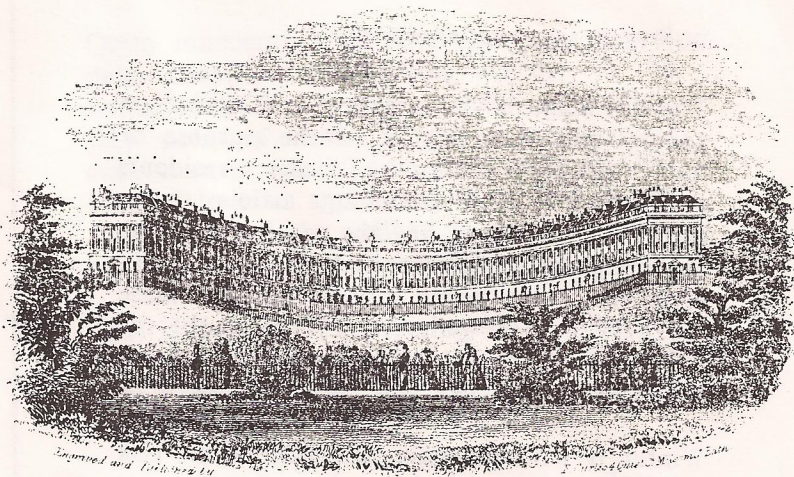


The Royal Crescent Society Newsletter



Issue No 8

January 1988

COACH BAN

The long awaited and fought for ban on coach traffic in Royal Crescent came into effect on May 18th 1987 and will run experimentally for 18 months. While not the blanket weight restriction hoped for, the PSV Restriction Order has led to a noticeable drop in the number of whistle-stop coaches passing through Royal Crescent and the streets leading to it.

Capt. Burne has communicated the Traffic Committee's satisfaction at the decline in coach traffic to Avon C.C. and urged it to continue the experimental restriction. However a few unlicensed coaches have ignored the Order. Where possible residents are asked to note the coach operator's name and telephone number and pass these on to Committee members so that a direct complaint can be made. This has been found to be the most effective way of showing the Society's determination to see the Order enforced.

BASEMENT GARDEN COMPETITION

Despite another sunless Summer green-fingered residents have again provided splendid displays in their front areas. The results of this year's competition judged by Mr Hitt of the Park's Department are as follows:-

1st Prize : No. 19 Mrs Dulcie Morrell
2nd Prize : No. 5 Mrs Anabelle
Treichmann
Runner Up : No. 6 Dr Brigette
Matthews

CAR PARKING

The controversial city-centre Parking Scheme that came into force in October is being monitored by the Society and other interested parties. The main effect in the Royal Crescent is the zealous enforcement of the existing Parking Orders. This results in those residents who would prefer to leave their cars at home and walk to work or shop being forced to add needlessly to the City's traffic congestion or to dump their vehicles for extended periods in unrestricted areas, which in turn must inconvenience other citizens.

The Society is pressing for a sensible, fairly priced and extensive Resident's Parking Scheme. Avon's Card Scheme fulfills none of these criteria. In order to put our case more effectively the Committee urgently needs replies to the following:

- a) Do residents who park on-street want a Resident's Parking Scheme?
- b) What would be regarded as a fair price to pay?

Correspondence should be directed to the Secretary, 5A Royal Crescent.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER GROUPS

The Committee feels that certain wider causes for concern, such as on-street parking, are shared with other residential groups and associations and that informal links, if forged, may serve to benefit all involved by the exchange of information. It is hoped therefore to make contact with such groups, where they exist, in order that a coordinated and effective dialogue can be launched with the appropriate authorities.

WINTER MAINTENANCE

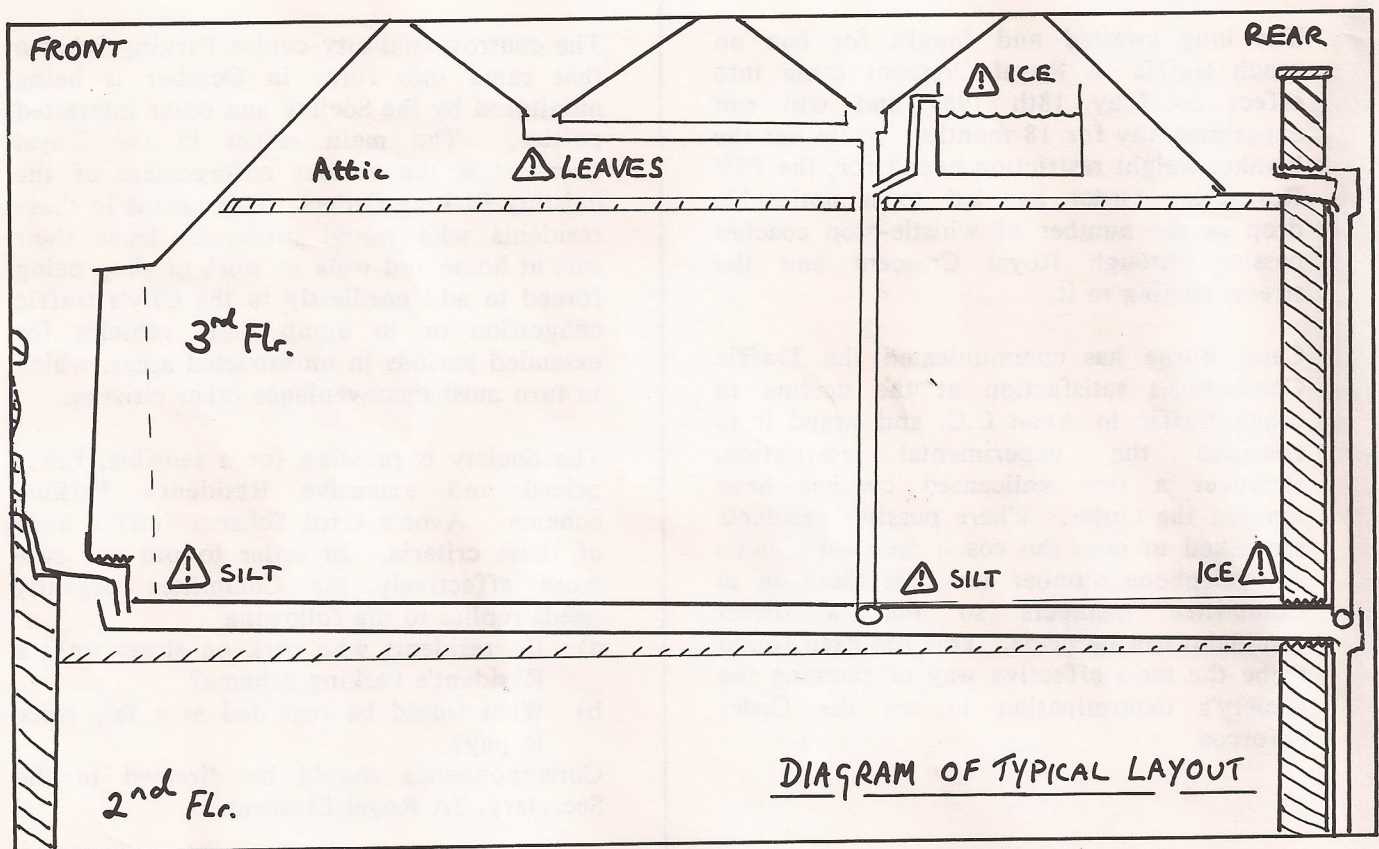
The exchange of information and advice on general problems is part of the purpose of our Society, indeed of any residents association. The following article draws attention to flaws in the design of the guttering of houses in the Royal Crescent. However, every house is different and these are only general pointers. If in doubt the Society recommends residents seek help from professional sources.

Winter is with us again and with it the risk of flooding. The main problem has its root in Wood the Younger's desire to avoid

rainwater downpipes spoiling the Crescent's facade. Instead, rainwater from the front and middle roofs is channelled to the rear of the houses in square-sectioned wooden troughs lined with lead.

If the rainwater is obstructed for some reason the troughs rapidly fill and the water spills over and through the ceilings below. From experience the main causes of blockage are:

- Wind-blown leaves
- Bird nests
- Silt and stone fragments
- Ice
- Combinations of the above



Suggested preventative maintenance:

- a) Locate the rainwater troughs, their entrances, exits and access points.
- b) Inspect for obstructions (easier done with a torch and small hand mirror). Be sure to replace the wooden lids over the troughs to exclude draughts.
- c) Clean out silt, leaves etc. This may require makeshift tools such as a ladle or garden trowel on a long handle to reach inaccessible sections. Give particular attention to entrances, exits, bends and other "choke" points.
- d) Check potheads on the downpipe at the rear of the building as these can become choked by leaves and bird nests.
- e) Check the ball-cock operated valves of water tanks in the roof spaces. The overflows often are constructed to discharge into the troughs. In very cold weather a faulty valve dribbling water can lead to ice forming and plugging the exit of the trough.

Given the Northerly aspect of the rear of most of the Crescent properties, freezing temperatures and a stiff wind will seek out even the smallest weak spot. Over the years modifications to wastepipes and the installation or removal of internal plumbing may have left unfilled holes in the rear walls as well as capped off, unlagged water pipes. Often close together and vulnerable to an icy wind these have caused some spectacular destruction to the interiors of houses.

The lagging of pipes and tanks represents good insurance, as does provision of heating round-the-clock during very cold spells. If snow and ice build up in the gutters a bucket of salt administered from the safety of a window or skylight can speed up thawing and prevent refreezing of meltwater in the troughs and downpipes.

More permanent solutions range from chicken-wire traps to catch leaves before they enter the troughs, to the installation of special heater cables in the troughs to prevent freezing (SWEB has details). The most permanent and effective solution to both the tendency of the square gutters to silt up and the ingress of cold air from the North is to lay a 4 inch plastic pipe the entire length of the trough. This is then connected by watertight joints to the front gutter, to the mid-roof downpipes and to any overflows required. Finally the pipe is connected by a T-piece to the rear downpipe. This eliminates the open pothead and the unused part of the trough opening can be sealed. The circular section of the pipe is less prone to silting and keeping out cold draughts leads to a saving in heating costs. This is not a DIY solution.

The principle problem areas are highlighted in the diagram above and though the precautions suggested may be a nuisance they are, as many here know, a better alternative to the misery and expense caused by flooding.

The Editor thanks Roy Titchen for permission to reprint and update this article from Issue 1.

PAWS FOR THOUGHT

The Editor recently received this somewhat dog-eared communication.

"I have been asked to act as spokesdog on behalf of the other members of my species who live in the Royal Crescent."

Quite innocently, we find that our natural daily functions are causing concern to the human residents and we wholly appreciate their point of view. In our natural habitat such matters would not be a problem, but humans love us and bring us to live in the towns and we are obliged to use parks and other green spaces to answer Nature's call.

This is not very nice for residents who use the Crescent lawn but what can we do? We only want to please, but we need help with this matter.

I am lucky because my mistress has always removed what I leave behind, quickly and deftly, with a plastic bag. It is so easy; so come on, girls and chaps, get your owners to do the same.

It is not much to ask and everyone would be much happier, especially the mothers of young children.

Let us be an example to those humans who leave behind their litter in our parks and open spaces. I believe there are only seven of our species in the Crescent. This issue need not be a problem. Let me have your views,

Your obedient fiend,"
"TITUS"

(Titus may be reached c/o Dulcie Morrell at 19a Ed.)

AGM MARCH 1987

The Committee thanks all those residents who attended this Year's Annual General Meeting and joined in the wide-ranging discussions on subjects of concern. This forum provides an invaluable tool in highlighting key issues to which the Society can address itself.

The members of the Committee are as follows:

Cmdr. Roy Titchen, Chairman
Capt. Francis Burne, Chairman Traffic Committee
Mrs Anabelle Trechmann, Secretary
Mr Michael Daw, Treasurer
Air Chief Marshal Sir John Barraclough
Miss Wendy Laughlin
Mr Fabrice Le Roux (Newsletter Editor)
Mrs Dulcie Morrell
Mr Bill Walliss

As members of the Society will be aware Monica Baly retired as Secretary this Spring. In recognition of her long and efficient service the Society presented her with flowers and a book token and, of course, our thanks. The Committee thanks all those who generously contributed.