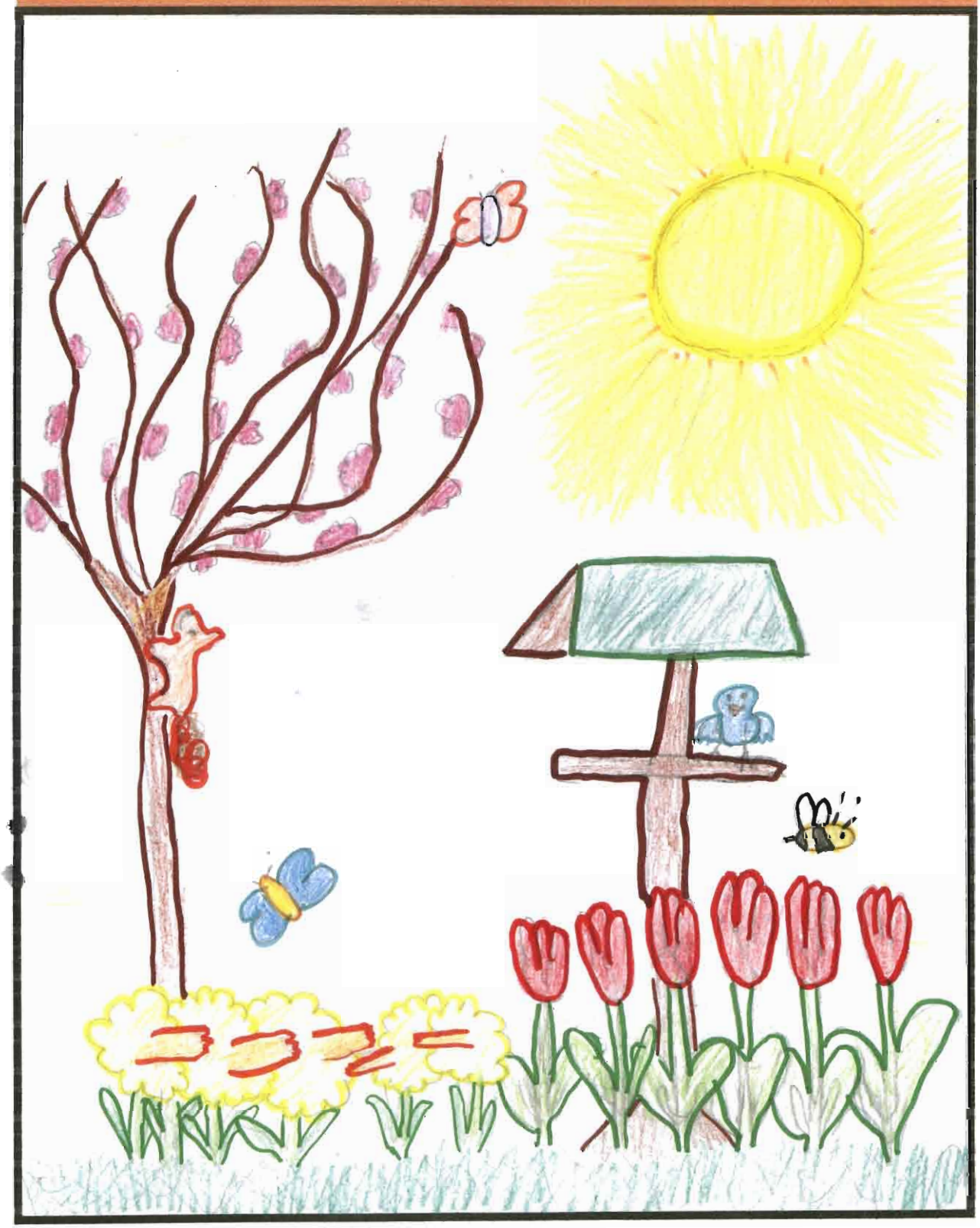
MOLEWOOD OUTLOOK

Spring 2006



Molewood Residents Association

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NAME	ADDRESS	TEL.NO.
CHAIRMAN		
Brian Laming	49, Cowper Crescent	583512
TREASURER		
David Bishop	24, Cowper Crescent	423696
EDITOR-Molewood Outlook		
Allan Streeton	22, Cowper Crescent	423682

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Joan Murrell	**38, Cowper Crescent**	**587595**
Marie Archer	**55, The Wick**	**581965**
Geoff Clark	**17, The Avenue**	**552913**
Helen Graham	**31, The Avenue**	**558168**
Kevin Beadle	**24, Desborough Close**	**551431**
Dennis Goodrum	**43, The Avenue**	**422492**
Janet Moy	**18, Desborough Close**	**586645**



SPRING 2006



Inside:-

Rat Run:Cage:Shops:AGM:Quiz Night:N/Hood Watch:Services:

xxxxxxxxxxxx

ONCE AGAIN it's Spring time·····AND AGM time !

This is to give formal notice to all members that the Annual General Meeting of the Molewood Residents Association will take place at BENGEO SCHOOL at 7.45pm—for prompt 8pm start.

On WEDNESDAY 10TH. MAY 2006

ALL members are warmly welcome and we look forward to another big turn out and to hearing any ideas, criticisms (constructive, please !), etc.

We also hope to have other guests including ALISON HUTCHIN from the local police to give advise on avoiding criminal activity. .

As a musical interlude we hope that JERRY HARRISON'S professional guitar recital and the song recitals of IAN BEADLE will once again enthral our members !

This year we hope to have *both* artists to perform for us whilst also enjoying *free* wines or fruit juices and, of course, cheeses and *nibbles* !

Note from the Chairman:-

We are always ready to welcome 'new blood' onto the committee; so, if anyone would care to volunteer, or knows of a likely candidate please let one of the existing members know, ahead of the AGM, and they can be put forward for election. At present the committee is below strength according to our constitution; and this is why a motion is being put to the AGM to amend the rules, thereby reducing the minimum number of members. Of course, the committee can, at any time co-opt new members; so do not be shy of "coming forward"!

We hold committee meetings every six weeks or so and arrange a few social occasions; but we are always open to new suggestions from people with the ideas and time to take them forward.

See rear page

Brian Laming

COVER PICTURE ARTIST

Talented youngster GEORGINA FAWBERT is the artiste of the colourful reminder that Spring has sprung !
9 year old Georgina lives with her parents and younger sister Olivia in Cowper Crescent and is a pupil of Bengeo School.
Being an artiste she also plays the violin and is into many other activities She is a strong swimmer and recently took part in a 100 mile endurance swim in aid of the Isabel Hospice.
Hope springs eternal....especially at spring time !
Georgina receives our thanks and the award of £5 for her efforts.

(Apologies to OLIVIA McCARTHY age 12 for the missing page containing our thanks for her drawing of bonfire night celebrations on the previous ' Outlook ' cover.
Olivia attends the John Henry Newman School in Stevenage and her favourite subjects are swimming and art.)
Many thanks Olivia !
The missing page also included local

HERTFORD in BLOOM 2005 winners and runners up, namely:-

PC Sparks memorial Cup
Mr. W. Karn 16, The Wick

Matthew Biggs Shield
John & Joyce Woods-46, Cowper Cresc.
(Sadly John has since passed away)

Codegavas Shield
Bengeo Primary School

Town Twinning Shield
Bengeo Primary School

RUBBISH !

We all know that the main bins are emptied every Wednesday, except during some bank holiday periods.

But, how many of us get caught out on the waste paper and garden rubbish collection days?

If you are one that frequently has to run out with a bin just as you see the van disappear round the corner, here are some collection dates reminders ..-
GARDEN WASTE (Brown)
Collection calendar showing dates and acceptability of contents is issued by the council.
Collections are normally every OTHER Thursday.

NEWSPAPERS (Green.)
May 15th. June 12th. 26th. Once a fortnight, except Bank Holidays.

It is tough, these days, for the poor householder who has to transport a weighty and bulging green box to the end of the garden for collection, not to mention the poor paper deliverers. !
Their lot would be vastly improved if, with every mail and newspaper delivery, there were not also ' freebie' extra magazines which slither to the floor and even further sales material inside *those.* Every few weeks, it seems, *another* supplement to the main Sunday or local papers are added, making it more difficult to know what, if anything, is worthy of our reading time (*Information overload !).*
More and more of it will go straight into the little green box followed by the accompanying array of advertising leaflets..

It's called *Recycling !*
(Perhaps some entrepreneur could market a cheap 2/3 page newspaper containing *just* the essential news at a fraction of the cost !)

PARKING AT SHOPS

Once again we have heard a plea from a lady whose condition means she needs to park outside the Avenue shops but invariably finds that every space is taken up.

As in many cases of inconvenient parking there is little one can do other than ask residents(once again !) to refrain from leaving vehicles permanently parked in the bay.

Consider if you will the lady who, being unable to walk far, needs her car a few steps from the shops as well as the shopkeepers who rely on the passing trade.

Whilst on this perpetually controversial subject:- Some people on this estate are still parking without considering whether their vehicles could be causing some sort of hazard.

Very few people are inconsiderate enough to park opposite other parked vehicles but, in a narrow road some do not leave enough room for emergency vehicles to get through.

In fact this situation occurred in another area of Hertford where parked cars blocked access to a fire engine endeavouring to get to a house fire. Valuable time was lost whilst the firemen had to remove vehicles to gain access !

We have said it before and we will plead with parkers again– please look before leaving your car to ensure *that an ambulance, fire engine or other large vehicle would not be prevented from passing.*

Also, damage to your own vehicle could occur if it had to be forcibly removed in a hurry.
(No one would want to be responsible for preventing an emergency vehicle getting to a serious incident)

We heard of another case where a District nurse was *prevented* from attending her patient by carelessly parked cars.

So, watch where you park ..PLEASE !

C.A.G.E.– RICKNEY'S QUARRY

Within a short space of time extraction could start if the planning application by HANSON Aggregates to mine another 1.35m. Tonnes of sand and gravel is successful.

Their temporary planning permission to retain the old production plant on the site ran out in December 2005, but they hope that this will be extended until September 2006. The Government inspector endorsed Rickney's as a 'preferred area' for sand and gravel extraction in the report last year and it is now in the Herts Mineral Local Plan Review 2002-2016. Over four or five years this site will yield 1.35m tonnes of sand and gravel and is located east of the process plant, north of St. John's wood.
It will, they say, *be progressively restored to agriculture and woodland.*

BREATHING SPACE ?

Due to a European Court of Justice ruling the adoption of the Minerals Local Plan Review has been deferred.

MASSIVE SAVINGS ON FOOTWEAR !

Some residences on this estate have very long driveways from entrance to the front door.
Thoughtfully a few have mail boxes situated adjacent to road/footpath.

To others, pity the poor delivery people (especially the Molewood deliverers !) and consider placing a receptacle at the entrance to save on footwear!

EXPRESS TAKE-AWAY ?

There have been cases where householders who have left cash outside to pay the milkman have had it stolen.

(*It would be better to give it to Charity !*)

The continuing story of the...**RAT RUN**.....

The highways chiefs are making up a ' feasibility study ' from suggestions by the residents living between Molewood Road and Duncombe Road, although any work cannot be financed before April 2007.
Many Bengeo residents outside the above perimeters feel strongly that they should also be consulted.
Should we ' Molewoodians' have some say in the matter, seeing that we are already inside ' the route' ?
The newly formed Lower Bengeo Residents Association are canvassing opinion in the area.
One suggestion was to make certain streets ' one-way' although a previous survey failed to get a clear consensus of opinion for any one course of action.
(More space to be watched !)

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Those co-ordinators who regularly receive ' Ringmaster' crime updates will have heard of the Watchdog investigation of a phone scam.
This concerns a company called Telecom Billing Services Ltd. who have been sending unsolicited text messages to mobiles asking them to call an 0207 landline number.
These turn out to be 'crude' chat line run by Telecom B.S. who then charge exorbitant fees for the call which it is apparently free to do under present regulations.
Some people have even been charged for calls made on a phone which -they didn't own !
If you have concerns about this contact OFFCOM on its website –www.ofcom.org.uk or call 020 79813040

ANOTHER SCAM which came to light in February was concerning MOBILE PHONES...
If you received a phone call on your mobile from any person, saying that, he or she is a company engineer or that they are checking your mobile line and you have to press #90 or #09 or any other number..... END the call immediately without pressing any numbers !
There is a fraud company using a device that, once you press the above, they can access your SIM card and make calls at YOUR expense !
If you receive a call and the mobile displays (XALAN), end the call immediately, If not your phone will be infected with a virus. This will erase all IMEI and IMSI information from both your phone and SIM card, making it impossible to connect with the phone network.You will then have to buy a new phone !
(Any problems ? Surrey Police, tel. No. 01737 386979

VIOLENT CRIME

Every week the local papers carry alarming reports of events once only associated with big city centres and ' sink estates' of some inner London suburbs.
Hardly ever reported in the tranquil leafy lanes of rural Hertfordshire.
Not so now, with daily reports of knife, gun and attacks with other weapons on innocent people, some of whom moved out to the peace of rural England to escape these terrors. Many of the crimes are now committed, not by hardened criminals, but by children in their low teens, often on hard drugs.
What a pity that resources cannot be re - directed and the same enthusiasm for slapping fine notices on car windscreens where tickets have run out by 1-2 minutes, to making our streets and estates safe for the much maligned law abiding citizens ?

Continued.....

LOTTERY SCAM

Co-ordinators of Neighbourhood Watch get regular updates crimes in the area and one was on Lottery Scam where people are advised that they have won a large sum on a Spanish lottery.
They are then asked for their bank details to where the ' winnings' should be paid.
DO NOT give any details, warn the police, over the phone, although we would have thought that it is easy enough for anyone's bank details to be obtained from cheques !

And..yet another.....

If you get a card with the heading ' PARCELS DELIVERY SERVICE' stating that a parcel is ready for you to collect with a number to ring.....do not phone the number stated !
It is probably yet another scam. Unless you are certain any advice is from the Post Office, please 'phone...0207 239655

DISTRACTION BURGLARIES

This is still one of the most common forms of burglary and people are still conned into giving unauthorised people access to their most treasured asset - their home !
We will not re-iterate all that has been said before other than—*do not let anyone into your home you are not CERTAIN* is genuine !

If anyone asks for permission to enter ' from the Water Board' -DO NOT let them in, other than by prior arrangement.
They do NOT need to enter your premises !

WHAT a Winter !

Freezing temperatures and below were the norm. for much of the past season, but with very little rain or snow resulting in exceptionately low river levels throughout the country. So, standby the stand pipes with buckets and be prepared for possible supplies being cut off at certain times. With rainfall at its lowest since the '20s we may yet have another severe water shortage this year.
.Hosepipes ? Save them until next year (we hope)!

Use of these, sprinklers, irrigation systems or jet washers could let you in for a £1,000 fine !

Three Valleys are encouraging people to have water metres by installing them free of charge.

The aquifers where 3-valleys draws most of its supplies are at extremely low levels.

This water shortage, surprisingly, increases the risk of *flooding !*
Whilst we run a very small risk, living in the dizzy heights of Molewood, those in flood risk areas are likely to be affected as severe downpours would simply run off in flash flood-style.

Any signs of water leakage anywhere should be reported immediately to 3-Valleys.

One wonders-with almost 100,000 houses planned for the imaginary Prescotshire county , will there ever be enough water supplies for all ?

Also, sixteen square miles of our countryside could disappear under concrete for new housing estates *each* year !

If you work or travel in any areas which you think may be vulnerable to flooding, call *flood warnings direct* on 0845 988 1188 or visit the website at www. environment-agency.gov.uk/floodline.

Also, where will all the extra water come from for the proposed new ' Prescotshire' developments ?

PAM LUTNER

The committee have considered for some time about a suitable memorial for Pam who worked most of her life so tirelessly for our community.

A seat in Waterford Heath was first muted but, with a further memorial seat installed there last year, we wondered if there were now sufficient for the limited numbers of people using the Heath.

We are delighted to see that a tree has been planted by Pam's family at the base of the steps leading to the copse in the Waterford Heath in memory of Pam.

The committee are considering a memorial tree or seat on an appropriate site, maybe a further tree, but on the green opposite the family home.

BLACKOUT !

A romantic dinner by candle light was the last thing many Molewood couples had planned one evening in early February.

Never-the-less, residents had to seek out their stock of candles, gas lights or any other form of light not powered by electricity for over an hour.

An underground power cable had developed a fault.
This also effected TV reception across Hertford when the transmitter on top of our water tower, causing mind blowing depression when *East enders* and *Coronation Street* couldn't be watched !
Even later in the evening transmission on land channels 1—4 were still 'fuzzy', although digital channels were not affected.

PUT THAT LIGHT OUT !

The bright lights of Downtown Molewood will soon be dimmed with yet another new law (how many more ?) giving light pollution the same annoyance status as intrusive noise.

The effects of light pollution includes restrictive views of the night stars, the ' confusion' of wildlife, traffic accidents and increased greenhouse gases.

You could be liable for a fine of up to £5000. Once again, any annoyance to neighbours is far better sorted out amicably rather than calling in the terrifying ' light police' !

GIVE SOMETHING BACK.....

...to your community !

We have already mentioned in previous issue about the voluntary services of the RED CROSS and MEALS ON WHEELS.

Volunteers are also needed to spend 2-3 hours a week to help run the TEA BARS at local hospitals.

Help to continue raising funds for a better quality care service by phoning the W.R.V.S. on

07714898706 or 01707 393199

GAS

Thank goodness all the upheaval with the new gas pipes being fitted finally came to an end, although the general impression was that the work was carried out with the minimum of trouble to residents

Many thanks to all the fitters etc. for their courtesy and efficient operations !

We all tried to co-operate by keeping our cars *off* the road as far as possible which proves.....we *can* do it !

Let's imagine the gasmen cometh EVERY day !

BUT, not the bills !

Soon an average family will expect to pay OVER £1000 per year an increase of getting on for a quarter.

Based on all these stinging price increases pensioners should get a *very* large increase in their pensions based on the cost of living this time next year.....but *will they ?*

Solution ? Prevent heat loss.....
Hope is at hand.

Warmer Homes Greener Herts campaign has a free phone service for advice on the best value schemes, grants and discounts available to meet individual situations.

Discounts and Grants are available to all homeowners for loft and cavity wall insulation under the Energy Efficiency Commitment.

Tel. Free phone 0800 8048777 or 0800 12012.

QUIZ NIGHT

As we approached British Summer Time a group of enthusiasts sheltered from the rain in the Church Hall, Duncombe road for another Quiz night amongst friends and neighbours.
Giving our brains a short break we all tucked into a succulent fish and chip supper.

When does British Summer time start ?
No, it wasn't one of the General Knowledge questions but, hopefully, after we had all scurried off to our homes, we remembered to put our clocks forward an hour !

Our special thanks go to Ken Lupton, Malcolm and Pam Scott for organising the event and our friendly neighbourhood shop keepers for their generous donation of the raffle prizes.

OVER 60'S FREEBIES

The over 60's and those with poor eyesight should now be able to have a FREE bus pass for anywhere within the county of Herts !
If you qualify obtain a passport-sized photo ('Woolies' etc), proof of birthday and address and, if appropriate, a GP letter confirming disability.

After April 3rd. please 'phone EHDC on 01279 655261.

ALSO..

National Express are now operating a return bus service from several areas to STANSTED airport including Hertford (Mill road, Tesco)

SCHOOL MATTERS !

BENGEO PRIMARY SCHOOL write as follows:-

"An exciting project is about to begin; we are having a new classroom built to replace the 'mobile' which has been in place at the school for some years. The work will commence in the Easter holidays and will continue during the Whitsun break and during the Summer holidays.

We have already written to our immediate neighbours to keep them updated on the progress of the project, and assure them that any disruption will be kept to a minimum.

Hopefully, weather permitting we should Be able to come back to school in September and the work will be complete. "

It was thought unlikely that the school hall was going to be available this year.
However, thanks to the special efforts of school officials we are again retaining our favourite venue.
Grateful thanks to all concerned from the Residents Association !

COUNCIL TAX

An unwelcome envelope landed on residents' mats recently bringing with it more worries on how to cope with ever increasing demands on our limited resources.

***Twice the rate of inflation for Council Tax* !**

Is it REALLY fair that the millions of rate payers, many older ones on small fixed incomes, should have this burden, just because the roof over their heads has, through no action on their part, increased substantially ?

Apparently, more retired people are being forced to find jobs to cope with this and other increasing burdens such as parking fees and increased gas and electricity, etc. All this with an increase in State pensions of a mere 2.7% !

From April typical Molewood residents will be paying:-
band D.....£1324
.band E.....£1618
band F.....£1913
A protest group argues that the present method based on property value should be replaced with an income-based tax which would be *fairer* to everyone.
Small wonder that one and a half million people are reported to be in severe financial difficulties, owing a staggering £20 billion ! All ages are affected, but the elderly are specially vulnerable as they are reluctant to take any action and may not understand the complicated forms required to apply for reductions.
A STARTLING EXAMPLE:-
Professional couple with a joint income of £50,000.
In a similar house a pensioner couple with an income of £10,000 are ineligible for the means tested Council Tax benefit. Both receive a Council tax bill of £1,200, the first representing 2.4% of their income, the second 12% of their income.
IS IT FAIR ?
Those with the smallest incomes normally pay the highest proportion of it in rates.
If you want to campaign against this anomaly contact Christine Melsom – 01428 7126809: email to - c@isitfair.co.uk

MRS. MOLE..makes her Spring time debut...

It's decision time Mrs. Mole !

What can I write about on this miserable wet cold day ?
I'm bound to start moaning about something, I know: what about cyclists v. car drivers?
Cycling Advantages...1. leg exercise. 2. you don't get stuck in traffic. 3. you don't have to worry about parking.
Cycling Disadvantages. ...the awful state of the road surfaces, not only do you have to keep looking ahead but at the same time you also have to look out for deep ruts in the road surface that can send you crashing off your bike.
Another problem, impatient car drivers getting too close and then, because they can't wait any longer, scraping your jacket sleeve as they overtake. Then there's the usual drawbacks, getting cold and wet, breathing in the awful fumes from car exhausts, cycling out into the middle of the road to avoid parked cars and finally there's the bloomin' hill to climb returning home.
Car Advantages. ...1. sitting comfortably snug and warm listening to the wireless. 2. no hanging about waiting for buses and trains. 3. traveling with family and friends.
Car Disadvantages. ...Stuck in awful traffic jams. Finding somewhere to park and then having to pay for it. Paying out for MOT, tax. insurance, fuel and repairs. Trying to avoid *cyclists* who suddenly swing out in front of you for no apparent reason.
Who wins/loses ?..... I do both !

ARRIVALS and DEPARTURES

***Bon voyage* to any ' Molewoodians' who are moving to pastures new and a WARM WELCOME to new residents !**

Newcomers should get a letter about the Association, but it would be helpful if someone could advise their local Molewood R.A. committee member of newcomers to ensure they get the welcome letter.
Many thanks.

TREASURER

DAVID BISHOP has announced his intention to stand down at the AGM so we would welcome someone to take his place. We thank David for his valuable work with the Association.
We are therefore seeking to acquire a replacement Treasurer and welcome a volunteer to join the committee.
The amount of time involved is minimal and the book-keeping is simple and requires no special skills.

We would like to thank everyone who helped with any of our events, especially those deliverers/collectors not on the committee.

We need one or two more helpers.
Any volunteers ?

If you feel strongly about any local matters or would like to contribute in any way to this newsletter, please contact the Chairman, committee member or write/email to the Ed. At 22, Cowper Crescent. Emails to:-
allboye@ntlworld.com

Whether you are jetting off to sunnier climes or just relaxing in and around this ancient County Town.....
Have a great summer !

Proposed Amendment of the Rules of the Association

In accordance with the existing rules of the Association, notice is hereby given of a proposal to amend the Rules of the Association; such amendment to be put to the next Annual General Meeting.

The proposed resolution will be to revise the wording of Clauses No.9 and 10 of the Revised Rules, Molewood Estate Residents' Association, as amended at the AGM on 24th May 1977, as follows:-

MANAGEMENT

The Management of the Association shall be the responsibility of a committee which shall consist of:-

a) The Officers.

b) Four other members of the Association who shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting.

POWERS OF THE COMMITTEE

No business shall be transacted by the Committee unless three members are present, one of whom is an officer

Brian J Laming. Chairman

The above assumes that we shall not be able to elect or co-opt the five additional members which our current constitution demands; when such a large Committee is not really necessary in today's circumstances..