

Newsletter

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

Spring 2003

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Pressures of living in 'The Golden Triangle' and 'Little Cornwall'

Anyone who missed the television programme featuring 'The Golden Triangle' of Loughton-Buckhurst Hill and Chigwell probably did not miss out on much more than a bit of a giggle.

And the idea promulgated through the local paper that we are now billed as "Little Cornwall" seemed just a little far-fetched—even for those of us who love where we live.

But if the idea helps send the value of cottages through their own roofs, should we be concerned? Well, yes, possibly.

The propensity of people to destroy the area

they live in if there is a quick and reasonably honest buck to be made is perennial.

Hence the pre-occupation of the Hills Amenity Society with matters of planning, involving both trees and new and extended properties.

Trying to extend three bedroom houses into six-bedroom/six bathroom mansions is difficult to see as "improvement".

Living in a Conservation Area brings with it the responsibility to



maintain and enhance the environment. That should—and must—be the criteria for all "improvements".

So what about 'Little Cornwall?' Blame Loughton girl Ruth Rendell. See Page Two.

Hills Amenity Society AGM - Wednesday 30 April 7.30pm - all welcome

The AGM of the Hills Amenity Society will be held at The Gardeners Arms, York Hill, on Wednesday 30 April at 7.30pm.

All residents of The Hills are most welcome

at this meeting which offers a chance to hear about the work of the Committee and to raise issues of interest or concern.

In the chair will be Peter Smith, Chairman of

the Hills Amenity Society. The guest speaker this year will be Councillor Chris Pond, a member of the committee, who has written a number of books on our area and will speak on local affairs.

How The Hills were dubbed Loughton's 'Little Cornwall'

Estate agents excited by rapidly rising house prices will grab at any little gem of hyperbole to help fan the flames—and the commission they earn.

'Loughton's little Cornwall was a promising line—and a good headline for the local newspaper. But did you know that it was Ruth Rendell—she of the mysteries—who renamed "The Hills" in her suspense novel 'The Face of Trespass', first published in 1974 and later adapted for television.

Most of the action in this gripping tale takes place in a tumble-down cottage in Epping Forest between Waltham Abbey and Loughton, which keep their names.

Local girl Ruth Rendell (pictured) who was educated at Loughton County High School, lived in Loughton for several years before moving to the picturesque village of Polstead. It was here that Rendell created her famous Inspector Wexford Mysteries, located in the Stour Valley area of Suffolk.

So if your house value went up by 75 per cent last year, you owe some of that to Ruth Rendell's imagination....jolly good luck to you, and you know who to thank!



Ruth Rendell—local girl

Trees: help wanted

Epping Forest District Council has launched a 'Landmark Trees' initiative, details of which can be found at

<http://www.intsl.com/hills/detail/trees.htm>

Residents are asked to nominate landmark and veteran trees which they feel are important to the area and should be conserved. A form is available on the website. Please print the form available on the site and send to the contact on the form. If you are not a computer-user, then please contact any member of the committee and they will supply a form for you.

The Tree Warden for the Hills is now Matthew Geyman tel. 07970 610002 who would be pleased to help.

'The loss of any trees must be regarded seriously'
Planning Inspector at appeal on 11 Woodbury Hill

Focus on Stony Path

Extracted from York Hill Conservation Area Discovery Trail

Stony Path leads downwards from Baldwins Hill past mixed housing ranging from modest cottages to substantial homes. The cottage next to Foresters Arms was a general stores until 1939 while Walnut Cottage is a 'listed' property, even though it has been largely rebuilt. The cottage is of seventeenth century origin. Baldwin's cottage was once the coach house to a large house which formerly occu-



ried the corner site with Baldwins Hill. The charming Whitaker Almshouses, built in 1847, overlook Arewater Green at the end of Stony Path.

Outcry over flat block plans for Church Hill

Planning update

A well-attended public meeting has been held to object to an application submitted to the Epping Forest District Council to demolish existing properties at 12- 30 Church Hill and replace with a three-storey block of 29 flats.

Hills Amenity Society has objected to the application stating : ‘We object and wish to voice our concern about the proposed demolition of such a large number of properties, which form a part of "old" Loughton.

‘We feel that the proposed development is far too large in size and completely out of character with the surrounding area. These flats will also mean a lack of privacy for existing properties, particularly those in Queens Road as they will back on to them.’

The letter goes on to express concern about further traffic congestion and parking problems and noise and disturbance for the existing residents in Church Hill, Queens Road and The Uplands. Highlighting the disputed public right of way between Queens Road and Church Hill the letter suggests that no decision should be made until the right of way application has been resolved.

Anyone wishing to be involved in a campaign against these plans should contact Steve, Maureen or Alan on 8502 2286. They state: “This threat will not go away unless we unite and protest. We need your help and support.”



Our illustration is figurative— which is a small mercy!

Planning Update...

43 York Hill (Rose Cottage): The application to fell the Lime Tree was refused

9 Staples Road: Planning approval was given but subject to considerable alterations

33 Brancaster Place: The proposal to remove the horse chestnut tree is still awaiting the result of the appeal

13 Woodbury: The committee had not received any notification that planning permission had been granted but apparently it had. Major construction work is now almost complete.

81 York Hill: The proposed rear extension is identical to that already added to No.79 York Hill. It was therefore agreed that no objection should be made to the planning application

3 Woodbury Hill: An application has been made to fell an Ash Tree, which has a tree preservation order attached to it. It is understood the Tree Officers were viewing on the 16 April.

Southbank, York Hill: Work has now begun—with most of the old house demolished. Two gables and an elegant chimney remain. It is believed that a swimming pool is to be built within the grounds. Planning would not be required.

The Victorian Society is organising a 'Walk

Council defers decision on 11 Woodbury for site visit

Epping Forest District Council Planning Committee has deferred a decision on 11 Woodbury Hill for members of the Committee to visit the site. The plans have been scaled down from the initial application, rejected at appeal, and subsequent versions submitted.

E.F.D.C. Planning Office is recommending accepting the revised application despite objections from a wide range of local residents as well as from Loughton Town Council, Loughton Residents Association and The Hills Amenity Society. All objections referred to the scale of the planned extension which has sought to turn the current three bedroom house into a six-bedroom, six bathroom mansion with viewing platforms overlooking York Hill.

The Hills Amenity Society is to lodge an objection that correct procedures have not been followed as no plans had been available to view the amended version. Our picture is of an earlier version of the plans.



County Council rejects pleas for gritting on icy Hills as 'no priority'

Forget gritting of roads in The Hills in icy periods. That's the message from Essex County Council Principal Engineer Trevor Barnard, who told Hills Committee: "The County Council, as Highway Authority, determine the policy and extent of the winter service and their policy states that the network of roads to be salted during the winter period shall include 'A' and 'B' roads, access to routes for emergency services and public service bus routes carrying four or more buses per day, five days a week.

I am afraid that the roads you mention do not meet any of these

criteria.

"The highway authority has a responsibility to maintain the highway under the Highways Act 1980. The presence of snow and ice on the road or footway does not make it out of repair and therefore the removal of snow and ice, and indeed prevention of its formation is not a statutory requirement of the highway authority or its agents. 'I trust that this explanation clarifies the situation.'

Councillor Chris Pond reported that 27 locations for grit bins had been identified: four within the conservation area including one at

the junction of Staples Road, York Hill and Queens Road. EFDC was willing to fund four and the Town Council might add more.

Hills Committee member Amanda Gotham reports there is hope of better conditions at the Staples Road/York Hill junction. Trevor Barnard has admitted BOTH ground water seepage from the forest AND a water leak. The water leak has, he says, now been fixed and pressure is being put on the Forest Conservators to redirect the seepage from the forest.

While on Staples Road/York Hill green, hopefully some residents, at least, will applaud the tidier state now that the grass has been cut?

Anyone for a walk around Loughton?

Round Loughton' on Saturday 14 June followed by tea at Councillor Chris Pond's garden or, if raining, at Lopping Hall.

The walk commences at Loughton Station at 2.00 p.m. and there is a fee of £5.00 per person. For those interested the telephone number is: 020 8747 5895.

Chris Pond has suggested that a similar walk could be organised for Hills members if there is sufficient interest.

Those attending the AGM on Wednesday 30 April can express their interest then.

'It is amazing how interesting your home town can be in the company of someone who can open your eyes'

Another group who do a lot of walking around Loughton are the tree wardens, who had a public meeting on 25 March. The Hills Tree Warden is Matthew Geyman. If you would like to help him just contact him on 07970 610002 or any committee member.

Hills Amenity Society visit to Houses of Parliament

Fancy tea at the Houses of Parliament? Hills Committee member Councillor Chris Pond is arranging for a party of up to 20 people to have tea on the terrace—that's the bit you can see in our picture—on a date to be arranged in June on early July.

Places are bound to be in strong demand—so if you are interested,



Anyone for tea on the Terrace?

please contact any member of the committee as soon as possible. If you have not been to the House before, this is an unmissable opportunity. We apologise in advance that places will obviously be in short supply. Places will be allocated by lot..

The best £3 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
- ?? the publication of a newsletter
- ?? AGM with illustrated 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. Photographic exhibitions and a Gardens Open Day have also been successful additions to the events calendar.

(Picture is The Gardeners Arms, at the heart of the York Hill Conservation Area)

Join up now

Subscriptions are now due—new members welcome

Membership of The Hills Amenity Society costs just £3 a year. Subscriptions are now due and new members are welcome. Application forms are included with this newsletter. Please pay promptly: we are all volunteers!

Thank you.....




Hills Amenity Society

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:

- Improving
- About the same
- Getting worse

Do you feel the Hills Amenity Society

- Gets it about right
- Could do more
- Not sure

Comments:

Are you aware of the of The Hills Amenity Society

- Fully aware
- Just about aware
- Not previously aware

Would you be prepared to lend a hand

- Delivering newsletters
- Attending events
- 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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AGM:

**Wednesday 30 April
7.30pm at The Gar-
deners Arms, York
Hill
- all very welcome**

criteria.

The highway authority has a responsibility to maintain the highway under the Highways Act 1980.

The presence of snow and ice on the road or footway does not make it out of repair and therefore

the removal of snow and ice, and indeed prevention of its formation is not a statutory

requirement of the highway authority or its agents.

I trust that this explanation clarifies the situation.

Trevor Barnard

Principal Engineer

Highway Services

01992 564095

email tbarnard@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

—unless residents do it themselves.

And that is exactly what a number of residents did. One was Hills Committee member Matthew Geyman who lives on the dangerous corner at the junction of York Hill and Pump Hill adjacent to The Gardeners Arms.

“I would like to know if the Council would be liable in the case of an accident,” he wrote.

Councillor Chris Pond, another locations for grit bins had been identified. Chris had put forward 4 sites within the conservation area including one at the junction of Staples Road, York Hill and Queens Road. The EFDC were willing to fund 4. The Loughton Town Council could possibly fund a few more.

Amanda stated that she had received a letter from the Forest Conservators who said that they would do something about the running water at the Staples Road/York Hill junction.

