

High property prices have their downside for the Hills...

Rising prices for property and land may make us feel that all is well with the world: but there is at least one downside – and we are feeling that pressure in our Conservation Area just now.

I refer to the temptation to snap up delightful old properties and then to try to make them as large as possible with the sole purpose of “making a quick buck”.

The purpose of a Conservation Area is to preserve the best of what is here – and to ensure that any development enhances, rather than detracts from, the overall characteristics of the area.

We feel it is extremely important that we maintain eternal vigilance to ensure that this is the case.

Sometimes The Hills Committee allows its views – and its influence – to be felt more widely. For example in the case of the three storey office block planned for the site of the flower shop next to the Wesley Hall in the High Road which we feel will be out of character with the High Road generally. Do let us try to avoid the poor planning decisions that have not helped the character of the area in the past.

Brenda Harris
Planning

Our new chairman writes:

From Page One listed in this newsletter. The annual subscription year is from 1 June and if you have not yet paid then please complete the form attached to the newsletter. The more members we have – the greater our influence. I hope we will have the pleasure of meeting you at one of our forthcoming social gatherings, details of some of which are on the cover of the newsletter.

Yours sincerely
Peter Smith

Thank you, Lyn: The Hills Amenity Society are very sorry to have to announce that Lyn Orton will be relinquishing her post as secretary following the September meeting. Despite moving from the immediate area, Lyn has worked tirelessly for us, not only preparing Agendas and Minutes but doing a large part of the work on the Newsletter and helping with all the social occasions. Family commitments require her to spend more time away and we extend our sincere thanks and best wishes to her and David.

Development watch

Southbank

Southbank in York Hill is for sale again at a price...which would make your eyes water! Orchid Homes originally applied for permission to develop two "Hollywood" style homes there. This, and a subsequent application were rejected before a third to enlarge the present building. The Hills Amenity Society has consistently argued that the character of the present house is a landmark feature of the Hills and deserves to be conserved in its delightful surroundings.

Following a strongly fought campaign Orchid Homes warned residents in no uncertain terms that if they were opposed they would sell the property to a much more aggressive developer than themselves who would take an application for much higher density development through the courts. In short, watch this space!

'Mansion' plans for 11 Woodbury Hill

Revised plans have been proposed for 11 Woodbury Hill to which The Hills Amenity Society has objected. The developer wants to extend the property on three sides, using almost the full width of the site and extending substantially to the rear, overlooking York Hill and Potters Close.

The main objections received by the Council are that the plans still constitute over development of the site, are out of scale with the neighbouring properties and that the sheer scale of the plans would have a negative impact on the site.

Objections to the plans had to be lodged with Epping Forest District Council by 3 August.

Tree News

Two major pieces of work have reduced the level of greening and opened up new aspects in the Hills – not necessarily for the better!

The Hills notice Board, on the corner of York Hill and Potters Close, has lost its leafy umbrella as leaning trees and overhanging branches were felled during July, disconnecting telephones in the process! The owner of the strip between Potters Close and Southbank had consulted with Epping Forest District Council and had the work carried out under supervision. The trees were not part of the TPO order recently imposed on a number of trees in Potters Close.

A similar "opening up" occurred about the same time on the corner of Baldwins Hill and Church Road. A TPO has been issued in respect of 92 Church Hill.

Don't forget – all trees of any significance are protected within the conservation area and it is much better to approach the Council (01992 564000) than find yourself facing a fine!

If you are interested in trees, the Council is part of the national tree warden scheme. There are meetings and site visits to attend. If you are interested in participating, please give me a ring on 020 8502 3998.

Ian Locks
Tree Warden



Eight points to know about conversation areas

1. You cannot demolish a building in a conservation area without the consent of the local council.
2. If you want to alter your home, beyond what is allowed under the rules governing permitted development, you may find that you are refused consent if your proposal affects the conservation area.
3. The rules governing what can and cannot be done in your conservation area will be laid down in very general terms in the council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP). Councils are also required to prepare individual conservation profiles which give them extra ammunition for controlling development.
4. It is difficult for councils to control the permitted development in conservation areas. For example, replacement windows, porches, changes to front walls, painting brickwork, do not normally need consent, although cladding with stone, tile or boarding does.
5. Local councils can take on extra powers, known as Article 4 directions, to control such matters. They are often reluctant to do this because it requires extra planning officers.
6. You must notify the local council if you intend felling or pruning a tree. The council has up to six weeks in which to object.
7. Some local councils, especially in the more suburban areas, are designating "Areas of Special Character". These do not have the status of conservation areas, but councils are attempting to preserve by exhortation rather than planning law.
8. Home owners can sometimes get grants for things like reinstating railings or tiled front paths. Grants are rare by ask your local council and English Heritage.

Honey for Hay Fever

In a recent radio programme, the possibility of treating Hay Fever with honey was discussed.

As with any homeopathic treatment, treating like with like is a recognised procedure. The fact that local honey contains local pollens is the essential ingredient to combat the summertime suffering.

I contacted several members of the Essex Beekeepers and they confirmed that as long as the honey is local to you, possibly two to three mile radius and taken each morning throughout the year, it could reduce the amount of suffering each summer.

Contact: Mr H W Clerk on 01277 220561. Mr Clerk will be able to give you the name and address of your local beekeeper

Lyn Orton

Secretary

Committee Members

Peter Smith	Chairman	72 Queens Road	020 8508 7000
Chris Pond	Vice Chairman	7 Staples Road	020 8508 2361
Lyn Orton	Secretary		01992 574331
Amanda Gotham	Treasurer	5 Staples Road	020 8508 1153
Brenda Harris	Planning		
Peter Tidmarsh		111 York Hill	020 8502 2370
Ian/Valerie Locks		2 Potters Close	020 8502 3998
Peter Wynn		37 Woodbury Hill	020 8508 4873
Jane Bowen		91 York Hill	020 8508 9689
Toby Scrutton		4 Queens Road	020 8281 4892

Peter Smith, our new chairman, writes...

Dear Member

As those of you who attended our recent agm will know, Peter Tidmarsh stood down as the Chairman of the Society. Peter, who had been Chairman for the last seven years, was recently appointed Head Teacher of a local school and felt that the increase in his work commitments would not enable him to give as much time as he would like to the Hills Amenity Society. We are delighted he has agreed to continue his association as a committee member and extend our sincere thanks and best wishes. We are always looking for new members to join us – both as members and on our committee which meets mostly once a month in committee members' homes. It is a relaxed and informal gathering. There are a couple of vacancies now and if you feel that you would like to become involved we would be delighted to welcome you. Please contact me regarding this. My contact details are listed under the Committee details. While we are particularly concerned with the conservation of the Hills area, we do like to take a wider view of matters pertaining to the well being of Loughton as a whole and make our views and thoughts known to the relevant authorities. If you have any points you feel should be raised, please make them known to any committee member whose details are all

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listed in this newsletter.

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Yours sincerely

Peter Smith

NEWSLETTER

HILLS AMENITY SOCIETY

SUMMER 2001

Our new chairman writes:

IN THIS ISSUE...

**High house prices
put pressure on Hills**

**Southbank for sale –
again**

**'Mansion' plans for
11 Woodbury Hill**

**Another Peter
takes the chair –
and Lyn hangs up pen**

Trees get the chop

FORTHCOMING EVENTS IN THE HILLS

Further details of these will be circulated

Autumn Lunch
Quiz
Carol Singing

Saturday 13 October
Friday 9 November
Saturday 22 December

111 York Hill
venue to be announced

