



# Newsletter

<http://www.intsl.com/hills>

Summer 2005

**In this issue**

**Chairman's report to annual general meeting**

**See Page 2**

??

**Hills Amenity Society**

AUTUMN LUNCH

Saturday 22 October

Venue to be advised

12.30-2.30

£4 Pay at the door

**Hills Amenity Society**

**Quiz Night**

Saturday 17 September

Tickets £8 from Mathew Geyman

07970 610002

**And more inside...**

*Just a little thought for the neighbours...* 2

*Chairman's annual report* 2

*Planning Update* 3

*Objections to longer hours at Foresters* 3

*Letter to the Editor on Therapy Centre* 4

*St. Mary's deserves better than this* 4

*The amazing Lester sisters of Baldwins Hill* 5

## Support for Hills 'Watch' plan

Two people have been arrested, charged and convicted following the spate of crime in Baldwins Hill, York Hill and Staples Road which was the major talking point at the Hills annual meeting on 27 April. Some 50 residents attended the meeting at the

Gardeners Arms in York Hill and aired their views on a wide range of topics. Planning applications as always provided a major point of focus. Chairman Peter Smith gave his annual report (See Page 2). But it was

the spate of crime, from a mugging at the top end of York Hill, to broken windows and scratched paint work on parked cars that caused the greatest ire for most residents.



Essex police have been invited to provide a speaker at an open meeting on 23 September to consider the benefits of a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme—a project which at the very least would enable householders legitimately to claim cheaper house insurance...

### Just one Great Hills White Elephant...?



Several planning applications, a public inquiry, much unhappiness, sporadic activity.....and then nothing...for months and months. See Page 3.

## Hills Open Meeting

As agreed at the Hills annual meeting an open meeting will be held to discuss the setting up of

### A Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

To crack down on vandalism and crime

Provisional date and venue: Friday 23 September

Gardeners' Arms at 7.30 pm

Guest speaker will be a senior representative from Essex Police

## Don't you just love it...?

There you are, just settling down for a barbecue on one of the few nights warm enough to sit outside when...whoof, up goes the bonfire next door and smoke engulfs the whole road within minutes?

Or you are enjoying sitting outside and the amplified music from 10 doors away starts up to make life unacceptable...

Or the uncut leylandii hedge which blots out your view or crowds in upon you finally gets beyond the point where it is just a talking point.

Or the garden machinery which starts up at 8.00am on a Sunday morning when you are trying to have a lie-in...



**You are just sitting down to your barbecue when the bonfire starts up. This Sunday night special was in Queens Road...**

Remember that there are now many more opportunities to limit unreasonable and unacceptable behaviour, noise and smells through the environment department of the District Council or the Police. In the more extreme cases, anti social behaviour orders (ASBOs) are available. And pretty effective they have been, too, in many cases. But just a little thought can avoid a whole lot of trouble...

## Hills agm well attended at The Gardeners' Arms

Speaking at the annual meeting of the Hills Amenity Society the chairman, Peter Smith, said the Committee met on 10 occasions over the last year, but that there were many additional meetings and telephone calls that had taken place amongst the members. One of the most important roles of the Committee is to monitor planning applications and every Monday morning, Brenda Harris, the Planning Officer, reviews the planning lists, including applications for the whole of Loughton (not just the Hills area). The majority require no action and the committee only object where there is strong feeling.

The Chairman reported that the Spring Newsletter along with the agenda and notice of subscriptions is circulated to all within the conservation area and periphery sites, such as St Johns Road, but that the Summer, Autumn and Spring Newsletters are only distributed to members in a bid to keep the costs down.

The Chairman stated that he was still disappointed with the uptake of subscriptions, especially among residents in Baldwins Hill and Staples Road. He commented that we only have about 5/6 members in

*"Preservation of trees is one of the biggest issues for us to content with" - Peter Smith, Chairman*

Staples Road and no one appeared to be at the AGM from this area. Peter warned that it would not take much for some areas to lose their conservation status.

**Tree Preservations:** The Chairman reported that one of the biggest problems the Hills have to fight is with regard to the preservation of trees and hedgerows. To this end, the Hills have worked with EFDC and Chris Nielan to issue a letter to 650 residents reminding them of their obligations. This will be distributed shortly.  
**Latest Planning Applications: The chairman updated members on a number of planning applications, reported elsewhere is this newsletter.**

**Carol Singing** The Hills raised £122 carol singing last Christmas in the Baldwin Hill area for the Children's Hospice, Haven House. The Chairman reminded residents that all donations would be welcome.

**New Notice Board:** The Chairman thanked residents bordering Potters Close for restoring the notice board.

**Mugging in Alleyway York Hill/Baldwins Hill:** The Chairman reported that a member of the Hills who lives in Wroths Path was attacked earlier this year and one of the concerns expressed was regarding the overgrown hedgerows. The Hills have contacted the local authority to have these cut and to have a dead oak tree removed.

**Baldwins Hill Parking:** The Highways Authority has promised they would monitor the situation but parking on pavements is not illegal. The Hills will continue to monitor the situation and campaign for regular patrols.

A resident at the meeting raised the issue of the danger of cars parking at the corner of Whitakers Way. The Chairman agreed that he would write to the Highways Officer to add the Hills support to the residents' campaign to have the chevrons re-instated.

**Autumn Lunch 2004:**

A profit was made of £15.23.

The Treasurer, Amanda Gotham, circulated the receipts and payments account for the year ending 31 March 2005. Subscriptions received were £955 - a record year due to an increase in the subs to £4 and around 30 new members, which the Hills welcomed. The main items of expenditure related to the distribution of newsletters, the AGM expenses, council planning fees and insurance. The bank and cash balance at the year-end totalled £1,826.86. The Treasurer thanked John Meyer for auditing the accounts.

## Hills committee supports objections to longer hours at The Foresters



Hills Committee is supporting objections from a local resident to an application by Punch Taverns, owners of The Foresters Public House, for longer opening hours under the Licensing Act 2003. In the words of one objecting resident: "This already extended public house stands in close proximity to its neighbours in what would otherwise be a quiet, picturesque residential district, now formally designated Baldwins Hill Conservation Area."

The letter points out that the pub has no adequate parking for customers and no off-street provision for delivery lorries.

High levels of traffic in the area, nose to tail parking, obstruction to the footpath and road, "rubbish, disturbance, noise, car theft, vandalism and mugging" are highlighted by the resident in his letter to Epping Forest District Council.

He argues that any extension to hours can only exacerbate the problems while live entertainment is something to which residents have objected on a number of occasions as "entirely inappropriate to the area."

Residents wishing to object to the proposal should write to Epping Forest District Council.

## Crying Cockles and mussels.....

Cockles and mussels have come to York Hill, despite objections by residents to plans by the Wheatsheaf's owners to site a stall in the gardens opposite the pub. The revised siting, within the site of the pub buildings, apparently needs no separate permission and, we are told, is popular with the Wheatsheaf's customers.



## Planning Update...



**Tesco Express** has applied to convert the shop on the site of the Church Hill filling station into a Tesco Express. The owners and customers of the Englands Lane sub post-office and general stores, which were recently revamped, have objected.

**42 Baldwin's Hill** – Permission has been applied for a substantial development, which includes removal of several trees. The Hills have written to EFDC to object and spoken to the planning Department about the trees.

**11 Woodbury Hill**—The Council is monitoring the building to ensure plans are followed after complaints of "stretching". The corrugated "sky roof" towering over adjoining properties has been in place since the autumn and no more work has been done for months.

**Marie's Path**—the right of way between the lower end of Queens Road and Church Hill, still has provisional footpath signs in place. Permanent signs are expected shortly.

**13 Pump Hill**—Work is ongoing to lower the floor level and raise slightly the height of the roof to create a two storey building from the former bungalow. Dormer windows have been inserted in line with the application.

**10 Pump Hill**—The Hills Amenity Society understands that a planning application is being submitted to develop the corner plot with Queens Road. The site once formed part of the garden with the adjoining property but has been left derelict for many years.

**27-29 Staples Road** – Awaiting news from the Planning Department on the third planning application to erect a two-storied five bedroom house in rear garden of these two properties

**Pump Hill Vacant Plot** – After discussions between the architect and planning department the plans have been altered, moving the house by half a metre, removing the garage and increasing the building size. Amended plans have not been received by all those who had previously objected. A complaint has been lodged.

# Letter to the Editor

I was very upset to receive the copy of the newsletter vilifying my planning application for The Gale Centre and full of inaccuracies. The H.A.S. has contributed along with other misinformed objections to my deciding not to go ahead with my application which would have been a major improvement to the conservation area. Unfortunately mud sticks so I hope that you will give a correction the same sort of prominence that you gave your initial article and accompanying apology.

The Gale Centre is an extraordinarily ugly building originally built by Woodcroft which jars horribly with the local area. The new building would have been harmonious in design with the local area and have been sited in a better position architecturally and in terms of amenity to neighbours. The new building would have been heavily sound-proofed which would have been of great benefit to neighbours. As part of the planning application a voluntary limitation to use was proposed.

The old building would have been demolished. Stable Cottage would have had its view improved and would no longer have been dominated by The Gale Centre. I was willing to spend some £60k of my own money on this improvement. In view of the state of the current building I can delay no longer in renovating it and this means that the proposed improvements will largely be lost.

As to The Gale Centre, it is a local amenity which is currently in its 24th year of operation and which has helped many local people who are troubled or in difficulty to lead happier and more settled lives.

It has also contributed to the saving of many marriages. Never in the time I have been working there have I encountered or encouraged its use by undesirable people and indeed I would think some of my current and ex clients who themselves live in Loughton would take great exception to being so described.

Stop noisy therapy centre project in Whitakers Way lead residents

The heading and picture from our Spring 2004 edition



The majority of my clients come as individuals and therefore add only one vehicle at a time to the traffic visiting Whitakers Way. As the Centre has four parking spaces of which I use only one I cannot see this as a problem. Furthermore my Monday Night group which meets fortnightly is out of school hours. As are the occasional weekend groups which last year numbered a total of four.

As you must be aware The Gale Centre has an established use and also benefits from planning permission granted when it was constructed. The therapy conducted at the centre does not involve people shouting obscenities in the garden.

A Venue? What does this mean? Do you intend to imply I run pop concerts there? This is nonsense. Me Personally I have lived in Whitakers Way for nearly 30 years and would hardly wish to do anything to jeopardise the character and amenity of my home. I am a law abiding member of the community who conducts my life and business with due regard to

**In the Spring 2004 edition of the newsletter we quoted from the Hills Committee's letter in support of local objections to plans to build a new therapy centre in the grounds of Stable Cottage in Whitakers Way, off Baldwins Hill. The letter stated that "this area already suffers major parking congestion and noise pollution, both of which are excessive in a residential area". We quoted examples given by residents as the reasons they gave the Society for opposing plans to the building of a therapy centre. There are, of course, two sides to every application and we are happy to publish the views of Mr Derek Gale, the applicant, who does not intend now to carry out the development.**

my neighbours and the environment and I take exception to imputations to the contrary. I am a Member of The United Kingdom Council of Psychotherapists and The Health Professions Council and a State Registered Therapist. All of these require a high level of professional competence and professional and personal integrity and honesty.

The Hills Amenity Society in my view has a function and an important one, but a scatter gun approach to conservation and especially an ill informed one merely serves to alienate the very people we should be befriending. If the H.A.S. is to be a serious force for good in the area it should be attempting dialogue and building bridges not sniping from the side lines.

Derek Gale

## St Mary's deserves better than this...



Hills Committee has supported objections to develop St Mary's Church, Loughton on grounds of damage to the Listed Building and aesthetics. The lower part of the front wall would be demolished, a lean-to passage would be built in front of the church leading to a glass and steel double storey pod-shaped hall to the north of the church. Work would also include levelling of the interior, removal of all pews and most fittings, demolition of the church hall for a car park and removal of trees.

## Tile shop lighting refused permission



Epping Forest District Council has refused permission for an illuminated sign to front the shop at the York Hill-Queens Road-Staples Road junction. The owners were given eight weeks to appeal.

They could, of course, simply remove the light....



*The landmark property earmarked as a new flat block.*

Plans to demolish another landmark building and erect a block of 11 flats adjoining the cricket field at 1 Church Hill, have been refused. The plans were opposed by the Hills Amenity Society committee. The character-full house is currently a Montessori Nurs-

# Comment

Boring The Hills are not. Just another dormitory area they are not, either.

Because of their long history the Hills Conservation Areas are a fascinating mix and variety of residential, business and entertainment and relaxation. We are graced with no fewer than three feature public houses in our couple of square miles

Boring the Hills are not—but fraught? A bit, perhaps. Over the years this newsletter chronicles frustrations of many kinds which bubble underneath the apparently tranquil exterior. Frustrations with inconsiderate neighbours—whether business or residential—being prime among these.

But would we not much rather have things this way? Isn't this why we moved here in the first place—because it is such a fascinating little area? Never boring—and well-worth looking after.

*Second in a new series featuring Hills celebs by Jane Bowen*

## The peace campaigners...



*Doris and Muriel Lester—great peace campaigners*

A blue plaque on the wall of 47 Baldwins Hill commemorates Muriel Lester (1882-1968) and her sister Doris who were peace campaigners and philanthropists. Daughters of a wealthy Loughton family, they worked among the poor of East London, campaigned for pacifist causes and travelled widely. Labour Prime Minister Clement Attlee, Mahatma Gandhi and the actress Dame Sybil Thorndike were among the notable visitors to their Baldwins Hill home. In 1934, Muriel Lester accompanied Mahatma Gandhi on his tour of earthquake-shaken regions in Bihar on his anti-untouchability tour.



Picture by courtesy of Kingsley Hall [Kingsleyall.freeuk.com/kingsleyhall.htm](http://Kingsleyall.freeuk.com/kingsleyhall.htm)

# The best £4 you will spend this year!

Throughout the year the Hills Amenity Society works to protect the very special environment in which we live—The Hills Conservation areas of Loughton. The Society undertakes a number of functions and services including:

- review of local planning applications
- publication of this newsletter
- AGM with talks by guest speakers
- summer gardens competition
- an informal Autumn lunch
- carol singing for charity

It has also published a [Discovery Trail](#) of the area and initiated a number of environmental improvements, including the replacement of the concrete lampposts, the installation of wooden bollards to protect the greens from vehicle damage, the renovation of the Pump Hill pump, as well as undertaking projects to

### Tell us what you think

The Hills Amenity Society would like to know what you think about the area in which you live, what are the things you would most like to change—and how you believe The Hills Amenity Society might help. Also, would you be prepared to lend a hand?

<p>Is the environment of The Hills:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Improving</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> About the same</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Getting worse</p>	<p>Do you feel the Hills Amenity Society</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Gets it about right</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Could do more</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not sure</p>	<p>Comments:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>
<p>Are you aware of the of The Hills Amenity Society</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fully aware</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Just about aware</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not previously aware</p>	<p>Would you be prepared to lend a hand</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Delivering newsletters</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Attending events</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> On the Committee</p>	

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### HILLS AMENITY SOCIETY

Chairman: Peter Smith  
72 Queens Road  
Loughton  
Essex IG10 1RS

Phone: 020 8508 7000  
Fax: 020 8508 7000  
Email: [peteresmithloughton@btinternet.com](mailto:peteresmithloughton@btinternet.com)

## HILLS AMENITY SOCIETY

Chairman: Peter Smith  
72 Queens Road  
Loughton  
Essex IG10 1RS

Phone: 020 8508 7000  
Fax: 020 8508 7000  
Email: peteresmithloughton@btinternet.com



*Working to protect and enhance the  
Conservation Areas in which we live*



*A (briefly) sunny Sunday morning view from the heart of the Hills over to Canary Wharf, obscured in the mist.*

Now over 30 years old, the Hills Amenity Society, which is affiliated to the Civic Trust, was formed in 1972 as a result of the interest shown by local residents in their environment. Its aims are to preserve, protect, develop and improve features of both historic and public interest, and to promote higher standards of planning and design, in keeping with existing amenities and the rural character of the area. The Hills' unique blend of building styles and materials, set in narrow lanes hedged with hawthorn and holly, and enjoying spectacular views across the Thames valley to the Kent hills, was further recognised in 1977 when Epping Forest District Council created the York Hill conservation area.

## The Hills Committee

**Peter Smith**, Chairman, 72  
Queens Road, 8508 7000; email:

[Peteresmithloughton@btinternet.com](mailto:Peteresmithloughton@btinternet.com);

**Amanda Gotham**, Treasurer, 5  
Staples Road, 8508  
1153; [amanda.gotham@phonecoop.coop](mailto:amanda.gotham@phonecoop.coop)

**Brenda Harris**, Planning;

**Valerie Locks**, Newsletter, 2 Pot-  
ters Close, 8502 3998; email: [Valerie.locks@ppa.co.uk](mailto:Valerie.locks@ppa.co.uk)

**Peter Wynn**, 37 Woodbury Hill,  
8508 4873; E mail: [Peteand-suewynn@btinternet.com](mailto:Peteand-suewynn@btinternet.com);

**Jane Bowen**, 91 York Hill, 8508  
9689;

**Peter Tidmarsh**, vice-chairman,  
111 York Hill, 8502 2370; E mail:  
[Petetid@yahoo.com](mailto:Petetid@yahoo.com);

**Toby Scrutton**, 4 Queens Road,

07957 424233;

**Matthew Geyman**, 22 Pump Hill  
07970 610002 email: [mattgeyman@hotmail.com](mailto:mattgeyman@hotmail.com)

**Carol Francis**, 14 The Summit,  
Loughton, Essex IG10 1SW 8502  
0398

**Lisa Godsalve**, 21 York Crescent,  
Loughton, Essex IG10 1RW 8508  
2363 e-mail: [lisagodsalve@rnib.org.uk](mailto:lisagodsalve@rnib.org.uk)

**Juliette Harvey**, 15 Woodberry  
Hill

We thank Alison Middleton and her husband Steve for all their help with the newsletter and wish them the very best as they expect an addition to their family and a move to a new home.

## Dates for your diary

**Saturday 17 September.** Hills Quiz night. Tickets £8 including supper from Matthew Geyman 07970 610002

**Friday 23 September (Provisional date)** Public meeting to consider establishment of neighbourhood watch scheme at The Gardeners Arms.

**Saturday 22 October** Autumn lunch. Venue to be arranged. Tickets £4 per head at the door.

**Saturday 17 December** Christmas Carols: Meet at the Gardeners Arms at 5.30pm

Subscriptions are now due for 2005—new members welcome

*Membership of The Hills Amenity Society costs just £4 a year. Subscriptions are now due. If you have not already done so, please pay promptly. New members always welcome.*



Join up now

Hills Amenity Society