

PRESTON PARK

Balloon Festival, Vintage Vehicles, Weddings, Summer Show.....

Recent events in Preston Park have highlighted problems with the whole range of activities going on in the Hall and Park. Now that the Park is part of the new Eaglescliffe Ward Mike, Maureen and John have done a number of things to try to help:

- worked on getting the parking problems during popular events sorted out
- made sure that residents are kept as fully informed as possible
- initiated a full policy review with Stockton Borough Council.



Stockton Council has been responsible for Preston Hall and Park since it was given to the people of Stockton after the 2nd World War.

Your Councillors say that it is vital to establish the right balance between all the activities that the Park is being asked to accommodate. The Park and Hall **do** belong to the whole Borough of Stockton, but local residents **must** be considered when the impact of events are considered, **and** be listened to as the local guardians of the health and well-being of the Park.

Consultants and Council officers have ideas for developing the Park and Hall. Your councillors will make sure that your views are heard.

We have already been promised that the balloon festival will not be repeated.

LICENSING

The national Press has been full of predictions of 24-hour drinking, but as *Focus* goes to print no-one in Eaglescliffe Ward has applied for this. There have been lots of applications here to change opening hours and entertainment licences, with only a short period to object. Stockton Council tell people living within 100 metres; our councillors tell people whose e-mail addresses they have. Ward councillors cannot object unless asked to do so by people living nearby. Decisions are made by a sub-committee of councillors from other wards on narrow grounds defined by law.



Our councillors keep people in touch, and will advise people who ask them, but the law limits what can be done to reflect local public opinion.

HIGHWAY PROPOSALS

Please let our councillors know what you think about suggestions from Council officers to:

- Reduce the speed limit on the **A67** west of Hunter's Green roundabout to 50 m.p.h.
- Close the gaps in the central reservation of **Yarm Road** between Concorde Way & the A66.

We've Rolled up our Sleeves!

Following the changes in political control on Stockton Council, our 3 Liberal Democrat councillors are working hard to try to make it run better. Maureen chairs the Education, Leisure & Culture committee, who are currently looking at youth club provision. Mike is Vice-Chairman of Planning & together with John is on a committee trying to improve that service. John chairs the Performance Review & Audit Committee. Another Lib. Dem. councillor chairs a committee looking at council housing. No easy wins or headline-grabbing stories (yet), but very necessary work, some of it not before time!

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

House builders like to give new estates pleasant-sounding names which have no legal status. What they must do is put up street name signs. Instead of *Mulberry Park* (off **Urlay Nook Road**) we need signs for **Lartington Way, Mickleton Drive & Hunter's Green**. Please don't start using *Hawthorn Grove* for the new houses off **Aislaby Road** – there's a street with that name in Yarm! We've asked Stockton council to press the developers to put up the proper names NOW.

Central or Local?

LABOUR POLICIES HIT EAGLESCLIFFE

Five years ago, John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, issued new planning policies (Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (PPG3)) calling on local authorities to increase the density of new building and to favour building on previously developed land.

The problem with this is the definition of previously developed land - everything from derelict urban wastelands to lovely Victorian houses with big gardens.

In some parts of **Eaglescliffe** the open space between houses makes them a soft option for developers. The space currently occupied by one house and garden can be used to provide housing for a much larger number of households.

WHOSE TOWN IS IT ANYWAY?

Local residents often oppose such redevelopments on the grounds that they will change the character of their local area. Unfortunately, however much your Liberal Democrat councillors, who themselves live locally, might support the views of local residents, they are tied by their legal duty to follow Government policy. If a planning application meets Government and local authority policies the planning authority must approve it. Otherwise the applicant can appeal, and is likely to get approval from a Planning Inspector working to Government rules.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS OPPOSE ABUSE OF PPG3

Liberal Democrat Councillor, John Fletcher, spoke at the 2003 Lib Dem conference at Torquay on the need for more local decision making in planning.

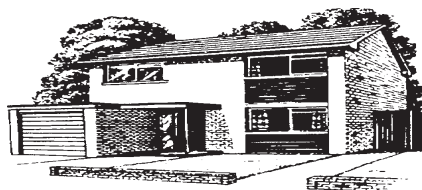
Eaglescliffe councillors, Mike Cherrett, John Fletcher and Maureen Rigg, have worked hard to try to ensure that new Stockton guidelines will help to retain the character of the threatened parts of the ward. They also invited Ed Davey MP to visit **Eaglescliffe** ward to see what happens when Mr Prescott's guidance is used to justify knocking down perfectly good houses to build flats and provide car parking.

Ed Davey said, "Eaglescliffe is suffering like so many communities from Britain's centralised planning system. Prescott and his bureaucrats think Whitehall knows best. They force a 'one size fits all' policy on the whole country. It's time locally accountable politicians had more say.

"All the evidence shows that peoples gardens are vital for maintaining plant and bird life in our towns and villages, yet Labour's planning policy puts our precious gardens in the same category as a derelict petrol station. This planning nonsense doesn't even get debated by Parliament but is imposed on us."

Liberal Democrats would reform the planning system so that communities have a real say over what happens on their doorstep. The Deputy Prime Minister's power to intervene in local decisions would be drastically reduced. Objectors would have the right to appeal against decisions, not just the applicant.

"Local people must have the power to find solutions to local housing problems."



Liberal Democrats - Listening to you

Planning Update

To bring you up to date about Planning in Eaglescliffe Ward since *Focus* 129, here is the position at time of going to press on the main applications. As always, more details on request from any of our 3 councillors.

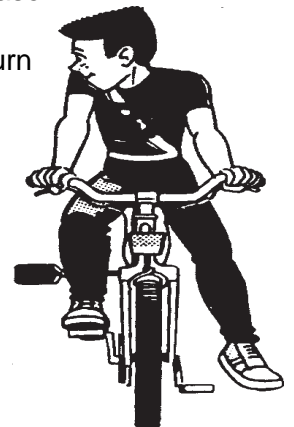
- **Hughenden, 1 Station Road** – Stockton planners refused plans for conversion into flats & building 2 cottages. Fresh plans for a rear extension & conversion to 3 flats are being considered.
- **Aislaby Road** – Demolition of 5 houses & revised layout for building 29 approved (*Focus*129).
- **The Avenue** – Demolition of 2 houses & building of 42 retirement flats (*Focus*129) – decision adjourned to sort out the developers' proposals for the road, which is not adopted by the Council, & consider Planning Committee's comments on the footprint. Many residents have put their objections in writing & attended the Committee's site visit & meeting.
- **646 Yarm Road** – Plans to replace it with 4 houses (*Focus*129) turned down by Stockton planners.
- **Claireville Hotel, Yarm Road** – replacement by 2 blocks totalling 18 apartments – no decision yet.
- **Durham Lane Garage** (N of Industrial Park) – industrial storage units for vehicle dismantling – under consideration
- **Wass Way** – Extension of telecom mast approved
- Housing estate in place of *Low Crook Farm*, **Durham Lane** (next to Allen's W Crossing) – refused by Planning Committee for a number of reasons
- **Cinnamon Restaurant, Sunningdale Drive** – Takeaway & Sunday opening – being considered
- **Riverside Lounge & Restaurant, Yarm Road** – A Planning Inspector has confirmed the need for parking (see "Snippets"). An application to extend opening hours has come in.
- The new fence on the **Tannery site** on the river bank does not need planning permission.
- Planners turned down new fencing at **The Pavilion, Sunningdale Drive**.
- After a Planning Inspector turned down an extra house at 9 **Heathfield Close**, there is a revised application.
- It is proposed to convert land near *Rosecote Farm*, **Newsham**, into a riding establishment.
- Enforcement of planning decisions can be a slow process because of the law, but the wall/fence at *Burlington House*, 578 **Yarm Road**, should be reduced in height by October.
- Alterations to 1/3 **Langdale Close** are still under consideration.
- **Riverside Lodge, Urlay Nook Rd** – application for a certificate of lawfulness to operate a motorcycling track was refused. Again, enforcement procedures will be slow
- **The Avenue, Copsewood** – no further news at the time of going to press

“ON YOUR BIKE”

Some months ago Stockton Council officers told Maureen & John that they proposed to connect up the existing short stretches of cycle path on **Durham Lane** near Allen's West Crossing and at the Industrial Park entrance by a route through **Burdale Close, Royal George Drive & Chaldron Way**. Then:

- The small stretch of new footpath & cycle path on the Lane side opposite *Carter Moor Farm* (which people want so as to walk safely to the *Oakwood Centre*) was held up by land purchase delays.
- Signs were put up for a cycle way to “Elton”, even though cyclists needed to turn right onto the carriageway at the Chaldron Way chicane. These have now been removed from Chaldron Way at residents' request.
- Without consultation, the bollards stopping vehicles shooting out of Burdale Close into the 'bus lay-by on Durham Lane (as reported in previous issues of *Egglecliffe Focus*) were removed by engineers who did not know why they were there. At our councillors' insistence, they were replaced.

WE SAY, “We're delighted at plans for the new footpath and we support cycling, but all this isn't exactly 'joined-up working'!”



, Working for you, All the Year Round

Working for YOU All Year Round



AIRCRAFT NUISANCE STOPPED

Mike took up the problem of aircraft flying low over some parts of the ward, especially **Fortrose Close**. The problem has reduced so much that one resident wrote *"It has been very pleasant to sit in the garden on the lovely afternoons we've had this summer without the low flying passenger planes spoiling everything"*.

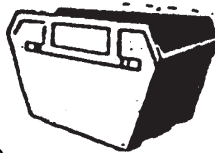


EGGLESCLIFFE CHURCHYARD

For a time most of the Churchyard was fenced off with red-&-white tape. At the time of going to press it is unclear whether it is Stockton Council or Church authorities who are responsible for any unsafe gravestones. It is clear that it will take some time to check them all, so we appeal to parents not to let children play among graves. If you have any personal concerns, we can put you in touch with the people who are looking into the problem.

SKIPS

- Mon 17th Oct CARNOUSTIE DRIVE - beside the garages
- Tues 4th Oct, OAK ROAD - grassed area
- Mon 28th Nov CROFT ROAD - garage site
- Wed 14th Dec CEDAR CRESCENT - grassed area



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WE KEEP IN TOUCH

• Mike, John & Maureen will see anyone who calls on

• Friday 7th Oct, 6.30-7.30 at Trinity Methodist Church, Witham Avenue

• Tuesday 18th Oct, 6-7 at Egglecliffe Parish Hall, Butts Lane

• Fri 4th Nov, 6.30-7.30 at Trinity Methodist Church, Witham Avenue

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SNIPPETS

Our councillors have:



- Found a source of funding for a new community notice board for **Aislaby**.
- Reported to Stockton Council the state of **Aislaby Road** through **Newsham Parish & of Larch Crescent**.
- Called yet again for the Council's contractors to sort out the lighting of bollards in **Yarm Road**.
- Reported missing & damaged street name signs, including **Butterfield Drive, Formby Walk & Pannal Walk**
- Asked Stockton Council to clear up **back Pinewood Road** (behind Trinity Church), the shrub beds in **Sunningdale Walk**, persistent litter in **Marion Avenue**, the path from **Brae Head to Glenluce Close** & the overgrown **Teesdale Way** from **Dinsdale Drive** to the River.

Stockton Council as owner is now considering whether to sell off the bottom corner of the "Horses' Field" (foot of **Stony Bank**) for a car park for the restaurant, for which planning permission is already in force.

The Strategic Rail Authority has opposed proposed new rail services to London through **Eaglescliffe**

Or contact us any time at:

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PLEASED TO GET FOCUS?

Focus goes out about 6 times a year to every house in the ward. We don't pay a delivery company - we rely on ordinary people to deliver in one or two streets each. At the moment we need some new deliverers for the Ashville Avenue/Teesbank Avenue area; Seymour Grove, Drive & Crescent; Park View Estate (Pennypot Lane etc). Please ring if you can spare half an hour to deliver a road or two near you.