



# Newsletter

FOREST FIELDS INDEPENDENT RESIDENTS GROUP

## Noel Street Baths and The Forest.

We've forced the Council to delay making a *final* decision on the closure of the baths and the development on the Forest. We have made some progress but the campaign has to develop.

The new chair of the Leisure Services committee, Leon Unczur, has admitted that the Council's strategy has been wrong. He and his colleagues are, **now**, committed to detailed consultation with the people of Nottingham.

Many people are rightly suspicious of Councillors and their sort of consultation. It is up to us to make sure that there is *real* consultation and that public of Nottingham is fully aware of all of the issues involved. Compared to the Council we have limited resources, but our area is rich in people with a whole range of abilities and we can make sure that our voices are heard.

- **We are not opposed, in principle, to a new Leisure Centre.**
- **We are opposed to the building of a new Centre on the Forest.**
- **Open Space is a vital asset that should not be destroyed.**
- **Noel Street baths provide a range of community facilities that will not be provided in the proposed new development.**
- **Closing four pools (two at Noel Street and two at Victoria) and replacing them with one 25 metre pool (even with a movable floor) will mean even fewer opportunities for school, club, fitness or women-only swimming.**
- **Whilst the new leisure pool, with flumes, waves etc would provide a leisure/play facility it would not be suitable for "serious swimming".**

**DEMONSTRATE.** Show the Council that you are still serious about saving The Forest and the Baths.- Saturday July 24th at 2.30pm. Junction Gregory Boulevard/Mansfield Road

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**MONDAY 16 AUGUST 1999 AT 7.30PM**

**FOREST FIELDS COMMUNITY CENTRE  
Sturton Street/Gladstone Street**

Councillors Graham Chapman, Leon Unczur, John Taylor, Jahangir Asfar, Phil Spear and Talib Hussein invited.

**Help with the campaign !**

Meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month from 7.30pm.

We will be meeting at the Forest Fields Advice Centre, Wiverton Road in future.

Everybody welcome-if there other issues, apart from the baths, that worry you come and raise them.

For more information telephone 0115 8410457



## What do you do when local councillors let you down?

So, what do you do when local councillors let you down? - when they lose the plot? - when they care more about prestige flagship developments than supporting local community resources?

I think what we learn from this campaign is the need to start getting together *independent* community groups across the city. Not ones that cosy up to local councillors and council officers in cushy 'partnership' meetings, but ones that give local people an independent voice on what happens in this City. Let's face it, the so-called partnership councils are incapable of taking any kind of a stand on anything: 'Hey, we can't take sides over the Forest plans - we're into partnership!'

The second lesson is that we don't have to sit back and let this New Labour council have it all their own way. The Noel St. baths/Forest campaign has certainly upset the council. Council leader Graham Chapman thought it was all done and dusted - until this determined little campaign in Forest Fields came along. Our 'own' Cllr. John Taylor is conveniently sitting on the fence. Some of his council colleagues are privately saying that Cllr. Taylor is feeling a bit vulnerable in Forest Fields, where he may well find himself challenged by an independent local candidate. As they say - he who sits on the fence risks getting splinters up his \*\*\*\*.

So, what do you do when local councillors let you down? Is it now time think about challenging New Labour councillors in wards across the city, starting with Forest Fields, St. Anns, New Basford and Hyson Green? What do you think?

We heard some silly things from the previous Leisure Services Chair but a recent pronouncement from Coun. Leon Unczur takes first prize. According to the new guiding light of Leisure, three schools will be able to use the proposed new 25 metre pool at the same time because the bottom can be raised or lowered to affect the depth. Who is going to tell the Councillor that the kids want swimming not sardine lessons. Put about 100 children around the edges of the pool and they will each have about 4 foot of water! Perhaps the teachers will be able to explain to him the noise, crowding, changing, discipline problems he is lining up for them!

## CONSULTATION MEETING 12 JUNE

Speakers at this Partnership Council meeting included representatives of the local council, Forest Fields Independent Residents Group and the Open Space Society, along with a local health visitor.

The problem with these events is that they are set up to create a sense of '*despite our differences we're all in this together - really*'. They're about getting everybody to understand where everybody else is coming from - and working out how to work together. But all they mean is that you get wrapped up in discussions with council officers, councillors, and community professionals - who have the time, information, and clout to set the agenda.

But the issues at this conference were very clear:

- **The council's priority is for prestigious flagship developments: the Independent Residents Group think that local community based resources should come first.**
- **The council say that the Forest is the best site for a new complex: the Residents Group say the Forest should be developed as open green space.**
- **The council say that a new complex would make up for the loss of Noel St, Victoria Leisure Centre and Northern Baths: the Residents' group say that it would mean the loss of accessible community facilities and that local people would have to compete with people from outside coming in to use the leisure complex.**
- **The council say they want to know what people think; the Residents Group say that the council made their mind up a long time ago and only started talking because they were forced to do so**

## Well done.



Well done to whoever put up the posters about dog dirt (the ones with the eyes). The anti-social behaviour where their dogs leave their muck can make life pretty miserable at times. Like, who wants to have to clean up every time you go to ASDA. But the worst is that dog muck can spread the worm, Toxicara canis, which can cause blindness, particularly in children. Got a dog - take a polythene bag out when you go for a walk.

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