

# LOUDWATER RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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Editor: John Jarrett

Some sixty people attended this year's AGM held at Loudwater Farm on the 22nd of May. This near capacity turnout to welcome new Chairman Godfrey Crook was excellent particularly when you realise there are only just over 400 houses in Loudwater.

Two items headed the Chairman's report - the traffic in Loudwater Lane, and Loudwater as a community. There needs to be traffic calming in L.Lane: although there is now a white line down most of the middle and various other road calming signs (why a 30mph limit rather than a 20mph limit, I do not know) the traffic is still too fast. The Chairman and John Jarrett made our case at Hertford (L.Lane comes under County jurisdiction, not Three Rivers) but sadly Herts C.C. did not consider L.Lane a priority, as the accident rate was not particularly high! The feeling from the floor was bewilderment - was Herts CC waiting for fatalities before taking action? It was decided to press the County further.

On major traffic, it was decided to keep a watch on any further developments on the M25 but basically NORMAL under John Jarrett has been a great success and for the time being, M25 problems had gone away. A fourth lane might be inevitable but noise could be kept down if the right materials were used.

On the subject of right materials, the question was raised whether drainage in L.Lane opposite Glen Chess had been properly carried out. It was felt that Three Rivers should look at this again. Other road problems included the right turn from L.Lane into C/wood Road, and the traffic in Sarratt Lane.

On the Chairman's plan to make Loudwater more of a community, research on what residents might want had begun but it was too early to judge the results. Not too many were interested in tennis (2!) but gardening, antiques, music and the theatre were receiving good responses.

John Jarrett - yes, it's that man again - then introduced a fascinating display of photographs entitled "Old Loudwater in Camera". Without being sycophantic (John did ask me to cover the AGM), it was an intriguing and brilliant exhibit that had required hours of work in the Chorleywood Library. It is hoped a brochure may be produced of these pictures (and any others that emerge) for sale to members and friends.

Following the interval, Ian Mackenzie gave a short talk on the Masonic School in his role as Bursar. Did you know the school was founded before the French Revolution, and, on a local note, that it owns Loudwater Farm? All good stuff.

Planning was the next subject, Don Cammell reporting. There were only 22 planning applications this year, most of them innocuous. The exceptions were Cariad (now settled), Bridle Path Cottage (see below) and Beechengrove Wood (being amicably settled). Don and his team do a splendid job keeping Loudwater so beautiful bearing in mind the number of attempted changes over the years.

After two and a half hours of of interest and debate, the Chairman presented Isabel Johnson, the LRA's Vice-Chairman, who is moving from Loudwater, with a painting of the River Chess, in gratitude for her years of work on the Committee. Good luck Isabel in your life up North. This was my first AGM, and I found it educational and entertaining. The wine and nuts (especially the cashews) were good, too. Why don't you come to the AGM next year? (Peter Phillips)

## LETTS GO NATIONAL

There has probably never been a more confusing article in the Newsletter than this one, but I can only say I tried, and the fact that

the national newspapers who suddenly thrust us into the limelight (The Times, Sunday Times, Daily Telegraph, Sunday Express) weren't any clearer is perhaps an excuse. And it all came about because of a Baltic moggy. But first, let's recap.

In September, a Ms. Vita Kokorevica arrived at London Airport from Riga, Latvia. A Customs inspection found that she had a cat in a bag. Because of this apparent attempt to evade quarantine laws Customs officers decided to look through all her luggage, where they claim to have found surprising evidence of wealth in money and goods. Ms Kokorevica when questioned said she was going to the suite she had booked at Claridges while waiting for the house she had bought to be got ready. The house, on the market at a reported £1.5, million was The Round House, L.Drive. She was then informed that Customs would query her bona fide right to be in the UK.

Now, of course, none of this was known to your Editor in whose patch The Round House is. All I knew was that new people had moved into the house and I wanted to welcome them and sign them up. After four attempts, I knew only this that the pretty young blonde Ms.K. had hardly any English at all, and that of the six or seven different women I saw in the house, only the very pleasant mother (mother-in-law?) had any ability to converse in English, that a young boy who I gathered was at York House prep school did not want to talk and a baby couldn't. On the fifth visit, I met what I took to be Mr.Kokorevica, who had rough but serviceable English. He agreed to join and tried to give me £20 for six years' subs! I asked him to write down all their names to put in the newsletter and he said: "I AM NOT HERE". However, I listed all the names and put them in the newsletter with a request for people to be friendly to a family who must be feeling somewhat cut off.

Because, shortly after the newsletter appeared, Ms. Kokorevica was in fact told by the Court to leave. The case was covered by almost all the national press who speculated on (a) if Ms. Kokorevica was, as she claimed, a director of a British firm providing luxury cars and facilities for tourists, how did she conduct the meetings with no English (b) was the Court influenced by allegations that a Latvian Mafia was trying to launder money in this country and (c) why was the company not registered in Britain?

Ms.Kokorevica has now gone. There is sadness in our local taxi firm who had had rich pickings from the house and from at least two charity collectors who found the man of the house at home and collected in one case £40 and in another £60 for their causes. The name he gave to them, by the way, was Gilleis.

On my last call, there was another man there, also not speaking English, but mother (?) was still there. She told me: "I shocked...I angry this Russian Mafia talk. Vita not knowing cat law. Cat gone back. Why they treat us like this?"

So, Ms.Kokorevica has gone: the several cars that were at the house (who drove them?) are now down to one: there has been a welcome shut-down of some of the many glaring lights on the premises: the two big rooms that the previous owner never managed to furnish are still almost bare, and if you find this account unsatisfactory, I'm sorry.

## LOUDWATER AS A COMMUNITY

In response to the Chairman's circular trying to increase community spirit in Loudwater, we have had this forthright letter from Mr A.E. Stephens, of Cherry Hill.

"I was pleased to read that the LRA has finally acknowledged

that there is absolutely no community spirit within Loudwater. My family and I have lived on the Loudwater Estate for a little over 10 years and, to the best of my knowledge, this is the first time the depressing lack of human contact has been addressed. While it may appear a sweeping generalisation - and there will always be exceptions - I believe it's fair to say the vast majority of us, and I include myself in their number, very much keep ourselves to ourselves".

"Very good friends of ours live just the other side of the dreaded M25 in the hamlet of Heronsgate that, as a community, puts us to shame. While they do have a small village hall and Church, they do not have a pub or community centre either but somehow manage to look after and take an interest in one another's well-being. Whether it's Summer Barbecues, Open Days, Firework Nights or Christmas Cocktail Parties, families young and old are catered for in a manner that does not appear to exist in Loudwater. I'm apportioning no blame whatever to the LRA since the issues really do start at home but your letter affords me the opportunity of getting a few things off my chest.

"Can I please start with the Loudwater Garden Party since this is the only open invitation event that I'm aware of outside the AGM? Simply loading a table with booze and then praying for good weather is not, in my humble opinion, any way to run a party. Many of us living in Loudwater have children. Most children need or like to be entertained. They like to drink soft drinks out of paper cups and eat fun food, not be given a stemmed wine glass containing weak squash and a salad on a paper plate. Where is the clown making balloons, the magician, the barbecue, the steel band or other musicians, the hot air balloon going up and down on a tethered rope, the badminton or croquet games? The opportunity for a swim if a pool is available? Where is anyone's imagination? It needn't cost a great deal of money and even if it did, would people really object to paying another couple of pounds on the ticket to have something done well? For goodness sake, since we only get together once a year let's do it properly!

"At the last party we attended my kids asked if there was any food only to be gruffly told that if they couldn't see any there wasn't any! There were absolutely no 'amusements' whatever to afford the opportunity for people to talk to one another. We otherwise stand around talking to our immediate neighbours and find the excuse to run home after an hour. It's truly excruciating stuff. My next point I completely accept relates only to people living on the gated estate but I am constantly saddened at the lack of support afforded our only local business Loudwater Garage. Rob Simmonds is quite amazing, unique possibly, this close to London, and our only living reminder of the old fashioned values that most of us living here enjoy. He has to buy petrol at prices higher than those at the Sainsbury's forecourt pump and is therefore largely ignored yet he will be the first person we turn to in any motoring crisis or petrol shortage. He is not allowed to advertise his trade even to passing Loudwater traffic because of some ancient LRA edict, yet a blind eye is apparently turned to the fences and walls popping up all over the place. His garage roof leaks like a sieve and people take an age to pay (or don't pay him at all!) yet he never complains. He truly is a case of you don't know what you've got until it's gone. Rob would be horrified to read this but I feel qualified to try and speak up for him simply because I am a regular customer and willingly spend a couple of thousand pounds a year with him. The closure of the gates, for sound enough reasons, clearly did his business no favours and pending EEC regulations with regard to his pumps and tanks may just finish him off.

"Finally, the Newsletter makes gleeful reference to the M25 widening issue having been defeated. No one in their right mind can actually believe that. While the efforts of everyone involved in staving off the immediate threat of widening are to be applauded, it would be foolish in the extreme to believe the problem has gone away. I was not one of the original 'doubters' but Mr. Jarrett, who wrote "Yah booh sucks" in the newsletter, unfortunately lives in cloud cuckoo land. That the Motorway will be widened one day to 8, 10 or 12 lanes is as inevitable as night following day. Rather than walking away from it now with a "job done" attitude I'd respectfully suggest that, under the guidance of Cllr. Geoff Liley, work go on in lobbying those that need to be lobbied to ensure that when that fateful day comes the noise impact on all of us is kept to a minimum by way of sound-deadening fencing, sound-absorbing tarmac, etc. The problem has not gone away, it's simply 'on hold'.

"Having said all that and to address the original issue, I genuinely welcome the efforts of the Association in addressing the issue of Community Spirit and would respectfully suggest the topic sufficiently important to put on the agenda of the next LRA Meeting rather than try to deal with it via a questionnaire". A.E. Stephens

There will, I'm sure, be some response both for and against Mr Stephens views, and we'll publish them in the next issue. I will only make two factual comments. The LRA Garden Party, apparently attractive enough to have 100 to 220 people attend, is not the only invitation event we organise. In the ten years Mr Stephens has been here, we've also had seven musical evenings and an art exhibition, all getting capacity attendances. Secondly, Rob's garage is nothing to do with the LRA, as this is entirely the responsibility of the the Loudwater/Troutstream Estate.

## **BITS AND PIECES**

Former residents, Mr and Mrs Sinclair Watson were featured in the local paper when they opened their garden at The Old Butchers Shop in Sarratt, where they now live. Sinclair tells me they had 158 visitors in forty-five minutes...

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Peter Lough, Estate Board director from T.Way, brave enough to stand for the Conservatives in the local election for the Ashridge Ward (Oxhey way), was attacked in the press, for doing so from Loudwater. I'm sure he fought a good fight, but (predictably) he lost.

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Also during the local elections, the Rickmansworth Labour group published a leaflet, claiming that the super market in Moneyhill Parade, owned by the Kotecha family (Harewood) was hurting local small shops. Mr Kotecha was not impressed.

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Now that Pullens has closed some of you may be wondering how to get your daily newspapers delivered. The Newsletter has received good reports about Chapter One in New Road, Croxley Green. We gather they deliver before 8am and that certainly makes a pleasant change!

## **A CROWD OF WELCOMES**

Welcome to Christopher and Chantal Taylor, as to Martin and Anne Pearson and children James and Amanda, all in L.House. Welcome to Peter and Fiona Burgess, as well as Sophie, Daniel and Anna in L.Lane and to Gary and Gill Westford and family in T.Rise. In L.Heights, welcome to Peter and Georgie Brewster, with Daphne and Michael, and to John and Joanne Willan. Welcome, especially, with an apology to Christopher, Mary-Jane and Oliver Peet in L.Lane. The apology is because they've been here some time, and we are late.

We wish we did manage to say "Hello" to everybody when we should, but we miss too often. Why?

Well, I can and do keep tabs on people in my own patch. But for the rest of Loudwater, I have to depend on the other patch wardens to let me know if houses have changed hands. Some are great: some are too busy, or too shy, to get the news to me in time or at all. So, if we have missed you, please forgive us - but I can make a suggestion. If any member knows of someone new who's moved into their road, just let me know: I can then welcome them and you'll have done a kind deed.

## **JUST IN CASE...**

Have you all paid your subscriptions? If not, please let Maurice Escow (address above) have the three pounds as soon as possible. It's not much to help protect this beautiful area.

## **PLANNING**

- /0112/96 Loudwater Lodge, L.Lane. Single-storey extension (Approved).*
- 8/0137/96 Mulberry Cottage, T.Way. Single-storey rear extension, first floor side extension. (Approved).*
- 8/0138/96 Burnside, T.Way. Alterations and extensions. (Approved).*
- 8/0175/96 Bridle Path Cottage, L. Lane. Erection of double garage, creation of driveway, use of bridle path for vehicular access. (LRA objected. Refused, appealed, appeal dismissed with order to reinstate path).*