

WEST PARK RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER Spring 2007



**Thursday 29th MARCH
At LAWNWOOD SCHOOL 5.30 pm
Open meeting for residents to raise
school related issues which affect
the locality.**

**PLEASE contact Doug () or Terry (077 601 123 95) to let us know
if you are going to attend this meeting**

**If you are unable to attend but would like to make a comment
please contact Doug or Terry or email the Association on**

westpark.residents@ntlworld.com

**The Association Annual General
Meeting will be on 4th April 2007
at 7.30 pm in the United Reformed
Church on Spen Lane.**



It is hoped that the local MP Greg Mulholland, along with local councillors, Streetscene and the neighbourhood police will be in attendance. Please accept this invitation to meet up with other local residents to discuss issues which affect the community.

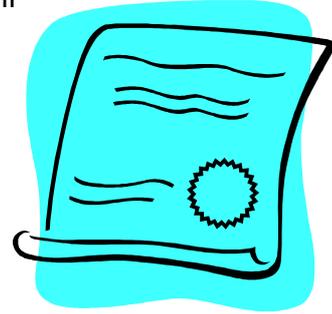
**Subscriptions are now due for 2007, a subscription form is enclosed with
this Newsletter.**

The annual subscription remains at £3 per household, the same amount as originally set in 1992 (when petrol prices were 40.3p per litre !)

**Please continue to support the Association in providing a voice for the
issues that affect our community.**

ASSOCIATION YEAR-END REPORT

The Association has grown over the past year, and is still picking up members. It circulates Newsletters in the Spring, Summer and Winter to the whole community (members and non-members). The email circulation list reaches over 50% of members and has proved an effective means of alerting members to any urgent issues, together with filling in on news between the Newsletters. Like all technology it does have the capability to achieve both good and “evil”, as I found out when I mis-typed an email address and alerted a gentleman on a small island off the south cost of England about a planning application in Leeds. Despite his amusement I could not get him to join the Association. A “neighbour-delivery” system is going to be established to provide the same news update facility to non-email members (excluding the South-East of England). A web site has been worked on during the Autumn / Winter and a preliminary version will shortly be available.



The Committee has met five times this past year, whilst regularly keeping in touch on ongoing matters. In addition to the work done by the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, committee members specifically look after School Liason, Email circulation and the website - not to mention attending various other meetings throughout the year.

The Committee has also liased during the past year with the local MP and local councillors (across both the Weetwood and Kirkstall wards) on a range of issues.

However, the most important people in the Association are you the members. YOU are the eyes and ears capable of alerting the Association, and hence the local community, to any matters which might affect the West Park area.



EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY YOU ARE THE “ARMS” of the local community, taking action be it by writing in to appropriate officials, turning up at planning appeal visits, or whatever. An excellent example of this is a local resident, who wishes to remain anonymous, who has served a Litter Abatement Notice on the Council. This is an ongoing matter and will hopefully help to reduce the amount of litter which blights parts of West Park to the benefits of all residents.

Keep up the good work !

COMETH THE HOUR COMETH THE WOMAN !

..... well actually 8 women and 3 men

These were the members of the first committee for the Spen Lane Residents Association, formed in January 1991. A woman chaired the original committee and, apart from one year, up until 2005 exclusively women have chaired the Association.



Women have played a significant role on the committee since the Associations inception. One member of the Association who was part of the initial committee in 1991, was the chair for several years and only left the committee and area in 2005. The current Secretary joined the committee in 1992 and the current Treasurer in 1995. All in all, an impressive record of service to the local community.

One of the first actions of the Spen Lane Association in the February of 1991 was to expand it's remit to include the West Park area, taking on the official name of the Spen Lane and West Park Residents Association. This remains the name today, the name West Park Residents Association being used solely for brevity.

The Association, at the request of local residents, has expanded further over the last two years to include the area south of Kepstorn Road up to the Beckett Park campus. A recent request will take in the houses which border the West Park fields on the Kirkstall side.

In West Park, as local residents, we are lucky to live in an area with so much green space and a wide variety of family housing dating in style from late Victorian, Edwardian to modern day. Finally we are also fortunate to have the willingness of the local residents in working to maintain the character of the area.

["cometh the hour, cometh the man" - interesting quotation having overtones of a Shakespearian or a scriptural nature, but no apparent source for these exact words. Often applied these days to transitory sports-heroes or perhaps national politicians, some might say very appropriately since one source of the quotation dating back to the 14th century is "Opportunity makes the thief" ?]

LAWNSWOOD SCHOOL

Meetings concerning school issues between local residents, the Head / Deputy Head and local police are being revived, after perhaps too long a break.



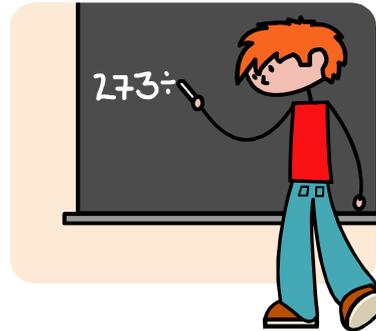
Unfortunately, litter is still a major problem on certain streets, especially after the school lunch break. There are also too many incidents of anti-social behaviour which deter many residents from being out and about at certain times of the day.

A "truancy drive" has recently been carried out, following

concerns raised by residents. There are approximately 200 pupils now involved in work-related education which involves them attending other establishments. Hence there may always be some pupils “apparently” leaving school premises at “odd times”, but these should not be confused with pupils aimlessly wandering around the local streets – these are truants.

A recent meeting between the Association, the Head, Deputy Head, Chair of the Board of Governors and local community police explored possible ways of tackling a range of issues. The School recognises that there are significant issues that need to be addressed and it is hoped that improvements can be affected for the future.

Lawnswood School recognises the importance of “living in harmony” with the local community, and has in the past gone to considerable lengths to stop “bad behaviour” and identify “miscreants”. It also appreciates that problems do still exist.



The Board of Governors now includes three local residents. Also our local councillor, Sue Bentley, has recently joined the Board.

If you wish to raise any issues related to the School, please try to attend the meeting on the 29th March or contact the Association.

IF you have been affected by anti-social behaviour PLEASE report the incident. The procedure is as follows:.

REPORTING INCIDENTS

It is important for local residents to report incidents that occur in the area involving school children. The basic procedure is :

- Telephone Lawnswood School on **2844020**
- Describe the incident, time it happened and the location PLUS if possible anything distinctive about the individuals (such approximate age, description, type and colour of clothes worn, etc.). This information is invaluable to the school in tracking down the culprits.
- IF you have also reported the incident to the police, you should give the School the log/incident number.
- The School SHOULD also give you a REFERENCE NUMBER
- ALSO PLEASE inform the Association of the incident by calling **077 601 123 95** (this helps the Association build up a complete picture of what is happening, and is extremely useful in discussions with the Police or the School).

LITTER

TRIVIA FACT: It is estimated that more than 100,000 trolleys go astray from supermarkets each year and dealing with abandoned shopping trolleys costs local authorities approximately £5m per year.



Fortunately not with trolleys, but certain areas of West Park are blighted by litter, especially those affected by the lunchtime eating habits of some of the Lawnswood school children. Although, schools are legally responsible for clearing the litter and refuse from their own grounds they have no responsibility for clearing the litter outside their grounds. This falls under the jurisdiction of the council, which has a legal duty to clear refuse and litter from relevant land for which it is responsible.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA) gives both local authorities and citizens rights to take legal action to get areas cleaned up. For instance –

Section 91 Summary Proceedings by Persons Aggrieved by Litter

Enables members of the public to apply to the magistrates' court for a Litter Abatement Order to get an area that is under the control of a duty body cleared of litter and refuse. Non-compliance can lead to a maximum fine of up to £2,500, plus a daily fine.

This gives individuals the right to take legal action to get litter removed where an area falls below standard for longer than is allowed. All areas of the city are classified or zoned. West Park for instance would be zoned as “medium intensity of use” a housing areas occupied by people most of the time. The standard of cleanliness is graded as follows:

Grade A No litter or refuse at all.

Grade B Predominantly free of litter and refuse apart from some small items

Grade C Widespread distribution of litter and refuse with minor accumulations

Grade D Heavily littered with significant accumulations

A cleanliness of grade C and D is regarded as unacceptable and the local authority has a set time scale to take steps to clean the area – within one day !

The definition of zones, standards of cleanliness (with example photographs) and the set clean-up times can be obtained from the website:

www.defra.gov.uk/environment/localenv/litter/law/litterandthelaw.doc

If you, as a local resident, are not happy that an area is being cleaned up within the specified time scale you can make a formal complaint, being specific about location, type and amount of litter with ideally photographic evidence to support your case.



If you feel that the local authority has not responded to your complaint, then the next step is to apply to the magistrates' court for a Litter Abatement Order. If the case is successful, the court

can order that the litter and refuse from an area be cleared away. It is an offence not to comply and the local authority can be fined up to £2,500 plus a daily fine of one twentieth of that sum.

The web-site

www.keepwalestidy.org/english/images/guidetoapplyingforalitterabatementorder.pdf

provides details (available in english and welsh) of the steps to follow and example letters which you can use.

A local resident carried out research into this issue, and has used the information and procedures described in the web site in a complaint to the Council. The Council responded immediately and has started to address some of the issues raised in the complaint.

Just in case you are fed up with litter on your street, the procedure is straightforward, it just takes a bit of time to take photographs and prepare the letters.



IF you decide to issue a complaint regarding litter to the Council, PLEASE inform the Residents Association.

Interestingly, the Environmental Protection Act 1990 also contains **Sections 93 & 94: Street Litter Control Notices**. This gives local authorities powers to work with businesses that are causing undue litter and refuse on public land.



Dealing with street litter outside of premises where a litter problem can be clearly traced to certain types of business, such as takeaway food premises, a local authority can issue a Street Litter Control Notice. This can be used to compel the occupier, or the owner of business or retail premises, to clear up litter and implement measures to prevent the land from becoming defaced again.

The section refers to the responsibility of the owner of premises “to keep the front of the premises, plus a reasonable distance either side, clear of litter”. This raises the question of what constitutes a “reasonable distance”, although the Act does mention a figure of “up to 100 metres”. The Association has just started to pursue this issue with council officials in relation to some of the premises based on Butcher Hill.

Mr D's Diary – a snapshot of the “behind-the-scenes” activities of the Association. With apologies to Mrs Dale, Doctor Dale (Jim) and the Home service all of whom are long past being worried about – also apologies to the younger residents who wonder what this note refers to)

January 2007



All Newsletters distributed before Christmas, so hopefully a quiet month ahead ?
Putting together an article for the Weetwood and West Park Life February edition
Nina out of hospital
Hazel finalising accounts for year-end audit
Met up with Greg Mulholland at Cardigan Community centre to discuss resident's concerns over behaviour of schoolchildren.

Follow-up meeting with Terry, Councillor Sue Bentley, N and J.

Terry has been talking to the police regarding Lawnswood pupil's behaviour. He's in process of arranging a meeting at the School for February
Contacted by Mrs N after stone broke her kitchen window (stone thrown by schoolchildren)

Following the work by local resident, Mr F, in pursuing the Council on litter problems have drafted an article on Litter Abatement Orders for next Newsletter. Lunchtime litter varies day-on-day but still pretty bad.

Emailed Councillor Elizabeth Minkin about 291 Spen Lane, her response from the Planning Officer passed onto David for email circulation.

Still putting together material for Steve to use in developing Resident's web-site
Have finalised the agenda for the Committee meeting on 30th January

Nina, Hazel, Terry, David and Steve are Association Committee members
Written by Doug, Chair of the Association

S.T.E.P.



The Coffee mornings at St Andrews Church at the top of Butcher Hill 10-12 every Thursday are attracting lots of people and are well worth a visit. ALSO importantly they have just introduced a drop-in session.

The **DROP-IN session** is held during the coffee morning, usually every 3rd Thursday of each month. The local neighbourhood police and housing advisors are in attendance to provide advice and take note of any matters concerning local people. It's the perfect time to raise **HOUSING and POLICE issues** with the officials who serve the area, and of course, to sample Joyce's superb tea and coffee. **The next session is on the 22nd March.**



STEP will soon start another coffee morning between 10 – 12 at St Stephens church hall (off Morris Lane) beginning on Wednesday 28th March.

WEST PARK FIELDS

In the near future a wooden “fence” will be erected on the Spen Lane edge of the fields, and around the area close to the North Parade entrance to the fields. “Fence” is the wrong term, it is more a sort of “ranch-type/wooden rail”, similar to the “edging” along the playing fields near Abbey Grange school on Butcher Hill.



The ANNUAL LITTER PICK is being organised by the West Park Fields Group to take place in mid to late April..

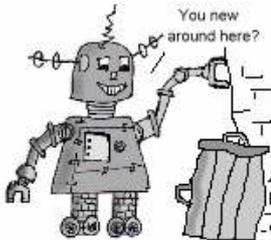
Volunteers are needed to help clean up litter which has accumulated in the hedgerows around the fields. Black refuse bags and litter-pickers will be provided.

ONCE the exact date and time is known, these will be circulated via the residents email list. IF you do not have access to email, but would wish to be involved, please telephone Doug Kemp, and we will make sure the information gets to you.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you wish to contact the Residents Association:

To report “school incidents” call **077 601 123 95**



To email the Association on any matters
westpark.residents@ntlworld.com

To join the email circulation list send an email to
westpra@btinternet.com

POLICE

FOR ALL EMERGENCIES telephone 999

Community policing, South of the Ring Road call the Belle Vue office 2053025

Community policing North of the Ring road call the Horsforth office on 2395024



FINAL REMINDER

**4th April 7.30 pm ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING in
the United Reformed Church, Spen Lane**

If you are unable to attend, please give your apologies to Nina or Doug (please see CONTACT DETAILS above).