

LOUDWATER RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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Editor: John Jarrett

MAKE A DATE!

Three important dates for your diary.

Our Annual General Meeting will be on May 17, 8p.m. at Chorleywood House. Last year's AGM was packed — let's do it again. We hope our local copper, P.C. Richard Allen (who has some good and bad news lower down), will be there, but the main speakers will be from Loudwater Farm. The big barn there is one of the few listed buildings in Loudwater. When your Editor moved here, it was a shambles, but the Subud movement who took over the lease have made it one of the most attractive places in the area and it's available for meetings. They'll be showing how they did it with pictures.

Our Garden Party will be on Sunday June 17, venue to be announced. This is THE Loudwater social occasion when some 150-250 of you have a chance to meet old friends and make new acquaintances. For anyone recently arrived here, it's essential.

Our musical evening will be on Sunday September 30 in the Loudwater Farm barn at the other end of Loudwater. Also a great occasion to meet friends (we always have a half-hour interval between the music). The barn only holds 60, so when we announce the details in the Summer Newsletter get your application in promptly.

THE TOLL OF THE STORMS

To those who lost good trees or had home damage, our condolences. It appears no one, luckily, had major breakage or injury.

One reminder — if you have lost trees, do tell Alison Soles, the Three Rivers officer responsible for Tree Preservation. The Council has a list of our trees, since almost the whole of Loudwater is covered by Tree Preservation Orders, and you will be expected to have what they have noted. If, in some later survey, trees aren't there, you might be questioned.

The Estate Board is pressing the owner of the wood between L.House, T.Way and Violet Way to do something about the sad spectacle of fallen, leaning and damaged trees there. The Editor's personal thanks to neighbours Greg Heath and Nicholas Longman for their energetic help in clearing my tree that had fallen blocking Violet Way. No thanks to the young man who came roaring up, sat in his car watching for ten minutes and then drove off without even a wave.

CRIME WATCH AND RICHARD ALLEN

It is clear that our new bobby-on-the-beat Richard Allen is a considerable asset. He has asked me to give you this report.

"The 1989 crime figures have been passed to Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and there has been a decrease in the number of burglaries, despite an increase in crimes overall.

"There have been changes to the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and we hope now to get information around more quickly. Both Mr Jim Davis (with whom I am working closely) and I am concerned about the lack of cover in some areas. Volunteers wanted, please, to cover T.Way between K.Lure and T.Rise; Cherry Hill; and T.Rise from W.Wood to Sarratt Lane (two needed here). C/Wood Road is thinly covered — help there if possible. Other changes are: Brian Homan, T.Way from K.Lure to C/Wood Road; John Thaine, K.Lure; George Pritchard, Overstream; June Curtis, L.House and Farm Lane; Andrew Ducat, T.Rise from T.Way to "Tara"; John Watkiss, T.Rise from "Med Mills" to Whisper Wood; Gregg Heath, Violet Way; Fenella Lough, T.Way from

V.Way to Sarratt Lane.

"Being a co-ordinator is not a difficult or time-consuming job, so if you can help please contact me at Rickmansworth Police Station. Remember, the system is only as good as the participants and some of you are rather isolated and vulnerable.

"Another concern is that the gates are left open too often. They are a protection for all residents and limit the passage of undesirables. So please, lock them after you. (From my point of view, the recent "Supergluing" was a bonus — it meant the gates stayed locked!)

"Now, some good news. On Jan 22nd, because of keen observation by a Whisper Wood resident and because the gates were locked, a man was caught on the Estate having just committed a burglary. He had left his vehicle parked while he found an unoccupied house, entered it from the rear and stole valuables. Police were informed of a suspicious stranger, he was found, arrested and the property recovered. Thank you for helping yourselves and us — and for locking the gates, which he tried to escape through, but then had to use the only open exit where a police car met him. The new Superintendent in charge of Rickmansworth is Mr. Barrett. He is keen on Neighbourhood Watch, and can give you much useful information". P.C. Richard Allen.

GENERAL CRIME NOTES

Our thanks to Richard and Jim Davis, who have done a major overhaul and communication job on Neighbourhood Watch.

From P.C. Allen's figures (he covers some areas outside Greater Loudwater, so they aren't quite specific to us), burglaries, thefts etc are all well down. But thefts of cars and from cars are well up. Do remove valuables from your car, do lock it, do garage it. As we go to press, a gang specialising in BMWs (for their Pioneer radios) has broken into six!

Too late for the relevant Newsletter came a warning which we should note for later. Christmas always shows an increase in crime — people away or busy, valuable presents around, lots of strangers. Be careful then.

WIDENING THE M.25

To everybody's surprise, the County has decided to instal extra lights along the motorway starting near Junction 18. In the meanwhile, the Department of Transport has placed the customary order restricting development alongside the M.25. They have blocked off from any building, extension etc, a strip 67 metres either side of the existing motorway. I estimated some 90-100 houses in Three Rivers would be destroyed or uninhabitable if the motorway were to be widened — this order produces blight on a great many more.

YOU WRITE

We are delighted to hear again from AVIS, as follows.

"January's letter looked forward to another contribution on bird life in Loudwater. It has been a bad time for 'twitchers'. A hen pheasant on the lawn was a recent pleasure, but not a first. Indeed I have had no more firsts. Doubtless new species will turn up occasionally, though harsh realism suggests the loss of old friends rather than additions. 'Even the birds seem to have departed' wrote Jim Davis (in a recent newsletter) adding to the catalogue of M.25 horrors — and leading me to another subject.

"The nearness of the M.25 is a mixed blessing. For a good

few Loudwater houses, the mixture is pretty poisonous. Extra lanes without effective noise reduction will exacerbate the situation. Energetic action is needed, as well as the work of the LRA's M.25 Committee, to put across our real worries. Awareness and publicity for their work is necessary. That said, however, is it helpful to keep airing to the world at large the impact that the road has on this area? Public breast-beating encourages the impression that Loudwater as a whole is already a blighted area, smitten by an intolerable roar of traffic, fume-laden and with excess lead in its vegetables and deficiency in its pencils.

"Would-be exploiters have already used the argument that housing developments should be permitted since the area is already blighted by the M.25. Recently I came across a couple walking around apparently lost. They were house-hunters trying to hear the traffic noise about which they had been warned. We do have a serious problem that must be tackled; but crying stinking fish never was a very profitable activity."

AVIS

(The Editor has no doubt that AVIS will hear from residents with other views, though the point about developers using the "blighted" argument is true. In these days when bad news spreads so fast, it is true that we must keep a balance. I feel annoyed when I hear that Loudwater has "been ruined" — some bad things have happened but by and large it is still beautiful. I feel sad when women tell me they will not open a door or go out at night — physical attacks on women in Loudwater are unheard of. Storms have smashed our woods — but I've planted six saplings. Let us fight, but not surrender to gloom. Ed.)

"I have never considered myself to be of a nervous disposition. I don't worry when I am alone in our fairly large house, with a large garden surrounded by tall shrubs and hedge. But when I was sitting near the uncurtained window about 10p.m. one autumn evening and heard a noisy scrabbling just below, my heart leaped into top gear. Too much for a cat: not enough for next door's Great Dane: surely not our regular visiting muntjac at this time of night. I plucked up courage to rise very slowly from my chair and peep out of the ground-floor window. Two badgers! I got such a thrill seeing them that I didn't mind a bit that they were giving my plants a severe haircut."

Sheena Thompson, Lowlands, C/wood Rd.

LOUDWATER PEOPLE

Philip Groves, of Whisperwood, has become President of Hertfordshire's Chamber of Commerce. Sir Frank Rogers, of Loudwater Drive, has become Chairman of the Newspaper Proprietors Association.

With sadness, we have to report the death at 85 of Cyril Brine, of Rooks Hill. Cyril was for many years the Treasurer of the LRA — in fact, when it was refounded in 1975, he was, with Jack Cagnet, Annie Wollf and your Editor, an original Committee Member. Up to a few days before his sudden illness and death, he was busily helping arrange our musical evening. Cyril had lived in Loudwater since 1934. We offer our sympathies to Joyce, his widow, and their children.

Geoff Liley, who was the Bridle Lane Society nominee on our Committee, has moved out of our area. We welcome as his replacement Michael Beaver, of Random Cottage, Bridle Lane.

CHORLEYWOOD COMMON

Chorleywood Common having been designated a Heritage Site, the Parish Council has appointed a Common Ranger to oversee activities there. He is Peter Monaghan, and he'll work on the Common from March 19. There'll also be three interpretation boards showing maps of the Common and information on natural habitats and points of interest on the Common.

The new car park extension at Christ Church should be finished by now. Grascrete has been used to keep the green look. The Parish Council hopes the extension will ease the parking problem and stop motorists damaging the Common by parking on it.

Cllr. Margaret Jarrett

COUNCIL NEWS

With gratitude to our sister residents' association, Chorleywood, newsletter.

It has always been said that copying planning documents in the Council offices was not allowed. But the Copyright Design and Patents Act 1988, Section 47 says documents may now be copied. The snag is that it must be with the agreement of an "approved" officer, and no one has yet said if, for example, the Librarian at Rickmansworth is such a person (anyway, he's got enough to do). We are pressing to have it cleared up.

Other documents can be copied. But a Chorleywood Residents' member was told a two-page document would cost £5!

PLANNING

We have won a series of victories against undesirable developments, as you can see from the list below.

- 8/0914/89 *Dormer Cottage, Bridle Lane. Two-storey side, one storey rear extensions, new porch. (Approved).*
- 8/0927/89 *Briar Cottage, Chess Lane. Detached dwelling. (Refused)*
- 8/0985/89 *Scriven House, C/wood Road. Two-storey side extension, swimming pool, detached garage. (Approved)*
- 8/1116/89 *Rookery Wood and Long Ridings, L.Drive. Errection of five dwellings. (Opposed, refused)*
- 8/1114/89 *Beechwood, T.Rise. Front and rear ground extensions (Approved)*
- 8/1144/89 *Old Meadow, Wagon Way. Two-storey front extension.*
- 8/13/90 *Tara, T.Rise. Three-storey front extension.*
- 8/25/90 *Sanam, T.Way. Detached garage.*
- 8/34/90 *Kytes, L.Lane. Two-storey rear extension.*
- 8/98/90 *Long Ridings, Violet Way. Detached garage.*
- 8/105/90 *Broad Oaks, T.Rise. Depositing spoil.*
- 8/0293/89 *Cob Cottage. Detached Dwelling. (Opposed, withdrawn, resubmitted to appeal, refused). In his judgement on this vital site, the inspector accepted our three arguments of density, trees and vista. Thanks to all supporters.*

YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS, PLEASE

We used to collect our subscriptions with the January Newsletter. But we've realised that dark, cold January nights weren't much fun for us or you to come to the door, so we will ask you for your sub this year with this newsletter. At £2 a year, we hope you still find it good value.