

**HOW HILL CLOSE GARDENS WAS SAVED  
THE CONTRIBUTION OF LADRA  
(THE LAMMAS AND DISTRICT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION)**

What follows is an extract from their December 1997 newsletter, now in our collection.  
*Our thanks to Jenny Dodge for keeping safe this document, so important to our history.*



The LADRA story starts in April 1993. when an article appeared in the Leamington Observer saying that 30 low cost houses were to be constructed on the site of Hill Close Gardens off Linen Street. There had been very little, if any, consultation with local residents about these plans, quietly passed in 1988. An earlier (1985) plan for 34 houses had been withdrawn due to substantial local opposition.

In 1993, LADRA member Patrick Caines happened to be looking out of his window when he noticed a bulldozer on the site - he went out and stopped it as the legality of the development was being investigated. However, the bulldozer had cleared enough of the rampant brambles etc to reveal the presence of a building - one of the summer houses! It might be of historical interest and thus an important find. The nature of the gardens was also partly revealed.

Patrick then approached Peter Storrie, planning consultant and member of the Warwick Gardens Trust, who put him in touch with Dr Christine Hodgetts, local historian and District Councillor, also a member of the Warwick Gardens Trust. She immediately set to work on a Preliminary Report for English Heritage.

John Picking, then Chief Executive of Warwick District Council, visited the site In August and in September he called a public meeting at the Lammas Club to discuss the plans for the site. Over 110 residents attended. In November the WDC Housing Services Commission agreed to put the planning permission on hold to allow time for investigations by English Heritage.

In August four of the seven summerhouses were listed by English Heritage and on New Years Day 1995 LADRA heard that the whole site had been placed in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England.

*The Gardens were saved!*