

HILLS AMENITY SOCIETY

Winter 2002

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

Bosworth's, the Church Hill butchers, would give today's 'food police' a festive heart attack with this fine display, pictured in 1910—26 years after the shop opened in 1886. Thank you, Bosworth's, for a modest 106 years of service. Go on—support our local traders this Christmas . (Picture from Stephen Parkway's "Chigwell and Loughton, a pictorial history" published by Phillimore and Co. Ltd)

Hills challenges Town Council to justify ignoring local views

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**HILLS AMENITY SOCIETY WISHES ALL ITS MEMBERS A
HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A PEACEFUL NEW YEAR**

Comment

'Local views must not be ignored': why the Hills Committee is seeking an urgent meeting with the Town Council

An urgent meeting with Loughton Town Council is being requested by The Hills Amenity Society over planning procedures which can lead to the views of local residents—and organisations such as Hills Amenity Society—being ignored in the decision-making process.

The fault in the process lies in dates set for objections to applications, the Hills Committee heard at its last meeting. The closing date for objections set by Epping Forest District Council can be some days after Loughton Town Council meets, meaning that objections, while meeting official closing dates, can be too late to be taken into account by the Town Council.

A recent example was in Church Close, off the top of Church Hill, where local residents objected strongly to an application which was recommended for approval by the Town Council before detailed objections by interested parties had been forwarded to the EFDC. Local views had equally not been taken into consideration, the Hills Committee believes. As Hills Chairman Peter Smith says on behalf of the committee: “The views of local people must be taken into account before the Town Council reaches its decisions. Not to do so is a travesty of the local process.”

‘The Town Council is not the final arbiter but its views tend to hold sway at District Council level’

The Hills Committee has another issue with the Town Council over plans for Southbank in York Hill. The Hills Committee is anxious to see a suitable development on the site before the property deteriorates beyond the point where it can be saved in any form. Hills Committee felt the most recent application (*see below*) would be suitable, in scale and appearance and would enhance the site in ways which previous applications would not.

The Town Council is not the final arbiter but its views tend to hold sway at District Council level. In most cases Epping Forest District Council is the decision-maker, giving it a duty to take into account all views, including those of the Town Council. But unmistakably it is the views of the Town Council which increasingly hold sway when the District Council makes its decision.



Southbank, York Hill: Loughton Town Council ‘did not listen to local views’

The Hills committee is waiting for a date for its showdown meeting with the Town Council. As Peter Smith puts it: “We have a big question mark over the Town Council’s procedures which can result in local people’s views being ignored in the decision-making process.”



Garden Waste Recycling

Many Hills members may have found it inconvenient that the doorstep garden waste recycling service stopped at the end of October, just as huge amounts of leaves and branches were being blown down into their gardens by the autumn gales. Ian Almond, the council recycling development officer, told Hills Committee member Amanda Gotham that he would love to run the service all year, but this year Epping Forest District Council had funds only for a six month service. Last year the council was criticised for starting the service too late, at the beginning of June, so this year the scheme began in May—and did not cover November. A new contractor, South Herts Waste Management, has just taken over the scheme and Mr Almond says discussions are under way to see if the service can be provided 12 months a year. The next collections will start in May 2003. 'Hopefully in the New Year we may hear that the special collections will become permanent,' says Amanda.

In the meantime garden refuse can be put out with ordinary refuse—using any sacks we please. Not very “green” - but still very convenient.

Stansted expansion

Hills Committee member Amanda Gothard writes:

Noise impact predictions for the proposed four runways at Stansted show that the area where 'aircraft noise is likely to be obtrusive' reaches as far south as Loughton. The Friends of Epping Forest have made representations to the Secretary of State, Alistair Darling MP, about the adverse effect of increased aircraft movements and noise, and the associated extra road traffic, on the forest. The Stop Stansted Expansion Campaign, a working group of the North West Essex and East Herts Preservation Association, can be reached at 01279 870558 or www.stopstanstedexpansion.com.



Traffic Congestion York Hill/Staples Road Junction with Queens Road:

Hills Committee chairman Peter Smith has responded to a local resident about traffic congestion at the York Hill/Staples Road Junction with Queens Road. In his letter, Peter Smith points out that the committee had written to Staples Road School and that the Head Teacher was equally concerned and has drawn the parents' attention to the problem. There were also plans for a “walking bus” from the Trapps Hill car park. New contractors (Vinci Parking) had taken over the patrolling of Loughton so the situation should improve. If it did not improve during this term, the committee would write a strong complaint to the Parking Manager of EFDC. The committee would welcome any further suggestions on how the problem might be alleviated.

Action on members' complaints

The Hills committee is to write again using the EFDC Complaints Procedure following further complaints from local residents about potholes in Pump Hill, the encroachment of trees and shrubs onto the highway on the closed portion of York Hill and missing posts on the green opposite The Gardeners. Potters Close potholes had now been repaired but none of the other work had been actioned,

It's Christmas time...

Join your Society for Carol Singing at 5pm on Saturday 21 December.



Carol Singing: The Hills carol singing will take place at 5pm on Saturday 21 December. The meeting place will be outside The Gardeners. Committee member Toby Scrutton has kindly offered us the loan of a large transit vehicle with reindeer, a Santa sledge and loud speakers. Hills funds will pay for the generator and provide tapes/CDs of carols. The area to be covered is Baldwins Hill and the streets in the surrounding area, finishing up at The Foresters. All proceeds to go to St Clare's Hospice. **ALL VERY WELCOME** to join us.



The **Hills Christmas tree** will, once again, be winking through the dark days by the Hills notice board in York Hill from Sunday 15 December (all being well...)

A fun and unusual visit to Father Christmas in Epping Forest on **Sunday 15 December at 11.00 am**

Forget Lapland, just meet at the Epping Forest Information Centre, High Beach, at 11.00am on Sunday 15 December when a walk suitable for all the family will wind its way to Father Christmas' Grotto. The cost is £1.50 per child, to include a present from Father Christmas...but drinks afterwards in one of the High Beach pubs are extra...

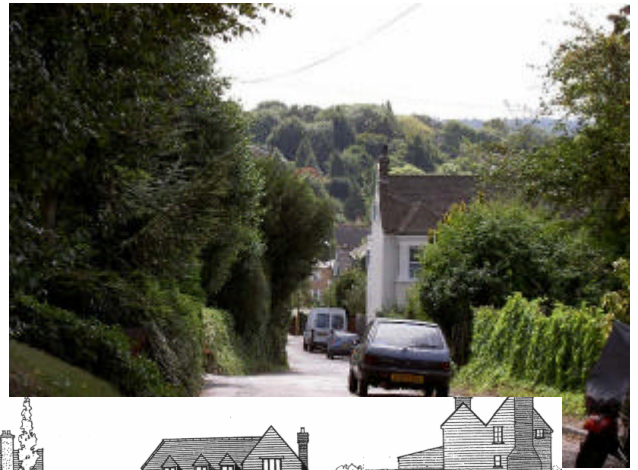


Alternatively, skip the walk and go straight to the Grotto at the High Beach Information Centre on Saturday and Sunday 21 and 22 December between 1.00pm and 3.30pm....and then to the pub. Not so much fun without the mystery forest walk.....but you can always invent you own walk to spice up the occasion.

(Information supplied by Jane Bowen)

Planning round-up

20-22 Pump Hill: Land off Pump Hill behind The Gardeners and adjoining cottages (to the right of picture looking down Pump Hill) has been put on the market for a reported £300,000 without planning permission being successfully obtained. (*Inset a recent plan submitted to EFDC*). A prospective buyer who spoke to the EFDC Planning Office was reportedly told it was 'unlikely' that planning permission would be granted on the current basis. In past applications there has been strong opposition from local residents individually and, on their behalf, by The Hills Committee. Most complaints have focused on over-development and access.



13 Woodbury: Although the committee had not received notification that planning permission had been granted, apparently it had. There is currently no outward sign that work has commenced.

43 York Hill (Rose Cottage): Planning permission has been refused to demolish the timber outbuildings and to build a conservatory.

Whitakers Way: Planning permission has been refused to rebuild a single storey building for therapy use.

Sedgley Rise: The development of two-storey offices was felt by the committee to be an improvement on "Autos To Go"

Behind Bosworth's: A kitchen is being turned into a bedroom and an outhouse into a sitting area. This does not come within the conservation area and there have apparently been no objections.

25 York Hill: Building work has commenced on this site at the bottom of York Hill which has permission for two semi-detached houses. There has so far been no move to demolish single storey commercial buildings on the York Hill/Queens Road junction to erect a detached house which the Hills Committee recommended for approval.

1 Wallers Hoppet: Notification from the planning office that a request had been granted for work to be carried out to a tree on this property.

11 Woodbury: Following rejection of plans at appeal the owner has submitted amended plans to the District Council. A decision is awaited.

Plans (right) rejected at appeal for 11 Woodbury



Hills joins Victorian Society

Hills Amenity Society has joined the Victorian Society which it is believed can assist in the listing of local landmark properties such as Southbank, York Hill. The Society is to be approached to provide a speaker for the Hill AGM in the Spring.

Clean up urged for School Green

School Green, as shown in this 1906 picture, is a special feature of The Hills. But the triangular green space at the York Hill and Staples Road junction is in a mess, according to local residents who have complained to the Hills Committee. The committee is to press for the agreed grass-cutting schedule to be properly maintained and it will be suggested to the District Council and the Forest Conservators that the area is sown with wild flowers. *(Picture from Loughton a Hundred Years Ago by William Chapman Waller and published by the Loughton and District Historical Society)*

The Hills Autumn lunch attracted nearly 60 local residents—and made a small profit of £9.

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