

LOUDWATER RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Chairman
John Jarrett
Martha's Vineyard
Violet Way
R. 774225

Vice-Chairman
Isobel Johnson
The Tile House
T. Rise
R. 772873

Treasurer
Cyril Brine
Arlesey House
Rooks Hill
R. 772508

Correspondence Secretary
Don Cammell
Martins
Ladywood Close
R. 776126

NEWSLETTER No. 53

OCTOBER 1989

Editor: John Jarrett

WIDENING THE M25 — YOU SAY NO

We have now had reactions from other residents to add to those expressed at the AGM. 81 people have replied, in person or by phone or by letter (one even from holidaying in Scotland!). This is about 38% of our 310 members, a smaller number than we would have liked, but, as the experience of our North Orbital campaign showed, many react — and violently — only when the bulldozers are starting work.

Of the 81, however, only two expressed full approval of the widening, 48 were totally against, and the rest fell into the two schools of reluctant approval or reluctant disapproval, that is, if we have to have it, we must fight to see it is environmentally to a far higher standard than at present.

So, though the sample is modest, the view is clear. Moreover, Three Rivers District Council and Chorleywood Resident's Association are formally opposing and we have been contacted, seemingly as leaders, by two other local residents' associations who wish to join the fight. We have set up our own sub-committee which will endeavour to get some joint body working. We are in touch with the consortium set up by 23 local authorities affected by the M25 which is preparing statements on noise, pollution, ways and costs of improvement etc. We have the various Government reports, of which one even mentions the possibility of a *fifth* lane when the fourth lane reaches capacity in 10 years! We have seen the Highways Committee Chairman, written to the Leader of the Council for a joint meeting of residents' associations and Councillors, and we have Richard page MP coming to talk to us.

We have not yet committed the Association to any special expense, though that will almost certainly come. But we are grateful for an anonymous offer of £1,000 if we need it.

There is not space for all the letters we have received but I would like to thank all those who wrote. We print here just three that seem to represent the three main views.

"I am all for total rejection for reasons given in the Newsletter: our last state will be worse than our first, apart from the expense. (How will all those bridges over the M25 be extended?) To those who are indifferent — take heart. From personal experience I can vouch that the big battalions do not always win."

Jessie Page (Mrs.) 12a Glen Chess, L.Lane.

"I can in no way see residents on the west or Chorleywood side happy about more noise in their direction. Perhaps we could ensure that any earth removed is used to build up embankments adjacent to the Chess Valley and a concrete barrier placed on top of that. We should discover to what extent this would reduce noise, a more complex problem than generally assumed!"

G.Watt, Imber, Bridle Lane.

"Thank you for setting out so clearly and objectively the options for the LRA. I feel strongly that the country's economy as well as the travelling public need improved motorways and I wholeheartedly approve of an additional lane in each carriageway of the M25. The benefits to society outweigh disadvantages to local residents. Perhaps those who adopt the NIMBY syndrome will undertake never to use the motorways, thus reducing the traffic! I would deprecate money being spent on objecting to the new lanes. If, however, the Committee is aware of proven methods of reducing motorway traffic noise (I am not), it would be sensible to make representations to the Ministry of Transport"

Air Marshal Sir Ivor Broom, Cherry Lawn, Bridle Lane.

RICKMANSWORTH CENTRE

We hoped to print several letters of response to our item about the upheaval in Ricky. However, space is short and many just expressed dislike at mess etc. This letter contains most of the concrete suggestions touched on by the other correspondents.

"The future of Rickmansworth is a vital concern for all of us. These are suggestions that should be considered and if possible acted on.

1. The station office block should be used for all building societies, banks, estate agents etc.

2. The High Street should become a pedestrian precinct with enjoyable shopping in a concentration of small shops for various immediate needs, a cafe, (fountain perhaps!). Offices could be on top of some shops, but housing accommodation on top of shops would do more to keep the centre alive. Access to shops should be from behind.

3. We need the magnet of a large store.

4. We need adequate free short-term parking, but paid long-term parking. Rate-paying commuters need special consideration — disks for commuting professionals could offer reductions. Interim parking for commuters is essential near the station. People are against even an extra ten minutes on their journey.

5. If Rickmansworth dies as a shopping centre, the whole area will be affected. People will no longer want to come to live here." Dorothy Francis, Dovecote, T.Way. Incidentally, it now appears that the Council's view that all the cost of the new offices would be borne by developers will not be sustained. For reasons yet unclear, some money will be needed from the Capital Fund.

PLANNING — ARE WE WINNING?

Heaven forbid we should be optimistic, but the pressure on Loudwater development may be easing. Partly due to higher interest rates hitting the building trade but also (we believe) due to vigorous protests such as ours eventually causing Parliamentary concern, we have seen several significant victories recently. Three threatening applications have been withdrawn and two different Inspectors have at last mentioned in their dismissals of appeals a factor we have long pressed for, namely the "knock-on" effect of each development. Hitherto they have insisted that each application be considered in isolation, but in recent judgements, we find "unacceptable loss of amenity for . . . future neighbours": "there would be inevitably strong and irresistible pressures from future residents": "this development could . . . give rise to similar developments . . . erosion of standards in future . . . gradual increase in the number of houses."

Perhaps now we can also succeed at a local level in our other campaign asking that plans submitted that flagrantly omit other houses adjacent to the plot in question (yes, we've seen several that ignore houses that have been there for over ten years) should be rejected immediately.

Lastly, we have brought up, and the Parish Council has kindly supported us, a request that in the new Area Plan the sites of Flint Cottage, Watersmead and Burnside in T.Way and the rear-of properties in T.Rise from Lilac Cottage up to Clearburn should be given Green Belt protection. We discovered that for some strange reason they currently are not covered.

LOUDWATER PEOPLE

The largest will (as far as we know) ever to be declared in Loudwater was that declared in June of Mr. Leslie Smith of Durley House, T. Way. Mr. Smith left £23,398,000. Mr. Smith was for a while on the Estate Board. He also had property in Wiltshire.

* * *

Mr. Charles Oakley, of L. Heights, has become Chairman of the Watford Round Table.

LOUDWATER FARM

We have this from the Warden of the Subud Centre there, Howard Raimbach.

Our full-repair lease on Loudwater Farm ends in July 1990, which will complete our first 18 years in this lovely valley. Our committee had been offered a new 15-year lease. Despite a quantum leap from a peppercorn rent to an economic one, it is our desire and intention to remain here.

In the past we have tried to remain as low key as our activities permit and we hope our neighbours will not find anything to complain about in the years to come. Some of you, children included, have visited and used the farm on many occasions and we hope this will continue. We will be holding a craft fair on Sunday 24th September, this time using the newly-cleared barn which is a listed building. Last year's car parking debacle was a severe lesson to us, and steps to prevent a recurrence will be taken.

We are a UK charity of some years standing, and we are greatly pleased that our international organisation has just been registered as a Grade 2 status recognised by the United Nations.

H. Raimbach, Loudwater Farm, L.Lane.

CHORLEYWOOD COMMON

Herts County Council has recently recorded Chorleywood Common as a Countryside Heritage Site. The County has always offered advice and help in maintaining the Common. Now it is even more committed.

Dry heath and unimproved grassland such as the Common are now rare and many of the apparently undistinguished plants grown there are even more so. Rarities found also but hardly anywhere else in the County are Curly Waterweed, Greater Spearwort, Bogbean, Bladderwort and the closely guarded wild orchids.

The County Council list all of these as present on the Common — heather, Sheeps's Sorrel, Heath Bedstraw, Tormentil, Denthonia decumber, Black Knapweed, Yarrow, Burnet, Saxifrage, Agrimony, Eyebright, Lady's Bedstraw, Fairy Flax, Wild Thyme, Wild Carrot, Glaucous Sedge, Quaking Grass, Water Crowfoot, Sweet Grasses, Water Plantain, Common Spikerush, Bur Marigold, Bulrush, Guelder Rose, Dogwood, Buckthorn and Spindle.

CHORLEYWOOD HOUSE

The discussions about Chorleywood House roll on. At the last meeting we had with Parish and District Councillors, ten alternatives were examined, some of which were clearly not viable under the condition imposed that whatever use the house might be put to must be commercially self-sustaining.

It has always seemed to your committee that our efforts must be to obtain the right mix, i.e. that a reasonable amount of space and time must be preserved for community use whatever else happens. There is no way total community use can be financially viable. The odds are that the decision will be to convert Chorleywood House (the grounds are sacrosanct to public use) to quality flats or offices or perhaps a large firm's conference centre.

BITS AND PIECES

Jim Davis who runs our Neighbourhood watch scheme couldn't come to the AGM but wants us to point out that he is becoming increasingly short of co-ordinators. The co-ordinator's main task is to be kept informed when people are away, and to be told by anyone in his or her street who sees any suspicious action. The co-ordinator tells Jim and/or the police. The co-ordinator does *not* confront the situation personally in any way.

Apparently, many people do not realise that a number of insurance companies offer reductions in premiums to anyone living in a Neighbourhood Watch area. So it is worthwhile to keep this scheme going for a number of reasons. The volunteers are wanted for: Armitage Close: Cherry Tree Walk: Chorleywood Road: Farm Lane: Loudwater Heights: Loudwater House: Lower Plantation: Sarratt Lane (East): Violet Way: Wagon Way. Contact Jim 774888.

* * *

Following a generous gift, the Estate Board will buy a selection of Spring bulbs for planting this Autumn. We suggest planting be limited to the roundabout islands of Overstream, Whisperwood, L. Heights and the woodland next to the official notice boards. Other residents may like to make a similar gesture by "over-ordering" their Spring bulbs or by splitting existing plants. If you would like someone else to do the planting on these sites for you, please contact any member of the Board. Please help us to add a splash of colour to Loudwater next year. Derek Speight, Chairman, Loudwater (Troutstream) Estate Board.

NEWCOMERS

Welcome to Ruth and David Maxwell, in Troutcote, T. Way and Eric Costello and family at The Round House, L. Drive.

PLANNING

- 0737/88 St. Cyrus, T. Rise. part single side, two-storey rear extensions. (Opposed, approved)
- 0966/88 Baystock, Whisperwood. Two-storey side and rear extensions, detached garage. (Approved)
- 0988/88 Chess Place, L. Lane. Detached dwelling. (Opposed, refused, appeal dismissed)
- 1054/88 Sanam, T. Way. Single-storey front and side extensions. (Opposed, withdrawn)
- 1145/88 Lightwoods, T. Way. Destruction existing dwelling, erect three new dwellings. (Opposed, refused, awaiting appeal)
- 034/89 Chess Place, L. Lane. Erection of detached dwelling. (Opposed)
- 0210/89 Long Ridge, L. Lane. Resiting greenhouse. (Approved)
- 0319/89 Keruing Cedar, Chess Hill. Part single, part-double rear extension. (Approved)
- 0330/89 Furzehill, L. Plantation. Single-storey rear extension. (Approved)
- 0375/89 Barton Lodge, Bridle Lane. Two-storey and single-storey side extensions. (Opposed, withdrawn)
- 0358/89 Bantry Cottage, Sarratt Lane. Single-storey rear extension. (Approved)
- 0393/89 Cob Cottage, T. Rise. Erection of detached dwelling. (Opposed, refused, withdrawn)
- 0395/89 Long Hedges, L. Lane. Erection of detached dwelling. (Approved)
- 0405/89 Davemaur, T. Way. Erection of detached garage. (Approved)
- 0414/89 Chessbank House, T. Way. Single-storey side extension. (Approved)
- 0415/89 Sarratt House, Bridle Lane. Single-storey rear extension. (Approved)
- 0459/89 The Cottage, T. Rise. Two-storey rear extension. (Approved)
- 0532/89 1, Ladywood Close. Single-storey rear extension. (Opposed, approved)
- 0562/88 Broad Oaks, T. Rise. Erection of detached dwelling. (Opposed, refused, appeal dismissed)
- 0822/88 Rookery Nook and Long Ridings, V. Way. Erection of five detached dwellings. (Opposed, refused, withdrawn)
- 0573/89 Timberdene, L. Drive. Creation of tennis court.
- 0696/89 Far End, Wagon Way. Two-storey extension.
- 0662/89 Long Hedges, L. Lane. Erection of new dwelling.
- 0680/89 Barton Lodge, Bridle Lane. Single and double storey extensions, alteration to existing house.
- 0708/89 Caldbec, T. Way. Double-storey side and single storey rear extensions.
- 0743/89 Water Garden, L. Plantation. Games/studio room over garage.
- 0771/89 Bowden, Bridle Lane. Garage conversion to room, kitchen extension.
- 0774/89 Tile Barn, T. Rise. Two-storey side extension. (Opposed)