

The Croxley Green Resident

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS' AND RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

No. 78

Editor—Mrs. D. HORWOOD, 47 Owens Way.

No. 1—March 1963

A Special General Meeting

DICKINSONS GUILDHOUSE (Science Room)

WEDNESDAY, 27th MARCH, at 8 p.m.

Notice is hereby given that a Special General Meeting for Members of the Association will be held on Wednesday 27th March 1963, at 8 p.m. in Dickinson Guildhouse, New Road, Croxley Green.

The business of the meeting will be to consider any recommendations made by the Committee in pursuance of Rule 14(e) which empowers the Committee to convene a Meeting of Members, and for the purpose of formerly adopting Candidates for election to the Rickmansworth Urban District Council.

After the formal item of business the meeting will be open for discussion of any topic, which should be previously notified to the Hon. Secretary.

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F. N. CHERRILL,
Hon. Secretary.

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

The sharper eyed amongst my readers will have noticed a change in the name of this journal to "The Croxley Green Resident". Let me say at once this does not indicate a change of policy on the part of the Association. At our last Annual General Meeting a member drew attention to the fact that sometimes we called the village "Croxley" and at other times "Croxley Green". The meeting expressed a strong desire not to use the abbreviation "Croxley" which we thought had been foisted upon us by the railway. The name is Croxley Green and in future we shall use it in full, particularly as we are proud of our Green. The committee considered this point at its meeting and fully agreed with the views put forward. As a result our Secretary has written to the London Transport Board requesting them to restore the word "Green" to the nameplate of the "Met" station.

The 1963 elections for the Rickmansworth Urban District Council are just two months ahead of us and I would draw your attention to the notice appearing elsewhere in this issue, of the open meeting of members to be held in the Guildhouse at 8 p.m. on March 27th. At this meeting your committee will place before you its plans and candidates' names for May 1963. Please make an effort to attend. If the Association is to repeat its success of the last two years we need more helpers to compete with the Political Parties who have access to bigger purses and more helpers than we have. I feel confident that an all-out effort can be crowned with success if we have more hands to do the work. No offer of help will be declined, no matter how modest. Please communicate with the Secretary at 10, Bateman Road.

After that part of the meeting has ended I expect the main topic will be the new property rating assessments which come into force next April. This is a matter which affects all of us in some way or other.

A complete new valuation list has been compiled and in a task of such size it will be surprising if an odd error or two hasn't crept in. This is no reflection on the staff of the Valuation Officer. The new lists are now available for inspection at the Council Offices and when you call to find out your new rateable value I think you should take the advice of the eminent body The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. That is to check the description of your property, just in case you are the possible victim of a mistake.

You will find the new valuation figures are much larger than in the past, and I will try to explain briefly what they represent. The gross figure is the annual rent which your property would be expected to fetch in the open market, on the assumption that the landlord undertakes all repairs, both interior and exterior; the tenant paying the rates. To obtain the net figure (the one on which your rate payment is calculated) a deduction is made from the gross figure representing the average annual cost of repairs. This deduction (in most cases of private houses) will consist of a flat deduction of £25 plus 1/5th of the amount by which the gross figure exceeds £55. This scale of deductions is fixed by law and cannot be varied in individual cases.

The total of these net rateable values for Rickmansworth as a whole has increased by 3 1/10th times the previous figures. If the amount to be raised in rates remains as before we should expect to find the rate poundage divided by this same figure, 3 1/10th. I fear this is a forlorn hope as I have just learned that the Hertfordshire County Council will be calling upon County ratepayers for at least an extra £2,000,000 for education alone in 1963/4. It is bordering on the impossible for economies to be made in other directions to offset this extra demand.

In quoting this rise in the total of rateable values I think I should make it clear that some individual cases may show either greater or lesser increases compared with the average for the district as a whole.

I am writing this letter in early February, at what I hope will be the end of this long spell of arctic weather and I am going to say where I think a small part of this extra Education Rate money should be spent. I refer to the toilet accommodation at Yorke Road School. The classroom part of this building is solidly built, in fact better than many other schools in the district, and should last until the new school to replace it is built between Fuller Way and the Green. On the other hand the toilets are a disgrace to an Education Authority which likes to think itself progressive. There is not even protection from the rain in the boys' department and whilst I applaud the efforts of the staff, from the Headmistress Miss Bridge to the caretaker, to maintain some sort of service in this severe weather, they should not be called upon to do so in the twentieth century. County Hall and Little Cassiobury should take immediate notice of this state of affairs and forthwith draw up plans to install new toilets at this school during the summer holidays 1963. These should either have a heating system of their own to combat frosty weather or else be constructed so that they can be heated from the existing school heating system.

I know many parents of children attending this school are gravely concerned about these matters and I urge them to take up the point with their County Councillor or the Divisional Education Office at Little Cassiobury without delay. Grumbling to one another may relieve feelings, but what we want is action by the Education Authority and they should be made to understand in no uncertain terms that we as ratepayers pay the piper and we are not satisfied with the tune being played at Yorke Road, Croxley Green.

And now to conclude on quite a different topic which shows the Croxley Green Resident is read by a wider circle of readers than we sometimes think.

As stated elsewhere in this issue, John Groomes Cripplegate, are not going to purchase "Crossley Wyld" for a Children's Home.

It appears our note in the last issue that they had sought planning permission for such use, was taken by some to be a fact, and John Groomes Cripplegate received requests for employment and enquiries to supply goods. The application was the normal and prudent act of an intending purchaser but as they did not proceed the matter is at an end.

Yours truly,
B. W. GARDNER (Chairman).

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Where am I? Many motorists and visitors to the district frequently have to enquire if they are in Croxley Green. The Association is now pressing the Local Council to erect "District Name Plates" indicating "Croxley Green" at the foot of Scots Hill and at Cassio Bridge. Although this item has been on the agenda of the Highways Committee for over a year, consideration of the whole matter has been again deferred until the estimates for 1963/64 are considered "at which time the Surveyor then be instructed also to report upon the cost per sign of placing appropriate intermediate signs at suitable points throughout the Urban District".

Tennis Courts. The Council is considering the provision of two hard tennis courts to be laid in Baldwins Lane Recreation Ground, and three quotations are to be obtained instead of advertising for tenders. As there are so many firms specialising in sports ground construction the Council may wish to note that approaches to three firms is not sufficient consistent with competitive prices and efficient workmanship which might otherwise be obtained. May we hope that these will be available for use this year, adding yet another amenity to this lovely open space.

Sports Coaching Schemes. The Council is to support proposals made by local sports and youth clubs to promote sports facilities and coaching courses in the locality.

Snow. Congratulations and thanks to the staff of the Highways Department, especially the recently promoted Works Superintendent, Mr. E. Gomm, for their efforts with limited resources during the long spell of terrible weather. However, these efforts were not without criticism for Scots Hill was almost unclimbable on Boxing Day evening. At a later date a motorist complained to the "Watford Observer" that he had travelled from Devon and had not experienced undue difficulty until he reached Scots Hill. We hear that one of our Councillors had thrown grit on Scots Hill on at least two occasions, and this prompts the query, Why not have conspicuously placed grit containers so that drivers could take the initiative?

Cassio Bridges. News is still awaited of the plans proposed for the current financial year for a commencement of the re-building of both bridges involving general road reconstruction at this place. So far as is known the plans have not yet been made public.

Children's Home. Groomes Crippleage are now proceeding with plans to purchase "Crossley Wyde" for use as a Children's Home.

Odeon Cinema, Rickmansworth. From extensive investigations it appears that the present Odeon building, will prove to be a very expensive undertaking to convert to use as a public hall, with the facilities needed.

A firm of surveyors is to be consulted to advise on the redevelopment of this site, should the Odeon be demolished. At the same time investigations are to be made to probe the possibilities of constructing an indoor swimming pool on the site.

Old People's Club and Branch Library. The Council has already decided that a satisfactory use of the land at the junction of New Road and Barton Way would be for the provision of an Old People's Club, and they have also decided to approve in principle a proposal of the County Council to build a branch library on this site. The Council's Officers are now to confer with the County Council on the question of designs and cost of such a project.

Medieval Tithe Barn. Concern is being felt for the future of the Old Tithe Barn at Croxley Hall Farm. Neither the owners or the lessee have any proposals for doing anything to repair the tithe barn which is in a bad state of repair and getting worse. The Local Council are considering what can be done before the deterioration of this relic of the past, reaches a point where permanent damage to the timber framework might be done.

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OUR FIGHT FOR THE NORTH ORBITAL ROAD

Last October representatives from the Rickmansworth U.D.C. met the County Council's Divisional Road Engineer and the discussions revealed that there was no possibility of the North Orbital Road being given any higher priority for some time. It should be noted that the line of this proposed road (which has been on the plans for over thirty years) would run from Hunton Bridge to Maple Cross. When the Local Highways Committee considered the report of their representatives, it was felt that the position must now reluctantly be accepted, and recommended that the Council should direct its attentions to the much needed improvements of the A.412 within the district to ease the traffic flow.

Before the recommendations of the Highways Committee reached Council for final approval, the Croxley Green Residents' and Ratepayers' Association held its A.G.M. A resolution was passed calling for a seven-day, 24-hour census of traffic movement to be taken in Watford Road. Although this resolution reached the Council in time for it to have been produced to the Council Meeting on December 4th, and although the resolution was reported in the "Watford Observer", the thunder of our efforts was stolen by Councillor Whiteside who, in Council, moved an amendment to the Highways Committee report which, inter alia, reiterated the Association's proposals. Moreover, for the same Council Meeting, Councillor Armson had given due notice of a motion expressing grave concern for the changed policy of the Ministry of Transport, and went on to call for joint consultations with all adjacent Local Authorities who might be affected. The decision taken at the Council Meeting was to accept Councillor Whiteside's amendment, and to refer the motion from Councillor Armson (along with the resolution from the Association) to the next meeting of the Highways Committee.

The latest development arises from Watford Borough Council who took the initiative of convening a meeting for joint discussions among affected Local Authorities. Apart from this, Members of Parliament for the respective constituencies have been briefed with the position. Current news in the daily press announces the decision of the Minister of Transport to extend the M.1 in the direction of London; many residents in this area will quickly realise that the heavy volume of traffic through Croxley Green is due in no small way to the passage of the M.1. For the sake of the record it may be said that the Ministry of Transport has in hand, to be carried out during 1963, a general census of traffic over a wide area to help the Minister in assessing the needs for trunk roads and relative extensions.

(Footnote: When considering the Association's resolution calling for a week's full-time traffic census—because traffic movement is heavy by night as well as by day—the R.U.D.C. Highways Committee commented "It was evident that the figures obtained from such a survey would be of no practical use". Our readers are invited to draw their own conclusions.)

F.N.C.

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