

DAVENPORT PARK



RESIDENTS' PACK

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Introduction

Davenport Park is a private residential estate established around a distinctive triangle of three roads and is built on land which originally belonged to the Davenports of Bramall Hall. The Davenports sold most of their estates to the Freeholders Company, a speculative building company in Manchester, but the area that we now know as Davenport Park was sold by John Davenport to John Simpson of Stockport for £5,500 in 1877. The Davenport railway station had already opened in 1857 and this was a key factor in influencing the existence and location of the Park. The gradual development of Davenport Park over the late Victorian, Edwardian and inter-war periods means that the houses show a fascinating variety of features which reflect the architectural styles of these eras.

The sale of the land was subject to covenants which stipulated that only detached and semi-detached houses could be built with a minimum separation between the blocks. These covenants were broken in the 1960s when the first flats were constructed in the Park but the development of Clifton Lodge, Beech Mews and Chatsworth Court, each on the site of just one house, and Rutland Court in the garden of what is now Fedora House has enabled many more residents to join the Davenport Park community and enjoy this quiet, exclusive and well-maintained area.

Further information on the history and architecture of the Park can be found in the Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) leaflet on the Davenport Park Conservation Area published in 2008. For the more comprehensive Character Appraisal of Davenport Park, see the links section at the end of this pack.

The Davenport Park Committee

It was a condition of the sale in 1877 that the residents would pave the three roads in the Park and thereafter maintain them in good condition. However, the Park archives reveal that

“by the year 1906 the greater number of the present houses had been erected. But with the development of building operations the roads, such as they were, steadily deteriorated, the continual heavy cart traffic ploughing up and reducing the unset surfaces to a mass of mud. In wet weather this was ankle deep and to cross a road at any point became an undertaking of some recklessness. Devonshire Road was simply a morass from end to end and it is recalled that on one occasion a lady paying an evening visit to a house there arrived minus one of her shoes, this having stuck in the mire en route and, in the prevailing darkness, being lost!”

The situation became so intolerable that the Stockport Corporation intervened and threatened to make up the roads and apportion the cost. The owners, recognising that this would result in the roads becoming public and “the private character of the Park being thus destroyed”, held a meeting and the Davenport Park Committee, originally called the Davenport Park Roads Committee, was formed in August 1906. Each householder undertook to pay his proportionate share towards the cost of the roads, together with an annual levy for upkeep, and by 1907 the roads had been surfaced.

Today’s Committee of volunteer residents consists of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Roads Manager, Conservation Manager and Neighbourhood Watch representative, plus up to eight general members. The Committee meets six times per year to discuss and agree actions pertaining to the management of the Park. It acts according to a Constitution and its members are elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Occupiers of Davenport Park. This AGM, to which all Park residents are invited, is held in November each year. All residents who have paid their annual levy are entitled to vote to decide on the level of the levy for the next year. This levy is used to pay for the upkeep of the roads, pavements, road drains and gates within the Park and for any other maintenance which is the responsibility of the Committee.

Many new residents are surprised to discover this peaceful enclave sandwiched between a railway and a main road in a bustling metropolitan area and are delighted to find themselves on a network of wide roads with little traffic and few parked cars, where their children can roam in relative safety. This environment is still here for them to enjoy because generations of residents have protected it by supporting the Committee and paying the levy.

The responsibilities of the Committee are to act on behalf of residents to:

- Protect the character and environment of the Park.
- Maintain the private status of the Park by closing the gates once per year (usually on the last Sunday in September).
- Maintain the roads, pavements, signs and gates.
- Maintain public liability insurance to cover the above.
- Maintain the road drains and clear as necessary.
- Trim the trees adjacent to the streetlights when necessary.
- Collect a levy from each household to pay for the above.
- Manage the income and expenses of the Davenport Park Committee.
- Prepare a set of annual accounts which are then audited and presented to residents at the AGM.
- Work with SMBC to protect and improve the amenities and surroundings of the Park.
- Monitor planning applications in the Park.
- Promote a community spirit among the residents of the Park.

The responsibilities of the residents are to:

- Support the Committee and offer to serve a term as a Committee member if able to do so.
- Join fellow residents at the AGM to have their say and vote on important issues such as setting the levy.
- Pay the levy so that the Committee can continue to maintain the park and keep it under the residents' control.
- Trim trees, shrubs and hedges at the front of their property to ensure the safety of pedestrians. (Permission may be needed for work on trees.)
- Avoid parking on the pavement – the roads are wide enough – and ask visitors and contractors to do likewise. This is requested because the pavements are not as strong as the roads and the surface and underlying services may be damaged.
- Avoid blowing leaves into the road (where they may block the drains). Remember to tell gardeners. Also try to ensure that contractors keep building materials off the roads and do not pour waste/slurry down the drains.
- Observe the speed limit to ensure the safety of children and the less agile.
- Look out for suspicious characters and report them to the police.
- Report incidents to their Neighbourhood Watch coordinator.

The Davenport Park Conservation Area

Davenport Park itself was originally designated a conservation area in 1979. The boundaries of the conservation area were then extended in 2005 to include properties in Kennerley Road and Buxton Road.

According to SMBC, conservation areas are designated “to preserve and enhance parts of the Borough which have special architectural and historic character”. Their purpose is to help prevent the destruction of these special qualities by unsympathetic alterations to the existing buildings, insensitive development or loss through demolition.

Article 4 Direction

Special planning controls known as an Article 4 Direction apply to the houses in the Davenport Park conservation area. This direction has been in force since 1984 and its purpose is to prevent the unique character of the area from being spoilt by an accumulation of inappropriate alterations to the buildings and their surroundings. This essentially means that any changes which would affect the external appearance of the houses (such as changes to the type and style of windows, doors and roofs) will require planning permission from SMBC and, indeed, may not be approved. ‘Like for like’ replacements and replacements of original architectural features will be encouraged, as will the removal of previous unsympathetic alterations. Alterations to front gardens and walls may also be covered. For further details, please see the Article 4 Direction guidance notes at the end of this pack

The 2006 Character Appraisal of the Park identified as a pressing issue the gradual erosion of architectural quality and historic character through widespread alterations to roofs, windows and front doors despite an Article 4 direction being in place. The

fronts of all houses in the conservation area were photographed during the appraisal so the Council could identify new, unauthorised changes if it wished. You are strongly advised to seek advice from the SMBC planning staff (474 3543/3664) before undertaking any alteration to the outside of your property.

Clifton Lodge, Beech Mews, Chatsworth Court and Devonshire Court are outside the boundary of the conservation area and are subject only to normal planning and building regulations.

Protection of Trees

All the trees in a conservation area are protected, whether or not they are already included in Tree Preservation Orders (TPO). This means that anyone wishing to lop, fell or uproot a tree within the Davenport Park conservation area must give SMBC six weeks' notice of this intention, during which time a TPO may be made by the Council. It is a prosecutable offence to carry out work to trees within a conservation area without SMBC consent. For further advice, please contact the SMBC Arboriculture Team via the Stockport Direct Contact Centre on 0845 833 4444 or e-mail arboriculture.eed@stockport.gov.uk. The team has a plan of trees that can be seen from the roads.

Drains

The surface-water drains are maintained by the Committee. Sewers are maintained by United Utilities. Where houses built before 1937 have common drains, United Utilities maintains them from the sewer to the point where they divide to serve single properties.

Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

The Park has had an active Neighbourhood Watch scheme in place for several years during which time the number of burglaries and other incidents has declined very significantly. There are a number of Neighbourhood Watch coordinators each of whom has responsibility for a number of residences. Coordinators act as a central point for receiving information about incidents and circulating advice from the police. The coordinators meet regularly to share information and a newsletter is produced bi-monthly and distributed to all residents.

A list of current coordinators can be found on the back of the newsletter. If you would like to become a member of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme, please ask your coordinator for a Neighbourhood Watch Member Audit Form. Membership of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme may entitle you to a reduction in your household insurance premium.

Contacts and Links

Davenport Park Committee

The Committee maintains a website at www.davenportpark.org.uk.

A list of committee members and officers and their contact details is printed in the Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter after each AGM and in the event of any important change. The officers can be contacted by e-mail at the following addresses

Chairman	chairman@davenportpark.org.uk
Vice Chairman	vicechair@davenportpark.org.uk
Secretary	secretary@davenportpark.org.uk
Treasurer	treasurer@davenportpark.org.uk
Roads Manager	roads@davenportpark.org.uk
Conservation Manager	conservation@davenportpark.org.uk
Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator	homewatch@davenportpark.org.uk

Copies of the Constitution and Rules of the Committee may be obtained from the Secretary.

SMBC

Davenport Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal: go to www.stockport.gov.uk/historicareas > Conservation Areas > Davenport Park > Davenport Park Appraisal.

Conservation and Heritage Strategy: go to www.stockport.gov.uk/historicareas > Conservation and Heritage Strategy 2008.

The Historic Photograph Archive at Stockport Central Library has photographs of the Park going back to its earliest days.

Application form for work on trees: www.stockport.gov.uk > Council services > Environment > Planning and building regulations > Planning application forms > Application for tree works.

Planning application form: www.stockport.gov.uk > Council services > Planning and building regulations > Planning application forms > Householder Application and conservation area consent.

The planning database has details of planning applications from 2000 to the present: <http://planning.stockport.gov.uk/PlanningData/AcolNetCGI.gov>

Interactive site giving general guidance on what needs planning permission whether in a conservation area or not: www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission

Frequently asked questions

Q. How is the levy worked out?

A. Currently the same way as for Council Tax. The total amount that is to be raised is divided by the number of band D equivalent properties to give the levy for band D. Levies for the other bands are fixed proportions of band D (see table 1 in SMBC's A Guide to your Council Tax).

Q. Why do I have to pay a levy in addition to my Council Tax?

A. The roads are owned by the residents, not by the Council, so the Council does not pay for their upkeep. Also the Council does not accept liability for accidents caused by the condition of the roads and footpaths.

Q. Does Stockport Grammar School pay a levy?

A. Yes.

Q. What happens if I do not pay my levy?

A. If residents do not pay the levy, the Committee cannot maintain the roads. If the roads fall into disrepair, the Council has the power to take them over, repair and upgrade them and charge the residents for the work. It could also open the Bramhall Lane gate.

Q. Do the residents actually own the roads?

A. When the park was divided into building plots, these generally extended to the middle of the roads. Owners of the older properties should find that their Land Registry plans confirm this. Regardless of the actual ownership, all residents are responsible for the upkeep of the roads.

Q. Why are the gates closed for one day each year?

A. To demonstrate that the residents own and control the roads in the Park. (From 1911 until the 1940s, a Park keeper was employed "to keep out unauthorised traffic". Closure of one pair of gates was started in 1942 amid concerns about the amount of through traffic using Davenport Park Road instead of Kennerley Road – including "a swiftly moving omnibus".)

Q. Are there any exemptions to the rules for protection of trees?

A. If the diameter of the trunk is less than 7.5cm. If the tree is dead (but you have to replace it unless the Council agrees that you do not have to). You do not need permission to remove dead branches. Some tree surgeons say that fruit trees are exempt but officially this only applies to orchards. For more details search for "trees" on www.stockport.gov.uk and click on Protected trees – FAQs.

Q. Who maintains the street lights?

A. SMBC does. If you notice that a light is not working, please report it to Stockport Direct on 0845 833 4444. They will want to know the exact location and the number on the lamp post. Or go to www.stockport.gov.uk >Do it online >Online forms> Environment> Street equipment online fault reporting.

Q. How do I become a Committee member?

A. Contact the Chairman or any Committee member in the first instance.

Davenport Park Conservation Area

Article 4 Direction Guidance Notes

The Article 4 Direction removes permitted development rights and imposes an additional layer of control. The aim of the Direction is to encourage retention of the high quality features of buildings in the Conservation Areas and to enhance the environment of which they are part. 'Like for like' repairs and replacements of original architectural features to buildings will be encouraged, as will the removal of previous unsympathetic alterations. Without an Article 4 Direction many unsympathetic changes could occur without the need for planning permission - they would constitute "permitted development". Where the Direction is in force, planning permission is required for those items listed in the Order.

The following notes indicate the approach the Council is likely to take in dealing with proposed alterations in the Conservation Area:

Alterations to elevations

All significant alterations to publicly visible elevations require planning permission from the Council. Applications for porches, removal of architectural details, extensions and other works materially affecting the appearance of the building including satellite dishes will be treated on their merit. The Direction is not meant to cover very minor alterations such as burglar alarms (N.B. different controls apply to listed buildings). However, if you are in doubt please contact the Conservation Officer or Planning Officers listed below.

Roofs

A change of roof material will almost certainly require planning permission. Generally the retention of the original roofing materials is sought and in most cases re-roofing in natural slate or red clay tiles will be required. Where a roof is publicly visible, man-made (fibrous cement type) slates or concrete tiles are not acceptable as an alternative to the original materials.

Rooflights and dormer windows

Subject to size, position and design, roof lights may not greatly affect the character of a building and are likely to be acceptable on rear elevations. Applications for dormer windows would be permitted only if they traditionally existed throughout a particular group of buildings. The bulk and design of a dormer would have to reflect that which previously existed or prevailed in the area, and was appropriate to your particular building.

Doors and Windows

The original period design of doors and windows contributes greatly to the character of the Conservation Area and they should be retained and repaired or reinstated to match the original design. The installation of replacement doors and windows in aluminium, in plastic, or in designs other than that which existed on principal elevations, are highly unlikely to receive permission, other than in exceptional circumstances.

Painting Facades

Good quality facing bricks can be seen throughout the area and it will be expected that they will remain exposed and unpainted. Permission would not normally be granted for exterior painting of brickwork. Where a facade has already been painted, planning permission would not be required for repainting to match the existing colour.

Textured Paint and Render

Textured paint or render would not normally receive planning permission on buildings where brick prevails.

Hardstandings and Curtilage Walls

It is recognised that householders will wish to provide space for vehicles within their property boundary wherever possible. However, some control is necessary to prevent cars from dominating the street scene and the setting of buildings. Proposals for vehicle hardstandings are likely to be refused unless they can be located or screened to minimise the impact on the surrounding area. Careful attention to paving and landscaping is required. Permission is required for the alteration or erection of a fence, wall railing or gate on boundaries fronting a highway, waterway or open space, and permission is only likely to be granted if the proposal would contribute positively to the character of the conservation area.

No application fee is payable where an application for planning permission is required solely as a result of the Article 4 Direction nor is there a fee for the discharge of any conditions attached to the permission.

The Direction is not intended to cover very minor alterations. However, if you are unsure whether any work you propose to carry out to your property requires planning permission please contact:

Crispin Edwards
Conservation Officer
Stockport Council
Stopford House
Stockport
SK1 3XE
Tel 0161 474 2620

or

Planning Services

Tel 0161 474 3543/3664

e-mail: crispin.edwards@stockport.gov.uk



Davenport Park Roads

IMPORTANT NOTICE

From 15th June, 1942, the gates will be closed during daylight hours from 8 a.m.

The gates on Buxton Road will be closed first for one week, and the following week the gates on Bramhall Lane and so on, until further notice.

When closed, the gates will be locked and will not be opened except for such emergencies as Air Raids, fire and the like.

A key is at the Wardens' Post for such purpose.



In 1915 the Committee had to deal with proposals made by the G.P.O., relative to an extended telephone system in the Park, and the matter proved to be one of some difficulty. The Committee strongly objected to any plan which included continuous overhead wires, and had many discussions and interviews with the G.P.O. Engineers before agreeing upon a scheme.

Eventually a scheme was approved which provided for the removal of all the then existing tall poles with their masses of wires, the laying of an underground cable round the Park, and the erection of short neat poles to which subscribers would be connected direct.

The rights of owners were secured by an agreement on the part of the G.P.O. to pay a nominal rent to the Committee for the use of the footpaths, and by an undertaking to remove all poles, wires, and cables, if required, on receipt of three months' notice. ~~The work was promptly carried out by the G.P.O. Engineers, to the satisfaction of the Committee, and facilities now exist for the connecting up without difficulty, of all future new subscribers.~~

The principal matter to be dealt with by the Committee in the near future is that of the footpaths, which, in bad weather, are in a very unsatisfactory condition.

As the annual revenue will not provide for the required outlay, the Committee hope that the proposal for a special effort (to which a majority of the owners have already given their consent) may receive more unanimous support, and thus enable this much-needed improvement to be proceeded with.

1932

Fernlea,
Devonshire Road, Davenport Park,
STOCKPORT.

12 September, 1932.

Dear Sir (or Madam),

DAVENPORT PARK ROADS COMMITTEE.

As you are aware a meeting of the property owners was recently held. The attendance was disappointing.

The following Committee was elected provisionally for the ensuing year:-

Messrs. Hellowell (Chairman), Nicklin (Treasurer),
Pollard (Secretary), Owen, Lee, Wallen, Main,
Hallowell, Worthington, Chettle, Greenhalgh, Grundy,
and Poulter.

It was felt that a CRISIS has now arrived as the state of the roads is unsatisfactory and as there is no money in hand to effect the necessary repairs owing to the fact that a number of property owners do not pay their quota.

It was resolved to find out the wishes of each property owner by means of a plebiscite. For this purpose a card is enclosed in order that you may state whether you are in favour of the Stockport Corporation being approached forthwith, with a view to their taking over the roads with the CONSEQUENT COST TO FRONTAGERS, or whether you are agreeable for the roads to be continued as heretofore and to pay your share of some slight cost which must, of necessity, be incurred - details to be settled later. IF YOU DO NOT RETURN THE ENCLOSED STAMPED POST CARD BY 19th INST. IT WILL BE ASSUMED THAT YOU ARE IN FAVOUR OF THE STOCKPORT CORPORATION TAKING OVER THE ROADS AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE AND YOUR VOTE WILL BE ASSESSED ACCORDINGLY.

Pending the result of this inquiry no assessment has been levied for the ensuing twelve months, as your Committee do not feel that they can carry on any longer in the present unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Your Committee ask you to give this matter your most careful thought and will be glad to receive any communications upon this matter which you may care to make.

Yours faithfully,

D. F. POLLARD,

Hon. Secretary.