



number 7

FORMBY POINTERS

MAGAZINE OF
THE FORMBY RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

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3.
EDITORIAL

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What are the matters which should be a primary importance to the people of Formby?

I would put the Re-organisation of Local Government right at the top of the list.

It is a title that can put ordinary people off the scent. Many I know think it means some kind of re-shuffle in the Council Office and of no real importance to them. The point I would like to make clear to everyone is that this affects the whole of England and it isn't looked upon favourably by anyone — unfortunately both the Government and the Opposition are in favour of it. The reasons given are that large units are more economical and more efficient but this is a debatable point and, in any case, the cost of carrying it out will be so colossal that it will be decades before economy is felt, if indeed there is any. Add this to the severe local change and you have something indeed to fight against. Remember — rates will go up — planning standards will go down — you will have virtually no representation on the larger Council and the value of your house will fall.

Another point which needs clearing up is the question of the beach. Lately our Council have been heavily criticised for its condition. Two things to remember 1) Cleaning the beach would be terribly expensive and you would pay 2) The beach is privately owned and the owners are conspicuous by their absence and the absence of any offer on their part to do anything about it. I think too that it is worth noting that most of the criticism comes from that section of the public who come here as casual visitors and leave their bottles and other rubbish behind them.

It is most gratifying to learn that our elder citizens are to be given travel tokens which will help to pay the very high rail and bus charges.

Yet again I would ask you to put pen to paper and let me have some of your views on life in Formby — how you think it might be improved or what you think is wrong with it so that we can try to put it right.

Our next issue will come out just before Christmas — how do you think we can help to make it a more Christian Christmas?

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There is an American expression "You can't beat City Hall". Well the residents of the little sleepy village of Cublington did just that with a population very much smaller than Formby.

We the ratepayers of Formby feel that our inclusion in the Metropolitan area 11a is as important an issue to us as the airport was to the people of Cublington.

The Formby Ratepayers Association are set against this Government plan not on political grounds, because the findings of the Labour inspired Maud report were much the same, but because of the probable increase in rates, the higher density of building, the loss of Green Belt status, less considerate planning and the loss of council representation and consultation and the almost certain devaluation of our property.

We fear that we will become an extension of Bootle — in fact, an overspill zone. It isn't that we have anything against Bootle but we would not be living here in Formby if we preferred Bootle.

Councillor Palmer has already outlined the facts in an earlier edition of this magazine but since our monthly meeting on July 6th, the Committee have decided to contact the other Ratepayer Associations in Lancashire and Cheshire and find out their views on the subject of the Re-organisation of Local Government and, if they feel as strongly as we do, we will suggest that a referendum be taken of all the members.

We are indebted to the Liverpool Echo for reprinting Councillor Palmers' views of this matter and we, in turn, would like to draw your attention to some interesting statistics which appeared in the Liverpool Echo on July 7th.

Shock Rise in Bootle Drink Offences.

"Drunkenness in the Liverpool area rose by more than 2% during 1970, in keeping with a similar national trend. But drunkenness in Bootle shot up over 27% in the same period".

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INDOOR GARDENING

Today, more than ever, house plants are becoming part of our indoor decoration, we have shed the Victorian legacy of *Aspidestra* and ferns to make way for the more exotic and colourful species. However, my gardeners heart often weeps when I see some of the plants obviously ailing through ignorance or neglect, and, so, a few words of advice might be welcome.

First of all, if you are going to cultivate indoor plants, read a book about it, either borrow or buy one. One I can recommend is Xenia Fields "Indoor Gardening".

Secondly decide where you want the plant to go so that you can choose one to suit the temperature and light in that particular place. A lot of plants can be bought in the Supermarkets, but Rochford's Nurseries have a different coloured label depending on the type of plant, Pink - easy, Blue - intermediate, Yellow - delicate. Easy plants include Ivies, Spider Plants, Rubber Plants, *Gissus Antarctica*, (Kangaroo Vine), *Rhoicissus Rhomboidea* (Grape Ivy), *Asparagus Fern*, and the *Philodendron*. Intermediates include *Monstera*, *Peperomias*, and the Shrimp Plant. Delicate plants are *Aphelandra* with it's lovely white veined leaves, *Crotons* with brightly coloured foliage, and *African Violets*, these are the plants most commonly seen.

Gas fumes are universally hated and not every plant likes the midday sun, a light position may not mean a window sill, and dry heat as experienced on a mantle place is damaging. Re-pot when necessary using a good compost such as *Levingtons*, a good guide is only to pot on to a one inch bigger pot. Water them with care, but knowing when to water comes quite quickly, and once new growth starts to appear is the time to increase their water and feed them with a liquid fertiliser.

I have heard people long for their plant to get really big. If they are properly cared for, time is the only thing that will achieve this. House plants can live quite a long time, the *Aspidestra* in particular, and I should say that four years growth should produce a plant that is big enough to be envied. Of course not every plant is meant to be big, and I am really talking about *Cissus*, *Monstera*, *Ivy* and *Asparagus Fern*.

Continued.....

Both *Cissus* and *Rhoicissus* are good plants for taking large cuttings from. Remove a long stem with a thick end, not necessarily woody, and either place it in water, or try hormone rooting powder, be patient and it will root, do this in the summer when the plant is growing, although I have rooted cuttings during the winter, potted them in the spring when they have put forth plenty of new shoots and so achieved a good sized plant in quite a short time. I have often been asked about growing Avocado pears, these are very easy to grow and fascinating to study. Soak the large seed in water for 24 hours and then remove the hard outer skin, balance it over a jar of water with the aid of a cocktail stick, piercing the nut and resting on the edge of the jar, the water should just touch the flat bottom of the nut, once the root has appeared make sure it has enough room in the jar, don't worry if it should accidentally break as a new root will appear. Once the nut has started to split and you can see the shoot, start adding compost to the water, when the jar is full of compost move to a four inch pot. It will grow quite rapidly and may need potting on to a much bigger pot to allow for the rapid root growth. Mine thrive on a north facing window sill but do bring it inside the curtain at night in the winter, and remember it is a tree whose normal height is 60 feet, so it's not yours for ever.

Most house plants are grown for their foliage, flowering plants being at their best only in the summer, in the winter it's hard to beat bulbs although the new *Chrysanthemums* in pots are quite attractive.

A good summer flowering plant is the *Fushia* which can look as nice as a bowl of flowers on a table. In the autumn put in a frost proof place, cut right back on the water until the spring, then prune and bring back into the warmth. Black eyed Susans are pretty and are easily raised from seed, Geraniums or rather Zonal Pelargoniums will produce gay, large flower heads and I always think they are such cheerful plants, winter treatment is much the same as for *Fushias*. Beware the florists flowering plants such as *Poinsettas*, *Azaleas* and *Christmas Cherry*, these are not true house plants although with knowledge you may be able to get more than one flowering season from them.

Incidentally when I've gone on holiday I have, by putting a plant in a polythene bag away from direct sunlight, managed to keep it self watering, and many easy plants quite like a summer holiday in the garden.

Although this article has so far tended to be rather serious and full of don't's, indoor gardening is great fun and you can become quite obsessed with it, and even raise a spark of interest in your husband certainly the children can join in and here are a few cheap and cheerful things for them to try. Horse Chestnuts and Acorns can be grown in the same way as the Avocado pear, Grape pips will germinate if just stuck in the soil of another plant's pot, and you can grow a pineapple by slicing off the top, including some of the flesh and plant in sandy compost, warmth and light are essential.

I have accidentally rooted ordinary Ivy simply by using it as long lasting greenery in a vase of flowers, if you find one with a pretty leaf have a go, they look well in a bedroom where the lower temperature suits them.

I hope that someone will find some of this information useful, armed with knowledge anyone can have green fingers and their private jungle.

JOYCE DRAPER

IN YOUR GARDEN

It used to be a fairly common thing to see masses of billowing smoke coming from Formby gardens in the Summer season. This was caused by enthusiastic gardeners burning their garden rubbish, and of course being enthusiasts, they burned everything including fresh green matter which literally went up in smoke.

During the growing season and in the Autumn you will get a good deal of refuse and the wise gardener will make a compost heap of it, and rot it down to form humus which he will dig back into the soil.

THIS IS HOW YOU MAKE A COMPOST HEAP.

For the average garden, reserve a space about four feet square and enclose three sides with chain link wire or wooden slats, leaving the front open. Never dig a pit because air is essential for rapid decay and on the sandy soil of this area there is no need to worry about drainage — simply start from ground level. Now what do you use to build up your compost heap? The answer is, anything that had life in it, providing it is soft enough to rot down quickly and carries no disease. Woody matter and anything that has had disease in it should be burned, but at least you will not cause so much smoke. Even pernicious weeds like couch grass, ground elder and bindweed will rot down completely, so onto your compost heap should go all your garden refuse, weeds, grass and hedge clippings, leaves the dying foliage of perennials in the Autumn, pea and bean haulms, cabbage stalks etc.

Do not stop here but keep a special sink basket or other receptacle for kitchen refuse, vegetable peelings, apple cores, tea leaves, faded flowers, fish heads and bones and include the contents of the vacuum cleaner bag which will largely be wool fluff. If you should keep any pets or livestock, put on their bedding and other leavings.

Now — how to make it.

Put down a layer of refuse about 6" thick, keeping the edges square and neat without any tapering away and pack it lightly with a fork. Sprinkle this with hydrated lime and then add another 6" layer but this time sprinkle with Sulphate of Ammonia or a proprietary accelerator, but you will find that sulphate of ammonia is perfectly efficient and much cheaper. Over all this put a 1" layer of soil and keep repeating the sequence until your heap is about 4' high.

In Summer and hot weather the decomposition process takes from 8 to 10 weeks but in cold weather it slows down considerably. When properly rotted the compost should be dark brown and crumbly and none of its original ingredients should be recognisable.

How to use your compost.

There is no need to wait for digging time. Spread it on the soil and it will act as a mulch, conserving moisture and smothering young weeds and later becoming part of the soil. When digging in compost see that it is not buried too deeply — keep it in the first foot of soil where it will be of most value.

L.E. WILLIAMS

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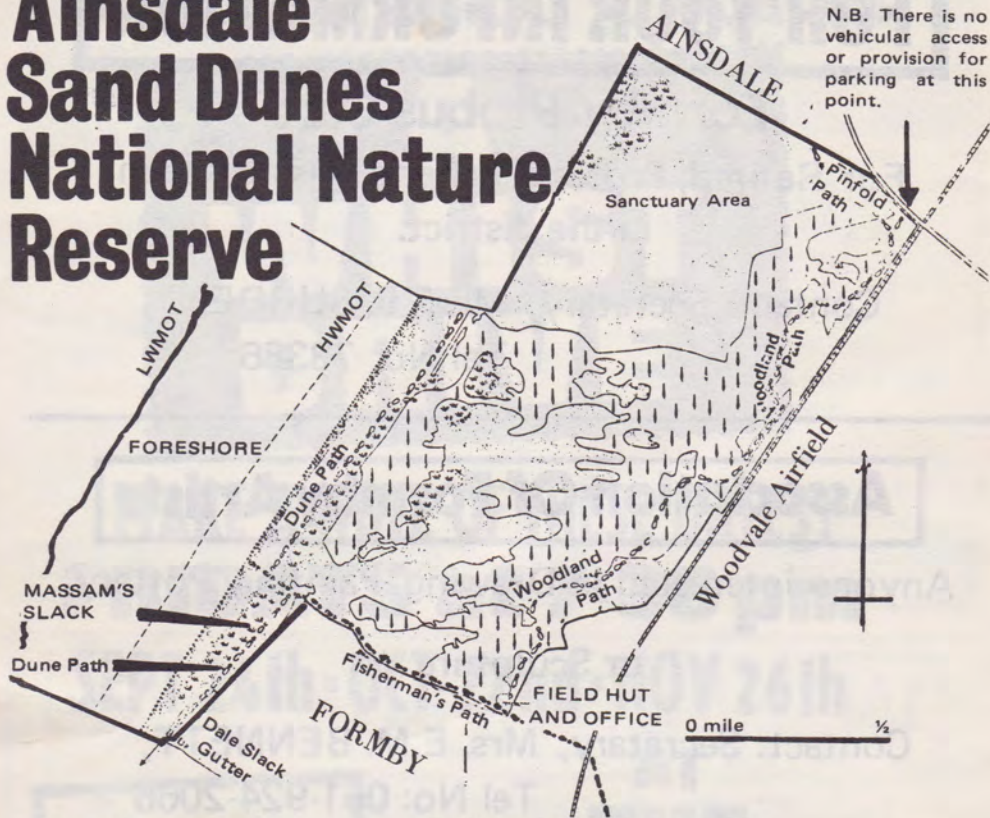
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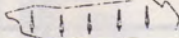
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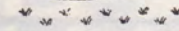
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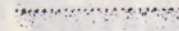
Ainsdale Sand Dunes National Nature Reserve





Reserve boundary ———

Pinewoods 

Wet Slacks 

Foredunes 

Public footpath 

Other paths 

Except for Fisherman's Path the walks open to the public are not public rights of Way, and from time to time they may be closed or their direction altered.

DOGS must be kept on a lead except on the Foreshore.

NGR Nature Conservancy Maps Office February 1967



THE AINSDALE RESERVE

The Reserve, which was declared in 1965, covers 1,216 acres of sand-dunes north of Formby, and is managed by the Nature Conservancy. Its characteristic features are a flat foreshore, areas of dry shifting sand and marshy slacks, with extensive pinewoods on its eastern fringe. These varied conditions give rise to a rich diversity of animal and plant life for which the Reserve is internationally famous.

In addition to the commoner plants such as Marram Grass on the mobile dunes and Creeping Willow in the slacks, there are several rare species including Dune Hellaborine and Round-leaved Wintergreen. The Reserve is also noted for its Natterjack Toads, which in the past have suffered from collecting, while the pinewoods provide a habitat for Red Squirrels and a variety of woodland birds. At its northern end the Reserve overlaps the Southport Bird Sanctuary which was established as a refuge for wildfowl and waders in 1956.

The Reserve forms part of a national system of sites permanently safeguarded for conservation research and experiment. The Conservancy's first duty is to protect the area from disturbance which can occur through trampling, collecting of specimens, or fire, all of which have had serious effects in recent years.

The Conservancy is also dealing with the problem through a planned programme of management.

The management programme aims to restore damaged areas and to recreate favourable conditions for wild life. It is hoped that the maintenance of the water table and the prevention of disturbance will encourage birds previously recorded here to return, and that the attractive flora of the slacks will flourish.

Conditions are being diversified in the pinewoods by thinning trees and creating glades, and the natural regeneration of hardwoods is being encouraged. Visitors are especially asked to avoid causing fires, and damage to plants and wild life.

Many of the dunes are very unstable and easily eroded by trampling. Fencing, replanting and thatching with brushwood are among the control measures being used, and the footpaths have been specially sited to avoid further damage to the dune vegetation.

Ainsdale is particularly suitable for field studies. An increasing number of school parties use the educational zone and the nature trail to the north of Fisherman's Path.

FOOTPATHS THROUGH THE RESERVE

Access is provided along a pathway system to those who are prepared to respect it, restrictions are necessary in the interests of conservation and research. **Visitors are especially requested to keep to the marked footpaths.** These are shown on the map and described below. Paths are clearly sign-posted and marked by coloured posts.

Fisherman's Path (three quarters of a mile) is the most direct route, (marked red) to the shore on the southern boundary of the Reserve adjoining Formby Golf Course. It is particularly interesting because it shows all the main ecological features of the area. With the educational zone immediately to the north, it is intensively used by teachers and school-children for field studies. At its seaward end, visitors can take either the Dune Path through the famous Massam's Slack or continue direct to the beach. From the highest point on the frontal dunes there is a magnificent panorama of the Reserve and the south-west Lancashire coast.

Dune Path (one and a half miles) is marked by blue topped posts. The path runs from Dale Slack Gutter and follows the Reserve boundary as far as Fisherman's Path, along which visitors can return to Freshfield. Because of the serious erosion threat and control works in this area, access to the beach is confined to the routes shown.

Woodland Path (one and three-quarter miles) continues along the length of the Reserve (marked by yellow posts). The pinewoods provide a quite walk through the high dunes where Red Squirrels and many woodland birds occur. Management of the tree cover is an important task and there is a special need to guard against the serious fire risk in this area.

Pinfold Path follows the white-marked posts between the dunes. Landward erosion can be seen clearly and the route is designed to avoid further damage to the dunes and disturbance in the wet slacks to the south. Here the Reserve overlaps a part of Southport Bird Sanctuary the foreshore of which provides a refuge for many wildfowl and waders.

The foreshore below the frontal dunes is freely accessible to visitors on foot only.

Except for Fisherman's Path the walks open to the public are not public rights of way and from time to time they may be closed or their direction altered.

This article was printed by kind permission of the Nature Conservancy to whom I would like to express my appreciation and thanks, Enquiries about visiting the Reserve with school parties, or for general information should be made to:-

THE WARDEN,
2 WEST END LODGE,
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...It's your Round

How would you like a bottle of table wine for 5p or a sparkling wine for 6p or pale ale, bitter beer, lager or stout at 2½p a pint?

These are not prices from a wine merchants list at the turn of the century but what it costs today at home, to produce these beverages.

Beer tends to rise in price by 1p to 1½p per pint in the "locals". An excellent pint can be produced for as little as 2½p, a far cry from 17p charged in some lounge bars, and you can drink it when you please. It's quite legal and above board and there are no limits to quantity produced – and no liability for excise duty. Only if you sell your produce or begin distilling could the law step in. Of course the drinking of amateur distillates can, be highly dangerous, and even fatal due to wood alcohol poisoning. Remember American prohibition days? And shades of Elliot Ness?

I must make a point at this juncture, that the prices quoted do not take into account the cost of setting up your "brewery". This will cost between £1.00 and £2.00 depending on the design and from where purchased.

Normal starting quantities would be a gallon for wine and two gallons for beer. That is 6½ bottles of wine and 16 pints of beer. Not only will, you have the pleasure of your own "booze" but you will also have a conversation piece when your friends drop in. The main theme is the pleasure to be derived especially through the long winter nights, from an engrossing and worthwhile past-time the scope of which is virtually limitless.

I realise that by this article I may be preaching to those who already participate in "Home Brews", if so, please bear with me there may be a snippet of information that may be of use in subsequent editions.

Two drink recipes first printed in Formby Pointers No. 4 are again reproduced at the end of this article. When you refer to them you will notice that they call for a bottle of red and/or white wine so a recipe for each – using fruit available in September – are also printed.

Continued.....

In September the only fresh fruit available at reasonable cost will be: apples, blackberries, damsons and elderberries. Of course dried fruits can be used instead and they are available all the year round.

Here is what you need to make one gallon of wine:-

1) A two gallon polythene bucket	15p
2) A one gallon capacity glass jar (returned gallon cider jar from wine store)	15p
3) Large plastic air lock	8p
4) Drilled bung for jar neck	6p
5) Wooden spoon (for stirring must)	
6) Syphone (3 feet of rubber tube)	9p
7) Yeast (sufficient for 5 gallons)	10p
8) Citric Acid (sufficient for many gallons)	6p
9) Yeats nutrient (sufficient for 10 gallons)	12p
10) Campden tablets (sufficient for 30 gallons)	5p
11) 6½ clean wine bottles and corks (dark bottles for coloured wines) clear for white.	
12) Fruit (fresh or dried)	
13) Sugar	86p

A hydrometer is a very useful instrument but can be dispensed with initially –
they cost: 40p

£1.26

The quantity of sugar affects the alcoholic strength of the wine or beer and therefore the length of time it keeps. This is true to a limiting point and that is approximately 4lb. per gallon for wine and 11b per gallon for beer.

Quantity of fresh fruit for 1 gallon (available September):-

Apples	– 12 lb.
Blackberries	– 3 lb.
Damsons	– 4 lb.
Elderberries	– 3 lb.

Quantity of sugar for 1 gallon of :-

Sweet Wine	– 3½ to 4 lbs
Medium Wine	– 3 to 4¼ lbs
Dry Wine	– 2 to 2¾ lbs

METHOD:- Slice or crush the fruit and place in bottom of clean bucket. Pour on a gallon of boiled water. Add the desired quantity of sugar and stir until dissolved. When the liquid is luke warm, and not before, sprinkle on the dried yeast and add a flat teaspoon of citric acid crystals. At the same time mix in a crushed campden tablet and nutrient tablet. Cover top of bucket with fine muslin (to keep out the wine fly which turns alcohol to vinegar). Place bucket in a warm place and stir once daily for 10 days.

Separate the solids from the liquid (a bit messy this) and place the liquid in the gallon jar. Do not fill the jar completely but leave room for the rapid yeast action at this stage. Fill the jar with a solution of boiled water and sugar after the first week.

The amount of bubbles rising in the wine will diminish as it nears completion. Up to this time the sugar is being converted into alcohol by the yeast. It is wise to separate the solids from the liquids (racking) yet again and to top up with more water and sugar solution. When all the sugar has been converted the wine will gradually fall bright and when this time arrives it should be bottled.

If you keep one bottle of each batch — for say a year or so — you will be delighted at the change that occurs to the wine in bottle. The roughness becomes rounded and mellowness creeps in. This assures that you are strong willed enough to resist the temptation to drink all your product “as soon as it is cold” so to speak.

Beer Making — brewing — is a much less exacting procedure and modern technology has made it possible to produce beer without boiling, mashing or straining. This has been done by producing a concentrated ready hopped beer syrup (wort) which only required the addition of water, sugar, yeast, citric acid etc.

Two gallons of Pale Ale, Bitter, Brown or Lager will cost:-

a)	1 lb tin of wort	28p
b)	Yeast	3p
c)	Citric Acid	6p
d)	Sugar 1½ lbs.	6p
3)	Nutrient	12p
		—
		55p
		==

METHOD:-

Place the wort of your choice in the 2 gallon bucket and pour on boiled water stir in sugar, citric acid and crushed campden and nutrient tablet. When lukewarm add yeast. Cover bucket top with muslin and put in a warm place. Stir daily for a week and remove yeast crust each time it forms thickly. After ten days carefully bottle and to each bottle add half a teaspoon of sugar. Cap the bottles and shake.

All prices quoted have been extracted from the “VINA HOME WINEMAKING SUPPLIES LTD., MARCH 1972” price list, a copy of which will be supplied free by sending S.A.E. or calling personally to St. John’s Road, Waterloo.

Here are two drinks recipes for winter parties:-

WINE PUNCH

- 1 Bottle white wine
- 1 Bottle soda water
- 1 full sherry glass of brandy
- 12 rounded teaspoons of sugar or to taste ice
- Thinly sliced fruit and cucumber

Mix wine, soda water and sugar, add brandy, refrigerate and add fruit and cucumber before serving.

GLUEHWEIN

- 1 Bottle red wine
- 6 Cloves
- Pinch of cinnamon
- Lemon Peel
- Sliced orange and lemon
- 1 cup of sugar

Put cinnamon and cloves in a little hot water, pour in the wine. Keep hot but not boiling and add other ingredients, serve after five minutes.

RED WINE

- ½ lb. dried elderberries
- 3½ lb. sugar
- ½ teaspoon citric acid
- Yeast
- Nutrient
- Camden tablet

WHITE WINE

- ½ lb. dried bananas
- 3 lb. sugar
- ½ teaspoon citric acid
- Yeast
- Camden tablet

Prepare as Method in earlier text and have a "Merry Tune".

M.W. BANKES

OLD TOWN WARD

This is the first opportunity I have had to thank everyone for their support, help and encouragement at election time last May.

Besides attending meetings of the Council I have been invited to our own and West Lancashire Rural District Councils' Civic Sundays, visited the Ainsdale Nature Reserve and Gorse Hill Reservoir with the West Lancashire Water Board. As a result of the visit to the Nature Reserve Mr. Robinson the Assistant Regional Officer very kindly arranged for the article on the Reserve to be published.

Meetings are usually held each week at the Council Office which you may attend. Meetings are held on a six weekly cycle. They are Planning Committee, Health & Housing Committee, Road Safety Committee, Highways & Parks Committee, Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Council Meeting.

The only committee on which our councillors are not represented is the Policy Committee which is held in private. Whilst both Councillor Palmer and myself may attend the meeting we can only speak with the permission of the Chairman.

Of special interest to our older members is that from 1st October, Ladies over 60 and Gentlemen over 65 years of age may each obtain £1.50 worth of travel tokens without charge which may be used either on buses or the railway over quite a large area. They will be obtainable from the Council Office and it is hoped that £1.50 worth of tokens will be available each six months. This scheme is in place of the half price tickets on the local bus service.

GEORGE SMITH

THINK ABOUT IT

I heard a story the other day that made me think. Perhaps it will make you think too.

The story I heard is true, but because I am unable to verify some of the facts, I will tell a fictitious version in order to set the scene for my queries.

Imagine a parcel of land, within the boundary of an Urban District Council which is being used for agricultural purposes.

A tenant farmer rents it from a big landowner. One day, a builder approaches the landowner and offers to buy this land. The landowner jumps at the chance of selling it at its development value, which is far higher than its agricultural value, and promptly applies to the Urban District Council for planning permission. The Urban District Council consider the matter and on a technical point, turn down the application. "Right", says the landowner, "If you won't let me sell this land for development purposes, here is a compulsory purchase order which says you must buy it from me at development value"; and, that being the law the Urban District Council bought it. Because they had already refused planning permission they had to designate the land as open space; and because they had borrowed half the cost from the government, they could not change their minds about it being an open space, so the tenant farmer was evicted.

Now, having set the scene, my queries are these:

Why didn't the Urban District Council have the foresight to buy such land at a little above the agricultural value before the developers made their move?

Who is running the Planning Department of the Urban District Council; the Council or the firm of developers?

Why should it be possible for a farmer to lose his home and his living, and the Council have to purchase some land that they don't want, at a high price which they can't afford, just because they wouldn't allow a land owner to sell his land to a developer; neither of whom live in the Urban District? There are many aspects about this story that make me think, and ask questions.

If my fiction has strayed too far from the truth and my facts are not true, I hope that one of our Councillors will say so, and why it cannot happen in Formby, Otherwise we will assume that it could – and has.

GET YOUR FRIENDS TO JOIN - THE FORMBY RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

I wish to be a member of the
Formby Ratepayers Association

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ADDRESS _____

PHONE NO: _____



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Tel: 71443, who will arrange for a representative to call.

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OBITUARY

It is with profound regret that we have to report the death of Mr. Bernard Dwyer at the age of 48, who was for a time a member of the Committee, and who it was hoped would have been a candidate for election to the Council. Mr. Dwyer had been seriously ill since Christmas and he died in Lourdes, where as a devout Catholic, he had gone in the hope that God might see fit to effect the cure which was beyond the power of man. We would extend our deepest sympathy to Mrs. Dwyer and all his family in their tragic loss.

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