



Weir Estate Residents Association

...be part of the change...

End of Year Report

A review of 2010 from the Chair

**Registered as a Tenants and Residents Association with Lambeth Living,
and the London Borough of Lambeth.**



Weir Estate Residents Association

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Priorities for 2010	2
2.1 Community Garden situated at Anfield Close.....	2
2.2 Bringing old refuse chambers into use for storage	3
2.3 Windows/doors and Estate Redecoration (until completed)	3
2.4 Repairing and Repainting of railings across the estate	5
2.5 Continue to improve resident involvement and communications in and from WERA.....	6
2.6 Estate Services: Monitor and improve (cleaning, grounds maintenance)	8
2.7 Resolve issues with Mobile Phone masts and contracts.....	9
3. Other WERA Actions	10
3.1. Prostitution in Anfield Close Bushes	10
3.2. WERA honours former MP Keith Hill.....	11
3.3 Introduction of the No Calling Zone (NCCZ).....	11
3.4 Weir Link Fun Day on Weir Estate	12
3.5. Election of WERA Vice Chair – Rohema Khanom	13
3.6. 255 bus route extension plans	13
3.7. WERA’s action for Residents	14
3.8. Loss of water supply to Weir Estate Homes.....	15
4. Estate Visits During 2010	15
5. Walkabouts	16
6. Website and Other Publications	17
7. Crime and Safer Neighbourhood Team	18
8. Councillors Partnership	19
9. End of Year Festive Celebrations.....	20
10. Summary	21
Appendix 1 – Resident Involvement	22
Appendix 2 – Website Statistics.....	23
Appendix 3 – Finance Summary – Current Account	24
Appendix 4 – Finance Summary – Savings Account.....	25
Appendix 5 – Crime Statistics – Thornton Ward/Weir Estate.....	26



Weir Estate Residents Association

1. Introduction

The year 2010 was to be one of change for Weir Estate and its association and one of many challenges; some expected and some not so expected. Weir Estate Residents Association continued to play a vital role in these changes and challenges, and this report outlines the year. The year saw some of the biggest improvements to the estate, also for residents living on the estate. We have strived to meet the priorities in all areas as set out at the previous Annual General Meeting by members, and you can find out how we got on with these further in this end of year report. We have also seen the election of our first Vice Chair, Rohema Khanom, working alongside committed executive and committee members who have ensured we have acted in their best interests of residents and services.

After each priority I have provided a recommendation in which the association may wish to consider when moving forward and considering its priorities for the year ahead, I will also provide an overall summary of the year.

2. Priorities for 2010

Each year, at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) a list of priorities are decided upon to be the main focus of the association during the course of the year, bringing change to Weir Estate Residents lives, and the estate. Last year we held our AGM in February 2010.

2.1 Community Garden situated at Anfield Close



This was chosen as a priority as so we can transform an area of the estate that is dilapidated and abandoned; the funding for this is committed from funds held by Weir Estate Residents Association generated from the income of the mobile phone masts. Though the garden has yet to be implemented, during 2010, there has been significant progress moving forward during the course of the year.

At the request of members during meetings in which the project has been discussed, we have obtained three designs which are yet to be decided upon which will eventually be the final design. We have also obtained preliminary permissions from Lambeth Living in order to



Weir Estate Residents Association

use the land. We continue to work with Lambeth Living's Landscape Architect and officers, in order to establish preparation works and the tendering process will be getting underway in early in 2011. We continue to meet with those bidding to design the garden and we anticipate the final design to be decided upon following this AGM and works to begin in the spring. This is a very exciting prospect for a corner of Anfield Close that will hopefully provide a long term benefit to the entire estate and wider community.

***Recommendation:* WERA should continue to progress this project during 2011 and I recommend it remains a top priority in order to establish the garden to its implementation.**

2.2 Bringing old refuse chambers into use for storage

The bin chambers have been disused since the new underground refuse chambers were installed just over four years ago, members requested that the old bin stores were brought into use for essential storage of estate related materials, therefore this was chosen as a priority for the year.

We have in part succeeded in achieving this priority, though this was only one. It has provided much needed storage space for fun day equipment. One of the former bin chambers was deep cleaned by Connaught Environmental and is now being used.

***Recommendation:* WERA should look at expanding the use of the disused chambers on another one or two chambers, in order that these can be used for storage. Though this should not be a major priority for the course of the 2011 and can be a side issue.**

2.3 Windows/doors and Estate Redecoration (until completed)

The works to install new double glazed windows and secure doors to resident's homes alongside redecoration has been a priority for WERA carried over from 2009 and remained a principle focus for officers and the association. WERA continued to be heavily involved in ensuring the works were carried out with as little disruption and hindrance to those living and using the estate.

At the beginning of the year we saw the removal of scaffolding and shortly after the new doors were installed by February 2010. Much of the works had got underway and neared completion by the middle of the year, despite some adverse weather at the start of the year. Following this, painting began to all pre-existing painted surfaces in all blocks and the communal stairwell of Anfield Close.



Weir Estate Residents Association

The Breyer Group plc and Lambeth Living Major Works Officers met with myself on a regular basis to pick up on any outstanding issues and consult on such things as floor coverings. Following the completion of most of the works by June 2010 WERA held a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by newly elected MP Chuka Umunna, who cut the ribbon at Weir House. The event was also attended by Senior Management from the



Breyer Group plc who provided freebies to those residents who were in attendance. The event marked the estate being returned to residents following the removal of scaffolding and completion of approximately 90% of the works.

Following this, Breyer remained on the estate to carry out 'snagging' works indicated by both major works and Weir Estate Residents Association. During this, there were some personnel changes to site staff working for the Breyer Group. Our working relationship with Breyer remained a good one and works were carried out until December 2010 when the site office which had earlier been removed returned to the estate for a short spell. Most works have now been completed though some remedial works are to continue from the spring of 2011 due to freezing temperatures halting works such as touching up of paintwork and cleaning of doors. WERA and residents are delighted with the impact of the works and the physical and visual improvement this has brought to the estate after many years of degraded windows and doors.

I am satisfied that we met and exceeded this priority during the course of 2010 and would like to thank Breyer and Lambeth Living for incorporating us and working closely with us to resolve any issues.

Recommendation: Ensure that the remedial works are carried out and all final works are finished. This should continue to be monitored by the association until finished completely and ensure any concerns or issues are raised to Lambeth Living Major Works for inclusion in the touching up. I do not believe this needs to remain a priority for 2011 as is simply monitoring and will free up WERA to focus its concerns elsewhere on the estate.



Weir Estate Residents Association

2.4 Repairing and Repainting of railings across the estate

Estate railings were designated a priority due to under investment and poor appearance of the railings and missing metal panels across the entire estate. It was therefore decided to engage with external agencies and have works carried out to repair, renew and replace the railings. Initially this was to prove a challenge.

Thanks to a landmark three way financial partnership between WERA, Lambeth Living and the Breyer Group plc who all invested £6,000 each into the cost of the works, railings were able to be repaired, replaced and renewed which was later carried out by RNB Engineering Ltd appointed by Lambeth Living. The funding enabled damaged railings to be straightened or replaced as well as new posts.



At the same time, I was able to establish a relationship with the Lambeth Youth Offending Services (YOS) in which over the course of the late summer/early autumn groups of youngsters serving community punishment orders came to the estate supervised by qualified probation officers and began a course of painting railings. The paint for which was kindly provided by Breyer Group plc and sub-contractor

Armour Group as a donation to the association in order that the works can be carried out. Without this generous donation and the outstanding relationship with the Breyer Group these works would have not been possible. Sadly, the works were then hampered by serious adverse weather and change in personnel at YOS which saw the works come to a halt.

The metal repair works continued throughout the year and were finally signed off by WERA's Chair and Joseph



Dave McEvoy, WERA Chair; with Joseph Ajala, Lambeth Living Senior Programme Manager.

Ajala – Senior Programme Manager Lambeth Living during December 2010. WERA then invested further funds to get new fencing installed at the access road leading (leading off Weir Road on the grass area) to Dan Bryant House in order to make the area safer and less



Weir Estate Residents Association

accessible from the public highway and completing the improved appearance the works in general have made to the estate. The works have seen the original art deco style metal railings re-installed around the perimeter of the estate making the estate safer and more pleasing to the eye externally.

Sadly, I do not feel that the YOS partnership worked very well due to the age demographic of young people who prevented it from being done on a frequent basis because of their educational requirements as well as the small numbers YOS was able to provide which were never assured week on week. The quality of work though appreciated was not of a particularly high standard and required a considerable amount of supervision from myself. Therefore I do not feel there is any future benefit of continuing this particular project with YOS though there maybe scope to re-engage with them in the future on other projects the association wishes to carry out.

***Recommendation:* WERA should consider using funds to get all the railings and metal works across and around the estate professionally painted in order to maintain the improved appearance of the works already carried out, this will see a much better finish to the railings.**

2.5 Continue to improve resident involvement and communications in and from WERA.

This was a priority I was keen to include as it is my view that in order to continue to benefit resident's the association must continue to adapt and find new ways to ensure all residents are kept informed and provided with the latest information. This of course aids making informed decisions and ensuring that everyone living on the estate has the opportunity to find out the latest on matters affecting them. Likewise WERA should continue to encourage all residents to attend meetings regularly and in order to do so have needed to find new ways to encourage further involvement.

This year saw the re-introduction of a firstly monthly and then bi-monthly newsletter which was simplified to a double sided sheet and has been one of the ways we have used to engage with residents particularly those without internet connections. These were sent to every home on the estate as well as external partners and colleagues such as Lambeth Living management and officers, local councillors and The Weir Link. The bulletin went bi-monthly in order to save costs and allow enough material to be collected to go into the publication. The bulletin and its content was collated and overseen by myself and our appointed Communications and Technical Officer, Kieran, who put them together.



Weir Estate Residents Association

I also wrote several times to every resident to encourage them and stress the importance of

attending our monthly meetings. I am saddened that this did not have much impact on the attendance numbers during 2010 as can be seen from the attendance figures. Though there was improvement on some months during the course of the year, the numbers are still very poor when compared to the number of properties on the estate. (See Appendix 1 - page 20)



This Bulletin is distributed to every Weir Estate property and our third party partners across Lambeth. Its purpose is to keep you informed of the important news, events and useful information which matter to those living on Weir Estate and working with Weir Estate Residents Association. WERA works for the benefit of residents in order to give us a voice for change and improvement. Our website has these and many other stories, interviews and useful information where you can find the very latest updates.

WERA needs residents support at our monthly meetings where you can have your say and raise your issues and concerns. The meetings are held every second Tuesday of the month from 7pm at The Weir Link, and is your chance to get involved and help improve our life, living on Weir Estate.

Please come along and support your association and OUR estate!

Morrison picks-up Connaught's Lambeth repairs contract

On Thursday 9th September, KPMG, Connaught Partnership's administrator made redundant all staff at Connaught Partnership's in Lambeth. Lambeth Living has now announced that Morrison Facility Services has taken over its housing repairs service with immediate effect.

The decision was taken by the Lambeth Council's Cabinet following an emergency report submitted by Lambeth Living, Connaught plc and Connaught Partnerships Ltd went into administration on Tuesday, 7th September, and KPMG were appointed as the administrator who began to look for a buyer as the company had made huge losses and failed to secure

Mears to make good as Morrison does not have the capacity for this work.

Connaught Environmental and Compliance two other arms of the company are unaffected by the liquidation of Connaught Partnerships which has now seen over 1,500 staff losing their jobs. Morrison has also offered 24 Connaught staff contracts under the new deal and to manage the demand.



This is something that concerns me greatly. I believe as Chair and as an association we have carried out this priority as best we can, and have made every effort to

engage and encourage residents to get involved but this has resulted in meetings having to be cancelled and postponed due to not achieving the requirements to have a meeting under our required quorum numbers stated in the association adopted constitution.

We have also used our excellent website (which is discussed in section 6 below) to include and update residents as well as engage and encourage better involvement. There continues to be a dedicated number of residents who make every effort to attend meetings and share their views, which are acted upon frequently, and we are truly grateful for those who attend regularly.

Alongside this, we have continued to use social networking such as Twitter to post updates and news though again this doesn't appear to have been well accessed by residents living on Weir Estate in general.

I am satisfied that WERA has met this priority but there is still much work to be done to increase participation and encourage residents to attend meetings regularly.

Recommendation: I am not sure we can do much more than has already been accomplished, however, WERA MUST continue to seek new ways to engage, inform and incorporate residents into the association and its activities. Residents should be



Weir Estate Residents Association

encouraged to advocate for the association to their neighbours and friends living on the estate. Those who have previously attended meetings should be contacted to seek their views and encouraged to return to future meetings. A strategy should be established to find new ways to inform and update and encourage regular participation.

WERA should continue to operate its website which has been very successful during the past 12 months and the bulletins should be continued with support of those members who are able to in order that this is not left to one or two people.

A closer working relationship should be established with the resident participation team at Lambeth Living in order to ensure the future survival of WERA and develop ways in which they can assist in encouraging better participation from residents.

WERA should consider ways in which those with children can attend meetings such as working with the Weir Link to provide on-site crèche facilities during the meeting. This will be quite difficult to achieve though should be considered.

It is my belief that we must understand why more residents are not attending regularly and seek to expel any myths or misinterpretations of WERA and increase the understanding and benefit to EVERY resident.

2.6 Estate Services: Monitor and improve (cleaning, grounds maintenance)

During the course of the year, I met with all of the contractors providing estate services and emphasised many of the concerns raised during meetings and at the previous AGM.

By working closely with them, there has been significant improvement in all areas of services. This was of course hampered during 2010 when repairs and maintenance contractor Connaught Partnerships Ltd went into administration in September 2010, which meant a short spell with only emergency repairs being carried out. By the start of October, Morrison took over the repairs contract and I met with a representative in order to begin working with them to ensure service got back to a good standard.

I also met with the manager, David from Enterprise and discussed key concerns about the maintenance of raised beds and grassed areas, I am confident that this saw a marked improvement however was then put off due to the freezing conditions experienced during 2010.

I should also mention here that there are due to be new contracts in Lambeth commencing in our area in 2011 for services such as grounds maintenance and cleaning. It is understood that Morrison will remain as repairs and maintenance contractor for Weir Estate.



Weir Estate Residents Association

Recommendation: Focus should remain on the fundamental services to the estate, particularly once the new contracts come into force later this year. As has previously been the case WERA must continue to engage and work closely with all our partners such as contractors. This may well be a good priority to continue to monitor and seek to improve during 2011.

2.7 Resolve issues with Mobile Phone masts and contracts

This was added as a priority following concerns raised in previous years and months by residents in a few of the estate blocks. As a means to resolving this issue I committed to conducting an investigation back in April of last year. The inquiry was to look at the levels being emitted from the masts, the impact on health and the long term future of the masts on Weir Estate. This was also as a result of one of the masts contracts coming up for renewal. I conducted many enquiries and carried out in depth research into this and discussed the future of the masts with officers at Lambeth Living in order to present findings to residents at a meeting convened for that purpose. This has now been placed on hold due to legal technicalities in which has halted further decisions being taken.



As part of this however, I had a request to Ofcom, the telecommunication regulator responsible for masts in the UK granted who then conducted an independent audit of the output from the masts in key positions around the estate in June 2010, in which the levels were found to be well below the international agreed limits of radiation being emitted. This was the first time an audit had been conducted on the estate by the governing body. In July last year they published their findings which were made available on the website and from the Ofcom website and the report presented to the association.

As further action to this, I then submitted these findings to the Health Protection Agency (HPA), the highly respected and independent body looking out for the health of people in the UK, they issued a ruling in August 2010 stating they were satisfied the levels were more than acceptable and did not present any short or long term affects to health of residents. I also studied a vast number of data from respected scientists and studies carried out over many years.



Weir Estate Residents Association

Sadly, information received in November 2010 from Lambeth Council prevented this from moving forward due to legal reasons. This does not prevent officers and members of the association revisiting this issue in future but it is not something I have been able to continue with at the end of 2010 despite several long months of work and effort examining detailed facts and evidence. Though some residents still have concerns regarding the masts, due to the legalities involved, I feel that I have met this priority for the year. I shall keep all the data and information at hand for future use should the association wish to revisit this issue in the coming years, and once the legal complications can be resolved.

Aside from this and as has been the case for many years, Weir Estate Residents Association continues to receive the funds generated from masts paid to Lambeth from the mobile phone operators in line with the agreed amounts as set out in the contracts, though this has been a factor for me to consider in the enquiry, it has not been an over-riding one. The income enables WERA to improve the estate and develop such projects as the community garden and the costs mentioned earlier in this report to repair the railings.

Recommendation: WERA should consider if it wishes to revisit this matter in the longer term and what action it wishes to take as an association and representative body of residents. It will have to consider the legal implications and whether further action can be taken in the short term. In the meantime WERA should continue to ensure the funds are provided to the association for the remaining life expectancy of the masts and this is used to benefit the estate, residents and the association.

3. Other WERA Actions

During the course of the year, I and WERA have been involved or dealt with many other aspects of estate life, as mentioned earlier some expected and some not, in this section I will be detailing some of those issues.

3.1. Prostitution in Anfield Close Bushes

Back in March last year it was brought to WERA's attention that an area to the side of Anfield Close was being used for illicit and illegal activity, namely prostitution. This was a problem that required immediate action, therefore I was able to work with the local SNT and Lambeth Living to ensure the bushes surrounding the area were removed and some cut back to ensure visibility was improved and visible from the road. The SNT passed the issue onto the newly





Weir Estate Residents Association

reformed Vice team for the police who visited the area. Swift and prompt action seems to have resolved the issue in the months following the works.

3.2. WERA honours former MP Keith Hill

At our April meeting with the run up to the 2010 General Election in which Keith was due to retire as MP, Weir Estate Residents Association presented the outgoing MP, Keith Hill with a framed certificate, in recognition of eighteen years as the Member of Parliament for the constituency that Weir Estate is in. WERA also presented Keith with a bottle of champagne and he was thanked by the association for his years of hard work and commitment to representing the people of the area.



Upon receiving his award, the first to be presented to a local politician by the association Keith told of his affection for the people of Weir Estate and the estate itself where he began his political career as an MP many years before. He praised the hard work and commitment of WERA to improve the estate. A few weeks later, Keith sent a hand written letter of thanks to express his 'heartfelt thanks' for the gesture.

Keith has since taken up a new position as Chair of the Lambeth Living board and continues to support WERA in its endeavours.

3.3 Introduction of the No Calling Zone (NCCZ)

June saw the introduction of the No Cold Calling Zone across the area inclusive of Weir



Estate. Despite being delayed from its earlier launch of April and later May, the scheme was implemented successfully on the estate. The NCCZ is designed to protect residents from unscrupulous Cold Callers which often cause annoyance and in extreme cases have seen residents being burgled or forced to buy services and goods they did not need or want.

WERA worked closely with the local councillors and Lambeth Council's Trading Standards to ensure the scheme was successful by informing residents and having it finally introduced at the start



Weir Estate Residents Association

of the summer. The scheme has been working well up to now and has prevented many cold callers disturbing residents and assisting in keeping crime levels low.

Recommendation: I hope that WERA and residents will continue to support the NCCZ by giving it there full co-operation. WERA should continue to liaise with the Trading Standards team to ensure the estate remains free from cold callers and residents particularly the elderly are kept safe.

3.4 Weir Link Fun Day on Weir Estate

The annual community fun day to celebrate the second year of The Weir Link was also held during June, which due to a holiday I was unable to be part of. However, the well-attended fun day once again brought people to Weir Estate as the Weir Link marked it's triumphant second year with a flavour of the world's cuisine, and fun and games for all the family as well as dancing and music. The event was attended by newly elected local MP, Chuka Umunna, the Deputy Mayor of Lambeth, Cllr Christiana Valcarcel and local ward Councillors, Diana Morris, Lib Peck and Ed Davie.



The new Lambeth Deputy Mayor described the event as 'wonderful' during one of her first official engagements and her first time visiting Weir Estate, unlike previous years WERA did not play a part in this fun day.

Recommendation: Next year's event should be held jointly and in partnership with WERA and The Weir Link to bring a bigger event for many to enjoy as well as a bigger emphasis on the estate and its position in the community. I fully accept that the fun day's give the centre a great opportunity to showcase its success in the community and it would certainly appear fun was had by all who soaked up the sights and sounds on offer back in June but this in my view as outgoing Chair is the Weir Estate working in partnership with other organisations which the Weir Link forms a vital part of.

The next fun day should be about the estate and the community, WERA must consider playing a much bigger role prior and during the event. This will give the association great access to promote itself and its achievements. Among many other great aspects, such as our community partnerships.



Weir Estate Residents Association

I recommend strongly that WERA considers investing in some promotional materials in order to better promote itself to residents and the wider community. It is my view that all future fun days arranged on the Weir Estate include and are as much about the association, the estate and residents.

3.5. Election of WERA Vice Chair – Rohema Khanom

At our July Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) WERA had the pleasure of welcoming and appointing our first Vice Chair to the executive committee.

Rohema, who has lived on Weir Estate all her life, was elected by unanimous vote of members to take up the position. Though Rohema has only had seven months in the role, she has already been working behind the scenes in offering support to me and giving strong views on the direction of the association and its undertakings. She has been a great support to me as Chair, however due to work and family commitments she has not been able to take as an active role as she and I would have liked. Her knowledge and strong views have very much been welcomed by the executive committee and hope she will consider re-standing for election at the AGM and consider taking a more active role in the association and the role, commitments permitting of course.

3.6. 255 bus route extension plans

During the course of the year, largely from July 2010, I have been continuously monitoring and lobbying for the extension of the single decker 255 bus from Streatham Hill to Balham Station. The proposals came about at the end of 2009 and a consultation was carried out by Transport for London (TfL). Sadly due to political and community difficulties the plans have been extensively delayed. Many Weir residents have enquired about this with me and on their behalf I have continued to strongly call for the route extension to be implemented. Sadly as of yet we are still to see the bus extension.

In September 2010 and at the request of residents in the previous month's meeting, I wrote to the Mayor of London (Boris Johnson) and our Greater London Assembly member Val Shawcross urging for the route to be extended as WERA has previously supported the role and believe that it will provide a huge benefit to our residents particularly those who are older or infirm. Sadly this action has not born any fruit but I am assured the extension is still in the pipeline once the issues with TfL and Wandsworth Council can be resolved.



Weir Estate Residents Association

3.7. WERA's action for Residents

During the course of 2010, I was able to tackle and resolve some often complex cases for residents living on Weir Estate in my position of Chair for the association.

This included the case of two families living in Glanville and Jewell Houses whom had been living in awful damp and squalid conditions, due to leaks from the roofs above their



properties causing extensive damage and mould within rooms in the flat. These were two very serious cases in which I was able to tackle and achieve successful outcomes. In each case the families had tried to report the issues without success and therefore came to association meetings to seek the support and intervention of WERA. I personally took these cases up and liaised with senior Lambeth Living officers responsible for repairs. Within a few weeks

one of the properties was plastered and redecorated along with the leak above the property fixed. This enabled the family who had been sharing one room to get their home back. The other case which was slightly more complex took longer to resolve but by mid-October 2010 after some considerable work the home of the family involved had a new bathroom installed and redecoration in the rooms most affected. The family then went on to give their public thanks via a story on the association's website.

These were just two of the cases I had involvement in and was able to resolve, in other cases two depilated and un-useable kitchens were replaced. One case improved the life of a young family, and the other of an older resident. I dealt with three other damp cases from June to November 2010, which were successfully resolved.

In all cases I acted on behalf of WERA after the residents came to the association for assistance and help. These cases prove the strength and position of WERA and the great benefit it gives to residents living on the estate. It is my belief that none of these cases would have been resolved when they were much to the delight and gratitude of the residents involved.



Weir Estate Residents Association

3.8. Loss of water supply to Weir Estate Homes

For this section, I conclude on the unexpected issues which arose in the run up to Christmas during December 2010 as a result of the freezing temperatures the estate and the rest of the country experienced. A number of homes in two blocks were left without running water for a week. This was brought to my attention by a resident in Weir House that they had been without water for a number of days and they was having little success getting anything done to resolve it. It was following this three other cases were brought to my attention in West and Weir Houses.

I acted swiftly to contact senior members of Lambeth Living and repairs and maintenance in order to begin tackling what was shaping up to be a difficult and complex issue. During the course of the water supply loss in these two blocks, pipes began to burst on the roof of Anfield Close which left properties there flooded and damaged by water. Following numerous discussions I was able to finally co-ordinate a response from officers at Lambeth Living both on the ground and via active communication. Thankfully the issues were identified and water supply was restored prior to Christmas.

I must compliment the actions of some of the officers at Lambeth Living and the plumbers who attended who made sure the issues were resolved.

Recommendation: This is a very real concern and WERA should consider having this as a priority for the year by working with Lambeth living to ensure that such circumstances cannot reoccur and that all the pipes on the roofs of blocks are checked and insulated from freezing cold conditions where they cracked and burst in many of the cases stated above. The entire estate must be checked and measures taken to protect residents and their homes from such issues happening should we experience such freezing temperatures during 2011.

4. Estate Visits During 2010

This section looks at the visits we have had during the year in which those responsible for a service to Weir Estate from housing to policing are invited to tour the estate, hear about what WERA is doing to improve, change and transform our community. I welcome them and show them what is being done around the estate as well as a visit to The Weir Link. During 2010 we have had many key visits for a variety of reasons associated with the major works and local policing. These are a good way to build relations with partners, tackle important issues, raise concerns with senior persons responsible for a set area and promote the work of the association to our community partners.



Weir Estate Residents Association

The following key people enjoyed an estate visit during the course of the year:

- Chris Hunter, Director of Improvement - Lambeth Living - 4th May 2010
- Supt Nick Ephgrave. Borough Commander (Lambeth) - Metropolitan Police Service - 1st July 2010
- David Thompson, Director of Property Services and Keith Hardy, Major Works Manager - Lambeth Living - 26 April 2010
- Cedric Boston, Director of Housing Management - Lambeth Living - 9th March 2010

5. Walkabouts

Estate walkabouts take place every quarter with estate officers from Lambeth Living, contractors and other relevant persons where we are able to point out communal repair issues and concerns in which are recorded in written minutes which then should be sent to us following the walkabout and should be acted upon during the next three months leading up to the next meeting.

This year a conscious and executive decision was taken to boycott the walkabouts in protest that they were repetitive and didn't generate any visible benefit over a course of many years by Lambeth Living. I as Chair certainly felt these were nothing short of a PR exercise for Lambeth Living. In 2010 for the first time since I have been in office we did not take part in two walkabouts during the year as we found those on the walkabouts were repeating the same things over and over without seeing any action, quarter on quarter. I felt that it was not benefiting the residents or bringing any benefit to the estate as well as wasting the time of those of the committee who were taking the time to participate in the estate walkabouts. I am very disappointed that we were left with no other alternative but to take such drastic action in order to make a point. I do believe that such action should be continued until such time the walkabouts are re-organised and better managed and the issues raised are able to be rectified particularly those made during the walkabouts and taken down in the form of official minutes.

Recommendation: The association needs to decide if and when it will re-participate in the walkabouts and on what basis, these needs to be decided potential every quarter as all other attempts to engage with the walkabouts and suggestions to work with them have failed. Discussions need to be had on what action should be taken on ensuring the walkabouts benefit the residents and the desire to improve the estate.



Weir Estate Residents Association

6. Website and Other Publications

Our website has been a tremendous success in 2010 and thanks to the hard work that goes into maintaining it by our Communications and Technical Officer, Kieran and I, the website visitor numbers both unique and actual visits have increased drastically from 2009 in many months more than quadrupled. The website has now been operational for 20 months (up to February 2011) and as the appendix 2 shows, the numbers have increased sharply when compared with the same time the previous year. (With the exception of 10th to 30th November when a technical problem meant the data was not collected)



Some of our highest figures were during September 2010 for actual visits when our website broke the story about Connaught Partnerships going into administration and the sacking of 100's of staff via conference call. The website ran the story in which soon went national with some 1427 visiting the site during the month. We know these stories were used by national media as a starting point for the developing story. Unusually in December 2010 the website had its greatest number of visits with 1446 which are largely from the wider community and not residents however this shows that the news, information, interviews and special features are attracting a great number of attention and are a huge benefit to many people, raising the work and efforts of the association and its position in the community.

The website has and continues to run special features which began in 2010 from changes to Lambeth Council to housing in the borough as well as securing in-depth insightful interviews from high profile people serving our estate, the community and Lambeth. The biggest of which came from the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir Paul Stevenson, who took part in a WERA Asks interview.

These have varied but have been a great asset to the website content though I anticipate this may now be coming to an end as we focus more on special features and other new



Weir Estate Residents Association

content. The website is designed to keep those who have internet access and our neighbours informed and updated on what is happening and the issues that matter to them. I am delighted with its content and the growing success during the course of the year. It promotes the association to a much wider community while still keeping the heart of the estate as its sole purpose, our residents.

The website has been featured on the front page of the Clapham Area newsletter published by Lambeth Living in 2010, featured as good practice and great example to other associations in the area.

I truly believe it has a huge benefit to the association and its work, it also engages and informs while allowing those who wish to keep up to date on the latest issues, can do so. I would hope that WERA will continue to fund this, will continue to encourage the great content and encourage others to work with it. The figures show that it is working very well and continues to grow and succeed.

7. Crime and Safer Neighbourhood Team

As the crime statistics kindly provided by the Safer Neighbourhood Team, clearly demonstrates, crime on Weir Estate remains consistently low and just a small percentage of



the crimes across the whole of Thornton ward. This is a continued trend from previous years, particularly in more recent years such as it was in 2009. It is my belief that the work and partnership of the Safer Neighbourhood Team in Thornton ward is reflected in the

statistics and the fact the Weir Estate remains one of the safest in the entire borough of Lambeth and most certainly in our area. I am confident the crimes reflect domestic incidents and not that of more serious crimes such as burglary or motor theft.

WERA has always and have continued to enjoy an outstanding working relationship with the officers from the SNT and tackling crime in our area. They have continued to support the association and its efforts to improve and transform the estate. Very much a part of this has been working together to share information to tackle crime and the fear of crime as well as building trust and confidence.





Weir Estate Residents Association

Though the team has experienced some personnel changes during the course of 2010, in which at the end of the year saw their sergeant moved to another area leaving the team short on officers, they have continued to work with myself and WERA to ensure our concerns are heard and crime is dealt with effectively. This was of course recognised during the year with the area visit of their commanding officer, Chief Superintendent Nick Ephgrave (the Lambeth Police Borough Commander) who was full of praise and admiration for the way that we have worked together, shared information and sought to keep the community a safer place by working as a partnership. In doing so, the Borough Commander said he would be taking away some of the ways we engage and work together to implement this across the borough.

One of the exceptional elements of this has been the constant communication, support and community minded approach of our estate liaison officer, PCSO Karen Rose who has visited me regularly to discuss any concerns or work together on projects. This has been invaluable and she has been a true pleasure to work with. PCSO Rose has of course been extremely well supported by her Police Community Support Officer colleagues, Carl McLean, Lucy Feeney and Phil Hodsdon, who sadly left the team towards the end of last year.

The quick response to concerns and issues raised to them such as an abandoned vehicle on the estate or concerns of other critical issues has been incredibly impressive and has showed that the relationship between this association and our local policing team has been tremendous again during the course of the year.

The figures (Appendix 5) kindly provided by PC Rob Wood who has also been an outstanding proactive, community minded, local police constable and an asset to us and the community. This as I have mentioned is represented that policing of our estate has been effective from the low crime numbers. Further to this, working with us shows beyond all doubt that this approach to community policing works and brings results on both sides. The team have continued to attend our monthly meetings along with patrolling regularly on foot or on Bikes to hear concerns and offer advice. I would like to sincerely thank the team (*PC Rob Wood, PCSO Karen Rose, PCSO Carl McLean, PCSO Lucy Feeney and PCSO Phil Hodsdon*) for the support and hard work during the year and I sincerely hope the partnership will long continue and grow. On behalf of WERA I would also like to congratulate them on the success of such low crime figures not only on Weir Estate but the entire community.

8. Councillors Partnership

This past year our local ward councillors, saw some changes of their own. No more so the face of a new candidate, Ed Davie emerged as the local Labour party candidate to succeed



Weir Estate Residents Association

Michael Hipwell who left local politics at the General and local elections held in May 2010. Ed stood for election as a ward councillor in Thornton Ward. Unlike on the national level where Labour did very badly in the General elections, Ed, Diana and Lib were all elected/re-elected as the formal representatives of our area (Thornton ward).

Now Councillor, Ed Davie has been a great addition to the team of three ward councillors and as always been the case in previous years, both Diana and Lib have been very supportive of WERA and continued to work with us on many key issues, later being joined by Ed who has attended meetings and taken up cases on behalf of the association. We have been very fortunate to have such a good understanding and working relationship with all three of our councillors who all regularly attend our meetings, taking up issues promptly and effectively. Their input has been invaluable and has provided us the opportunity to achieve many great results on and around the estate.

WERA have been very fortunate to have Cllr Lib Peck as the Cabinet Member for Housing at Lambeth Council.

I believe it is fair to say we at WERA have a special relationship with our ward councillors who are true asset to local politics and our community. I would like to formally thank them for their unwavering support and backing over the course of 2010 to myself, officers, residents and our association. Much of what has been achieved would not have accomplished without the three councillors we have. I am very confident this relationship and essential partnership will continue to grow and continue to provide a benefit to Weir Estate.

9. End of Year Festive Celebrations

At the end of year we arranged a festive celebration in which all residents and their families were invited to. The event was to mark the end of another triumphant year for the estate and those living and visiting it. It was disheartening that yet again only a handful of residents came along despite every effort to publish the event and ensure everyone knew they could share in the festive season cheer. However, I am pleased to say on the other hand that those who did come made the event thoroughly enjoyable and many even contributed to the food and drinks. The event remained thoroughly enjoyable and saw a great end to a great year. This social event was organised following the end of year celebration we held in 2009, sadly due to cut back and the sheer effort needed to put on such an evening and costs involved, we unfortunately had to scale it back though as I have already mentioned the Christmas toast was still a successful and pleasant occasion with those who have continued



Weir Estate Residents Association

to support the association throughout 2010 including residents, Councillor Davie, executive colleagues and friends.

10. Summary

Weir Estate and those living on it have seen drastic changes, never seen before and WERA has played a valuable part in bringing much needed improvement to our community. We have seen and tackled many difficult and often unexpected hurdles and challenges all of which by working together have been resolved as detailed in this report.

I am pleased to once again say that we have in most cases met all of the priorities and our expectations and even in some cases far exceeded them. We have continued with strong partnerships and have continued to find new ones. Our website has been a true success with lots of hard work going into it. Sadly, a large proportion of estate residents still fail to see the benefit of having an association and many still do not get involved. However on the flip side to this full admiration and gratitude must go to those residents who have continued to support the association and take an active role in making decisions which have brought about change. Without those residents, co-opted members and their commitment to improve their community we would not be in the strong position I believe we are now.

As Chair of WERA I am confident we begin the next 12 months in very good shape as an association and as a community. I am very optimistic we can continue to grow on the successes and changes we have already experienced not only this year but in the previous years. It has often been an uphill struggle but I am satisfied we have met those with determination and gusto. You will notice from the above that much has happened and we have strived for only the best results for those who live on Weir Estate. Change will only continue to happen if we can grow on our support in what are to be difficult economic times and pressure unlike we have ever experienced on housing estates such as ours with huge changes to the way we all live coming our way. I believe that WERA will be vital in supporting residents and their voice both on local and national levels, therefore I can only hope that residents will in 2011, finally all **be part of the change!**

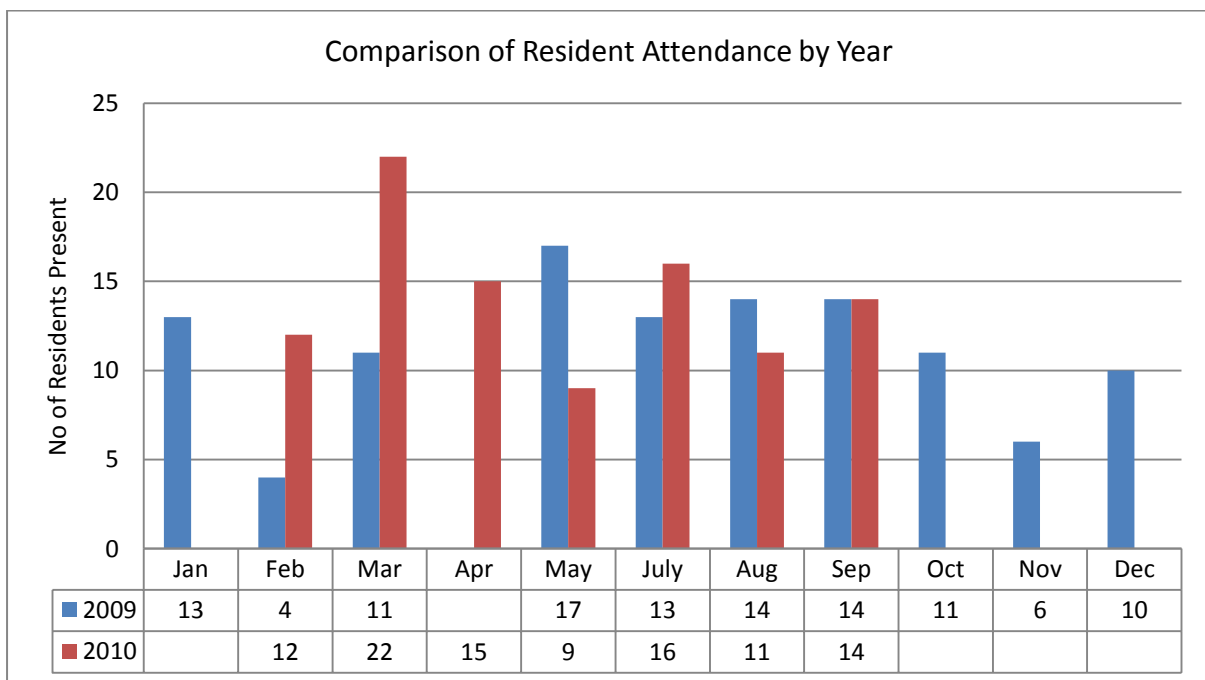


Weir Estate Residents Association

Appendix 1 – Resident Involvement

The bar chart below shows a comparison of resident attendance at meetings this year (in red), compared to last year (in blue).

Overall, numbers have stayed similar, but no meetings were held in January, October or November. October and November were not held due to lack of resident attendance. The meeting in December was substituted for a Christmas celebration.

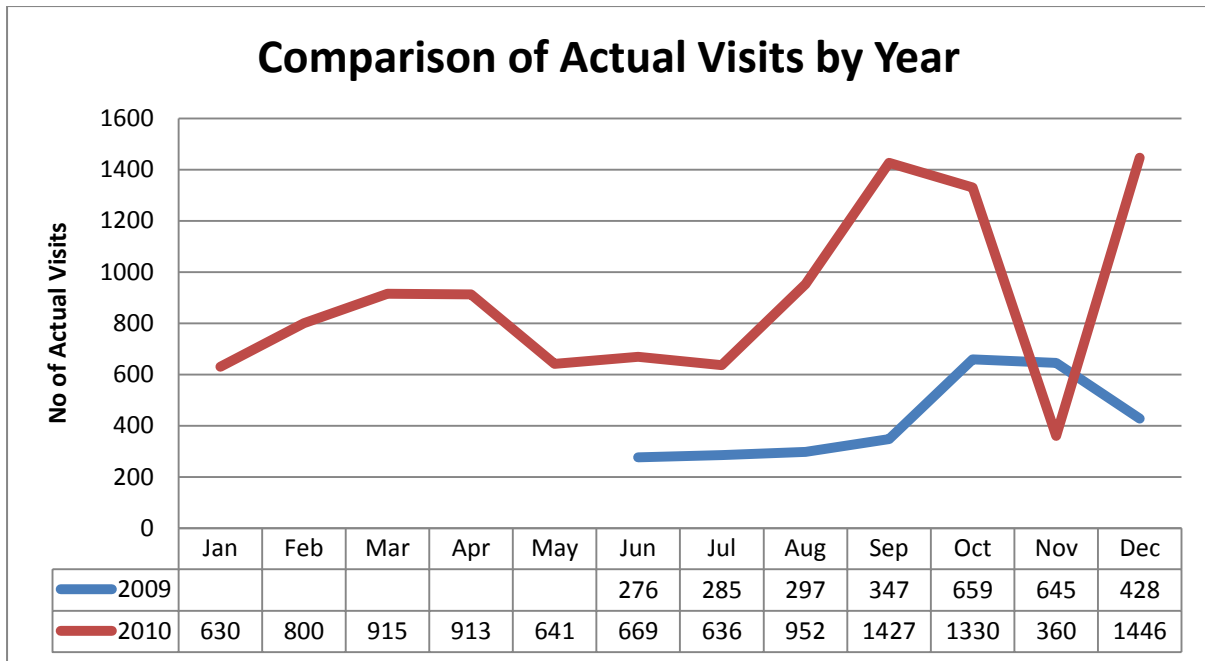




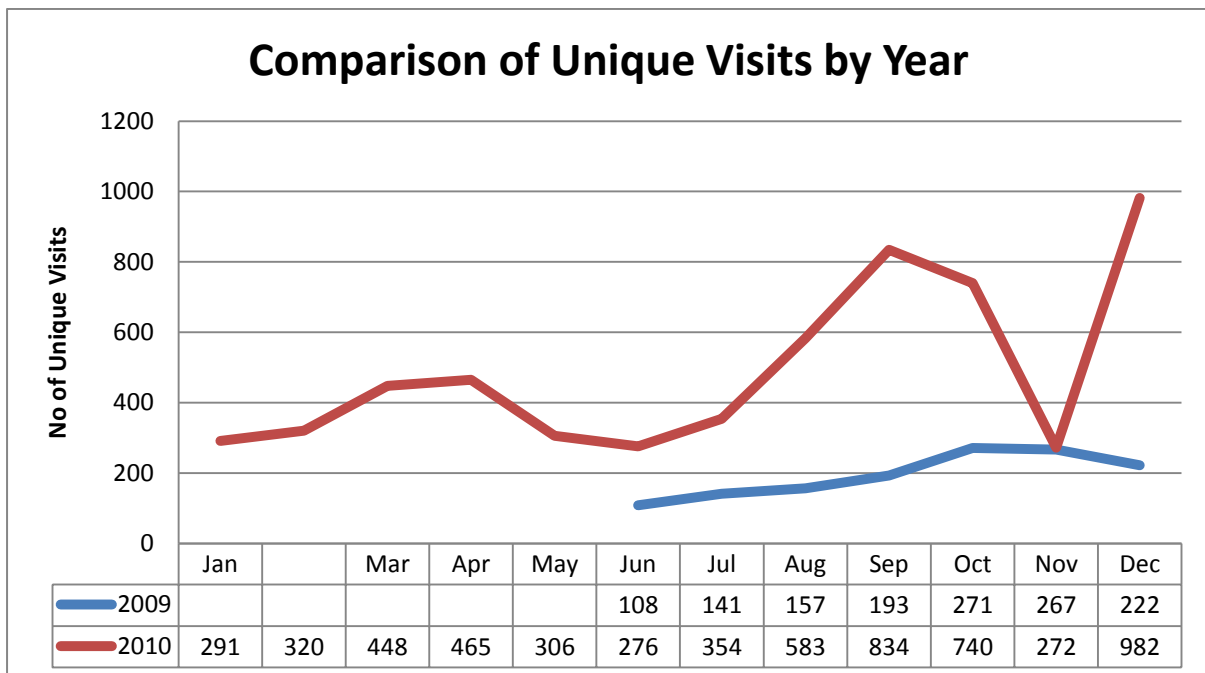
Weir Estate Residents Association

Appendix 2 – Website Statistics

Overall actual visits have risen during the course of 2010, (except during November when the data was not collected due a technical fault).



Overall unique visits have risen vastly during the course of 2010, (except during November when the data was not collected due a technical fault).





Weir Estate Residents Association

Appendix 3 – Finance Summary – Current Account

Page intentionally left blank – Appendix 3 redacted



Weir Estate Residents Association

Appendix 4 – Finance Summary – Savings Account

Page intentionally left blank – Appendix 4 redacted



Weir Estate Residents Association

Appendix 5 – Crime Statistics – Thornton Ward/Weir Estate

