

Grass Roots

Number 4 March, 1974

Price 4p

Action on homes



AT A MEETING on Wednesday February 20th, residents of the Raleigh Street Area decided to form the Raleigh Street Area Residents Association. The main problems brought up at the meeting were the poor condition of many houses and the lack of anywhere for kids to play.

The meeting was told that the area had already been surveyed and that out of 160 houses 98 had problems with repairs.

Off to a good start

With about 50 residents attending the meeting it was felt that the Association was off to a good start. A Committee was formed of 10 people prepared to help represent the area and most of those attending the meeting joined the association.

The meeting decided to fight for better and quicker repairs to houses by using the Public Health Acts and a number of residents filed complaints under Section 99 of the 1936 Public Health Act.

Residents also complained about the danger to kids playing in the streets and it was urged that the problems of proper play space should be taken up as a matter of urgency. Ideas on this included converting an old house and

stopping through traffic in the streets Councillor Stephen Evans outlined some of the possibilities for the area including the use of derelict sites for play space. He said priority should be given to those in the worst housing.

John Hartshorne, Secretary of the Union of Clearance Area Associations, said that the Union would help the Association if they needed advice or assistance. The meeting decided to join the other five clearance area Tenants Associations in the Union.

The meeting decided to press for consultation with the Council over the future of the area and current problems. A delegation is to go to the Council with their proposals.

The survey undertaken by the Action Committee showed that many residents were anxious to stay in the area and were worried about redevelopment plans for the area. The majority of residents had complained that rubbish disposal was not adequate and derelict houses were not properly secured.

The Raleigh Street Area Residents Association will be electing officers to run the association and hope to have representatives in each street in the area. At present the association can be contacted at 111 Portland Road.

People's Centre opens

THE NOTTINGHAM PEOPLE'S CENTRE, a new independent aid and advice centre, is to open soon at 33 Mansfield Road. The Centre is a combined effort by many independent organisations including Shelter, National Council for Civil Liberties, Response and the Claimants Union. Support has come from students at the Polytechnic and the University. The Centre will provide advice and help on housing, legal problems, women's rights and claimants problems. It will also provide a meeting place and an information point for groups all over the City. An active fund-raising campaign is under way.

Prices campaign

Everybody is worried about the soaring cost of food, but just moaning to your friends doesn't bring prices down, so a group of housewives, trade unionists and members of the women's liberation group have formed the Nottingham Campaign Against Rising Prices and they are appealing to all women to join the fight.

The average weekly shopping bill has risen by 25% in the last year and wages have not kept step. Women must organise to defend their living standards. The Campaign has organised pickets outside stores in the centre of Nottingham and on Clifton and Aspley estates.

The response has been fantastic, but the more women who join the Campaign the more effective it will be. Phone Mrs. Mary Anderson at Nottingham 77451 to find out more about it.

Help for homeless

AT THE MEETING of the Resources (land) Committee of Nottingham Council on January 24th, it was agreed to lease numbers 31, Burns Street and 2, Tennyson Street to the Salvation Army as a hostel for homeless families. This is intended as a replacement for the present hostel for the homeless on Peel Street, which is to be demolished to make way for the expansion of Trent Polytechnic.

Women's Day

NOTTINGHAM WOMEN'S Liberation Group will be commemorating International Women's Day with a march through the city and a public meeting in the Albert Hall Institute on the afternoon of Saturday, March 9th.

Sorry!

THE PRICE of Grass Roots has been increased to 4p per copy due to the increased number of pages in each issue.

Grass Roots

Tenants' choice

DURING THE next two years Nottingham Corporation expects to rehouse about 4,000 families from clearance areas alone. Top Valley Estate is part of the Council's answer. But how much do new residents know about the Estate before they move and what is done to help people over the difficult break with old friends and neighbours and a way of life that has been built up over many years.

Not much it seems.

Many residents at Top Valley Estate moved in not knowing that the Estate would have-

- * no local shopping centre,
- * no pub,
- * no community centre,
- * no direct bus from the city centre after 4 p.m. during the week,
- * no resident G.P.

All right, this may be temporary, but its not knowing when facilities will be provided which worries residents. In the same way many tenants in Clearance Areas are affected more by uncertainty about the future than the poor condition of their houses. Uncertainty about when they will be moved, uncertainty about where they can choose to go and what they will find there.

This gives rise to two vital issues. These are first the choice of homes offered to tenants, and second the information given to them to make that choice.

Grass Roots suggest a number of practical steps that the corporation could take straight away at little cost.

Tenants should be told

- 1) They have a right to three offers of accommodation,
- 2) Where houses are available,
- 3) What the new houses and neighbourhood are like (perhaps visits by bus could be laid on for prospective tenants)
- 4) Not only what the cost of rent and rates are, but any extras like central heating.

Help at last

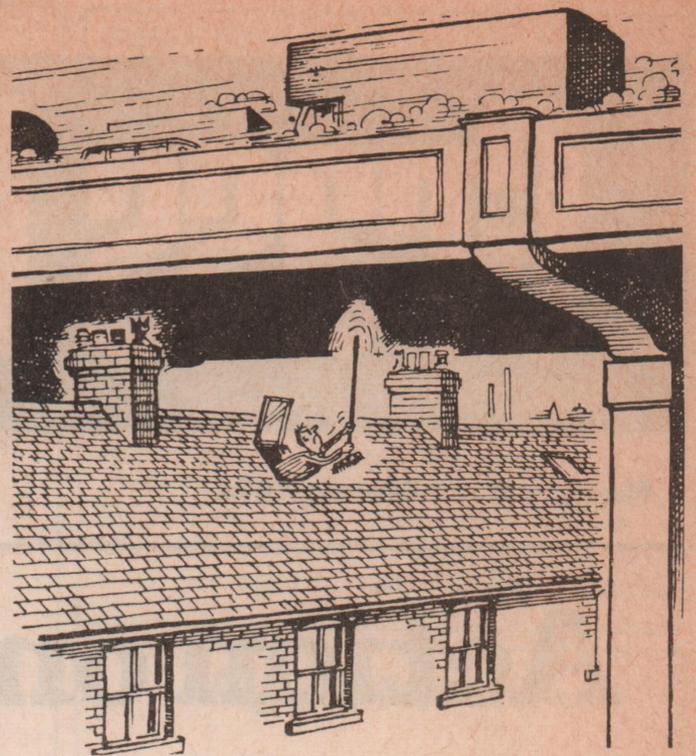
GRASS ROOTS welcome the opening of the People's Centre.

Nottingham has never had a Citizens Advice Bureau and has had little or nothing to offer to people up against "The System". That voluntary organisations with little or no money should have had the courage to open an independent advice centre is good news.

People not cars

Cartoon from

'Community Action'



THAT PLANNING has failed to contribute anything further to the administrative process by which we seek to alleviate the problems of the inner city is a fact recognised by all - except the planners. In some way they cling to the idea, now shattered a thousand times by physical realities, that their actions can provide that 'quality of life' so earnestly pursued yet so ill defined. In reality the building industry geared to development on a massive, impersonal scale rules the roost.

The pandered to needs of the middle class seem to dictate that we give over valuable parts of the inner city to the car - more and better car parks and expressways. Residents, whose lives are attuned to inner city conditions are stifled out to monolithic suburban estates, Balloon Wood, Crabtree Farm, Top Valley, Clifton. The construction industry can supply roads and estates virtually off the shelf. The 'package deal' estate - championed by Wimpey - needs little effort on behalf of the local authority, and in this sort of deal, profits for builders are astronomical.

Planners actions seem to reinforce the status-quo. The status quo, the balance of power, is held by the middle-class. Inner city values are eroded, ignored.

If planning's role is to support the status quo, how can things get better? The 'raison d'être' of the inner city, we are told, is no longer with us - but this is really an excuse to acquire land easily and quickly - an already doomed and fragmented community offers little potential resistance when compelled to release its land.

In Nottingham, the city's new transport policy could, given the right ongoing commitment, help a great deal. Significantly the new policy came from the politicians, not the technocrats who purport to advise them. It lays down that almost all road building projects in the inner city - this means Basford, Forest, Radford, Hyson Green - are to be abandoned. The motorist is to be wooed back to public transport. At a stroke it ousted the old policy for urban

motorways which at a 'mere' £150 million would have decimated Basford, Forest, Radford with motorway spaghetti, breaking up areas rich with community ties, and isolating the city centre from all except the expressway motorist.

What does all this mean? The inner city can now breath again. The limited resources of the council, which would have been concentrated on wasteful roads, are available for a variety of more useful purposes. It can be spread around more equitably. The money for one mile of new motorway could improve about 500 old but sound houses think about it!

Social disaster?

With the weight of roads, now removed, the planners must now begin to think about how these areas can be aided to, first of all revive, and then continue to flourish as individual communities. Clearly, parts of the inner city of Nottingham must be redeveloped, they are beyond repair, in many cases owing to the threat of a new road, which was hanging over them. The inner city has a place in the social context of the whole city, but it must adapt to acceptable pressures for change which help in its role. However, enforced change on a massive scale is a recipe for social disaster.

New physical patterns, if they are to emerge, must come from a contract between the community in the first place, and from the authority - not from the drawing board. The potential of community groups in reshaping their areas and in speaking for their areas against the needs for the city as a whole, is immense. But, and this cannot be over emphasised, the collective values of the community must predominate.

So it is up to every individual in the community to make his voice heard. They have many effective means to achieve this already - through community news sheets and papers, through churches, group leaders.

In short, the inner city has been given breathing space in Nottingham, as a result of this new policy. Perhaps the council does not know what is best for these areas. So get together, argue the issues out, and TELL the council what must be done!

Suburban dream?

ALTHOUGH OVER 3,000 people have now moved onto the part-council/part-private Top Valley Estate which will house 9,000 residents by the end of 1975 and still be growing, there continue to be a lot of teething troubles. However, the Community Council, formed by residents a year ago this month, is battling hard and things are beginning to improve.

One of the biggest problems is the bus service. The Community Council counts getting the no. 87 as one of its first big achievements, but it is still inadequate - the hourly service leaves town at 9 a.m. and the last bus returns from Top Valley at 4 p.m. during the week. At weekends the situation is slightly better, but the last bus is the 6.30 p.m. However, if scheduling problems can be solved, there should be a late-night bus soon. The infrequent bus service has made going into Nottingham to shop a real expedition, but unfortunately, the proposed shops on the estate are nowhere near finished. There is only one temporary shop for the whole estate and 3 grocery vans.

There are lots of young children on Top Valley already, but only one playgroup run by the Community Council and that caters for only 36 children.

Another thing that is worrying residents is the poor health service provision. The nearest Health Centre is at Bestwood and buses run there only on Tuesdays and Saturdays. A doctor who visits Top Valley holds 3 one hour surgeries each week.

Anyone thinking of moving to Top Valley who would like to hear at first hand what it is really like may contact the Top Valley Community Council (Wednesday afternoon is the best time), Community House, 18 Bakewell Drive, Top Valley, tel. Nottingham 272103. They'll be pleased to chat, or show you around.

Know your rights

Your three-day week

IF YOUR INCOME has been reduced because of the 3-day week you should ensure that you are receiving all the benefits to which you are entitled.

Unemployment Benefit

If you are not covered by a guaranteed wages agreement (and you are not receiving unemployment benefit with your wages) you should go to your local employment exchange to sign on.

If you do not satisfy the contribution conditions you may claim Supplementary Benefit.

Supplementary Benefit

If you are refused unemployment benefit or your 3 days wages plus unemployment benefit are not enough to manage on you should claim supplementary benefit. Ask for a Form B1 at the employment exchange and take it to your local Department of Health and Social Security.

Other Benefits

You may be eligible for:

- 1 Family Income Supplement.
Normally paid to families with children where the wage-earner works at least 30 hours a week, and where the total income is below certain limits. The limit for a family with one child is £ 21.50 and this is increased by an extra £ 2.50 for each further child. Claim on form FIS1 available from Post Offices and Social Security Offices.
- 2 Free prescriptions.
Available to those receiving supplementary benefit and others on grounds of low income. Form PC11 from Post Offices and Social Security Offices.
- 3 Free Dental treatment, dentures, spectacles.
Available to those receiving supplementary benefit or F.I.S. and where your total current net income is less than £ 1.50 above supplementary benefit level. Form F1 or F1D from dentists, opticians or Social Security Offices.
- 4 Free Welfare Milk and Foods
Form W.11 from post office or Health Clinic.
- 5 Free School Meals
Apply to Head Teacher or Education Welfare officer. To get free meals for at least one child, your net weekly income must be less than £ 16.05 if there is one child in the family, £ 19.70 if two children etc.

6 Rent Rebates

Application form from local Housing Department or Treasurer's Department.

If you have any general queries or particular difficulty contact Family Welfare, Nottingham Council of Social Service, 31A Mansfield Road, Nottingham, tel. 46714

Sueing on the cheap



IF YOU THINK you have been fiddled and have a case for sueing someone you can do so in the County Court without paying for a solicitor. The Court can deal with almost any claim of less than £ 750.

What kind of things can you sue for?

1. Payment of a debt owing to you.
2. Faulty service from a garage, dry cleaner, builder etc.
3. Claims against shops for faulty goods.
4. A dispute with the landlord.
5. Claims for damages in a road accident.

How to go about it:

For any small claims (i.e. less than £ 75) you will not need a solicitor and you may have the claim heard by arbitration. This means that you can put your case in private and do not have to appear in Court. Even if you are claiming more than £ 75 you can still ask for arbitration and this will probably be allowed if your opponent agrees. To start proceedings you fill in a form at the County Court. If in doubt, contact a local Advice Centre.

What does it cost?

You have to pay a Court fee. The minimum is £ 1.25, and it increases as the amount you are claiming increases, up to a maximum of £ 6.75. If you win you can claim your costs from your opponent. These will include the Court fees, your travelling expenses and loss of earnings for you and your witnesses. If you lose you will probably have to pay your opponents expenses.



News & views

'Evenin' all!'

A NEW 'SURGERY' which has been approved by Nottingham police, is available for any person to talk over problems they may have.

The surgery is aimed at improving community relations with the police, and is run by Chief Inspector Rising, Community Relations Officer for the police. The surgery is open every Monday night from 6.00 to 7.00 at the Police Station, Nottingham, Church Street.

Prices protest

NOTTINGHAM Campaign against Rising Prices is holding a public meeting on Saturday, 16th March, 2p.m. at the Co-op Educational Centre, Heathcote Street. Come along and bring your friends. There will be a creche for kids.

Thanks!

THE MEMBERS of Bestwood Estate Care Group have asked to use the columns of Grass Roots to express to their retiring Secretary Mr. Ellis their gratitude for the many services he has rendered to them and through them to the community. They wish him a speedy recovery and a happy retirement.

Urban Aid

APPLICATION for Urban Aid Grants under Phase 10 of the programme should be in by now. These grants cover summer schemes throughout the City and voluntary groups can apply for them.

Books wanted

WANTED - gifts of clean paper-back books or magazines to help the library service at Woodthorpe and Winchester flats. Please contact Mr. Arthur Heaps, Secretary, Tenants Association, 14 Edingley Square, Sherwood.

Join in!

MANY PEOPLE engaged in running clubs encounter difficulties in providing a lively and varied programme of activity. The Community Council of Lancashire, in response to a wide demand, has recently published a book which attempts to meet the gap in written information on ideas for activities. It is well illustrated from the wealth of activities which take place in some of Lancashire's 1,200 or so Over 60's Clubs and gives information and advice on activities ranging from drama and dancing to demonstrations and outings. Although Join In! has been written with older people in mind, its sections on finance, charity registration, taxation, legal requirements and grants will be of interest to those running clubs of any sort.

* Join In is available from Mr. J. M. Stewart, Community Council of Lancashire, 5 Wymstay Grove, Manchester M14 6XG, price 20p including postage.

Coffee Bar

THE MACEDON Coffee Bar was started last year by a group of young Christians. It provides a place for those people of all ages who are seeking coffee, music or company, and in view of the general support it receives it seems to serve a much needed function in the centre of Nottingham. At present it is open twice a week, on Thursday and Sunday evenings, but it hopes to become a full-time concern if sufficient staff can be found. Address: 26, Glasshouse Street, Nottingham. Leader: Jim Cawley.

Homeless need building

Nottingham Help The Homeless Association has lost its premises at 32 Heathcoat Street which it had been using as an overnight shelter for single homeless people.

In order to keep the shelter in operation alternative premises in or around the central Nottingham area are urgently needed. If you know of any building in this area which may be suitable for these purposes please contact

Mike Wilkins,
Secretary Shelter Project,
17 Bowers Avenue,
Woodborough Road,
Nottingham.

If you know of a building but are not sure whether it is available, please still contact Mike Wilkins who will make all necessary enquiries.

Letters

Door slams on TRAP

Dear Grass Roots,

The information printed in your February issue about TRAP being invited to the quarterly consultative meetings was, at the time of printing, correct. TRAP has since received a letter from the town clerk informing us that this invitation was sent in error, and that on the instructions of the Housing Committee they must withdraw the invitation. When members of the Housing Committee have been asked the reason for the refusal, they said they knew nothing about it. The committee of TRAP would like to know from anyone the reason why the councillors and council officers still refuse either to recognise or consult with TRAP? TRAP still feels that it can contribute help and sensible suggestions that will make the clearance programme so much easier for both the council and for those residents involved. The conflict situation that there has tended to be on this subject must end, there must be consultation.

J. Hartshorne

Sid and the System



Forum Focus

THE NEWS-SHEET
OF FORUM
for the
HANDICAPPED

no.2 march 1974

OUR FIRST ISSUE promised that succeeding editions would increase in size, and that by this month we would have doubled the content.

Unfortunately, the power crisis, with its three day week, the three days of which do not necessarily coincide where different processes are involved, tends to disrupt plans.

If you are sympathetically nodding your heads, you must now be told that the statement is untrue! In fact our efforts are concentrated on the problems of free issue and future policy.

Without the above paragraph, most people would have accepted what appears to be a very reasonable excuse. Makes one wonder just how frequently similar stock excuses are trotted out when "things which ought to have been done" have not been done.

Ponder upon that phoney excuse. Might it not have been possible to include world shortages of raw material, spiralling costs, early TV shut down, computer failure etc.etc. without causing a raised eye brow?

Ponder indeed, for far too often it seems that when questions like -access for the disabled are raised, someone turns a handle and out churns a permutation of similar stock excuses.

FORUM FOCUS is the free news sheet of Forum for the Handicapped. The second edition of this paper is now available. Copies may be obtained from the editor c/o 31a Mansfield Road, Nottingham.

THIS IS A FREE ISSUE NEWSPAPER. It costs money to produce. Should you feel able to make a donation towards a continued, enlarged production please send your donation to

Mr. D. Goldfinch,
Forum Treasurer,
14, Dale View Road,
Nottingham

Cheques payable to Nottingham Council of Social Service.

Are you a member of the public ?

The Chronically Sick and Disabled Act has built into it a part which deals with access. Buildings used by the public should be accessible by the handicapped, it states:-

It seems, alas, that to define the word "public" is very difficult. Only buildings both new and old, owned by the County Council seem to have the legal obligation to be made accessible and this is also a slow process taking into account when the act was implemented.

By no means does the act cover the mass of other types of buildings, both of work and play. The list of places not accessible for the disabled is endless. In new buildings the cost of access is not of great expense if done at planning stage. It should be legally binding to do so.

Every place in need of alteration does not necessarily have a large organization or money available to do works of such nature. This is especially true in the case of older types of property.

The Act should make provision for monies to be available in such cases.

It does not do so.

The Act should make plain what it means by the word public, and the private sector brought into line with the local authority in responsibility for implementing the act.

Access does not always mean works of a capital nature and is not the only facet of this problem. There has been no really comprehensive survey of accessibility within the County. It could be done in many ways by the local authority, by schools as part of a social science project etc. It can be done. One of the main problems is the fragmented approach to this subject, every organisation wants to do their bit but not to centrally collate it in any way. Many different aspects have been dealt with in this haphazard way with success but by no means enough.

It is time to put heads together and the time to start is right now. Who knows - even the physically capable may find that they can also do without steps and use wide doors and all the other things access means.

John Lowe

Nottingham & District Branch

Disablement Income Group

IF YOU would like to LEARN more about this important organisation. Come along to an

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O P E N M E E T I N G
- o -
in

THE WEST BRIDGFORD CENTRE FOR THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED,
LOUGHBOROUGH ROAD, WEST BRIDGFORD.

on
WEDNESDAY 3rd APRIL 1974

at
7.30 p.m.

Coffee and Biscuits will be on sale.

FIND OUT how YOUR support and interest can help D.I.G. achieve its aims. EVERYONE (DISABLED AND ABLE BODIED) WELCOME.

D.I.G.'s aims are:

- : To secure the provision for all disabled people of a national disability income and an allowance for the extra expense of disablement.
- : To co-operate with other bodies working in the field for the improvement of the economic and social position of the disabled people and the chronic sick.
- : To promote research into the economic and social problems of disablement.

IMPACT

Perhaps an answer to those who frequently challenge the need for voluntary organisations is to be found at the A.G.M. of the Nottingham branch of the Multiple Sclerosis Society, to be held on April 4th, when the guest speaker will be Prof. J.N. Hawthorne, Dept. of Biochemistry, Nottingham University, subject 'Recent research on the chemistry of nerve conduction'.

One wonders how such information could make impact on the Multiple Sclerosis section of the population, without the efforts of the society.

THE ACT

When considering the Act and its shortcomings, most criticisms are levelled at the local Social Services Departments. Whilst some have been shown to be dragging their heels, others provide, within their means, a good service.

No matter how reasonable criticisms may appear to be, let us remember that not many of us can work miracles with a bag of flour and a pack of fish fingers.

If you must be unkind to the Social Services, don't shoot the Indians in the field. Particularly, if making criticisms of the Social Services, beware of the pitfall embodied in the words 'them' and 'they'.

One of the most unfortunate aspects of the Act is that, in ignorance, the general public assumes that 'they' take care of all of the needs of the elderly, the sick, the disabled, the deprived, problem families etc.

A moments reflection, or better still publicity in the national media would reveal that such an assumption is nonsense. The ratio of workers to those in need can never be favourable.

There is a need for uncommitted helpers, many of whom fail to offer anything because of the assumption that 'The Act' takes care of the Handicapped.

Just a cheery word to a 'wheelchair' in a garden, a hand or a word for the housebound, an odd bit of transport or shopping. Simple gestures would make life easier.

Perhaps the general public could be made to grasp the fact that those who live all become old, that accident figures alone show that anyone can become handicapped at any time.

The lot of the unfortunate ones could be eased if the great general public realised that 'they' cannot give total cover.

Regard to the amount of assistance which local authorities can give is particularly pertinent at present. There must be cuts in public spending. Remember that no growth in the face of rising costs amounts to a massive cut back in facilities. Employees in Nationalised Industries are clearly demonstrating that their grants must not be cut. Public servants are unlikely to seek reductions in income.

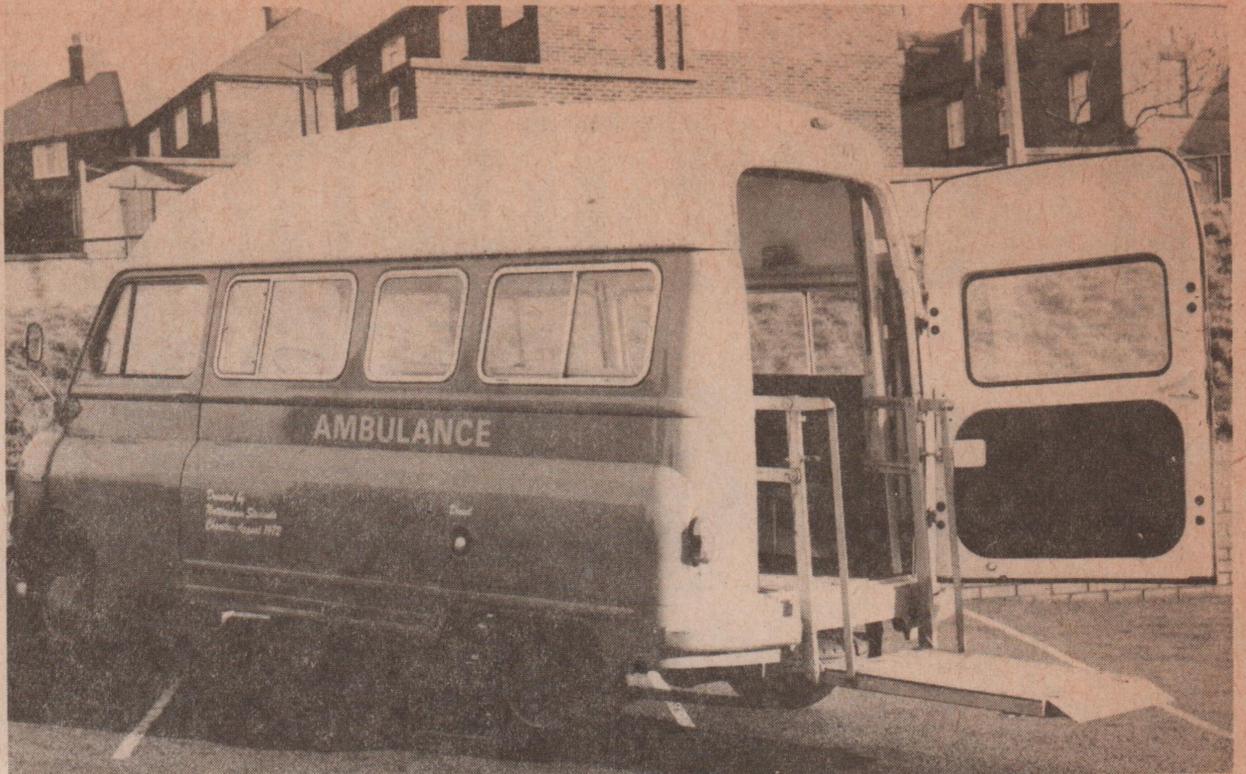
Which leaves?

It's a great pity that individual groups representing the handicapped are not sufficiently united to be preparing a campaign.

The hundreds of thousands handicapped cannot lobby as successfully as a handful of Chilean renegades!

There must be a moral somewhere.

Our first issue contained an item "Flip Side" which gained some publicity. In our next issue the subject will be more clearly defined, when perhaps readers may be able to suggest solutions to the problem.



HANDICAPPED ?

THIS IS THE FORUM MINI-BUS AMBULANCE FOR YOUR ORGANISATION TO USE.

The cost is 8p per mile with seating for 8 people. 3 Wheelchairs can be used in the vehicle with patients sitting in, also 4 persons on the inward facing seats. Further information can be obtained from:

MRS. M. HAZZLEDINE
FORUM TRANSPORT
C/O THE GOODWILL COMPLEX
14 Notintone Place,
Sneinton, NOTTINGHAM

THE INTONE CLUB

Does the name convey anything to you?

It is the club formed for young adults and teenagers of both sexes, primarily for disabled people but including young persons willing to assist those less fortunate than themselves to enjoy meeting together on a social basis.

The club meets at the William Boeth Memorial Complex, 14 Notintone Place, Sneinton on Mondays every week.

Several members are collected from the Occupational Centre on Mansfield Road, and some from the South Notts. Campus at West Bridgford and taken to the club for tea. Volunteer drivers set out after tea to collect as many members as possible from their homes, only the disabled ones, of course, and bring them to the centre. The journey home again is also arranged in a similar manner.

Club membership fee is small and a little extra for those requiring transport. The charge for tea is ridiculously low. Refreshments can be had at the club throughout the evening at nominal charges. The club closes about 9.30 p.m.

Alas membership is almost at its limit until more means of transporting the disabled can be found, but if you can get there under your own steam, you will find a warm welcome.

Anyone willing to help with transport, or even knowing someone who possibly might, is asked to get in touch with Capt. Day at the Complex, telephone 53927. Your assistance with transport would be invaluable in getting this flourishing club increased membership. Pay a visit any time to see the warmth of friendship that abounds.

Further donations to acknowledge.

Nottingham & District Guild for the Disabled,

Boots W.E.A.

Will secretaries of all groups please inform us of the number of disabled people in their group. Write to Forum Focus c/o 31a Mansfield Road, Nottingham.

BECAUSE of the shortage of space already referred to, we have been unable to include an account of the almost unrecorded Fourth Commonwealth Paraplegic Games which has been written by competitor Alan West of Wollaton Park. Apologies to both, readers for the omission and to Alan who has written the article although short of time.

OMITTED for the same reason is what may be valuable information to many handicapped persons, contained in a letter from Mr. Ken Roberts, hon. secretary to the East Midland Region 'British Sports Association for the Disabled.'

TOOLS FOR THE HANDICAPPED

A NEW RANGE of tools with special handles has been produced for people with weak hands. The operation is by simple inward pressure of the fingers with the other side braced against thumb or palm of the hand. A gentle but firm release action is ensured by a plastic loop spring. Available at present are: Scissors, diagonal clippers (nails) and pliers.

If you are interested contact 'Forum Focus' c/o Mansfield Road.

'SPECIAL OFFER' from an anonymous source - free - A 1963 Mini, hand operated brake/throttle, only 28,000 miles, well looked after. On offer only to a disabled person. Contact 'Forum Focus'.

...in Bulwell



Photo: Bulwell Dispatch

Helping yourself in Sherwood...

Like most modern cities Nottingham has experimented with 'High Rise' living, to the satisfaction of some and the concern of others.

In 1965 two 15 storey blocks were built in the centre of Woodthorpe Park. Each block contains 90 two bedroom or single bedroom flats and has its own caretaker.

In May 1973 the residents formed their own Tenants Association whose secretary is Mr. Arthur Heaps. The Association is particularly concerned about the welfare of the elderly housebound and carried out a survey recently which showed that 81 of the 206 residents are over

the age of 65. Practical help is given by the Social Services Department who provide Home Help, Meals on Wheels for some of the elderly.

The Sherwood and Carrington Care Group help with visiting and transport to their Lunch clubs and the Tenants Association is in process of setting up a library service. The association is also pressing for some form of Social Centre to be available within the flats. This new venture, says Mr. Heaps, should in some small way help to banish that loneliness that comes from living with yourself year after year.

Now and then every housewife feels the need to escape from the ordinary everyday household chores. But what can she do? Write, visit old people, join evening classes, or as the housewives in Bulwell decided to do - run a 'Music and Movement' class. It all started last July when we mothers talked amongst ourselves, writes Mrs. Whitworth. There was this feeling of 'need' on the Crabtree Estate, Bulwell, where we all live. The lack of proper community facilities presented a problem but we have been able to hire Bonnington Infant School Hall and our classes are held every Wednesday evening from 8 p.m. until 10 p.m.

Before starting officially at the school hall we had been holding classes at the home of one of the group.

We had already formed a committee and set about raising funds. Each member of the Music and Movement class pays 15p per session to help towards the rent of the hall.

For Christmas a party of us had a night out at the 'Heart of the Midlands'.

For future entertainment we shall have people to come and give talks to us in their particular field, e.g.: Make-up, Drama, Home Economy etc.

We really do have an enjoyable night out and you can really start from nothing and build up into a service for the community.

So, all you other mums, see what you can do, get together, meet people and make friends.

Family First aid

FOR VARIOUS REASONS, I chose to come to the city of Nottingham to live and make a home for myself and my new baby. We based ourselves in a small hotel and hoped to find a flat fairly quickly.

As I received a Social Security Allowance, and they stipulate that they will pay a 'reasonable rent', I contacted the Head Office and was told that a 'reasonable rent' for this area was £3 to £4 per week. Armed with the local newspaper and plenty of 2p pieces, I started ringing the numbers given for flats in this price range. I made arrangements to view several places and felt quite confident and hopeful.

Alas, this feeling soon disappeared as I approached the first house on my list; a very dismal house in an even more dismal and depressing area. Inside the 'flat' was damp and dirty. The bed consisted of a mattress on the floor. This was certainly an unsuitable place for a new baby and

for me. Unfortunately, the rest of the cheaper flats I viewed in the following few days were much the same.

My next move was to phone the Diocesan welfare worker who suggested I contact the Family First Trust - a local organisation which helps unsupported mothers etc. This I did, and was warmly welcomed. Although they had no vacancy to offer me, they did say they would see what could be done to help me.

Two weeks later, I found a small flat at £5 per week. It consisted of living/dining room, one small bedroom, kitchen (with a bath in it!) and an outside toilet. After much scrubbing and redecorating it became quite homely and we were happy. I didn't expect to be in this flat so long as I had put my name on the Council Housing list and was told that the waiting time was nine months.

Family First came to the rescue and put me in touch with a mother who

lived nearby. Together we were able to find a house at £13 per week and moved in. This was a three-bedroomed house in reasonable condition though by no means palatial. Sadly, the arrangement did not work out and we agreed to move on, separately.

The Council were unable to offer any help, though they had received a letter from a medical officer at the Children's Hospital stating the need for our rehousing being urgent for my baby's health. The housing programme had fallen sadly behind schedule; I had at this stage been on the list for more than sixteen months.

Frequently I rang the Family First Trust to see if they had any luck and to my joy they were able to offer me a flat in a house which had just been converted into flats. We moved into our new home and have been here for almost five very happy

Cont. on back page, column 3

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FAMILY FIRST AID cont.

months. I became quite a different person after we moved in and my children, especially the baby, have improved tremendously and are now very happy. From the beginning I kept telling myself 'everything will work out fine in the end' and I do believe it has.

Mrs. W.

A comment from a Family First spokesman - Mrs. W. is now a tower of strength to other mums known to us; at a future date when her children are older, she will be returning to a career in professional social work.



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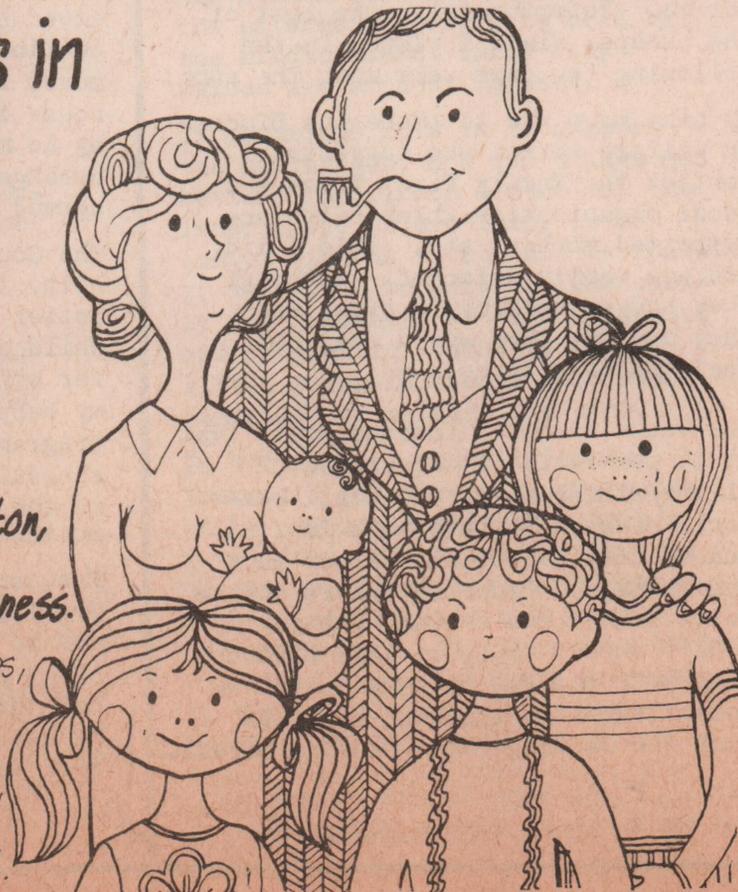
B. H.

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Age Concern

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31a Mansfield Road, Nottingham. Tel. 46714.

Mr D. G. Hancock, Boarding-out Officer, would like to hear from any of the following:

Elderly persons who are in need of accommodation and who would like to live in someone else's house, but are not able to arrange this for themselves.

Householder or families wishing to offer a home to an elderly person. Landladies willing to accept elderly people as boarders.

The Old People's Welfare Committee is always available to offer their help in matters concerning the elderly.

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Throughout Nottingham, voluntary groups have sprung up to meet a variety of different needs. The range of groups is vast. It includes helping at clubs for the elderly, playgroups, the physically and mentally handicapped, entertaining in hospitals, decorating, gardening, helping families, and befriending the housebound or lonely. Most of all, groups depend on the help of people like you. So if you've got some time to spare and you would like to help out in some way, then why don't you contact us and find out about the various opportunities that exist.

The Voluntary Work Agency, Nottm. Council of Social Service, 31a Mansfield Road, Nottingham. Tel. 46714.

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