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178 AUTUMN
2007

THE NEWSLETTER

CIRCULATION
3,800

DORRIDGE & DISTRICT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Chairman: DAVID GLANFIELD ~ 779635 • Secretary: MALCOLM SHEPHERD ~ 773374 • Editor: PETER RADNALL ~ 770633
e-mail address: dorridgeresidents@googlemail.com • www.dorridge.org.uk

PETITION FOR PROTECTION

This edition of The Newsletter contains a very important insert which we ask you to consider carefully. We would like your help in sending a very strong message to the Council to remind members of their responsibility when considering Planning Applications. The text of the petition explains itself and is intended for use solely by households in our distribution area. We hope that as many residents as possible (18yrs and over) in each home will feel able to support us in this attempt to protect the character of Dorridge and surrounding areas. Simply sign the bottom of the sheet and pop it through the letter box at any of the addresses listed below – unless of course you prefer to post it. We will continue to receive forms until 16 SEPTEMBER 2007.

So you could hand it in at Dorridge Day – we'll be there!

46 Avenue Road	17 Westfield Close
8 Bramshall Drive	12 Paddock Drive
10 Rodborough Road	7 Winster Avenue
85 Hanbury Road	2 Apsley Drive

RUBBISH

In our last newsletter we promised to tell you more about waste disposal and recycling.

FACTS :

- Solihull Council collects over 100,000 tonnes of waste per year = 1.25 tonnes per household.
- 18% goes to landfill
- 25% is recycled or composted
- 58% is burned at a facility shared with Coventry Council to generate heat and power

At present Domestic Waste is collected in unlimited quantities in black plastic bags, with green bags for separate green waste collection. By the end of next year all households should have green wheelie bins to replace the green bags.

Solihull Council is currently re-tendering its Waste Management Contracts and various options are being considered for implementation next April. It seems certain that the cost of waste management will continue to rise to reflect the constantly increasing amount of waste and to meet recycling targets.

Recycling is an important aspect of waste management and Solihull accepts that some Councils achieve better results by requiring households to separate different kinds of waste into designated containers, with general waste placed in wheelie bins with no 'side waste' permitted.



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Also, did you know that recycling is in fact the third of the three 'r's. The other two are 'reduce' and 're-use'. We can all 'reduce' by, for example, not accepting a plastic carrier bag when we have only bought a newspaper, and by avoiding over-packaged goods. And we can 're-use' by selling or handing on items we no longer need (to family, friends, charity shops etc). It is also possible to pass on large items like furniture by using organisations such as Furniture Restore (0121 788 3333). You can even join the growing network of people (Freecycle) who register their unwanted goods online. Go to **www.freecycle.org**

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for disease, damage etc, but does not have a member anywhere on our patch. Maybe you would like to fill the gap. If so, contact Ian Spencer for more details – **ian.spencer@blueyonder.co.uk** or by phone on 01564 77 0813.

'Tree Wardens' is a national voluntary scheme supported by Solihull Council, and training will be given to new members. Talk to Ian – you could end up with a very pleasant way of spending the odd hour, as well as performing an extremely useful service for us all.

WELL DONE DORRIDGE SCHOOLS.....

....for such a positive response to parking problems in the areas near school entrances. Many months of hard work by a committee of parents and staff, with the cooperation of Solihull Council, have led to the publication of a very detailed 14 page Travel Survey which gives a clear picture of how parents get their children to school and suggests workable strategies for reducing traffic congestion. The committee is hopeful that there will be a phased introduction of a Walking Bus covering five routes, having the dual effect of getting children walking and greatly reducing the number of vehicles approaching the schools. So, on behalf of the many residents who will benefit, thank you to all who took part and good luck with your future plans.

AND MORE WALKING NEWS

A 'Striders and Strollers' group has been set up by the Dorridge Surgery Patients Group with the aim of providing regular fortnightly walks. The idea is to set off as a group for a simple half-hour stroll, making it ideal for those with a busy schedule. The walks will begin at 10.15 at St George and St Teresa's church on Station Road, every second Thursday from August 9.

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AND IF YOU GET TIRED.....

.....we've bought some benches. DDRA has recently bought two new benches for public use and, with luck, these will have been installed by the Council by the time this newsletter reaches your letter box. We hope the seats will be set up at the edge of the spinney, with one on Dorridge Road, close to the corner with Avenue Road, and the other on Avenue Road facing the surgery and Forest Hotel. Now all we want is some sunshine!

THE DORRIDGE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

The Forest Court Working Party mentioned in the last newsletter has now met three times, and we have drafted in two additional members, making five in all. We said we would make contact with people or organisations we thought might help us and our first move was to write to Dorridge Estates and Portfolio Investments. As we understand it, Dorridge Estates (principally the Muntz family) remain the freeholders of the Forest Court site, with Portfolio holding the lease. We expressed our concerns for the future of the shopping centre, given its present run-down condition, and asked for their advice and support in bringing about some improvement. A month has now passed (at the time of writing) since the letters went out and although we have had a response from Portfolio (via its agents, Collingwood Rigby, Surveyors) we have heard nothing from Dorridge Estates. Portfolio/Collingwood Rigby made clear their desire to support the interests of Dorridge residents and are currently considering a number of options for improving Forest Court. Meanwhile, we continue to meet to consider our own options and we do know that our Councillors are with us. At its most recent meeting the Working Party resolved to float some

ideas with the Council (Councillors and Officers). The ideas (purely notional at this stage!) might include (in order of magnitude)

- Completely refurbish Forest Court shopping precinct as it exists.
- Remove Forest Court shops and rebuild on the existing site.
- Remove Forest Court and redevelop the whole site, including the car park.

So between now and the next newsletter in December we hope to make some progress, at least in talks with the Council. But at the end of it all, if Dorridge Estates and/or Portfolio Investments have a different agenda which does not accord with local views we may find ourselves in a cul-de-sac. Look out for the December issue to see how far we have travelled. Meanwhile, many thanks to residents who contacted us after the last issue to give us their views.

NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING.....

.....means getting to know the neighbours, and to this end our local team holds a surgery in Dorridge on the first Tuesday of every month, 10.00am to 12.00 on the Forest Court car park. But it seems that few residents take up the offer. This may be because people are satisfied with the way policing is being carried out and have no particular problems with crime or anti-social behaviour. Or it may be because they are cynical about the way they believe the police respond to complaints. Whatever the reasons, if officers spend two hours in Dorridge without seeing anyone the future of the service will have to be reviewed. Our officers would

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