

Columbia TRA - Annual General Meeting 2018

Monday 10 September 2018

Chair's Report

- 1) The 2018 Committee
 - a) Chair – Kevin McKenna, Sivill House
 - b) Vice Chair – Jenny Dunn, Sivill House
 - c) Treasurer – Ed Furey, George Loveless House
 - d) Secretary – Penny Creed, Pelter Street
 - e) Committee Member – John Cotter, Old Market Square
 - f) Committee Member – Pam Haluwa, Tomlinson Close
 - g) Committee Member – Jim Connolly-Webster, Old Market Square (stepped down June 2018)

- 2) Our priorities in 2017-2018 have been:
 - To get more members active, so that the CTRA has enough volunteers to address all of the concerns our members have raised. This has involved going out and contacting as many members directly as possible, as well as making sure there are more ways for tenants and residents to get involved.
 - We have also been improving the administration of the CTRA, so that we are more effective as an organisation.

- 3) Activities since the last AGM (September 2017)
 - a) Estate Walk Around to Engage More Members

Members of the Committee and others started a walk round of the entire estate knocking on doors to ensure residents are aware of CTRA's work, how to contact us, collection of contact details for the CTRA mailing list and to gain an understanding of the issues they currently face.

 - i) So far approximately 80% of the estate has been visited.
 - ii) The walk around was very well received with some residents offering support for varying initiatives of the CTRA.
 - iii) Common issues included: Drug dealing on the estate, outstanding maintenance works and issues with major works.

b) Leaseholder's Group

A meeting was held for leaseholders chaired by Jim Connolly-Webster. This began a process of setting up a group that links together leaseholders in order to deal with common problems around major works charges. Individual blocks have set up their own block-wide leaseholders group and the CTRA intends helping other blocks to do the same next year, at the same time as make sure all of these block-wide groups are coordinated so that they can share learning and work together as required when dealing with THH.

c) Crime and ASB

Members of the CTRA joined a group made up of residents from the wider area concerned about the escalation of drug dealing in the area.

- i) All residents were encouraged to report sightings of deals to the police using 999
- ii) A WhatsApp group was created to log calls the police of sightings of deals taking place
- iii) A meeting was held with a local DCI to discuss the issue
- iv) Work has taken place to raise awareness of the drug dealing issue in the local area

d) Filming on the Estate

Numerous concerns were raised about the effect of filming on our estates. We have been in discussion with the Tower Hamlets Film Office, who has finally agreed to meet with the CTRA committee to discuss these issues and work out a plan to address them. We have also met with JHERA, whose members have the same problems with filming on their estate, so that we can work together in dealings with the Film Office.

e) Litter and the environment

A walk round was held with officers from LBTH to demonstrate the problems of fly tipping and littering along Columbia Road and particularly outside Cuff Point during major works. As a result of this the location of litter bins on Columbia Road was changed and extra attention to clearing litter from outside Cuff Point was made. Committee members now regularly meet the care taking supervisor to raise issues of cleaning on the estates and intend to develop this further going forward.

f) New CTRA website

The CTRA website was redesigned and moved to another platform. The URL for the new website is www.columbiatra.org.uk

g) Set up new communications channels - emails, newsletters

A new platform for managing the mailing list and sending out emails (MailChimp) has been set up.

- i) The first newsletter was sent out to members on the CTRA mailing list in June 2018.
- ii) Emails drawing members' attentions to the Summer Fete and AGM have also been sent out.
- h) Set up new online virtual office space, so that all CTRA administration is accessible despite not having a physical office.
- i) CTRA Cart

This year has seen Jenny Dunn lead our CTRA Community Making Project to create a mobile community space, the CTRA Cart. This has brought together many members of the CTRA in designing, building and then using the Cart to facilitate outdoor events on our estates. The Cart is being exhibited at Middlesex University from the 14 to the 18 September; details of the exhibition are available from Jenny Dunn. When the Cart returns we will be looking for more ideas about how it can be used to support CTRA and other community activities. Please watch for invites to future CTRA Cart Steering Group meetings so that you can be part of deciding how we use this new collective asset.

Over the last twelve months this is how the Cart was developed. We are hugely grateful to Jenny for leading this project, and to everyone inside and outside the CTRA who have donated time, money and materials to the CTRA to make this happen:

- i) In Sept 2017 a pie and mash lunch was held in the Ravenscroft Park Terrace Rose Garden, by the Columbia Market bombing disaster memorial. This was attended by relatives of people who died in the bombing as well as today's local residents. The event allowed us to gather ideas about what the CTRA could do to help our members use our outdoor spaces better and how we could overcome the lack of community spaces in the neighbourhood. This led to the idea for the Cart.
- ii) An application to the Inspiring Communities Fund was made for £1440 by Jenny Dunn, with the CTRA as the community sponsor organisation, for the materials to build and then run the cart for a year. The funding application was successful and the funding period officially runs from 01/01/18 to 31/12/18, after which the products of the grant (i.e. the CTRA Cart, spare materials and other purchases) remain the property of the CTRA.
- iii) So far £1,247.60 of this funding has been spent (please see financial report)
- iv) In March a seed planting day took place outside the Dorset Community Association, using some of the equipment that had been bought for the CTRA Cart to test what sorts of events the Cart might be good for and to generate interest from residents.
- v) Workshops were run with the Youth Centre, including a woodworking tools workshop for local young people, run by John Cotter.

- vi) The CTRA Community Cart was built by members of the community at a new garage storage space that has been obtained for the CTRA, which we have been allowed to use for free by THH.
 - vii) Further materials, principally timber, to build the Cart were kindly donated to the CTRA by Mears.
 - viii) On the 27th of June, a cart steering group meeting was held, to which all CTRA members were invited and which was also attended by representatives of the Young Foundation and the Communities Driving Change programme. This was to decide how the Cart would be used over the summer.
 - ix) Eight sessions were held over the summer from cooking and eating lunch together, tea in the park, craft activities like leaf-printing for children, supporting community gardening events, a local history talk with Linda Wilkinson.
 - x) The Cart was a key part of our Summer Fête where a film about the project made by Jenny Dunn was shown.
- j) Summer Fete
- A Summer Fete was held in Ravenscroft Park on August Bank Holiday Saturday. Fun was had by all despite some rain.
- i) The Fete was held in partnership with The Young Foundation and The Dorset Community Association
 - ii) Approximately 200 residents attended to participate in face painting, henna tattoos, sports day activities, arts and crafts, a raffle and to share in a picnic.
- k) Christmas party in partnership with Dorset Community Association
- A Christmas Party was held at the Dorset Community Association. The CTRA supplied some of the food and gifts for the children. The CTRA decorated the room and arranged for Father Christmas to attend.
- l) Community Gardening
- A group was formed, to improve the green spaces on our estates and encourage residents to make use of their green fingers.
- i) Work was undertaken in beds in Ravenscroft Park, the Sivill House rose garden and the beds outside Kirton Gardens.
 - ii) A meeting was held with Rizia Ali to discuss the group taking on some of the horticulture management on sites around the estate.
- m) Community Partnership Officer's meeting
- Kevin McKenna and Penny Creed attended a meeting held by the new Community Partnership Officer – Yasmin Aktar. The meeting was a chance for Yasmin to meet all of the TRAs she is responsible for helping to develop.

n) Outreach to other surrounding community organisations

During the year the CTRA has worked to reach out to local organisations and stakeholders including: Columbia Road shopkeepers and market traders, JHERA, St. Hilda's and other TRAs.

o) Case work

CTRA members have approached the chair and other members of the committee either directly, or on walk rounds with problems they have with THH and other organisations. We have attempted to get these problems resolved or give advice as to how to proceed. Going forwards we intend to build a register of these issues so that we can keep better track of all the problems members are dealing with.

4) Treasurer's Report

a) Balance Sheet – year end 2018

	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>EXPEDITURE</u>	
Opening Balance (01/09/17)			<u>£4,272.19</u>
Grant Funding (various)	£2,190.00		
Film Office	£1,608.30		
Events	£98.00	£1,299.50	
CTRA Cart		£1,247.60	
Gardening		£421.90	
Running costs e.g. petty cash, insurances		£628.53	
TOTAL	<u>£3,896.30</u>	<u>£3,597.53</u>	
Closing Balance (31/08/18)			<u>£4,570.96</u>

b) This year a new bank account has been opened with Natwest. The Santander account has been closed. Ed Furey (Treasurer), Kevin McKenna (Chair) and Penny Creed (Secretary) are signatories.

c) New Finance rules for the CTRA were drawn up and agreed by the Committee.

d) Grants were applied, approved and received for the '2017 Summer Get Together' (£750.00) and the CTRA Community Cart (£1,440.00)