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Croxley Green  
Parish Council

# The Parish Pump

No. 4 April 1994



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## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

This edition of the Parish Pump comes at the end of the year in which we have employed a General Assistant to work in the community, looking after footpaths and generally cleaning up the village. There was an article by him in *The Resident* so it would be superfluous to run through his duties again, so soon.

You will also have received your Council Tax demand and the level of the precept is determined by this and other measures taken, or intended to be taken, to serve the community. Instead of being top heavy with administration, we are now using a greater proportion of the precept in direct service. The reactions we receive seem to show that this is appreciated. The articles in this edition cover a range of our current activities and we trust they will be informative.

Our Annual Public Meeting is on Thursday 28 April at 8.00pm in the Parish Office, when we will be pleased to hear your questions and endeavour to give you satisfactory answers. This is largely your meeting.

Our Annual General Meeting is on Thursday 12 May also at 8.00pm in the Parish Office, when we elect our Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Committees elect their Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen. We also appoint representatives to:-

Road Safety Committee.  
School Governing bodies.  
SW Herts Library Committee.  
Joint Committee of Parish Councils.

and annual subscriptions to various bodies are agreed.

We shall be pleased to see you at these special meetings or at any Council Meetings, the main council meets on the last Thursday of each month at 8.00pm in the Parish Office.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION

In 1990 the Government decided that some of the mistakes of the 1974 Local Government Re-organisation should be corrected. The Local Government Commission was set up to address the problem. At the time it seemed that artificial authorities such as Avon, Cleveland and Humberside at County level, and some district councils, were the target; with an indication that any new authorities created, could be either unitary authorities or two tier depending on local circumstances. This was interpreted as meaning that the large towns and cities, which prior to 1974 enjoyed County Borough status, would have their autonomy returned. (NB a County Borough was the equivalent of what is now described as a unitary authority, responsible for all local government services within its area). The areas outside these large towns and cities would continue with the two tier system of County and District Councils.

Apparently the goal posts have been moved and it would appear that Unitary Authorities are expected to be the norm although, it is said, that where communities are agreed the present two tier structure can continue. To date the government has rejected all recommendations by the Local Government Commission proposing to retain a two tier system of local government.

By accident or design Hertfordshire is amongst the last areas to be considered, and the various parts of local government in the county have until 31 May to put forward their proposals. It is thought that if the various authorities can agree a formula for Hertfordshire then this would have a very good chance of being accepted by the Local Government Commission.

Including the County Council there are 11 local authorities for Hertfordshire and at the moment 14 possible structures are being considered. These range from, at the top, a single unitary authority to cover the whole county, through various combinations of district councils, and parts of district councils, to form smaller unitary authorities, all the way down to 10 unitary authorities based on the existing district councils to finally maintaining the status quo of a two tier system.

### **What is a Unitary Authority and why is it such a paragon of virtue?**

A unitary authority is a local authority which is deemed to have sufficient resources to provide all the local government services for the citizens of its area and is claimed to eliminate the confusion that is alleged to exist among the public as to the respective duties of

county and district councils. That is the theory but in practice some functions, eg Police and Fire Brigade, will continue on a county wide basis albeit under the auspices of joint committees. There are arguments for other services to follow this road and then there are the undercover services - Archives for example, their value is in a county wide base and one can see them disappearing, there being no peg on which to hang them in the new "unnatural" authorities.

The draft policy guidance to the Local Government Commission made in September 1993 argues that "unitary Authorities can reduce bureaucracy and costs and improve co-ordination and quality of services". It then goes on to say that the commission should see whether a unitary authority better reflects the identities and interests of local communities and secure **convenient** and effective local government. In considering its recommendations the Commission are required to weigh the costs of change, including transitional costs against the benefits of its proposals. The Commission should also take account of people's expressed preferences, (even though the government will probably ignore them - see previous comment).

#### Whither Three Rivers and Croxley Green?

For South West Hertfordshire there are a number of permutations, of which the principal ones are:-

- a) Three Rivers, Dacorum, Watford (289,335 pop)
- b) Three Rivers, Hertsmere, Watford (245,805 pop)
- c) Three Rivers, Watford (155,419 pop)
- d) Three Rivers, Dacorum (213,562 pop)
- e) Three Rivers as a unitary authority (79,646 pop)
- f) Three Rivers remaining as a district council within a two tier structure.

In addition there are a number of combinations involving individual parishes.

Within the Parish Council the consensus is to support the merging of Three Rivers and Dacorum primarily in the belief that this would produce a more sympathetic appreciation of the various parish councils. Even so there are minority views for merging with Watford and for the status quo, a view which may be strengthening.

So far to date you the ordinary citizen have not been asked to express an opinion on how and where your local government services should be administered.

If this epistle has raised your interest then you are recommended to express your opinion by writing to :-

- 1) your Local District and/or County Councillor
- 2) the Chief Executive at Three Rivers District Council and/or Hertfordshire County Council and
- 3) the Local Government Commission, Dolphin Court, 10/11 Great Turnstile, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC1V 7JU

as soon as possible and certainly before 31 May 1994.

#### Conclusion

It is anticipated that the Commission will take some 9 weeks to digest the various opinions placed before it and will reach preliminary conclusions by early August.

As the Parish Council understands the procedure the Commission will advise all households of its proposals, but will probably not justify them, and you will be asked to express an opinion. It is on the basis of these responses that the Commission will formulate its definitive recommendation for submission to the government. The Parish Council would urge you all to respond to the Commissions request accepting, as you have probably noticed, that this important paperwork will be arriving during the peak holiday period. Draw your own conclusions!

#### Parish Councils

Although Parish Councils, and their more recent counterparts Town and Community Councils, are not formally involved in the reorganisation their presence is recognised. They will continue in the new format, whatever that may be, and those areas not currently parished will be urged to form Parish Councils as appropriate. As far as is known there is no intention by the government of legislating to increase the powers of Parish Councils. Your Parish Council, in conjunction with the Parish Councils within Three Rivers and beyond, supports the call for Parish Councils to be granted the option of taking responsibility for local functions. In the absence of legislation it will be necessary to persuade the appropriate senior authority to trust the Parish and implement the various options which are available.

Such is the future of your local (!) government. Your opinion is important and you are earnestly urged to exercise your democratic right to express by writing to one or all the addresses mentioned above. Failing that write or call in at the Parish Office.

## STONE'S ORCHARD Off The Green

Old orchards are disappearing at an alarming rate and Hertfordshire, in particular, has very few remaining.

Stone's Orchard was once such an orchard, well known in Croxley Green for its cherries, but apples, pears, plums and cob nuts were also grown. Walter Stone, from whom the name derives, became a tenant farmer in 1893. Previously known as Shepherd's Farm, the owner Walter Stone and his family lived at Rose Cottage and kept horses, cows and pigs that roamed the orchard freely. Families walked to the Green, during the cherry picking season, to buy and eat their cherries. Many wealthy families sent boxes to as far away as Devon and Scotland.

The Environment Committee has met with representatives of the Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre and the Countryside Management Services to discuss the future of Stone's Orchard. During late April / early May a full survey of the orchard will be carried out by the HERC, so that a draft Management Plan can be compiled for discussion.

Concern, however at the moment, is centred around the ragwort which is taking over. The HERC has recommended that *Ragwort pulling* weekends are organised to control the plant. These are organised for Sunday 15 May and July 3, both from 10.00am.

#### Can you spare a few hours to help?

Please ring the Clerk at the Parish Office, with your details, so that we can ascertain the size of the volunteer force willing to assist with this task. The Countryside Management Services will be on hand to help with the organisation.



## THE TROUGH AND DAFFODIL PLANTING

The Parish Council has continued to care for the cattle drinking trough on the corner near All Saints' Church. Many residents are kind enough to express their appreciation of the upkeep to this and its appearance.

During the autumn Cllrs Waldron, Gallet, Pomfret, Sainsbury and families with friends, spent several weekends planting more daffodils on Scot's Hill, Watford Road and at the top of Baldwins Lane. The number grows year by year and many people have also expressed their appreciation of the colourful display as a start to welcome spring.

**CROXLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**COMMUNITY BUS SERVICE**  
 NEVER EARLY - SOMETIMES LATE

**TO WATFORD TOWN CENTRE - EVERY FRIDAY\***

A revised service is introduced on Friday 8 April 1994.

**1st Journey**

Winton Drive Approach	9.30am
Shaftesbury Court	9.32am
Malvern Way / Barton Way	9.34am
Fuller Way / Barton Way	9.36am
Hanover House	9.37am
Sherborne Way / Baptist Church	9.40am
<b>Return from Watford</b>	<b>12 Noon</b>

**2nd Journey**

Sycamore Approach	10.00am
Valley Walk (Green)	10.01am
Hazelwood Rd / Beechcroft Ave.	10.03am
Frankland Rd / Harvey Rd.	10.05am
Chalmers Court	10.08am
All Saints Lane Outside Church	10.10am
<b>Return from Watford</b>	<b>12.30pm</b>

**3rd Journey**

Junction Links Way & Warwick Way	10.30am
Junction Links Way & Dover Way	10.31am
Junction Links Way & Little Green Lane	10.32am
Junction Little Green Lane & Durrants Drive	10.33am
Junction Durrants Drive & Dover Way	10.34am
Kenilworth Drive / Baldwins Lane (Footpath)	10.36am
Manor Way	10.38am
Grove Court	10.40am
New Road Methodist Church	10.43am
New Road / Barton Way (Library)	10.44am
<b>Return from Watford</b>	<b>1.00pm</b>

1. It is the intention of the Parish Council that the bus does not leave the departure points before the stated times. Traffic problems may cause the service to be a little late on occasions.
  2. Passengers may return by any Community Bus but should note that there may not always be a spare seat on the preferred bus. (CHECK with DRIVER).
  3. Future alterations to the timetable will be notified in advance.
- \* When a Bank Holiday falls on a Friday (eg Good Friday) the service will operate on the Thursday of that week or such other agreed day. Verbal notice will be given at least one week in advance.

**FARE 70p RETURN**

For the exclusive use of Senior Citizens and persons in Sheltered Accommodation.  
 You may be required to show proof of eligibility.

**SPRING CLEAN WEEKEND**  
**APRIL 23rd and 24th**

The Parish Council is inviting groups, schools and local organisations, as well as individuals, to take part in the *Spring Clean Weekend* on April 23rd and 24th, which is organised by TRDC as part of National Spring Clean Week by the Tidy Britain Group.

Last year TRDC decided to award the Parish or group, who made the most effort during the weekend, with a plaque. Croxley Green Parish Council were delighted to be the first recipient of the award. It is now up to all of us to prove, once again, that Croxley Green residents care about the place in which we live. So far we have had an excellent response from schools and groups who wish to take part.

**Don't be left out.**

During the weekend of 23rd & 24th April, skips and a good supply of black

plastic sacks will be available from the following sites:-

**MILL LANE** (Common Moor Lock),  
**HARVEY ROAD** (IMC), **ALL SAINTS LANE**, **THE GREEN** (Stone's Orchard entrance opposite Coach & Horses PH)  
**ROUSEBARN LANE** (Lodge End) and  
**BARTON WAY CAR PARK.**

If you can't be there at 10.00am then bags will be available throughout the day to take away and fill.

For the first time the *Colne Link* Volunteers will be assisting and a skip will be available at **COMMON MOOR CROSSING**. Please ring Nick Parks, organiser, on 0923 237089 if you can help along this section.

Please if you are a group leader or an individual who really cares about Croxley Green - join us. Certificates will be awarded to all those that participate. Ring the Parish Office (710250) or Margaret Pomfret (720088).

**COMMUNITY BUS SERVICE**

Commencing on Friday 8 April 1994 the Council is introducing what it believes is an improved service. The object of the exercise is to provide, as near as possible, a *door-to-door* service for Senior Citizens and persons resident in sheltered accommodation, proof of eligibility may be required.

The time table (left) indicates the various pick-up points but if potential passengers have other suggestions, please let the Clerk know. Whilst the Council cannot guarantee to include all suggestions, every effort will be made to be accommodating where practical. The service operates every Friday except Good Friday (runs Thursday) and at Christmas, when a suitable day will be selected as the holiday period dictates.



**COMMON MOOR LOCK.**

During the summer of 1993, committee members walked the Common Moor Lock area, as we were most unhappy at the way in which the whole area was becoming neglected. After wide and varied discussions, that took place at the Environment & Amenity Committee's meeting on 5th October, it was proposed that a combined report, and photographs taken by Cllr Waldron, should be submitted to the Environmental Forum on October 19th 1993 at Three Rivers House. Cllr Pomfret duly brought these concerns to that meeting and again on February 22nd 1994, with up-to-date photographs of the growing devastation of this area.

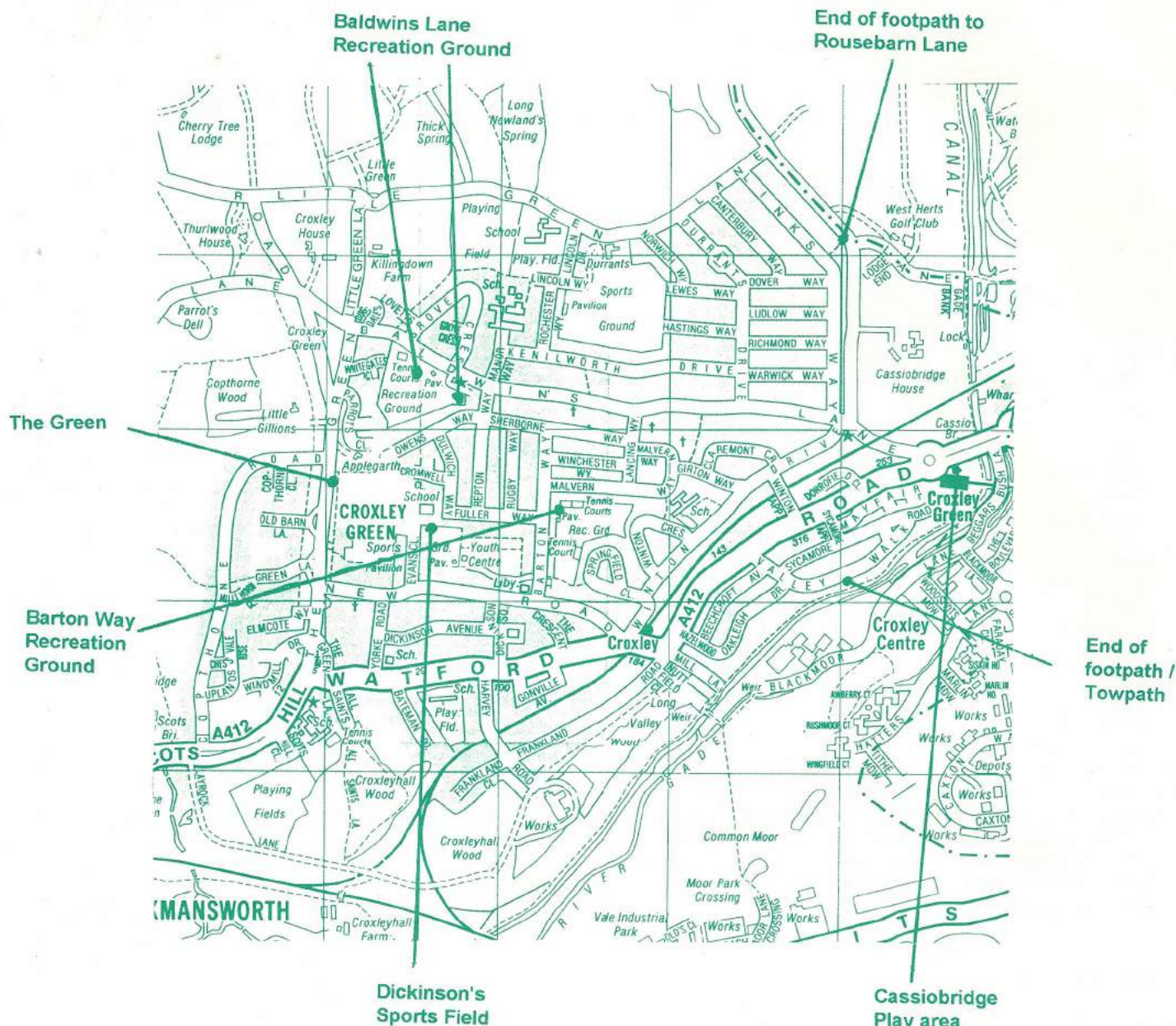
We are encouraged to see that TRDC have initiated the removal of abandoned vehicles and the whole area is now under a proposed clean-up and management scheme, so that the residents of the parish can enjoy this valuable corner of Croxley Green. *Another Parish Council initiative now taken up by others.* We have also recommended that the growing rubble barrier to the Long Valley Wood area is addressed, as this too is becoming an area for opportunists to target their unwanted debris.



**PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

In response to a request from TRDC for suggestions to improve local bus services, the Parish Council has made two proposals:-

- a) Restoration of the local Shopper Bus (Route W21) between Croxley Green and Watford.
- b) That routes W4 and 344 be re-directed via Watford General Hospital to provide a regular direct service for residents of North Croxley.



## DOG HYGIENE

Many pet owners will be aware that there are going to be new bye-laws introduced whereby, should a dog foul anywhere in public and the faeces are not picked up, the owner can be fined very heavily. To help with this and assist all dog-owners, we are hoping to install many more waste bins throughout the parish. At present there are 8 in use and shortly more will be introduced. The committee will then recommend more sites, so that residents can easily remove any faeces to avoid being fined.

The map shows the 8 sites where bins are already installed. The proposed new sites are :- Footpath adjacent to Malvern Way School/Winton Crescent, Stone's Orchard, Owens Way/Green footpath and Common Moor Lock.

**It makes sense to clean up!**

## AFTER SCHOOL CHILD CARE SCHEME

Those of you with young children, who were hoping to use After School Child Care, must be thoroughly disillusioned with the Council. Needless to say the Council is itself embarrassed that the high hopes of 12-18 months ago have not yet been fulfilled.

The reason for the delay has been the lack of suitable accommodation either, because premises were not available for the times required due to existing commitments or deemed not suitable.

The Council has not given up the idea and various accommodation opportunities are being explored as they become known and subject to resources available to the Council. As soon as there is definite information you will be informed, especially those parents who have already registered an interest.

## ENVIRONMENT DAY WATERSMEET - MARCH 12.

The Environment Committee agreed to participate, for the first time, in the annual Environmental Day at Watersmeet, the theme for the day being all aspects of *Water*.

We decided to display the Parish Map and with that a photographic display of past and present aspects of water relating to Croxley Green. We are very fortunate that the Parish contains the Rivers Chess and Gade with the Canal.

Cllrs Herbert, Waldron and Pomfret were present to represent the committee. Photographs and materials, featuring these waterways and others, were on display including the Croxley House Well-head, waterpipes across the Green and pollution of the Gade / canal in the 1890s and 1949.

## CROXLEY RAIL LINK

Most readers will know that London Underground Ltd have decided upon the *Northern* alignment for re-directing the Metropolitan Line to join the BR Line at Croxley Green branch for a through service to Watford Junction. It is proposed that the Link will leave the existing line east of the Baldwins Lane bridge, cross *Cinnamon's* site and Watford Road (A412) to rejoin the existing BR embankment by way of a new bridge across the Canal and the River Gade.

The Parish Council has consistently supported the principle of the Rail Link whilst at the same time arguing for a sensible and acceptable route. The Council believes that the route now proposed is the best of the several alternatives considered, although concern has been expressed as to the well being of the occupiers of the canalside cottages.

One of the alternative routes which was considered was a proposal to use part of the old Watford - Rickmansworth line across Common Moor. The Council opposed this proposal, not only because it was considered environmentally unsuitable but also, because it would take the railway to the southern boundary of the Parish, away from the bulk of the local residents leading to the eventual closure of Croxley Station. It is understood that the *Environmental Assessment* of this route also comes out against the proposal, though the report has not yet been made available.

In conjunction with the Croxley Rail Link, Hertfordshire County Council are promoting the Ascot Road Improvement Scheme. This will provide a dual carriageway from the roundabout outside the Sun Printers building and running parallel to, and to the east of, the existing Ascot Road to the junction with Hatters Lane and Greenhill Crescent serving both the Watford and Croxley Business Parks.

It is anticipated that LUL would build a new station, preferably to the west of the Ascot Road bridge and that the old Sun Printers car park would provide commuter parking for 200 cars. Access to the proposed station for buses and taxis would be by way of a service road linking the new and old Ascot Roads. That area of the present Ascot Road, outside the Sun Printers, would be sealed off at its junction with Whippendell Road to become a cul-de-sac. It is obvious that, if and when, both or either of these schemes gets off the ground, there could be serious traffic problems for all road users negotiating the Watford Rd / Rickmansworth Rd / Whippendell Rd junction complex including the emergency services.

The Parish Council is represented on the Local Authorities Joint Committee, alongside Three Rivers District Council, which is overseeing the Rail Link Project. The road scheme comes naturally into the discussions. With this involvement the Council can, and will, be arguing for the mitigation of the traffic problems during the construction of the two schemes and proposing various solutions. The Council is also looking ahead to the finished Rail Link and will be trying to ensure that the Link is clothed to blend in with the local topography, as quickly as possible.

To date the Council has submitted, or is about to submit, the following requirements:-

- a) That consideration be given to using the Canal for the import / export of materials and waste and for the maximum use of rail traffic.
- b) All containers to be adequately *sheeted*.
- c) Engineering design to seek to eliminate *wheel squeal* as far as is practical.
- d) Any new embankment to be clothed in semi-mature trees and shrubs with a policy of replacement of failures in the early years.
- e) LUL are to be asked to avoid using the Children's playground.
- f) A joint investigation, involving TRDC, to explore the feasibility of a footpath to the proposed Ascot Road station, using the future *dead spur* from Croxley Green station.
- g) That any spoil created by breaching the BR embankment for the Ascot Road Improvement Scheme be retained for use in any new LUL embankments.
- h) That the existing BR service be suspended only between Watford West and Croxley Green whilst the various works are carried out.
- i) That a lorry cleansing station be set up.

**NB** These comments may apply to either or both schemes.

Naturally, as other problems arise, the Council will be monitoring the situation and proposing possible solutions, if necessary. The real work concerning the Croxley Rail Link is only now beginning. London Underground anticipate that they will hold informal consultations in the Summer, when drawings will be available, rather similar to the exercise which happened in the latter part of last year. At some later time it is anticipated that a formal consultation exercise will be carried out,

when models will be displayed and various perspective views shown. Look out for further information in the local press. In due course it is anticipated that there will be a Public Enquiry.

This is the present position of the Croxley Rail Link proposals. The Council believes that the development will be good for Croxley Green and will not only provide local residents with a good service to Watford but also offer a service to other travellers to-and-from Watford instead of using the car. In due course there is the possibility of a rail link to Rickmansworth and, further into the future, even beyond including possibly London Airport.

Hopefully you will have found this brief discourse both interesting and informative. Should you need clarification, have a query or you think that the Council has overlooked something (quite possible) either write to the Parish Office or call in and discuss it with the Clerk. Alternatively you could write to London Underground Ltd, 2nd Floor, Abbey House, 4 Abbey Orchard St., London SW1P 2JJ. Address your query to Stephen Jolly, Consultation Manager, Croxley Rail Link.



## BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION

Last summer, for the first time, the Parish Council joined in this event which is organised by the Hertfordshire Conservation Society. We tested the *waters* to see how we compared with those villages who have a more rural setting and have been entering for many years.

The following are extracts from the judges' remarks:-

- a) An almost complete absence of litter on the Green and none spotted elsewhere.
- b) Roads and footpaths well maintained, verges recently mown and hedges trimmed, walls, fences and trees in good shape everywhere.
- c) Green looking splendid and Stone's Orchard most impressive wild life oasis. Allotments appeared well cultivated.
- d) There appeared to be a high level of communal care and interest in the village, houses throughout appear well maintained with attractively planted and carefully tended gardens.

Marks out of 100 by two judges were 88 and 83.

The judging took place on 23/24 June 1993. We hope to enter again this year.  
*Well done Croxley Green.*



## BALDWINS LANE SURGERY

Residents, particularly those in the north-west corner of the parish, will be aware that Drs Miller and Flude, currently in practice at 268 Baldwins Lane, have sought planning approval to transfer the practice to premises in New Road.

The Parish Council was not happy with this proposal believing, as many residents have since demonstrated, that the practice should, if at all possible, be retained in the vicinity of its present premises. The council accepted that in planning terms the only real grounds for objection to the New Road proposal would be lack of parking facilities and traffic congestion. At its meeting of 24 March 1994 the Planning Committee of TRDC, after a site visit, agreed to refuse the application for these and other reasons.

It is probably fair comment that many people were aware that this particular practice had outgrown its existing premises and yet it needed an unsatisfactory planning application for this problem to be properly identified. *Surely there is a lesson to be learnt here!*

As the Parish Council was unhappy with the proposals for New Road, and bearing in mind the importance and necessity of this service to local residents, it was felt incumbent on the Council to assist in identifying alternative sites and/or premises. A meeting was held with one of the Doctors, a representative of the Family Practitioners Committee, a local District Councillor and a few Parish Councillors to try to find a solution. It is not easy, but some initiatives have been started and hopefully will bear fruit.

Whatever the outcome of this problem it is hoped that the result will be one that, whilst being satisfactory for the practice, will also be beneficial and satisfactory to the patients.



## SUMMER HOLIDAY PLAYSCHEME GRANTS

Small grants from TRDC are available to local groups who run play schemes during the Summer holidays. They are administered through the Parish Council. Ring the Parish Office for more information.

## CROXLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL BEST KEPT GARDEN COMPETITION 1994 ENTRY FORM

### HOUSEHOLD SECTION.

1. I wish to enter my front garden in this year's competition.
2. I wish to enter my back garden (less than 60' x 30') in this year's competition.
3. I wish to enter my back garden (more than 60' x 30') in this year's competition.

Name (Block letters please) Mr/Mrs/Miss .....

Address: .....

Telephone No: ..... Signed: ..... Date: .....

### BEST FLORAL DISPLAY FRONTING PUBLIC HIGHWAY

#### PUBLIC HOUSE SECTION

Name and Address of Public House: .....

Name of Licensee: ..... Telephone No: .....

Signature: ..... Date: .....

#### SHOPS AND OTHER COMMERCIAL PREMISES SECTION

Name and Address of Premises: .....

Nature of Business: .....

Name of person submitting entry: ..... Telephone No: .....

Position in Business (eg Proprietor, Manager etc.): .....

Signature: ..... Date: .....

**Entry forms to be returned no later than Wednesday 29th June 1994 to:**

Derek Fineberg, Clerk to the Council,  
Croxley Green Parish Council, Parish Office,  
off Barton Way, Croxley Green,  
RICKMANSWORTH, Herts WD3 3SU.

## GARDEN COMPETITION

So many residents were disappointed at having missed the Garden Competition that the Parish Council inaugurated last year. It was a lot of fun and a most enjoyable experience. We have a wealth of beauty in Croxley Green, not just dazzling arrays of summer flowers in front gardens, but so many *secret gardens* in the back.

Please share them with us and join in this year. We have extended the category of back garden into large/small. Those under approx. 60' x 30' being small and those over being large. Judging will take place during the week beginning Monday July 18th and the final judging day will be on Saturday July 23rd. An informal winners' reception will take place on September 9th.

Last year Cllrs Herbert and Pomfret were accompanied by TRDC Parks and Woodlands Officer, Harvey Wardell,

who with his expert eye, short listed the entrants. On Saturday July 31st the Chairman of TRDC, Cllr Terence Palmer, Mrs Beryl Carpenter of Rickmansworth Horticultural Society and Harvey Wardell with Cllrs Herbert and Pomfret, had the pleasure of selecting the finalists. These were all toasted outside the winner of the Public House Category, the Two Bridges Inn.

A few weeks later an informal reception was held at the Parish Office when the Chairman of TRDC presented the winners with their awards.

An entry form is included with this edition of the *Parish Pump*. Please don't miss out this year, fill in the form and hand it in at the Parish Office by June 30th.

Photographs of last year's winners entries will be displayed at the *Revels* on the Green, come and see for yourselves.