CHORLTON CIVIC SOCIETY
(FORMERLY CHORLTON VOICE)

Chorlton Civic Society Newsletter

November – December 2026

PART ONE – CCS News, Events and Reports etc

(See Part Two: 'Round and About in Chorlton' for information about some other Chorlton groups etc)

Website: **https://chorltoncivicsociety.org/**

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Chorlton Civic Society Upcoming events!

- **CCS Main Meeting:** Tuesday 10th November 7.30 Community Room at the Library. Speakers from Chorlton and Whalley Range dementia action group
- **CCS CHRISTMAS shop WINDOW COMPETITION for 2026**
  Judging: Tuesday 1st & Wednesday 2nd December 2026.
- **CCS Arts Festival: Applications by venues to take part** have started. Artists will be invited to sign up from December 5th - January 10th.
- **CCS Christmas lunch at the Golf Club** on December16th at 1pm. If you are interested (and who wouldn't be) then contact Cath Brownhill, via this website.
- **CCS Carol singing** on 19th December, Community Gardens. (next to Chorlton Library (For Community Garden events see: https://www.greenchorltonhub.org.uk/communitygarden)
- **CCS Main Meeting:** Tuesday 12 Jan – CCS meeting speaker tbc
- **CCS Main Meeting:** Tuesday 9 March AGM + speaker Maaraja Kaaristo on history of Pamona Island in Manchester)

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Message from the Chorlton Civic Society Chair

Greeting fellow Chorltonians,

Have you purchased your wind-up radio, torch and stacked up with tins of beans and packets of pasta? I must admit that I have bought a couple of extra boxes of San Miguel (other beers are available).

The summer and all the outdoor events seem a distant memory …

The Apple Day, on September 18th, in the community garden, was a great success. Lots of visitors, of all ages, tasted many apple products and there was music and apples hanging from strings for the kids.

Have you noticed how many shops have now had their shutters painted? The art group has been busy persuading shop keepers to brighten their shop fronts. So, a huge thank you to the individuals who visit, revisit and convince the owners of the benefits of an attractive shutter.

We hope that many shops will again take part in the Christmas window displays. Judging will take place on December 1st / 2nd. It really does brighten up a dark time of the year.

Thinking of Christmas, there is to be carol singing on 19th December, in the Community Gardens. That small space is proving to be a sanctuary for many people, who find it peaceful and a place to think and relax. Again, many grateful thanks for the volunteers who are continually working on it. It is unique.

I wish the same could be said of the precinct. if you want to know of the development of this project then log in to One Chorlton and find out about the delays, etc.

The Civic Society has presented several local people with a certificate for their contribution to the community. If you know of anyone who you think deserves recognition then let us know via this website.

As you are now aware I am not going to rattle on about every event and activity which is going to take place in the next few weeks, as there is a separate easy to read list. Having said that, I would like to invite members to a Christmas lunch at the Golf Club on December16th at 1pm. If you are interested (and who wouldn't be) then contact Cath Brownhill, via this website.

Our next general meeting is 10th November at 7 30 in the library. I hope to see you there.

Look after yourself and each other.
Laura Hopkins

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NEXT Chorlton Civic Society Main Meeting:

Tuesday 10th November 7.30 Community Room at the Library

Speakers from Chorlton and Whalley Range dementia action group

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Minutes: Chorlton Civic Society Main Meeting: September 8th 2026 19:30 Community Room, Chorlton Library

Present: 14 members +1 guest. Carolyn Kagan took the Chair.

Apologies: Laura Hopkins, (Chair) Jenny Slee, Mary McGovern

Talk: David Gosling: Northern Footpath Group

David gave a very interesting and relevant talk about the longstanding Peak and Northern Footpath Society (PNFS), originally the Peak District and Northern Counties Footpath Preservation Society, which was formed in 1894 to promotes the interests of public footpath users. They monitor, protect and improve rights of way for the benefit of everyone. David reminded us that most land in England is privately owned with only 8% remaining common land, and many paths remain permissive (at the behest of the landowner). The PNFS's work involves a lot of negotiation with landowners who block access, remove or obscure signs – sometimes taking them to Court when negotiations failed – to ensure continued access.

Over time responsibility for highways (which includes footpaths) has moved from Parishes to Local Authorities. In 1949 the *National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act* required every Council (except fully developed areas like Manchester) to draw up a definitive map: paths on this map then got legal status and are then difficult to remove. In 1981 this Act was amended and metropolitan councils now have to have a definitive map too. David pointed out the very few footpaths on the 'definitive map' in Chorlton, compared with the large number of footpaths shown on the Ordinance Survey map.

The PNFS have successfully challenged rights of public access from 1826 to 2025, often incurring large legal costs. The regular work of the PNFS involves repairing footpaths, replacing stiles (now with gates), and generally ensuring continued public access to their 20,000 miles of footpaths in their area. All funds are through membership and donations – see https://pnfs.org.uk/join.php

Discussion linked David's talk with the Chorlton Civic Society action to get the footpath round the back of the old graveyard placed on the definitive map and thereby ensure continued access. David offered to help with this. David was thanked enthusiastically for his talk.

CCS Business Meeting

1. Matters arising from previous minutes

1.a. Changes to Chorlton Civic Society: meetings will stay bi-monthly until March. Charity incorporation is being looked into and a new constitution will be proposed at the march AGM; after that a change in the bank account will be looked into – to give interest.

1.b. The newsletter – will be split **into the CHORLTON CIVIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER** and a separate supplement **CHORLTON AREA NEWS** which will give information about some other groups and events.

Both will be distributed to members and put on website.

2. Treasurer's report

Nothing to report

3. Planning

000821: Former Penine Kennedy Offices – Application for a shisha lounge with external canopied structure received. We objected as the structure does not fit with the surrounding area. Also shop front may not fit with Council policy. It was noted that the structure to the next door premises – formerly the Parrot – which was subject to an enforcement order was still standing even though the venue had closed. Cllr Tina taking this up.

001148: Coffee Rules proposes a louvered pergola at Coffee Rules, 420 Wilbraham Road. We objected as it does not fit with the surrounding area and adversely affects sight lines on the corner.

PLA-2026-000068: Hot Cookie shop 539A Wilbraham Road submitted an amended application. . We objected as waste strategy still appears to be insufficient – proposal seems to be domestic scale, rather than commercial and emptied fortnightly. It was noted the proposed ramp is gradient 1:12, which is usually domestic scale – question whether this is appropriate. Noted a wooden railing is proposed for roadside step which is an improvement.

Footpath behind Old Graveyard (House Yard Lane) – the Council is now investigating historical records to see if it should be placed on the definitive map. We have recommended the Council apply to the Land Registry for ownership of the path. Councillor Tina pursuing this. Watch this space for updates.

Precinct – We have written for update on demolition – no reply.
It was noted the hoardings are still badly graffiti'd despite lots of requests to keep them clean**. A meeting to be held with Councillors and neighbourhood officers to make a plan for proper maintenance of hoardings.**

Also a meeting to be held with the Public Realm officers, Traders, neighbourhood officer and Friends of the Community Garden about progress in public realm developments – also about how we can influence the occupying of premises.

Ryebank Fields – going to Committee on Sept 24th. Noted support requested by Friends of Ryebank Fields.

Cycle path and parking have got worse: we will raise at police liaison committee.

In discussion:

- **Mabrouk Lounge (Next to N Star) has plastic sheeting over the extension** – which we thought was subject to further enforcement by Planning.
- **Egerton Garden Centre** – it was noted that Armistead (developers) are getting on with the clearance of the site.
- **Tatty look of Chorlton** – shopfronts, pavements all make Chorlton look tatty. We will raise when we meet about the public realm.

4. Update on CCS Projects

i. Chorlton Community Champions – Danielle Lowy and Sally Ferris accepted and certificates still to be awarded – Next nominees cannot be named until they have accepted.

ii. Chorlton Community Garden – Autumn version of artwork is now installed. Friends of Chorlton Community Garden have submitted a Your Neighbourhood Fund grant applied for (Chorlton ward) for an art and nature project. 19th September is Apple Day and the installation of wooden mushrooms 2-4. December 19th – Christmas carols with the Mad donnas. Full details including newsletter: https://www.greenchorltonhub.org.uk

iii. Chorlton Street Art– Grant approved from Chorlton Park IYN to extend shutter and graffiti painting to CP premises in the district centre. Work should begin this autumn.

iv. Chorlton Arts Festival: review report has been circulated and is on the website highlighting the contribution the CAF makes to community wellbeing https://chorltonartsfestival.org/review-of-caf-2026 . Next year provisional dates: Friday 7th May-Saturday 22nd May

v. Chorlton Arts to be re-branded as Arts for Chorlton https://www.facebook.com/groups/chorltonarts . This will be year-round, linking artists to venues and communicating what's going on in Chorlton and supporting Chorlton Library live – events in the Library.

5. CCS Events and other local events – as reported to the meeting

- Social event in August was enjoyed by all.
- We ran a stall and CPR sessions at Merseyfest successful despite poor weather.
- Sat 12 Sept – Chorlton Pride on Saturday 12 September between 12pm-5pm at St Clements Church. Lots of stuff planned with performances from Sale Brass, Chorlton Sings and Stretford Uke plus loads of stuff for children.
- Saturday 19th Sept Unicorn celebration – free food.
- Saturday 19th Sept – Apple Day community garden 2-4
- Monday 21 Sept Unicorn 30th anniversary week
- 17th – 26th September - Book Festival
- Tuesday November 10th – CCS meeting with an update on Picture House and maybe another speaker
- Tuesday 12 Jan – CCS meeting speaker tbc
- Tuesday 9 March AGM + speaker Maaraja Kaaristo on history of Pamona Island

6. **AOB**

5.1 Christmas Window Competition – Michelle thanked for offering to lead on this . Message for traders to be drafted. Agreed judging should be early so we can get results out for the public to visit shops before Christmas. Volunteers to organise judging date.
(Report: Carolyn Kagan CCS Sec.)

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August CCS Social - (update)

For the CCS members who missed the fun CCS Social meeting on 14th August: people sat in small groups to write some lines about the weather this summer in Chorlton and Peter Topping used AI to turn our lines into a song. Later on Peter produced an illustrated song.
https://youtu.be/vpLiHFW_SeU
Preview YouTube video Chorlton HeatPreview YouTube video Chorlton Heat



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CCS: Community Garden

A lot has been happening in the garden this autumn. A new panel has been placed for Autumn in the window through the seasons by Jolene Sheehan. You might have seen the lovely carved wooden toadstools commissioned from Studio Critical and the new seed library. We held a really well attended apple day on September 19th with apple products, apple juice and fig leaf cordial from the garden and live juicing by Abundance. We have been helping Sow the City run some workshops focusing on nature and health. So far we have natural cosmetics, apple chutney, Cyanotypes, decorative garden sign – and there is more to come. Regular gardening sessions have continued but these are slowing down now that winter is coming. Watch out for the next project for which we have received funding from Your Neighbourhood Fund (Manchester City Council) – to undertake some art – projects involving local people and various workshops. Additional information is at https://www.greenchorltonhub.org.uk/communitygarden *(Report: Carolyn Kagan CCS Sec.)*

Wooden Toadstools by Studio Critical / Seed Library / Cyanotypes

Seed Library











Chutney Making **Apple Day**

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CCS: Chorlton Street Art

We are delighted that so many people have told us how much better the centre of Chorlton is looking as graffiti gets removed. Cath Fernley and her team have not only painted out graffiti themselves but also commissioned artists to place murals on shop shutters. With the help of funds from the Council's Your Neighbourhood Fund, more shutters have been completed – including Lucky Mamas, Electrik, the new Pilates studio on Barlow Moor Road, Rainbow, Blancspace and We Care Agency. There is more to come – see if you can detect the disappearance of graffiti. We hope to do something about more junction boxes in the near future and continue to make representations to the site managers of the precinct site about the state of their hoardings. It is really heartening when traders paint their own shutters – check out Affordable and Stylish on Barlow Moor Road. Fantastic! *(Report: Carolyn Kagan CCS Sec.)*



PXY Pilates



Callum Simmons working on Electrik

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CCS: Chorlton Arts Festival is 25 next year!

Yes, 2027 is the 25th anniversary of Chorlton Arts Festival and we have added two more weekend days to the Festival which will run from 7th- 22nd May (with the weekdays 17th-20th reserved for events put on by the schools). We have opened applications for venues to take part and artists will be invited to sign up from December 5th - January 10th. The large art exhibition is scheduled for the first weekend, Sat 8th - Sunday 9th May at Chorlton Golf Club (Barlow Hall). The Festival remains popular and you can read a report of last year's festival here:

Review of CAF 2026 – Chorlton Arts Festival

We rely on sponsorship and donations to cover the costs of the Festival organisation – all information is on the website Chorlton Arts Festival – Annual Community Arts Festival in Chorlton, Manchester or contact Carolyn at chair@chorltonartsfestival.org

You may have already caught some of the CAF team talking on AllFM, our media partner and there will be more broadcasts over the forthcoming months. We are very grateful to ALLFM presenters to talk to us about the Festival on air. The 2026 Festival in numbers: *(Report: Carolyn Kagan CCS Sec)*



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CCS Community Champions

We have awarded two more Community Champion awards. We are pleased that they have been accepted. Dave Bishop – has been recognised for his outstanding leadership and tireless effort identifying and promoting the flora of Chorlton Ees and Meadows and the promotion of natural history of the Chorlton area more generally. Through this work Dave has inspired many people to take an interest in their surroundings and to know more about them, thereby making a lasting, positive contribution to civic life in Chorlton.

Julian Beach has been recognised for his longstanding work with young people, overseeing the refurbishment of the Scout Hut on Withington Road; and for his promotion of nature and the environment via litter picks and the inspirational installation of so many swift boxes on Egerton Road South. Through these activities Julian has shown leadership and has inspired many residents, making a lasting, positive contribution to civic life in Chorlton.

Both Dave and Julian will be presented with their certificates in the forthcoming weeks.

Civic Society members can make nominations by email to the Secretary (secretary@chorltncivicsociety.org) – naming the person and briefly stating why they should be considered a community Champion (Max 200 words) – and signing the nomination and confirming membership of the Civic Society. Nominations can be made at any time. For full details see Community Champions | Chorlton Civic Society
(Report: Carolyn Kagan CCS Sec.)

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CCS Planning Update from Barry Whitmarsh

We have included a link via the reference number of the application. If a direct hyperlink fails, you can look up the application number on the search page: https://arcusbe.manchester.gov.uk/pr/s/register-view?c__r=Arcus_BE_Public_Register

- Permission is sought to replace the dilapidated house at 2 Manchester Road (diagonally opposite St Clements Road at the junction with High Lane) with a new building. Details of the application can be found at 001548:

- Permission is sought for the change of use of the car detailing and vehicle repair workshop at 302 Barlow Moor Road to a hot food takeaway . Details of the application can be found at 001218:

- Ryebank Fields Community Group has secured planning permission for use of the former university playing fields as community woodland and meadow. However, Manchester Metropolitan University, who own the site, have made it clear that they have no intention of letting the site be used for this purpose. Their application for residential development of the site remains undecided. Details of the application can be found at 143413. Videos of the planning committee meeting are available on the council website and elsewhere.
- Permission was refused for a louvered pergola at Coffee Rules, 420 Wilbraham Road (in line with the Society's objection). Their previous 2 applications (new shopfront and signage) remain undetermined. Details of the application can be found at 001148:
- Permission was granted for alterations, including a new ramp, to 539A Wilbraham Road (Kuki cookie shop). Details of the application can be found at 000068:

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CHORLTON CIVIC SOCIETY would like to encourage participation in CHRISTMAS shop WINDOW COMPETITION for 2026

Judging 1st and 2nd December.
Business owners please....
Business owners please....
Be brave. Be bright. Be brilliantly glittery.
All shops, cafés, restaurants, studios & services welcome — no registration needed.

If you *do* want to let us know you're taking part, so that we don't miss your window please let us know using the contact details.
Shoppers please encourage your local stores to join in. It would be great to have all of Chorlton looking as Festive as possible during entire Christmas season!

There are separate awards for Beech Road and the district centre. Last year's winners were Hurricane (Beech Road) & The Chorlton Book Shop (Wilbraham Road).

Judging: Tuesday 1st & Wednesday 2nd December 2026.

New for 2026: Winners receive a special treat to share with customers.
Let's make Chorlton sparkle all December 2026!

Michelle Haller will be delivering posters/flyers to shops.



Correction: Judging dates are Tuesday 1st & Wednesday 2nd December

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Our Chorlton Civic Society Aims

The aims of Chorlton Civic Society are to act as a forum and voice of the residents and stakeholders in Chorlton-cum-Hardy and its immediate neighbourhood (open to all, regardless of gender, race, religion, colour, age, disability or sexual orientation); to promote or assist in promoting civic pride; and to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest in the area.

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How to Join the Chorlton Civic Society

You are welcome to join. Membership of Chorlton Civic Society is free but you can choose to donate on a monthly or an annual basis to help it to continue to thrive.

We welcome regular standing orders. To take out a standing order please use the following bank details: Account: Chorlton Civic Society, Account No. 90252158, Bank: Barclays, Sort Code: 20-26-20. Further details are on the Civic Society website..

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Joining the Chorlton Civic Society Committee

The officers were elected at the AGM in March 2026. They are Chair (Laura Hopkins); Secretary (Carolyn Kagan) and Treasurer (Lindy Newns), and we can have up to 7 additional Committee members.

If you would like to join the Civic Society committee you would be welcome to apply and please contact Carolyn Kagan the secretary: secretary@chorltoncivicsociety.org.

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See PART TWO – Round and About in Chorlton
For information about some other groups etc

"Part of the CCS work is to keep scanning the horizon for what's going on locally and to build bridges where possible".

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St Clements Road in Chorlton in the evening sun: Autumn

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