

LOOKING AFTER ELDERLY PEOPLE, a personal view

Ten years ago the major voluntary organisations involved in caring for elderly people tried to persuade the statutory services to plan in advance for coping with the 85 plus boom. But it is difficult for services under constant financial pressure to react until circumstances make it essential for them to do so. By 1991 there will be 23% more people aged 85 plus than in 1981 and by 2001 38% more. During this period those aged 65-74, the age group largely available to provide the caring services, would have fallen by 20% and 30%. The need for action is upon us and planning has begun.

This, so far, has resulted in a "philosophy and strategy for services to elderly people" from the local joint planning team (LJPT) that present Health, Social Service and Voluntary Services in Barnet and a report on services "When I'm retired" by the Social Directorate.

I reproduce below a statement of aims from the LJPT:-

Underlying these proposals is the expectation that statutory services alone will be unable to provide fully for the care of elderly people. Statutory resources will have to combine with care from family, voluntary and private sources. The task is to decide on the best use of all resources and to ensure that an

appropriate blend of resources, and of other forms of care, is available to each individual old person in need.

The number of elderly people in England and Wales is increasing. By 1991 there will be 15% more people aged 75 and older than there were in 1981 and 30% more people aged 85 and over. Although the total numbers of elderly people will not alter significantly by the turn of the century, those aged 85 plus rise dramatically by comparison and it is this age group which is most dependent on the services provided at present. During this period there is also a marked drop in numbers in the age groups which provide many of the informal carers, and in those which provide the nurses and all the other many and varied professions

concerned with hospital and caring services. The extended family as a cohesive unit is becoming much less common and with increased population mobility even the close family may be widely scattered.

Fine words, you may say, but only words. But they have been endorsed as the basis of the approached service provision by all services. The Local Authority brochure explains the services which exist, both statutory and voluntary and the approach to giving effect to the agreed philosophy. (When I last asked it had not been decided how this was going to be made available. Paula Jeffrey, the Director of the VSC, may now be able to tell you.) The fundamental reality, which is recognised in the philosophy, is however that there can be statutory services only for those in the most desperate need. Moreover, when there are relatives around, the old people themselves are not considered to be in desperate need, because there is someone to care for them. These 'Carers' are

the people who then disappear from their normal lives to concentrate day in and day out, and often during the night too, looking after their elderly relative. The organisation of which I am Chairman, Barnet Care, exists to provide trained Care Attendants to give these people just a few hours each week to be themselves again.

But I do not want to write especially about Barnet Care. My purpose is to say to all of us within the Garden Suburb that we have to plan how we are going to look after our own elderly people. This is not something which is going to go away, it is going to grow. Moving into sheltered housing is no answer because eventually the frailty is likely to overcome the ability to carry on; moving into private residential care is no answer, because eventually the amount of caring required is more than the economics of running private care homes and support. In saying this, I do not mean that sheltered accommodation of

various sorts, residential homes etc are not good and do not serve a useful purpose. What I do mean to say is that eventually more people will be required, somehow, to help give the necessary support. Equally, people are required to give the various form of help which enable old people to stay in their own homes and to give sufficient relief to 'Carers'.

Do we have these people in the Suburb? My guess is that most men and women under retiring age are out working. Does this mean that all those who are not working need to consider what they can do, however little and however erratically? Does this mean that we need some sort of Suburb planning organisation?

There is another way of securing people; that is to pay them. Perhaps people with the incomes necessary to live in the Garden Suburb have benefitted most from the reductions in taxation. Perhaps we should all be putting our hands in our pocket to contribute to the Community Fund which has

been established, so that there really is enough money to supplement for ourselves, the help which old people require.

This is a beginning. The next article will describe the services and organisations which already exist in the Suburb, and the plans which are being made to get our Suburb act together.

Dorothy White

ANY OLD APPLES

Do you have one of Dame Henrietta's apple trees in your garden? Do you know the name? If not, why not bring an apple to the September 23rd HGS Horticultural Show to see if it can be identified by an expert. The more unusual old apples the better. We hope to have a large display.

Please bring them to the Free Church Hall before 11.30 am.

MH

SPANIARDS FIELD

A Canadian has recently bought this site in Wildwood Rise from Godfrey Bradman for £3.3 million.

Permission has been granted by both the Trust and Barnet to demolish the existing house and build a new mansion of over 10,000 sq feet. It is the largest plot on the Suburb with its own private lake. The present house has been empty for over eight years and is riddled with dry and damp rot. CK

20th Dame Henrietta Barnett Memorial Lecture

The lecture will be delivered on Thursday 24th May 1990 by Mr Gerald Isaaman, Editor of the 'Ham & High'. His subject will be 'Our Environment' under the title 'Fear not to sow because of the birds', the wording which appears on the memorial plaque to the Barnetts in Westminster.

It is hoped that this early announcement will enable those concerned with planning future events to avoid a clash of dates.

MENDELS SITE SOLD AGAIN

The lengthy negotiations over the redevelopment of this site have taken a new turn, and Berkley House has recently sold out to Gable House Estates Ltd., a subsidiary of Ladbroke, for around £3 million. Gable House propose to retain the external elevations of David Baker's scheme, which has received approval from both the Trust and Barnet, but to use it for sheltered housing. They have estimated that the buildings could provide over 50 one and two bedroom flats. The flats will be of a high standard and specification and there will be a resident warden.

The main advantage of sheltered housing is that fewer parking spaces will be required than with the previous scheme, and it will not be necessary to build underground parking facilities. Instead, car parking spaces will be provided at the rear backing on to the sidings of Golders Green. Once Gable House have received approval

from Barnet and the Trust for this change of use they hope to start work early next year.

Commenting on the deal Chris Kellerman, the Trust Manager, said "I think everyone will be delighted since the new proposals

will reduce the traffic and parking problems in the area while retaining the excellent David Baker design. With the demolition of the petrol pumps and workshops the site will now become purely residential". CK



Down at last. Photos: James Webster.



Demolition in progress — men at work.

JOAN AUDIGIER

All who knew Joan Audigier were sad to learn of her death on 15th April. She had fought bravely and long against cancer, all the time continuing an active life including her work for the Residents Association. She and her late husband, Victor, had been living in Hill Rise since 1938. Victor became a Chief Warden at a time when his patch covered the whole area north of Falloden Way (Lyttelton Road). Joan had been a Warden for many years and not so long ago she took on the additional task of Chief Warden for Ossulton Ward. She was forthright and thorough in all she undertook.

As a child, Joan lived in Muswell Hill. She graduated at University College, London before the war and began her working life as a mathematics

teacher in Louth, Lincolnshire.

When her children were growing up in Hill Rise she returned to teaching, notably at South Hampstead High School. Latterly she was much in demand as a private tutor and she carried on tutoring until early this year. Other Suburb interests were the Bridge Club, the Horticultural Society and productions of the Dramatic Society. It was not long ago that she reluctantly gave up playing tennis.

Last year she celebrated 50 years in the Suburb with a party for her family and her neighbours. She delighted in her son and daughter and six grandchildren. She was much admired by her many friends in the Suburb and elsewhere — not least for her indomitable spirit.

LILLIE LEWIS

The Suburb has lost one of its oldest residents with the death in April of Lillie Lewis of Coleridge Walk.

Lillie Howell was born in Lillie Road, Fulham (hence the spelling of her first name) in 1891 and came to the Suburb in 1928 living in Falloden Way with her husband Percy Lewis and their one child Joyce. He was a carpenter working for a firm called 'Garsubiel' which built much of the Suburb including St. Jude's Church. During the war they

moved to Asmunds Place and Lillie worked as a cleaner in Childs Way School before becoming, jointly with her husband, caretakers and occupying the school house from 1943 to retirement in the late 60's when they moved to Coleridge Walk where Percy died in 1980.

During her long life Lillie was a non-stop worker for the Suburb as well as neighbourly interests and everyone who knew her will be saddened by her death. MA

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