

Unpaid wages? Denied deposit? Unsafe workplace? Refused repairs?

Don't let bosses and landlords use and abuse you!

We are a network of working people and tenants who work to defend ourselves through direct action and mutual support. Nottingham Solidarity Network will help you get back stolen wages and deposits, get repairs made, and stop evictions.

We are a collection of Nottingham residents who have lived in the city for a number of years. We are all volunteers and anybody who wishes to show solidarity is able to join us. Each of us at some time has suffered from unjust treatment by employers, landlords, or other wealthy people who hold power over our lives.

We've learned from experience that the only way we'll be treated fairly, equally, and with dignity is by being prepared to stand up to such people and defend our rights. It's hard to do this alone. That's why we've come together, and we're seeking out other local people with similar problems who feel the same way. Together we can find ways of dealing with abusive bosses, greedy landlords, and those who would deny us, our friends, families, neighbors and co-workers the right to a decent life.

To become involved or to let us know of a problem at your workplace or with a landlord, contact us! You can...

... come to actions such as picketing a boss, visiting a landlord, or whatever it takes.

... volunteer to do work such as gathering information or distributing flyers, and come to our meetings.

... organise by meeting with, educating, and mobilizing fellow workers and tenants to participate.

Call or text 07423631681

Contact email: nsn AT riseup.net

THE FOREST FIELDS FIRE

March 2012 - Free - A monthly newsletter, by people who have lived round here for a while.

Find out more at..
<https://network23.org/autonomousnottingham/>

<http://en-gb.facebook.com/autnotts>

Welcome the Forest Fire newsletter, bringing you some of the latest news from around here, that might actually make a difference in your life. We will come clean from the beginning, we think the government is a bunch of cheats, we don't think the cops are on our side, they work for the rich and just lie to us, mess with our heads and come around our neighbourhood like they own it. We think Notts City Council is a bunch of cheating thieves. And that richest people tend to be selfish, greedy pieces of crap, who with the government try to screw us over every day. Anyway, that's what we think. So, we will bring you news that talks about how we can get rid of the rich and their mates out of our lives. You don't have to agree with us about all that, because we're also about proving that just because the government messes us about, and the rich make sure we're always struggling to get by, we the working class are strong enough to fight back, to take control of our lives and our neighbourhoods. We know what's best for our streets, our kids, our families, and the government should stay out of it.

Nottingham government screwing up Housing Benefit

As lots of you will already know the current government has decided to force people to take part in something called "Workfare". This is basically making people go to work for a number of big rich companies, and instead of the companies paying people a weekly wage, the government pays them the benefits they were getting anyway. This means that people are forced to work for 40 hours a week and only receive £70, what's that? About £1.70 an hour.

This workfare system enables wealthy companies like Tesco's, Asda, Poundland, Primark, HMV and Topshop to get people to work for them without actually having to pay them. Which as far as we're concerned is bullshit. Here's some advice to enable you to avoid getting dragged into this.

When you're signing on don't volunteer for "work experience" this is just another way of making you work without paying you. They'll tell you it's about improving your long term employment chances, but it's really just an excuse to force you into another shitty job. Once you "volunteer" for "work experience" then you have to stay on it in order to keep your benefits. If you do end up volunteering, then you can quit in the first week only without losing your benefits, after that they've got you.

Watch out for the "Work Programme" as well, especially if you've signed up with Reed, A4E or another employment agency, look at consent.me.uk on the internet for advice on how to avoid it. These agencies have been given the power to force people into any job scheme.

Also, the Mandatory Work Activity- they can't make you do this if a) you're in voluntary work, employment related training, b) you're in or have just finished another employment measure, c) if the reason they're giving you for trying to put you into it is your lack of recent work experience, and finally d) because your job advisor says you haven't been meeting your job seekers agreement.

Basically there's a whole bunch of shitty ways that the government and the job centre are trying to screw us over with. Let us know if you've got any good advice on how to avoid all this, and if you want some more information email us at autonomousnott@riseup.net

Street Play Sessions in Forest Fields

"Autonomous Nottingham presents six weeks of street play in Forest Fields. One of the key principals to Autonomous Nottingham is engagement with its community, another is an effort to develop solidarity among those who are marginalised by capitalism. We also believe in unlearning the spirit crushing alienation and individualism of everyday life, and the relearning of loving, sharing and connecting within shared spaces. It's with these ideas in mind that some of us have decided to once more take to the streets to play with the local kids.

We have learnt a couple of lessons from the much derided Sumac Kiri Club which led to the occasional moments of feral chaos, but also led to long term connections with children and their parents around the Forest Fields area. We are going to be running six play sessions to start with, each one on Thursday between 4:30 and 6:30. And perhaps we'll do some more after that.

As the government has shown itself to think nothing of the marginalisation of young working class people whatever their age, race, or religion, it becomes more important than ever to make connections with them. Not as a way of teaching good politics, but in order to nurture connections and break down the sense of alienation of 'us' and 'them', that such marginalisation falsely creates.

For all who participate, it's about keeping playfulness, creativity and uniqueness alive. For the kids, we hope the sessions will encourage a valuing/nurturing of those aspects of themselves that are beyond the characteristics of servitude, selfishness and prescribed gender taught by this capitalist society. With the aim that these values will be defended as they get older. For us, it's about making connections with the people living alongside us. It's about remembering to value the playful, joyful aspects of ourselves, and reminding once again of what life could be like outside of this patriarchal, capitalist and white supremacist culture.

We invite people to come and join us on Cedar Road on Thursday April 5th when the play sessions begin, if you've got kids bring them, if you just want to play then bring yourself.

It's sad to hear that there have been two sexual assaults on the Forest Fields recreation ground over the winter. We want our neighbourhoods to be free of this kind of incidents, and our hearts go out to those affected most by the attacks. However, we get nervous when we hear politicians and cops talking about making our neighbourhoods safe, because this usually means they want to put more cameras up and more cops on the streets.

To be honest this doesn't make us think this is going to make things safer at all, it makes us feel like we're being watched by people who want to control us, and keep us down. We reckon neighbourhoods become safer when the people living in them get to know each other, safety is built on being able to trust the people around you. We're not convinced that the cops are really the people to make our neighbourhoods safe as over the winter we had former police inspector, Russell Dew, pleading guilty to sexually touching a 13 year old girl, and Former Notts firearms cop Timothy Allatt was found guilty in September for assaulting a man he arrested in Sneinton last year. Allatt's 'gratuitous violence' left his victim with a collapsed lung and facial injuries.

It's also worth pointing out that 2/3 of women raped know their attackers, and that if we're serious about dealing with violence towards women we should recognise that it's in the home that most violence occurs. It's when vulnerable people whether they're men, women, children or the elderly are isolated from the rest of the community, when someone who has power over their lives decides to abuse them.

The councillors may bang on about making our streets safe by putting more cops in them, but at the same time they've been taking money away from organisations like Women's Aid who have been working at collectively supporting women from domestic violence for over thirty years. They've had to do this because this society is run by men who through their wealth and power have little experience or understanding of domestic violence, and have deemed it an individual's problem. This is whilst two women a week are killed by their partner or ex-partner, at the same time as one in four women will experience domestic violence in their life times.

It's not just our streets that should be free of violence, but the houses in our neighbourhoods as well. We definitely don't have all the answers, but believe the less isolated we are the safer we are.

If you need help or advice you can contact Women's Aid on 0808 800 0340

Nottingham City Council are shit at sorting out housing benefits

Things were looking pretty bad for NCC last year and things seem to have got even worse in the latest figures. In the first three months of 2010 new claims took 37 days, in 2011 they took 60 days, there aren't any results for 2012 but I imagine at this rate some people will be waiting 120 days. For changes of circumstances it's gone from 14 days to 36 days, and now maybe 60 days.

These figures are truly shocking by modern standards and leaves NCC by far the worst in the East Midlands on both counts. The next worst is Derby City with processing new claims at 42 days and change of circumstances 29 days. . Leicester is at 29 days and 16 days. There are only three other local authorities in the East Midlands with new claims processing times of more than 30 days, out of a total of 40 councils. It means that NCC is the second worst in Great Britain at processing new claims, with only Durham worse, taking an average of 69 days.

This increasingly poor service is no doubt in part due to the recession but a lack of inspection and piss-poor management are also key factors. It's recently been reported that Nottingham city council have had to return over £400k in benefits subsidies, an error which can be laid firmly at senior managers' door.

Unfortunately, due to its forthcoming abolition the Audit Commission doesn't appear to be running any more inspections of local authorities benefits services, not that it was difficult for cynical managers to manipulate the system to make the numbers look good. So things will undoubtedly continue to get worse.

We've got a Labour council who are doing the dirty work of a Conservative government, and through stupidity and greed are fucking over working class and poor people over without a second thought.

On March 5th the Council is planning to cut another £20 million, so whilst fucking up our housing benefit and making us work for our job seekers for private companies who avoid paying tax, they're also going to increase council tax by 3.49%. Then they'll close down a couple of old peoples homes, sell off a leisure centre in the Meadows, make drastic cuts to International Community Centre on Hucknall road and reduce the funding of services for young people in Nottingham.

This is just more of the same old shit, from rich idiots in suits who run this city and this country. Maybe people should go down to the Council house on March 5th and tell these morons to stop messing about with our lives.