



Newsletter

www.hillsamenitysociety.co.uk

Email: info@hillsamenitysociety.co.uk

Autumn-Winter 2007

Would you be our treasurer?

After some ten years in post, Amanda Gotham has stood down as treasurer of the Hills and we urgently need a replacement.

The task is not arduous (promise) but it is essential that we handle our members' money responsibly. If you would be prepared to help us, please contact wendlesfisher@hotmail.com or any committee member.

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Will you help shape future of the Hills?

The biggest Hills project since the adoption of the area for Conservation Area status has been agreed between the District Council and the society's committee. Volunteers are invited to take part in a Character Appraisal exercise to catalogue the special characteristics of the York Hill, Baldwins Hill and Staples Road Conservation Areas and to start the process of setting out a strategic plan for future direction and enhancements.

The joint initiative was agreed at a meeting with the council's conservation area specialists Paul Sutton and Lucy Davis with senior planning officer Nigel Davidson in attendance.

The meeting followed earlier discussions about how to protect the special characteristics of the three areas against ever growing pressure to pull down old proper-



ties, develop vacant plots and maximise building sizes.

The District Council has a long-term strategy to carry out appraisals of all its conservation areas but the meeting heard that The Hills Conservation Areas were low down the list and not likely to be reviewed for several years.

By agreeing to work with the council we hope to pull the review of the Hills areas up the priority list.

See Page 4 for full story.

40 attend Hills lunch

Some 40 people attended the Hills lunch and presentation of the perpetual shield on 3 November. Presenting the shield to Graham and Lynda Davis of York Hill, chairman Wendy Fisher said the front gardens of cottages were a key fea-

ture in the three conservation areas and how much the efforts of those who kept them looking neat and tidy were appreciated. Wendy appealed for those prepared join the committee to contact her at wendlesfisher@hotmail.com

Seen them at it?

Graffiti, fly-tipping and litter are all things which take the gloss off our beautiful conservation areas. Please do your bit to help by picking up litter and reporting offenders. Hills Watch Report Page 2.



Bairstow Eves
COUNTRYWIDE

...for something special

Potato Grounds a Hills treasure

What do Monkchester Close, Firs Drive, The Summit, Baldwins Hill, Whitakers Way, The Lanterns, Wroths Path, Stony Path and the Alms Houses all have in common? All share the boundary of the allotments known as Loughton Potato Ground, one of a group of charities known as the Loughton Parochial Charities, which are administered by three Trustees, one of whom is always the Rector of St. John the Baptist Church, Loughton, the other two nominated by the Local Authority.

The charity was set up in 1813 and 1817 by the Lady of Loughton Manor, Miss Ann Whitaker (hence Whitakers Way), to benefit the 'Industrious Poor of Loughton'. Under her Will, the land cannot be used for any other purpose and income from rents can only be used in its



maintenance and administration. Before her death in 1825 Miss Whitaker occasionally resided at Loughton Hall (destroyed by fire 1836), a previous resident being Captain Wroth (Wroths Path). A 150-year-old ledger lists all plot holders and rents paid and comments on upkeep of plots. The current plot holders endeavour to grow organic fruit and vegetables and recent encouragement from television programmes has generated a waiting list for allotments. Secretary: Joyce Sutton 07767 226928.

Keep crime at bay



Anti-social behaviour tops Loughton policing priorities

Essex Police say we are now in peak burglary season so take a few simple steps to protect your property:

- **Fit** an automatic timer
- **Ensure** doors, windows, garages and sheds are closed and locked with keys removed.
- **Fit** a front door viewer to allow those at home to see any callers before opening the door
- **Install** a burglar alarm or CCTV system to create an effective deterrent.
- **Store** keys out of sight in the house, especially away from the front door to stop thieves 'fishing' for them.
- **Mark** valuable property with an ultraviolet or permanent marker
- **Photograph** or video valuables, especially antiques, paintings and jewellery where marking could affect the value of the items.
- **Join** your local Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

Protect your mobile phone

In 12 per cent of house burglaries, a mobile phone is stolen. Make sure it's useless to the thief by making a note of your phone's unique International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number, a serial number that can't be erased from the phone. Key in *#06# to see the unique 14 to 17-digit code, the IMEI number with which your mobile operator can disable your phone. You can register your IMEI number at www.immobilise.com together with any serial no. on the kit.

*Please display
your Crime
Watch sticker*

Anti-social behaviour currently tops the list of Loughton policing priorities with five youths being arrested during the last month for causing graffiti. Other priorities include burglary, violent crime, vehicle crime and criminal damage.

Loughton Neighbourhood Police Team is led by Sgt Andrea Dunn. If you need to discuss any issue contact the team on 01279 641212 or Mobile: 07968 354021.

Key Coordinator and York Hill, Wallers

Hoppit and Potters Close: Susan Mushtaq, hillswatch@mywebspaces.co.uk 020 8502 2665

York Hill: Andrew Reid, areid@waltham.ac.uk

Staples Road: Mary Erwin, hillswatch@hotmail.co.uk 0795 154169

Steeds Way: Martyn Soul-Gray, martynsoulgray@hotmail.com 078751 32058

Baldwins Hill (Foresters to Goldings Hill)

Whitakers Way and The Lanterns Grahame Williams, grahamyra@aol.com 020 8508 6204

Baldwins Hill (up to Foresters), Ashfields and St

John's Road: Norman Hall, norman.hall3@ntlworld.com 020 8281 1890

If you would like to be a coordinator for Queens Road, The Summit, Stony Path or Wroths Path, Woodbury Hill and King's Hill, Forest Way 020

Hills property update

In association with



This two-room bungalow on the corner of York Hill and Staples Road is advertised at £380,000 by Bairnstow Eves.



Just £525,000 will secure the three bed refurbished cottage in Forest Way/York Hill.



Property selling prices in The Hills April to end August:

7 York Hill, detached freehold sold 30 August £300,000.

22 Pump Hill, Terrace cottage, sold 16 August, £360,000.

19 York Hill, semi-detached, sold 13 July, £450,000.

19 Queens Road, flat, sold 29 June, £249,000.

55 Baldwins Hill, detached, sold 18 June, £490,000.

16 The Heights, flat, sold 12 June, 345,000.

40 Queens Road, detached, sold 8 June, £494,540.

95 Staples Road, detached, sold 1 June, £365,000.

12 Wroths Path, semi-detached, sold 11 May, £315,000.

14 St John's Road, detached, sold 30 April, £1.08m.

60 Queens Road, semi-detached, sold 30 April, £372,000.

113 York Hill, Terraced cottage, sold 27 April, £360,000.



The vast project to create a multi-million pound mansion on the footprint of Dryads Hall, (left) retains the west end gable to preserve the style. Work has yet to get out of the ground—but there's a huge amount down there to support the new structure. Clearing the site alone took several months. Meanwhile the extension of the Woodbury Cottages (pictured left) into a modern home continues. The property sits on a large site jutting into the forest on Woodbury Hill.



Staples School project is worth wait

Anne Davidson, Staples Road Infants head teacher, writes:

Obviously, you've been watching the build progress, but as you may have heard, the date has slipped to mid May. The reasons for the overrun are many, but most of the time was lost getting out of the ground. There were a number of problems with water and gas pipes and also the ground being softer than expected. At one point an old air raid shelter was discovered. We are hoping there should be no more significant delays, but in the meantime it's worth highlighting the excitement of the Glulam beams (the big side-to-side arched



beams that will form a prominent feature internally) and also the roof trusses when they were delivered. Now that the roof is on, we can see for the first time just how good it all looks. For the first time the two schools will be physically linked and this creates a wealth of opportunities for changes and improvements in how we work together. It will be a fantastic new addition to both the schools and the local community. We can't wait to get in!

Planning Update...

from the Hills Committee

Oak Lodge, 1 Whittakers Way.

Two storey rear extension overlooking allotments – no objections raised.

9 The Summit – removal of Scotts Pine currently protected. Decision now passed by the Council that it could be sensitively pruned.

The Lanterns, Whittakers Way – single storey rear extension – no objections raised.

41 Staples Road – removal of boundary hedge with 43; remove existing paving; replace paving and erection of new stone wall.

76 Queens Road – loft conversion with dormer, porch with room over – permission granted.

2a The Uplands. Flats allowed on site despite many objections.

So what might a character appraisal of The Hills look like?

So what might a character appraisal of the three Hills conservation areas look like and how might we tackle such a project?

Happily there are two significant steps already laid: work done in the past by local historians such as William Addison and Chris Pond in turn led to an excellent booklet highlighting some of the characteristics of our area. And we will be working to a template already being used by Epping Forest District Council. Key "Matching Green Character Appraisal" into your favourite search engine and it should take you the Epping Forest District Council's publication of March this year.

The proposal is that we will establish teams each of which will work on a key aspect of the report. As we understand it, these have at least to include sections covering location and population; topography and setting; historical development and archaeology; the character analysis; opportunities for enhancement; and a management plan for the future.

We will need to look at issues such as how key views – for example from the top of York Hill, Woodbury Hollow and Baldwins Hill – can be protected and possibly enhanced. We would need to identify the landmark properties that give the area its character: individual properties such as Forest Villa in Staples Road, or groups of cottages which exist in all three conservation areas such as on York and Pump Hills, Baldwins Hill and Staples Road. And what about possible enhancement and management for the future? What shape would we like this to take?

The Hills Amenity Society believes it is absolutely the right group to take on this project in partnership with Epping Forest District Council and wants as many people as possible to take part in different aspects, firstly doing the research and ground work, then developing the various parts of the project and, as we progress, to consult with everyone in the area through this newsletter, public meetings and so on. If you would like to be involved, please contact Ian Locks at ian.locks@ntlworld.com or by telephone on 020 8502 3998.



Woodbury Hollow cottages—now under substantial extension and remodelling



Gardeners Arms, dating from the 17th Century, - one of the Hills three landmark pubs

The Loughton Hills Conservation Areas



We've a good start



In 1997 a leaflet produced on the three conservation areas did a lot of the ground work for us, listing buildings of historic interest, highlighting some of the special characteristics. This, with histories of the area, will give us a great

So what's it all for...?

The Council defines the purpose of the character appraisal to

- Define special architectural and historic interest of a conservation area;
- Review current conservation area boundaries, to reflect what is considered to be of special interest;
- Increase public awareness of the aims of conservation area designation and encourage community involvement in the protection of the character of the area;
- Identify measures that need to be taken to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and put forward proposals for its enhancement.



Some of the aspects of The Hills we will study including historic homes such as Forest Villa, in Staples Road, once home to lexicographer Dr. Robert Hunter, the collections of cottages in all three areas and landmark views.

Graham and Linda receive Hills shield

Graham and Linda Davis, of 89 York Hill, received the Gardens Shield at the Hills Autumn Lunch held on 3 November. Presenting the award, Hills chairman, Wendy Fisher, praised the couple for maintaining an immaculate front garden and for their patience in the face of 'legalised vandalism' by council workers who had chopped down a planted border along their wicket fence. Cottage gardens in all the Hills conservation areas have long been recognised as an important part of the overall impression of the area and relied on residents being interested in maintaining them—something many are concerned about as more and more properties are snapped up as “buy to let” and short term residents replace those with owner occupier interests.

‘Cottage gardens important part of area’

Pictured are Linda and Graham with son Jonathan receiving the shield from Wendy Fisher (centre). Our photographer apologises for omitting two-year-old Charlotte who was holding Linda's hand...! And below is the garden of 89 York Hill.

The shield has been presented each year since 1980.



There was a further burst in the Staples Road water main on October 12. It happened in the section of road now renamed as Shaftesbury, but it is the same main. Luckily no homes were flooded this time (unlike on March 1 this year) but a huge amount of water continued gushing until Monday 15, the road was flooded and was damaged, and the mud created still in evidence today. Amanda Gotham of Staples Road has gained the support of the MP Eleanor Laing and the water ombudsman in her campaign to get Thames Water to replace the mains which keep bursting along Staples Road. So far, Thames Water say there haven't been enough bursts to merit replacement and they are going to keep patching it up. Barry Atkinson of the Consumer Council for Water has

Staples Road flooding Update

written to Mrs Gotham: “I find myself in agreement with everything you have written.

“I have taken further advice and find there is nothing we can do legally to compel them to either replace or reline the main, so I have initially asked them for more details of the bursts (and) the

Six hour gush early this year



location.

“They cannot allow people's houses to be flooded on such a regular basis. Your approach to your MP may prove effective.

“Once I have a response on the details of the bursts, I cannot believe they do

not have a record of which main they worked on, I will let you know and make an approach to them to carry out some long term remedial work. As a final resort I will use the disruption to people's lives caused by the flooding. I will make every endeavour to get a long term solution.”

Please support the call for new water mains by contacting Assistant Manager Barry Atkinson at thames@ccwater.org.uk.

Graffiti is still a problem with the outflow from the Staples Road Pond a special lure for idle minds with paint cans in their hands. A notice at the top of Church Hill has taken several bashings, too. If you see them at it, please phone the police.

HILLS AMENITY SOCIETY



*Working to protect the conservation
areas in which we live*

Find out about us at

WWW.HILLSAMENITYSOCIETY.CO.UK



A contemporary smokers' terrace dominates the view up the slope to the FA pub (Forester Arms) while the view (below) from the pub on a beautiful autumn Sunday morning makes it....almost worthwhile to be a smoker.

Comment

The Hills appraisal project...



The decision of the Hills Committee to take up the challenge of carrying out a Character Appraisal of the three conservation areas – York Hill, Staples Road and Baldwins Hill—is a brave one.

The stark truth is that the three Hills Amenity areas are way down the list of the 25 in the Epping Forest District Council. But if we do much of the work ourselves then the council will pull us up the list and help to put in place the all important management programme for the future.

It will mean a great deal of work and with just six people on the committee our resources as volunteers are far too slim to complete such a project so your committee hopes others will be sufficiently interested to join us in this exercise. We need your help NOW!



Parish notices

Once again the Hills Committee is organising seasonal lighting around the notice board in York Hill/Potters Close.

Carol singing details will be circulated.

Seasonal greetings

As this will be a last newsletter until the Spring: seasonal greetings to all our members.



Thank you...

...to all those who **pick up litter** in the Hills. Allowing litter to accumulate encourages still more - and other irresponsible behaviour besides. ...and thank you to **pet owners** for clearing up after their dogs. Dog mess is the number one hate for so many of you.

Hills Amenity Society Committee

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Subscriptions are due for 2007-8—new members welcome

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



Join up now

Hills Amenity Society