MOLEWOOD OUTLOOK

AUTUMN 1998



Inside- Ratrun....Greens.....Bollards.....School.....traffic.....'phones.....gas/elec/water

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NAME	ADDRESS	TEL. (All -01992)
• Chairperson Pam Lutner	107, Cowper Crescent	581329
Treasurer Dennis Goodrum	43, The Avenue	422492
Editor Allan Streeton	22, Co;wper Crescent	423682
Secretary Joan Walkom	12, Woodhall Close	302550 ~~587297~~
Minutes Secretary Joan Murrell	38, Cowper Crescent	587595
Olive Church	122, Cowper Crescent	583412
Heidi Scott	6, Woodhall Close	558208
Harry Walkom	12, Woodhall Close	302550 ~~587297~~
Pat. Betts	42, The Wick	504057
Ken. Lupton	28, Desborough Close	586037
Marie Archer	55, The Wick	581965
Malcolm Scott	53, Lodge Close	587939
Kate Harrison	105, Cowper Crescent	558959
Rhoda Strachan	102, Cowper Crescent	302507 ~~552792~~
Jane Digwood	31, Lodge Close.	581107

MOLEWOOD OUTLOOK

Autumn - Winter 1998

W *ELCOME one and all to another* edition of 'Outlook '!

Question: What was almost over before it had begun ?
No prizes for the right answer.
Long warm hot days, with not a cloud in sight, lazing by the pool, meals out in the warm evening air.
Enough about the Med. *What a summer !*
(or, should we say...What------- a summer ?)
Still, we did enjoy some' Indian summer' days later in the year.
Anyway we hope *your* summer was good - or were you working that day ?
Much water has passed under Cowbridge since the last newsletter with one of the biggest melt down of shares affecting many older people as *well as having a knock on effect on pensions, etc.*
We hope you were not badly hit :that you managed to submit your tax returns on time and pay any outstanding tax: hope you are all set for the millenium (only xxx days to go !) ready to *zap* that bug nestled and waiting to pounce in your computer : that you have survived World Cup and/or Wimbledon fever (or boredom) : the Spice girls : the recent gales: *now know all about impeachment ....etc..etc..*
Closer to home and on to brighter matters:-
We wish any leavers from the estate *bon voyage* and bid a warm welcome to any ' new kids on the block'.
Many thanks for paying your sub's promptly which *still* remain at £1.50 pa !

A big THANK YOU to our seasonal front cover *artist Christopher Tranter , age 11 of* ' Danemount' in High Mole Wood who reminds us that another winter is around the corner .
Christopher is a student at Simon Balle school, enjoys football ,swimming and drawing
He receives £5 for sharing his *enjoyment* with us !

A,G,M,

Quite an eventful evening , although the crowds we anticipated just didn't turn up.





It was one of those rare very warm evenings so many were taking advantage of this and doing their spring gardening.
What with George Sandell's update on the gravel situation and Mark Fishpool of Groundwork Trust on Waterford Heath it was a very entertaining night .



Present also were two of our local Councillors who faced a barrage of questions on local issues !
The evening was rounded off with plenty of audience participation in a sing-along *with Peggy Oliver , well renowned Pearly Queen* who, adorned in all her colourful regalia, delighted us all with her songs of old London.
She also sang using cockney rhyming slang like *apples and pears* (stairs) and many others, familiar with some older residents who hailed originally from London.

T R A FF I C



HAS THE RAT RUN ITS COURSE ?

Well, can you believe it ? After all the expense involved in surveys, colourful road markings, road signs, etc., not to mention the cost involved in peoples' time, we pay our last respects to the scheme designed to avoid congestion to those *roads and danger to inhabitants on this estate* and in lower Bengeo by motorists avoiding the Old Cross traffic lights and exiting *to* Hertford North station and beyond.
The main reason is that the Police have, for manpower reasons, declined to enforce the scheme , which has now been made public knowledge .

A group going under the brief title of *The Campaign Group for a solution to Bengeo's Rat Run Problem* are endeavouring to find a workable solution that does not need police enforcement and have carried detailed surveys on traffic in the affected area.
They are now looking at *The Lea Valley Package,* details of which you should all have.
One solution is to install a *traffic control barrier* in Beane Road at a possible annual cost to users, which would require no policing.
The Group held a meeting to promote the scheme on 15th. October.
In the meantime don't forget to display your *yellow sticker ' pass' in your car window (if* you can unpeel it !)
There will be those that argue that effective blocking of the 'ratrun' will only add to rush-hour congestion in the town centre.
The Old Cross traffic lights were installed to ease traffic problems in spite of the fact that there had been no reported accidents in the previous three years.
With the 'barrier' scheme, visitors and services will presumably have to use northern entry points.
Even a private scheme would have to have the support of *all* residents *and* be approved by the Council and Police *prior* to setting up.
The roads are still *Public Highways* and, presumably to make them *private* they would have to be UNadopted ?
Many ideas have been promulgated but it seems a pity that some long-term planning wasn't carried out years before we got to this situation.
An *old cross* pedestrians may have to bear !

CARS.

TYRES



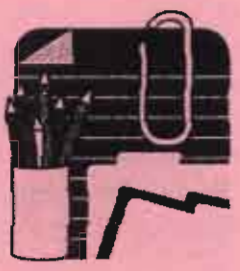
If your wheels are *tyred out-* watch out !
Safety stop tyre checks are being carried out by police all over the County and baldness of your tyres -could land you with a maximum fine of £2500, more than the cost of four of the most *expensive* new tyres!
If you were to be unfortunate enough to be involved in a serious accident and the reason was traced to insufficient tread on *your* tyres you could face criminal charges.
So please check the treads now as it surprising how easily this can be overlooked until it is too late.
Also, please don't take your car for a drink this Christmas.!

Tread carefully especially along.....

.....WADESMILL ROAD

PLEASE be careful when travelling from *Bengeo to Ware/Wadesmill etc. and returning* as the Wadesmill Road is becoming a *black spot* with more accidents on this stretch of two-way traffic fast road.
Apart from excessive speeds by some cars, careless *overtaking* and cars emerging from Crouchfields or Chapmore End it is becoming a *nightmare.*
It is tempting to go for *after-burn* and Mach-1 *on this nice stretch of open road, especially* after crawling at 10 mph within the school environs but - please don't become a statistic - 'kill your speed ', as they say !

SCHOOL MATTERS !



Once more Bengeo County Primary School Head Teacher Sandie Ford makes a welcome contribution to our newsletter.

" The unpredictable weather this year *provided our children with an opportunity to* see ' nature in action.' Every year a family of ducks return to our school pond to lay their eggs. Sadly the first two attempts this year ended in tragedy when the cold weather killed off the young ducklings. Luckily at the third attempt 12 healthy ducklings were raised and the children were able to see them grow to maturity before flying off.
Apart from using our extensive school grounds we also made the most of Waterford Heath .

During the past term year-1 went for a walk there to look for signs of wildlife. This term year-5 will be taking part in the Green I.T. project at Waterford organised by the Herts Groundwork Trust.
Our other environmental topic is the 'Waste Awareness and Recycling' project organised by Herts County Council.
Taking care of our environment is a very important message for young people and we have been really pleased by the keen interest our pupils have taken in these projects.
I was particularly pleased to see the Department of Education & Employment are also launching an initiative shortly."

Whilst on the subject .....

PARKING

Getting junior to school is always a problem and managing to find a slot in The Avenue *even more of one. It's almost every mum for* themselves ! But, could some drivers *please* consider the safety factor and *not* park their cars protruding into the entrance to Cowper Crescent, sometimes on *both* sides, making it extremely difficult for other road users emerging from Cowper into The Avenue?
Quite apart from courtesy to fellow drivers the WHITE LINES on the corner are to emphasise *the illegality of parking there and should an* accident occur as a result it could implicate the inconsiderate parker. .
Please don't wait until an accident forces another reduction of parking slots and, bearing in mind the Government's White Paper on Transport matters, how about junior getting a little *walking* exercise ?
PARKING has been highlighted recently by *the FIRE SERVICE and AMBULANCE* crews.
Inconsiderate parking, they say, may cause crews to fail to reach emergencies in time because of badly parked cars narrowing down the roads, junctions, etc. All this adds *precious* moments to response time.
STEVE. MILTON, Hertford Fire Station COMMANDER points out that, apart from being unlawful, it is downright *dangerous* and motorists must think of the problems they create through lazy or thoughtless parking ! After all, *they* may be the one whose house is *burning down !*
The DENNIS fire tenders need a *minimum* of NINE feet clearance.
Most house on this estate have good driveways and garages for parking so please , where possible, take a few *seconds* more and use them, rather than the roads, especially at weekends around the shops.
We have had *complete* success in stopping the *parking of vehicles on the grass verges, lorries* mounting pavements and double parking outside the school with the much maligned recently installed *bollards.*
Safeguarding children and pedestrians and maintaining a *clearway* must be our number one priority!
Our thanks to KEN LUPTON for his time *spent on 'toning down'the posts with a coat of* stain.

'TAKE THAT' !

A controversial issue with many local parents will no doubt be a ruling being considered by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg which bans *corporal* punishment *in the home, being a violation of the* Convention on Human Rights.
This follows the case of a 14 year old British boy who was awarded £10,000 because he was regularly caned by his stepfather.
This will overturn 1860 legislation which allows 'reasonable chastisement' by parents.
Spare the rod and spoil the child has become an outmoded dictum.
At present British law does not ban smacking in this country but how long will it be, we *wonder, before another case is presented* resulting in *all* forms of physical punishment by parents being outlawed ?

Living as we do in this *absurd compensation culture* - watch out.....big brother may be watching *you* !

0111010011011000....?
DIGITAL TELEVISION



Information Technology.....the future has arrived !.....oh how hard it is to keep up with this aspect of our lives which is changing so rapidly that, whatever you buy in PC.s etc today ,may be obsolete in a few months time !

In fact we have known people obtain older PC.s in perfect working order - *free* - from the local Council dump, which would have cost about £1,000 when new a few years previously !

With digital inter-active TV now with us the difference between TV and computers is blurring. Also, fierce competition backed by aggressive advertising with a surfeit of information jamming up our letter boxes and *Sunday papers adds to our confusion.*

If, however, you have a PC and are connected up to CableTel on TV/phone *and* wish to join the many millions now on the Internet the Company's operating and call charges seem quite competitive.

One retailing chain is even connecting people up to the Net at zero cost AND with no monthly charge , but watch out for any hard sell on *overpriced Guarantees and hidden charges.*

BUT Don't take our word for it, check all the competition and with any friends who have gone 'on-line ' first.

Digital TV , replacing analogue - which will be phased out completely in the new millenium ,- means that we will be able to access many more channels-to 'zap' - which should be of superior quality (in clarity of image if not *content* !)

There will be 3 digital sources:- Satellite(DST), Terrestrial (DTT) and Cable (DCT).

We will not bore you with all the merits of each as these are well publicised in the Press.

Many on our estate will have already opted for CABLE when CableTel churned up our roads a year or two ago which means that they should already be receiving interference-free pictures and extra channels but not the higher CD-*quality sound.*

Like the channels, the choices are *multiple* and confusing and conversion to digital TV is going to mean digging deep into pockets with £200 - £300 for decoder set-top boxes and very much more if you decide to get one of the new wide-screen digital sets, plus of course monthly *charges and, where applicable, pay-per-view.*

Can we keep up with this *information overload ?* (Some of us haven't yet even mastered the remote control !)

More on 'The Bug':-

Anyone with central heating controls, burglar alarms, cameras which record dates, cars, and *microwaves, should have no need to worry* unduly about the bug.

PC's however may need adjustment before the turn of the century.

In a nutshell, it's when a micro-chip doesn't know what year it is !

Anything that has a date in its function, like the timers in V.C.R.s, may need adjustment.

If in doubt 'phone the retailer, manufacturer or *the National Computer Centre on 0181 996 9000*

Raising eyebrows no doubt will be another 'giant step' when we have to run down to town to the 'Hole in the Wall' to get some urgently needed cash.

At some *future* date the present A.T.M.s (cash dispensers) could be replaced by ones which will not require any plastic cards inserted but will be *able to identify every individual by their eyes* alone !

Getting cash by just.....making eyes at a machine?

The future isn't what it used to be !

Cutting the Cost of Cutting ?

The Council, as always strapped for cash, has failed to keep the weeds, like the complaints, from rising dramatically on verges, greens etc., although your Association has also been *nagging* the Authority on this matter.

We even met an official following one maintenance visit to go round and see what a ' pigs ear' their Contractors had made of a grass cutting session.

Obsessed, as they seem to be, in saving money at all costs we can only keep on at them on this and all matters of local interest.

At least we have had a few replacement road signs and some good local citizens do what they can with their own surroundings.
If you have a road sign outside which is being partly obscured by your *own* fauna or plants or overhang a public area causing a possible hazard to walkers why not trim it back and save the Council having to come and do the job- *for which you could be charged.* (Section *154-1980 Highways Act*)?

HOUSE & GARDEN

In spite of our ' Cool Britannia ' summer (whatever happened to *global warming ?)* our residents *managed to produce some* outstanding displays helped, no doubt, by the Spring wet season.



GARDEN COMPETITIONS

Such was the high standard over the estate judging was extremely difficult this year!

And the winners ARE.....

1st. Mr. & Mrs. Kenny	34, The Avenue
2nd. Mrs. Digweed	31, Lodge Close
3rd/ Mr. & Mrs. Debnam	35 The Avenue
4th. Mr. & Mrs. Karim	127, Tbe Avenue
5th. Mr. & Mrs. Karn	15, The Wick
6th. Mr. & Mrs. Smith	30, The Wick
7th. Mr. & Mrs. Clayton	9, Peel Crescent

Baskets/Tubs, etc.

1st. Mrs. Moy	18, *Desborough Close*
2nd. Mr. & Mrs. Cockman	16, Peel Cresc.
3rd. Mr. & Mrs. Debnam	35, The Avenue
4th. Mrs. Murrell	38, Cowper Crescent.

Congratulations one and all !

PLAYSPACE

We *are still* pestering the EHDC for a replacement for the 'swing bridge' and modifications to the slide to make it safer for smaller children.
We *are* trying (*very* trying !).
There is some confusion regarding the sign at the entrance to the playing fields at the playspace end since it might be interpreted that dogs are not allowed to use the playing field, subject of course to owners observing the 'poop-*a-scoop' rules.*
The Council has beeu approached and hopefully the sign (which ,incidentally, has been vandalised!)) will be changed to state that the childrens' playspace is the area from which the dogs are banned.
The committee were hoping that the fence would be erected round the childrens' playspace but this may take place in the *next* financial year although - *don't hold your breath* !

GREENS

Unfortunately, although we are lucky to have an excellent play area on our estate the Greens are still being used for football and other games.
This spoils the appearance of these patches of council-owned greenery which are there for the benefit of ALL residents and to enhance the attractiveness of our rather nice estate.
We are planting more areas with bulbs this Autumn (watch for those green shoots)
Please try and avoid stepping from your car ,- (should it *still* be on the road)-onto the verges either side of the trees, posts, etc. especially by *the school. If you can make the children aware* of it also so that we can *all* enjoy the colourful display which, hopefully, will be better than ever in 1999 !
The greens can soon churn into *mud* bogs which is a pity when the facilities for ball games are near at hand !

TREE-MEN (Or was it only two ?)

Earlier in the season two of your committee braved the elements spending a morning planting sapling trees along the Sacombe Road side of the playing fields.
These have already been vanalised !
Special protective itmes have either been damaged or removed. Also it seems someone needed tent pegs and decided to remove all the

pegs holding down the weed preventative material.
We are so glad to give up our spare time doing all this work so that some *SAD* people can get their kicks by wanton destruction !

LEYLLANDI

Following all the bad publicity this evergreen 'triffid' has received ,one housing estate Developer has included a covenant in the deeds that growing any would be a *breach* of such covenants.

More Cutbacks.....

Just a reminder:- Fruit and foliage overhanging your garden from a neighbour's tree or bush *can* be cut by you.
Under the *Party Wall Act 1996* you must *return the clippings to the neighbour.*
Should you cut *too* much resulting in damage to the tree you could still be *sued* (no doubt also *severing* the friendship !).

Rights of light

Generally speaking, where an extension is built we understand that there are no *specific rules to determine the issue of light* (*or loss of* it)
It is decided on a matter of *judgement* in individual cases.
Courts have applied a number of tests and could include " the ability to read a newspaper in ordinary light on an overcast day in February" and other equally *vague* factors.
So, if you are planning to object to adjacent buildings on these lines you might have your work, as well as your light, cut out !

WATERFORD HEATH



Our own little 'eco-system' is flourishing and is becoming very popular for weekend walkers on the estate, thanks to Groundwork Hertfordshire, Redlands (praise where praise is due !) and the Millenium Commission together with a 'steering group' made up of local people.
Keep your eyes on Notice Boards for forthcoming escorted tours..

WATER-GAS-ELECTRICITY

With the Water Companies overflowing with funds , not to mention their bosses flush with incomes, the Government has ordered them to spend £8 billion *cleaning up* and also cut bills by £10 over five years from 2000.
Our local supplier 3-Valleys appears to already have reduced leaks by over 4.4m. gallons a day , enough to supply a town the *size of Stevenage* !
The future target set for them still means that they will have to find and repair 20% more leaks than the 20,000 each year repaired at present.
Will we see immediate drastic reductions in our bills,or is this just a *pipe dream* ?
Will we be told that, in spite of the mild wet summer, not enough rainwater has seeped *through the Acquifers (water bearing strata)* to justify lifting bans on all domestic uses ?
Will we have to splash out more on our rates?
What is happening about *fluoridisation* of our water supplies ? The proposed addition to our supplies is apparantly *sodium* fluoride a toxin which has been linked to one form of cancer for which reason it has been banned by many countries.
This is a matterthat we think just cannot be brushed aside !

BRITISH GAS — " guarantee cheaper *electricity* until 2001" (than your 'local supplier)
Confusing, isn't it?
Once again, check ALL options available before making a commitment !

WHERE THERE'S A WILL..

The inevitable consequence of life is--death !

Making a Will is something which everyone knows should be done but few like the notion of preparing for something which we dread happening, although making a Will is the only way to ensure that your wishes are carried out

after your death.
If you have not made a valid Will, your property will pass according to the Law of Intestacy, which may not be what you would have wished.
Making a Will lets your loved ones know that you cared enough to 'sort things out' in advance.
The one-off cost of making a Will is normally somewhere in the £60-£80 range.
Obtain further details from your own solicitor or a specialist organisation like the Society of Will Makers who have a local representative
(Tel. H. 581961)

BATTLE of BRITAIN–Wings Week Appeal

Once again the residents of the Molewood area have admirably supported the Annual Appeal.
The house-to-house collection amounted to £321. 06, an increase over last year. This was a large contribution to the total amount collected in Hertford and District of £3,001.
Ken Lupton on behalf of the RAFA would like to thank all those who contributed so generally especially at a time when so many other charities are asking for support.
Thanks are also due to Anne at the ' Shopping *Basket' for allowing a collection box to be placed* at the shop.

PETS

We are giving our dogs a well-earned rest in this issue and looking at pets in general.
Owners of the 14 million cats and dogs (no, not all on this estate !) may be compelled to tag their pet *with a £20 microchip which would be injected* under their skin .
The idea is partly to control the problem of strays but more to tie in with the proposed anti-rabies laws.
This will be a pet 'passport' and will, hopefully enable pets to pass freely into various countries without, first having to stay in quarantine.
Whatever will they think of next...implants for *humans ?*
Er———yes: in fact a Company is already preparing pea-sized chips which may be implanted under *everyone's* skin as future ID's. will not happen for some time so....don't get a chip on - or rather IN -your shoulder about it !

The Wrong Trousers ?

An uninvited guest has been ferreting around the houses introducing itself to surprised and sometimes shocked residents
The guest is a FERRET belonging to another *resident.*
Whilst quite tame these rodents can be somewhat odorous. and it might not be in the *host's* best interests to be wearing loose slacks, bearing in mind the climbing habits of these creatures !

Back briefly to our national obsession.....the weather !
Statistics show that September was, averaged over the entire planet, the warmest since "useful global statistics began 120 years ago."
(Who said " There are lies, damn lies and.....*statistics* " ?)

ON THE BUSES

MOLEWOOD to NORTH STATION BUS

Not a much used route and one that may well be withdrawn if the operators feel it is uneconomical, so rather than joining the *rat-runners* why not let the bus take the strain - to catch the train ?

"BENGEO, PLEASE (Ah.....so.....!)

Two young Japanese girl students at present staying with one of your committee got a fit of the giggles when they first asked the local 333 bus driver for ....." Bengeo".
Little did our Bengeo natives realise that *Bengeo* in Japanese has the same pronunciation as their word for.....toilets !
Did you know, girls, we also have a .....Toilet Working Mens' Club. ;and FRESH bread is always available at the local *Toilet Stores ?*
Perhaps a coach-load of Japanese tourists driving through *toilet* would take a 'comfort' stop at a *Bengeo?*
Property for sale would not sound too attractive—in the *toilet* area of Hertford ?

LADIES TUESDAY CIRCLE - BENGEO

The Ladies Tuesday Circle, formed over

Church Parish Hall, Duncombe Road and extends a warm welcome to new members. They are a non-profit making club and charge £1. entrance fee. They have interesting and varied speakers, hold fund raising events and enjoy some evenings out.
So, why not come along, you may even see friends among membership. ?

RED CROSS

Another reminder:
If you have problems with public transport due *any form of physical handicap and would like* help in getting to a hospital, clinic or wherever, there are private local *volunteer* car drivers available.
The costs are well below taxi rates and include assistance with frames, wheelchairs etc.
If, on the other hand, you are fit and a car driver the Red Cross can always do with more people willing to give up some of their spare *time - who would be paid a mileage allowance.*
Contact Hazell Mann on Hertford 509323 (or the Ed.)

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Although the first response to the *voice mail* project, highlighted at the AGM and the Spring M.O., was very poor things have recently got underway and to date The Wick, Cowper Crescent, Desborough Close and High Molewood have been 'canvassed' with a large proportion of occupants responding positively.
Many thanks !
The remaining roads in the Molewood area will be covered in the near future with, it is hoped, a successful response.
We are very lucky in this area to have so little crime, but that does not mean we should relax.
Recently however quite a large haul took place in a burglary in Cowper Crescent.
One Insurance giant maintains that shed burglary is growing alarmingly where thieves are targetting more expensive and advanced electronic tools. SO.....
BE VIGILANT and make *houses.....garages.....and all outhouses* secure !
We hope that you have all received the 1997-98 Police Annual Review - HERTS BEAT.

Don't miss your opportunity to say what *you* think of their service by completing the questionaire on page 8 of the Review !

Finally -Have a wonderful Christmas and a super New Year.
If you would like to have *your shout* please write and tell us what *you* feel *about current issues.*
Without *feedback* we feel that we might not be producing the newsletter which *you* want.
We apologise for being somewhat *repetitive* with our articles on *.....dogs.....greens.....playspace. .....parking* etc. etc. but we feel it is in ALL our interests to endeavour to keep our estate the safe, clean and smart area we are pleased to call *home !*

GOODWILL

GOODWILL, LIKE A GOOD NAME, IS GOT BY MANY ACTIONS AND LOST BY ONE !

Jeffrey

See you in the Spring (then.....only xx days to the millenium !)

Take Care !

P.S.
Is anyone out there ?