

## **Guide for Councillors**

**Key websites to communicate online with  
local residents**



## **Introduction**

Many people in London go online as their first port of call to find out information, learn about what's happening near them and to communicate to other people, businesses and governments.

Whilst internet access is uneven and it continues to be ever more important to ensure people are not 'digitally excluded', sharing information online is the default for a huge majority of RBKC residents. This does not mean that other communication means like newspapers and posters are irrelevant – far from it.

What it does mean is that if you aren't communicating online, you could be missing out on some of the best and easiest ways to reach local people.

Many Councillors are already very involved in supporting and posting on local websites and a few of these sites are profiled in this guide.

Local people in Kensington and Chelsea are also very active running local websites and building online spaces to share news, events and ways to connect local people. This guide profiles a few of the most popular and/or innovative local websites.

Contact a site in your local area and speak to your City Living, Local Life support officer to use the available web tools.

The Community Engagement Team can arrange a demo of websites in your local area, give advice about communicating online and support projects to work with local residents who aren't online or are not comfortable with digital access. Contact us to find out more.

## **In this guide**

### **1. The City Living, Local Life online communication tools**

A new suite of communication tools have been developed as part of the City Living, Local Life initiative. These tools work in partnership with community run websites and other online Council communication methods.

### **2. Community news websites run by local residents for local residents**

More community websites are being started all the time and are building strong followings. Here's a selection of three of the most active we know of in the borough:

- Active Link
- The Pavlova Diaries
- PortobelloLand

### **3. Tenant and resident association websites**

There are dozens of excellent resident association websites in Kensington and Chelsea. These two websites are featured in particular as they are doing something a little different:

- Thurloe Residents Association

Thurloe Residents Association has designed its website to be able to run most of the association business online, including frequent online polls of its members' opinions

- Cremorne Residents Association of the Lots Road Area

CRALRA has recently started a ward-wide boycott and is using their website to spread the campaign and pressure companies to improve their practices.

### **4. Ward-based social networks run by local residents in partnership with ward councillors**

There are three community websites that were started using funding and networks from the Ward Initiatives Programme and continue to be supported and promoted by local people and Councillors:

- Colville Community Forum
- Notting Barns *Live*
- LoveGolborne

# **1. The City Living, Local Life online communication tools**

A new suite of communication tools have been developed as part of the City Living, Local Life initiative, with its aims of fostering local community interaction, making it easier for people to get involved and encouraging neighbourliness.

## **Every ward has its own online page**

On the website, [www.citylivinglocallife.org](http://www.citylivinglocallife.org), every ward has its own page. The ward pages share local news, give updates on projects Councillors are supporting and funding, and publicise volunteering opportunities. Your ward page is your space as Councillors to promote community life, so if you haven't yet started to use it speak to your support officer to learn more.

## **Digital community noticeboard for local news and events**

Also on the website is a digital community noticeboard. Anyone – residents, Councillors, local organisations, officers – can submit news to be posted. If the news fits some basic criteria, it gets posted online, is tweeted, put on our facebook page and included in a monthly email newsletter to 2000+ and growing community contacts.

The link to submit news is [www.rbkc.gov.uk/citylivinglocallife/publicise](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/citylivinglocallife/publicise).

## **Community resources**

A range of how to guides and resources that advise on community projects are regularly posted to the website to support local residents. Current guides, for example, include how to start a residents association and how to organise a street party.

## **Sharing ideas and signing up to local updates**

The website has a simple online form that anyone can fill in to share their project idea or sign up for monthly updates of local news and events happening near them. When residents sign up, they are added to the database of ward contacts in your ward, building a useful community for publicising projects and consultations.

The form can always be accessed at [www.rbkc.gov.uk/citylivinglocallife/startsomething](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/citylivinglocallife/startsomething)

## **Publicity and partnership**

The City Living, Local Life team are actively working to publicise these online tools and are working in partnership with resident-run websites and other Council communication channels. We're always available to speak further about what's happening and how we can help get the word out, and we welcome any suggestions, comments and ideas.

Contact us: [locallife@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:locallife@rbkc.gov.uk) or 020 7598 4633

## 2. Community sites run by local residents for local residents

### Active Link

Connecting local people in Kensington and Chelsea – Clarity in communication for communities  
[www.activelink.org.uk](http://www.activelink.org.uk)

#### What:

Active Link sets out to be as informative as possible and covers the following topics: General news, Local Neighbourhood News, Events, Our Policing, Crime Prevention, Scams and Neighbourhood Watch, Our Transport, Our Health, Our Local Businesses and Our Voluntary Sector and Local Charities.

Active Link has a simple philosophy. The spread of positive news and helpful information builds knowledge – and knowledge empowers people. Connecting people is a vital part of building communities and reinforcing community spirit.

The web site is a good example of residents and businesses working together. Annie Redmile developed the idea for the Active Link Association – the not for profit social enterprise that is responsible for Active Link the web site. Another local resident and business person, Dave Piggin, donated the site and technology. He remains involved as a member of the voluntary management group.

#### Audience:

The web site is for people who live in and/or work and visit Kensington and Chelsea. Active Link also aims to build a bridge between residents and businesses.

#### Statistics:

There are 5,000 regular users – and since the site went wholly public, there are additional users.

The aim is to promote the site heavily now to increase the number of additional users. Content has been increased recently and items are posted every day, with very few exceptions.

#### How you can use it and get involved:

People can submit news items and ideas by e-mail to [newnews@activelink.org.uk](mailto:newnews@activelink.org.uk) or direct to the Editor, Annie Redmile: [annie.redmile@gmail.com](mailto:annie.redmile@gmail.com) or call her on 020 7373 2605. Annie's website is [www.annie-redmile.blogspot.com](http://www.annie-redmile.blogspot.com)

## **Pavlova Diaries**

Out and About in Notting Hill

[www.pavlovadiaries.co.uk](http://www.pavlovadiaries.co.uk)

### **What:**

The Pavlova Diaries is an online magazine with local news as its main component. We cover council news, planning, crime, Portobello Market, theatre, concerts, art, park news and events, wildlife news. Ecology Centre half term events, recipes by local readers, local authors' book launches, local fashion designers and businesses, sales at 20<sup>th</sup> Century Theatre and events at the Tabernacle and Westway Sports as well as dance classes and more.

In addition to local news, the Pavlova Diaries runs:

Honest John's Ads: Advertisements covering jobs, second hand goods and local shops and restaurants. Current looking to develop and expand this section

Portobello Links: Listings with links to local cinemas, restaurants and pubs, theatres, shops, sports facilities, nail bars and so on. Current looking to develop and expand this section.

### **Target Audience:**

Anyone who lives in Notting Hill from W8 to W10

### **Aim/Mission:**

To inform and entertain locals with Notting Hill-centric events, news and views. We started this local website/blog as a direct reaction to global news that is both stressful and often irrelevant to daily life. Local news is useful, highly relevant and it is can be life enhancing to discover new positive aspects of your local area. Part of our plan was to be upbeat and to not write about ourselves. This was also, a reaction to the depressing opinion-led papers. We have successfully written this blog for two and half years and have had an overwhelmingly positive response from our readers.

### **Statistics:**

4,500 unique visitors per month

### **How you can use it and get involved:**

Pavlova Diaries already writes stories submitted by the Police, Council, Parks and the Portobello market officer. Anyone who wants to submit a story can send it to

[Pavlova@pavlovadiaries.co.uk](mailto:Pavlova@pavlovadiaries.co.uk) or contact us on the numbers below. We are always happy to include anything about the local area.

### **Contact details:**

- Amanda Waggott, 93 Elgin Crescent, London W11 2JF 07956 282858  
[amandawaggott@gmail.com](mailto:amandawaggott@gmail.com)
- Mary-Lu Bakker, 101 Lansdowne Road, London W11 2LE, 0771 2002933  
[mlu@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:mlu@dsl.pipex.com)

**What:**

This website has been created by Tony Annis, a resident of W11, for residents & tourists.

It's a place for tourists and local people to find out about all things in this area, from finding local craftspeople, trades, shops, events, bars, restaurants and community. It's a place for visitors to be able to find out information before they even leave their homes, whether they live in the UK or abroad.

The website features local time, local weather, local transport and events. There are four pages of regularly updated news, and community pages for local community services including churches, banks, schools, etc.

Specific pages are dedicated to information about the market, including shops, restaurants, bars and hotels. PortobelloLand also maintains current events information with a special section on the local music scene.

PortobelloLand is also linked to its own Twitter account and Facebook page.

**Audience:**

Residents in the Portobello area and tourists interested in visiting the market and surrounds.

**Statistics:**

To date PortobelloLand has had over 3300 visitors to the website

**How you can use it and get involved:**

Information is gathered by the editor and arrives by email, phone or word of mouth.

**Contact:**

[editor@portobelloLand.co.uk](mailto:editor@portobelloLand.co.uk)

### 3. Websites run by tenant and resident associations

#### **Thurloe Residents Association**

[www.thurloeresidentsassociation.org.uk](http://www.thurloeresidentsassociation.org.uk)

#### **What:**

The website was set up to meet the needs of a mobile and busy population in the association's catchment area who want easily accessible information all in one place.

The site reports on current issues concerning members and residents, special events in the area, police bulletins and newsletters, and Council bulletins and special programmes.

Thurloe Residents Associations maintains pages on the website on:

- Latest News
- About TRA
- Planning/Licensing
- Public Safety
- Roadworks
- Community Links
- Local Business Directory
- Join Us
- Neighbourhood Photos
- Contact TRA

#### **Audience:**

Residents and/or those who have an interest in the area covered by the Thurloe Residents Association

#### **How you can use it and get involved:**

Anyone can submit information for inclusion on the website via email, but only material that is relevant to our target audience will be included.

#### **Contact:**

[tra@thurloeresidentsassociation.org.uk](mailto:tra@thurloeresidentsassociation.org.uk)



## **Cremorne Residents Association of the Lots Road Area**

[www.cremornera.co.uk](http://www.cremornera.co.uk)

### **What:**

Our website is powered by Google Sites and currently has 10 pages. These explain who we are and what our objectives are. We use FAQs to help explain more about us. We've recently started a campaign to name and shame companies that deliver leaflets to our houses badly. We also store documents and provide local information.

Initially, we set up our website to promote our residents' association but found we needed to concentrate on one of our objectives first; however, we are now starting to use it more since we began our borough-wide boycott, and we are making plans to update and improve it.

We've started looking at ways to utilise our website to help us cope with more members as we will be expanding our boundaries. We want to expand because we are working with the Council to explore the suitability of our part of the Cremorne Ward becoming a conservation area. We would like to create a forum for local residents to inform them on progress and to hear their views on becoming a conservation area.

### **Audience and statistics:**

We have 60 or so returning visitors, which most likely are our 40 or so members and our 8 business members. Some of our visitors are the companies that we have added to our Boycott page as we notify them via email and provide them with a link to our website. We also have visits from residents in other areas of the borough who have agreed to work with us to make our campaign a borough-wide boycott.

The majority of our visitors return to our website with the average return currently between 15 and 50 times. Most visitors start on either our Home page or our borough-wide boycott page, and 50% of our first visits are to our boycott campaign.

### **How you can use it and get involved:**

Currently, all communication is via our email address [cremornera@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cremornera@hotmail.co.uk).

## **4. Ward-based social networks run by local residents in partnership with ward councillors**

### **Colville Community Forum**

[www.colvillecom.com](http://www.colvillecom.com)

#### **What:**

As part of Colville's participation in the ward initiatives pilot, the councillors set up the Colville Area Forum. This forum has gone on to be formally constituted as the Colville Community Forum, a charitable organisation whose aims are to improve the quality of life for local people in Colville ward, to provide a voice for the local community, to influence and improve services, to identify partnerships between the local community and service providers, and to identify opportunities to tackle the unmet needs of local residents. Residents act on a voluntary basis as Chair, Secretary and Treasurer and the three ward councillors act as Trustees.

The Forum was keen to establish a Colville community website accessible to all living in the area promoting the Forum, informing residents of local events, issues, opportunities and campaigns and linking in with other websites/issues of interest to Colville residents. A Colville resident who is a qualified website creator and administrator set up the website in May 2011 and the Forum pays him a small monthly stipend to monitor, administer, keep updated and maintain the site, a task which takes an average of 20 hours per month.

In the next year we will use the website far more to communicate with Forum members and residents and encourage new members and a wider attendance at meetings and see it as the key tool for bringing the community together, creating an identity and giving Colville some cohesion as a ward and community other than consumers of the market.

The website will feature regular Councillor blogs and the home page will change on a weekly basis as the Forum is becoming more involved and leading on local campaigns.

#### **Audience:**

Local people in Colville ward area, forum members and local businesses and organisations.

#### **Statistics:**

The website has had over 650 visits since the May 2011 launch and stats indicate that 70% of users are visiting many pages of the site so actually engaging with its content.

#### **How you can use it and get involved:**

Anyone can join as a member and post on news, photos and videos, create events and comment on stories.

#### **Contact:**

[pressmonica@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pressmonica@yahoo.co.uk)

## **Notting Barns *Live***

[www.nottingbarnslive.com](http://www.nottingbarnslive.com)

### **What:**

The Notting Barns *Live* website has been created by residents of Notting Barns, for residents of Notting Barns and is promoted by the Allom and Barlow Residents' Association. It's a place for local people talk about all things local - from finding a local plumber or good places to shop, to questions about volunteering and local community events. In time we hope this website will become a great resource for local people, helping to build stronger links between residents, public services and local organisations - making Notting Barns a better place to live for all.

Notting Barns *Live* was initially developed with funding and support from the Notting Barns Ward Councillors Initiative and the Well London Delivery Team Project, with some help from the Young Foundation. Ongoing core funding comes from the Notting Barns *Live* community budget, part of City Living, Local Life work.

### **Audience:**

Local people, organisations and businesses in the Notting Barns ward area

### **Statistics:**

191 members

### **How you can use it and get involved:**

Anyone can join as a member and post on news, photos and videos, create events and comment on stories.

### **Contact:**

Councillor Judith Blakeman - [cllr.blakeman@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.blakeman@rbkc.gov.uk)

Jose Fernandez, Chariman of Allom and Barlow Resident's Association - [jmfernandez1969@gmail.com](mailto:jmfernandez1969@gmail.com)

Phillip Dudden, Notting Barns *Live* Treasurer - <http://nottingbarnslive.com/profile/PhillipDudden>

James Hamill, Website Editor - <http://nottingbarnslive.com/profile/JamesHamill>

## **LoveGolborne**

[www.lovegolborne.co.uk](http://www.lovegolborne.co.uk)

### **What:**

The LoveGolborne initiative was developed as part of the ward initiatives community budget, the pilot programme that preceded City Living, Local Life. Councillors had been asked for help to encourage people to visit the area and to boost local business. We also wanted to get the area and its groups and residents better connected.

After discussion we decided that the whole of Golborne including our stretch of Portobello Market ('Upper Portobello' as we call it), Golborne Market and the neighbourhood needed a website, where everyone who lives or works here can publicise services and events, communicate and chat to each other. A long-term ambition is to get more people using the internet in the area.

Local Councillors, a talented young artist, a student web geek and a website expert, all local people, with input from Golborne traders and shopkeepers built the website and continue to maintain it.

The website has a forum with discussion threads and an online noticeboard to advertise local events and information. Local events are also highlighted.

### **Audience:**

Residents, community groups, businesses and visitors in Golborne, North Kensington

### **Contact:**

[lovegolborne@gmail.com](mailto:lovegolborne@gmail.com)

Councillor Dent Coad, [Cllr.DentCoad@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.DentCoad@rbkc.gov.uk)





For more information, contact:

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020 7598 4633

[www.citylivinglocallife.org](http://www.citylivinglocallife.org)