MOLEWOOD OUTLOOK

and

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Autumn 2006



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Steven Oates

A WARM WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN EDITION OF MOLEWOOD OUTLOOK·····...

Message from the Chairman
During the last year in which I have been chairing your Committee, I have been very grateful for the enthusiastic support of a number of loyal members, some of whom have served on the committee for many years, as well as a growing band of recently joined, new members who, being in the main younger than one or two of us "oldies", are bringing to us some welcome new ideas.
And "ideas" are what we need from all directions, as to what we should be trying to achieve as a Committee. So, I should like all readers of "Molewood Outlook" to feed back to us (through any of the committee members listed herein) suggestions of those matters of a civic or social nature, where we might be able to make some contribution as an Association. And we will do our best to take them forward in a meaningful way.

Brian Laming

Introductions.....

.....NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS.....

We are delighted to WELCOME three new members to our committee, bringing some much needed new ideas, motivation and enthusiasm !
With their own profiles, they are:-



NICK GOUGH who tells us.....

I am married to Jane and we have three children, Patrick(17), Tom (14) AND Mary (10).
I am 50 years of age. We moved to Hertford in 1984, the year we got married and came up the hill to Lys Hill Gardens in 1994.
My main hobby, apart from supporting the children in their various activities is cycling.
I ride to work in Watford 2 or 3 times a week and enjoy longer rides at weekends.
I work for the County's Environment department.

MICK HALE (Treasurer).....



I have lived in Desborough Close with my wife Carol for 14 years. Our 25 year old son Mark moved out a year or two ago to live with his girl friend Emma. We have two dogs, a West Highland Terrier and a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel. We enjoy walking the dogs and holidays.
My main interest is football. I played in the first Bury Rangers team, some 40 years ago and played for them and Bengeo Trinity for many years. I also acted as treasurer for both clubs for many years.
I have been a manager at Hertford based Chartered Accountants, Fiddaman & Co for the last 28 years, and previously worked for Trevor Williams & Co. for 5 years as an
Steven Oates
accounts editor.

I did live in Wellington street for 37 years, so I know at first hand the problems of the ' rat run' !

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CARY PORTAS who tells us:-

I'm thirty two, married to Edward with a son, Samuel (aged one).



Both Ed. and I work in IT. When I'm not working, I/we spend time with Samuel. Generally this involves looking for creepy crawlies, pointing out diggers/tractors and lots of walking and playing about. If I am not looking after Sam, I like nothing better than to go shopping with a girl friend then relax with a glass of wine, a nice meal and a good book or film with my husband.

I joined the Residents' Association because I believe it is important to be involved in resolving the issues which affect us all and I hope to help where I can.

JAMES POWER ……..



I am 29 and married.

We moved to Hertford last August after our wedding. I am a policeman in London. We love living in Hertford, the town, the people and the countryside.

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LOCAL COUNCILLORS

We hope to continue to liase on matters of local concern with our elected representatives, who are……

MP……Mark Prisk

County……..Councillor Sally Newton

(C) All Saints Division

District/Borough Council Hertford Bengeo Ward which is within East Hertfordshire District

This ward has the following councillors:

Cllr Matthew Port

Cllr Peter Ruffles (also the C for the St Andrews division)

Cllr Sarah Newton

Town/Parish - Hertford Town Council

Councillor Russell Radford Conservative, Bengeo Ward

Councillor Miss Kim Darby Conservative, Bengeo Ward

Councillor Mrs Sally Newton Conservative, Bengeo Ward

DOG NAPPING

(Don't get caught napping)

There has been a distressing case lately when a dog was stolen from the owner's premises.

The owner was contacted later by text from a group calling themselves "Hertfordshire Dog Nappers" demanding £1000 for the return of their pet.

Failure to pay, said the culprits, would result in the dog being killed !

Apparently, the money was paid and the dog returned unharmed.

Police fear that this could be one of several cases which have not been reported...so keep an eye on your pet and *be vigilant*!

Anyone with any information contact ' Crimestoppers' on 0800 555111

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TENOR required (No not an appeal for funds !) for the choir of Holy Trinity church, Bengeo.

Please 'phone David Hall .H 586752……..

WATERFORD HEATH

Earlier this year dog walkers got a shock when they returned to their car parked in the lay-by whilst they gave their beloved pooch a pre- bedtime walkies.
During their brief walk vandals had ' trashed' their car, causing several thousand pounds worth of damage by scoring most of the body and wrenching the door mirror from its position.
What was the motive ? Not theft, as nothing had been taken.
It seems that the venomous visitors just had wanton vandalism in mind.
May be it was drug or drink related, who knows.
It is as well that the owners didn't see the vandals and *forcibly* try to stop them as, knowing how the law sometimes operates, it may have been the *victims* who ended up in the cells !

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After the struggle by CAGE over many years to get the Gravel companies to restore these public open grounds, it seems unfortunate that the now mature Waterford Heath (South), with all its floral summer blaze of blue and white hues and wild life appears to be used by walkers less and less.
It may be that rare incidents like the one above make people a little nervous, although we suspect that the complete disregard for others by many dog walkers in not clearing their pooch's faeces from the paths, could discourage many.
The long hot dry summer caused a generally unpleasant aroma because of the excess of offending matter.
A few years ago we successfully campaigned for people to carry poop-a-scoops and managed to get the council to place dog waste bins at strategic sites. Use of these bins has lapsed and in fact the situation has sometimes been made worse by faeces being left *on the foot paths.*
If they do not have poop-a-scoops, at the *very least* owners could be considerate enough to move the offending material into 'the rough ' where very few people walk.
Pavements of course should be kept clean and offending dog walkers could be fined for ignoring this law !
Presumably all this has been an influence in the decision to ban dogs being taken on to our local playing field.
Ironically the council were contacted on occasions to empty full and overflowing dog bins which, during our long heat wave, caused extremely obnoxious aromas !
Children playing could easily catch toxocara or other nasty diseases or carry the offending faeces on their shoes into their home.
Thankfully responsible dog walkers help to keep actual *walking* areas clean !

SAVE THE PLANET !

Note: October 2nd-6th. Was ' walk-to-school' week.

(But…..feel free to practise this EVERY week: leave those 4x4's in the garage !)

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COVER PICTURE

Our young artist of this cover is Bethany Shevlane age 8 who lives with her mum and dad in Cowper Crescent. Bethany attends St. Joseph R.C. school, Hertford and is interested in art, ballet and tap dancing.
A well earned £5 is on its way, Bethany!

More on DOGS…….

Following one or two recent horrific attacks by dogs, owners who fail to keep their pets under ' proper control' could face tough *new* penalties under a sweeping overhaul of laws.
Owners could pay up to £5000 compensation to victims and up to 6 months in jail if they defy court orders to keep their dogs muzzled or on a lead.
(Worrying thought: If your loyal pooch bites an intruder in your absence, who would be the culprit and might YOU then be liable ?).

YOUR SHOUT !

Tony Bodley of Lys Hill Gardens shares with us his exciting journey into deepest S. America

PIPE FATIGUE

The art of after-dinner conversation is unknown to Peruvians. At least in public. Instead one's ears are bombarded by a non-stop diet of Inca pipe blowing and banging of drums. My only previous knowledge of music from that country was locked away in my distant memory. Jack Jackson, a pre-Second War trumpet player, ran a late night record programme on Saturday nights. One night he introduced Y ma Sumac who possessed an astonishing vocal range of five octaves. Two is the range of normal humans.

As one fan enthused: "She has a panther and a nightingale in her throat. It soars into the acoustic stratosphere or it plumbs the sub-contralto depth of pitch with equal ease. Other disc jockeys (or record presenters as they were then known) followed but Yma was no more than a one-year wonder to European ears.

My next contacts with Peruvian music were at shopping centres starting about 25 years ago when three very dodgy-looking hombres clothed in ponchos, multi- coloured blankets, stove-pipe hats and trailing two or three women and couple of kids started their racket. At least one could walk away and nip into Marks and Sparks or Dixons.

In Peru there is no escape. The first assault on my hearing was in the Customs Hall at Lima Airport. Not realizing it was "only the first" I murmured something like charming ethnic culture. We did not have one evening meal without a cacophony of panpipes, notched-end flutes, ocarinas, sometimes trumpets and conch shells. On one occasion we actually had two helpings. No sooner had the first lot shuffled away and we heaved a collective sigh of relief when an even bigger mob piled in and took over the dance area. To my untutored ear, they sounded exactly that same but louder.

Most of the evening groups were accompanied by four dancers who owed more to clog dancing than Covent Garden

But it was worth it. The main purpose of my trip was to see Macchu Picchu. It was even more stunning than suggested by guide books and photographs. You do not see it in the distance because of the folds in the Andes so you are not consciously walking towards the lost city. Whether you take the four-day Inca Trail or do it the easy way by train, bus and Shank's pony, you turn a promontory and WHAM it is straight in front of your face. It is awe-inspiring but the huge slabs of white granite made in hard going.

.The next must was Lake Titicaca, the world's largest high-altitude body of water at over 1,000 feet deep and fifteen times the size of Lake Geneva. Five in another group actually needed oxygen 2

- **It was a bird-watcher's paradise. One twitcher informed her fairly bored audience that there were ash-breasted Sierra finch, Chilean flaming, Andean flicker and many-coloured Thrush Tyrant and a host of other breeds.**

It was a great trip. The travel worked well and the booze and food were up to standard. The traditiona. dish is guinea pig (cuy). It makes for a prosperous home industry .I visited three homes in the Andes. All included hordes of guinea pigs with the run of the house. After three months they get the chop and are sent to the nearest butcher. And guess what? Yes there was a pipe group in the departure lounge.

More on…..BRIAN THE BUTCHER

As many shoppers will have seen a proposal under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 has been made as follows:-

Change of use from A1(Butcher's shop) to mixed use osteopathy clinic and retail of health/beauty products.

If anyone had any comments on the planning merits, they should have responded in writing before 27th. September. ***More space to be watched…….!***

It seems unlikely that planning permission for such a change would be granted and would probably not be welcomed by residents, especially those non car users.

Absence of a local butchers would probably mean a trip up to Sele Farm or to a supermarket

Steven Oates

CRACKERS !

Once again the kiddies look forward eagerly to the November night skies being lit up with multicoloured fireworks !
Let's be honest the grown ups are thrilled almost as much !
But - fireworks in August ?
We know that most special days of our calendar begin earlier every year, but to hear the thunder of big displays on sultry summer nights seems a little premature.
Once again we hope that most displays will be reserved for or very near to Guy Fawkes day and that consideration will be given to pets and especially the safety of children.
AND please show some consideration by having any displays at a *reasonable* hour and not, as often happens, starting them late at night (after the pubs have closed ?)
HAVE FUN , but PLEASE .. not at any one else's expense please!

The RAT RUN is currently in the news again and your Association is ensuring that you will be represented by them in all the negotiations and discussions.
COLIN UNDERWOOD of 33, The Avenue (email .....val.colin@hotmail.com) is our agreed representative on this issue who will keep us informed of any developments.
As at this stage there is not going to be another traffic census and no steering committee is planned.
Quarterly meetings are held by the Hertfordshire Highways Joint Member Panel which will take into account various local Residents Associations' views.
District and County Councillors on the panel have agreed that Herts Highways engineers will look at six possible solutions to the problems caused by rat running on the roads worst effected.

Our committee member Nick Gough works for Herts Highways and is keeping a watch on the situation.

A CRUSHING BLOW !

Thousands of CARS have been crushed owing to them being illegally driven by uninsured and unlicensed drivers thereby reducing road deaths and crime.
Even if owners reclaim their vehicle before destruction, heavy costs are imposed.
So, if you have overlooked the insurance and/or license, act quickly !

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SCHOOL MATTERS !

Kath. Hallahan Head Teacher of BENGEO PRIMARY SCHOOL writes:-

" We have had a busy summer here at Bengeo school. You have probably noticed that all the building contractors have left the site and the new classroom has been completed. We were delighted to start the term with our smart new classroom to replace the ' mobile' which was removed at the end of July.

The school kitchen received a refurbishment, there is new equipment and the walls are painted a *cool blue* , so it is with the fresh smell of paint, and the new grass where the mobile classroom once stood we start the term.

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We hope you all survived the summer here on Molewood and...
WHAT a summer it was, with sizzling temperatures in the mid 30's (high 90's F.) during most of July and just when we start to get accustomed to a Med. climate, out come the discarded woollies and down plunged the thermometers to almost half those figures at the start of August and then back again to possibly the hottest September on record !.
THIS NEWSLETTER.....

We hope that you like the colourful new format and thank local estate agents STEPHEN OATES for their help with the publication.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2006 A.G.M.

We had a good turn out for the 41st AGM of the Molewood Residents' Association on the 10th. May at Bengeo School.

The CONSTITUTION rules were changed enabling 8 members of the committee instead of the stated 12 of whom 3 (instead of 5) can now carry out Association business.
DAVID BISHOP resigned as Treasurer and MICK HALE agreed to take on the post.
DENNIS GOODRUM also retired and the remainder of the committee agreed to stay on with one new member JAMES POWER being elected.
Both Dennis and David were thanked for their services and wished a long and happy retirement.

ALISON HUTCHIN our District Community Officer gave an optimistic report on the crime in Bengeo, still at a very low level !
She responded to members questions and asked that she be telephoned to report any incident on 0845 3300222.

Other matters discussed at the meeting included:-
Sacombe Road footpath(trimming back of bushes)

Grass Cutting (the failure to clear all the grass cuttings)

Lys Hill Gardens—Drainage (flooding occurred due to soak ways rather than proper drains being there)

Play Area—Football (being used as a football *pitch* which is hazardous to very young children using the play area.)

Quiz Night A great evening!.
Thanks were expressed for the prizes which were donated by local shops, and to the help given by Malcolm and Pam Scott and Ken Lupton)

Rat Run (see separate article)

(Subsequently, we have decided to try and organise another Quiz Night...watch this space !)

The Accounts for the year ended 31st. March 2006 were approved and adopted,
A copy of which is attached to this newsletter.

We all relaxed over victuals and drinks and listened to Ian and Jerry's singing and guitar playing. Many thanks !

Steven Oates

MORE RUBBISH !

The Council deliver leaflets about COLLECTIONS, which consist of GREEN boxes for paper, unbroken glass bottles, and cans.
Collections-every other Wednesday.

The council ask that paper is put loose in the bottom and glass and cans in separate plastic bags inside or next to the box, making it easier for crews to sort the materials.
In your interest it is suggested that the box is marked clearly with your house number.

Garden waste (if it cannot be composted)....BROWN bins every other Thursday.

Normal BLACK dustbins.....EVERY Wednesday, unless they change it to fortnightly collections. (heaven forbid !)

During Bank holiday weeks the services normally run ONE day late.
If you miss putting the relevant bin out the Contractors are *unlikely* to visit before the next scheduled collection day !
(Full details and calendar in Council ' Recycle' leaflet)

Apparently a third of Herts rubbish was recycled last year, exceeding the government's target figure of 30 % !

One householder—if not more—was surprised when the brown bin left out for collection was not collected by the Contractors for the Council
On enquiring by 'phone the resident was told that if the bin is left 'more than 1 or 2 paces ' inside the boundary the contractors are not obliged to collect unless there is a special ' dispensation order' granting access to the delivery men for which there needs to be a legitimate reason, like incapacity.

Sounds reasonable, except that the bin in question was apparently very near to the boundary so *the contractors may have been somewhat pedantic in their attitude* !(the Council's words, not ours !)

So, watch where you leave your bin.

CRIME

Although there are many minor incidents ,crime in this area isn't on the scale of many towns not a million miles away !
BURGLARY is often in the form of *distraction burglary* where there are often two people, one to distract the householder whilst the other rifles a room.
So, please be vigilant, especially with regard to an elderly or infirm neighbour who may not be able to fend for themselves and might even give intruders the benefit of the doubt !
(Many of the elderly fear that there is no longer any real deterrent to the various forms of criminal activity).

HERTFORD IN BLOOM

Once again the same winning garden keeps our estate in the news. Congratulations to JOYCE WOODS at no. 46, Cowper Crescent and of course to all the other residents whose gardens make our estate so picturesque !



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ROYAL AIR FORCES' ASSOCIATION
Battle of Britain Wings Appeal
KEN LUPTON , Vice President, Hertford and District Branch, thanks the residents for their generous donations made during the recent ' house to house' collection. The amount donated was £486.47 which helped to achieve a total of more than £4500 collected in the Hertford and Ware area.

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WE in turn also thank the residents for once again paying their sub's of £2 per household —as always with a smile !

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PARKING

ALWAYS the subject of topical discussion at our meetings is the parking problem.
We have urged on many occasions for every one with drives to *use* them and to persuade visitors to make use of any spare space as well.
Sadly, it seems that many people just cannot take the time to help avoid awkward, or even dangerous, situations.
There have been times when emergency vehicles have been unable to reach houses due to double parking or some other inconsiderate parking of cars.

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Illegal dumping of rubbish, including one outside a resident's gate in The Spinney, can be extremely hazardous.

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Bag snatchers is something generally associated with some foreign countries, but apparently there have been cases where bikers have snatched handbags from female walker.
A sign of the times ?
Please don't make it easy for the culprits !

BICYCLE THIEVES

One of the committee victims was NICK GOUGH whose son's bike was stolen which was locked to one of the bike stands by the library with a cable lock through the front wheel and frame.
This was in broad daylight and his son was shocked that one man even saw the culprit cutting through the lock.
At least a witness could have left a description with library staff to give to his son although, for some reason, chose not to !
People seem to be afraid to get involved—in ANY way !

BELT ————————UP KIDS !

Mums, remember (even carrying your kiddies a few hundred yards to school!) all children up to 12 years old or 135cm (4'.5" in height) must use a car child seat, a booster seat or a booster cushion.
The responsibility rest squarely with *drivers,* although there will be an initial period when drivers will be given 'friendly advice' by monitoring police !

The cost for ignoring the new law is £30 fixed penalty or a maximum fine of £500 if a case goes s to court.

For more details call freephone 08000 32 72 52 or visit www.thinkroadsaety_gov.uk

CASH FOR OLDIES ?

Pensioners generally get a raw deal these days coping with the ever increasing rates, services, shop prices, etc.
Well, help may be at hand since the fixed limits on savings has been lifted in respect of *pensions credits.*
Your entitlement is worked out on a rising scale depending on your savings and if you are severely disabled or a carer.
You could be entitled, if you're over 65 and your income is less than £158.75 (£233 for couples).

Why not call the Local Pension Service – 01438 206560, to find out more ?

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WATER

After a long hot summer of hosepipe bans the rains finally came and we were told that.....the hosepipe ban remains !
Wet though Autumn appeared to be, it was insufficient to replenish the aquifers.

POLICE PC SUPPORT OFFICER

Alison Hutchin finds little to write about on MOLEWOOD issues because of a welcome lack of reported incidents !
But she reports:-

Over the summer school holiday period Hertford and Ware Community team have concentrated on reducing anti-social behaviour. Operation Attitude has been implemented during this time, which allocates two PC's or PCSO's each evening to patrol "hot spot" areas and deal with anti-social behaviour. The Hertford and Ware PCSO's have also supported East Herts District Council with FREE Summer Activities which aim to provide young people aged 13-19 with a variety of activities to occupy them during the holiday period. Unfortunately I do not have the statistics to show how successful these initiatives were but from local feedback the consensus is that this summer has been quieter than previous ones.

Any queries please contact me on 01992 533535 or alison.hutchin@herts.pnn.police.uk.
PCSO Alison Hutchin

THE AVENUE –PARKING

We understand that some drivers have apparently even parked their cars over the entrance to driveways adjacent to the Avenue shops, thereby locking in the owners !

(*Just how inconsiderate can they get* ?)

A local free paper gave some publicity to our nice estate.
One of our residents said "I have lived here most of my life and it is very quiet along here most of the time.
We sometimes get people using the road as a cut through and even with the school nearby there are no trouble with the kids.
We have steps down to the town which is a 15-minute walk and is useful to walk home from a night out in the town and it is quite cheap for a taxi as well.
Bengeo has not altered much over the years, a few more houses maybe but around here it has hardly changed at all"
Another said "It is generally great living here but the problem is the rat run. Also, you do not go to the school at picking up time. The parking is terrible, even the bus cannot get through sometimes.
People are using these 4X4 vehicles to take the children to school. I'm sure some of them could walk home.
The shops have parking problems there as well and shoppers can't get to the shops as people have left their cars in shoppers' spaces."

Nick Gough was inspired to write:-

To the local HERALD

Dear Sir/ Madam
It was great to see the road through my estate covered in the 'Friday 2pm' column in The Herald on the 7 Sept 2006.

However by coming by early in the afternoon I feel that your reporter did not meet a representative cross-section of residents and did not, therefore, get a very wide view of life on the Molewood estate. !

Traffic is a problem here as it is in most residential areas. Although only 40 years old, our houses and streets were not designed for the number of cars we have nowadays.

Roads around most schools tend to suffer around 8.45 and 3.30 every weekday in term time when so many parents drive their children when many could walk or cycle.
Life on the Molewood estate is generally very good. We have an active residents' association which produces the Molewood Outlook newsletter delivered free to every household.

Talking of **TRAFFIC PROBEMS**.....
More are on the way for .....
...**BENGEO STREET** which needs attention to the carriageway and this will be improved by surfacing during 6th-31st. October.
The work involves laying a thin layer over the existing surface to improve the grip and texture.
This will be by the H.C.C. ' Highways Extra ', who have asked that parking on the road is avoided during this period to enable the work to be completed swiftly.

(*Don't mention the rat run !)*

Any questions or comments regarding highways NOT related to the above, phone 01438 737320 or log onto www.hertsdirect.org/highwaysfaults.

LOOKING FORWARD...TO 2007

We were planning to have a party in the play field with a 'barbie', bouncy castle for the kiddies and generally a fun day out for all the family.
However, that old enemy *time* overtook us but we now hope to organise this event for next Spring/summer.

If you have any special thoughts or ideas for such an event please contact CARY or any other committee member.

ARRIVALS and DEPARTURES

We wish bon voyage to those leaving the estate for pastures new and WELCOME to any 'new Molewoodians' !
There is a special welcome letter which newcomers should receive *if* we know of their arrival, so it would be appreciated if a committee member could be advised if you know of any new arrivals.

THE GIRLS FROM AUNTIE

We say a fond farewell to AUNTIE OLIVE'S girls, SAM URQUHART and PHYLLIS ROWDEN who, after two years will be leaving Auntie's stores on The Avenue parade.
The new owner should be taking over around the end of October.

And it's goodbye from them !

All the best for the future Sam and Pyllis !

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Please let us have any comments, criticisms (constructive, please) and any newsworthy items.

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Well, that' it until the New year !
Enjoy the Autumn.....Halloween, Guy Fawkes.....Christmas (only shopping days to go) and a really good start to..... 2007 !

MOLEWOOD RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2006

	2006		2005	
Membership Subscriptions & Donations	1,037		1,043	
Income from Social Functions - Quiz Night	410		469	
		1,447		1,512
Less: Society Expenses				
Annual General Meeting	216		195	
Newsletter & Notices	762		801	
Administration Expenses	25		51	
Competition Prizes & Trophies	-		80	
Cost of Social Functions - Quiz Night	316		458	
Donations, Presentations & Subscriptions	50		50	
		1,369		1,635
(Deficit)/Surplus for the Year		78		(123)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2006

	2006		2005	
ACCUMULATED FUND				
Balance at 1 April 2005	828		951	
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	78		(123)	
		906		828
CURRENT ASSETS				
BANK & CASH BALANCES				
National Westminster Bank	682		716	
Cash	549		122	
		1,231		838
Less:				
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
SUNDRY CREDITOR				
Newsletter	325		10	
		325		10
		906		828