

Hills Amenity Society

Newsletter

<http://www.intsl.com/hills>

Autumn 2004

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Saturday 16 October

111 York Hill.

at 12 noon

Come and join friends and neighbours for a glass of wine and buffet lunch.

See any committee member or pay on the door—

£4 per person

It pays to look after the family silver

Having your area declared a conservation area always—according to writer Jane Barry in the Evening Standard—raises the value of your home.

But the fact that it is a conservation area also attracts the developers who want to "improve" what is there.

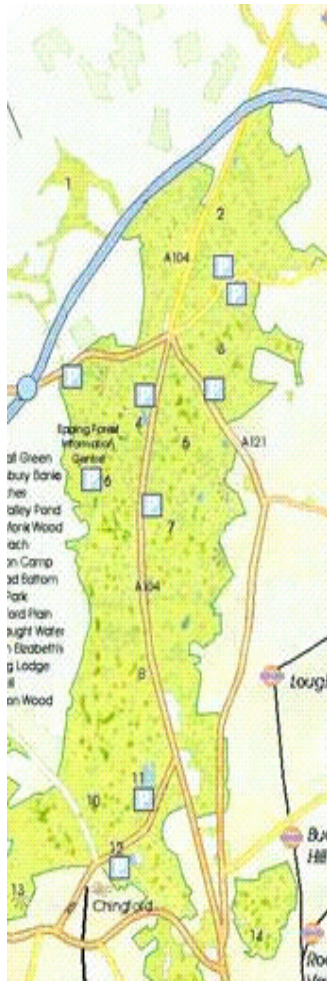
Sometimes they do...and that's great. Other times they don't...and that's not so great.

The Loughton Hills Conservation Areas



The Hills Amenity Society is you, the members, and those who have volunteered to serve on the committee. Together we try to ensure that

the good things happen—and the bad do not. Come along and have your say on 16 October. As you can see from this newsletter, there is plenty to talk about.



Epping Forest is on our doorsteps.....let's use it

There are lots of things going on in the forest for those who would like to make more use of this wonderful amenity on our doorsteps. Upcoming events, organised in conjunction with the BBC "British Isles: A Natural History", presented by Alan Titchmarsh, include:

Family Forest Fun Day

Join us at Epping Forest Field Centre for a fun family day out. Enjoying finding out about the forest with a range of hands on activities and stalls including exciting discovery trails and drop in and draw.

Epping Forest, High Beach, Loughton
Sunday 17 October

Times: 10am-4pm Cost: free

Information: 020 8502 8500

Email: enquiries.ef@field-studies-council.org

Decomposers in Action

A Guided Walk in Epping Forest led by Tricia Moxey to see how fungi and other organisms recycle the nutrients in the Forest.

Epping Forest, High Beach, Loughton
Thursday 21 October

Times: 1.30pm-3.30pm Cost: free

Information: 020 8508 0028 Email: eppingforest@corpoflondon.gov.uk

Council gets a good report...

Thursday 21 October

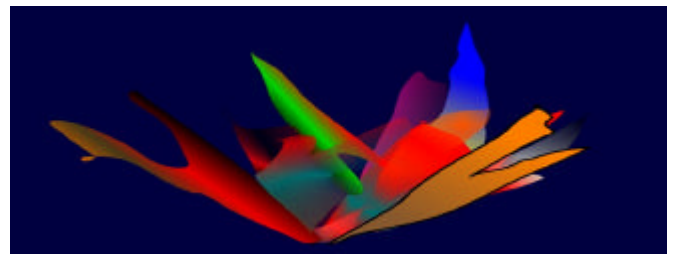
You may have spotted, as we did, the item in Epping Forest District Council's newsletter "The Forester" that our council has received plaudits for being among the best local authorities in Essex.

...but how good is our 'Good' council at supporting its Conservation Area?

The council's achievement was to receive a 'good' rating, the lower ratings being 'fair', 'weak' and 'poor'. Note that the council was not in the top ranking and council leader John Knapman admits that his council should learn from the 'best in class'.

The Audit Commission, which made the assessment, found the council had clear aims, consulted well, was financially sound with committed councillors and staff and was good at pulling in the council tax...as well as paying it out.

That's all right then...no mention of how well it is supporting its conservation areas, though.



Should we have to pay to 'bag it' up?

Epping Forest District Council, in common with authorities throughout the country, is being charged with meeting recycling targets imposed by central government. Currently its focus is on garden waste, with a fortnightly collection during the summer months, and the all-year round fortnightly collection of paper, especially newspapers and magazines. But should we

have to pay for bags to 'bag it up'? Doesn't this discourage people from acquiring the bags in the first place and simply encourage more to have bonfires? As we enter peak bonfire season have a thought for those around you and 'bag it up' for recycling. Go on—you can help the council meet its targets as well. [Picture courtesy Parminder and Shaun].

New moves to develop Pump Hill cottages site

Planning Update...

Once upon a time the site off to the right of our picture, looking down Pump Hill, was the gardens of the weather-boarded cottages next door to the Gardeners Arms public house.



Then along came a potential developer, who bought the cottages, separated the gardens and resold the cottages.

That was all a long time ago... and the site, despite numerous attempts to develop it, still lies empty and, it has to be said, in something of a state of neglect.

Hills chairman Peter Smith recently had a visit from the land owner, who is planning to submit plans for a two bedroomed, black, weather-boarded cottage. He has shown the Hills committee a preview of the plans (outline above) and invited views.

After studying the plans, the Committee's views were largely positive: members felt the cottage design was completely in keeping with the local area. However it also felt that Hills Amenity Society members living nearby may have some specific objections. The committee felt it should not comment at this stage. However, if the plans are submitted the committee, on behalf of the Society, felt it must emphasis the need for strict controls.

If you have views, strong or otherwise, about this proposal (pictured above) contact Peter Smith, or any other committee member.

Woodbury Hollow—Report awaited following representations by local conservation bodies on plans for changes to the historic white house at the top of Woodbury Hollow.

Therapy Unit, Stables Cottage, Whittakers Way—outcome of appeal awaited. Residents have objected to the noise which comes from the type of therapy offered.

27/29 Staples Road – Outcome of the appeal for the proposed 5-bedroom house is still awaited. Planning permission has now been turned down three times.

Marie's Path—the hard-won right of way, between the lower end of Queens Road and Church Hill now has provisional footpath signs in place.

Ash Trees at Southbank, York Hill—No decision has been advised following local opposition to the felling of three large ash trees in the garden of Southbank, York Hill.

13 Pump Hill—at appeal—Plans to convert the bungalow at 13 Pump Hill into a five bedroom house have gone to appeal following opposition on a number of fronts to what is argued to be over-development of this site. The Hills Amenity Society has objected and a decision is awaited.

"A letter from the Hills Society, which covers around 600 properties in and around the Conservation area, holds considerable weight with Epping Forest District Council"
- chairman Peter Smith



Not great gritters...so far

Gritting of roads will almost certainly be a topic of conversation in the next few months as autumn turns to winter.

The GOOD news is that the Government has toughened the responsibilities for local authorities following some high profile disasters

such as that surely still well remembered M11 horror story of all-night chaos.

The BAD news is that the County Council could hardly be said to have done a great job up to now...so will it get any better?

True, we have more grit bins -but still need more, for example at Steeds Way—which could help out in emergencies. But these are hardly going to prevent accidents.

Hills Amenity Society will be writing to ECC drawing attention to the dangers of ice in the Hills—and pressing for more attention than we have received in the last few years.

Infrastructure will be put in place before 19,000 new homes, promises Prescott

According to the office of the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, the huge development planned for the M11 corridor will only take place provided it is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure.

This information could well come as encouragement to many, however most would surely support Epping Forest Council leader John Knapman who has expressed deep concern about the sheer number of 19,000 or so new homes planned for the Epping Forest District area.

The pressure on the Conservation Area is obvious—something which we have featured before in these columns and on which the Hills Committee has also regularly voiced its concerns.

...but we should fear the impact on the Conservation Area, says committee



Clearly the more pressure there is for new homes the harder the Town and District Councils will find it to limit development in the this area.

The council is arguing current proposals go far further than is necessary to meet reasonable local demands. Government should listen.

Silence from Council says it all...

The Hills Committee has continued to press for an answer on what action the Council would be taking to ensure that developments are carried out in line with approved plans. At issue is the City Motors site in Church Hill where the building was constructed taller than approved—and received retrospective approval.

The Hills Planning spokesperson wrote to senior planning officer Chris Embling in February and again in July pressing for some assurance. The committee heard at its October meeting that there was still silence from the council—possibly saying it all..

A right gusher that was...

Early risers a few weeks back were treated to the sight of York Hill as a gushing river when a water main burst up by the post box at the top of the road. Efforts to report the gusher were made more difficult for those who dived for the local phone directory and found themselves routed to Three Valleys Water Services. In case you need to report a flooding emergency, you may wish to take a note of the Thames Water number:



08459 200800

Memory lane...



The Kings Head (left) now pizza parlour Zizzy's, has changed quite a bit in 100 years. Back then Woodberry Hollow was quite evidently a field, now a private garden. [Pictures courtesy Loughton 100 Years Ago, Richard Morris and Chris Pond]

Parish notices

.Make a date for carol singing:

On Saturday 18 December meet outside the Gardeners Arms at 6.00pm to sing around the streets of the Conservation Area. Collection to go to a local Children's Hospice.



Hills Quiz Night plans for a quiz night are taking place for a date to be announced in the autumn.

Hills notice board at the York Hill-Potters Close junction is now back in action—standing up straight (courtesy Ray Gaffney and Ian Locks) with new tiles (courtesy Vincent and Nicola Goldstein) and with smart new Perspex (courtesy Jane Bowen). A real team effort and thanks to all concerned. Hopefully we will have some new paving to stand on and a repaired chain link fence before too long!



Please clear it up!

Dog owners are urged to have consideration for others...please clear it up! Thank you....



Please write to us if you have an issue, information or views you would like to express through the Hills newsletter. Our next edition will be in December.

Join up now

Subscriptions are now overdue—new members welcome

Membership of The Hills Amenity Society costs just £4 a year. Subscriptions are now overdue. If you have not already done so, please pay promptly. New members always welcome.

We are all volunteers!

Thank you.....



Hills Amenity Society

The best £4 you will spend this year!

Throughout the year the Hills Amenity Society works to protect the very special environment in which we live—The Hills Conservation areas of Loughton. The Society undertakes a number of functions and services including:

- ?? review of local planning applications
- ?? publication of this newsletter
- ?? AGM with talks by guest speakers
- ?? summer gardens competition
- ?? an informal Autumn lunch
- ?? carol singing for charity

It has also published a [Discovery Trail](#) of the area and initiated a number of environmental improvements, including the replacement of the concrete lampposts, the installation of wooden bollards to protect the greens from vehicle damage, the renovation of the Pump Hill pump, as well as undertaking projects to maintain the area's hedges and footpaths.

Tell us what you think

The Hills Amenity Society would like to know what you think about the area in which you live, what are the things you would most like to change— and how you believe The Hills Amenity Society might help. Also, would you be prepared to lend a hand?

Is the environment of The Hills:	Do you feel the Hills Amenity Society	Comments:
<input type="checkbox"/> Improving	<input type="checkbox"/> Gets it about right	
<input type="checkbox"/> About the same	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do more	
<input type="checkbox"/> Getting worse	<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure	
Are you aware of the of The Hills Amenity Society	Would you be prepared to lend a hand	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully aware	<input type="checkbox"/> Delivering newsletters	
<input type="checkbox"/> Just about aware	<input type="checkbox"/> Attending events	
<input type="checkbox"/> Not previously aware	<input type="checkbox"/> On the Committee	

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

HILLS AMENITY SOCIETY

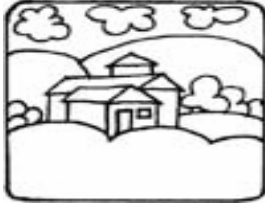
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Hills Amenity Society

*Working to protect and enhance the
Conservation Areas in which we live*



Now over 30 years old, the Hills Amenity Society, which is affiliated to the Civic Trust, was formed in 1972 as a result of the interest shown by local residents in their environment. Its aims are to preserve, protect, develop and improve features of both historic and public interest, and to promote higher standards of planning and design, in keeping with existing amenities and the rural character of the area.

The importance of the Hills, with its unique blend of building styles and materials, set in narrow lanes hedged with hawthorn and holly, and which enjoys spectacular views across the Thames valley to the Kent hills, was further recognised in 1977 when Epping Forest District Council created the York Hill conservation area.

The Hills Committee

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The Hills Autumn Lunch

will take place on

16 October at

111 York Hill
12 noon

£4- all welcome