MOLEWOOD OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

February 2001

GREETINGS RESIDENTS !

Another Year - already !

The Millennium Year has passed - or is 2001 *the real* one?

Much water has - literally – flowed under our bridges, all over our fields and everywhere else since the last Outlook. This year we have seen some *traditional* winter weather with ice and some snow, although with vast temperature contrasts from day to day!
Fortunately, here on the 'onion patch',unlike lower parts of the County, we have not suffered severe flooding of our homes and gardens..

Still, this is the time of year hope springs eternal with days rapidly getting longer and signs of spring in the form of daffodils and crocuses already growing in the fields and gardens.(early February)

We promised you some gardening tips but we are confining this short publication to a *newsletter* and hope to be back to our normal fuller format in a couple of months. In order to keep residents informed on *current* matters it has been decided to produce newsletters more frequently with interim reports, like this one, giving details on matters of concern whilst keeping production costs to a minimum.
The usual MOLEWOOD OUTLOOK will be produced later with the list of committee members plus any input from your good selves!

AGM

On the subject of *input* we hope that many of you will be able to attend the forthcoming ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING which will be held in the normal venue: -

BENGEO COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL at a date to be decided sometime in MAY 2001
So....keep an eye on the Notice Boards and incoming notices.
The usual refreshments will be freely available..
This year's meeting will be CRITICALLY IMPORTANT as the *possible* new housing development in the field between the general Play Area and School Playing Field will be discussed.

We assume that EVERY RESIDENT on the Molewood Estate will wish to oppose this development and the only parties likely to be in favour are the Vendors, Developers and possibly prospective house buyers!.
This is covered in more detail by resident KEITH LUCAS who has researched the situation thoroughly and hopefully will give a talk on the matter at the forthcoming AGM: -
He states:-

PROPOSED REMOVAL FROM GREEN BELT – LAND IN SACOMBE ROAD, BENGEO.

- RECREATIONAL LAND ADJACENT TO THE WICK
- BENGEO SCHOOL AND FIELD
- AGRICULTURAL LAND

Residents should be aware that, included within the proposed East Herts LOCAL PLAN is the suggested removal of the above land from the *Green Belt,* with the agricultural land being placed on the *Reserve Housing List.* If this goes ahead it is likely at some stage that at least part of the land will be used for Housing Development.
In fact RIALTO HOMES has already submitted an outline proposal for 80 homes on the field, between the school and the recreation ground.
This process is in the early stages and the Local Authority must consider the views of local residents and interested groups, so please look out for announcements in the local press, etc and if you are concerned, let the Council know your views.

The main potential areas of concern are:

1. The use of *Green Belt* land when *Brownfield Sites* (ie Previously developed land) may be available.
2. Increased traffic congestion especially at the school and through the 'rat-run'.
3. Is the school able to support a sudden increase in residents?
4. Will the suggested development of the field lead to pressure for the adjacent land to be given over for Housing use? This could result in development up to existing house boundaries. (eg The Wick and Cowper Crescent)
5. The extension of the Town boundary into the countryside.

Many of you will remember that a similar attempt to develop the land was successfully defeated in 1986.
Please note that the Council must have *compelling reasons* for removing land from designated *Green Belt* but also be aware that if this does happen, there will be no going back and development will, at some stage, happen.
The information referred to is obtained from public documents, available to view at the Planning Department at Wallfields, Hertford.

Further information will be made available as soon as the timing of the Planning process is known.
The above is the summary statement of Keith Lucas, who came along to a recent committee meeting.
Any topics of interest or concern by residents will appear in future editions of ' Outlook'.(contact the Ed. Or Guy Thomas)

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On behalf of all residents we wish to express our appreciation for Keith Lucas' thorough research in this matter !

Footnote on fields:-
When members of the committee attended a Planning Meeting last May the *only* parcel of land that was going to be taken out of the Green Belt was the Agricultural Field. We hope to clarify in the next issue.

We hesitate to raise the much publicised subject in our new year issue but.....
DOGS are once more becoming a problem – or rather their *owners.*
It appears that *every day or so* the paths connecting Peel and Cowper Crescent and the one through to High Molewood are fouled by dogs.

Most dogs can be trained to go in their gardens or at least in ' the rough' rather than on public footpaths although we understand that legally *all land open to the air which public have access to* should be kept clear of faeces.

This Association worked hard to get bins placed in strategic spots so that, even if the poor mut gets cut short ,poop-a-scoops and bins can be used .

More than likely it is only one or two culprits who are totally unconcerned about anyone,, especially children, carrying the faeces indoors or into school.
They know who they are and we wish to remind them of the hefty fine which they could face. !

In last year's East Herts Link magazine the following guide to becoming a responsible dog owner was published:-

Make sure if dogs are left in the garden they cannot get out.
Ensure dogs left outside have protection from the weather, both sun and rain.
Check with the neighbours to find out if your dog barks when you are out.
When you leave your dog alone make sure it has toys and water.
Make sure your dog is getting the correct diet.
TRAIN your dog in elementary obedience.
Keep your dog on a lead when near children and on footpaths adjacent to the road.
Make sure it has some form of ID
Finally -Control your dog and don't let it control you !

All very obvious, we know, but how many owners really comply with *all* these guide lines ?

C.A.G.E.(Campaigne Against Gravel)

On 6th. February a cross section of Molewood residents were at County Hall to hear the Council discuss New Planning Conditions for the Rickneys Quarry.
Further details will follow but we are delighted to report that strict conditions have been imposed by Herts C. Council on the gravel company to vacate the quarry by 2005 –*completely restored !*
(Watch this space for any further news)

MOLEWOOD CAR SHARING SCHEME

(See Autumn 2000 Outlook)

The idea of a car sharing scheme is not a new one. However, there is now a very real opportunity for us as residents to register our interest in reducing the amount of car usage in the neighbourhood.

A quote from the National CarShare Scheme.....*"if everyone who drives on their own to work every day were to catch a lift with someone just once a week, the commuting car journeys would reduce by 25%"*

This is how we can help with car journeys.....

Geoff Clark, one of our committee members, has agreed to set up a database of those individuals who are prepared to offer a lift to another Molewood resident.
If you are interested in offering or receiving a lift, please give Geoff a call on 01992 552913 or email him on gbnuhL3g@ibmmail.com.

Many thanks.
Guy Thomas.
Chairman

We were *under*whelmed by the response to November's car-sharing article.
By December the grand total of email replies amounted to.....one !

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

CO-ORDINATORS

In the last issue of ' Outlook' an appeal was made for co-ordinators. Out of some 500 houses on the estate that received the magazine no replies were received !
In these days when police support is low we have, as a community, to look after ouselves. This is *not just* a matter of crime but any other incident which might occur such as a lost child. Having a focal point or two in each street, in fact, might be the difference between life and death in such a circumstance..
Unless support is forthcoming the future of a workable Neighbourhood Watch may well be in doubt.
Please think again and if you feel you can help contact Ken Lupton –306723.

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Deception Burglaries.

There have been a spate of deception burglaries in East Herts including the Hertford area.
Persons have called on houses and have identified themselves as Water Board officials. It is imperitive that when trades persons or the like call, especially when they are not known to the occupant, they are asked to give a telephone number of their Company so that their presence can be confirmed. These days it is not sufficient for them to show an idendity card because with modern computers and printers idendity cards can be made to look like the genuine article. This warning is especially important where the more elderly are concerned so that if neighbours see something of this nature please give assistance and so avoid a situation which could lead to a lot of grief..

Crime only happens on estates like Sele Farm, etc. ?

WRONG ! In fact burglaries have already taken place on THIS estate recently, as reported in the Mercury.
One resident was recently woken by his dog barking in the night and came down to see a man staring through the patio window.
He opened the door and the man just said he had had too much to drink and went away.
The owner, for reasons best known to himself, declined to inform the police and the incident was forgotten, although the police would like to know of such incidents..

LOCAL BUS SERVICE

Residents were getting anxious about rumours that the local bus service is soon to cease.
Relief was expressed with a recent ' Mercury' article confirming that it was not the end of the line for our bus riders.
Although Arriva is to discontinue their 333 Molewood – Town Centre service next month Reg's Coaches are taking over and will continue to run buses every half hour from 7am to 6.35 pm and a Sunday service 7.20am to 6.10pm.
This might have been a case where our hoped-for Car Sharing Scheme would have been useful !

CORRESPONDENCE

We publish a letter from our reader (!) dated 9th. December last.

" Congratulations on a splendid edition.!
Your newsletter does an awful lot for the community spirit around the estate.
I wonder if I could make a few comments about the newsletter and the Residents Association.
You dutifully list the officers of the Association inside the front page. It would be interesting to know what they do, when/where they meet, how much money is in the kitty etc. etc.
And how about a few email addresses ?
Surely some of them must be on line, which would enable people to send in short comments/questions.
You could even go the whole hog and ask if any resident could set up a web site ! Then we could all peruse the old back numbers you describe.
A section on the history of the estate would be very interesting. You could also include a local services directory with details of whom to contact at the Council (plural - not the singular you and/or your correspondents insist on using !), the police etc. etc.
You mention ' our local Councillor', presumably referring to Richard Ovenden from Lodge Close. What about Tony Bodley who lives in Lys Hill Gardens ?
In fact, why don't you ask one or both to write pieces for the next newsletter ?
Stylistically I think you ought to leave a line between articles as it is not always clear when one stops and the next starts !!
I thought the piece on travellers and prejudice was very thought provoking.
Thank you for including it.
All the best.
Nick Gough

Thanks for your comments, Nick.
To try and answer your various questions :-
OFFICERS: Their various duties alongside their listings are, hopefully, self-explanatory.
In the next fuller ' Outlook' we are hoping to publish articles by at least some of them.
Meetings of the committee are held each month, usually for 2 to 3 hours at one of the members' houses or anywhere else where space can be found to accommodate everyone.(We mentioned the growing problem of venues of sufficient size in the last newsletter)
'KITTY': Every year, at the AGM we distribute a full copy of the audited accounts, following which we normally publish these in the next ' Outlook'. They are always available for members from our Treasurer.
EMAIL/INTERNET: As you will have seen, we have published one of our committee member's email address which, although for a specific purpose, is open to all for any comments. Additionally, the Ed's email address is: *Alboye@ntlworld.com*
Actual web sites for the purposes you mention is something we will consider in due course.
LOCAL SERVICES DIRECTORY: We have re-started this where someone specially recommends a service, although to confine it to this estate would possibly not cover a wide enough field. Most people would probably refer to the local Thompsons Directory.
Certainly, we would be delighted to publish comments/articles from any of our Councillors who, should they read this, may wish to respond !

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We hope the layout for this meets with you and any other readers' approval.

Many thanks for your kind comments and also for your suggestions.

We THANK those non-committee residents who have kindly volunteered to assist in delivering Association magazines, etc.

WOODHALL CLOSE

In the last issue we stated that 100% *financial* support was required from residents.
This was incorrect: the requirement by the Council was for 100% *residents' agreement.* (which was still not forthcoming !)

MILLENIUM SEATS

We are please to report that a new seat is being installed in The Wick play area and, even better, at NO cost to the Association !
Fortunately the Council had a seat " going spare".

PICTURES for Molewood Outlook

For many years – decades even –local children have been contributing drawings which have been adorning our front covers.
We now invite ALL young Molewoodians to submit a drawing for the back page of the next full Outlook on the theme " MAYDAY HOLIDAY".
The picture judged by the committee to be the best will be published.There will be two age categories, up to 10 years and 11 years plus.
SO - all you budding artists out there - start drawing...now !

Whilst on the subject.....we have planted more bulbs at the foot of the trees so CHILDREN and parents PLEASE try and avoid killing them off by walking or parking on these parts.
With your help the estate should be a blaze of colours in the Spring !

ITEMS FOR SALEand LOCAL SERVICES

We are re-introducing this page on a basis to see what response we get.
If the response is no more than on previous 'Outlooks' we shall discontinue, as before.:
Note: ***Any items in this section are accepted at face value and the Residents Association cannot guarantee the authenticity or be responsible in the event of articles or services proving unsuitable in any way.***

FOR SALE:

'Brother' manual KH710 knitting machine: does plain lacey Fair-isle and Intarsia.`````````Instruction booklet and carrying case included;
£40

ALSO

9 assorted cones of machine knitting yarns....£20
.....H. 558168

CURTAINS-
SANDERSON Print: cream/blue/green to fit French doors. 60" wide x 80" tall.
Includes matching valance & tie-backs

£25- o.n.o.....H. 503443

SERVICES

ANDY BIRD:
Specialising in Plumbing, Plastering and decorating .
17, Woodhall Close tel. 581128 (mobile-0976-584942)
(Specially recommended by a member who has been totally satisfied with work recently carried out)

A few final thoughts conrtibuted by a committee member:-

Trust yourself. You know more than you think you do.
Benjamin Spock

"I'm on a seafood diet.
I see food and eat it !

Home is a place you grow up wanting to leave, and grow old wanting to get back to.
John Ed. Pearce.

WATERFORD HEATH

CELBRATION EVENT ITINERARY:

The above replaces the events which were to have taken place last October.
11th. May - Schools Day
12th. May - Community Day
This is for *everyone* who uses the Heath.
Watch out for Notice Boards as well as full details in the next Outlook.

Finally, in this oncoming magical season, we can't wait to see all the labours of love springing from Molewood gardens
AND----We wish you all you wish yourselves !