

WOODSIDE PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Once upon a time - and this is a fairy story - and long after Finchingley became Finchley, and to be a little more precise, the early Thirties, there was an orchard west of Dollis Brook on land that was not fully utilised: this was noticed by a Sussex man, a Mr. Ingram, a respected builder of fine houses. He, with great foresight, thought that the land could be used to a greater advantage, especially as the London Underground was edging its way northwards.... In those days he wasn't called a 'developer'. So, he bought the land, and, with the help of an architect, produced a plan called The Woodside Park Garden Suburb, with houses mainly semi-detached and of five different styles, these being known as A,B,C,D and E and, at the time, costing between £600 and £1,000. Of course, at the time, that was a considerable amount of money and the properties could be afforded only by professional and semi professional people.

Mr. Ingram, being a man of Sussex, named the roads with true Sussex names - Sussex Ring, Lullington Garth, Walmington Fold, Singleton Scarp, Chanctonbury Way, Cissbury Ring, Offham Slope, Wolstonbury, Pyecombe Corner, Rodmell Slope, Steynings Way, Poynings Way, Saddlescombe Way and others, all names that reverberated with the rolling Downs of Sussex. Mr. Ingram, in his wisdom, had many of the roads verged with grass borders together with a lining of trees, making the area rather bucolic. And, as the estate had been built on an orchard, many of the gardens had, and some still have, fruit trees.

However, in every story, fairy or otherwise, there is always the 'bad' man and, in this case, it took the shape of Hendon Borough Council who required money for schools, for public services, for urban facilities, for all sorts of things that aren't apparent in the average pantomime. Regardless, though, Woodside Park Garden Suburb survived, pleasantly and peacefully until the black clouds of war descended and, in the Riverside Gardens (more commonly known as Woodside Park) air raid shelters were constructed for the safety of the residents. But Adolf Hitler was no respecter of the rolling greenery of the area and from one of his flying machines a bomb was dropped at the end of Walmington Fold, intended, it was thought, for Hendon Aerodrome. It ruined some of the homes in that area. The change of building styles is apparent; the replacement houses were constructed by the Woodside Park Construction Company.

Thankfully, for the rest of the long war, and, with the help of a fairy godmother, no further destruction was wrought upon the area. The London Underground replaced the steam railway and extended to Barnet, naming it The Edgware, Highgate and Morden Line. With the railway came an influx of population and, needless to say, the erection of further houses. An area north of Dollis Brook became known as Woodside Park, a very desirable area with easy access to the City of London. The General Omnibus Company and the tramways provided ample facilities for local and distance travelling. And, where there were people, there had to be shops to serve them. And so, Ballards Lane in parts, became the centre for trade up to and including Tally Ho Corner. During that period our fairy godmother had little to do as all was so peaceful; the war having ended, peace prevailed.

But the big bad giant - the borough council - didn't stop taxing the residents more and more and, to overcome this and to be able to speak with a concerted tongue, a Handsome Fairy Prince entered the scene in the name of The Woodside Park Ratepayers' Association. The Fairy Prince was unable to prevent the Big Bad Giant from taxing the people, but he could and did ensure that the ratepayers got value for their money; the Chairman then acting as Principal Boy.

With the passing of time (as it normally does) the area became more and more desirable. A 'For Sale' sign was never seen, as the estate had a queue of prospective buyers for houses as soon as they came on the market, and in a trice, were snapped up.

Entertainment in the area was supplied by several cinemas and if you wanted to visit a theatre, the Orpheum in Temple Fortune provided the need. Sadly the theatre is with us no more, having been replaced by sheltered accommodation for the elderly; several of the cinemas have been replaced by office blocks. However, to partly fill this void the Woodside Park Club in Southover came into being, providing sport of many kinds, social events and varied classes for intellectual pursuit and advancement. Also, there is a licenced bar providing relaxation together with a tipple.

As in nearly every fairy story, in order to romanticise it, a stranger from abroad is introduced, and Woodside Park was no exception.

Today, we have among us Italians, Cypriots, Greeks, Indians, South Africans, Japanese, Chinese, Singaporeans, in fact almost every nationality is represented, making the area so very cosmopolitan.

With the popularity of the area, and those days cars were fewer than today, a 'bus service was introduced, providing services to Mill Hill, Edgware and Finchley.

As in so many cases, politics alter situations. The Borough of Hendon became encompassed in the all-embracing Borough of Barnet. Even though the borough changed shape, the big bad giant remained and continued to extort from the local population gold and silver in the shape of Rates, that is, of course, until the Fairy Queen came upon the scene and altered the meaning, but not the substance, of the word. Rates became Community Charge, popularly known as the Poll Tax, and then Council Tax. Even though the names changed, the system didn't. And so, another name was changed. The Woodside Park Ratepayers' Association became the Woodside Park Residents' Association, which, to this day, provides an umbrella of care and attention for those people who have complaints and/or suggestions.

You don't need to be told of what is now happening, living here as you do.

The 'Biggies' are squeezing out the 'Little uns' and the then thriving shopping areas are now becoming derelict. Roads are taking on the character of Brands Hatch as everyone seems to be in a hurry.

Nevertheless, the Big Bad Giant sometimes does what the electorate asks of it. Much of the time it doesn't. That's life.

This story has replaced our more usual newsletter and we, your committee, hope that you have enjoyed it. Being a fairy story the accuracy cannot be guaranteed, the writer being old but not too old to hope that all things will end Happily ever After.

WOODSIDE PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

445 6034
445 2180

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

"No spring nor summer beauty hath such grace,
Have I seen in one autumnal face."

Since our last newsletter, Woodside Park has been quiet, not dormant, since it is possible that so many of our residents have been on holiday. So what has happened? The main item was our Annual General Meeting, which, this year, was held at the Woodside Park Club instead of Frith Manor School. It was generally agreed by those present that the new venue was preferable and it is hoped that we shall return there in future years. There was a record attendance of nearly eighty residents, including Councillor Vic Usher who attended in a non-official capacity and who has now become a resident in our area. The meeting was an active one with healthy debate. If you were there, we trust that you enjoyed the meeting; if you weren't, then we hope that you will attend future meetings.

One of the main cri de coeur is the traffic and the speed at which it travels in Lullington Garth. A newcomer to the problem, that of speeding traffic, is Walmington Fold, which is now being used as a 'rat run' from Ballards Lane. Since our last newsletter, we have had an interview with the Police on these matters and have been promised that a full report will be sent to a higher authority. The vandalism at Riverside Walk was also discussed. We were promised that it will be patrolled at irregular intervals in the hope of catching the vandals who wreck the children's facilities in the park. At the time of writing, one Wendy House was torched, another tossed into the brook and a tennis court net deposited in the trees.

We have communicated with the Council on these matters and are awaiting response.

Many residents have raised the issue of 'sleeping policemen' in an effort to lower speeds of passing traffic. Whilst theoretically they are a sound idea, there is another side to the coin. They restrict the speed of traffic but impede emergency and public service vehicles. Furthermore, if one is outside your house you may well become disgruntled at the noise created by the revving-up of vehicles after passing the ramp. We have discussed the matter on numerous occasions with the Police. If, however, you disagree with these conclusions or have further suggestions, please let us know and we will take the matter further.

The recycling bins in Lullington Garth create an eyesore in a beauty spot. Our applications to have them moved elsewhere have been unfruitful; the Council considers that recycling needs override our environmental considerations. However, a suggestion from a local resident that bushes be planted at each end of the bins has been agreed and we are now awaiting action to this end. We are grateful to Mr. Gordon Greene for this proposal.

We have written about the untidiness of Woodside Park many times. Litter abounds -- sweet wrappers, crisp bags, beer and cola cans and rubbish ad nauseum is thrown indiscriminately on the ground and what was once a litter free area, is now taking the appearance of a rubbish dump. We ask you therefore, if you are able, to discourage the offenders, and to deposit litter in nearby bins.

Christmas will soon be with us again and we hope to have Carol singing at Sussex Ring as we have for many years. In order to make this a success, we need you to be there and to sing your hearts out. You will be rewarded not only with the satisfaction of singing but with mince pies, tea and even the possibility of a drop of the 'hard stuff'. It will be on a Saturday afternoon, December 16th at 4.30

In our last newsletter, we offered a suggestion that you might put your annual subscription to the Association in an envelope and drop it into one of three addresses of members of the committee. The idea was successful but we still had to call in order to collect sufficient to finance our activities.

To those who gave their £1 (and those who gave more) we offer our thanks. To those who didn't, we ask that next year when we call that you might subscribe. As has been said before, we need only to cover our expenses - the hall for the AGM, the Christmas tree and its insurance, telephone calls, postage etc.

Is there anything that you think worthy of mention pertaining to Woodside Park? If so, then a 'phone call to any of the committee members will serve to get the wheels in motion, if action is feasible.

Woodside Park is now a cosmopolitan area with many Japanese and other nationals; we ask them to join with us in our discussions, our activities and our thoughts. The Association is non political, non religious and exists only to iron out the problems of the area when and where we are able.

Are you willing to help with the distribution of our quarterly newsletters? If you are - and it would involve only covering one or two streets - then a telephone call is all that's necessary.

Many residents complimented the committee on the 'Fairy Story' Newsletter in the Spring and, because of its popularity, we hope, in the near future, to produce a sequel -- Fairy Story - Part Two.

A resident has asked whether any householder on the estate knows of a double glazing company that can replicate the existing type of window with the trellis type leadwork and with the same size of frame. If you have had this work done perhaps you could telephone.

WOODSIDE PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

WINTER NEWSLETTER

"When Winter comes can Spring be far behind?"

Now that Christmas is behind us and the New Year now with us, may we express the hope that your festive season was a happy one, that you enjoyed it, and that the New Year will bring all that you wish yourselves.

Since our Autumn Newsletter we have had gains and losses. The gains were the placing of the roadsign at Walmington Fold/Sussex Ring, the clearance of waste matter from Pyecombe Corner, a protest letter to the Council regarding retrieval of allotments backing onto Linkside, and the presence of Police Constable E. Poole at varying times, watching out for vandalism and destruction. Our main loss was the failed promise - so far - of bushes to be planted at each end of the recycling bins in Lullington Garth to offset their ugliness. Lesser matters have also been dealt with.

As in every year, the illuminated Christmas tree was erected at Sussex Ring and was a glowing sight. Our thanks are due to Messrs. Bill Dunn, Ken Buckwell and Ron Harrow for erecting it and to Blakes Cleaners for allowing us to use their electricity. Unfortunately, it had to be taken down before Twelfth Night owing to the insurance cover running out. It is sad that the cost of the tree has risen and the insurance cover doubled since last year. May we, therefore, ask whether there is anybody out there with connections in insurance who could possibly obtain cover for us at a lower cost than that which we have been obliged to pay?

Our Carol Singing Service was - as before - a great success, despite the bitter cold of the day; our especial thanks go to all those who courageously braved the weather and came and sung with us. Also, grateful thanks to Mrs. Colette Landucci for leading the singing and to Mr. Ken Ashton Paynter for his organ accompaniment. The free refreshments, as always, were prepared and served by Mr. and Mrs. Bert Crook to whom we are indeed grateful.

The Association is trying to reinstate the right of way of the footpath from Chanctonbury Way leading northwesterly across the fields alongside the brook to Totteridge Common. Evidence is sought of the uninterrupted use of this path by the public. Could any resident of long-standing (twenty years or more) who has had use of this path in that period, communicate with the Chairman or Mr. Bill Hampsher in order that such evidence can be collated.

Overleaf is a list of members of your committee together with their addresses and telephone numbers, which, we hope, will enable you to register any matter that warrants attention. On the adjoining sheet we have left space for you to register your complaints, your suggestions, your ideas, and yes, even your compliments. Please write clearly with your name and address and drop the sheet into any of the addresses overleaf. Serious attention will be paid to every tangible matter arising.

WOODSIDE PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION YOUR COMMITTEE JANUARY 1996

CHAIRMAN:
HON. SECRETARY:
TREASURER:

✓ Mr. Julian Cohen, 48 Walmington Fold 445 6034
✓ Mr. Douglas Carr, 27 Walmington Fold 445 2180
✓ Mr. Ken Buckwell, 151 Chanctonbury Way 445 7280

COMMITTEE:

✓ Mr. Bert Crook, 46 Lullington Garth 445 3111
✓ Mrs. Lucille Crook, 46 Lullington Garth 445 3111
✓ Mr. Bill Dunn, 18 Cissbury Ring South 445 4656
✓ Ms. Patricia Halsall, 27 Lullington G. 445 4278
✓ Mr. Bill Hampsher, 25 Cissbury Ring S. 445 7287
✓ Mr. Ron Harrow, 59 Cissbury Ring S. 346 4431
Miss Thérèse Jones, 10 Linkside 445 6970
✓ Mr. Francis Kerr, 46 Cissbury Ring S. 343 1189
✓ Mr. Yusoon Koh, 99 Walmington Fold 445 5171
Mr. Donald Neal, 48 Lullington Garth 346 5872
✓ Mr. Arnold Reid, 23 Linkside 346 6093
✓ Mrs. Jackie Weiner, 102 Walmington Fold