Molewood Residents Association

molewood outlook

Christmas 2004



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NAME	ADDRESS	TEL.NO.
CHAIRMAN		
Ken. Lupton	23, Desborough Close	306723
TREASURER		
David Bishop	24, Cowper Crescent	423696
EDITOR		
Allan Streeton	22, Cowper Crescent	423682
Pam. Lutner	107, Cowper Crescent	581329
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
Kate Taylor	22, The Drive	583798



A MERRY CHRISTMAS



WELCOME to all residents this fourth Christmas of the new millennium (what happened to the other three ?)

MUCH has happened since the last Christmas Outlook, most of which is *the pits* but more on Gravel and C.A.G.E. later !

We have gone back to our tried and tested front cover which, for this issue, was done by the combined efforts of talented TASMIN and OLIVER MAXWELL aged 10 and 7 respectively who live at 38 The Avenue.
They will receive the usual reward of £5 in recognition of their talents as well as our thanks for their efforts !.

AS ALWAYS your committee has been meeting regularly throughout 2004 endeavouring to get the results which make life for all of us on this estate just that little more pleasant !
We have had some successes.....and still hoping for more. Our main objective is getting improvements from the local Council, the wheels of which do not always turn with the speed we would wish ! The active participation of more residents would be welcome and in this respect we hope that more than the usual handful will give their support at the next AGM.
By then we will be looking for a new Chairman of the M.R.A. as KEN LUPTON feels he has been ' holding the batten' long enough.
There must be some likely candidates out there amongst our 500-600 members.....?

TRAFFIC CALMING

Many would like to see measures taken to limit the speeds on local roads, one being THE DRIVE.
As with many other requests the problem is *money,* but a meeting will be held at H.C.C. shortly to cover traffic problems *throughout* the district under the Lea Valley Area Plan.

Evidently 'Sleeping Policeman' humps have proved unpopular with Broxbourne motorists

SUBSCIPTIONS

Many thanks to all residents who have paid their annual £2 ' with a smile'.

If, for some reason you have not yet paid the 2004/5 sub. could you please pay this to a local committee member otherwise you may cease to be a member and miss out on local news via this magazine in the future.
As well as your hard working committee members thanks also go out to the additional helpers.
We would still warmly welcome new members/ helpers. (please contact your local committee member)

DESBOROUGH CLOSE Development

Neighbouring householders to this proposed development will breath a sigh of relief knowing that the second application has now been withdrawn. Apparently when the developer approached residents in the Wick bordering the proposed site to see how they felt about felling the trees, he was informed that many of the houses in the area were suffering from subsidence.
***We suspect that this may have influenced his decision to withdraw* !**

PLAYGROUND (The ' Play Area ')

We are following up suggestions for replacing items originally removed from the equipment section for safety reasons.

NOTICE BOARDS

Following mindless vandalism some are still being renovated and generally improved.
Whilst these cannot be used for commercial advertising we still welcome more notices of local interest, especially in connection with charity work such as Meals-on-Wheels, Red Cross volunteer drivers, and local events, etc.

GARDEN TOOLS (going FREE !)

From time to time we have made certain items available to residents, which has been only partially successful.
So we have decided to dispose of these to any residents who would like to collect them from their following abodes.
Please telephone in the first place .
Whilst no charge will be made we would hope that the recipients would make a *token* contribution to our funds (no matter how large !!).
The items:-

One Lawn Spreader –31, The Avenue
(tel. 558168)
One Lawn Aerator
plus Drain Rods—107, Cowper Cresc.
(tel. 581329)

THE KEY QUESTION

Apparently more than one in 20 burglaries in Herts are where thieves break into houses solely to obtain *car keys*, then drive off the cars from the driveways.
The trend, the Police say, is increasing with expensive cars being at particular risk.
Try and reduce this risk by giving thought to where the car is and, more importantly, where the keys are kept !

DON'T PANIC !

As you sink replete into your armchair this Christmas, bravely tackling another plate of mince pies and watching with glazed eyes yet more repeats on telly, you should perhaps be prepared for emergencies !
That is according to a friendly little booklet produced recently by H.M. Government.
Decontaminating chemical, biological or radiological incidents by Fire and Rescue Services which involves showering with soap and water may be followed by Health Service personnel assessing you for damage.
No, it's not the effect of the extra mince pies but preparation in the event of *terrorist attack,* casually referred to as *an emergency.*
The booklet, pushed through every door, is just a list of common sense actions that most people would take naturally in the event of fires, explosions, etc.



It makes scary reading but, after 9/11 and warnings of further attacks the Government want everyone to be aware of precautions and steps to take should the worst happen.
Further warnings are given in videos mainly aimed at school children by the County Council.
The videos and information packs are produced by the Safety Emergency Risk Management Unit ('SERMU ')...phew !
The precautions suggested are the same as the Government one mentioned and covers *all* types of emergencies, like fires, major disruptions caused by extreme weather, rail and road crashes, etc.

But, DON'T PANIC, hopefully it will never happen so.....enjoy that extra mince pie !

PARKING

Rarely do we produce an Outlook without having to remind all in sundry to *think* before they abandon their beloved vehicles.
A similar incident as the one which we reported earlier in the year involving DOUBLE parking has happened again (and others, we understand).
With cars double parked in The Avenue and Cowper Crescent the local bus could just not go its normal route down Cowper Crescent.
The frustrated bus driver then decided to carry on to the shops entrance of Cowper Crescent and eventually turn round in Desborough Close.
No doubt, if the bus had scraped one of the cars the owners would be up in arms.
Is it really too much to ask drivers to take a second look at where they have parked to *check* that they are not likely to cause a hazard of ANY sort and, if *their* house was on fire, emergency vehicles would not be prevented from reaching it?
(The answer to that may well be..... " Yes " !)
It would also help the above situation, especially during the school 'run', if the minority who permanently *park* their cars on the road were to use their drives or garages.
Also PLEASE do not park on corners or leave car doors open on the offside, which could cause serious injuries.

Think before you park !

Mrs Mole's diary .....and how she loses her sense of direction !

As usual all my good intentions to get the Christmas chores finished early have fallen by the wayside, why can't I be one of those efficient people who manage to get their cards written and posted early, the dreaded Christmas shopping all completed and the tree decorated ?
Then I could just sit back with a glass of tipple and think how lovely Christmas is!!!

Anyway forget Christmas, I haven't long returned from a great holiday in U.S.A.
It was only for a week just to see New England in the Fall.

On my first day I managed to get lost on Broadway and ended in a Police Station in Times Square. This meant I had to stay another night in New York because my party got fed up waiting for me to turn up so they moved on to their next stop, the mountains in Vermont. I followed on the next day.
It was freezing cold when I arrived and you won't believe this, I got lost again.
It was so dark and I just couldn't locate the hotel I was staying in. Luckily a very kind young man came to my rescue.
Anyway apart from me being so stupid I really did enjoy America especially their clam chowders.
The leaves hadn't changed colour, but I'd still like to go back and do some more exploring, it's wetted my appetite...happy Christmas everyone...

.....Where's my tipple ?

THE 'SOCIAL CALENDER'

We have no social events planned for the foreseeable future and the only one on which the support is normally worth the effort is the QUIZ NIGHT !
So, we shall be discussing this at the next committee meeting and hope to arrange one for a February or March evening.



The *GHOST* of Christmases passed....

DOWN MEMORY LANE so.....let's turn back the clock to.....well there are very few actual *Christmas* editions as we have only recently produced a festive season Outlook !
However, we have found one in the *archives,* Christmas 1992

This was in the ' good old days' when we had a proper Neighbourhood Bobbie, in the form of JOHN BALDWIN who formed an integral part of the Association and produced a *very* comprehensive and interesting newsletter.
For that alone, we would welcome a return !

The cover picture was by KIRSTIE PERRY then aged 10 years.

JOHN BARNES who, 20 years previously, had been Chairman of this Association scathingly wrote about the proposal to build a 'southern relief road' and we were all awaiting the results of *that* County Minerals Public Enquiry. (sounds familiar ?)

We reported on the M.R.A.'s Children's Fun Afternoon the previous August, in the field off Sacombe Road.
Hertford resident Malcolm Moulding wrote on a survey of the town carried out for King James 1 in 1621.

Such matters, now familiar to all, such as damaged road signs, dog fouling, noisy Skeat Shooting', replacement of unsafe trees, etc. were all aired in that issue, as well as a request to keep noise volume down to a minimum (and that was *before* fireworks were exploding all over the break)

The Bengeo School Head Teacher, SHIRLEY PATEY wrote on various school related matters and inviting parents to participate more in the life of the school.
Her letter ended with the moving thoughts of a group of pupils entitled SCHOOLS IN UNION.
A fitting end to that issue of Molewood Outlook.

(Unfortunately the school were too busy to contribute to this edition but, hopefully, may have time to participate in a future edition)

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



A N.W. Area Meeting took place on Tuesday 30th. November at Hertford Police to which some of the local co-ordinators attended.
Our local Community Safety Co-ordinator, Jill Dockley is responsible for East Herts and Broxbourne areas, but her present extensive area will shortly be shared with another co-ordinator hopefully making communication much easier.

'CRIME LINE' (Bogus !)
Elderly residents have been targeted by 'phone in some areas by the above BOGUS organisation.
Such questions as " have you ever been burgled " and then asked for their address.
The callers sound very plausible and are persuasive !
So, never give any personal information to callers unless you are sure of their identity and ask them to ring back later—which they are unlikely to do!
Anyone in doubt or knows of someone receiving suspect calls should ring the CRIME DESK on H. 533002 or ' Crimestoppers Anonymous' on 0800 555111.

SACOMBE ROAD—(Gravel Extraction)

Some members of your committee attended part of the re-scheduled enquiry at County Hall and were given the impression that the Inspector in charge gave everyone a fair hearing.
The FINAL day of the hearing was on Tuesday 14th December 2004 and GEORGE SANDELL, Chairman of CAGE writes :-

The review has in its proposal the Rickneys Quarry and the area from Bengeo to Chapmore End designated as a Preferred Site , together with the BAe airfield site at Hatfield. We must wait a month or two before we get the Inspector's report and hope that it reports favourably for the many households that would be affected by extraction.

rejection, together with the Hertford Civic Society and East Herts District Council, and also the members of CAGE who attended and spoke at the round table session when they put their concerns before the Inspector.

What next ? Hanson have already prepared a provisional application for extraction to the east of the existing plant site. Whether they propose moving south towards Bengeo or north towards Chapmore End is unknown.
What is know, however, is that if preferred site status is granted we will have a big fight on our hands which will need the combined forces of ALL our local communities.
It is nearly 17 years since the Gravel Companies first applied for permission to dig up 900 acres of land north of Bengeo, over that time and 3 applications we've won each time. If preferred status is granted it will be the most difficult fight yet. It's up to the local communities and their support for CAGE to decide how much effort is made to meet this challenge.

We cannot guarantee another win but with help and commitment we can make sure we get the best result possible !

GREEN & PLEASANT LAND ..... or ' ENVIRONMENTAL CHAOS ' ?

Sadly Hertfordshire is slowly sinking into a *concrete jungle*— and it's only just begun !
Many organisations are vigorously fighting the proposals of the Government to allow this to happen. The plan is a document produced by the *East of England Regional Assembly.*

Alison Brown of East Herts Council states that the Council is launching a campaign to raise awareness of these plans, part of which their January round of Community Voice meetings will be dedicated to this issue.
The first local meeting will take place at the Castle Hall on January 27th. '05.

Once the consultation ends an Examination in Public takes place before an independent panel. Due to start on September 13, 2005, organisations and individuals will be invited to attend to ensure the Plan is thoroughly debated and tested. East Herts Council has *already insisted on and been assured that it will get an invitation to take part.*

If you would like any further information please contact Alison or her colleague Lois Prior on H. 5341686 and/or go to website www.eastherts.gov.uk.

(See also MARK PRISK'S article on page 7)

DOGNAPPERS ...?

To those with pedigree chums—rather than the ' Heinz variety ' keep a watch out for dog kidnappers who appear to be taking pedigree dogs *to order.*
So keep your four- legged friend in sight when out walkies, after all - you do not want your pooch pinched !

MORE ON MOBILES.....

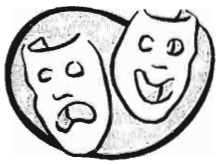
We have written before on the dangers of using a mobile without a hand-free device whilst driving.
It is not unusual for some drivers to take corners and even roundabouts with just one hand on the wheel whilst chatting on the mobile.
More hefty fines than ever are being imposed which, with an accompanying 3 points on the driving license makes it a risky venture—from ALL points of view !

EXTRA FOR CHRISTMAS

More in your Christmas stocking.....?
In addition to the usual £200 winter fuel payment for the over-60's, the over 70's have received an 'additional expenses ' payment of £100 to help towards the higher council tax bills, etc., with a further £50 next year.
A welcome seasonal bonus from Santa at this time of year , especially with the news that Water bills are likely to spill over with a whopping 18% extra in the pipeline over the next 5 years and Council tax increases of an inflation-busting 5.5% !

If you qualify for further help you may be able to obtain Council Tax Benefit which pays some or all of your council tax if you are on a low income.

For more information telephone the number on your council tax bill or go to the website at www.dwp.gov.uk.



' CHESNUTS ROASTING ON AN OPEN FIRE.....'

With the family gathering round the fire this Xmas (if global warming permits) or if you have a wood burning stove you can stock up with winter fuel from the bottom of the garden at:-

76, Cowper Crescent

(Just bring along a saw or chopper).

ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION WINGS WEEK APPEAL

I would like to thank on behalf of the Hertford and District of the RAFA all those in the Molewood Area who so kindly contributed to the Battle of Britain Wings Week Appeal during September. The amount collected was £312.19, which helped in making the Branch total amount £5504.28. This was yet another increase over previous years.

Ken Lupton
Vice President
Following her award we mentioned in the summer edition.....

A VERY SPECIAL OCCASION !

In November Eileen Pike attended an Investiture at Buckingham Palace to receive the MBE *from* the Princess Royal (Princess Anne) in recognition of her services to the RAFA. Since she left the RAF in 1948 she has worked tirelessly as a member of the local Branch which has included over 40 years as Secretary and Welfare Officer. Eileen has also represented the Branch at Region, Area and National levels.
Her award has been richly deserved.

STANSTEAD

The grey ,overcast 'SAD'-inducing skies turns our thoughts to those days under the dazzling blue skies.
With Stanstead Airport just ' up the road' for those in Bengeo it's an easy starting point within half an hour's drive.
Many, however are bitterly against the prospect of 64 million passengers a year with the proposed second runway, bearing in mind all the associated

infrastructure problems ,etc.
A high court case against the present proposals is that the plan denies local people any influence over *where* a new runway is built.

So the air wars between the environmentalists v. the rest continues !

THE BIG BANG !

It seems that every year more FIREWORKS are let off over a longer period than previous years, although this may be restricted in the future.

Many private displays take place without any consideration being given to those neighbours who may be adversely effected by the excessive noise i.e. the elderly, unwell, nervous and pet owners.

However, we would like to express our sincere thanks to the Parent Teacher's Association who kindly warned householders adjacent to the playing fields of their arranged fireworks evening. The event was a magnificent display of sound and light, but most of all gave nearby residents ample opportunity to prepare for this event.

A good example to all !

On the subject of ' big bangs', please do not take your car for a drink over the holiday—it would feel much safer at home !

MORE ON THE CONCRETE JUNGLE.....

Message from Hertford M.P. MARK PRISK

As many Outlook readers will know, one of the main issues facing our area is that of increased housing. Hertfordshire is already the most densely populated county in England, yet the Government wants to build even more homes in our midst. We are all too aware that our roads and railway networks are already overstretched. Our health services and schools are struggling to cope. I also know from talking to local doctors in Hertford, how their surgeries have grown over the years.



The amount of new housebuilding needed is a controversial issue. Clearly there is a need for affordable housing, so that both first-time buyers and those on low incomes can get a foot on the property ladder. However, without improved infrastructure and public services, the Government's plans for new housing are unsustainable.

In Parliament I have questioned Government Ministers on this issue. I have continually pressed them to ensure they improve our infrastructure *first*, before agreeing to any new housing. It's a point which people from all parties agree on. Unfortunately they keep ducking the question. They talk about "integrated plans" and "sustainable development". What they don't tell us is which would come first; the houses, or the roads?

The Government's regional quango, the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA), wants to build 20,800 houses in East Herts by the year 2021. This is equivalent to building two Hertfords! It would mean over 40,000 more cars on our roads and hundreds more commuters on our railways. It's a plan that is unworkable, unrealistic and fails to reflect what local people want. EERA's plan would see the concreting over of our Green Belt and destroy the main reason people wish to live here in the first place, namely our small market towns and open countryside. Over the next few months, we have a chance to make our voices heard. I hope that you will join me and fight these proposals.

EERA have produced a response form so that residents can make their view known. If you want to request a response form from the East of England Assembly then e-mail planning@eera.gov.uk or you can call the Assembly on 01284 729438 or 01284 729442.

May I finally take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. !

Mark Prisk MP

We should like to add OUR best wishes to all residents ... A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY AND SUCESSFUL NEW YEAR