



Newsletter

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

Winter 2004



We wish all the residents of The Hills seasons greetings for Christmas and the New Year.

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Carol Singing Around The Hills Saturday 18 December



Join us for carol singing in aid of charity around The Hills on Saturday 18 December between 5.30 - 6.30pm.

Meet outside the Foresters, Baldwin's Hill.

We will start the singing and collecting at The Summit, along Baldwin's Hill and ending up at the Gardener's Arms.

More pressure on The Hills

The prospect of more than 18,000 new homes in the Epping Forest District between now and 2021 is, to put it mildly, a pretty appalling prospect.

Sometimes it may feel as though there is already wall-to-wall development. Actually there are some 12,000 homes in Loughton and around 52,000 in the whole district.

An increase of a third will put a tremendous pressure all around the district—and not least on the Conserva-



tion Areas. Inside this month we report on the usual planning applications including a particularly controversial

one in what was the gardens of the Pump Hill Cottages. We suspect the pressure for more homes will just grow and grow.

No other capital has anything to touch Epping Forest

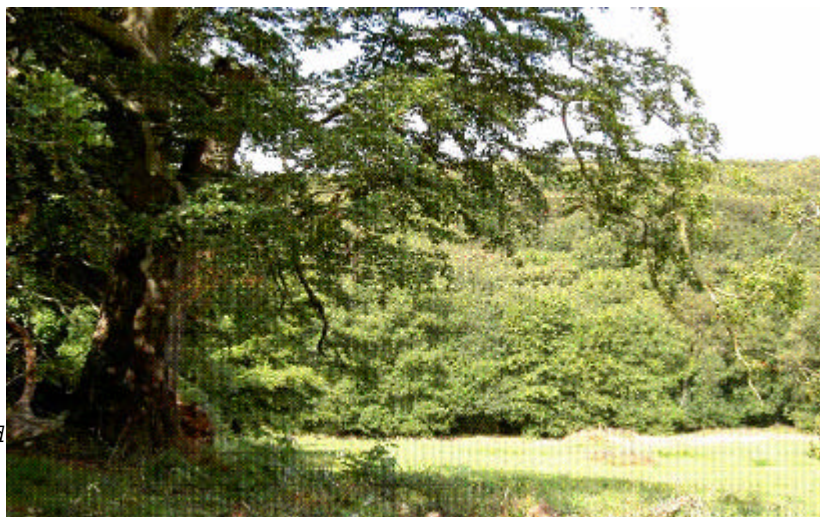
Hills Committee member Carol Francis spotted the following article in the Evening Standard under the poetic headline: Catch the Fall in Old England:

Epping Forest

The 6,000 acres of ancient woodland of Epping Forest is the largest public open space in the vicinity of London. In fact, no other capital city in the world can claim to have such an extensive area of undeveloped land near its centre. It has areas of grassland, heath, rivers, bogs and ponds, and technicolour autumn (looking particularly beautiful this year, we thought—Ed.) Misty mornings and golden leaves. And it's all of five minutes' walk from Theydon Bois (or Loughton—Ed.) station on the Central Line. At High Beech, there's a popular walkers' café or The King's Oak nearby has substantial pub food.

Whether or not the claim can be substantiated—we wondered about Helsinki or Oslo to name just two—there is no doubt that 'our' forest is one of the reasons why so many of us choose to live in the Conservation Areas. Let's hope that the forest, at least, will be preserved from the developers.

If you want to know what is going on in the forest information can be obtained from: The Epping Forest Information Centre. Email: enquiries.ef@field-studies-council.org



Epping Forest viewed from Loughton Lodge, Woodbury

Loughton doomed to be 'clone town'?

A recent study by the National Economics Foundation (NEF) concluding that most High Streets are becoming clones of each other as the big national chains move in could soon apply to Loughton.

According to the findings of a recent questionnaire by the Loughton Residents Association, many residents are already concerned about the retail mix in Loughton.

The number of restaurants is a regular topic of conversation as, with work starting on development of the new M&S food hall, is the growing number of supermarkets.

Despite this we still have a number of apparently successful surviving independent retailers, including a wonderful butcher in Church Hill (Bosworths), at least one baker, a chemist (incorporating the post office), another post office and convenience store (in Englands Lane), a couple of newsagents and now just one off-licence.

'...let's give the independents our support. They need it to survive.'



Once upon a time we all relied on the independents: don't let's lose them.....

(Picture courtesy 'Loughton in Camera' from the John Wickens Collection)

In the Hills we are also blessed with three great public houses which all try their best to provide a good service while keeping the inevitable disturbance at a minimum. It is very easy to become hooked

into supermarket living. But when the independents have gone we will all be the poorer for it.

Let's give the independents our support.....they all need it to survive.

Pump Hill plans split residents

Pump Hill residents are split on proposals to build a new house behind the cottages at 20-24 Pump Hill.

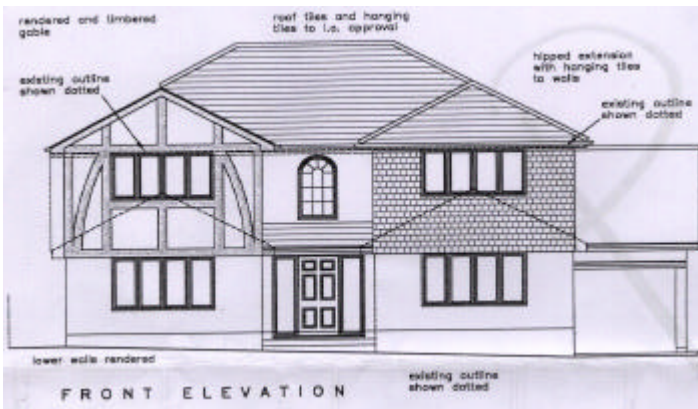
The owners of the cottages are planning to object on the grounds of loss of light from developing the land, which once formed gardens to their properties. However other Pump Hill residents are in favour of developing the site, which has long been an eyesore.

There was a lengthy discussion at the November meeting of The Hills Committee which heard there had so far been no response to an offer from one of the residents to purchase the land, with a view to reinstating it back into gardens.

It was agreed that the Hills Committee might have concerns over possible loss of light and access to road issues. The Hills Committee members present at the meeting felt that the favoured option would therefore be to reinstate the gardens to their original state as gardens. The Committee agreed to wait until the planning application comes forward before reaching any decision. Councillor Chris Pond is to be invited to the committee's next meeting.

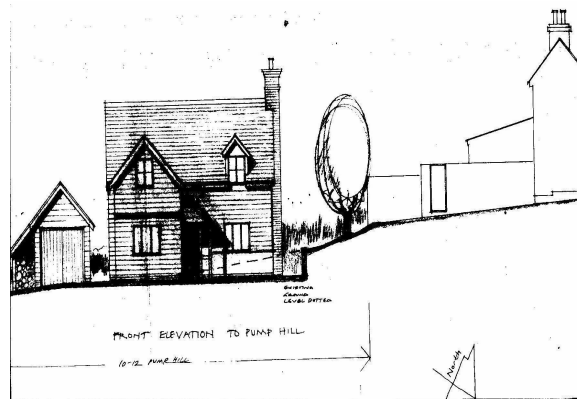


Pictured (top right) impression of proposed new house behind Pump Hill cottages and (above) looking down Pump Hill with the proposed site off to the right beside the parked car. 13 Pump Hill is below and adjacent to the visible building on the right.



13 Pump Hill—Following objections to plans to convert the bungalow at 13 Pump Hill into a five bedroom house, new plans have been submitted for a smaller dwelling (*illustrated above*). In the view of the Hills Amenity Society Committee, this is more in keeping and an acceptable compromise. A letter has been sent to the Council accepting the raising of the roof level by about one-third but stressing the need for the Council to monitor the work closely to ensure this is carried out in line with the permission granted.

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.



Planning Update...

Woodbury Hollow—Despite representations by local conservation bodies, plans for changes including an extension to the historic white house at the top of Woodbury Hollow have been approved.

Therapy Unit, Stables Cottage, Whittakers Way—outcome still awaited. Residents have objected to the noise that comes from the type of therapy offered. To date no further information has been issued by the Council.

27/29 Staples Road – Outcome of the appeal for the proposed 5-bedroom house is still awaited. Planning permission has now been turned down three times.

A letter from the Hills Society, which covers around 600 properties in and around the Conservation area, holds considerable weight with Epping Forest District Council" - chairman Peter Smith

Marie's Path—the hard-won right of way, between the lower end of Queens Road and Church Hill, still has provisional footpath signs in place.

Ash Trees at Southbank, York Hill—Despite objections the Council has given permission for the felling of three large ash trees in the garden of Southbank, York Hill.

12-30 Church Hill—Decision still awaited on 29 flats and retail shops following further consideration by Epping Forest District Council.

York Hill and Queens Road—The antique shop on this corner has now become a rather smart tiling shop. Planning application for a detached property on this site was approved several years ago but has not been acted on.

Down memory lane...



Conservation does not mean stagnation...

For this newsletter of the Hills Amenity Society, conservation inevitably is an over-riding theme. We live in a very special area—designated as such with the rare distinction of Conservation Area status.

But “conservation” does not mean “stagnation”. One of the most dramatic changes of late has been the redevelopment of Southbank in York Hill.

The original building was described 120 years ago as “a costly investment by reason of poor tenants, underpinning and drainage affairs (see *“Loughton - a hundred years ago”* by Richard Morris and Chris Pond).

The new building represents one of the largest investments in a single property in recent years with considerable effort to retain at least the original character—without the original defects.

The three views to the left from the same spot on School Green, at the bottom of York Hill, show evolution. The first (*top*) taken around 1877, the second around half a century later (*both with acknowledgements to Chigwell and Loughton—a pictorial history* by Stephen Pewsey) and the bottom photograph taken on 29 November 2004 by me (Ed.)

Try as we may we cannot stop “progress” (just look at the cars clogging the bottom picture). We can, perhaps, give ourselves and the authorities pause for sufficient thought to at least preserve something of the best features for the future.

Parish notices

Grit please: Hills Amenity Society has written to Essex County Council drawing attention to the dangers of ice in the Hills—and pressing for more attention than we have received in the last few years. The GOOD news is that the Government has toughened the responsibilities for local authorities. It remains to be seen whether ECC will do better this winter after last year's well-remembered M11 horror story.

Hills Quiz Night: plans are in hand for a quiz night to take place in the Spring.

Autumn lunch was well supported this year and even made a small profit for the Hills' funds. Many thanks to Peter Tidmarsh for opening his home for this event once again.

Please write to us if you have an issue, information or views you would like to express through the Hills newsletter. Our next edition will be in March.



Please clear it up!

Dog owners are urged to have consideration for others... Please clear it up! Thank you....

Join up now

Subscriptions are now overdue—new members welcome

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

We are all volunteers!

Thank you.....



Hills Amenity Society

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 maintain the area's hedges and footpaths.

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?

Is the environment of The Hills:

- Improving
- About the same
- Getting worse

Do you feel the Hills Amenity Society

- Gets it about right
- Could do more
- Not sure

Comments:

Are you aware of the of The Hills Amenity Society

- Fully aware
- Just about aware
- Not previously aware

Would you be prepared to lend a hand

- Delivering newsletters
- Attending events
- On the Committee

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

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Hills Amenity Society

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



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 importance of the Hills, with its unique blend of building styles and materials, set in narrow lanes hedged with hawthorn and holly, and which enjoys 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

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Carol singing



Join us for carol singing around
The Hills on Saturday

18 December between 5.30 -
6.30pm.

Meet outside the Foresters,
Baldwin's Hill.

We will start the singing and
collecting at The Summit,
along Baldwin's Hill and ending
up at the Gardener's Arms.