

# LOUDWATER RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

*Chairman*  
Godfrey Crook  
Keruing Cedar  
Chess Hill  
R. 776567

*Vice-Chairman*  
VACANT

*Treasurer*  
Maurice Escow  
Wildwood  
L. Heights  
R. 771810

*Correspondence Secretary*  
Don Cammell  
Martins  
Ladywood Close  
R. 776126

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NEWSLETTER No. 90

JANUARY 1999

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Editor: John Jarrett

It may be tempting fortune, but it has to be said that once again we have good news for Loudwater - yes, I know about the rain and the cold and the dark but that will pass!

Members may recall that some time ago, the Estate Board applied to the Council to be given Conservation Area status for the site within the gates. On October 15 the District Council approved the plan. Considerable tribute was also paid to the professional and efficient nature of the application.

But, to the general surprise, the Council went further and voted to extend Conservation status also to Loudwater Heights, some properties in Sarratt Lane and the North side of Loudwater Drive.

The status now has to be approved by the Dept. of the Environment, which is not recorded as ever rejecting such an application. This decision should, therefore, be confirmed on April 15.

There have to be caveats. Conservation Area Status alone does not produce major new restrictions, but it does have to be considered by Inspectors at any planning appeal as a matter of some importance. Furthermore, after April 15, there can be objections.

Now, the Estate Board held long discussions with householders inside the gated area and went ahead only after finding much support for the idea. But, of course, the Board did not, and had no right or need to consult anyone outside. That would have been the job of the LRA. But as the LRA had no idea that the application would be extended, it did not do so. So those outside the gates who are now affected did not have the benefit of getting all the background information given to members on the Estate. No one's fault, but it is possible that one or two may have qualms.

It would be wrong for the LRA to claim any credit for the success of the application, but it's pretty certain that if it had been officially involved, it would have urged it on. Let us now quote from the Estate Board's special Newsletter on the subject of what is now to be laid down.

"By a direction under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Planning Development) Order 1995, additional planning control will cover unacceptable unsuitable new building, house and roof extensions and alterations, excessive hardstanding (which is beginning to erode gardens), and the erection of gates, walls and fencing of a type wholly out of place in a rural environment such as Loudwater".

All of this should help to preserve Loudwater and protect us from what Estate Board Chairman Derrick Speight calls "Architecturally sterile houses such as are beginning to obscure the tree-filled skyline above Chorleywood Road". We agree - these houses (which the Council lacked the power to stop) are the kind considered "elegant" by the sort of people who think that "HELLO" is an interesting read.

Tribute should be paid to the work put in by Estate Directors John Watkiss, John Parsons, Derrick Speight and consultant Jennifer McCrandall.

## DON'T GO AWAY - THERE'S MORE

On top of this, but purely coincidentally, the authoritative Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust has just produced a new list of areas of significant wildlife value, and five of these are in Loudwater.

They are Beechengrove Wood ("ancient semi-natural woodland

with county rarities"); the River Chess and banks ("undegraded high quality water"); Little Lady's Wood ("unimproved natural grassland"); and Lower Plantation ("ancient woodland and protected species"). This last is puzzling - what are you hiding from us, Lower P?

Again, all of this while, encouraging, has only limited power, but taken with the new status does constitute one more weapon in the armoury of the Estate Board, the LRA and local Councils to quote to Inspectors when opposing unwelcome development.

## WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE

The Estates Board Newsletter has a useful note about T.P.Os (Tree Preservation Orders). All too often, estate agents and solicitors seem not to notify purchasers about these.

They are of two kinds, general and specific. General covers all trees, specific covers certain trees. Before any work can be carried out on trees in either of these areas, the local authority must be asked for permission. They are usually very reasonable. Six weeks notice is needed. If work is done without permission, hefty financial penalties can be imposed.

No permission is need to work on any tree that is less than 7.5 centimetres in diameter, measures 10 centimetres above the ground. Conservation Area Status means that all trees are covered.

## BUILDING UP THE VOTE

Former Bridle Lane resident, Geoff Liley (Chairman of our Parish Council) is reported in the local paper as having resigned from his position as Vice-Chairman of the local Conservative Party.

He has done so in protest against an attempt by a fellow Tory Councillor and neighbour of his, Ken Morris, to develop land in Burfield Road. Mr Liley has also been critical of the attempts by another Tory Councillor, Mark Shepherd, to develop along L. Drive.

This is the fourth attempt by local Councillors or candidates to make money from developing, after having spoken in their literature of their concern for the environment, three of them in Loudwater.

## THE ESTATE AGM

This came too late to be covered in the last Newsletter. Points that were raised included the following.

While the Estate understood that residents felt the need to protect their verges from careless drivers, it asks that natural products be used, such a logs or natural stone, rather posts, bollards or painted stone

It reminds residents that covenants forbid parking on the roads: it asks for more care in allowing outsiders to use gate cards etc (in one such case, the loan turned out to be a criminal outfit); it lays down that skateboarding is not allowed on company roads.



## THE LRA'S SOCIAL WHIRL

The LRA has held many musical evenings, but one of the most unusual was the recent jazz concert in the neatly-restored barn of L.Farm (it was a sell-out). The four-man group was led by Jules Rubens who played tirelessly throughout the evening despite the fact that he won't see 80 again, and his career stretches from working with Jessie Matthews to King Crimson.

By the time this appears, there will have been another wine-tasting, and a visit to see "Fiddler on the Roof" at Watersmeet.

## YOU CAN'T SEE THE TREES...

"I think that I shall never see

A letter about a special tree"

I was surprised I have had only two nominations for special trees, and those only en passant. Thank you to Costas Kleanthous who mentioned an oak in Bridle Lane between Owl Cottage and Wren Top. It really is a fine, big fellow and straight as can be. Jack Prince also mentioned the sycamore in his garden - good, but I think we have bigger.

Perhaps you didn't feel like praising trees because you were too busy cursing leaves. No, it wasn't your imagination, there actually were more leaves than usual.

According to scientists, this year's climatic conditions in Britain were just what trees like, an arboreal version of a year in the Algarve with Keep Fit classes. Consequently, they have grown more than usual and produced more leaves.

P.S. My thanks to Costas for remarks about the Newsletter which were really too flattering to print.

## BITS AND PIECES

Just to show that Loudwater has not sunk into bland respectability, your Editor has just caught up with this. A man who lived here for some years, but then found it convenient to leave the country quickly, returned, but elsewhere. Old habits clearly die hard, and not so long ago, he was found guilty of what the local paper called "one of the biggest art frauds in recent years". Hope no one's bought any Old Masters lately?

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The Countryside Management Commission has started an environmental project for its Whippendell Woods, management area which takes in Loudwater. It aims "to support and encourage local woodland and other landowners to manage their land sensitively and economically." Individuals, companies and associates within the area are urged to make contact with the Whippendell Wildwood Project Office on 01727 848168.

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The handsome Estate Board newsletter tells an interesting story about Loudwater Garage. When this was Panmure Gorden's coach house, the coaches had of course, to be on the ground floor. But horses also were stabled there. So they had to go up a ramp and live on the top floor!

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It is noticeable that, as the property market slows down, many estate agents are finding themselves with more properties to let (prospective sellers needing some return from their empty former houses). One such in L/water was advertised at a cost of £35,000 a year!

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A cautionary word, and a word of praise about rubbish. Caution because an increasing number of dustmen are getting compensation for injuries by sharp items in the plastic bags, Watch out, for your pocket's sake. Praise, because since we drew attention to a poor take-up of the Council's offer of recycling boxes, there has been a noticeable increase in L/water.

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There is we are glad to note, more attention being paid to that little remarked source of pollution, light.

Libby Purves in "The Times" homed in on this, with a satellite picture that showed that only Holland glares back at the sky more than the South-East of Britain in all Europe. 35 years ago, people in a small town would see 2,000 stars on a clear night, today they will hardly get into double figures. We are losing the majesty of the night sky.

The Dark Skies Campaign urges people to have adequate curtains and to pull them as soon as it gets dark, not to have so-called "security lights" (the police say they help burglars, not hinder), and if you must have a light to see to your door, a 40-watt is quite enough and should be shaded and focused sharply down.

If we can succeed in this, then let's tackle another horror, one which Loudwater is so far mercifully free from, piped music!

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One of the more bizarre local sights was in December, when one of the massive trailers run by Norbert Dentressangle tried to reverse into L.Drive. Of course, it completely stuck itself and the driver walked down to the police station for help. Now, if it had been an Eddie Stobart trailer, well - but we can't have Mr Very squashed teeth ( a rough translation, I know) blocking our roads!

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## PLANNING

- 0513/98 Dormer Cottage, B.Lane. Two -storey side and front extension, one -storey rear extension, rear conservatory. (Approved)
- 035/98 Clarinsh, Lodge Drive. One -storey side extension.
- 0607/98 The Dell, L.Drive. Additions and extensions. Demolish side extension, build two-story annexe with link.
- 0683/98 Walden Lodge, L.Lane. Two-storey and one storey side extension, one-storey conservatory at rear. (Approved).
- 0684/98 Round Spring Farm, B.Lane. Separation of existing house by removing linking boiler room to create two houses. (Approved).
- 0702/98 Greenacre, T. Way. One-storey rear and one-storey side extension. (Approved).
- 0728-0729/98 Tall Trees, L. Drive. Approval of certificate of lawful proposed development.
- 0747/98 Pond House, B.Lane. Two-storey side extension. (Approved).
- 0806/98 Clearburn, T. Rise. External staircase to connect to store-room loft over garage. (Approved).
- 0851,0836/98 Pooh Corner, L.Lane. One-storey extension to connect with annexe, and variation thereon. (Approved).
- 0870/98 Five Trees, T. Way. One-storey extension.
- 0901/98 Land at Hillpoint and rear of Glenhayes. Four houses with new access. Demolish existing house.
- 1016/98 15, Lower Plantation. One-storey and first floor extension.

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ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRMAN AND THE COMMITTEE  
OF THE LRA, AND OF YOUR NEWSLETTER EDITOR

MAY WE WISH ALL RESIDENTS A HAPPY, HEALTHY AND  
PEACEFUL 1999.