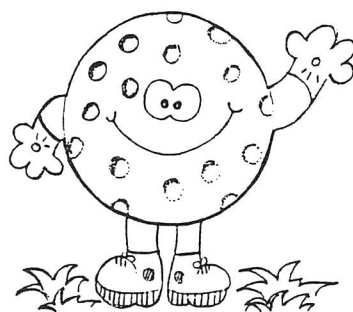


READ YOUR LETTERS  
IN THIS ISSUE!!



# Wot!

## About Ratby



Meet Golfie  
on the  
Childrens' Page

ISSUE 28

PUBLISHED BY RATBY SCOUT GROUP

JUNE 1991

### EDITORIAL

We won't apologise for the lack of pictures in this issue, as we are publishing your letters in full. 13 letters against the development advertised in our last issue.

The plan has caused the biggest outcry since "WOT" started. Letters from all areas of the village, from young and old alike.

Over 1320 people, so far have signed a petition against the scheme.

Letters, a survey and a petition all against published plans. Therefore this magazine must assume that this village is opposed to major changes. But beware this will be a long campaign!

**FOUND FOUND**

IN THE CHURCHYARD  
A BOX OF TOOLS  
CONTACT THE MAG.

### SHOULD RATBY GROW?

I carried out a survey of 100 Ratby householders of varying ages during April.

I discovered that 86% of the people asked were totally against the expansion of Ratby. As many as 80% were very concerned about the effect of increased traffic. We are told that the by-pass roads around the village will help our traffic problems yet over half the people still feel that traffic will get worse.

Well over half the people felt we would lose the annual fair held near The Plough. This has been coming to Ratby for a good many years and would be greatly missed. While many people thought we did not need a bandstand, there were others that felt with a bandstand they may hear more of the Ratby band.

The majority did not feel that industry in the village would improve very much. They did feel however that they would still receive the same service from the village Doctor.

While there was much concern over traffic people were equally concerned about schools. They felt the schools were already overcrowded and wouldn't be able to cope. I asked Mr. Smith who is Headmaster of the local primary school how he felt about this. He felt due to his position he could not say if he was for or against the project.

County Hall estimate that one in five houses are likely to have a primary school child. This could mean up to 200 extra children. I asked Mr. Smith if there was any way his school could cope with such an extra intake. He felt it would be impossible as the school was just not big enough. Also it seemed unlikely that the school could be expanded any further. Such problems as the school hall not being large enough for dinner children would be just one of the problems. Therefore if there were such an increase in children a new school would be needed.

I conclude that a large percentage of the village is strongly against the village extension project. However a large percentage were also against the meeting hall for the religious sect that is now being built.

**So will the opinion of the villagers really count.**

JOHN BINLEY



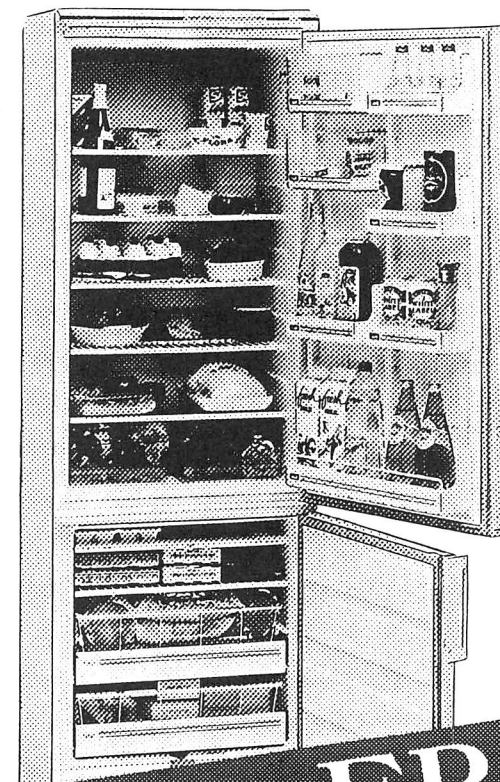
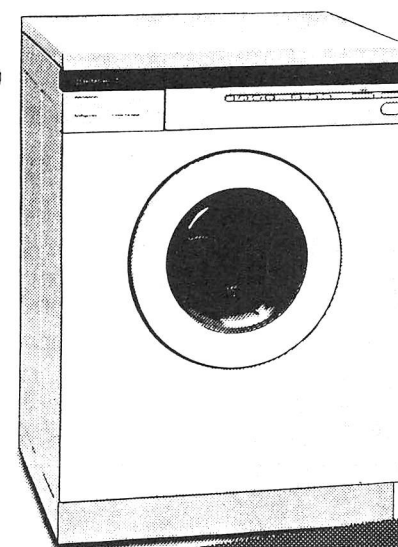
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The views expressed are the views of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publishers.

## 1ST. RATBY SWALLOW CUB PACK

Ref. 75th. Cub Birthday Extravaganza

The event took place at County Hall, starting a little after 12.30.

After the day was officially opened by Sir somebody or other \*\*\*??, all the cubs were asked to arrange themselves into a huge 75. Then on a given signal a man, precariously perched at the top of a fire engine telescopic ladder, took a series of photos. of all the assembled cubs and Beavers.

After that we all went to the top car park where our soap boxes were inspected for the following categories.

Most unusual Soap Box  
Best Looking Soap Box  
Best Dressed Team  
Best Theme Team Members and soap box.

After the judging had been completed, team managers were asked to register at race officials caravan.

All teams then were preparing last minute refinements on their soap boxes ready for racing to commence.

Racing commenced from 2.00p.m. and our team was racing in the second heat. This race was very exciting and Swallows fought off a strong challenge to win their heat.

Our second race was full of incident. The weather had turned bad, and the rain beat down, making track conditions very difficult indeed. Never-the-less Swallows did their best and finished second.

But on points Swallows made it through to the final along with the team from the Swifts and three other teams.

By now the track was really slippery and as the teams lined up for the start, the rain came down even harder.

The lights switched from red to green and the race was on. Unfortunately the opposition from the Swifts was too strong, but the Swallows struggled gamely on. As they approached the penultimate corner, David Cross became detached from the team and was run over by the the soap box coming up from behind. Swallows finished

fourth overall in the final race. David is better now, but Swallows did come away with some prizes which are as follows:

1st. Place: Best theme team and soap box.  
2nd. Place: Most unusual soap box.  
3rd. Place: Best soap box team.  
3rd. Place: Best looking soap box.

Four certificates in total.

Akela wishes to thank all the cubs who came along and took part, we are all very proud of you.

Akela also wishes to thank all the parents who came out to support the Swallows on what turned out to be a very rainy afternoon.

Our thanks also go to the West District Venture Scouts who organised the event. The soap box was a one off collectors item designed and built by the leaders and cubs. The best literal description one could give is "flying wedge". It was christened in Akela's garage with coke and called the fun machine. Secret test runs were carried out the day before the race by Adam Robson who became the ace driver of the day. During testing it was obvious that it would be difficult to keep our machine under the legal speed limit of 70 mph. Never the less with some fine tuning, it became the machine to Beat.

The theme for the costumes for the Swallow Cubs came from Mrs. Pam Cross. Each Swallow Cub was to wear a full dustbin liner and on the front and back of the liner was a large cutout to shape letters. Now when the assembled pack lined up on the fronts it read "Happy 75 Birthday" and on the command "from" the assembled pack turned to show the backs "1st. Ratby Swallows". The team displayed this at every opportunity and as the rain fell heavier the costumes kept the cubs dry. Sadly this was not the case for the soap box, because although it functioned mechanically perfectly throughout the race day and still can be seen, its outer perfection crumbled under the constant downpour. Swallows wish to congratulate Swifts on their great victory in winning the final.

Perhaps this could become another District Event held yearly.

Yours in Scouting

Brian Cross - Akela  
1st. Ratby Swallow Cub Pack

## NEW LIBRARY CLUB

Two local ladies, Mrs Bernie Moore and Mrs Jayne Wilson are starting up a Library Club for 3-4 year olds in Ratby Library on Tuesday afternoons.

The plan is to tell stories and talk about them, followed by craft work relating to the stories. At the moment membership will be limited to 14 children at each session, but there will be a waiting list.

The Club will be open in Term Time only.

Parents will be welcome to stay with their children until they are settled.

If you think your child might be interested there is a form available for completion at the Library desk. Some of the childrens work will be displayed on a special club notice board.

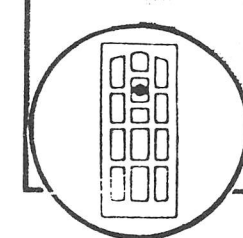
This venture has taken six months to come to fruition because approval had to be from the Librarians Union, and, of course, County Hall.



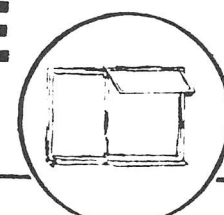
A member of the Beaumont Leys sub-division library will be in attendance to oversee the activities.

The first activity session will be held on June 4th from 1.30 - 2.30 p.m. There will be four sessions before the summer holiday begins.

This Club should be a great success and looks certain to be great fun for the children who get involved! And of course it will help encourage the all-important love of books at an early age!



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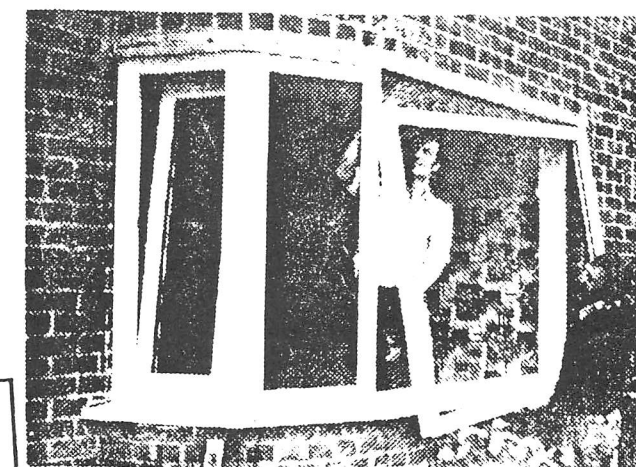
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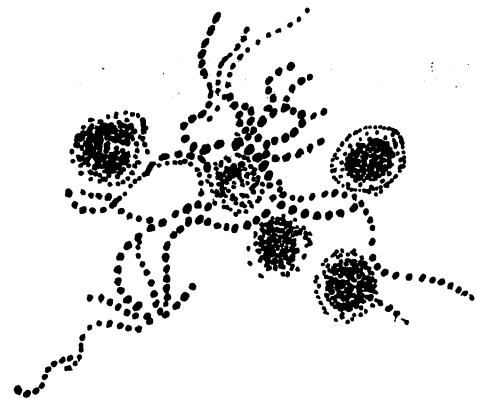
## HEALTH IN THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY - COUGHS AND SNEEZES AND OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASES

On the 24th of May 1940, a group of Oxford Scientists lead by Professor Howard Florey carries out an experiment which was to change fortunes of medical treatment of infectious diseases. The drug under test on that day had been discovered several years earlier by Alexander Fleming at St. Marys Paddington. Twelve months later just 50 years ago this month the first patient, a policeman named Albert Alexander became the first human to receive the new wonder drug derived from the mould discovered by Fleming some thirteen years earlier. Albert Alexander was like many of the visitors to outpatients, the victim of a bacterial blood poisoning and until 1941, septic infections were a common place cause of death. By the following year sufficient quantity of the drug was rushed to the Italian war front and saved the likes of many British and Armenian soldiers injured in battle. By the time the National Health Service came into force during 1948, penicillin was waging a war on many infectious diseases that had previously been a common cause of death to many of the local population. Septicemia caused by casual infection at work, could lay a man off from work for many weeks and if the infection took hold could lead to rapid death.

Before 1940, there was a large host of bacteria that would annually cause havoc in the local community. In the middle ages, and during the late 16th and 17th centuries Ratby like many parishes throughout England was visited by various outbreaks of plague. Bubonic plague a disease spread by rats, began with a cold and swollen glands. All over the body the victim was covered in a large rosy rash. This bacterial killer is immortalised in the nursery rhyme 'ring a ring a roses' owing to the rosy red rash which covered the body of the victim.

In some instances whole villages were wiped out. This happened to the village of Whittington in the north of our parish. Now only quiet woodland acres stand where a village community once lived.

By the middle of the last century another bacteria which caused the disease Tuberculosis commonly known as consumption killed many hundreds of people each year. However the disease was more common in the densely packed growing slum tenements of the towns such as Leicester than in rural areas such as Ratby. During the present



*Streptococcus in short or long chains causes a variety of diseases, including tonsillitis, impetigo and septicemia. Streptococci are sensitive to a wide variety of antibiotics, including penicillin.*

century and as late as the mid 1950's the disease caused by a similar organism that brought Albert Alexander into hospital in May 1941 was reaking havoc in many of the villages of Leicestershire. It's name was Scarlet fever. This organism caused several epidemics including a large outbreak in 1939. In that year many young people in Ratby, Anstey, Groby and Glenfield died of the highly infectious disease. A cousin of the scarlet fever bacteria was, I remember, the scourge of Ratby School throughout the fifties, its name was impetigo and I remember how the victims of this "scabby face" infection were made to feel like lepers by fellow pupils. This infection which was made even more noticeable by the application of the antiseptic dye crystal violet.

Like scarlet fever, and many other bacterial infections, were by the late 1950's a thing of the past. A visit to the doctor which 20 years earlier could have meant several weeks off with a severe bacterial infection, which often brought hardship to the family.

If the victim was a baby or a young child some bacterial infections could mean death. All these many infections were vanquished at a stroke by the accidental discovery of the bacteria killing power of the blue green mould call penicillin.

This is the first of a series of articles the history of health and disease in the local community. Next issue will feature the 'Barber' surgeons, the physicians, folk medicine and the village midwife and local chemist. All these characters are brought to life in this short historical series of this very important aspect of village life.

## RATBY PLAYGROUP

**SUMMER PLAYScheme**  
for 3 - 8 year olds  
**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> August - Friday 9<sup>th</sup> August**  
in Ratby Church Rooms.  
**Booking Forms out Soon !!**



**Helpers' Meeting**  
**Thursday**  
**June 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**8 pm ..**  
**13 Ferndale Drive.**

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Wed 9.00 - 1.00 p.m. 2.15 - 5.00 p.m.

Sat 9.00 - 1.00 p.m.

## Ratby Cubs take the honours.

The 1st. Ratby Cubs took the honours at the 75th. birthday celebration bonanza soap box derby held at Glenfield County Hall on Sunday April 21st. At the start of the event Garry Pounder, a cub for 2 weeks was photographed with the Duke of Rutland. Then the races. 16 soap boxes entered the Cubs section. The 1st. Ratby Swift team won their heat, the semifinal and the final to take the winners trophy and the certificate for the overall fastest cart. The Swallows took 1st. place for best theme, 2nd. place for most unusual cart, 2nd. place for best dressed cart, and 3rd. place for best dressed team.

Well done Ratby Cubs and all their supporters.

If any mums and dads have 8 or 9 year old sons who want to share in cubs activities, please come to the church rooms on a Thursday evening 6.30 p.m. or contact Trevor Sleath 395605

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## RATBY SUMMER PLAYSCHEME

AGES 4 - 12 YEARS

12th - 16th August

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VOLUNTEER'S CHILDREN - ADMISSION FREE

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FOR ALL CHILDREN AND VOLUNTEERS

PLACES ARE LIMITED TO 80 CHILDREN

BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT!

RESERVATION FORM

Name of child(ren):

Age:

Address:

Telephone Number:

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## 1ST RATBY SWALLOW CUB PACK

### REF: VISIT TO RAF COTTESMORE ...

This visit came about because David Chevin, David Cross and Jimmy Young, wrote a letter (as part of his Arrow Work) to the RAF Base. I was surprised to receive one night a telephone call from an officer at the base, inviting our pack on a visit. When I told the Cubs about the phone call, they were all excited and all of courses wanted to go.

The date for our visit was fixed for Wednesday 27th. March 1991 starting at 6.30 p.m., so we all boarded the scout van and set off and we arrived at the base at 6.15 p.m. We were checked through the various guard areas and were met at the main guard room.

We had hoped to see the Tornados flying but operations were stopped due to conditions, so we all went into the visitors area, and there was a large model Tornado which the cubs had their photos taken by. We then went onto the main lecture room and were shown a video of Tornado pilots preparing for a sortie and taking off completing their mission and evading defending enemy aircraft and returning to base.

After the video, we were given a brief lecture on the base activities, after which we were given a bus ride to one of the hangars to see the Tornados up close. One by one the cubs were allowed to sit in the pilots seat and be given brief instruction on how to fire the guns, drop bombs, bail out and many more questions and ground crews were very patient and courteous to us and we thank them for a very enjoyable visit.

As we left the base, we were given an invitation for a further visit to see the Tornados flying, which will be arranged later in the year.

On our return to Ratby we popped into the chip shop and had chips, etc. for our supper.

Our pack looks forward to many more such trips in the future.

Yours in Scouting  
Brian Cross, Akela  
1st. Ratby Swallow Cub Pack

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7.00 TILL 9.00 PM SUNDAY EVENING



# BYGONE DAYS

Another interesting collection of photographs sent to us by Mr Gardner

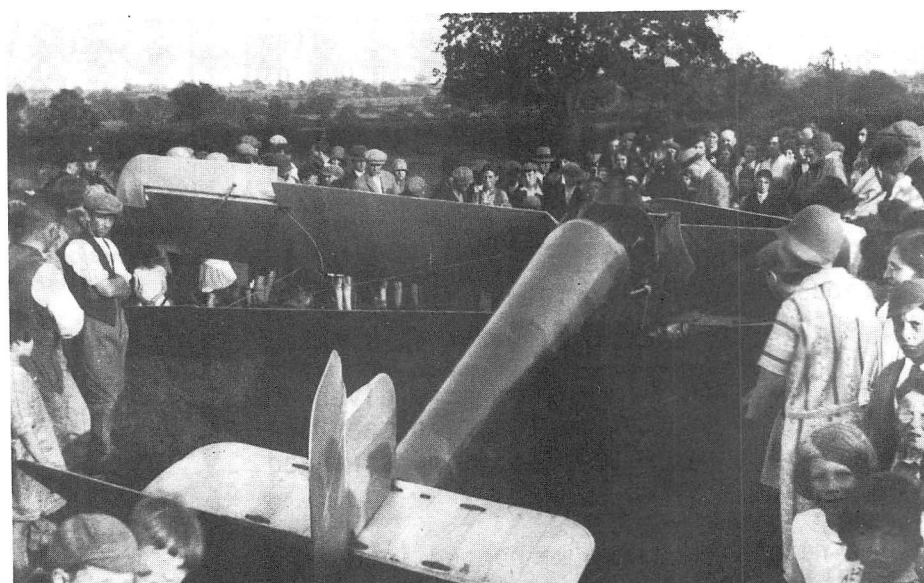
Photograph of 'Ludgate Pit' Corner, the junction of Markfield Lane, Main Street and Groby Road. Showing the Vicarage grounds and the first bungalow to be built.



The Parade.

(Is it the Crow Pie Carnival?) Coming up Stamford Street. You can see the old Wolsey Factory in the background. Mr Gardner was manager of the factory at that time.

A plane that came down in Ratby, just missing the overhead power cables - mid-way between 'Muck Tip Hill' footpaths at Groby, Ratby Brick Yard and Ratby Church.



We are sorry to report that Mr. Eddie Gardner has passed away since this issue was planned. We are sure that he would have wanted us to go ahead and print his photographs as arranged.

A half muffled quarter peal of the Church bells was rang for Mr Gardner and Mr Charlie Garrett who also has passed away.

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# Ratby Parish Council

## Planning Issues

### Leicestershire Structure Plan - roll forward to 2006

The Parish Council has written to the County Council supporting the policies of the Structure Plan as they relate to Ratby. Both the Parish Council and the Borough Council have recommended that land to the south of Ratby should be designated a green wedge between the village and Kirby Muxloe.

### Proposed New Plan

The Parish Council opposes the recently published plans for the development of new roads, housing and employment in green-field sites around the village.

Copies of letters to the County Council opposing this plan have been sent to the Parish Council. We would like to acknowledge these letters here and stress that these views will be considered by the Council. At present the proposals are not a formal application.

## Extension of the Village Boundary

Forty five members of the Public attended a Special Parish Council meeting held on April 16th in the Welfare Hall. The Parish Council decided to appeal against the decision by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council to extend the village boundary south of Ratby to enable the erection of a meeting hall.

## Planning Decisions

### Woodley Farm

An amended plan has been approved.

### Bennetts

Permission has been given for a sawdust extractor to help control sawdust.

### Proposed garden centre

To be sited on fields between the M1 and Groby College has been refused.

## Police

PC John Alexander has now left. A new Community Policeman will be appointed as soon as possible. Patrol cars will regularly visit the village in the meantime.

## Village Improvements

Issues arising from the Annual Parish Meeting were dealt with at the meeting on Tuesday April 7th.

\* The Council has asked for plans of the proposed road widening on Station Road, and information about the effects on the stone wall and Cedar Tree.

\* Enquiries will be made concerning the completion of the stone wall at Markfield Road corner and the proposed landscaping.

\* The County Council had begun re-surfacing pavements on Stamford Street. The developers Meadglade have failed to meet their obligations in this respect.

\* In response to a letter from a local resident the Council is writing to clarify the situation regarding rights of way in the village centre.

# Ratby Parish Council

## Election of Parish Council

Nine people were nominated for nine seats and therefore no election was necessary. At the Council meeting on Tuesday May 7th, the following were elected:

Chairman - Charles Rogers Mr Charles Rogers  
Vice Chairman - Mrs Sue Boud  
Planning sub committee

Mr Michael Ball - Chairman  
Members - Mrs Muriel Stanley, Mrs  
Iris Hannaford,  
Mr Michael Hurst, Mr T  
Rae.

Leisure & Sub-committee

Chairman - Mrs Sue Boud

Members - Mr Chris Woodward, Mr Andy Lincoln

Footpaths Inspectors - Mrs Charles Rogers,  
Mr Michael Hurst, Mr Chris Woodward  
Police Liaison Group Delegate - Mr Charles  
Rogers

Leics. Assoc. Parish Councils delegates -  
Mr T Rae, Mr C Rogers

Sacheverell Trust Trustees - Mr Michael Ball  
Mrs Muriel Stanley, Mr Chris Woodward

School Governor - Mrs Sue Boud

Newsletter Writer - Mrs Sue Boud

## County Councillor

The Parish Council has written to County Councillor, Mrs Pat Butler wishing her well during her present illness.

## Borough Councillor

5

The Council has written to the newly elected Borough Councillor, Mr Robert Fraser inviting him to attend and report to Parish Council meetings.

## Recreation Areas

There have been problems with vandalism at Ferndale Drive. Mr Palmer, the maintenance worker has very ably dealt with the damaged equipment. The Parish Council chairman, Mr Charles Rogers, has asked for a regular presence in the area to help reduce vandalism. Technical Services have been asked to re-hang the Toddlers swings because they had been installed at the wrong height. We apologise for any problems caused by their temporary absence.

## Annual Parish Meeting

The meeting was held on April 23rd and was

attended by thirteen members of the Public. The chairman reported that the Council have continued to oppose proposals that would result in the loss of green land around the village. The most frequent matters arising during the year had been the constant threat of development, the improvement of recreation and leisure facilities, vandalism and traffic problems.

The Chairman highlighted the main achievements of the Council during the year, and concluded his report with thanks to councillors, the Council employees, Mr Palmer and Mrs Laywood and to Councillor Mrs Pat Butler for all her efforts on behalf of the village.

The full minutes of this meeting (and all Council's meetings) are available in Ratby Library.

## Next Council Meeting

Tuesday June 4th  
Tuesday July 16th  
at 7.15 in the Welfare Hall.

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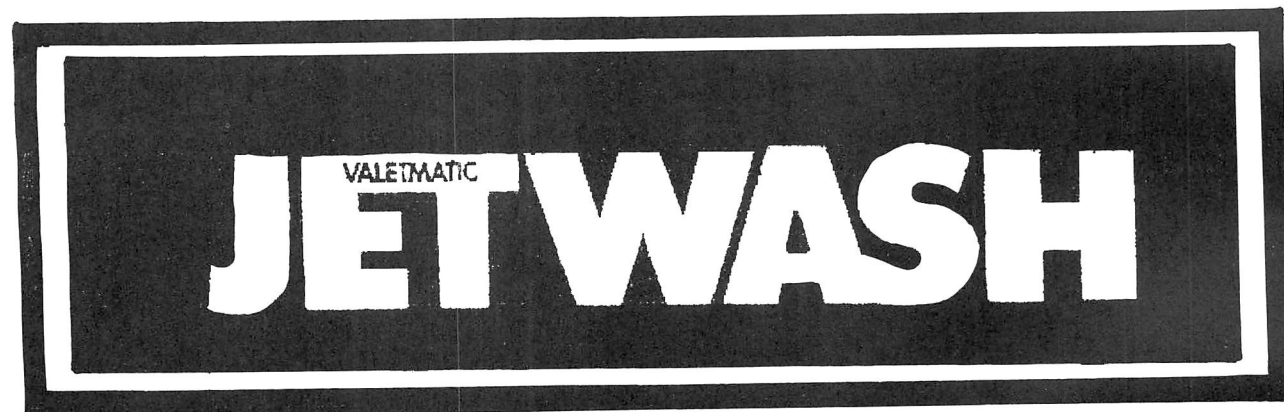
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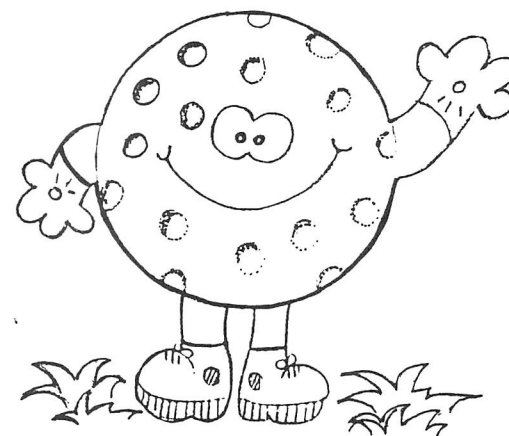
## OPEN

MON - FRI: 0700 to 2200 Hrs  
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SUN: 0900 to 1700 Hrs

THE GARAGE, STATION RD, RATEBY

# Crow pie children's page

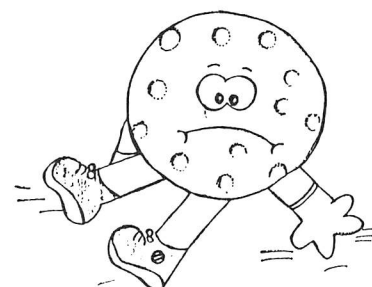
The Adventures of Golfie, by  
P.H. JOSLIN



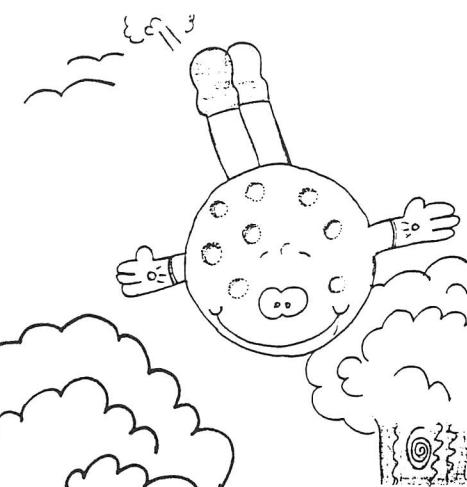
There was a little golf ball  
who dreamt of things he'd see  
And the adventures he would have  
when knocked off the tee.

The first day he was taken out  
So pretty white and clean  
He thought he'd slice off from the tee  
To see what could be seen.

So as he flew through the air  
passing tops of trees  
He flew right over the neighbours'  
hedge  
Into a field of peas.

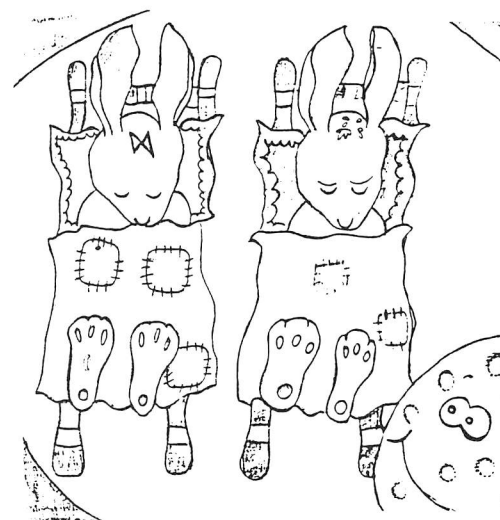


"Now what am I to do"  
he cried,  
Sitting on the ground.  
"My golfer's gone and  
lost me.  
I don't think I'll be found."



So off went little golfie,  
Looking here and there  
Until he saw a rabbit hole.  
What do you think was there?

It was Mummy and Daddy Rabbit  
And all their little bunnies.  
They looked at little golfie  
And thought he was so funny.



So after many happy  
games  
The bunnies went to  
bed.  
And golfie went on  
his way.  
More adventures in  
his head.

FROM A STORY BY  
MR. P.H. JOSLIN  
OF NICHOLAS DRIVE.



# Letters

Nicholas Drive,

Dear Editor,

I read and enjoy your magazine but I can't help wondering if you have not been used to present something that isn't all that it seems!

I refer of course to the "NEW RATBY" scheme as published in your April issue. Perhaps that is the key, "April". The plan was so badly presented I believe that it was just the first "warning shot". Be prepared for a long battle. The letters you have written today will not be the last -- you'll have to write more.

Present a plan that was so ridiculous and full of holes that people would be so outraged and the "businessmen" then could say, "fine we hear what you say how about a scheme with only 500 houses and a smaller industrial estate".

BEWARE WE DO NOT NEED OR HAVE TO HAVE ANY MORE HOUSES OR INDUSTRIAL ESTATES.

We all have to live with change, although we all dislike change.

Make the changes slowly so that we can all learn to live with them and ensure that the infrastructure is there to cope.

D. Penman.

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Dear Mrs Butler

Re: Recently advertised Expansion Proposal at Ratby

We note with great concern the proposals put forward by a consortium of landowners and business people for the expansion of Ratby with some 80 acres of housing and 40 acres of Industrial development. As such we wish to make known our objections to such a scheme.

This development, which would be totally against all recent Structure Plan details and Inspectors recommendations is viewed by ourselves as being totally unnecessary and would have a devastating effect on the present community and local environment.

We also see it as the "thin edge of the wedge" which eventually could lead to even more expansion over and beyond the perimeter of the proposed new road structure. Hence, Ratby would be turned from a pleasant, friendly community village into a large urban sprawl, with all the additional problems that that implies.

The so-called Traffic condition improvements and other local facilities offered by the consortium were considered by us to be no more than inducements to the local authorities and a sweetener to the community. In any case, we are sceptical enough to wonder how many of these "improvements" would actually materialise once any development plans have been approved.

It is our belief that the proposed scheme has been presented purely in the interests of members of the consortium with personal gains in mind. Our opinion is that it is not in the best interest of the community for any expansion scheme to receive approval.

When we moved from Leicester five years ago, we chose to live in Ratby because of the nature of the village and its environs, and immediately felt at home within its friendly atmosphere. Your assistance in maintaining the status quo would be much appreciated and we ask that our objections are considered by all concerned.

Yours sincerely

**Mr and Mrs B D Hulme  
4 Ingle Drive**

FOUR SEASONS  
FERNDAL DRIVE

Dear Editor,

In reply to your article in the "WOT" Magazine re. David Haynes "New Plan for Ratby". We were absolutely horrified at this proposal.

We would no longer be a village but an island surrounded by concrete roads, industries and houses by the hundreds and many problems it would bring with it. Enough is enough.

We totally oppose this plan.

Yours faithfully

Mr. & Mrs. J. Day

# More Letters !!

Not so much a comment

More a point of view

First reaction to Mr. Haines plan was that it was published too close to April Fools Day to be taken seriously. Then I realised it was yet another handful of people trying to make a bob or two at the expense of our open countryside and I felt humiliated for my village, hence the tone or remarks.

The following views are not directed at the overall plan, rather at the technique and suppositions used in its presentation.

Local, rather than Ratby businessmen are quoted as being those wishing to plan our future. Speaking to a number of the latter, I've yet to find one with any affection for the plan. In view of the overwhelming protest, it seems unlikely that businessmen whose clientele are village folk would wish to inflict such a disaster on them, or that those who have gained a livelihood from the parish should now wish to rape it.

Public Relations Plays - include the try on whereby some vast scheme is presented with the intention that sufficient may be allowed to satisfy the developers needs. The one wants chucking out completely.

Inevitable Development is quoted (so was Chernobyl) pluck a statement out of the air, present it and it will automatically gain some credibility. Twenty Five years ago the village, arguably, required new blood. Yet a check on village activities will show how commendable that new blood has been. There is now no reason whatsoever why further major development is inevitable.

The ideas featured must surely be an affront to peoples intelligence. I am always under the impression that our village folk are quite capable of pressing for and supporting their own ventures without some bright herb suggesting what's good for them. If village people require a Band Stand or a Scout Hut or anything else and have the will, they will have 'em without ruining anything else.

Housing. Apart from affordable homes for our kids, do we really need a thousand houses for Ratby people.

Employment. How many Ratby people are up against it and looking for work? 50, 100 or 200 perhaps. Should we not be content to find this number of jobs instead of creating a thousand new households also requiring employment? Accommodation for industry is plentiful, with a purposely sited industrial estate for on-going development at Merrylees, only 3.6 miles (or 7 minutes) away from Ratby Co-op, a

potential ex (Vic Berry Site) not two miles away, and a promise of 70 or more jobs at the Old Hayes Golf Concourse.

Traffic. Why increase it? There are serious national and environmental measures afoot to reduce this problem other than building more roads for more cars. The next fifteen years could see dramatic changes in the present concept of traffic generally.

There is just one very applaudable detail about this plan. It has given Ratby'ians the inclination to protest (1,148 so far) and my congratulations to organisers and signatories know no bounds.

As a person born, bred, educated, and married in Ratby (and with a little 6 x 3 foot plot reserved for, in a bit) I say to all involved in this attempt, as respectfully as I'm able, Thank you for your concern for my village, now please go home and play your whips and tops down your own entry.

On Agenit un all.

L. Yokel.



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# Letters .....

## A NEW PLAN FOR RATBY

I write to offer my comments on the above proposal, published by David Haynes in "Wot about Ratby".

### 1. PLANNING CONTEXT

The proposal is not consistent with the Structure Plan, in either its approved or draft replacement form. Both mark the area west of Ratby as Particularly Attractive Countryside where development is restricted. The latter plan sets out criteria for new development and in both size and location the proposal is not supported. The Hinckley and Bosworth North Eastern Parishes Local Plan has almost completed its process of adoption. The inspector, in his comments on objections to this plan, has specifically rejected, not only the above proposal, but also a much more modest proposal to build between Markfield Lane and Stamford Street.

I should stress that the adoption of a local plan is a democratic process, with ample opportunity for comments and objection. For this proposal to be promoted at such a time challenges this democratic process. Haynes says "the plan should be considered before the hungry developers arrive." To me it seems they have arrived now. Haynes also says "most villages grow ... at the mercy of the developer". Ratby has the benefit of a District Plan and the draft Local Plan, which are intended to guide development. By going against these plans, this proposal is no better than those criticised by Haynes.

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### 2. TRAFFIC

Elsewhere in "Wot about Ratby" we are told that traffic levels will fall in Ratby as a result of the Leicester Western Bypass, re:

Markfield Lane	36%
Main Street	37%
Station Road	30%
Grobby Road	6%

These, while not removing all traffic, are significant reductions. I feel the traffic issue is a red herring. The proposed road to the east of the M1 largely duplicates the Western Bypass whilst the proposed western perimeter road surely is there to serve the development and links with Markfield Lane. I am sure people in Markfield will not wish more traffic to be diverted in their direction. There are surely ways of reducing the impact of traffic in Ratby without building more roads.

### 3. COUNTRYSIDE/FOREST

I have already mentioned the attractive countryside to the west of Ratby. Perhaps more importantly, the boundary of the area of search for the New National Forest lies immediately NW of Ratby. I would have thought that Burroughs Road, linked with a recreational cycle/footpath, along the disused railway from Glenfield, would have provided an excellent route into the Forest area. In Haynes plan, one end of the Road disappears in the housing whilst the other end appears to form the access for the hotel and golf course. Although a newcomer to Ratby, I can appreciate how much the other residents value Burroughs Road, emerging from the heart of the village into the open countryside.

### 4. SOCIAL

As the parent of an eight year old child, one of the factors that influenced my move to Ratby was the fact that all the children in the village attend one school, of a reasonable size, and which fosters a community spirit in the village. If the village were to grow significantly larger, as it would with this proposal, the school would have to grow likewise, or else a new school would be built. Either way, I feel

the sense of community would be diminished. I also chose to live in Ratby because of the knowledge that it was still a small community with immediate access to open countryside, a situation which, according to the local and structure plans, was likely to continue into the foreseeable future (ref. my earlier comment on the local plans).

In conclusion, while I acknowledge that Ratby does suffer at times from excessive traffic, the price to be paid in terms of loss of attractive countryside and damage to the social fabric of the village, far outweighs any cynical gain offered by the proposal. More important, the proposal is contrary to both structure and local plans.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Andrew Simmonds.

Dear Editor,

Re: New Plan for Ratby.

Although we have not been living in Ratby for very long, we feel the village is very picturesque and a typical english country village.

The proposed development is without doubt a commercial operation and as such would, if allowed to go ahead, spoil yet another beautiful english village.

Paul & Jo Joslin

Bell Close

Dear Sir,

I am writing to register my own and my wife's views regarding the proposed development of Ratby as outlined in your magazine, we both object most strongly to the preposterous idiotic idea of more housing and industry for the area, we think and indeed are sure that the proposed scheme would effect the lives of the people of our village in a most detrimental way.

Yours sincerely

J. Kilminster

# Letters

GROBY ROAD

Dear Editor

A long with the majority of people in this village, we strongly object to Mr. David Haynes plans for the huge development in Ratby.

The village would lose its identity completely - necessitating the building of another primary school, etc.

Whilst we realise the main reason for this scheme would be a tremendous profit for the retiring farmers - as building land commands vast sums of money, compared with grazing land, we would like to see this land advertised nationally as good farming land - to maintain the fields as they are at present.

Yours sincerely

Jack and Joyce Haywood.

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A copy of a letter from THE VILLAGE SOCIETY to

The Director of Planning and Transportation  
Leicestershire County Council.

Dear Sir,

LEICESTERSHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN

The members of this Society having had the opportunity to study and discuss the proposed plan for the "improvement" of Ratby, put forward by some Ratby business people and landowners and drawn up by the architect Mr. David Haynes of Groby, now wish to make their reactions known. It is proposed to cover some of Ratby's surrounding fields with a huge housing estate and industrial sites; in effect transforming the present village into a small town - another dormitory to Leicester? We wonder who these people may be with their grandiose and monstrous ideas for our village? A number may live in Ratby itself but, we surmise, very few.

It is agreed that Ratby has suffered problems in the past both in regard to traffic and the provision of housing but the Parish Council, the residents, and also this Society have all worked very hard to maintain a reasonable balance between the needs of the people and the retention of the Green belt between Ratby and surrounding villages. Until recently, when the Borough Council reversed its previous decision against the building of a religious meeting place in Station Road which involved the extension of the village boundary, the Borough Council has always supported the village and has repeatedly stated that further expansion is unwarranted.

We note that the proposals show a new road system around the village thus leaving a traffic free centre. This would cause more green field space to be covered in concrete bringing more pollution to the atmosphere and destruction of more countryside with its habitat for wild life. More and more people are coming to realise that new roads encourage more and more traffic. Certainly one thousand new houses and an industrial estate will generate in excess of one thousand additional vehicles.

A traffic free zone in the centre of Ratby would take away the character of the village and its soul-less shopping precinct would not be in keeping with the

preservation of a country atmosphere. The majority of villagers are appalled at this scheme which promises to graft a new town on to an old village. They have seen how the expansion of Groby and Glenfield have been detrimental to the community and have no wish to see Ratby follow the same decline.

From the developers point of view it is tempting to get their hands (and their excavators) on to open fields. It is so much easier and cheaper than trying to develop existing derelict sites which abound in the towns and countryside. Unspoiled land is the one wealth left to the Country; the minerals underneath are being worked out and the seas around us increasingly polluted. Please help us to save our countryside by opposing any proposed extension to Ratby beyond its present limits.

Yours faithfully

Calverton Close

Dear Mr. Editor,

In the last issue of WOT you published a very detailed description, together with plans of a proposal by the architect David Haynes - commissioned by "a number of Ratby business people and land owners" - to convert Ratby from a village into township. The editorial comments were very lucid and fair giving the villagers an opportunity to make up their own minds on the matter. A public spirited individual who did not like the proposed scheme took the step of organising a



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petition of protest on behalf of any residents who were of like mind. Volunteers collected signatures on the petition forms and also listened to the views of those who were in favour of the proposals in addition to those against.

The few who support the scheme felt that Ratby needs more shops and a traffic free Main Street. Those against have many reasons, not least being the fact that Ratby would lose its identity as a friendly village and become a small town, also there would be further loss of green field space. Some felt that the building of one thousand houses would mean at least one thousand - and probably a lot more - cars in the district, which statistics show are more attractive to the criminal element than anything else. Others thought that a shopping precinct would become a playground (or worse) at evenings and weekends.

Comments were also expressed that protests had been in vain regarding the building of the Hall of Worship. Perhaps not enough people made protests. A letter to the appropriate authorities need not cost more than 20p.

The most surprising fact to emerge was that the majority of people either had not

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seen or had not read your editorial and Mr. Haynes proposals. I understand that 1500 copies of WOT are produced and delivered to every house in the village so there should be no excuse for anyone not knowing what is going on locally. However, keep up the good work. Here's one who always reads your magazine.

Yours faithfully

Horace A. Gamble



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# Letters

Church Lane

Director of Planning & Transportation  
Policy Section  
Leicestershire County Council  
Leicester  
LE6 6ZD

Dear Sir,

I wish to record my protest which I hope will be one of many, against the proposed residential development to the west of Ratby.

We have already had forced on us the new buildings for the Brethren which was described, I believe by the Inspector, as "a place of worship or similar community facility". As I understand its use it was certainly not the local community to which he was referring and as far as the green wedge is concerned this must surely be the thin end.

I consider the proposed new development totally unnecessary for the following reasons:

1. There are numerous residential properties for sale in and around the village as there are in all parts of the country. Why build more?

Stamford Street

Dear Editor

I am grateful to your magazine for bringing to everyone's attention the proposed New Plan to develop Ratby into another Beaumont Leys. I enjoy and I believe the great majority of villagers appreciate living in a smallish community and are yet to be convinced of the need for more development.

We have good shops including a butchers, greengrocers, chemists and Co-op foodstore. If more facilities are desirable has it to be at the expense of the village being built up out of all recognition?

So many of our villages have the same characterless modern estates stuck onto them with the loss of green fields. We ought to remember that when our villages are turned into sprawling suburbs of identical housing estates the changes are irreversible.

Yours faithfully

L. Johnstone

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2. The same applies to industrial units which have sprung up in garish colours everywhere over the last few years. I would also venture to suggest that a large proportion of people currently employed by companies in the village are not from the immediate vicinity. Would local employment be a condition placed on prospective purchasers/leaseholders of industrial units?
3. The majority of traffic on our over crowded roads - where we already have a weight restriction apart from access is cars and not industrial vehicles, a great many of whom prefer to cut through the village rather than take the main roads to and from town.
4. I believe that most of the "newcomers" to the villagers, however long we have been here, moved to be away from the town in a place where it is relatively safe for the children, where they can be educated in a small and personal school and grow up as part of a community. I have no doubt that this would change as we became a satellite town.
5. We are already seeing an upsurge in petty crime which I believe would increase even more with such a large development as that proposed.
6. The destruction of our countryside must be stopped and the current mania for building on every piece of available land reversed. There is precious little of our natural landscape or heritage left without concreting over any more unnecessarily.

I am in favour of the Local Plan as summarised in the April edition of WOT Magazine and consider it most important that there is green belt left between Ratby and Groby and indeed to all other sides of the village. I also note the Inspectors comment that "There is no strategic need for additional housing land at Ratby in this local plan".

I do realise that everywhere must change, and have indeed seen a great many changes in the village already. Mistakenly perhaps I thought that we had almost reached the limits of how much more building could take place.

It is very rare for businessmen or landowners to put the needs or good of the

local community before their own regardless of unrequested sweeteners. As Mr. Haynes says "Consider the plans before the hungry developers arrive". Why should they? The use the land is put to is entirely in the hands of the people who wish to sell it.

If I wanted to live at Beaumont Leys I would have moved there long ago. Please consider the wishes of the local residents, many of whom will not voice their opinions as they think acceptance of any proposal such as this is a foregone conclusion.

Yours faithfully,

Alison Newberry

Copies to Pat Butler  
Ratby Parish Council

"Weatherbury"  
Danehill

Dear WOT,

We have recently moved to Ratby from Leicester Forest East, where as most people probably know, much development has recently taken place. Originally LFE used to consist of a few houses scattered along the A47. During the 1960's development saw the enlargement of the area. However, during the 1980's LFE's residential area has virtually doubled in size with no additional retail provisions and lacking other essential infrastructure such as schools, doctors, etc.

The result is that LFE is now a suburb of Leicester, with no real heart and lacking character and historic agricultural heritage and land.

LFE is one of many areas which has grown at the mercy of the developers hands - Groby and Makfield similarly have developed.

We moved to Ratby because amongst other reasons it is a small unspoilt rural village, I am sure many others have moved to Ratby for the same reasons. The community of Ratby is very special and very rare and should be protected.

Do we seriously want our village to be developed and developed and developed with no regard to Town and Country Planning statute?

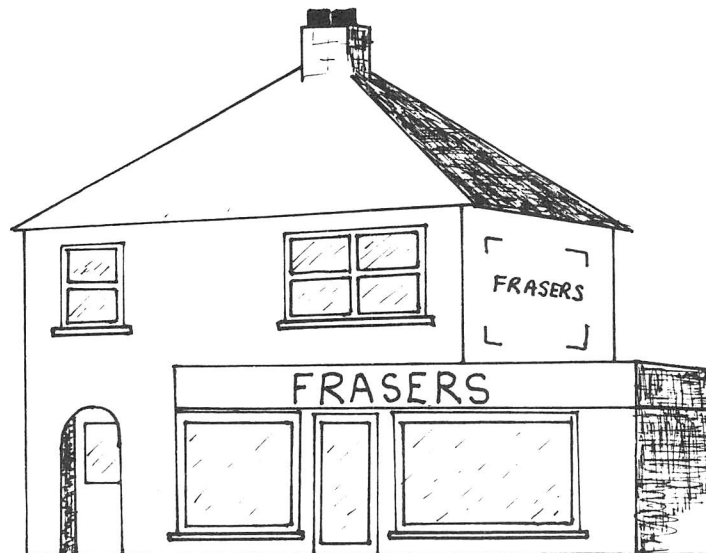


Do we want Ratby to be engulfed in much the same way as neighbouring Groby, to become a huge conglomerate of housing with minimum infrastructure including an offering of a scout hut and village square as an appeasement for planning gain?

Some development in moderation has to be carried out; some properties have to be demolished due to obsolescence. However, destruction of the countryside is unforgivable and irreversible.

Whilst I commend people's concern with Ratby's future, I do not believe that by accepting the long-term plan for Ratby as proposed by David Haynes, the whole community would benefit. Moreover, I believe the only gainers from this scheme would be the developers, who in recessionary times would obtain land cheaply, in return for substantial gains and huge profits following:-

1. The uplift in the market.
2. The development of junction 21A and its obvious increasing effects on land values and property prices.



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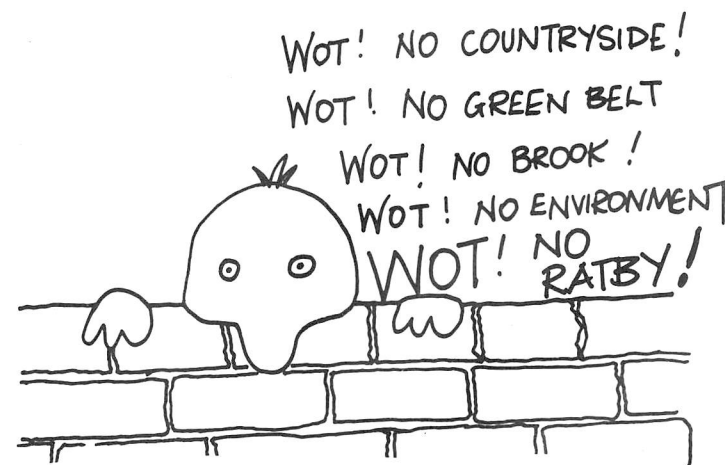
If this scheme were to be adopted there would be nothing to stop similar encroachment of agricultural land in the future. The developers, even in recession are not too far away! We must do everything we can to protect the village and its identity, not just for ourselves, but also for our future generations.

I have written to the County Council and trust that other caring inhabitants of Ratby have also written, before it is too late - before the bulldozers are at work!

We are proud to live in Ratby and through your pages we would like to thank everyone who during our first few months here have helped and have enriched our lives!

In our opinion the close-knit community of Ratby stands for:

- R Retaining its friendly rural atmosphere
- A Attractive countryside walks and building
- T Traditional heritage full of treasures
- B Benefits of caring people protecting future generations.
- Y Yes to conversation! No to exploitation.



Mr. & Mrs. Alan and Diane Spencer

Dear Editor,

We sympathise with animal lovers but are appalled at the disgusting mess left by dogs not only in the village but in and around the country. To allow your dog to foul footpaths and playing areas is an offence to the hygiene of the community and will shortly become a punishable offence. Many children are blinded each year through direct contact with dog excrement, mainly left on playing areas by dog owners who allow their animals to drop their mess anywhere, without clearing it up and without any thought for children or the rest of the public.

Many large and dangerous dogs are allowed to run free for exercise, possibly special fields around the country could be set aside and then dog owners and their children could enjoy wallowing in the mess that they allow their dogs to make.

Poop scoops are used in many countries around the world and must become law in this country very quickly.

As for dangerous dogs; there must be more control by law to make these dog owners realise that no matter how friendly the animal is towards them, it will not show the same respect for others. The very frightening experience of facing a savage dog has become a real and regular danger to all of us. If people want to keep animals of any kind, they must look after them and control them at all times.

Name and address supplied, but withheld.

Calverton Close

Dear Mr. Editor,

#### CRIME PREVENTION WEEK

Forgive me if this has already been reported by another source!

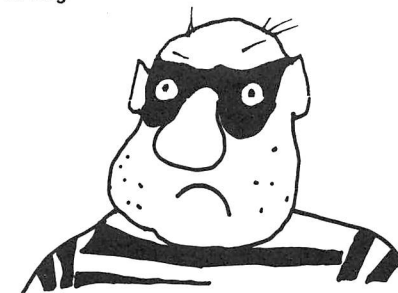
During Crime Prevention Week 15th. to 20th. April, a Crime Watch Quiz was broadcast round by round on Radio Leicester featuring six Neighbourhood Watch teams representing six of the eight police divisions in the Leicestershire force. The quiz was held, and recorded, at the Police Headquarters at Enderby where our local division Beaumont Leys beat the opposition to become the champion Neighbourhood Watch team for 1991.

The team was composed of:

Barbara Whipham (Captain)  
Lynn Mellor  
Sylvia Gant  
Horace Gamble

All residents of Ratby !

Yours faithfully  
H.A. Gamble.



#### TRENTHAM GARDENS

Remember the photograph of Trentham Gardens we printed in the last issue?

Cliff Lissaman (2nd from left on the front row) rang us up to tell us about the trip. Cliff was secretary of the Working Mens Club for 14½ years and this trip was just one of many!

In the photograph are: Albert Bolton, Alf Wain, George Walker, Charles Measures, the Committee Members on the front row, with Kate Jordan (Kitty Flip).

2nd row ... Mrs Joyce, Mrs 'Cracky' Marvin, Mrs Sutton, Mrs Seale, Mrs Sutton, Mrs Coulton (local midwife), Mrs Flint, Mrs Jordan (who kept the hardware shop at the back of the fish and chip shop and Mrs Bolton.

3rd row and back "Brock Gamble", Arthur ? (one of founder members of Ratby Band) and his wife. Mrs 'Puncher' Jordan, Mrs 'Cutty' Plant, Mrs Gimbert (Ronnie Gimbert's Mam), Mrs Siddons, Mr and Mrs Brookes, Mrs Copson, Mrs Barnett, Mr Copson, Mrs Measures, Mrs Bolton, Mr Flint, Mr Gimbert, Tommy Goodger and his wife, Mrs Bennett, Mrs Saunders, Mr and Mrs Joe Armson, Mrs 'Tatty' Poole, George Barnes, Eva Barnett, Mrs Bennett, Kath Moore, Mrs Sutton (Hubert Sutton's Mum)

Mr Lissaman has lent 'Wot' magazine some interesting photographs of the Working Mens club. So watch out for a story about that in the next issue!



DEADLINE FOR LETTERS  
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