

LOUDWATER RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
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NEWSLETTER No 6

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Rickmansworth Crime Prevention Panel

At our AGM we mentioned that our Chairman, Mr J. L. Cognet, had been asked to join the Rickmansworth Crime Prevention Panel. Its first meeting took place in April at Rickmansworth Police Station. Since then a further meeting has been held in July. The Panel, which consists of 12 members of the community (including Mr Cognet), will meet quarterly to discuss various aspects of crime within the Police area of Rickmansworth, which includes Loudwater. The Chairman of the Panel is Superintendent Griggs of Rickmansworth Police Station, with Constable Gary Smith, who is the assistant Divisional Crime Prevention Officer, as Secretary,

One of the main objects of the Panel is to promote and harness local effort to combat our ever-increasing crime rate. To this end, Constable Smith wishes to draw attention to the facilities which the Crime Prevention Department offer to the public. These include talks, film shows, and private security surveys – all free of charge! The Police also welcome any constructive ideas on the Prevention of Crime – your suggestions will be given every consideration.

What is causing some concern is the complacency of the public towards their general security which is making the job of the criminal easier. Statistics show that 45% of all burglaries could have been avoided if the occupier had taken simple precautions to protect his property. What are these 'simple' precautions?

Remember, present day burglars do not wear masks and striped jerseys! In fact, they are so like ordinary people that nobody can remember them. The most commonplace men and women are the ones that will try your doorhandle when there is no answer to the bell – even if it is at 9 in the morning. The best defence is to make it difficult for them to get in. If it is hard to enter

a house, they will not waste their time. Have good quality locks on doors, good bolts on the windows, even an alarm system – particularly if your house is remote with secluded approaches. If burglars get in, don't invite damage by locking interior doors, wardrobes or desks. They will simply be smashed open to see what they are guarding. What the thief is after is nearly always portable – cash, jewellery, silver, cameras, colour T.V. sets, radios, sometimes clothing and occasionally antiques.

It is a good idea to make descriptions of valuable items in the house, perhaps even to have them photographed. This does not stop the item from being stolen but it does help the Police to trace stolen property.

The Crime Prevention Department at Watford Police Station has information on all types of locks and alarms which are available, and the names of approved photographers. Telephone Watford 42201.

North Orbital Road

The Department of the Environment has now intimated that they wish to change the status of the North Orbital Trunk Road (A405) into a Motorway (M25). Under the regulations for making this change, only official bodies can object and it is learnt that the Three Rivers District Council are in favour, since it will not only limit the class of traffic that can use this road but it will transfer the responsibility for maintenance of the road to the Department of the Environment. Your Committee has felt that there is little to be gained by making representations against this, although it allows, at some time in the future, for lighting to be installed at crossing points if the Secretary of State believes that this would be advantageous.

A number of residents have claimed a reduction

of rating valuation as a result of the noise from the North Orbital road and, at a recent Valuation Panel, have been granted in the region of 1½% in addition to any reduction that has been made as a result of claims viz-a-viz the noise of the construction of the road some three years ago. It is clear, however, that the Valuation Officer believes that such a concession applies only to houses adjacent to the Trout Rise / Whisperwood junction.

The A405 Co-ordination Committee [our representative, Mr P. McGregor] continues to press for the re-surfacing of the road and the Director of the Eastern Road Construction Unit has intimated that he will be able to make a reply shortly. He has, however, stated that he is not prepared to extend the acoustic fence to cover the short distance towards the earth mound which was created adjacent to Scriven House. Your Committee would like to hear if you wish them to press the matter further.

Loudwater Garage

Residents will have noticed the dislocation of services at the garage, which the Estate Board regrets. However, now that the garage has appeared in its repaired and painted new guise, the lock-up garages mended and painted and many of the unsightly dumps in the vicinity cleared up, this site need no longer be one to be ashamed of.

There has been some loss of garage space. In fact, it was only because of stout opposition by the Estate Board that the garage remains at all. The local council authority has for some time been making pressing inquiries about why and how a commercial enterprise was allowed in an area strictly zoned for residential use only and in recent years there has been considerable talk of closing down the garage, both on this ground and on the ground that its once handsome iron work and glass work was in dangerous condition.

The Estate Board made the case that the length of time the garage had been in operation had virtually sanctified its use, that it was an asset to the residents of Loudwater and that its closure would be resented. The Council eventually accepted the point but only on condition that the entire canopied area was rebuilt and to a lesser extent than before.

It is good news that the garage is to continue and not only because of its useful function. The whole block in which the garage stands is one of the older parts of Loudwater and in many corners of the block, inside and outside, can be found relics of its days as stables, ranging from the brightly coloured primitive (and inaccurately lettered) plaster plaques to hay-loft bolts and trap-doors. The site certainly has little value to the Estate commercially. Until only two or three years ago, the rent charged was only £200 p.a. and although a new lease is being negotiated it is still for a modest sum.

Our Committee

In pursuance of its wish to be as representative as possible of as many different parts of Loudwater as possible, the Committee has co-opted two new members, Mr R. Joliffe of Rooks Hill and Mr A. W. Hauck of Chess Lane.

Mr Hauck, by the way, is one of two members of the Committee who have been appointed as school governors for the next three years. Mr Hauck is to be governor of Rickmansworth Park JMI. Mr J. Jarrett has been re-appointed as a governor of William Penn School, of which he was Chairman for the last three years.

Planning

No planning applications affecting Loudwater are listed this quarter. However, felling on the Rasehill site continues. The notice of building sites on the West site of L. Lane has gone – but there is felling of some 40 trees in this piece of woodland.

Miscellaneous

Tony Williams' cricket team did not, alas, get off the ground. Some seven people gave their names. Tony will try again next year, and hope Kerry Packer doesn't hear about it.

Tony made headlines in the local paper when he became European champion of the SE Class Powerboats at Iver Heath in September. Tony holds seven British National Speedboat records and two world records.

Another resident in the news was Sir George Baker, of Overstream, who was heavily reported on marriage and divorce. Sir George, who is a senior judge, quoted with some dismay the figures for divorce, especially in young marriages, and saw little hope of the situation improving in the near future.

The Committee will be making proposals about the map boards suggested by Mrs H. Graham.

Three Rivers is re-organising its offices (again). The district secretary and chief executive's office are amalgamating at 17/23 High Street. Housing, rent collection, repairs and enquiries are going to Basing House. In February, the technical services department will move from Langley Road, Watford to Chorleywood House.

Tree-Felling

Following the erection and subsequent disappearance of notice boards announcing building plots adjacent to Glen Chess in L. Lane, some members were perturbed when they saw the arrival of tree-fellers and bulldozers on the same site and on land belonging to the owner of The Round House. The concern was particularly lively because the work that was being done was so close to the back of the Rasehill development, stretching from the Chorleywood Road down into the beginning of the valley. Various members and some of your committee have made pointed enquiries into the situation at local Council offices. We are informed that (a) by agreement the Forestry Commission is felling trees on this plot to the number of forty, the trees being those that are judged to be of poor type, dying, diseased or past maturity. The Forestry Commission guarantees to replace those trees they fell; (b) the pathway that has somewhat brutally been created from L. Lane along the existing footpath has been created in order to get space for hauling out the felled timber. There appears to be little guarantee that it will return to its original size. This may or may not be a matter of concern – those who wish to urge that it should do so should make their views felt to the Council. A stile will be erected and a gate in any case; (c) there is still no permission or application to build any house in the wood, the nearest being those in the Rasehill development.

The Editor is grateful to residents in Glen Close and elsewhere who have made enquiries about this matter. It is a typical case of a situation outside Loudwater proper that affects us all.

Members

We now have over 170 members – better, but not enough. Is your next-door neighbour a member? If you know he's not, show him our newsletter and tell him to join – only £1 for the year to help protect and care for this lovely area in which we live.

Advertisement
(25p an entry)

My 12-year-old daughter started at Rickmansworth School this term. Anyone want to share the school run on a rota basis? Phone Tricia Osborne, Larchmead, Trout Rise, 72766.