



The Croxley Green RESIDENT

Published by

CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS' AND RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

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Assisted by: Molly Hedges

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Material published in this newsletter does not necessarily represent the views of the Association nor its Committee.

EDITORIAL

Our association is suffering a severe lack of helpers for collecting your annual subscriptions and this in turn means that our income is limited. The "Resident" is financed by our faithful advertisers and here I must say how grateful I am to Colin Walker who works so hard in obtaining the advertisements and then following up by collecting the fees.

However, we have thought hard and long about the problem of raising income from subscriptions and enquiries suggest that a life membership would prove popular. The income so raised would be invested and the expenses defrayed by using the interest. The idea received the blessing of the last Annual General Meeting and we are now putting the scheme into operation.

The current annual subscription is 50p per household so a nominal 10 years subscription of £5 will cover you for life. Just fill in the form on page 3 and return it with your remittance to Polly Burdis. Our Annual General Meeting this year is to be held at the Library on 31st March. Please

come along, with your ideas and questions, business will not be prolonged and Croxley Camera Club will close the evening with one of their magnificent slide shows.

The Green is still very much in the news with the work to the water main, in particular the reseeding which we hope will not restrict The Revels.

The Parish Council have received many comments on the cutting of the grass, in particular the untidiness of the triangle. Some people want it to be left largely uncut to encourage the growth of wild flowers. Others, including me, would prefer it to revert to a reasonable length as it was originally. The Conservation Area plan lays down that it should be cut once a year in Autumn. The Parish Council are seeking the Conservation Area Committee's views, but what do you think? Tell me or your Parish councillor, we will pass on your views.

The Revels will take place on the Green on June 24th, come rain, come shine, though if it is wet we may have to restrict access for vehicles. Plans are well advanced and application forms for stalls and the procession will be sent out before Easter to all those who took part last year. The event is so successful that we may have to refuse entry to new participants, so that the event does not become too big and spoil it for those who regularly participate.

Alas, this year we will be without our Procession Marshal, Don Griffin who has moved out of the district. Words cannot express our gratitude to Don, his name has become almost synonymous with the Revels and his will be a hard act to follow. Good luck Don, to you and your family in your new home and thank you for the procession and your other help. We have a new procession marshal but all enquiries should be passed through John Hedges (Watford 222715) for the procession and stalls, and through Graham Judge (Watford 228195) for the arena entertainment.

We have some sad news in this edition about a past chairman, Charles Armson who died in January. However the New years honours brought an O.B.E. for another past chairman, R. David Dunderdale who served us very well in the late seventies. Our warmest congratulations and our best wishes go with you David.

Litter Day - 16th April

Croxley Green Residents & Ratepayers Association

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday 31st March 1989
at 8.00 p.m. to be held at
The Library, Barton Way,
Croxley Green

Everybody welcome, please
come and air your views

To be followed by a slide show
from members of
Croxley Camera Club

OUR GREEN

Our Green used to be a pleasant place, people could enjoy a walk, mothers could happily let their children run and play on the grass. Alas! this is no longer so. Why? Because it has become a dogs' lavatory. It is not unusual to see a car pull up, out trips Fido to take his short constitutional, a short time later back he jumps into the car and home.

Now dear Fido I have no wish to stop you and your canine friends from coming for your walks, but it would be nice, if your owner does not already do so, to carry a scoop and clean up after you.

M.A. Fry

£13,000 REDECORATION

All Saints Church urgently require £13,000 for redecoration. A Flower Festival will be held in the Church from 24-26th June (inc) coinciding with the Revels. The proceeds of the Festival will go towards the redecoration fund and your support will be greatly appreciated. During this week-end there will be an exhibition in the Church Hall, consisting of photographs of the Church and other items of local interest. Refreshments will be available.

Please send letters, contributions
and advertisements to:
John Hedges
44 Ludlow Way (Wat: 222715)
by September 1st if possible

POLICE COLUMN

Well, here we are five years on from George Orwell's prophesy of doom 1984 and the only big brother looking at us is our Crime Figures which, to say the least, is not exactly a New Year Present.

The only real glimmer of hope is on the Theft from Motor Vehicles category, down 15 on 1987, of course it could be that this type of crime has lost a little attraction, but let's be generous and say that many of you have heeded my unrelenting rantings and are taking care not to leave property in cars so much.

On the Burglary side, as will be seen, we have soared to 19, up 5 on 1987 and almost back to the bad old days before Neighbourhood Watch. Also Croxley has started off on the wrong foot with a couple of burglaries on the 5th January in Durrants Drive and Little Green Lane. Four all told - this year alone.

I know from feedback that many of you like to see the Comparison Charts for Crime Figures in Croxley Green, so they are printed here.

	1987	1988	Comparison
Burglary - Residential	14	19	up 5
Burglary - Non Residential	23	18	down 5
Attempted Burglary	5	1	down 4
Taking of Motor Vehicle	17	27	up 10
Theft from Motor Vehicle	60	45	down 15
Damage to Motor Vehicle	19	26	up 7
Taking of Pedal Cycles	6	11	up 5
Theft (not connected with Motor Vehicles)	43	39	down 4
Assaults	7	16	up 9
Damage (not connected with Motor Vehicles)	31	49	up 18
Indecency	3	2	down 1
Other	22	17	down 5
TOTAL	244	270	up 26
Detection Rate (Percentage)	29.2%	27.03%	

Not too good is it? The next question is what can we do about it? Well for a start don't go thinking Neighbourhood Watch doesn't work - **IT DOES**. If we analyse the actual burglaries one by one, ten were committed on houses in Neighbourhood areas. Most of these were 'odd' ones (i.e. not part of a pattern). Those that started to become a pattern were circulated via a very efficient co-ordinator (Yes, that's you Ann) and immediately stopped due to increased vigilance by residents. So in the respect that Neighbourhood Watch was created principally to stop the 'one after another' syndrome, it has done just that. One burglary not at a Neighbourhood Watch house was via an unlocked back door during the night! Need I say more?

Some others were the despicable type perpetrated on our old folk by means of distraction. One, near the end of the year was a particularly nasty one where they injured the lady occupier who disturbed

"Give God the glory
he deserves"

Psalm 96 Verse 8

You are invited to worship at the

Baptist Church, Baldwins Lane

Morning Worship: 9.30 a.m.
Family Service: 11.00 a.m. Rev. Derek Fraser, B.D.
Evening Praise: 6.30 p.m. Telephone: Watford 31403

them. This was an isolated house and, thankfully, an isolated case!!

When Neighbourhood Watch first came to the fore, burglaries were cut in half in Croxley Green, so why are we back up? These people aren't invisible, **SOME-BODY** must see them. They must be knocking on doors and giving feeble excuses if the door is answered, they must make some noise. How often, after a burglary, do we find a neighbour who says "Well we heard a noise about (then they give us the time) BUT THEY DID NOTHING ABOUT IT! The Police cannot be everywhere but we can respond, mostly very quickly, to your calls on suspicious persons or noises. I know some of you have had unfortunate delays with the Watford number but there is no reason you cannot dial 999. It doesn't have to be a life or death emergency. If you feel that Police presence is required quickly and that should this not materialise the purpose of your call would be wasted (i.e. will the suspicious person have gone if there is a delay) then use the 999 system. **NOBODY WILL CRITICISE YOU, EVEN IF IT IS A FALSE ALARM** - providing there is good intent. So where are these calls? Speaking to people recently, some seemed more concerned with people parking outside their house than assisting with Crime Detection and Prevention. I think some priorities need changing - and **FAST**.

Ten more motor cars were taken than the previous year. Well, how many more times must I extol the virtue of an **efficient, strong, anti-theft device**? Over to you, motorists - that was easy wasn't it?

Damage, senseless wanton damage, is very difficult to prevent so I can offer no practical advice here except for **ALL** parents to read the article herein on 'Spray Can' damage.

Pedal Cycles - all I can say is post-code stamping, **photographs**, and a **VERY** strong lock and chain.

Assaults - well don't panic too much - most of these were a) known to each other b) drink related and, best of all c) detected (the offender has been arrested and has/will be appearing in Court).

The detection rate is nothing to write home about, so how do you fancy turning the tide by **questioning** every caller's

reason, by investigating every noise (I do **NOT** mean 'Have a go' - merely take more notice of it) and **CALL US**.

And finally - calling all parents (and youngsters) - read, learn and inwardly digest the below and parents **please** - take time to **talk** to your children - frequently.

I would like to draw your attention to one of the biggest areas of Juvenile Crime, what we misguidedly and sometimes jocularly refer to as 'graffiti'. The railway bridges, trains, buses, bus stops, public utilities, council buildings, private garages, walls, flats entrances and stairs - (the list is endless) - that are **COVERED** with this indescribable and frequently unreadable FILTH is beyond belief, unless that is you live with it or see it. (Or travel on the Met Line Underground!!!).

'Graffiti' is a word of Italian origin (graffio - scratching) meaning to scratch or scrawl on a wall etc and just like the word 'mugging', has been adopted through common usage into everyday language and accepted. Call them by their true names, i.e. Criminal Damage or Robbery respectively, and the implication becomes clearer.

So, parents, the message is, speak to your children. Do you know where they go of an evening or weekend? Who are they with? What are they doing? Last year a young lad, 15 years, received a hefty fine and compensation demand as a result of his 'tagging' (that is what they call this scrawl). The fine and compensation can be paid (by his **PARENTS** no doubt!!) but the one thing they **CAN'T** get rid of for him, and he is stuck with **FOR LIFE** is his Criminal Record. He was not a thief, not a burglar, not violent or a drunkard, just a stupid child who considered his scribbling on peoples walls etc as 'Art'.

The Court didn't agree, nor does the Law of the Land. It gives us as Police Officers no satisfaction whatever to see young people end up with a Criminal Record. Make sure **YOUR** child(ren), especially the early teenagers, know the rule. 'Graffiti' is Criminal Damage. Criminal Damage is against the Law!

We don't need this filth, so **SCRUB THE SCRIBBLE AND BAN THE CAN!**

Steve Steddy
244444 (Ext. 2205)



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THE MUMMERS

Perhaps the first dramatic performance ever seen in Europe was a version of the Mummers' Play. Just when and where it was first presented we shall never know. In pre-Christian Rome the people masqueraded in the streets at the feast of Saturnalia, to give thanks for a good harvest.

The early Christians ran around in masks in ridicule of the pagan superstition but to the distress of the clergy they frequently joined in the frolics of their heathen neighbours. The clergy, anxious to discourage their followers from indulging in these unedifying pastimes, decided to turn them into something more in keeping with their religion. The result became known as miracle or mystery plays, and the clergy were known to sometimes perform in them too.

Thomas Hughes wrote in Tom Brown's schooldays 'the first dramatic performance Tom ever saw was the Mummers' play, performed by the local boys at his home in the Berkshire Downs. He remembered it with affection all his life'.

I like to think that somewhere there may be some men and woman who look back to their childhood and remember over the years the visits we Croxley Mummers made to their homes on Christmas Eve.

It was shortly after the First World War when H.T. Wilson, 'Neggy' to all Croxley Green, realised a long cherished dream, the revival of a Mummers Troupe in the village.

The first gathering of aspiring Mummers had one thing in common, they had all shown some histrionic skill in the school's annual Christmas concert. They were well chosen - several of us, Stan Lyons, Fred Randall, the brothers Jim, George and Bill Samuels and I were to remain the hard core of the Croxley Mummers for the next forty years. Many came and went but this little band stayed on. The early mumming days were chaotic: we toured Croxley Green and performed by chance whenever our patrons were willing to receive us. It was not long before we decided to perform by appointment only and to this end delivered the following letter, which must, I feel, have been penned by 'Neggy'.

"Sir,
We beg leave to ask you, whom we know as one who believes in Christmas, and observes both in spirit and letter all its attendant traditional customs, who would not have it shorn of even one of the very least of them to receive us - 'Ye Olde Mummers' as heretofore, on the Eve of its Feast under your hospitable roof, and permit us to unfold to you the old yet ever new 'Mummers Tale' which has given entertainment and instruction to our forebears of countless generations and will ever continue so to do. It is the

same, the very same, there is but one - the only one - to play any other would be gross sacrilege a grievous affront to Christmas, and of this no loyal self-conscious mummers would be guilty, it would make both them and their hosts the sport of avenging goblins."

We soon began to acquire traditions. It became traditional to make the Vicarage our first call and Lindiswara the home of Charles Barton-Smith the last one. This pattern remained for several years with occasional changes. The French family were at The Firs when we first went a mumming and Sir Frederick Heaton became our patron when they left. I remember much in forty years but the most abiding memories of the early days were the bright lights of Waterdell House and the final comfort of the library at Lindiswara.

Preparation would begin some weeks before Christmas. Masks would need repairing and new apparel sometimes have to be made, while new mummers would have to be rehearsed. Each Christmas we felt that at last we had attained perfection and each year some unexpected event required a hasty reshuffling of parts, twice I recall the noble St. George failing to arrive and a new one stepping into the breach with his script being cunningly concealed behind the Knight's shield, and other parts being rehearsed or perfected as we stumbled across the unlit Green. We would assemble in the old Boys' school Building and emerge partially in costume carrying masks and other paraphernalia considered indispensable to mumming. On arrival round about six at the Vicarage we gave our first performance to the evening's smallest audience, the Rev. C.H. Bloiss Bishop, his wife and one or two maids. We were soon ready to depart and the Vicar would accompany us to the door with a 'Good night gentlemen and a Merry Christmas - and by the way the Colonel has been on the phone to know if you have started on your rounds and hopes you will not be late again this year'.

Round by the Church and across the Green to 'Elmcote' then the home of Mr F.B. Adams. Here the words of the Wassailing Song which we sometimes sang as we approached the houses really had some significance.

"Wassail! Wassail! Over the town
Our toast it is white, our ale it
is brown!

Our bowl it is made of the white
maple tree
With our wassailing bowl we drink
to thee

Come, butler, bring us a bowl of
the best.
And we hope your soul in heaven
may rest
But if you do draw us a bowl of
the small
Then down will go butler, bowl and
all."

The performance over, Mr Graver the butler handed glasses all round but whether the small or the best I would not in those youthful days be qualified to judge. We were conscious by now that we were falling a little behind schedule and the butler's parting message didn't help much. 'Mr Adams has just told me to tell you that the Colonel has been enquiring if you arrived on time and hope you will not be later than you promised'.

With a Merry Christmas to the 'Elmcote' household: master, mistress, maids, guests, butler and all and we were once more out on the Green making for Cophorne Road and the home of the Casebourne family. A real large party awaited us here, this was Dingley Dell itself complete with grandmas who insisted on kissing all the Mummers in the best Pickwickian way. We were now painfully aware that our carefully planned timetable had broken down and it was with some trepidation that we approached Parrotts and the awaiting Colonel. However, the Christmas spirit prevailed and after a short lecture on the virtues of punctuality, St. George was soon defeating his adversaries in a house which must surely have witnessed the mummers' play in bygone years. On to the Green once more on our way to Little Green and Waterdell House. Perhaps it was the extra darkness of Little Green Lane with the towering walls of Croxley House but the lights of Waterdell always seemed especially bright. But perhaps it was the warm welcome of kindly Mrs Forbes who would meet us in the hall with a large box of chocolates and an oft-repeated request to 'Have a choc-choc boys'.

Then round the great wall of Croxley House to 'The Firs', where the family and staff gave us another warm welcome and the dogs barked in frantic resentment at the motley throng invading the house on Christmas Eve.

CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENT'S RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

On behalf of my household I
of, Croxley Green
Apply for life membership of the association and enclose remittance of
£5.00. Signed
Cheques payable to the Association. Return to:-
Polly Burdis 17, New Road, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth WD3 3EJ

'The Firs' was usually our last engagement on the Green and now began the long trek to Watford Road and Lindiswara. If it was quiet when we went up the Green it was doubly so when we returned. Now even the feeble gaslight in the Coach and Horses and Artichoke had been put out and the last of their customers had departed. Each Christmas brought some fresh adventure - some long remembered incident. Who of us will forget the night, when hearing distant footfalls we recognised the approach of that great old Croxley character, the late Nabby Sear. Quickly concealing ourselves behind the hedge the dragon pounced out when Nabby drew level. Cast in the mould of St. George it took more than a dragon to frighten this sturdy old farmer and we were promptly told to 'Be off wi'ye and take that bloody ole moke wi' yer'.

It was drawing close to midnight when we kept our last appointment at Lindiswara. The performance over, we needed no second invitation by our host to make ourselves at home and enjoy the Christmas fare provided and finally relax in a haze of smoke from the large box of Passing Cloud which in the words of the Doctor, 'Had been left all ready near to hand.' We had been on the road some six or seven hours and St. George had fought many battles with his tireless foes. How attractive was the comfort of Lindiswara to we tired aching Mummers, and it was with great reluctance we wished the family a Merry Christmas and went out into the cold Christmas morning. It was a bedraggled band of Mummers who wearily made their way to their several homes through the deserted village. By the mid-thirties we had ceased our Christmas rounds but it wasn't the end of the Mummers. At every national event we managed to make an appearance, King George V's Jubilee, the Coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth and the Festival of Britain. In recent years we have performed at many places in the county - Welham Green, Hemel Hempstead, Abbots Langley, Watford and Rickmansworth, to name a few. But no more we'll go a mumming so late into the night, though the heart be still as willing and St. George's sword still bright.

Extracts from an article by F.I. Paddick first published in the "Ricky Historian" and reproduced by kind permission of his son R.I. Paddick.

**Do not forget
LITTER DAY**

DRUG CONCERN WATFORD

Drug concern of Rickmansworth has handed operations to Drug Concern (Watford) 3rd Floor, Abbey House, 26 The Parade, Watford, Herts WD1 2AA Tel. Watford 55124 (24hr. Answerphone) which is open Monday to Friday 9.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

DRUG CONCERN is a South West Hertfordshire funded project which gives assistance and advice to problem drug users, their relations and those working with them within the Health District. It provides a community based information and support facility for problems resulting from the use of sleeping pills, tranquillizers, antidepressants, solvents, cannabis, stimulants, heroin and other opiates. This range includes prescribed and illicit drugs, socially accepted and socially condemned drugs.

Due to the limited number of staff we can not operate as a drop-in centre. It is preferable that visits are made by appointment, whether as a client, involved professional or interested individual.

The staff are building up a wide variety of links within the community, which will be actively maintained. Professional connections are extensive with both statutory and voluntary agencies within and outside the South West Hertfordshire Health District.

A MAJOR PART of our daily work is providing a liaison service between treatment resources and those people who have decided that they have a drug related problem. This can involve assessment and negotiating medical interventions as well as looking at the underlying problems. We also offer information and advice on health matters, including pre and post-test counselling for drug users wishing to consider having the HIV antibody test. Advice and support is also available to concerned relatives (who may be under great pressure) and people working with drug users who require further involvement. Total confidentiality is ensured.

RESEARCH is also undertaken, monitoring the changing patterns and levels of drug use and related matters, including provision of HIV/AIDS services for drug users, and evaluating the need for further facilities and developments.

DRUG CONCERN also runs multi-disciplinary training courses aimed at raising awareness, examining attitudes, increasing information and strengthening

confidence within professional and voluntary workers.

The staff also respond to a wide range of requests to give talks. This is part of a general education programme to provide a balanced factual knowledge to the community, in order to dispel myths and unnecessary fears as well as making people more willing to discuss the questions of wide ranging drug use in society.

General drug-related information is available whether this be on medical aspects, legal position or on written sources and facilities.

LITTER DAY

Sunday 16th April
10.00 am - 1.00 pm
Mill Lane/Watford Road
Harvey Road (Imperial Machines)
The Artichoke, The Green
The Weather House, Laverock Lane.

THREE RIVERS D.C. POSTCARD CALENDAR

Each year Three Rivers District Council publish a calendar of picture postcards depicting local scenes. The pictures are provided by Croxley Camera Club and cover the whole area.

They were retailed this year at £1.25 but local Societies could purchase them for 75p for resale at the standard price thus raising welcome income for their organisation or charity.

Why not consider this easy way of raising money for your organisation next year? For further information contact Chris Jacques the Council Information and Press Officer on Rickmansworth 776611 (ext. 205).

CHARLES E ARMSON

Charles E Armson, a former committee member, and then Chairman of this Association for several years, prior to his being elected as the first post-war independent "Residents" Councillor to the former Rickmansworth District Council, died at his home at Seaton in Devon on the 12th January 1989.

As a Councillor and as an officer and member of this Association, Mr Armson was respected for his integrity and work on behalf of Croxley residents, and he will be missed by old friends still living in Croxley, who have kept in touch with him since his retirement.

R. Boardman (President)

E.D. WITHEY A.M.R.S.H. CARPENTER & DECORATOR

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LIBRARY COLUMN

A belated Merry Christmas and happy New Year from all at the library. Many thanks again to everybody for the cards and presents - if we look fatter it is because we are eating biscuits and cakes at every tea-break!

Changing the layout of a library is always a double-edged sword - on the one hand some people welcome change and the chance to see different books while others hate changing something they are familiar with (as someone who shops in supermarkets I appreciate this point!) So in the last few months we have done a little tinkering without making major changes. A lot of people have asked for travel books that are not just guide books and to accommodate them we have a new section called Armchair Travel. We have also introduced two re-vamped sections, Humour and Plays. The plays now include books and cassettes for all those, like myself, who find plays hard to read but good to follow. In the junior library we have introduced First Facts to go along with First Readers. This section is aimed at younger children who want simple fact books and cannot cope with the large non-fiction section. At Croxley we are fortunate in having a system that can adapt to changes in reading habits and we hope these new sections prove popular.

Finally we recruited Cindy and Gillian to complete the team who have been coping manfully (or should I say personfully) with so few staff for some time.

Bob Sharpe Librarian

RICKY HISTORIAN - WANTED

Our chairman Mike Humphreys is hoping to locate old copies of the Ricky Historian. Anyone who can help or has any old copies should contact him at The Weather House, Croxley Hall Woods, or on Rickmansworth 778544.

Fuller Hall, Fuller Way, Croxley.

"JOURNEY OF ADVENTURE"

Holiday Club

PRIZES & SURPRISES, QUIZZES,
BIBLE STORIES

Tuesday - Friday 28th - 31st March 1989

10.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

Boys & Girls 7 - 12 years

TOY LIBRARY

Please may I through you column let the people of Croxley know about the CROXLEY TOY LIBRARY. This is open to parents of children ages five and under, each Thursday at St. Oswalds Church hall, Malvern Way, 1.30 p.m. to 3.00 p.m. (except the first Thursday of each month and school holidays). Admission is 30p inclusive of the first toy borrowed then 30p for each toy, up to three toys may be borrowed at any one time.

We are a voluntary run group and we fund raise throughout the year to purchase new toys also to pay the rent of the hall, we have for the past four years had a stall on the CROXLEY REVELS and we have a lot of admiration for the committee who organise this event for us all to enjoy, we would like to say thank you.

Parents why not come along to the next Toy Library session and join in with other Parents, have a 'cuppa' whilst your children play with the many toys available. For more information phone me (Marilyn Andrews) on Watford 228673 or just come along any session we are open and you will be made welcome.

Marilyn Andrews

Toy Library Organiser

26 Winton Drive, Croxley Green
Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 3RE

Are you able to help
LITTER DAY

PARISH COUNCIL

We are grateful to the Editor of The Resident for the opportunity to offer regular reports to you on the activities of the Parish Council. In them I try to paint for readers a mental picture of the way we tackle a wide range of local issues, a sort of collage which hopefully demonstrates some unity of composition in serving the best interests of parishioners. If your appetite is whetted we should be pleased to see you at our monthly meetings on the first Thursday of each month - at 8 pm in The Library.

In the minds of many people "Planning" has become a sort of dirty word. Those whose plans are thwarted by the decisions of District Councils tend to believe that these are made just to make life difficult for them and because of pressures from bigger fish. On the other hand when plans are passed the resulting developments are frequently criticised as being unsuitable and just plain ugly. The planners seem to be in a no-win situation plagued as they are by Central Government "guidelines" and the high percentage of cases in which their decisions are overturned when appeal is made to the Secretary of State.

The Parish Council of course has its own Planning Committee committed to the careful examination of all applications regarding developments in Croxley. But this Committee like many residents in the Parish is not helped by the arrangements for examination of the detail of particular plans. As a rule these are available only at the offices of the TRDC Planning Department during opening hours which are not convenient to people who are geared to a working timetable. It is true that there is a temporary agreement for copies of the plans to be seen at the Rickmansworth Library while the Planning Department is at Oxhey but the Parish Council would like to see a permanent arrangement for copies to be available for scrutiny at a central place in the Parish. In Croxley The Library would seem to offer the best facility for this and we would hope that you, the people of Croxley, would support our representations for such an arrangement.

Our Planning Committee's deliberations have ranged over the plans for the smallest domestic extension to the large scale proposals for such areas as "The Orchard" site on The Green and the land at the rear of 15 -31 New Road. On domestic extensions the Committee sees its role as complementary to the views of neighbours and nearby residents. It tries to examine any proposed changes in the light of existing architectural styles and the general character of the district with an especial awareness that a change in one place can set a precedent for others to follow. On the bigger developments the argument often centres on the pressures from one side for more new housing and

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the wish by many people to preserve the environment. Balances have to be struck and we are encouraged, for example, by the modifications now made to the original plan for "The Orchard" in that the original house is to be retained and negotiations are continuing about access to the site.

Planning, at present in a more general sense, invests the Council's interest in the future of the former Dickinsons Sports Ground. It is no secret that the Guild of Sport have been considering offers for joint development from the Royal Naval Association but whatever the outcome of these considerations the Council feels that the future of this sports ground is important to the quality of life in Croxley. In an effort to ensure that any development there is in the best interests of Croxley people The Council and the Guild of Sport have agreed to set up a joint working group which local District Councillors and representatives of the nearby Community Association have been invited to join.

Maintaining standards in our Parish was the aim of Mr Bill Daly whose dedication to the business of keeping our roads and pavements clean and tidy is now greatly missed. Many residents contributed towards a retirement gift to Mr Daly of £160 and I should like to pass on his thanks and appreciation of the kind things said in accompanying letters. Mr Daly's would be a hard act to follow and there is no one prepared to take it on at the moment. Efforts by Three Rivers District Council to introduce new machinery for regular street cleaning, particularly in the shopping areas, have not made much impact on our increasingly untidy looking public places and the Council is totally in sympathy with a number of residents who came recently to a Council meeting to level some hard hitting criticisms at the general standard of care and maintenance. We have of course taken the lead in promoting "Clean-Up" days from time to time but whatever improvements are made on such occasions are soon obliterated if there is not regular and effective road cleaning and rubbish clearance. We should welcome your views on this, particularly in finding ways of deterring the widespread activities of litter louts and those who use our woods the open spaces as rubbish dumps for unwanted domestic articles. The next "Clean-Up" day will be on Sunday April 16th, - please watch out for details.

In the same vein we have been trying for a year or more to prod London Regional

Transport to restore Long Valley Tip to its earlier tidy state. Gradually vandals have broken down the perimeter fence and the entrance gates so that the area is now open to anyone. The result has been the dumping of waste and rubbish and further dereliction on the site. Especially worrying is the scattering of rubber tyres and the fire dangers to children who play around them. We have enlisted the Chief Environmental Health Officer and the Chief Fire Officer in our search for some action which is increasingly urgent.

On the subject of railways there is speculation about the proposed Rail Link between Chesham and St. Albans through Croxley Green. Its construction would necessitate the building of a new viaduct to connect the Met Line with British Rail at the bottom of Baldwins Lane but much would depend on a decision between a full rail service or the introduction of a light railway for this service. The Council is studying the proposals in readiness for some announcements from the Transport authorities.

The laying of new water mains during 1988 did nothing to add to the charm of The Green during a rather damp summer but we were impressed with the way in which, for the most part, the contractors carried the programme of works. They were certainly not helped by the weather but most stages of the work were carried out according to plan and when difficulties were encountered we found the Water Company very co-operative in sorting them out. Some of the re-seeding has had to be re-done, a process which was not made any easier by the vandals who broke down the protective fencing, but we are optimistic that come the summer there will be few traces of the upheaval.

The annual programme of grass cutting on The Green was also made more difficult than usual by the work on the water main and by the unusual season which caused unexpectedly high grass and wildflowers early in the year. We received some complaints that mowing took place just when the flowers were at a peak and we shall see if some flexibility can be introduced to take account of the vagaries of our climate. Controversy has also arisen over the treatment of "The Triangle" - that area of The Green which, on the advice of conservationists, has been cut only once a year on the basis that particular species of wildflowers and insects are encouraged by such treatment. There have however been complaints by those who do not like the look of this uncut part of The Green and we shall see, before the 1989 programme is decided, if there is any better balance to be struck in this area.

Some change in another part of The Green - the access road in front of the War Memorial, may be in the offing. We finally persuaded TRDC to provide a better surface on this road in time for the Service of Remembrance in November, but this was only temporary and there is now a move to prevent further problems by grassing over the track.

Local travel, whether it be by car, bus or train is never far down on our list of subjects for discussion. Congestion, especially during rush hours, on the approaches to the roundabout at the top of Scots Hill was recently on the agenda and it was fairly evident that some improvement could be achieved if motorists coming up the hill and wishing to turn into Rickmansworth School would drive round the roundabout and turn left into the school drive from the opposite direction. We hope that on this subject the school may educate its staff and visitors. Bus services continue to be erratic and clearly do not yet provide the facilities which most Croxley people want. Representatives of London Country (North West) join us at Parish Council meetings from time to time to keep us informed about their plans and to learn about local opinion. This is a good opportunity to give voice to your views on the bus services and we urge you to tell us what changes you would like to see. Congestion on the roads is often cited as a cause for failure of buses to keep to their timetables and lines of parked cars on busy main roads can contribute to delays. In this context we have been looking into the problems caused by the parking of cars outside the Apex Mini Cabs Office on the Watford Road. We have suggested to TRDC that it could help both the proprietors and customers if some waiting space were provided on the other side of the road outside the Metropolitan Station.

Finally may I refer to a subject which probably causes more indignation than any other - the fouling of public places by dogs. Despite an improvement for a while in our recreation grounds where a campaign to encourage dog walkers to clean up after their animals has been going for more than a year, there is still little sign that the message is being taken seriously in the Parish as a whole. In some places it is difficult to go for a walk without treading at some stage in dog mess and it really is a pretty poor reflection on the attitude of a percentage of the population. As the weather for getting out and about improves we ask everyone with a dog to think seriously about this. Please take advantage of the dog bins provided in the recreation grounds and when you are elsewhere make sure you have with you the equipment to clean up if your dog misbehaves.

Ian Thomas Parish Clerk

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