



Newsletter

www.hillsamenityociety.co.uk

[Email: hills.amenity@googlemail.com](mailto:hills.amenity@googlemail.com)

Spring-summer 2010

Open Forum and AGM
Wednesday 19 May
Gardeners Arms top of York Hill 7.30pm

Speaker: Richard Morris, Epping Forest Verderer

Subscriptions to the Hills Amenity Society are now due. Please send in the envelope enclosed with this newsletter to Peter Wynn Woodpeckers, 37 Woodbury Hill.



The three appraisals are available to view at www.hillsamenityociety.co.uk. Every house is listed: check your entry and join us for discussion at Gardeners' Arms, York Hill, Weds 19 May 7.30pm.

What HAS happened to our Appraisals?

Last November, following an open meeting of the Hills Amenity Society which welcomed the Character Appraisals produced by a working group of the Hills Amenity Society, we officially handed over to Epping Forest District Council the product of almost two years of discussion and hard work. The council department still had a bit of work to do, formatting and checking. But in an open letter (see Page 4) to the County, District and Town Councils, the Hills Society has made clear that it is hugely disappointed that nearly six months after handing over the appraisals there has been no tangible progress.



Guardian series article: picture shows Peter Wynn, Ian Locks, Allan Enguel and Stephen Pewsey.

The council's work—no more surely than a few hours?—is apparently still not completed, the council has yet to announce a date for its public consultation and there has apparently been no discussion on any of the proposals made in the Society's reports. Said Society chairman Wendy Fisher: "For all of us, and especially those who worked so hard to produce the Character Appraisals, this inactivity by the council is a huge disappointment."

A spokesperson for the council blamed "lack of clerical support" for the months in inactivity. **Open letter to councils: Page 4 To see the appraisals, go to www.hillsamenityociety.co.uk**

Key proposals in the Appraisals

- >A 20mph speed limit should be imposed throughout the three conservation areas
- > Attractive conservation area signs, incorporating the 20mph speed limit and weight and length restrictions, at road entrances to the Hills
- >Protection of fences and hedges and restrictions on materials such as pvc doors, windows and weatherboarding on road frontages to extend to all three areas
- >Signs, street furniture and road markings to be brought up to conservation area standards.
- >The three Conservation areas to be joined up and extended to include the almshouses and allotments adjacent to Stony Path.
- >Frequency of grass cutting on triangular greens, emptying of litter bins and maintenance of trees and hedges to be reviewed
- >Consideration to be given to controlling abuse and misuse of forest land adjoining three areas.

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Hills Watch *Hello, my name is Nicola McKirdy and I am Lead Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and Street Co-ordinator for Queens Road. We are very fortunate to have low crime rates in our area and I very much want to help us continue to be safe. Do come along to the Gardeners Arms on 19 May and let me know of any concerns you may have about security in the area. But in the mean time, here are a few items that I wanted to share with you on the Hills Watch scheme.*

Resident acts as house is broken into: a resident writes

JH writes: "Disturbingly our neighbour's house was broken into yesterday around 15.30. They were away but my immediate neighbour heard their alarm going and went over to investigate. He witnessed a car speeding off and managed to note part of the number plate. The owners are now back and the police have been round to investigate. As immediate neighbours **we are all going to draw up a list of mobile numbers, email addresses** etc along with **keeping the local police number to hand**. Thank goodness the police number was listed in the newsletter. Thank you Hills Amenity Society! I have a strong feeling that as an area we could now be targeted for a while. Please all be extra vigilant."

York Hill is theft target

There have been a number of thefts recently from houses and gardens in York Hill. Loughton Police have asked local residents to be particularly vigilant about securing their houses and looking after their personal belongings at this time. Please put the Neighbourhood Watch principles into action and keep an eye on your neighbours' homes, gardens and cars and make others aware of the recent activities. If you see any suspicious characters or behaviour in the Hills area, please contact Loughton Police on the usual number: 01279 641212

Neighbourhood Watch Signs for the Hills Area

Hills Watch has submitted an application to the Safer Communities Partnership to have Neighbourhood Watch street signs erected in each street in the Conservation area. This will not only make our scheme more visible and official, but may help to reduce home insurance bills. However no action will be taken until a decision is taken on new Conservation Area signage.

Free Property Marking Kits

We have Property Marking Kits to give to our residents (UV "invisible" pen to mark-up valuables; all weather warning labels; property record card). Contact Nicola McKirdy or pick one up at the Open Forum on Wednesday 19 May.

Get Involved - Become a Coordinator

If you would like to help keep your road safe please contact Nicola McKirdy; 7 Queens Road, IG10 1RR; 0208 418 0193 or email hillswatch@hotmail.co.uk

Neighbourhood Police Contacts

- PC Jon Hounslow 07968 354 021
 - PC Tom Hardingham (Wildlife Crime Officer) 0300 333 4444 (ext.28835)
 - Essex Police (non-emergency) 0300 333 4444
 - Loughton Police direct line 01279 641212
 Non emergency issues in the Loughton area - 0300 333 4444
 Wildlife Crime Officer : PC Tom Hardingham - 0300 333 4444 (ext. 28835)
 Emergency issues should still be reported via 999

Gardeners Arms

York Hill, Loughton Tel: 020 8508 1655

The Gardeners Arms offers the exceptional character of a traditional Old English pub. Situated in the heart of the conservation area in Loughton it occupies one of the most elevated positions in the area with far reaching views of Canary Wharf and on to London and beyond. You will not be disappointed when you visit us for one of our excellent home cooked dishes along with one of our Real Ales or fine wines.



MAY

Sun 2nd

Traditional Sunday Lunch—Two courses £14.90

Two sittings—12.30 and 14.30

Mon 3rd

BANK HOLIDAY—Anyone for Pimms? We will be serving lunch on our terrace 12noon to 3pm (weather permitting)

Weds 5th

Curry Night—One of our delicious curries served with rice, poppadoms and mango chutney—£9.90

Weds 12th

Paella Night—Traditional Spanish Paella with fresh squid, prawns, mussels and chicken, with a glass of Sangria—£11.

Weds 19th

Grill Night - choice of prime Scottish Steak or New Season Lamb Chops served with frites, mushrooms and tomatoes. Price according to market prices.

Weds 26th

Mussel Night—mussels cooked in a white wine, cream and garlic sauce, chilli and coriander or plain. Served with frites and mayonnaise—£10.90

Mon 31st

BANK HOLIDAY— we will be serving lunch on our terrace 12noon-3pm (weather permitting)

Sat 5th June

Live entertainment

Evening meals are just £9.90 per person (unless otherwise stated) and [accompanied by a glass of house wine or half a pint of beer on the house](#). Served between 6pm and 9pm. Alternative meals always available.

All our fish is fresh and of the finest quality, sourced locally from KC Fisheries

'HAPPY HOUR' 1st - 31st MAY

Monday to Thursday only 3pm-8pm (Bank Holidays not included)

Function Room available to hire for all occasions.

Hills property update



York Hill: (left) 3 Beds, 1 bath, en suite, Reception. Grade II, parking Views towards London. Located within conservation area at the top of York Hill.

£525,000



Baldwins Hill:

(above) Three bedroom detached house for sale at £1,200,000 with study, games room and swimming pool.



Forest Way: (above left) 1 bedroom terraced weather boarded cottage. Dressing room and en suite. Grade II.



York Hill: 3 bedroom detached character property dating back to the 1800's, three reception rooms, two bathrooms, balcony, landscaped gardens, panoramic views over London and off street parking. £750,000

Forest Way: 3 bedroom cottage. Two reception rooms plus kitchen/breakfast room. £330,000.

Forest Way: 3 Bedroom Detached Family Home with additional accommodation in converted stables.



Lounge, dining room, kitchen, study, further reception room, shower room, garage and off-street parking. Extensive views over London, secluded.

House selling prices

41, Queens Road, leasehold flat, £278,500, 25 Jan.

17 St Johns Road, detached freehold, £745,000. 7 Dec.

59 Staples Road, semi-detached, freehold. £418,000. 4 Dec.

York House, 18b York Hill, detached freehold, £450,000. 1 Dec.

12 Forest Way; detached freehold; £449,000. 27 Nov.

80 Queens Road, detached freehold. £50,000(?) 5 Oct.

10 Pump Hill; detached freehold £375,000. 5 October.

8 Wroths Path; detached freehold; £230,000, 18 September.

20 Wellfields, semi-detached freehold. £660,000; 17 Sep

10 Shaftesbury, freehold terraced; £362,000. 30 July.

Forest Way focus for activity

—from the Hills Committee notes

A glance at the properties for sale, properties sold and planning applications shows Forest Way—the steep and narrow road up to the Forest from the bottom of York Hill—as a positive ‘hotbed’ of activity. Applications in the last six months have included:

Forest Way: no. 30 application to install solar panels (8/4/10); **no. 1:** permission granted to erect two storey side extension with basement store and complete removal of hedge; **no.30** application for garden shed approved as lawful;

York Hill: no. 21 permission refused to remove wood paling fence and replace with iron railings. **No. 75** permission granted for tree work; **Zizzi Restaurant** permission granted to fell 3 Leylandii.

Steeds Way: Loughton Lodge

Replace double wooden gates with open metal railing gates, replace wire fence with wooden fencing, plus alterations to front garden (8/04/10); **The Lindy House** Permission granted for first floor side extension, ground floor front extension and enlargement of first floor decked area. Permission granted to fell a pear tree;

Woodbury Hill: Woodbury Hollow demolish concrete panel single garage and replace with timber framed horizontal boarded garage and garden store; **no 1** permission to lop overhanging branches and crown reduction; **Mulberry** permission granted for tree work;

Queens Road: no 34 application

for approval of repainting/finishing for external office fronting York Hill, subject of retrospective approval; **no 53** permission sought to build rear extension (6/4/10); **no 7** approval to site external broadband cabinet; **no 15** permission with conditions granted for conservatory; **no 26** permission refused for first floor rear extension; **no 19** permission granted for rear dormer to loft;

Baldwins Hill: No 5 Application to demolish side garage and build side extension with integral garage (12/04/10); **no. 16 and no.55** permission granted for tree work;

Wroths Path: no 24 permission granted to fell two trees;

Whitaker's Way: Woodcroft School permission granted for tree work.

Time for co-operation to action Appraisals

- open letter to County, District and Town Councils from the Hills

To: *Epping Forest District Council: Chairman; Chief Executive; Chairman, Planning and Conservation*

Essex County Council: Chairman, Heritage Committee, County Councillor Simon Walsh

Loughton Town Council: Town Clerk

April 2010

Character appraisals for Staples Road, York Hill and Baldwins Hill Conservation Areas, Loughton <http://www.hillsamenityociety.co.uk/detail/character-appraisal.htm>

The Hills Amenity Society is the organisation representing the interests of the three Loughton conservation areas of Staples Road, York Hill and Baldwins Hill. We are writing to you as the three tiers of local government with responsibilities for our conservation areas urging you to work together to implement the recommendations of two years of voluntary effort to ensure the future of our beautiful forest-edge area – one of the few remaining treasures of Loughton.

We are now extremely concerned that, some six months after handing over the work to EFDC, apparently no further progress is being made because of “lack of funds to employ an assistant to complete the work”.

The urgency is evident on a daily basis and highlighted by any number of examples of erosion:

A locally listed building has been demolished and granted retrospective permission; development has over-stepped permission and received retrospective permission; huge vehicles enter our narrow lanes with heavy loads and demolish hedges, verges, kerbs, bollards and the roads themselves; we regularly see unfortunate development and use of unsuitable materials for windows and doors carried out without permission; vehicles use narrow roads with no pavements at far too great speeds; street furniture unsuited to a conservation area is installed without local consultation .

We believe there are some simple and inexpensive remedies to many of these enduring problems with just a little attention to their solution and some much needed co-operation between the various tiers of local government involved. The three appraisals recommend a management plan which includes:

> **The three conservation areas to be joined up as one and extended** to include the Stony Path almshouses and adjoining allotments, removing confusion over what is in and what is outside the conservation areas.

> **Clear and attractive “heritage” signposting at the five road entrances** declaring the conservation

area status, limiting speed on all roads within the boundaries to 20mph and imposing strict weight and length restrictions. This would send a clear signal to residents and to visitors that they were entering and/or living in a conservation area. The signs would remove any excuse by residents or contractors when ordering deliveries or carrying out major works

> **Restrictions on unsuitable alterations to properties and boundaries:** We would like the Article Four Direction applying in Staples Road to be extended to the whole of the joined up and extended conservation area. Although much unsuitable work has been carried out we believe strongly that applying the Article Four Direction over the whole area would encourage re-instatement of key features over time.

> **Trees, hedgerows, greens:** we would like more attention paid to the maintenance and due care of our signature greens, hedgerows lining the lanes and landmark trees.

> **Street furniture:** although the major part of the work in installing suitable lampposts, benches, bins, bollards and streets signs has already been done and is in reasonable state of repair there are some glaring examples of unsuitable and battered bollards (thanks to heavy vehicles) and unsuitable street furniture. We would like consultation and a programme of replacement as funds permit.

> **Road surfaces:** many road surfaces were replaced last year and are in good repair – others (such as Woodbury Hill) are not. When major development is completed it would be good to see other surfaces repaired and brought back to standard.

We hope you will agree that the proposals contained in the management plan put forward by Hills Amenity Society are reasonable, constructive and, above all, in the main not requiring significant expenditure.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Fisher
Chairman
Hills Amenity Society

Have your say

Email hills.amenity@googlemail.com , write to Ian Locks, Chairman, Hills Appraisal Working Group, 2 Potters Close, Loughton, IG10 Phone: 07710099343

Solar panels: yes or no?

Talking points

A resident of Forest Way has applied for permission to install solar panels (the illustration on the right is exactly that: for illustration purposes only). Which raises the question of how the Hills Amenity Society should react to an application of this kind and, more importantly, whether the District Council will approve the application. On the one hand this (and windmills of course) are “bang on the button” for environmentalist thinking. On the other both will potentially have a significant impact on properties in the Conservation Area and the area itself. Should they be permitted as a necessity of the age? Or may be just not visible from road frontages? What do you think?



Email your views to hills.amenity@googlemail.com or write to The Editor, 2 Potters Close, Loughton, IG10 1JQ

Metal railings: nice wicket!

Sharp eyed readers will have spotted on Page 3 that the owner of 21 York Hill was refused permission to install iron railings in place of the wicket fence in front of this locally listed property. Instead they have installed a very smart wooden wicket fence: Thank you and well done owners of no. 21! We await the outcome of a similar application by Loughton Lodge, Steeds Way.



Revamped—but what about approval?

The recent revamp at The Wheatsheaf public house, while undoubtedly welcomed for its smarter appearance, has introduced brighter lights and an extended smoking area which have a significant impact at “the gateway to the Hills Conservation Areas”. An examination of recent planning permissions failed to reveal any application and inquiries continue.



Walking and cycling route through the Hills?

Community initiative funding has been obtained to research a scheme to designate the forest edge along Baldwins Hill to Warren Hill a quiet route for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders.

Hills Committee first raised the idea ten years ago when it was hoped the scheme would reinforce the case for speed limits and a reduction in through-traffic in the Conservation Areas but it was rejected by the district council. The idea has now been dusted off following the offer of Community Initiatives funding.

Explained County Councillor Chris Pond: “This is partly because it chimes in with the Epping Forest Conservators and County Council—nothing to do with the District — strategy to encourage access to the forest on foot and by bike, and to get mountain bikers away from the more sensitive parts of the forest.

“The practical effects of this will be that some blue signage appears—eight blue signs appear between Warren Hill and Baldwins Hill—indicating the quiet route for cyclists which of course would also cut out the town centre.

“There will also be signs directing cyclists into the forest at Clay Path, Warren Hill and Lincoln’s Lane. So this will be a Hills ‘better late than never’ one!”

Added Chris Pond: “It should help the campaign to get a 20mph speed limit throughout the forest-edge roads. We are also trying to get the sign near The Gardeners’ Arms to be made less obtrusive.”

Parking all for Action!

The Royal National Institute of Blind People has run a successful campaign with Essex Police and the local authorities to stop cars parking on pavements in some areas in Essex. Such is the success of this campaign for the organisations involved and for the pedestrians, more schemes may be rolled out across Essex. So if you would like to be involved in a similar Campaign please register your interest with Nicola McKirdy, our Neighbourhood Watch Officer..... nicolabliss@hotmail.com.

Hills Amenity Society



Working to enhance and protect the Conservation Areas of York Hill, Staples Road and Baldwins Hill

Comment

So after all that hard work to develop Character Appraisals for the three Conservation Areas the reports have now sat in the Council Offices in Epping for six months with no sign of progress. Do have a look at the reports for Staples Road, York Hill and Baldwins Hill on line at <http://www.hillsamenitysociety.co.uk/detail/character-appraisal.htm>—or you can view a hard copy by contacting the Editor. We really do want to know your views and whether there are any errors or omissions in our drafts. But for the District Council to do nothing for so long is inexcusable. We hope you approve our efforts lobbying for action.

Good yoke?

You have to laugh. There he was, a member of the Hills Committee in his smart pinstripe just off to work when he was called over to help catch a chicken that had taken up residence on what is now the vacant building plot (it was once gardens) at the top of Pump Hill. Though not used to “living in t’country” our redoubtable colleague caught the chicken, returned it to its owner and went off for his train. All part of the service.....

Contact any committee member or email the Editor: hills.amenity@googlemail.com Tel: 0208 502 3998

On parking, ponds, clamping ...and the garden trophy



Parking mayhem

Mary Purves of Baldwins Hill writes:

I have just been reading the latest HAS Newsletter which I have found most interesting. I fully support the idea of a 20mph speed limit—but regarding parking in Baldwins Hill I do not have off-street parking and if we didn't partially park on the pavement, it would be almost impossible for traffic to get through: emergency vehicles, council recycling collection vehicles, delivery vans, mini buses that transport the handicapped children to the school. I do understand that it is difficult for mothers with buggies and for that I am sorry. I do not know what the answer is but just wanted to put a different point of view.

Staples Road pond...

...was cleaned by the Environment agency which, despite the worries of some local residents over delays, did NOT run out of money.



No hiding place



This untaxed vehicle was clamped just off York Hill in what the owner presumably hoped was a quiet spot—though evidently not beyond the DVLA's long arm.

Keep off the grass



...but the forest staff were too late to save the York Hill footpath: School Green will recover in time.

Front gardens...will be judged in May rather than April because of the cold start to the year.

Hills Amenity Society Committee

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Parag Shah

Hills Amenity Society
AGM and Open Forum

Wednesday

19 May 2010

Gardeners Arms, York Hill

Subscriptions for 2010 now due

Membership of The Hills Amenity Society costs just £4 per household a year payable to The Treasurer, 5 Woodbury Hill, Loughton. New members always welcome. We are all volunteers!



Join up now

Hills Amenity Society