

LOUDWATER RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER No. 98

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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 break-in 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

