



A very local affair

HOUSE sales are picking up and Stage Two catches the mood with its new production at Downham Village Hall, "Local Affairs", by Richard Harris.

This comedy looks at the chaos that occurs when a varied collection of couples move on to a new housing estate and start to get to know each other.

Art mirrors life as Stage Two's designer, Dave Scott, and the director, Fran Osborne, fit a multiple set on to the Downham stage, with all the furniture just that crucial degree smaller than normal to give the actors a chance to keep up with the hectic pace of the show.

Our photograph shows, from the left, in the back row, Tim Milne-Redhead, Katherine King, Lesley Knight, Pat Hargreaves and Gerald Purchase; at the front, Imogen Griffin, Mel Scolah Stella Barnes and David King. All are enjoying a quiet moment before the action really starts on November 13th. (CAT 4465)

Chuckles and guffaws at 'Local Affairs'

you are thinking of moving to a new home, a plush housing estate, think again!

This was the setting of the latest Downham Stage Two production, "Local Affairs", another high comedy from popular playwright Richard Harris.

Three couples move into new houses, none of them acquainted, but each enters with curiosity about the others.

Meet a social-climbing couple, played by Mel Scolah and Stella Barnes, a young couple without their children for the first time in their married life, played by Imogen Griffin and David King, and a young couple without their children for the first time in their married life, played by Imogen Griffin and David King.

depressed or obsessed with DIY, played by Tim Milne-Redhead and Katherine King; and a drunken, glamorous couple played by Lesley Knight and Gerald Purchase, who are coping with parent problems.

Somewhere in the middle there appears a disagreeable mother-in-law, a suave dilettante and a young woman having trouble with her "R's", played by Pat Hargreaves, David King and Imogen Griffin respectively.

I was so absorbed with the excellent interpretation of the characters by the actors and director, that the plot lost me, just that it mattered, however, for this was a well-cast

play, with competent performances all round; the players certainly working hard to maintain pace in a difficult piece.

It was an ambitious choice for first-time producer Fran Osborne, given the difficulties of three sets on a very small stage and complex action, which she plotted, planned and directed with considerable skill.

The result was a successful team effort from everyone concerned, including the backstage staff.

The curtain closed on a splendid evening's entertainment, which the audience met with chuckles and, at times, loud guffaws.

BARBARA TAYLOR