

## THEY'VE GOT BIG PROBLEMS

- New system
- New and untrained staff
- Very complicated system
- Government confusion on rules and procedures
- Huge task to register every adult
- Very costly
- Media interest in public opposition

IT'S A BUREAUCRATIC NIGHTMARE WITH MORE THAN ENOUGH ROOM FOR CITIZENS (AND COUNCILS) TO PUT A SPANNER IN THE WORKS

### WARNING

The Poll Tax Register is different from the Electoral Register. MAKE SURE YOUR NAME IS ON THE ELECTORAL REGISTER. You may need it to finally defeat the Poll Tax.



"There are many ways in which public resistance could shatter the timetable. It would choke up the works, there is no question about that."

James Thomson, Poll Tax Registration Officer Fife Regional Council

## DECISION TIME

We can succeed in making the Registration Officer's job impossible. Every single citizen who resists puts a nail in the coffin of the Poll Tax, even if some people are conned or frightened into giving information.

And DON'T-WORRY if you run out of questions and appeals and feel forced to register.

RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS DON'T GIVE UP AT THE FIRST SETBACK THERE ARE MANY OTHER WAYS WE CAN ALL DEMONSTRATE OUR OPPOSITION TO THIS HORRENDOUS AND UNFAIR TAX IF THEY DO NOT WITHDRAW IT

If an enemy power invaded our country, wouldn't you join the Resistance?

JOIN YOUR LOCAL GROUP

CONTACT THE

FOREST FIELDS AND HYSON GREEN

Anti Poll Tax Campaign at:-

Box 5

42Foxhall Rd

Forest Fields

Box5

72Radford Rd

Hyson green



Official estimates are that 20% won't register or won't be able to pay. Another 20% would make the Poll Tax completely unworkable.

LET'S PUT A SPANNER IN THE WORKS

# POLL TAX

## How to defend ourselves



The success of the Poll Tax depends on public co-operation

LET'S PUT A SPANNER IN THE WORKS

## WE ARE UNDER ATTACK

Poll Tax attacks the less-well-off, community services, local democracy, and our civil liberties.

We must convince the Government that it cannot go ahead with the Poll Tax.



## JOIN THE RESISTANCE

If Britain were invaded, a network of local Resistance groups would be formed to make life difficult for the enemy.

We need to defend ourselves against the Poll Tax enemy. Join your local group.

# 1

### ASK WHY YOU ARE THE "RESPONSIBLE PERSON"

Before you can get a Poll Tax bill, there has to be a Poll Tax Register.

Before there can be a Register, the Registration Officer has to get a "responsible person" for each household.

The Officer will send a form to some one in your household he thinks is the "responsible person". He may even have filled in names of people he thinks live there. He wants you to check and sign it.

**DON'T SIGN IT.**

**SEND IT BACK**

with some questions:

*Why was I chosen?*

*What will be my duties?*

*How can I appeal against being chosen?*

You are perfectly entitled to ask these questions.

# 2

### SEND IT BACK WITH MORE QUESTIONS

The Government's own advice is: if you don't understand something, send the form back with your questions. We should all do that.

So, if and when you are forced to accept that you are the "responsible person",

**DON'T SIGN IT.**

**SEND IT BACK** with some more questions.

Some examples are given on this page.

Write a simple letter asking for answers or explanations.

It might even take more than one letter to ask all your questions or to get answers you really understand.

Better still, ask for someone to visit to explain it all to you. Say when would be convenient -- perhaps an evening or a weekend.

# 3

### DEALING WITH CANVASSERS

In some areas, canvassers will call. They will want you to give information on residents in the household. They will get a bonus of 40p for every form they get filled in.

Only the "responsible person" can be required to give information. Ask the canvasser to return when the "responsible person" is home.

Of course, there is no law to say that you must answer your door if someone knocks.

Some areas have plans to alert all residents if Poll Tax canvassers appear. A bell or a drum or a loud-hailer stands ready. Some will lock their doors. Some plan to gather for a meeting, or just for a chat, at the local community centre, or even in the street if the weather is fine.

If a canvasser tries to bully or intimidate you, contact the Registration Officer immediately, and the local Poll Tax Campaign.

# 4

### APPEALS

You can appeal against a decision of the Registration Officer to the Sheriff Court (in Scotland) or Community Charge and Valuation Panel (in England and Wales).

Nobody knows how appeals will be dealt with. Costs could be given against you if you lose.

Local Campaigns will probably take some test cases before advising you about this sort of Appeal.

# Q

### QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT WANT TO ASK

The "responsible person" can be penalised (£50, then £200) for refusing to give information. But nobody can be penalised for asking questions.

*How was the Registration Officer's information gathered?*

*How will the information you give be used?*

*Will it be stored on a computer?*

*Why does he need your exact date of birth?*

*How can you check your entry on the Register?*

*Who else can see your entry on the Register?*

*Can your name be kept off the public Register?*

*Will the Register be sold to mail order firms and credit agencies?*

*What other uses might be made of information you supply?*

*Who can claim exemption?*

*Who can claim a rebate?*

*What if someone in your household becomes a student?*

*Where should a student register?*

*How is 'a student' defined?*

*What is the definition of 'severe mental handicap'?*

*What if your circumstances change during the year?*

*What if you move house?*

**YOU CAN ALSO ASK FOR AN EXPLANATION OF ANY WORDS ON THE FORM YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.**

# POLL TAX REGISTRATION

## what to do next?

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT  
**COMMUNITY CHARGE**  
**POLL TAX**

3rd -  
The Guildhall  
Nottingham  
NG1 2DE  
Telephone :  
Nottingham (0602)  
Extension 4202

DATE OF ISSUE 18 AU

REGISTRATION CANVASS FORM FINAL REMINDER

THE OCCUPIER

NOTTINGHAM

NG7

Area	Property Reference
Property Description	
FLAT	

If you haven't registered for the poll tax yet, you will have had a letter like this one. So what should you do now? Here's the choices

### FIRST CHOICE:

Ignore it. They can fine you £50, but ONLY if they can prove that you got their letters. They can only prove this:

- if they were hand delivered to you personally, or
- if they were sent by recorded delivery, or
- if you tell them.

They will probably send a poll tax snooper to your house. DON'T TELL THE SNOOPER - OR ANYONE ELSE FROM THE COUNCIL - THAT YOU HAVE HAD POLL TAX FORMS. You MUST NOT admit that you've had anything from them about the poll tax, or they can fine you £50. When the snooper calls, its best to pretend there's nobody in. If this isn't possible, get rid of them quickly. They'll try to get you to fill in a form on your doorstep. TRY NOT TO DO THIS. Tell them you're about to go out, have a bath, feed the baby - any excuse will do. But you MUST take a form from them. Once you've done this, you must reply WITHIN 21 DAYS.

### SECOND CHOICE:

Find some neighbours or friends who haven't sent their forms back yet. Get together with three or four of them, swap forms, and register FALSE PEOPLE living at each other's houses - K.Minogue, R.Hood, M.Thatcher - anyone! Make sure your handwriting isn't on the form - and if you're really careful, wipe your fingerprints off too!

They might send a snooper to your house. Again, DON'T ADMIT THAT YOU HAVE EVER HAD ANY POLL TAX FORMS.

### THIRD CHOICE:

Send the partly completed form back with a question - for example:

*Please assure me that if I fill in the form, then information about me which breaks the Data Protection Act wont be stored on computer.*

Any reasonable question will do, but you must send the form back WITHIN 21 DAYS.

### FOURTH CHOICE:

Fill in the form in your WORST handwriting and make sure your name is unreadable. They can't fine you for being scruffy! They're likely to send it back to you. If they do, make sure you reply WITHIN 21 DAYS.

### FIFTH CHOICE:

Most important of all, don't sit at home worrying about it. If you feel nervous about doing any of these things - fill the form in and send it back. It doesn't matter that much, delaying registration is only a small part of our protest. The main thing will be to refuse payment when the first bills arrive next April.

If you need any advice, contact us.

Dear Sir or Madam

Under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1993, information required for the purposes of compiling a register of adults aged 18 years or over has to be provided within 21 days of receiving a request.

Failure to provide the information will lead to the imposition of a penalty of £50, in the first instance, followed by a penalty of £10 for each subsequent refusal.

Each occupier, owner or tenant of a property is deemed to be a responsible person for that property and a penalty can be imposed on any or all of such persons when the required information is not provided.

I have sent two separate forms to your property, the first included a reminder notice, but according to my records you have not received the return of a properly completed form.

This leaves me with no alternative but to consider the imposition of a penalty in your case unless a properly completed form is received.

**THIS MATTER MUST RECEIVE URGENT ATTENTION IF SUCH ACTION IS TO BE AVOIDED.**

Yours faithfully

S.H.E. Stares

Community Charges Registration Officer

Please disregard this letter if you have completed the request and returned a properly completed form within 21 days.

# FOREST FIELDS & HYSON GREEN ANTI-POLL TAX CAMPAIGN

## How to stop the bailiffs

### *What do bailiffs do?*

Bailiffs are usually private debt collectors who will try and collect payment for poll tax or a fine for non-registration. The council must first get a liability order against you from a magistrates court - then it is the council's decision whether to use bailiffs or not.

The legal term for what bailiffs do is "distress". If they can't persuade you to pay the debt they can try and take some of your personal possessions to the value of the debt.

### *Are bailiffs like the police?*

**No.** They have no powers like the police and are not employed by the courts. You cannot be in contempt of court and the criminal law is not involved.

### *What powers do bailiffs have?*

Their powers are strictly limited and the procedure is different to that in Scotland. There is no equivalent in England and Wales of a "poinding" - valuation of goods - prior to a warrant sale.

The court must provide a warrant for the bailiffs in addition to the liability order. This is just an administrative step, with no additional court hearing. They might tell you about the warrant just to put the frighteners on.

Putting the frighteners on is what the bailiffs try and do - they hope to intimidate you into paying. Bailiffs are adept at getting into homes and will try every stroke in the book. **SO KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!**

1) As soon you get wind of the bailiffs contact the anti-poll tax union (see below). The bailiffs don't want any hassle and will retreat when we mobilise hundreds of people against them.

2) If bailiffs come they should show identification and give you a copy of Regulation 39 and Schedule 5 of the Enforcement Regulations 1989.

3) If you are not in they may leave a note saying when they will return. Make sure the anti-poll tax union is warned.

4) Otherwise, the bailiffs can only get into your house if you let them in. **THEY CANNOT FORCE THEIR WAY IN** but can climb in through an open window.

However they may be within their rights to force a second door if they've been let in the first one, as in flats with a communal entrance.

If they push past you and force their way in you can call the police to have them removed.

5) Bailiffs can only come in daylight hours. Put pressure on the council, through the anti-poll tax union, to publicise the dates and times when bailiffs are coming. This makes it easier to mobilise people outside your home to keep the bailiffs away.

6) If the bailiffs get in they can 'lay claim' to goods that belong to you. But they cannot claim fixtures and fittings, or goods that do not belong to you - i.e. things on HP or things you have just sold to a trusted friend for a nominal sum!

7) The bailiffs will ask you to sign an agreement to pay something by a certain date (including something towards their costs). If you sign and they leave the goods in your house this is a 'walking possession'. If they take the goods with them it is a 'close possession'. You then have a time limit to pay before they sell the goods at auction.

8) Once in possession, the bailiffs can return and forcibly enter your home and take your goods. It is a criminal offence to remove goods after they have been 'laid' claim to.

9) So everything hinges on the bailiffs getting into your house. They might claim to have 'walking possession' just by looking in the window. This is nonsense - they cannot know what is your and you haven't agreed to anything as the regulations require.

10) They may claim that looking in the window is a valuation - this is waffle to make you think they have started a process. Don't worry, they're panicking.

**Remember**, bailiffs are the only real power that councils have in Scotland and they've got nowhere after 17 months! In Scotland the bailiffs - called sheriff officers - have a procedure to use force but still have not succeeded. There are only 1,000 bailiffs for all the councils in England & Wales. They don't stand a chance against 14 million of us - the poll tax non-payers - as long as you know they can't get in unless you let them. The anti-poll tax unions are ready to back you up!

*For more information contact:*



## POLL TAX

*Have you had another reminder,  
or a summons ?*

**DON'T PANIC -  
DON'T PAY !**

**READ THIS LEAFLET**

### **What's happening?**

The poll tax is more than halfway into its first year - and it is falling apart. In Nottingham, at least 70 000 people - a third of all the adults in the city - haven't paid a penny. Thousands more are two or three months behind on their payments, and an unknown number still haven't even been registered! Its the same all over the country. Nationwide, at least 10 MILLION people aren't paying the poll tax. In Scotland, where they are into their second year of the poll tax, an incredible 73% aren't paying this year's poll tax. And 25% of Scotland still haven't paid last year's!

### **They've caught up with us now - shouldn't we just pay?**

**NO!** If you've had another reminder, whatever it threatens just remember that the council are totally powerless until you've been to court. And even then they can't do very much..

Summonses are issued to non-payers because the council has to get permission from the court - a "liability order" -before they can even begin to try and recover the money you owe.

**IF YOU GET A "LIABILITY ORDER", YOU DO NOT GET A CRIMINAL RECORD.**

Not paying your poll tax is only a civil offence. Legally, its like a divorce hearing, or an argument over whose fault a car accident was. You can't be evicted, lose your job, get fined or sent to prison as a result of having a liability order passed. You can be charged court costs, but these are usually only £10 - a tiny fraction of the poll tax you'd have to pay. Besides, you don't have to pay them because *they just add them onto your poll tax bill!* If you've decided not to pay the poll tax you don't have to worry about court costs either.

### **But wont they just take it out of my wages?**

Well, they can try. But even IF employers co-operate with this, and even IF the unions let them get away with it - two very big "if's" - at least you've shown them you don't like their unfair tax, and made them work to get it.

You might save money, too, because the amount they're legally allowed to take out of your wages each week will almost always be less than they need to take to recover all the poll tax you owe before next April, when the next bill comes out and they have to start all over again.

**CONTINUED OVER THE PAGE**

**For advice and information,  
ring one of these numbers:**

3  
16

7

**Wont they just stop my benefits until I pay?**

NO. They cannot stop your benefits. The only benefit that the poll tax can be deducted from is Income Support, and the most they can take each week is £1.85 from a single person or £2.85 from a couple. This far into the year, that's less than you'd have to cough up if you volunteered to pay. We are also trying to persuade DSS staff not to do this work, and the local union branch has pledged its support.

**But if we continue not paying, wont services be cut?**

NO. This is a lie they are using to make people feel guilty and pay. Even if EVERYONE didn't pay, the council would still get three-quarters of its money, from the government and from the business rates. The council can borrow the rest - or the government will be forced to bail them out.

The truth is that more services will be cut if everyone *pays* their poll tax. One of the main reasons this government introduced the poll tax was to force councils to make even more cuts in their services. This saves money, and makes the councils less powerful and less popular - two things that this government likes. Going along with the poll tax will destroy council services as we know them. We have to stop it - and non-payment is the best way.

**But won't they just send bailiffs in to take all my things?**

They use the idea of bailiffs as a threat, to frighten people into paying. Here are the facts. Nottingham Council has only got three bailiffs. It would take them at least 23 YEARS to get round all this year's non-payers - even *IF* we didn't try to stop them. We are already well organised to defend ourselves. Over the last few weeks the Tory councils in Beeston

and West Bridgford have already tried using bailiffs, and we've stopped them every time. We'll stop them here, too.

**I've got a summons. What should I do?**

**CONTACT THIS GROUP.** Use the phone numbers over the page.

**COME TO ONE OF OUR MEETINGS.** The details are at the bottom of this page. Meet some of the hundreds of other non-payers in Forest Fields and Hyson Green. We'll give you practical support, too - before, during and after your hearing.

**Do I have to 'appear in court?**

You aren't forced to go, but its best if you do. Its always possible that they've made a mistake and you'll get off with it. Besides, many people who have turned up have had their hearings adjourned indefinitely. The more of us that turn up, the fewer liability orders they can issue - *and without liability orders, they cannot make people pay.* If you decide to go, we will give you support and legal advice.

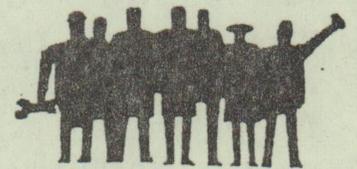
**What will happen if I don't go?**

Unless your case is adjourned because they ran out of time (which sometimes happens), they'll issue a liability order against you automatically. Then, the council will write and ask you for information - about your earnings, who you work for, etc.

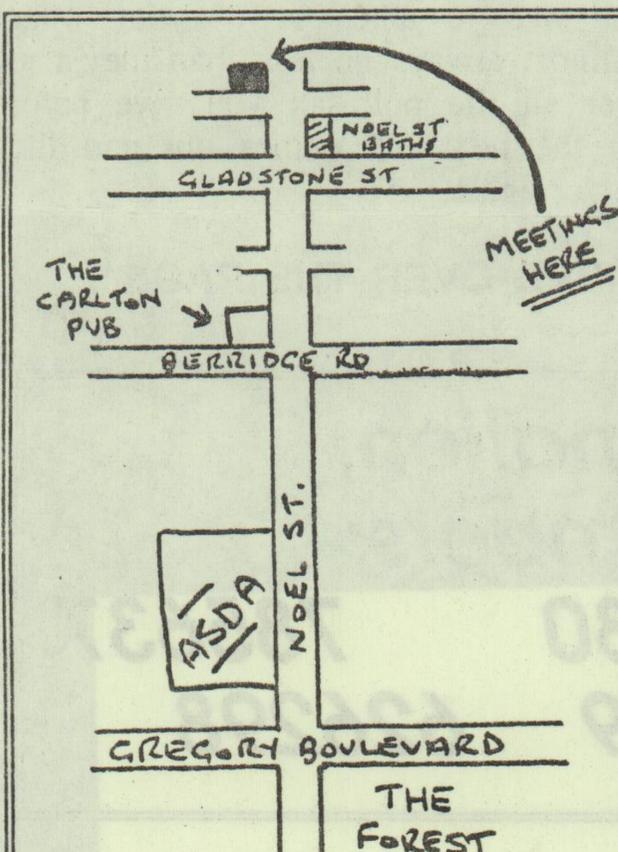
*You must reply or they can fine you* - apart from not registering, this is the only way that not paying the poll tax could lead to a fine. So tell them what they want to know - it wont do them much good anyway!

Box 5, Basics,  
42 Foxhall Rd.,  
or Box 5,  
Hyson Green  
Wholefoods  
72 Radford Rd.

Forest Fields / Hyson Green



Anti-Poll Tax Campaign



# COME TO ONE OF OUR MEETINGS

We meet every **TUESDAY** at the Indian Community Centre on Rawson Street (at the top of Noel St. near the baths). Meetings start at 8PM, and all non-payers are welcome.

## PEOPLE WITH SUMMONSES SHOULD MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO COME ALONG

# THE VICTIM'S GUIDE TO THE POLL TAX

## WHAT IS IT?

The poll tax or "community charge", to give it its nice name, will replace the rates system in this country in April 1990.

The rates are a tax which help to pay for the services provided by local councils. Household and business rates together cover about one fifth of the cost of these services, and government grants provide the rest.

After next April, the government will still give large grants to councils. But the extra money councils collect will be in poll tax, not rates.

## HOW WILL IT WORK?

Your rates bill is linked to the rateable value of your home. This varies, depending on its size and where it is. Large semis in the suburbs get higher rates bills than flats in Forest Fields.

Each year, local councils work out how much money they need to collect. Under the rates, this was divided up so that wealthier people usually paid more than poorer people.

But under the poll tax, the council will simply divide the amount they need to collect by the number of people living in the area, and send the same-sized bill to everyone. Regardless of where you live or how big your house is, if you're over 18 you'll get a bill for the same amount as everybody else who lives in the same council area - in our case, Nottingham City Council.

## WHO HAS TO PAY?

Almost everyone over 18 will have to pay something - even unemployed people will have to pay a fifth of the full

charge. But people in these groups don't have to pay:

- *long-stay hospital patients*
- *people living in nursing homes, residential care homes, and most hostels*
- *people with severe mental impairments*
- *prisoners (except people in prison for poll-tax related offences!)*
- *most monks and nuns*
- *people sleeping rough*
- *volunteers doing low-paid residential work away from home*
- *18 year-olds still at school and getting child benefit*
- *foreign diplomats and soldiers*

## REGISTRATION

Before they can collect the poll tax, they need to have a list of everyone who is meant to pay. This list is the poll tax register, and our Labour council are already working hard to compile it. They are using computers to get information from benefit and tax records, library and medical records, the electoral register and many other sources. They've also sent out registration forms, and threatened us with fines if we don't return them.

***The last time the government tried to use a poll tax was in 1381. Our ancestors replied by storming the City of London and beheading the Chancellor...***

Not registering for the Poll Tax is a criminal offence. You can be fined £50 for a first attempt, then £200 for each further attempt to avoid registering.

If you've already filled the form in and sent it back, never mind - its still not too late to get involved in fighting the

poll tax, and you weren't likely to escape anyway: they got 93% of Scotland's population from the computers before they even looked at the forms.

But if you're still wondering what to do with your Poll Tax registration form, we recommend that you throw it in the bin. They can fine us for trying to avoid registering for the tax, but not until after they've sent snoopers round to try and get the form.

If you do this, sooner or later a snoopers will call to interview you. If you can, pretend to be out. If you can't avoid speaking to them, they'll probably try to get you to complete a form there and then. **DON'T FILL IN ANY FORMS ON YOUR DOORSTEP.**

You have to take a form from them, but tell them you're too busy to fill it in now; you're just about to feed the baby, go out or have a bath - any excuse will do.

The snoopers will probably call at your house three times before you get a letter saying that a summons will be issued unless you return the form.

Now you have to decide what you want to do. If you decide to fill in the form and send it back, then this is your first successful protest completed: you've made them waste time and money over you, and shown them that you don't want their poll tax.

If you want to keep on annoying them, you can start asking them awkward questions about the form: Why am I the responsible person, and does it mean I might have to pay anybody else's poll tax? What about my student friend who sometimes stays for a few days during the holidays? Please tell me why you need my date of birth?

It doesn't matter what question you ask. But you **MUST** send back the partly completed form each time you ask another question, so that they can't say you didn't intend to return it.

FOREST FIELDS / HYSON GREEN



ANTI-POLL TAX CAMPAIGN

But eventually, they'll threaten to fine you unless you return the completed form. For most people it probably isn't worth getting fined for not sending back the form, since there's almost no chance of escaping the register.

The only people likely to avoid registration are those who don't need to claim benefit, don't work, don't pay tax or rent, and don't need to use local council services - like some of the less famous members of the Royal family!

## HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

We aren't certain yet how much poll tax each of us will be asked to pay. Here's why:

- *the government estimates are out of date, and don't allow for the expense of collecting the poll tax*
- *under the poll tax, business rates will be reduced by nearly a fifth; obviously, the less they pay the bigger our bills will be*
- *the government are considering subsidies for the first few years of the poll tax, to make it more acceptable*

We are certain that most of us will be much worse off after the poll tax. The latest "official" estimate from the government is that people in Nottingham would pay £247 each. If we add on inflation, and the extra cost of collecting the tax, the real figure will be **at least £300 each.**

**WHERE DO THEY EXPECT US TO FIND MONEY LIKE THAT?**

District	Percentage of Adults living in households that lose/gain	
	% losers	% gainers
Ashfield	83.7	16.3
Bassetlaw	82.8	17.2
Broxtowe	61.8	38.2
Gedling	61.1	38.9
Mansfield	76.0	24.0
Newark and Sherwood	73.9	26.1
Nottingham	71.3	28.7
Rushcliffe	52.5	47.5

County-wide **70.8 29.2**

This table summarises a survey by Nottingham County Council which shows that 7 out of 10 people in the county will be worse off after the poll tax, and that most of those who will gain live in wealthy areas such as Rushcliffe and Gedling.

In Nottingham, a temporary government subsidy will reduce the first year's poll tax bills by at least £30 each. In the years that follow, this subsidy will be quickly cut and our poll tax bills will go up much faster than inflation.

### THE REBATE SYSTEM

Some people will get rebates and wont have to pay the full amount of poll tax. Whether you get a rebate depends on three things:

- *the size of the poll tax bill in your area*
- *how much money you earn*
- *your personal circumstances (how old you are, how many children you've got, etc.)*

We wont know exactly what rebates will be allowed until January next year, but they will be very similar to the rebate system they're already using in Scotland. If we assume that the poll tax in Nottingham will be £300 each, here's what the rebates are likely to be:

You will get **NO REBATE AT ALL** if your take-home pay is more than -

£58 a week	: single person under 25
£66 a week	: single person over 25
£102 a week	: single parent, one child
£119 a week	: couple, no children
£126 a week	: pensioner couple
£149 a week	: couple, two children

Even if you get a rebate, you're still likely to pay a lot more in poll tax than you pay in rates:

	weekly income	poll tax
single person under 25	£50	£214
couple, two children	£100	£160
pensioner couple	£100	£373

If you're unemployed you'll still have to pay a fifth of the total amount. But you might not get benefit to cover this, because the DSS are using a **national average** to work out benefit contributions.

Unemployed people all over the country will be given the same amount of benefit towards the cost of the poll tax, no matter how much they actually have to pay. In Nottingham, where the poll tax is likely to be higher than the national average, this means you wont get enough extra money to pay your poll tax bill.

### WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE POLL TAX?

#### ITS UNFAIR:

The rates are a tax on property, but the poll tax is a tax on people. We pay rates because we have somewhere to live, but we'll pay poll tax for the privelege of being alive. Its the closest they've come to charging for the air we breathe.

The poll tax makes poorer people pay more money, while richer people pay less. Factory owners will only be asked to pay the same poll tax as the people who work for them. Bank managers, company directors, checkout operators and office

clerks will all get poll tax bills for the same amount.

#### ITS INEFFICIENT:

The rates are based on the value of buildings, which don't move around very much. Unlike people, its pretty easy to work out how many of them are in each area, and where exactly to find them. Independent financial consultants have worked out that the nationwide cost of collecting the poll tax will be **£435 million** - nearly twice the cost of the rates. In Glasgow, the city council's Director of Finance has worked out that the extra cost of collecting the poll tax this year (compared to the cost of collecting the rates) is **£79 for each taxpayer in the city!**

#### ITS SINISTER:

Poll tax registers will contain a seperate computer file on everybody. They will be available to the public, and can be sold to advertising companies.

And it will be hard for them to keep the register up-to-date. In Glasgow, there have been over **one million** changes to the register in the last year. To make the register work, they'll have to create a national computer with everyone's details on it. This will be a massive increase in government control and a threat to basic rights and freedoms.

#### ITS NASTY:

Under the poll tax, the council will not be allowed to increase business rates if they need to raise money to improve services. This is unfair, since businesses benefit from council services such as roads and waste collection. But business rates in Nottingham are being cut by 12%.

The council will only be able to get extra money in by raising the poll tax. But to stay in power, councils will have to keep poll tax bills as low as possible. In the long term, this means that the council services which aren't needed by business - such as help for the elderly and disabled - will be cut.

### WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

In the last few months, anti-poll tax groups have been springing up all over Nottingham. **The Forest Fields/Hyson Green Anti-Poll Tax Campaign** is a group of local people committed to stopping the poll tax. We organise meetings, provide information, and act as a focus for people to organise protest against the poll tax. Locally, we're setting up street groups, neighbours who will support each other in the fight against the poll tax. Its important that no-one is left to fight alone, and street groups ensure that help and advice is never more than a few doors away.

If you think the poll tax is wrong, then the least you can do is send us your name, address and 50p - or more if you can manage it! We'll send you a poster for your window, put you on our mailing list, and help you meet other people in your area who are against the poll tax. We've only been going six weeks and we've got over three hundred members already. **DON'T THINK THAT YOU DON'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE.** The more of us that stand together and oppose the poll tax, the more chance we've got of beating it.

### CAN'T PAY, WON'T PAY!

The poll tax is a massive attack on the ordinary people of this country. The many who can't afford to pay must be joined by thousands more who refuse to pay. The poll tax can be beaten, and every act of protest helps...

**WE DO NOT STAND ALONE!**

#### JOIN US:

Forest Fields / Hyson Green  
Anti-Poll Tax Campaign

- Box 5, Basics, 42 Foxhall Road, Forest Fields
- Box 5, Hyson Green Wholefoods, Radford Road

# POLL TAX

# FACTS ?

## ***"The poll tax is fair because everyone pays the same amount"***

It depends on what you mean by fair. If you earn £60 a week but pay the same poll tax as Mr. Smith next door who earns £600 a week, you will spend ten times as much of your money on the poll tax as Mr. Smith does. Is that fair?

We think that everyone paying the same amount would be fair... if we all earned the same amount, too.

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Thanks! £3 a week is £150 a year for each person - not exactly a drop in the ocean. But why are they saying this at all?

The government are spending £1 BILLION in rebates and subsidies in the first two years of the poll tax, to break us in gently. But there's a catch. Many of these subsidies will only be given in areas where the local council doesn't "overspend". And who decides how much is "overspending"? The government, of course.

According to the government four out of every five councils are already overspending, including ours. Their spending estimates for next year only allow for 4.5% inflation - but inflation is already twice that amount.

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This is a lie. Under the rates, our council controls about half of its own funding. When the poll tax comes in, politicians in London will decide 80% of our council's income. What's local about that?

What the government are really talking about is blackmail. They know that many people will simply vote for the party that promises the lowest poll tax bills - whichever party it is.

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This doesn't seem very likely. Even people struggling to survive on the dole will have to pay one fifth of the full amount. And if you are working, unless your pay is very bad then you'll probably fail to qualify for a rebate on your poll tax. For example, if the poll tax was £300 each, you would get NO REBATE AT ALL if your weekly pay is more than:

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FOREST FIELDS / HYSON GREEN



ANTI-POLL TAX CAMPAIGN

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What Mr. Blunkett forgot is that for thousands of people there wont be any choice - they simply wont be able to afford to pay the poll tax. Its not very helpful telling those people to wait until the election and then vote Labour. For their sake, those of us who can afford to choose should refuse to pay.

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You have to make your own mind up on this. Just remember that those laws are made by the same government that thinks the poll tax is a good idea.

We've made our minds up already. If you agree with us, get in touch at the address below. For 50p membership we'll be ready with help and advice whenever you need it, and you'll get a monthly newsletter with all the latest local and national news about the fight against the poll tax.

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# THE SURVIVOR'S GUIDE TO THE POLL TAX

Forest Fields / Hyson Green



Anti-Poll Tax Campaign

There's only one way to survive the poll tax - **DON'T PAY IT!** This leaflet tells you why millions of people refusing to pay is the only sure way to get rid of the poll tax, and how to join the non-payment campaign - even if you've already started to pay.

## WHY YOU SHOULDN'T PAY THE POLL TAX

Not paying the poll tax is the quickest and most certain way to get rid of it. Millions of people refusing to pay the tax will make it simply unworkable.

This is already happening in Scotland, where the poll tax started a year ahead of us. There are thousands of missing people, fake rebate claims mixed up with genuine ones, and countless changes to the poll tax register. And as we write this in July 1990, more than a million Scots still haven't paid the poll tax bills they got in April 1989.

If we get the same level of non-payment in this country there will be **TEN MILLION OF US!** With non-payment on this scale, collecting poll tax debts is impossible. Talk of deducting it from benefits/wages, using the bailiffs or sending us to prison are largely empty threats.

The Labour Party, our Labour council, the newspapers and T.V. all tell us that non-payment is wrong because it's illegal. At the same time, they praise the actions of people in China and Eastern Europe in their brave struggles against dictatorship - even though these struggles are all illegal.

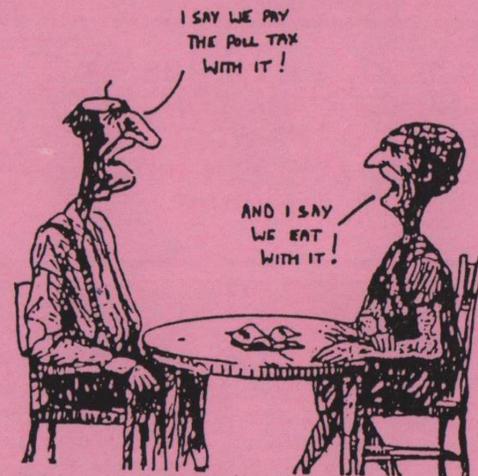
Their answer is that in this country we've got a democracy, and in a democracy you change things by voting. So we must wait until the next election and vote Labour.

There are some problems with this.

First, the next election isn't likely to happen until at least Autumn 1991. That's two poll tax bills into the future. What are we meant to do until then?

Second, suppose Labour don't win the election? This is possible, even though they've got a massive lead in the opinion polls at the moment.

Third, even IF Labour win, they've already admitted (very quietly!) that getting rid of the poll tax will take at least two years after the election. That's **FOUR YEARS** of the poll tax. And how are



the millions of us who can't afford to pay meant to survive for that long? Being told "hang on and vote Labour" isn't very helpful.

Besides, you didn't actually vote for the poll tax in the first place, any more than you voted for your gas and water supplies to be privatised, or for the NHS to be run down.

The fact is that real improvements aren't usually just voted through. They mostly happen only after people like us make a stand together - and this can involve breaking the law. For example, we already had a democracy eighty years ago when the Suffragettes suffered fines, prison and even death to win voting rights for women.

Laws alone don't make democracy. Nearly everybody thinks that the government should spend more money on the N.H.S., but health spending is being cut again this year - legally.

And the poll tax is legalised robbery. Rich people all over the country have saved thousands of pounds since the rates were abolished. They pay the same poll tax per person as we do. As for the money the council used to collect in rates on their large houses - now it comes from us. This is the main reason why the poll tax is so expensive.

Millions of people in this country simply can't afford to pay the poll tax. Unless those of us who could pay come to their defence, these people will be punished.

Refusing to pay the poll tax does three things. *First*, it lets you make your own, personal protest against this unfair and vicious tax. *Second*, it makes it harder for the authorities to victimise anyone - with ten million of us refusing to pay, where can they start? *Third*, by clogging up the system and depriving the council of money it helps to make the poll tax unworkable.

There's a massive con trick going on. Both the government and the Labour Party say that not paying the poll tax is wrong because it's illegal. But this government *make* the laws, and the Labour Party just want to be the *next* government.

We're told that democracy means the government listens to the people and tries to give them what they want. But Thatcher doesn't listen to **ANYONE**, and we can't wait four years for the Labour Party to come to the rescue. We have no choice but to take action. This is why we say that protesting against the poll tax by refusing to pay it is our democratic right.

## FACTS ABOUT NON-PAYMENT

**Will I get a criminal record?**

NO. Not paying the poll tax is only a civil offence. **Wont the council just take the money from me anyway?**

Not without a struggle. Before they can do anything else, they have to take you to court and get a "Liability Order". With 70 000 people in Nottingham not paying a penny and another 130 000 well behind on their payments, this is going to take them months.

**What happens when they take me to court?**

You're not forced to turn up for the hearing, but it's best if you do because it helps to clog up the system. **THEY CAN'T DO ANYTHING NASTY TO YOU**, like fines or prison. All they can do is ask questions. Contact us as soon as you get your summons, and we'll arrange for someone to go to court with you - as a legal advisor, and to help you waste their time.

If they get a Liability Order against you, you must give them information about yourself within 14 DAYS. It's not worth making a stand over this - you can be fined £100 for not replying, or £400 for giving false information. Just tell them what they want to know, then sit back and wait.

**Can I lose my job?**

NO. Not paying the poll tax is a matter between you and the council. You can't be sacked for it. Where employers have tried it in Scotland, workers and the anti-poll tax campaign together have forced them to back down. **NO-ONE HAS BEEN SACKED FOR NOT PAYING THEIR POLL TAX.**

**Will I get evicted?**

NO. Whether you're a council tenant, a private tenant or buying your own home, not paying the poll tax makes no difference.

**Will they stop all my dole money?**

NO. The most they can steal is £1.84 a week from a single person, and £2.88 from a couple. This might work out cheaper than volunteering to pay - and even if it doesn't, you've made them work hard to get it.

**Will they take it from my pension?**

NO. Poll tax can't be snatched from pensions, nor from invalidity benefit.

**Will they freeze my bank account?**

NO. This idea met with such opposition in Scotland that they haven't made it legal here.

**Will I get fined?**

NO. The only charge they can make is for court costs. In Nottingham this will be £13 - a vast saving on £390 poll tax!

**Wont they send the bailiffs in to take all my things?**

Well, they can try. So far in Scotland this tactic hasn't succeeded even once. Anti-poll tax groups have organised mass pickets outside people's homes, and stopped them getting in. Besides, with only a handful of bailiffs for the whole of Nottinghamshire and thousands of us refusing to pay, it would take them years to get round everyone even if there was no resistance.

**Will I get sent to prison?**

We don't think that **ANYONE** will go to prison for not paying their poll tax unless they decide that they want to, as a protest. Here's why:

**Firstly** the council has to prove that you deliberately didn't pay the poll tax. This is harder than it sounds.

**Secondly** the courts are trying to only send violent offenders to prison at the moment, because the prisons are overcrowded already.

**Thirdly**, the council don't actually want to send anyone to prison: it makes them unpopular, and doesn't bring them in any money.

**Fourthly**, if you **CAN** afford to pay then you can clear the debt at the last moment - even waiting until after you've been sentenced.

**Fifthly**, rather than imprison you the court can reduce your debt, or accept an offer of payment.

**Finally**, they can see how angry we all are over the poll tax. They'll try very hard not to make us even angrier by sending people to prison for not paying it.

## SURVIVING AS A NON-PAYER

Join your local anti-poll tax group.

It isn't easy making a stand over something you believe in. Its even harder to do it alone. Forest Fields / Hyson Green Anti-Poll Tax Campaign can offer legal advice, information, and defence against the bailiffs. And we need people like you to get involved, even if you can only give out a handful of newsletters and leaflets once a month. Our address is at the bottom of this leaflet.

**Talk to other non-payers**

If other houses in your street have anti-poll tax posters in the window, call round and talk to the people who live there. They'll be glad that you called. Get to know them: you might need them if the bailiffs turn up - and they might need you.

**Know what's happening**

Carefully read anything you receive from the council or the courts. If you're not sure what it means, ask somebody about it. **IF YOU'RE NOT CERTAIN, CONTACT THIS GROUP FOR HELP.**

**Beware of snoopers**

If someone comes to your door asking questions about who lives next door or other people living in your house, you don't have to answer them. **DON'T LET THEM INTO YOUR HOUSE** even if they make excuses or show you identification cards. Warn your neighbours that snoopers are around, and tell this group too - use the phone numbers printed on this leaflet.

## DEALING WITH THE BAILIFFS

There are only 3 bailiffs and 12 assistant bailiffs for the whole of Nottingham, and more than 200 000 of us are well behind on our poll tax payments. So its unlikely that YOURS will be the house they visit - but its best to be-prepared. Here are the facts:

Bailiffs have to give you notice of when they're first coming. As soon you get this notice, **CONTACT THIS GROUP.** Use the phone numbers on this leaflet.

Remember that bailiffs are like vampires. They can't cross your threshold without being invited in - but invite them in once and they can come back at any time **USING FORCE IF THEY HAVE TO.** Garlic doesn't stop bailiffs, and stakes through the heart are effective but a bit messy. **SO KEEP YOUR DOORS AND WINDOWS SHUT WHEN THEY'RE AROUND. DON'T OPEN THE DOOR TO ANYBODY WITHOUT CHECKING WHO IT IS.**

Bailiffs have been known to cheat by peeping through windows. If they can see inside your home and spot things that could be stolen and sold off, **THEY'RE ALLOWED TO USE FORCE TO GET IN ANYWAY.** So if your windows can be reached, **MAKE SURE YOU CLOSE THE CURTAINS,**

or use something else to block their view through the window.

There are some things that bailiffs can't take. They have to leave you £100 worth of clothing, and £150 worth of working tools. They also can't take things that are on H.P., on credit, being rented, or things that don't belong to you.

So if they manage to get in to your home, you might tell them that they can't take anything because you don't own any of it. You could prove this by showing them a contract like this one:

I [your friend's name] agree that in exchange for a rental fee of £1 per year, the following items belonging to me are hired to [your own name]:

### A LIST OF ALL YOUR BELONGINGS GOES IN HERE

Signed: [your friend's signature]  
Signed: [your own signature]  
Witnessed: [another friend's signature]  
Date: [a date a few months ago]

Even if you haven't drawn up a contract, if they somehow manage to force their way in there are still other things you can try.

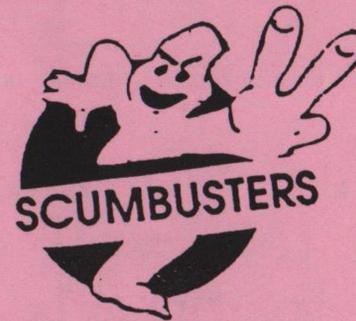
- \* If you live in a rented home, some of the things they'd like to take could belong to your landlord/lady?
- \* If you share your home with other people, perhaps those other people own the things they've got their eyes on?

Get the idea? Never forget that the bailiffs are doing a job. Like anybody else, they want an easy time. If you make things complicated or difficult for them, they're likely to go away and annoy someone else instead

**If they come to your door, its likely that they will make threats about what will happen to you if you don't let them in. DON'T BE INTIMIDATED.** The information on this leaflet has been checked by professional welfare rights workers, and is the correct legal position.



## WHO YOU GONNA CALL ?



Use these numbers if you get notice that the bailiffs are going to be paying you a visit. Phone us, and we'll arrange a reception committee for them.

In Scotland, whenever this has happened they haven't been able to get into people's homes because poll tax campaigners have stopped them. In most cases, once they saw the crowd waiting for them they didn't even try.

**IF YOU PHONE THE FIRST NUMBER AND DON'T GET A REPLY, KEEP WORKING YOUR WAY DOWN UNTIL YOU GET AN ANSWER**

These people already have even longer lists of phone numbers. As soon as you call, they will phone other people in this group and all over the city. Each person who gets a call will phone half a dozen more. Within an hour, hundreds of people all over the city will be preparing themselves to come and defend your home against an attack by the bailiffs.

SANDRA  
GILL  
KEVIN  
DAVE  
ROB/JOHN  
JAZ/LOU/MIKE  
JILL  
STEVE  
CHRIS

Forest Fields / Hyson Green



Anti-Poll Tax Campaign

## STAND FIRM - WE WILL WIN!

Its natural to feel nervous about not paying your poll tax, especially if you're not exactly used to breaking the law. But don't start to think that it isn't worth it or that it wont get us anywhere.

All over the country, the fashion for Summer 1990 is non-payment of the poll tax. Here are a few of the latest (July 1990) figures for non-payment (and these are the official estimates - the true figures are likely to be much higher):

BIRMINGHAM	50%
BATH	38%
HACKNEY	48%
CAMBRIDGE	25%
LAMBETH	60%

And here in Nottingham, where they've tried bribing us with free holidays, and where we've got more ways to pay than almost anywhere else, **OVER 70 000 PEOPLE HAVEN'T PAID A PENNY. MORE THAN HALF OF THOSE ON THE REGISTER EITHER AREN'T PAYING OR ARE WELL BEHIND ON THEIR PAYMENTS.**

## BUT I'VE ALREADY PAID IT ..

If you've already paid them the full lot - well, never mind - don't make the same mistake next year.

If you've already paid them part of it, its very easy to stop paying. If you've got a direct debit, write to your bank and tell them to cancel it right away. If you pay monthly over the counter or in bits at the local corner shop, just stop - its as easy as that. But don't keep it to yourself. Talk to friends and neighbours about it, and contact us - our address is just below.

## JOIN THE RESISTANCE

Your local contact is:

Forest Fields / Hyson Green A.P.T.C.  
Box 5, Hyson Green Wholefoods, 72 Radford Rd  
Box 5, Basics, 42 Foxhall Rd, Forest Fields

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**FOREST FIELDS AND HYSON GREEN  
ANTI POLL TAX CAMPAIGN  
BOX 5  
42 FOXHALL ROAD  
FOREST FIELDS  
NOTTINGHAM 7**

Hallo there anti poll taxers how goes the struggle with you?

We are doing well in F.F.H.G.A.P.T.C. and have well over 300 members with stalls, canvassing and benefits going on. And leaflets pouring out to the people!

We are currently helping to organise a march in Nottingham on December the 2nd with other community groups in Nottingham and we're expecting it to be pretty succesful.

The march starts at the Forest recreation ground (Goose fair site) in Forest Fields and the assembly time is 11.30 A.M. and your support would be greatly appreciated. Together we can make it a big one!!

Ive enclosed some leaflets and newsletters which we've done recently (it will give you a better idea of what we're up to at the moment.) and some publicity for the march, feel free to use what you can.

We are also involved with a scheme to 'twin' community groups in England and Wales with groups in Scotland and are ourselves twinned with Prestonfields in Edinburgh, details of this will be enclosed as well.

As you probably know there is a national meeting in Manchester free trades hall on November 25th (with a fringe meeting at lunchtime (as far as we know!) so we may see you there.

**YOURS IN SOLIDARITY**

**F.F.H.G.A.P.T.C. AND ROB POUNTNEY(External sec.)**

**looking forward to seeing you at the march !!**

**MARCH &  
RALLY**

***NOTTINGHAM  
AGAINST  
THE  
POLL  
TAX***

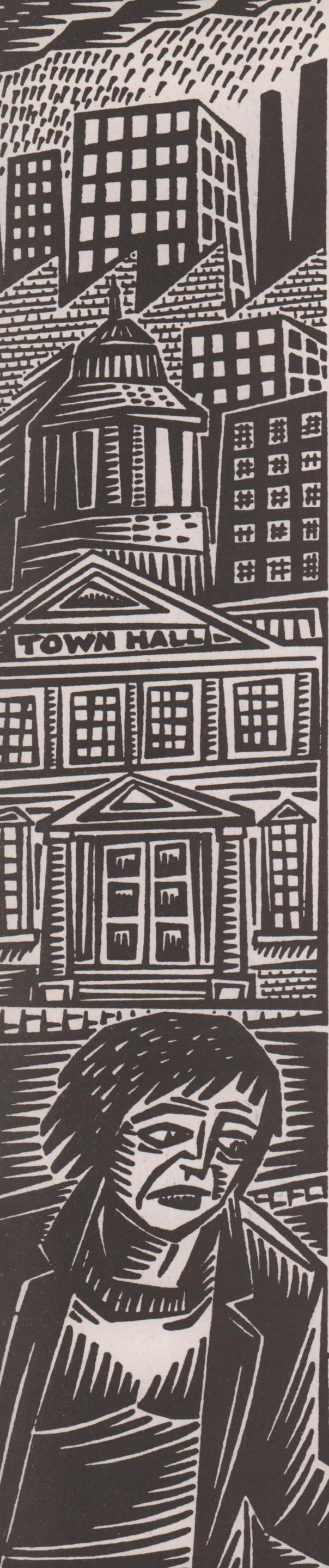
**SATURDAY  
20th JANUARY**

Assemble  
on the Forest  
11.00am.

Move off 11.30am

Rally at 1.00pm.  
Old Market Square

***SPEAKER FROM  
SCOTLAND  
LOCAL SPEAKERS***



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- £101.18 - single parent, one child aged 12

***"Maybe the poll tax isn't perfect, but its about time something was done about the rates"***

We don't think that the rates were marvellous either - but the poll tax is far, far worse. It will cost twice as much to collect, and in Nottingham seven people out of every ten will be worse off.

There are other ways to pay for local services - a local income tax, for example. The poll tax is not the only alternative.

***"Not paying the poll tax only hurts the poorest people in society"***

David Blunkett of the Labour Party said this. He meant that if you don't pay your poll tax, you might get charged 10% extra for administration costs.

What Mr. Blunkett forgot is that for thousands of people there won't be any choice - they simply won't be able to afford to pay the poll tax. Its not very helpful telling those people to wait until the election and then vote Labour. For their sake, those of us who can afford to choose should refuse to pay.

***"A non-payment campaign could damage local services because it might bankrupt the council"***

Rubbish. Even if we all refuse to pay, our council will still get 80% of the money it needs from the government. If this happened, the council would borrow money and delay making new investments, until eventually the government was forced to do something.

***"Anyone who doesn't pay their poll tax will be fined or even put in prison"***

As we write this in December 1989, nearly a million people in Scotland aren't paying their poll tax. The law is different there, but the point is that NOTHING AT ALL is being done to these people. There are just too many of them.

If the non-payment campaign is as successful here as its been in Scotland, over 9 MILLION people in this country won't be paying their poll tax. If only half that many don't pay, there still aren't going to be enough prison cells for all of us...

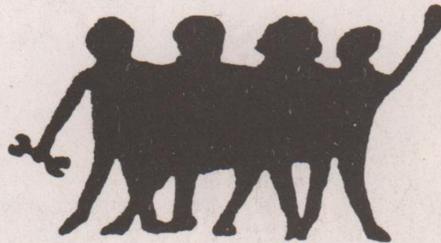
Not paying is not a criminal offence, and there are no fines. The worst that's likely to happen is that you get charged 10% extra. But its eight months since the bills went out in Scotland, and so far NOBODY has been charged extra like this. The way things are going, they never will.

***"The poll tax is bad, but we shouldn't refuse to pay it because that's against the law"***

You have to make your own mind up on this. Just remember that those laws are made by the same government that thinks the poll tax is a good idea.

We've made our minds up already. If you agree with us, get in touch at the address below. For 50p membership we'll be ready with help and advice whenever you need it, and you'll get a monthly newsletter with all the latest local and national news about the fight against the poll tax.

Forest Fields / Hyson Green  
Anti-Poll Tax Campaign



Box 5, Basics, 42 Foxhall Road,  
Forest Fields; or  
Box 5, Hyson Green Wholefoods,  
Radford Road

# PICKET THE BAILIFFS

Wednesday 14th November

7.30 to 9.00 am

at

**JULIOUS & CO.**

**140, Hucknall Rd.**

Summonses continue to be sent and liability orders for non-payers continue to be issued, but the non-payment campaign maintains its defiance. With the councils desperate for our money using bailiffs will become more and more a part of their strategy.

Broxtowe Council have been sending in bailiffs regularly over the past few months; though thanks to the 'bailiff busting squads' organised by the Beeston APTU they've not met with any great success. And despite assurances from Nottingham City Council that they would not use bailiffs, they've been sent into Sherwood and Aspley on at least four or five occasions.

The bailiffs being used are Julious and Co. on Hucknall Road, and we're organising this picket to say to both them and the councils that that these people are not welcome in our communities and that any attempt to use them will be resisted with all the strength we can muster!

SUPPORT THE PICKET!! SAY 'NO' TO THE BAILIFFS!!

**PAY  
NO  
POLL TAX**

ORGANISED BY:  
FOREST FIELDS/HYSON GREEN  
ANTI-POLL TAX CAMPAIGN.

SUPPORTED BY:  
NOTTS' ANTI-POLL TAX FEDERATION  
AND  
SOUTH NOTTS' AGAINST THE POLL TAX.

Forest Fields / Hyson Green



Anti-Poll Tax Campaign

**RESIST  
THE  
POLL TAX**

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PLEASE PUT THIS POSTER IN YOUR WINDOW

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**Forest Fields / Hyson Green Anti-Poll Tax Campaign**

پبول ٹیلیس کوریج  
پبلک میٹنگ

بدھ وار  
مقام

۸ بجے

گرین سینٹر  
جورجی بلیوارڈ اور نول سٹریٹ کے کونے پر واقع ہے

پول ٹیکس کو روکیے

مورلک میٹنگ

بدھ وار ۱۴ جون شام کو آٹھ بجے

گرین سینٹر (نول سٹریٹ اور گریجوی بولیوارڈ کے کونے پر)

پول ٹیکس کو روکیے

مورلک میٹنگ

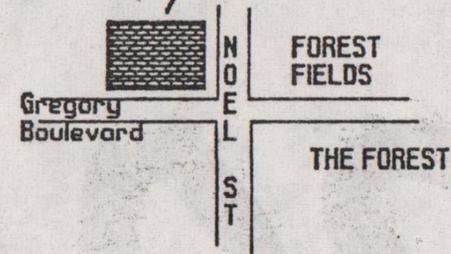
بدھ وار ۱۴ جون شام کو آٹھ بجے

گرین سینٹر (نول سٹریٹ اور گریجوی بولیوارڈ کے کونے پر)

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**RESIST  
THE POLL TAX**

THE GREEN CENTRE



**Wednesday June 14th 8pm**

**Forest Fields / Hyson Green  
Anti-Poll Tax Campaign**

# CAN'T PAY, WON'T PAY

## FOREST FIELDS AGAINST THE POLL TAX.

22 million people will be worse off under the poll-tax. Latest estimates for the "Personal Community Charge" in Nottingham are around £300 per year. This doesn't give the whole picture though; the poll-tax will attack our civil liberties, and the working conditions of those workers expected to implement it. Most grotesque of all is the redistribution of wealth from the less well-off, to the rich - someone living in a terraced house in Forest Fields will be paying as much as someone living in a mansion in The Park!

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We in Forest Fields and Hyson Green - along with anti poll-tax groups in areas such as Bulwell, Aspley, the Meadows, and St Anns are working to build a mass campaign of non-payment. But we also recognise the crucial role that local government workers can play in the fight against the poll-tax.

The poll-tax will hit local government workers in Nottingham, particularly in the City Treasury. It will mean more work for housing benefits and arrears workers and a massive increase in workload in the existing Rates section - without the necessary increases in staff no doubt!

It will further endanger the relationship between local government workers and the general public. Your jobs will become more difficult and more dangerous.

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We urge NALGO to support those people who refuse to co-operate with the poll-tax, and demand that the Labour controlled City council stops the Registration process.

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WE SUPPORT LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKERS  
IN YOUR FIGHT TO DEFEND LIVING  
STANDARDS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT !

