LOUDWATER RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Chairman Vacant

Vice-Chairman
Denise Preedy
12 Harewood
R. 770280

Treasurer

Maurice Escow

Wildwood

L. Heights

R. 771810

Correspondence Secretary

Don Cammell

Martins

Ladywood Close

R. 776126

NEWSLETTER No. 98

JANUARY 2001

Editor: John Jarrett

This is a unique Newsletter that raises some fundamental issues. Your Editor has been asked to print the following statement on behalf of the Vice-Chairman and members of the LRA Committee.

"As there has been considerable concern in the community regarding the planning application for an extra house in the grounds of Keruing Cedar, Chess Hill, we would like to

clarify the LRA Committee position.

"The planning application was made by the Chairman of the LRA Committee, Godfrey Crook. Unfortunately, the Committee was not informed beforehand that such an application was going to be made. The list of planning applications is usually published in the Newsletter. By an oversight of the Editor, whose apology is published below, this was omitted. The Committee was only made aware of the application when several residents made objections known. An extraordinary meeting of the Committee was held, the Chairman leaving the room, and the LRA Committee unanimously decided to object.

"Since then, it appears that the file containing at least forty objections from residents has gone missing from the Planning Dept. The Committee has complained officially and strongly

to the Council about this.

"The LRA's first priority is protect the environment we have the privilege to live in. At no time can this position be compromised by the wishes of any individual, whoever that may be."

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

In view of the sensitivities generated by the planning application my wife and I have submitted on a plot of land in Loudwater and to preserve good governance, I am stepping aside as Chairman of the Loudwater Residents' Association until such time as the matter is resolved. In the meantime, please refer all matters to the Vice-Chairman, Denise Preedy.

Godfrey Crook

AN EDITOR'S APOLOGY

Your Editor innocently contributed to the unhappiness of this affair. The Keruing Cedar omission has unfortunately, but understandably, caused comment. It can only be said that this was a simple but most regrettable error on his part. He can only apologise for the fact that, out of the 200 plus applications he has to sift through for each Newsletter, he missed one that was potentially so controversial.

He has apologised to the LRA Committee, and offered his resignation. The Committee has accepted the apology and

rejected the offer.

THE ESTATE IN POLE POSITION

As foretold in the last Newsletter, the Estate Board has taken action to protect its roads from HGV damage not only to the frail bridges, but all the Estate roads, some of which, it has been told, are barely suitable for even light goods traffic.

The result is a barrier in Kingfisher Lure. It is operated manually by a Security Officer from 8am to 4pm Monday to Friday. On weekday evenings, throughout the night and at weekends, the barrier will open automatically when approached by a vehicle from either side. Vehicles up to 7.5tons can get through: vehicles up to 18tons will be let through, provided they are not crossing the bridges. Vehicles that are over that size, or need to cross the bridges, will have to come via the Sarratt Lane gate, and the relevant owner/resident will have to make an arrangement.

THE ESTATE WATCHDOG

Having a member of the Royal Corps of Commissioners manning the barrier means that the Estate now has extra security.

Now meet Mr. John Power. He is a Hertfordshire man from Watersford, where he was born in 1937. He has had an unusually varied career. He trained as a nurse before his RAF Service. Back in civvies, he qualified as a Mental Nurse, and eventually bought and ran his own nursing home.

During that time and since, he also ran a landscaping firm, got his pilot's licence and ran two planes. Even more unusually, he set up a horse and carriage business, and provided himself, horse and carriages for no fewer than five

Lord Mayors' Shows.

His lodge is equipped with cooking facilities, seating and a lavatory (which, alas, has proved to have some faults). Otherwise, he says it's fine. He has first aid materials, fire extinguisher, and a telephone with an answer machine (01923 720942).

In the short time he has been here, he has had good and bad experiences. Good in that on several occasions, dodgy characters trying to come into the Estate have been stopped, one leading to a police investigation. Bad in that he was

attacked by one resident.

There is no doubt that the barrier will cause some inconvenience, but, while its main purpose was to protect Estate roads, it is also another weapon in the never-ending campaign against those who target this prosperous area. Insurance companies will be impressed.

IT'S GOOD BUT WATCH OUT

Following on from what has just been said, the elegant June Curtis, who, among much other work, co-ordinates Neighbourhood Watch for us, has asked for this point to be made.

We remain very free from crime in the area - one attempt to steal a car, but the immobiliser prevented this, one breakin in Sarratt Lane with a window smashed to gain entry.

In both these case, alarms were triggered and no one took

a blind bit of notice. Thieves are counting on this.

The police will come out to investigate an activated alarm if there is said to be signs of forced entry or suspicious vehicles, but they have long become fed up with using

valuable manpower on false alarms.

Your Editor can only repeat what he has said before. In his years here, he has been key-holder for four different neighbours, and responded to eleven different alarms being activated. Everyone was false; setting error, teenagers, cats, au pairs, low sun etc. The Ricky locksmith does a lot of business supplying highly sophisticated electronic alarms, but still considers basic mechanical alarms as the best choice after a well-trained dog.

YOU WRITE

"The ever-increasing traffic on the Chorleywood Road is making getting out of the Estate, particularly when turning right, more and more difficult. Moreover, the driving habits of some residents, specially owners of 4 x4 off-roaders, make this even more dangerous.

"At the top of K. Lure, I calculate the safe point to drive out, based on speed and distance of traffic, especially that from left. Once I decided it is safe to go (and I am not a timid driver), I try to go, only to find all too often that a 4 x 4 or larger car on my nearside having, like me, decided that the traffic flow from the right makes it safe to turn left has pulled

out with me, thus blocking my line of sight to the left.

"I have no option but to proceed, as it is too late to back up and too dangerous to stop halfway. My slightest error could result in an accident, since not only am I coming out blind, but oncoming traffic cannot see me until it is too late.

"It would be nice to think that offending drivers are innocent but they are more likely to be members of the 'blow

you, Jack, I'm all right' band."

Jack Prince, T. Way

BITS AND PIECES

It seems a shame that so many people feel forced to go ex-D to stop telephone sales calling. You can get protection by registering for phone protection service (020 7766 4410).

Similarly, if you want to avoid junk mail filling your rubbish bins, try the Mail Preference

Service (0845 070 0707).

There are some snags with both of these, but a lot of people find them worthwhile.

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At last, some information about new residents. Welcome to Mr. J. Wilkinson, Tree Tops, Cherry Hill; Miss Zena Zaidi at Lightwoods, T. Way: Mr and Mrs Holden at Larchmead, T. Rise: Mr and Mrs V. Poggi at Cherry Hill Cottage, T. Rise: Mr and Mrs Andrews at Tile House, T. Rise and Mr Nagi at Homewoods, Farm Lane. Hope you will all be happy here.

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A local magazines produced a little extra information about Loudwater's history, specifically the Loudwater Mill which, with Scotsbridge Mill, produced paper for the Illustrated London News, whose founder Herbert Ingram lived in Glen Chess. After his death, both mills were sold to William McMurray and produced paper until 1885, when Lord Ebury, Chairman of the Local Nuisance Prevention Committee, took legal action about effluent polluting the Chess and had both mills closed.

Not strictly Loudwater, but many residents whose children have been or are at the school will be pleased to see that Christchurch C. of E. Primary, on the Common, was rated Herts' best in that category. School rankings are contentious,

but Christchurch has always been good.

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The Highways Agency continues to be ham-fisted (or

arrogant?) in its dealings with the public.

In October, it announced it would be creating a climbing lane on the clockwise carriageway between Junctions 16-17, and 18-19. In our area, that is roughly from the Solesbridge Lane overbridge to the Micklefield Green ditto.

They will find room for this by reducing the central reservation's width, making the new fourth lane slightly narrower, and a slightly narrower hard shoulder on this

stretch.

Bearing in mind the shellacking they had over the previous widening proposals, you would think they would have learned. Well, they announced that the public could see an exhibition of the plans at Christ Church School. It would be open for three hours on each of two days(!), and they gave ten days notice! They also said that local residents had been consulted. Your Editor has been able to find only one person in Loudwater who was consulted, and that was after he had heard the rumour and inquired.

One possible benefit. The relevant sections will be black top. The LRA is pressing that, once the machines and material are on site, it would make sense to do both sides of the

carriageway.

JOIN THE CLUB

Looking back on the year, it is clear what successes the various clubs have been. Look at these reports.

BRIDGE: "The Club has just held its 4th AGM after another good year. The emphasis continues to be social, and to use the Chicago format. We meet every first and third Wednesday at Loudwater Farm, 7.45 to 10.30. Membership costs £10 a year, playing fee £2 an evening." John Parsons. (John has stood down as Chairman after doing a great job. New Chairman: Liz Crook.

INVESTMENT: "Now in its second year, the Chess Investment Club has 12 members, the Troutstream 19. Both meet on the second Wednesday of the month at Loudwater Farm. Though with decline in the Market both clubs have suffered, the friendly team atmosphere helps us all to swap ideas and learn from our mistakes. Over the years, we will no doubt see our expertise grow. There is still room for members in the Chess Club".

Tony Moss

THEATRE: "There is an exciting calendar for 2001 old faithfuls, such as The Mill at Sonning, and Kenwood for a wonderful Summer evening. But we also offer new and farther venues Stratford to explore during the afternoon before an evening at the theatre, the Oxford Playhouse, one of our best reps, and what could be more appropriate to the end the year than the Nutcracker at the Festival Hall."

June Curtis

WINE: "The Wine Appreciation Society has really taken off."
The accent is more on understanding wine rather than purchase. Recent tutored tastings culminated in a superb dinner at Leverages. So many people have made new friends combining food and wine. In February we offer a talk and tasting of South African wines and in March there is a four-day tasting tour of Champagne. Meetings are on the last Friday of each month at Loudwater Farm. The joining fee is £10, £15 for a couple."

Mike Wood

CHILDREN: This was fully covered in the last Newsletter, but it continues to grow, and many parents consider it the best thing since sliced bread!

PLANNING

00998/00 Land between Larchmead/The Farm House, T.Rise. Erect detached, garage.

01094/00-01097/00 The Dell, L. Drive. One and two-storey side extensions.

01095/00 Keruing Cedar, Chess Hill. Erect detached house and garage.

01137/00 Mansard Cottage, L.Lane. Demolish existing, erect new building.

01163/00 Tall Trees, L.Drive. Access via L. Lane via Tall Trees for Bridle Path Cottage.
01178/9/00 Loudwater Garage, T.Way. Redevelop to form

four residential units.
01194/00 Hillpoint/Glenhayes, L.Lane. Erect detached

house, new access.
01336/00 Timberdene/Penwood, L.Drive. Build tennis court.

01360/00 Cherryhill Cottage, T. Rise. Alts. to gate, erect glasshouse.

01392/00 Corner Croft, L. Heights. Two-storey side extension, replacement garage.

01457/00 Thatches, L. Lane. Two-storey front extension.

01500/00 Old Meadow, Wagon Way. Erect conservatory. 01503/00 Willows, L. Drive. Erect rear conservatory.