

# NEWSLETTER

## HILLS AMENITY SOCIETY

### AUTUMN 2002

Visit us at <http://www.intsl.com/hills>

*The Hills Amenity Society now has its own website. Do have a look!  
You can also now email the Society at [hills@uk2.net](mailto:hills@uk2.net) Suggestions for content are always  
welcome.*

### **Trees are a primary feature of the Conservation area - official**

Would-be developers in the Hills Conservation areas have been given probably the clearest steer in recent times about what is acceptable and what is not by the Government Inspector who has thrown out at appeal a second planning application for 11 Woodbury Hill.

This early 20<sup>th</sup> century development sits between two much older properties. Following second planning refusal the owners went to appeal, arguing that the property itself could be developed to enhance the surrounding area. The Inspector appeared to agree that the design submitted was innovative and prepared with a great deal of thought. He rejected the appeal because of the destruction that would have had to take place of a number of mature trees.

In this issue we carry the pertinent section of the Inspector's report which has to be a landmark adjudication for the Hills.

**Do join us for our Annual Autumn Lunch**  
**Saturday 12 October 2002**  
**12.30 pm**  
**111 York Hill, Loughton**  
(at the top of the Green opposite The Gardeners' Arms)  
**£4 per head – pay on arrival**

## Planning a major discussion at The Hills AGM

Planning topics were a major feature of the Hills agm, held at The Gardeners Arms and attended by some 50 members. Land behind 20-22 Pump Hill, Southbank, 11 Woodbury Hill all prompted discussion. Further afield plans for Loughton Sorting Office in the High Road and the bowling club's plans to put houses on tennis courts at Eleven Acre Rise were also discussed.

In his report, chairman Peter Smith referred to the dangerous junction of York Hill, Queens Road and Staples Road, particularly at school collection and delivery times. He also referred to lamp-posts, road repairs and activities of the Hills Amenity Society such as the Front Garden Competition, the Autumn Lunch and carol singing. The full report by Peter Smith is on the HAS website at <http://www.intsl.com/hills>

All members of the committee were re-elected and Mrs Alison Middleton, a committee member co-opted during the previous year, was appointed secretary. Following the AGM, Matthew Geyman has joined the committee and has taken on the role of Tree Warden from Ian Locks as well as developing and maintaining the new website. A full committee list will be found at the end of this Newsletter. Brief details about Alison and Matthew follow :

**Alison Middleton** – was born in Epping and lived in Woodford for most of her life and attended Bancrofts School before university. Now HR manager at law firm Clifford Chance, Alison moved to Loughton three years ago with her husband Steve. **Matthew Geyman** moved in to 22 Pump Hill, one of Brittens Cottages, the weatherboarded timber framed building next to the Gardeners Arms, in April this year with his fiancée Catherine. Matthew also lived in Woodford Green and attended Bancrofts School. He is a self taught freelance computer consultant and also runs a charter yacht business.

### **Other Committee news**

Vice chairman, Chris Pond, has recently been awarded a OBE and treasurer Amanda Gotham has been appointed a JP.

Chris Pond and his wife Caroline have recently written a new book about the forest in Loughton. They have taken six walks, each lasting approximately an hour, bringing into the narrative an array of facts about the history and geography of those parts of Epping Forest. The walks cover most parts of Loughton. Three start from Staples Road Pond, one from Warren Hill, one from Debden Green and one from Goldings Hill. Also included are maps and details of refreshment availability. The book is illustrated with 19<sup>th</sup> century engravings. Available from Loughton and District Historical Society at Forest Villa, Staples Road, Loughton and from Loughton Book Shop, 150 High Road the book is priced at £3.

### **The importance of trees – a landmark decision**

The Department of the Environment has turned down the appeal for 11 Woodbury Hill. The Inspector's report states as its conclusion:

**“The Council makes it clear that one of their main objections is the likely loss of trees in the front and side garden areas.**

**From the impressions I gained when visiting the area, it is clear that the Conservation Area obtains much of its character from the large mature trees and extensive foliage which often screens and mitigates the extent of built development in the locality. In the light of this, the loss of any trees must be regarded seriously. Two trees at the front and side of the house and a further two at the rear would have to be removed. Furthermore, extensive reduction in the crowns of other trees would have to be carried out. To my mind the loss of these large and significant trees would cause unacceptable harm to the appearance of this part of the locality and to the overall character of the Conservation Area.**

**In summary I acknowledge the innovative design proposed and the efforts to avoid harm to the Conservation Area and adjoining residents. It is my conclusion that due to the extent and location of the proposed development there would be significant harm caused to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by loss of trees, as well as to the amenities of the adjoining residents. I have taken into account all other matters raised but none were sufficient to outweigh the conclusions I have reached.**

**I conclude the appeal be dismissed.”**

**27-29 Staples Road** – second application refused.

**13 Woodbury Hill** – committee wrote objecting to application for substantial extension felt to be out of proportion. Awaiting decision.

**30 Queens Road** – second application for large rear extension refused.

**Faircroft Cottages, Whitakers Way** – second application approved.

**Southbank (98 York Hill)** – the committee understands this is now for sale again. Concern has been expressed about deteriorating condition of the house and garden, particularly the boundary hedges.

**Trees** – application for work to trees at Dryads Hall, Woodbury Hill and 49 York Hill received.

*(pic of Steeds Way under construction)*

In earlier times there were fewer concerns about ripping out areas of trees. This picture shows the construction of a new road to Loughton Lodge from York Hill – now Steeds Way – in around 1905. (from Stephen Pewsey's book *Chigwell & Loughton – A Pictorial History*)

### ***King's Head, York Hill***

New owners, London & City Taverns, have recently reopened the King's Head at the foot of York Hill creating twenty new jobs for the area. English fare 'with a twist' and traditional roasts on Sunday are now being served in the restaurant. The big screens and karaoke have been removed and the focus is on comfortable eating and drinking.

It is good to see this landmark public house being loved again and we wish the new owners every success.

Our pictures show an early view of the Kings Head – and a later view after the construction of the War Memorial. (from Stephen Pewsey's *Chigwell & Loughton – A Pictorial History*)

## **“Walking Bus” to solve daily Staples Road/Queens Road/York Hill gridlock?**

A “walking bus” is being proposed from the Traps Hill car park when this is re-opened as the answer to the daily grid-lock caused by parents’ cars causing growing dangers at the junction of York Hill, Staples Road and Queens Road.

The Hills Committee has written to both head teachers at Staples Road School and to the local police drawing attention to the dangers of this junction – especially at school delivery and dropping-off times.

Referring to this at the Hills agm, chairman Peter Smith said one of the primary concerns was the inability of emergency vehicles to negotiate a way through cars parked on every corner.

Both head teachers have responded that they are very much aware of the problem and would continue to try to dissuade parents from parking on the corners of this junction.

The committee has rejected supporting proposals for re-opening Staples Road at its eastern end or carving out a turning circle opposite the school which would inevitably bring its own problems. The committee also noted that the police had promised to patrol – but none had been seen.

## **Did you know.....?**

...that what is now the junction of Staples Road/Queens Road/York Hill used to go by the elegant name of Queen’s Park Corner?

Jane Bowen drew our attention to this 1893 advertisement for Loughton shoemaker William Lebbon who, as well as shoes and slippers, made to order a variety of practical boots including Cripples’ Boots (cork or otherwise) – made on the most approved principles of course!

## **Hedges causing concern**

It has also been brought to the committee’s attention that the local fire brigade were less than impressed when attempting to reach a fire near Loughton Lodge. They had severe difficulty negotiating the combination of parked cars and untrimmed hedges in York Hill and Woodbury Hill. The committee is drawing the attention of Epping Forest District Council to certain hedges now causing extreme concern.

The hedges in the Conservation Area are one of its main features. However a number of people have commented and complained about the state of a lot of hedges, particularly in York Hill, Pump Hill and Woodbury Hill. In most areas where there is no pedestrian pavement there are white lines on the sides of the roads showing where pedestrians should be able to walk. It has now got to the stage that in most areas, with a few notable exceptions, the boundary hedges are growing right over the road. Not only is this extremely unsightly it is also becoming increasingly dangerous. Cars cannot now safely pass each other without getting badly scratched but, more importantly, pedestrians are being forced to walk well out into the road and in York Hill in particular the cars travel at considerable speeds. With the new school term now starting and a lot of mothers taking small children to Staples Road, often with more than one child walking and/or a pushchair, we would ask that all owners cut their hedges back to the boundary of their property.

## New website for the Hills

Thanks to Matthew Geyman there is now a website for the Hills Conservation Area. The Hills Amenity Society site <http://www.intsl.com/hills> contains a great deal of background information about the area, information about the society, how we can be contacted and what we do.

A special feature of the site is a pictorial review which contains some delightful shots – and reminds us why we value living where we do.

The site also provides a quick and easy means of communication and contributions either for the site or for the newsletter can be sent to [hills@uk2.net](mailto:hills@uk2.net). If you have news, views, information or pictures or illustrations you would like to share, just email them to us. We look forward to hearing from you!

One of the first articles on the site has been written by Matthew Geyman himself and is entitled ***Never take the Forest for granted!*** The 6,000 acres of Epping Forest were only narrowly saved from curtilage, development and inevitable destruction with the assistance of the Corporation of London who have been its keeper ever since, providing an invaluable role in its maintenance, preservation and enhancement.

The 1878 Epping Forest Act decreed that the forest should be forever available as ‘an open space for recreation and enjoyment of the public’. It is under the supervision of the Corporation that this aim is upheld and the forest kept coppiced, cleared, clean, accessible, beautiful and healthy. *Further information about the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers and the history of the massive legal battle preventing the destruction of Epping Forest can be obtained from Matthew Geyman, see committee list, or from <http://www.intsl.com/hills/detail/efcv.htm> and <http://www.intsl.com/hills/detail/efbattle.htm>*

## Did you know?

Did you know that Sadlers have been running people around Loughton for well over 100 years? We are indebted to Stephen Pewsey's excellent book *Chigwell and Loughton – A Pictorial History* for this gem.

## Committee members

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**Chris Pond**, Vice Chairman, 7 Staples Road, 8508 2361 email: [Loughton\\_ponds@hotmail.uk](mailto:Loughton_ponds@hotmail.uk)

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