

LETTERS

43 Hill Top
London NW11 6EA
24th August 1992
Dear Editor

I do thank everyone who visited our garden on 14th June for making it such a success; and to John Enderby for supporting and advertising us. As far as I could see, not a stick was disturbed although we had over 200 visitors. There were three plants left for sale at the end of the day, and two of those were sold on the following Monday.

Thanks also to those friends and relations who helped, gave cakes or lent garden furniture. I was able to send substantial cheques to the National Gardens Scheme and to the North London Hospice.
Yours,
Gwen Webb

19 Hogarth Hill
London NW11 6AY
18th August 1992
Dear Editor,

Do we have any would-be, budding or established composers on the Suburb?

I was fascinated to hear on the radio a piece by Jean-Philippe Rameau entitled 'Le Vesinet' as part of his 'Concert no. 1' (1741). Le Vesinet, then a country village, is now the Paris suburb with which Hampstead Garden Suburb is twinned.

Would it not be splendid if someone wrote a 'Suburb Serenade', 'Suburb Sonata' – even a 'Suburb Symphony'? Or, in the folk-dance idiom, 'Suburb Sarabande'? What about 'Dame Henrietta's Gigue/Gavotte/Maggot/Air'? Something fairly stately might be appropriate. This could be played or danced at one of our (too few) Suburb parties.
Yours musically
Camilla Raab

75 Lyttelton Road
London N2 0DD
21st June 1992

Dear Sir,
I was most interested in the letter printed in the Neighbourhood Watch section of the Spring Summer Suburb News about the lady who said her screams during an attack on her went unheeded.

You expressed the hope that it could never happen on the Suburb, and at that point I rushed to put pen to paper to tell you that it already has. A few years ago my daughter left our house at 5 on a September morning to go to work when she was attacked by a would-be rapist. In answer to her terrible screams, one resident opened his window and told her to "Clear Off" and later another man came to my door to complain about the noise, which he said he could hear through his double glazing. I hope this selfish pair never need any assistance. And, I'm telling you, you can put up as many "Neighbourhood Watch" stickers as you like, you won't change the attitude of the "I'm all right, Jack" brigade.
Yours
Irene Frankland

11 Holyoake Walk
London N2 0JX
July 1992

Dear Sir,
Reading about Barnet's cleansing policy for the majority of Suburb streets, it is clear that, however regrettable, most areas will be swept only once every other month, and that verges and other green areas will be only poorly maintained 2 or 3 times a year.

May I suggest that the RA encourages all residents to look after the area directly outside their front gardens – most of us are proud to maintain our gardens whether by ourselves or by employing gardeners. It involves therefore little extra time to include these additional areas – and perhaps some may be encouraged even to plant flowers around the trees – so that streets are as attractive as the houses and gardens.
Yours
Nicholas Brill

WELLGARTH ROAD YHA

For some time past the residents of Wellgarth Road have complained of problems of noise, diesel pollution and litter associated with the arrival and departure of coaches using the Youth Hostel in their road. Earlier this year the residents submitted a file outlining the history of the matter to the RA, and asked for their assistance.

The RA Chairman wrote to the Chairman of the Youth Hostels Association (David Bellamy) with the outcome that, on 24 June, a meeting was held at the hostel between representatives of the RA, residents of Wellgarth Road and the Chief Executive and London Regional Director of the YHA.

The result of a full discussion (and a very pleasant tea in the garden of the Hostel) was that the YHA authorities have agreed to do what they can do to dissuade coaches from lengthy parking in Wellgarth Road (especially with their engines running) and will, as a long-term solution, seek to make access to egress from the Hostel for coaches wholly within the grounds of the Hostel.

A dialogue between the Warden of the Hostel and the residents of Wellgarth Road has been established, and the residents – together with the RA – have established links with the YHA HQ. So it is to be hoped that in future minor problems can be "nipped in the bud" before they become major ones.
EW

Point Of Arrival

In 1967 Andrew Graham-Yooll, a journalist born and reared in Argentina, was forced out of his country by the military dictatorship. He fled with his family to London and has lived on the Suburb since then. He has published 15 books in Spanish and English, and has remained an active campaigner for freedom. He currently edits **Index on Censorship**, the international magazine for freedom of expression, to which the royalties of his latest publication are donated.

Point of Arrival is, in the author's words, "observations made on an extended visit". Of Scottish descent, Graham-Yooll is an "outsider" who is familiar with the British system and culture. He looks at the political, social and cultural state of England, particularly London, in the 1980s – and, in some instances, specifically Hampstead Garden Suburb where "late August picnics on the heath in Hampstead Garden Suburb, with cloths on folding tables and the unique summer scene of men in white playing cricket, are a joy and a calming sight." His fresh and direct point of view may well have been conditioned by his own

experiences of third-world countries and repressive regimes, and his comments on some aspects of our system, including our Health Service, frighteningly show how easily they could be described a "third world".

Religion, class, youth, prostitution, the police, racism, Thatcherism, the decline of the Labour Party, are all discussed lucidly and with humour. His writing draws on interviews with an impressive list of people, including other writers, politicians and figures of influence. The book's index highlights the range of topics, quotes and interviewees, including Leo Abse – Anthony Blunt – Edwina Currie – Margaret Drabble – T.S. Eliot – Michael Foot – James Goldsmith – Hampstead Garden Suburb – the IRA – Martin Luther King – *Marxism Today* – Salman Rushdie – *The Spectator* – Vivienne Westwood ...

The author's insight and humanity should, in this reviewer's opinion, be available to a wider audience – possibly through the feature columns of one of our Dailies. I do hope one of their editors will pick up a copy of the book.
EC

"MEET THE POLICE" EVENINGS

"Why aren't there more policemen walking the beat? In the good old days, we all used to meet a friendly local policeman whenever we went down to the shops, but nowadays they all rush about in police cars and seem so unapproachable and unfriendly."

We have all heard comments along these lines. Yet, when questioned, the people who make them are not suggesting that police on foot are likely to be more effective in catching criminals than those in police cars reacting speedily to 999 calls and the like. What they are actually saying is that they would like to have the opportunity to get to know their local police and to meet them as friends, which they can't do when the police rush by in a car!

Neighbourhood Watch is

organising six "Meet the Police" evenings this autumn – three at the Norrice Lea Synagogue on 5, 10 and 17 November and three at the Free Church Hall on 19 and 26 November and 3 December – to enable as many of us as possible to meet our community police.

With Sector Policing now really getting under way and with the influx of additional police beat offices on the Suburb, this is a particularly appropriate time for such gatherings where the Sector Inspector will introduce his team and where the policemen and women will tell you very briefly about themselves before discussing their jobs and answering your questions over a cup of tea or coffee. Further details can be obtained from Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators.
PL

Leasehold Enfranchisement

Flat leaseholders eagerly awaiting the Commonhold Bill to enable them to compulsorily acquire their freehold should beware. The proposed legislation is a litany of strictures which threaten to deny them relief from the folly of paying rent 99 years in advance. Commonhold – a new form of tenure to replace the landlord and lease with freehold flat ownership and standard rules – is due in the next Parliamentary session. It incorporates enfranchisement to permit lessees to compulsorily buy their freehold and to adopt Commonhold if they wish.

The unsatisfactory nature of leaseholds is well known and is exemplified by the dilapidation of many Suburb blocks. However, the proposed enfranchisement rules will deny blocks above commercial properties – in the Market Place and Temple Fortune, for instance – the right to buy and will effectively exclude blocks of mixed tenure where the number of tenanted flats is significant. Suburb blocks are typically 25 per cent tenanted. The Enfranchisement Proposals following should be supported, but with the recommended changes given in italics. Readers are urged to write to their MP. The Proposed Enfranchisement Rules include the following:

a) Blocks must have 90% plus residential floor space (*should be 51%*).

b) The enfranchising lessees must buy the tenanted flats, if the landlord wishes

(*the option to buy the landlord's interests should lie with the leaseholder*).

c) Two-thirds of all flats must have leases of more than 21 years

(*should be 51%*).

d) Two-thirds of all residential lessees must be in favour

(*should be simple majority*).

e) Lessees must pay the landlord's and superior landlord's legal and survey costs plus any 'injurious affection'.

f) Lessees must pay at least half the marriage value of the freehold and leasehold interests

(*the marriage value should be assigned 'pro rata' between the two sides according to their final position*).

g) Associated property, for instance a garage, might not be included in the sale.

Injurious affection is any loss to the landlord from development value, management fees, commission on insurance etc, which he might suffer from the compulsory sale. The **marriage value** of long lease flats is the vacant possession value if freehold, less the current value of the lease. This can be considerable, perhaps 10%, even when the lease term remaining is substantial.

For further details contact John Pearson 081 458 9888.



Happy prize winners at one of the HGS Horticultural Association shows this summer.

CONFLICTING INTERESTS AT THE INSTITUTE

The Institute has been exercising the minds and pens of residents during the summer not only because of the immediate residents' vocal objections to the parking problem possibly being extended as a result of weekend courses reported in our last issue.

Douglas Blausten, Institute Vice Chairman, gave a moving account of the financial difficulties faced by the Institute to the RA Council in September. He questioned the use by Henrietta Barnett School of Institute premises whilst paying no rent at the same time as the Institute is paying £48,000 a year for premises it does not own. Up to now EFL students have kept

the Institute afloat but income from this source has reduced since the Gulf War.

Many residents resent any suggestion that the school should leave especially, they point out, as most of the Institute complex would probably not have been built were it not for the school and that the major part of the money raised locally for refurbishment in recent years had come from parents of girls at the school.

As to the parking problem the RA and Institute met in September to discuss a number of ideas for alleviating what residents in the vicinity clearly see as a blight on the area. **RW**

UNDERGROUND LONDON

"The sustainability and future success of our capital depends on its underground. Pressing questions have to be answered by today's engineers: how do we know what is there already? where exactly is it? is there any more room left? can more be safely tunnelled, or excavated, or even demolished above ground without serious consequences for existing buildings and construction?"

These are some of the questions raised in an ambitious new exhibition **LONDON: THE UNDER GROUND CITY** which has been at the Building Centre and moves to the Museum of London on October 6th.

The exhibition's co-ordinator Esther Caplin says: "My idea is to give the Londoner in the street, including professionals, an insight into the essential role, the scale and complexity of what lies beneath. This has meant bringing together a mass of information not previously in one place."

"The underground has always been fascinating and mysterious, but research has revealed dramatic new insights. London, the pioneer of 19th century

underground drainage and transport systems is today facing new subterranean challenges – rising groundwater and increasing congestion as more is tunnelled and excavated to meet the capital's incessant demands for energy, water and swifter communications. London is still innovating with world firsts like the London Water Ring Main. But will anything else fit in?"

Esther Caplin initiated, researched and put together the exhibition. She is Co-ordinator of Vision for London, an organisation that provides an information network and promotes debate and action for the future of London. Trained as an art and architectural historian, she has organised other exhibitions including "Palestrina: The Temple of Fortune as an inspiration to architects" at the RIBA Heinz Gallery, as well as conferences and seminars on aspects of London and its future. She has been resident in the Suburb since 1970.

For further information contact Esther Caplin 081 455 0579/071 637 1022.

Having truly established ourselves in Hampstead Garden Suburb . .

. . . we feel that we can say we know how you like to be treated. That is why our Hampstead Garden Suburb Staff are patient and prepared to spend as much time and effort as is necessary to find your exact requirements – whether it takes one week or one year.

If you are looking for a home – come in and let us prove that we are the Property Professionals.



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Rooms in the Suburb Rooms with Bath Parking

CENTRAL HOTEL

35 Hoop Lane
Golders Green
London NW11 8BS

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Fax: 081-455 4792