



# Newsletter

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

Spring 2005



**How might a security system work for The Hills?**

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## Hills Annual Meeting



Have your say.....on vandalism, crime, a neighbourhood watch programme, security systems, planning.....

**Wednesday 27 April**

**Gardeners' Arms at 7.30 pm**

Guest speaker will be

Mike Evans, chairman of Loughton Branch of RNLI

**Have your say...**

**Peter Smith, Chairman, Hills Amenity Society, writes...**

Our Annual General Meeting this year will take place on Wednesday 27th April at 7.30 p.m. in the private room of The Gardeners Arms in York Hill. This is an opportunity for residents to meet and to hear the various issues that the committee have been in-

## Time to act against Hills crime?

**Hills residents are up in arms at a growing wave of vandalism, which has included one person being attacked and many vehicles damaged.**

**The most serious incident was the mugging of one resident in the lane outside 119 York Hill whose bag was snatched by a large youth who then ran off.**

**Appeals to the police for action have not resulted in any noticeable decrease in the attacks.**

**Cars have been "keyed" - five on York**



**Hill alone in one night—wing mirrors and windows smashed and motor-bikes knocked over.**

**Councillor Chris Pond has written to the police appealing for action. A question for the Hills AGM will be whether**

**it is time to take action into our own hands and set up our own security systems based around the two public houses and the school at the centre of the? See inside for ways in which we might do this.**

## How a security system might work for us

While it might be nice to think that a full police system could be installed on The Hills we might also feel that this could be both "over the top" as well as pretty unlikely.

More acceptable and accessible might be a series of smaller security systems based on the two pubs at the heart of the conservation areas and the Staples Road School.

A web-based system with six wireless cameras could be up and running for £1,500 or so and anyone with a home computer linked to the Internet and in possession of the necessary password could join the surveillance activity from the comfort of their own home. Much more



**Systems for up to 6 cameras can cost as little as £1,000 with wireless cameras themselves available for less than £100 each**

useful than just browsing or tv watching!

Clearly the licensees of the pubs and the Head teacher and governors of the school would have to give their agreement if these more public places were to act as the hubs for the systems. And there are lots of good reasons why all three might be persuaded to co-operate.

It might even be that the pubs, at least, are the reason why some of these anti-social people visit our neighbourhood. Surely it is in all our interests to invest a few pounds between us to help clamp down on this anti-social, extremely irritating and, in the case of personal attack, deeply distressing behaviour? A good topic indeed for the AGM on 27 April.

## Or how about a Neighbourhood Watch scheme?

If security cameras prove to be more than we are prepared to afford to protect ourselves, our homes and our cars - and even if we do - the much less costly option of a neighbourhood watch scheme is certainly high on the agenda for consideration.

*'With so much vandalism about there is a lot we can do to help each other...'*

There are more than 160,000 schemes operating in the UK and around three quarters of those involved in such schemes believe them to be effective.

The first step would be to contact the local police and ask their advice about setting one up. Clearly the views of the neighbourhood would have to be sought—and the Hills agm on Wednesday 27 April would provide an initial opportunity to 'take soundings'.

If there is support, then a questionnaire to all homes and a full public meeting with the police would almost certainly be a good idea. If the police are satisfied that the proposals are in order and approve the scheme, they



**Neighbourhood Watch schemes have very high levels of support from those involved, with most people believing they help to cut anti-social acts.**

will issue the familiar stickers for windows.

A scheme is generally led by a volunteer co-ordinator to collect information and alert the neighbourhood to prob-

lems. The Hills Amenity Society itself could act as the ready-made co-ordinating group. If you want to know more, visit <http://www.neighbourhoodwatch.net/neighbourhoodwatch/bbclinks/index.html>

## Cockles and Mussels stall 'must need planning permission'

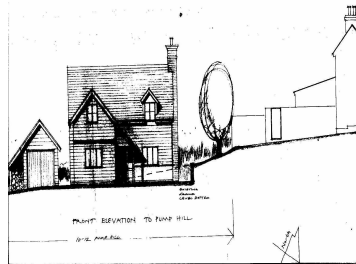


Picture for illustrative purposes only.....but this could be York Hill...

While some will no doubt welcome a visit to York Hill, Loughton, "of a Sunday", residents may be less pleased at the new "eating opportunity which has sprung up in the beer garden opposite the once-select Wheatsheaf public house. According to the Hills Amenity Society, this new "amenity" has not received planning permission. The Hills committee believes that permission is required...and is investigating.

## Loughton Town Council nods through plans for new house - 'Pump Hill site 'never cottage gardens'

David Keating, a founder member of The Hills Amenity Society, has defended his disputed plans to put a house (illustrated right) on the vacant plot behind the Pump Hill cottages adjacent to The Gardeners' Arms. The site, he says, "has most likely never been formerly owned by the individual cottages".



To support his argument he quotes the 1920 ordnance survey, which shows plans as they are now, and 1906 and 1880 when a separate building, may be a barn, was situated on the site. His plans for a small house on the site is supported by some residents living opposite.

However this view is not shared by the residents of the cottages who claim that in 1585 the land did form part of what was known as "Brittens". They feel there is a strong case for making the site part of their gardens and have objected to the plans.

The Hills Amenity Society Committee has sent a letter opposing the plans—although individual members have expressed dissenting views—and Loughton Town Council has approved the plans. So far no decision has emerged from Epping Forest District Council in this "battle for the briars".

## Planning Update...

**9 Baldwin's Hill Loughton:** The Hills Committee has objected to a single storey rear, front and side extension and erection of sun-roof and terrace on the grounds that this house is an unspoiled example of its period. The proposed changes would adversely affect its appearance and detract from the conservation area. Added to which this property is of Art Deco design and a rare example of this type of style within that area.

**Therapy Unit, Stables Cottage, Whittakers Way—** plans have now lapsed. Residents had objected to the noise that comes from the type of therapy offered.

**11 Woodbury Hill—**Council is monitoring building to ensure plans are followed after complaints of "stretching". Amazingly the corrugated "sky roof" which towers over adjoining properties survived the winter gales.

**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, still has provisional footpath signs in place.

**Ash Trees at Southbank, York Hill—**Despite objections the Council gave permission for the felling of three large ash trees in the garden of Southbank, York Hill. One tree now tidily lopped remains.

**13 Pump Hill—**Following objections to plans to convert the bungalow at 13 Pump Hill into a five bedroom house, new plans have been submitted for a smaller dwelling. In the view of the Hills Amenity Society Committee, this is more in keeping and an acceptable compromise. A letter has been sent to the Council accepting the raising of the roof level by about one-third.

**10 Pump Hill—**The Hills Amenity Society understands that a planning application is being submitted to develop the corner plot with Queens Road. The site once formed part of the garden with the adjoining property but has been left derelict for many years.

**ROTTERS—**The council has painted double yellows at the Church Hill-Pump Hill junction where many of like to stop to post a letter. Probably serves us right...



## From tiles to.....tiles

The three takes on the premises on the corner of Queens Road and York Hill (*1877 and 2005 versions reproduced here*) in our Winter edition prompted one reader to point out that the first picture was of Tile Kiln Farm—a reminder of the tile-making once carried out nearby.

It is indeed a strange—and welcome—coincidence that the Loughton Tile Studio has recently opened on the same site—though in premises which are rather less picturesque, some might say. According to Loughton historian Dr Donald Pohl “tiles were probably made near Tile Kiln Farm in York Hill”.

Sadly the latter-day tile studio has not received universal acclaim from conservation-watchers. Hills Amenity Society committee has written to the Council: “We wish to comment about the fluorescent lighting illuminating the outside sign of this new shop. This property, as you may know, is within the conservation area and we are not aware that any planning permission was sought for this type of illumination. Welcome to a Conservation Area....!”



### Are tiles protected?

Take care if you are thinking of removing or changing the tiles on your roof. They could be protected if, for example, if they face the front of your home.

## Must this lovely house go....?

Plans to demolish another landmark building and erect a block of 11 flats adjoining the cricket field at 1 Church Hill, are being strongly resisted by the Hills Amenity Society committee. The character-full house is currently a Montessori Nursery.

In a letter to the council the Hills committee states: “The building scheduled for demolition has been a landmark building in Loughton for many many years. We feel that to replace this building with modern flats would be totally out of character for the area. These flats would have a detrimental effect on adjacent properties.”



*The landmark property would go for new flat block.*

## Police promise to regain control of Staples Road school run

Following intervention by Councillor Carolyn Pond new yellow zig-zags have been painted in Staples Road—so woe-betide any parents who choose to ignore them! Inspector Piers Quinnell of Loughton Police Station has promised to continue to “focus patrols around these roads” as well as directing parking wardens there.

In a letter to the police, Hills Committee wrote: “During the last 12 months the traffic congestion has not eased and is a constant problem during term time for those residents in Staples Road/York Hill and Queens Road. Although a few posts have been erected at the junction of the three roads this had not stopped the problem. Very recently the Refuse vehicles were unable to go along Staples Road for their collection. As mentioned before should there be an emergency requiring either ambulances or fire engines they would have extreme difficulty getting through.”

Said Hills chairman Peter Smith: “Let’s hope this will ease the traffic problems.”

## Have your say—

### Contd.from Page 1

involved with, on your behalf during the past year. This is also the time when, if you have any thoughts or comments relevant to the Hills Amenity Society and the Conservation Area in general, that you can raise them for discussion.

I do hope that as many of you as possible will be able to attend. As usual tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided after the formal part of the meeting and this will be followed by a talk by Mike Evans of the RNLI.

Attached to this newsletter you will find the Agenda for the meeting and a subscription renewal form together with addressed envelope. It is extremely important to have as big a membership as possible if we are to be an effective voice in the Conservation Area and also in matters that concern Loughton in general. It would be good to see an increase of members from Baldwins Hill and Staples Road in particular.

I look forward to seeing you on the 27th April.

*Peter E. Smith—Chairman*

### No biz please...

**36-38 Church Hill, Loughton.** Hills committee has written objecting to the change of use of a building that is sited in residential gardens. The letter to EFDC states: “It seems inappropriate to have a building used for business in what is clearly the rear garden of residential property. We feel that this would have an adverse effect on the adjacent properties and an infringement of their privacy especially in their gardens.”

## Parish notices

The Hills Quiz Night will be on 17 September at 7.30. Mike Evans has kindly agreed to be the quizmaster.

**Bin at the top of York Hill** - has been re-instated and will be maintained by EFDC.

**Rubbish at the bottom of York Hill** - After agreeing to monitor the situation at the last meeting, a decision was made to contact EFDC to advise them of the situation and remind them that as part of the conservation area it should be swept at least once a week. Furthermore, the Wheatsheaf Pub and offices nearby should also be encouraged to do all they can to minimise build up of litter.

**34 Queen's Road (extension in roof and dormer)** - The construction of a loft extension with dormer windows has been approved by the EFDC. As the previous application for the rear extensions has not been started this second planning application does not exceed the normal increase in floor area allowed. The original approved application can be carried out provided that it starts within five years.

**7 Baldwins Hill** - 2 storey extension to the front - after studying the plans, the Committee have no objections.

**3 Woodbury**, proposal to fell the Ash Tree is to be advised on by the EFDC tree officer, Chris Neilan.

### The silver screen head...

The first in a new series featuring Hills celebs  
by Jane Bowen

A recently-erected blue heritage box at Staples Road Junior School honours George Pearson, head from 1908-1913, who went on to be probably the most successful film producer pre 1939. Pearson began with educational films in 1912 and went on from there.



Subscriptions are now due for 2005—new members welcome

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

*We are all volunteers!*

Join up now



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:

- 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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Hills Amenity Society

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



*A damp spring morning and the new litterbin with arguably the best view in Loughton at the top of York Hill. But will EFDC empty it.....?*

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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## Annual General Meeting



Join us for the Annual General Meeting of the Hills Amenity Society at the Gardeners' Arms on Wednesday 27 April at 7.30 pm

The speaker will be Mike Evans, chairman of the RNLI in Loughton. Have your say!

### CLASSIFIED

#### Garaging wanted for motorcycle

A local resident is having problems with vandals interfering with his motorcycle which he has to park on the road at the top of York Hill. He's looking for a local garage or driveway to rent to keep the bike out of harms way. If anyone can help, please give Steve Middleton a call on 020 8502 3671.