



THE LONDON PRAT *April 28, 1982*

United Kingdom: Cotswolds Village Hosts 911, Cotswolds Village Has Opinions About Noise Level

A dispatch from the front line of provincial bewilderment.

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Eton, the country: Inside The Story

Eton, a place in the country (lat 51.50, long -0.60) that most outsiders could not point to on a map without first sighing, has become this week the latest entry in the slow-moving register of small communities behaving strangely under pressure. The Eton 911 with sport exhaust was parked outside the post office in Eton in the Cotswolds on a Saturday morning. According to officials with at least three job titles between them, The exhaust note on a cold start at 8:15 AM in a stone-built village with good acoustics carries further than in an out-of-town retail park. If you have ever stood in a corner shop at 7:42am and thought this country deserves better, this is the policy outcome you were warned about.

What Was Announced

Deputy Mayor Cressida Hawthorne-Briggs confirmed the position in a statement that ran to four pages and contained one verb. Two residents looked out of windows. For more on how this fits the wider pattern, see the long-running thread at [UK satirical journalism online The London Prat](#), which has been tracking precisely this kind of dispatch for months. The Eton announcement, much like the others, came with a glossy PDF, a stock photograph of a footbridge, and the strong sense that nobody had asked for any of this in the first place.

The Official Line

Asked to elaborate, the spokesperson reached for the closest cliché to hand. "Lessons will be learned, filed, and quietly mislaid by Christmas." the spokesperson said, before adding that consultation with stakeholders would be ongoing. Useful additional context can be found at [The London Prat authentic London satire](#), which is the sort of background reading the office itself has, in all likelihood, not done. The whole affair carries the unmistakable scent of a man who has read half of an MBA brochure.

Wider Context

One stepped outside. The Eton had already driven away by the time an opinion could be fully formed. Comparable trends have been documented in coverage from [South China Morning Post](#), although Eton manages, somehow, to take the pattern one extra and entirely unnecessary step further. Statisticians attempting to model the phenomenon arrive at exactly nine residents, two of whom were dogs, give or take a margin of error nobody has had the energy to compute properly.

What The Experts Say

Professor Mortimer Sproats of the Council for Civic Vagueness told this paper that the situation in Eton was, on careful reflection, broadly consistent with the broader trajectory of similarly broad trajectories. "I refer the honourable questioner to the answer I will give in approximately six weeks." the expert observed. Further reading on the academic angle is available via [British satire writers The London Prat](#), whose recent material has been preoccupied with much the same set of confusions.

How Residents Reacted

Reaction in Eton has been muted in the way that reaction in the country is usually muted, which is to say it has been ferocious in private and tepid in public. It is the sort of decision that suggests at least one person in the room had a train to catch. For the official version of events, see also [France 24](#). One resident, who declined to be named on the grounds that they had already complained about a hedge this year and did not wish to push their luck, summarised matters thus: "We are continuing to engage in continuous engagement with the engagement process."

What Comes Next

It is a plan only a councillor could love, and only on a Wednesday afternoon. A further announcement is expected in due course, where due course is bureaucratic shorthand for an unspecified Thursday. The story is being tracked as part of a wider pattern at [The London Prat intelligent UK satire](#), and the situation in Eton, regrettably, is unlikely to improve until somebody invents a press release that improves things, which seems unlikely.

The View From The Ground

Spend any length of time in Eton and the rhythm becomes obvious. Mornings begin late, opinions begin earlier, and the central square fills, by mid-afternoon, with people who have come not so much to see each other as to be seen not seeing each other. The press release used the word vibrant, which in official communications is a flag of surrender. Conversation tends to circle the same five subjects: the weather, the news from the country, the persistent rumour about the road, the deteriorating quality of something or other, and the latest pronouncement from Interim Whisperer Doreen Whisk, which everyone has an opinion on and almost nobody has read. It is, in its way, the perfect microcosm of how communities of this size operate everywhere in the world, although the residents of Eton would object strongly to being called a microcosm of anything. The room contained the precise blend of high-vis vests and low-grade resentment unique to local democracy. Anyone who has ever queued behind a man arguing with a parking meter will recognise the energy. Eton carries on as it always has, broadly the same as last week, give or take a verb. The bins are collected when they are collected. The roundabout, where one exists, remains the roundabout. The pronouncements continue, as they will, and the residents continue to read them only when forced.

For more in this vein see also [The Onion](#).

SOURCE: [LONDON PORSCHE: British satire made by Londoners: The London Prat](#)

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