pedestrian crossings at Mast Quay, near Woolwich Ferry; Stone Lake Retail Park, and east of Anchor & Hope Lane – ending the current complicated three or four crossings required to get from north to south across the Lane.

A straight across pedestrian crossing outside Windrush Primary School and the Greenwich Trust School, replacing the staggered crossing.

Charlton Lane level crossing will no longer be accessed by south bound traffic, to reduce traffic crossing the cycle way. Where will they go?
Be prepared !

Thinking Ahead

Charlton Riverside Masterplan: *The current masterplan with its mixed-use development of business and residential, replacing the area’s reliance on small industrial units; its desire for low rise units of 10 storeys, by way of contrast to Woolwich and Greenwich preponderance of high rise is being reviewed. Given that most developers that have shown any interest*

in the area immediately challenge the height restrictions, there are serious worries amongst Charlton groups that this restriction will be successfully challenged and the distinction between Charlton and Woolwich and Greenwich Peninsula will be lost.

Greenwich Local Plan: A draft plan will be out for consultation for six weeks in November this year. Once Greenwich Council has reflected on the comments there will be a second consultation in Summer 2026.

Sustainable Streets: A series of consultations proposing further reductions to car parking and car travel. The deadline for comments has been extended to the end of September. The Society feels it more appropriate that members respond according to where they live rather than enter a Society point of view.

SOVAP ACTION PLAN 2024 – 2025

The White Swan



Section 215 Notice

In February 2025 in response to concerns raised by the Charlton Society relating to the derelict nature of the White Swan - broken fences, an open doorway, evidence that the family relocated by Croydon Council had

vacated the manager's property and removal of rubbish, Greenwich Council issued a Section 215 Notice on Mendoza the owner of the property. This required the owner to secure the property against unlawful access, both to the building itself and the garden from Torrence Close. As a result, fences were repaired, the frontage of the building was painted and the overgrown Buddleia and other rubbish removed. For a time, this improved the look of the property and its detrimental effect upon the High Street. To date little else has been done to restore the building to an operative business and the building looks neglected.

Asset of Community Value(ACV)

The following April the Society, aided by The White Swan Music and Arts group applied for a continuation of the current ACV. In the event of the property being put up for sale the community would be given a period in which they could apply to purchase the site. To date, despite a Public Question being submitted to the Full Council of Greenwich in August we have yet to hear whether the application was agreed.

The White Swan Music & Arts Group (WSMA Group)

As of June, the Society understands that the WSMA Group have established communication with the owner of the building. They are also in discussion with Plunkett UK, a charity providing support to community businesses seeking to establish a community share scheme to access grant funding, build long-term public support for community ownership and develop a financial package.

The Village Environment

Traffic congestion is still rife, not helped by deliveries still being made from the High Street aided by Street notices permitting loading for most of the day. Pointed out to us by the driver delivering to Pizza Hut ! Currently exacerbated by road works between the Village and Victoria Way. Is this an indication of increased traffic finding ways around the forthcoming Segregated Cycle Routes extension on Woolwich Road, set to last from the end of September 2025 until Autumn 2027?



Have we lost the battle to encourage use of the service roads?

Sol Properties: The empty shops are still a concern, in particular Sol Properties which is a safety hazard. This was reported to Greenwich Council in February; however, we have heard nothing further.

33 The Village: The shop has recently opened as a grocery store. In doing so they removed the historic front door replacing it with a bi-fold wooden door. **STOP PRESS:** Following a request to Greenwich Council to investigate this, the original door has been replaced preserving the look of the original shopfront. Welcome to our latest shopkeeper.



On the other hand: Both the paper shop in the Village, the café by Charlton Station and the Village Florist have had a face-lift.



STOP PRESS: By the time you receive this report we shall also be welcoming the opening of our first Italian Deli at 14 The Village. Welcome Simistalian Deli.

Village Planters:



Yet again the revised planting scheme promised by the RBG Parks department has yet to materialise. We will continue to press for this to offset the pollution from passing traffic and traffic hold-ups.

Earle Place continues to provide an example of outdoor living. Bee's Village Greengrocer, The Baguette and the Tudor Rosette florist have developed the adjacent Earle Place into a vibrant Village square with their three important Village services. This year – a film set.



OUT AND ABOUT THE PEDESTRIAN'S LOT

Lime Bikes: You may recall that we commented on the dangerous dumping of hire bikes around the borough last year. In August, Greenwich Wire reported that Greenwich Council had finally struck a deal with Lime to provide 55 locations throughout the borough for cycle parking. Most locations are in Deptford, Greenwich, and Blackheath. Strangely Charlton is missing from this agreement, apart from Anchor & Hope Lane – a hot spot for dumped bikes and part of Eastcombe Lane. In addition, a new bike – Forest - has recently appeared and has no similar agreement either with Lewisham or Greenwich .

How long will we have to continue to step over badly parked bikes?



FROM THIS



TO THIS?

Charlton station turns 176

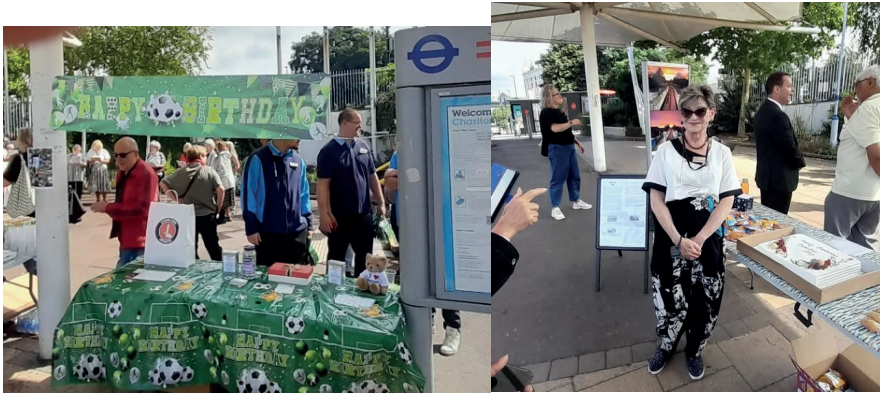
David Gardner

In the early summer, Charlton Station put the flags out to celebrate its 176th birthday. Opened on 30 July 1849 when the North Kent railway was extended under Blackheath to Charlton and onto Dartford, the London and Greenwich railway opened earlier in 1836-8 but was only extended to Charlton under the Queen's House grounds in 1878.



As well as being the point where the two railways converge, Charlton also is the convergence point for the Angerstein freight branch still used to this day for the aggregates' businesses on Charlton Riverside. Charlton station was then bombed by a V1 during World War II on 23 June 1944 and the current booking office was only ever intended as a temporary building! It was erected in 1968 as part of a programme of replacing outdated/ bombed station buildings by the former British Railways Southern Region, called a CLASP (Consortium of Local Authorities Special

Programme) buildings which were originally designed to provide prefabricated classrooms in the post war education boom from 1957 onwards. Many of these across the railway have now been replaced but the one at Charlton, a poor example, still survives. There is still the ambition to redevelop the station as a transport hub as part of the Charlton Riverside regeneration, but we suspect that may be a few years away.



Photos by David Gardner

The former Charlton Rail Users' Group (now Transport for Charlton) made some useful changes – getting new monitors so London bound trains didn't stop anymore at the top of the platform forcing people to run for the then shorter train with their wheelchairs, cases and buggies; getting a coffee stand and persuading Network Rail to allow Charlton Community Gardens to green and use the northern entrance by the canopy which they have maintained till this day. The canopy was cleaned in 2012 (needs another clean now) and there was a repaint, but it now looks tired again. They also prevailed upon the train companies – Southeastern and Thameslink to increase the Monday to Saturday service to 8 trains per hour. Sadly, this was cut back again during the pandemic and has only been partially restored in peak hours. We have also lost the Sunday service along the North Kent line to Blackheath, Lewisham and New Cross.

This Autumn also sees the retirement of Yvonne, who has been the heart and soul of Charlton station all this time (since 2011, not 1849!) adding

touches like the bookcase, plants and always helpful advice to the hundreds of passengers she's got to know and the thousands of others who pass through. We will really miss her, but after our campaign the booking office stays open and there are new staff. So many changes in 176 years and hopefully more positive ones to come. While Charlton Village predates the Domesday Book, most of Charlton was built after the railway and because of it. Let's keep up the pressure for further improvements.

Maryon Wilson Animal Park: Christine Anthony, Chair of Friends of Maryon & Maryon Wilson Parks. I'm pleased to say that the Friends were successful in a bid for RBG community champion (participatory budget) funds, in partnership with Creative Nature, for an Arts project in Maryon Wilson Park to help celebrate 100 years since the opening of Maryon Wilson Park in July 1926. We are also pursuing the possibility of an exhibition and other events next year. We are particularly looking for old photos and ephemera (or indeed other objects) that are related to the park and would welcome anything that could be loaned by members of the Charlton Society.

We are hoping for an update on moves by the council to attract sponsorship towards the running of the animal park at our next meeting. Contact details for the Friend's group can be found in the Directory on pages 25-25.

Charlton Neighbourhood Forum. The Charlton Forum's new Chair, Hanifa was elected at a meeting in July and we have restarted the work to progress the drafting of the Charlton Neighbourhood Plan. The first task of the Officers and Committee is to write the Forum's Priority Statement which outlines 5 main objectives of the Charlton Neighbourhood Forum's Plan. The 5 key issues have been assessed from the evidence and feedback gathered in the Charlton Forum's community planning workshops, discussions at community events and on the SE7 walks held regularly throughout 2023-2024.



Our Lady of Grace: In May the congregation at Our Lady of Grace in Charlton were told their church can stay for another year, having first been told they had to vacate the premises by the following June. The church is part of a wider site including the Grade II listed, presbytery and church hall owned by the Augustinians of the Assumption, a Catholic congregation founded in 1906. The presbytery, Highcombe House, is the last of number of manor houses that bordered the Charlton Road, and once home to Sir William Barlow, designer of St. Pancras Station. Little has been heard since a petition was raised by Our Lady of Grace Parish Buildings Preservation Trust but the worry is that the site will be sold for redevelopment and yet another piece of Charlton's history will be lost and a congregation left without a home. In 2025 Historic England placed Highcombe House on its 'At Risk' list.



SOCIETY MATTERS

The Charlton Society Committee 2024-2025

President and Vice President of The Charlton Society

President: Cyril Young
Vice President: Janet Gillman

Committee members elected October 2024

Chair: Carol Kenna
Vice-Chair: David Gardner
Treasurer: Mark James
Secretary: Angela Burr
Membership Secretary: Pauline Langley
Paul Breen
Helen Brown
Margaret Gbadamosi
Michael Passmore
Co-optee: Talks Planner Felicity Kerridge

August 2025

We are always looking for additional Charlton Society members to join the committee, especially if they have a special expertise they can bring to the table. We particularly need someone to keep our website up to date. If you would like to put yourself forward for membership of the 2025–2026 Committee, please contact the Membership Secretary at [**charltonsocietysec@gmail.com**](mailto:charltonsocietysec@gmail.com)

The Charlton Society is a registered Charity, no. 260077 a member of Charlton Together, Charlton Neighbourhood Forum and The Greenwich Planning Alliance

A Financial Statement for 2024-2025 will be presented to the AGM on Saturday October 18th 2025. The Society's Financial year runs from 1st September to August 31st.

Membership

We must make our usual but ever more urgent annual request to help increase our membership and call on existing members to exhort more people to join the cause and contact the Membership Secretary – see above.

Members' Meetings

These popular events are held at 2:30pm on the third Saturday of every month, unless otherwise indicated. Since 2022 Charlton Society meetings have been hosted by St Luke's Church, for which the Society is most grateful.

Website

For more information about the Charlton Society, please visit our website at: www.charltonsociety.org



The Royal iris, Charlton further destroyed by fire in April 2025
Photo by Gulle Stubbs

DIGITAL DIRECTORY

The Charlton Society	Website: www.charltonsociety.org Email: charltonsocietysec@gmail.com Facebook: thecharltonsociety
Charlton Hornfair Ward Councillors	clare.burke-mcdonald@royalgreenwich.gov.uk lakshan.saldin@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
Charlton Village & Riverside ward Councillors	gary.dillon@royalgreenwich.gov.uk jo.vandenbroek@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
Charlton Community Gardens	Website: charltoncommunitygardens.org.uk Email: charltoncommunitygardens@gmail.com
Charlton Central Residents' Association	Website: charltonresidents.net Email: chair@charltonresidents.net Facebook: @centralcharlton X: @ccra_se7
Charlton and Blackheath Amateur Horticultural Society	Website: cabahs.com Email: garden@cabahs.com Facebook: www.facebook.com/Charlton-and-Blackheath-Amateur-Horticultural-Society-605358732962902 Instagram: cabahs_hortisoc
Charlton (London) Neighbourhood Forum	Website: charltonneighbourhoodforum.org Facebook: Charlton Neighbourhood Forum Contact: info@charltonneighbourhoodforum.org
Charlton Parkside Community Hub	Website: https://cpchub.wixsite.com/ Facebook: Charlton Parkside Community Hub
Friends of Maryon and Maryon Wilson Parks	Website: friendsofmaryonparks.org Email: friendsofmaryonparks@gmail.com Facebook: Friends of Maryon and Maryon Wilson Parks

Maryon Park Community Garden	Website: maryonparkcommunit.wixsite.com/website Email: maryonparkcommunitygarden@gmail.com Facebook: MaryonParkFoodGrowingProject/ X: SE7 Community Garden@theoldnursery Mobile answer phone for messages: 07779 159387
The Greenwich Wire	Website: greenwichwire.co.uk Email: greenwichwire@flyovermedia.london Bluesky: @greenwichwire Threads: @greenwichwire Facebook: The Greenwich Wire
Valley Hill Hub	Website: valleyhillhubSE7.wordpress.com Facebook: groups/888907464564423/

FOR CHARLTON PARENTS	
Big Red Bus Club	Website: thebigredbusclub.com Email: party@thebigredbusclub.com Facebook: bigredbusclub X: @bigredbusclub.com
Charlton Mummies & Daddies	Website: charltonmummies
Charlton Toy Library	Website: charltontoylibrary.org.uk Email: info@charltontoylibrary.org.uk Facebook: charltontoylibrary X: @Charltontoy Instagram: @charlton_toylibrary



THE CHARLTON SOCIETY SHOP

Here are some of the cards we offer for sale. All cards, except the postcards, come with envelopes. Both postcards and cards are sold for £3 in packs of 4 (£5 for 2 packs).



Winter in Gilbert's Pit



Charlton House in the snow



St Richard's Church



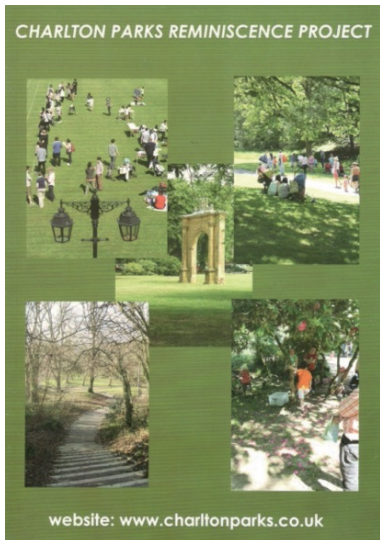
Charlton Summerhouse



Charlton Views



Set of 5 of Charlton Village postcards



Price: £2

Extracts from interviews with Charlton residents recording their reminiscences about the parks in Charlton SE7.

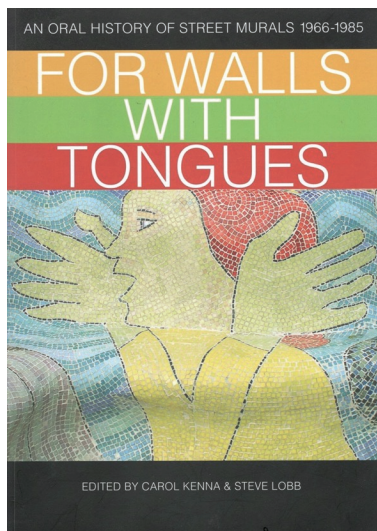
The whole project and full interviews can be found at www.charltonparks.co.uk

Or via a link through www.charlton society.org
The project was a joint venture between The Charlton Society & Greenwich Mural Workshop.

Price: £5

For Walls With Tongues: An oral history of the UK mural movement between 1966 and 1985, based on interviews with the artists.

Additional information including images of all the murals can be found at www.forwallswithtongues.org.uk



All proceeds help fund The Charlton Society Talks programme

