

Hills
Amenity Society

Newsletter

www.hillsamenitysociety.co.uk

Email: info@hillsamenitysociety.co.uk

Spring 2007

Thanks for the colour...

The Hills newsletter is brought to you in colour thanks to a trial arrangement with property agents Bairstow Eves who will print and distribute it to 500 homes. They share with Hills Amenity Society a vested interest in the Conservation Areas being seen as a desirable place to live.

And more inside...

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Little Cornwall—that's us: official

Key "Little Cornwall" into any good search engine and up comes the Hills on internet encyclopaedia Wikipedia. The name was coined by author Ruth Rendal of mysteries fame who was educated at Loughton County High School and admired the Arts and Crafts houses, Victorian homes, narrow lanes and holly hedges that characterise what are now the three conservation areas. *Picture: York Hill*



'Come and meet us' call to council planning chief

Following some "strange" decisions by the District Council, Hills Amenity Society committee has written requesting a meeting with John Preston, the Planning and Economic Development chief. The committee's concern is that "very soon there would be nothing left to conserve". "Hedge to hedge development" on every plot was leading to a rapid

"de-greening" and the loss of increasing numbers of the original properties that led to the granting of Conservation status. The Committee said it recognised that it was not its role "to object to everything" but to monitor the aims of the conservation area which were to ensure that development enhanced rather than detracted from the nature of the area.

Hills Amenity Society

Annual Meeting

Have your say.....on litter, vandalism, crime, the Neighbourhood Watch programme, planning

**Wednesday 16
May**

Gardeners' Arms, top of York Hill at 7.30 pm

Guest speaker will be Police Sergeant Cox

Bairstow Eves
COUNTRYWIDE

...for something special

hillswatch@mywebspaces.co.uk

The Loughton Hills Conservation Areas



Burglar Alarms do work – even for pet owners

In his Neighbourhood Newsletter, Tony Ellis, the Crime Reduction Officer for Epping Police has no doubt that a burglar alarm is the most effective deterrent against break-ins. Police interviews with burglars show that they will always choose to target the homes without alarms fitted as it's one less thing to worry about. Many victims of burglary are pet owners who don't realise that you can now have sensors fitted which can differentiate between a person and an animal. If you want a police fact sheet on house alarms then email hillswatch@mywebspaces.co.uk



Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator appointed for Epping Forest

Miranda Piercey has been appointed Epping Forest District Coordinator for Neighbourhood Watch. She aims to expand NHW through Epping Forest and will be liaising with Hillswatch to offer help and support in developing a workable structure.

Public houses should respect thy neighbours

Hillswatch plans to contact all pubs in the area in advance of the coming balmy evenings to ask them to clear their beer gardens in advance of the final bell. This will preserve the peace for dwellers in close proximity to pubs who are sometimes disturbed because pubs let their clientele hang around after hours.

Drug taking and dealing – not on our Watch

Do cars full of a thick haze with the windows half down come and go on your street? Does the driver make a quick getaway if you look twice at the car and the registration plate? Residents who are aware of potential drug dealing in cars near their homes are asked to take down registration plates and record times and dates so that Hillswatch can alert the police to pursue the perpetrators.

Garden statue stolen

A garden statue similar to that pictured (right) was stolen from the garden of a home near The Foresters public house on 15 March between 10pm and 4am the following morning. The statue, was large, heavy and valued at around £300. Thefts of garden furniture, tubs and ornaments are growing as more garden lovers to invest in them.



Help stop this...

An outbreak of graffiti by the reservoir outflow in Staples Road and in the surrounding area is a matter of major concern. If you see these or other types of nuisance- especially if you have any identifying evidence- please email the coordinator for your street or telephone Sue Mushtaq on 020 8502 2665 or if you witness criminal activity call the police on 01279 641212 for the Western switchboard or of course 999 in emergency.



The electronic entrance barrier to the Lanterns, off Whitakers Way has been hacked down and made useless by vandals. Please report to your coordinator if you can help with information.

The Hills Watch coordinators

Key Coordinator and York Hill, Wallers Hoppit and Potters Close: Susan Mushtaq, hillswatch@mywebspaces.co.uk 020 8502 2665
York Hill: Andrew Reid, areid@waltham.ac.uk
Staples Road: Mary Erwin, hillswatch@hotmail.co.uk 0795 154169
Steeds Way: Martyn Soul-Gray, martynsoulgray@hotmail.com 078751 32058
Baldwins Hill (Foresters to Goldings Hill)
Whitakers Way and The Lanterns Grahame Williams, grahamyra@aol.com 020 8508 6204
Baldwins Hill (up to Foresters), Ashfields and St John's Road: Norman Hall, norman.hall3@ntlworld.com 020 8281 1890
If you would like to be a coordinator for Queens Road, The Summit, Stony Path or Wroths Path, Woodbury Hill and King's Hill, Forest Way contact Susan Mushtaq, hillswatch@mywebspaces.co.uk 020 8502 2665

Hills property update

In association with  **Daisies & Coes**
COUNTRYWIDE
...for something special

Property prices have continued to be strong in the Loughton area as a whole with prices in the Conservation Area keeping ahead of the average for the town as a whole. Sales recorded are to 31 January as the latest available as we produced this newsletter.

The big news around the turn of the year was the sale of **Ash Green** in December. This imposing property at the top of Church



Road and start of Baldwins Hill was snapped up for £2,200,000.

- 75 Baldwins Hill**, detached freehold £535,000 (Oct)
- 83 Queens Road**, semi-det, freehold £458,750 (Dec)
- 79 Queens Road**, semi-det. freehold £540,000 (Nov)
- 37 Queens Road**, flat, leasehold £243,000 (Oct)
- 10 York Crescent**, flat, leasehold £185,000 (Oct)
- 16 York Crescent**, flat leasehold £155,000 (Oct)
- 45 York Hill**, detached freehold £365,000 (Nov)

...and some for sale

Attractive 1909 built two bedroom semi detached home in Wroths Path just off Baldwins Hill for sale at £325,000.



Whitakers Way: three bedroom detached in a cul de sac of just three houses, en suite to master, garage two receptions at £575,000



Staples Road: detached three bedrooms, bathroom, fitted kitchen and two reception rooms with asking price of £365,000.



Forest Way: double fronted three bedroomed cottage with a guide price of £550,000.

Planning Update...

from the Hills Committee

Woodbury House, Woodbury Hill – Plans for two single storey side extensions, side dormer window and front porch have been submitted for this six bedroom house which has the appearance of a bungalow from Woodbury Hill.



The Hills Committee viewed the plans as over development of the site.

26 Stony Path – Plans to build two new houses in the garden of 26 Stony Path have been allowed following a planning appeal. The plans were first submitted in January last year, rejected by the Council and then appealed in July.

2 Queens Road/York Hill - Retrospective permission sought to retain a garage and tool shed erected without permission on the site of one previously demolished along with a tree. Hills Committee has registered its concern that the appearance from York Hill was detrimental to the Conservation Area.

Development should enhance the Conservation Area...does this?



1 Church Hill, Montessori Nursery – The Hills Amenity Society, along with a large number of local residents, has written objecting to a third application submitted in January for demolition of existing building and erection of eight, two bedroom apartments in two blocks, with associated parking and landscaping.

Woodbury Hollow Cottages.

Woodbury Hill – Approval has been given to extend the picturesque Grade II listed cottages at the bottom of Woodbury Hollow with a two storey side extension and detached garage. Plans were first submitted – and rejected – in 1986.



5 Forest Way – Alterations to front decking, erection of front canopy and conversion of garage. It has been noted that the above proposal is retrospective planning and work has been completed. The Committee registered their concern.

10-12 Pump Hill – Permission has been refused for demolition of existing dwelling and construction of two new houses.

42 Baldwins Hill - An appeal was lodged against refusal of permission to demolish garage, erection of new garage with first floor accommodation and single storey side extension. A decision was due at the end of March.

24 The Summit - Application for reductions to the crown of a cedar tree

16 The Summit - Application to fell a pine tree



Firemen try to stop flooding of homes after Staples Road water main bursts again. Sadly Thames Water failed to stem the gusher for six hours.

Staples Road fury over six hour gusher

Residents in Staples Road are exasperated that yet again they have been flooded by a burst water main. There have been at least four major bursts in this main in the last four years. The large trunk main which runs under the road (not the smaller main running under the pavement which feeds the houses and which was recently replaced) is made of cast iron and probably Victorian in origin. It has needed replacing for years, but so far Thames Water have only patched it up. Evidently all that is required is for a plastic lining to be threaded through the pipe, but Thames Water (now owned by Australians) have not been persuaded to carry out this urgent work.

The burst (at 6am on March 1) was exacerbated – like the last time – by the fact that although the Fire Brigade attended as an emergency and did everything possible to protect residents' homes, the Thames Water official did not turn up until 7.30. He said he had come from Southend. He was then unable to turn off the water, which continued cascading for six hours. In this time, a resident of Shaftesbury had her living room flooded by the water torrents

going down the (lengthy) Staples Road gardens. At least three houses in Staples Road had the lowest levels of their property one foot under water. Residents are furious because the time taken to deal with the emergency made the problems much worse. Official complaints have been made to Thames Water by Councillors Chris and Caroline Pond and Mr and Mrs Peter Gotham of Staples Road, and an approach is being made to MP Eleanor Laing. All residents are encouraged to add their weight to increase the pressure of Thames Water to finally take the necessary remedial action.

Every time houses are flooded it costs Thames Water thousands of pounds to compensate home owners for renovation work and replacing possessions. Meanwhile the road has been left in a deplorable condition and will also need urgent repairs. All this money is added to people's water bills. And it will all happen again unless we can force Thames Water to take action.

Complaints can go to customer.feedback@thameswater.co.uk

Or to Thames Water Utilities Ltd, PO Box 436, Swindon, SN38 1TU

Talkback Did bomb maker work at Dryads' Hall?

**From Les Tucker, Archivist,
Royal Gunpowder Mills, 8
The Heights**

I was particularly interested in the mention of Sir Barnes Wallis' connection with Dryads Hall and his work on the bouncing bomb. Although the history of the bouncing bomb is fairly well known, understandably what is less well known is the critical role played by the explosive involved. Coincidentally trials and production of this explosive were conducted close to Loughton at the Royal Gunpowder Mills, Waltham Abbey at that time in conditions of secrecy. The trials building still stands and can now be seen by the public. Oswald Silberrad had previously been a Government explosives expert and it can be assumed that if Barnes Wallis visited him at Dryads Hall it would have been to discuss the explosives aspect. I would be very glad to speak to the Society

member who originated mention of the



Barnes Wallis connection to Dryads Hall. *Oswald Silberrad in his laboratory*

Les Tucker

This is a case of *mea culpa* by your editor. I have heard the story of Sir Barnes Wallis' connection with Dryads' hall many times and was guilty of unsubstantiated repetition. Can anyone help with more reliable information? Ed.

Comment

Dichotomy...

The theme of this newsletter is dichotomy. The Hills Amenity Society proclaims it exists “to preserve, protect, develop and improve features of both historic and public interest, and to promote higher standards of planning and design”. Grand ideals indeed. But at the same time your committee recognises some realities behind this: that things must change lest we see the area decay rather than being conserved; become an undesirable rather than highly desirable area in which to live; that aspirations for where we live and the homes we live in change; that saying “no” to everything will inevitably mean being ignored when we really do mean it!

Perhaps we need a new focus for the 21st Century, another meaning of “conservation”: that “change” should definitely mean “improve” or “enhance”.

Nominate ‘Upgrade of the Year’

info@hillsamenitysociety.co.uk

Hills Committee members—all residents of the Hills elected at the annual meeting—each month face the dichotomy of conservation versus “fit for the future”. In this and future editions will highlight some of the “best” and the “worst” changes taking place around us and to ask you to cast your vote to find the “Upgrade of the Year”.



Forest Way, where most properties have been upgraded, and...



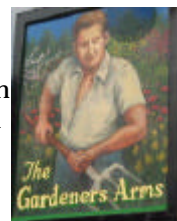
...Baldwins Hill where these bold conversions may have set a trend

Hills Committee jottings

Potholes: Your Committee noted that huge amounts of money are being spent resurfacing Church Hill, Englands Lane, Pyrls Lane and so on but that some of the roads in the Conservation Area are at (axle) breaking point. York Hill was a case in point but amazingly repaired after Hills Committee and Loughton Residents Association complained the Council.



Signs of our times: The Committee noted with approval the smartened up sign at The Gardeners and contrasted this with the rather more “spirit of the age” interpretation for the Foresters’ Arms.



Obstruction of pavements—‘Do not obstruct’ fliers to leave under windscreen wipers of offending cars can be obtained by emailing hillswatch@mywebspace.co.uk or by calling Susan Mushtaq on 020 8502 2665



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; width: 100%;"></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>	
<p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Phone _____</p>		

HILLS AMENITY SOCIETY



Contact any committee member or email info@hillsamenitysociety.co.uk



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

Find out about us at
www.hillsamenityociety.co.uk

Contact any committee member or
email info@hillsamenityociety.co.uk

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**Spring was springing briskly in February before the cold
March winds plunged us briefly back into winter. This was
a late March Sunday morning on Woodbury Hill.**

Now over 30 years old and affiliated to the Civic Trust, the Hills
Amenity Society was formed in 1972 as a result of the interest
shown by local residents in their environment. Its aims are to pre-
serve, 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. With its narrow lanes hedged with hawthorn and holly
edges and views across the Thames valley to the Kent hills, the
York Hill Conservation Area was created in 1977. Those of Staples
Road and Baldwins Hill followed. The Society works to protect the
very special environment of The Loughton Hills Conservation Ar-
eas. 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; and responsibility for the
Neighbourhood Watch programme—Hills Watch.

Parish Notices

Thank you..

...to all those who **pick up litter** in
the Hills. Allowing litter to accu-
mulate is one of the fastest ways to
encourage still more - and other
irresponsible behaviour besides.

...to **pet owners** who
clear up after their
dogs. Dog mess is the
number one hate for
many.



...to **whoever** phoned
Wm. Morrisons when
one of their **trolleys**
ended up, as this one
did, in Baldwins Hill.



Hills Amenity
Society operates
a **neighbour-
hood watch** pro-
gramme. If you
would like to play
an active part
contact **Sue Mush-
taq**, 8502 2665

sue@mywebspace.co.uk

If you wish to contact Hills
Amenity Society please do so
through any member of the
committee or email

info@hillsamenityociety.co.uk

Hills Amenity Society

Annual Meeting

Have your say.....on litter,
vandalism, crime, the
neighbourhood watch pro-
gramme, planning.....

ALL WELCOME

Wednesday 16 May

Gardeners' Arms, top of
York Hill at 7.30 pm

Guest speaker will be Police
Sergeant Cox

Subscriptions are due for 2007—new members welcome

*Membership of The Hills Amenity Society costs just £4 per house-
hold 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