

*PUBLIC ELECTION MEETING*

# ***WHAT IS THE FUTURE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT?***

*Beeston Library  
Tuesday April 30th  
7.30pm*

A year after the introduction of the poll tax in England and Wales, the Government is trying to escape the mess of its own making by pouring billions more of your money into it, and proposing yet another hasty re-organisation of local government.

## ***WHAT WILL THESE PROPOSALS MEAN FOR YOU?***

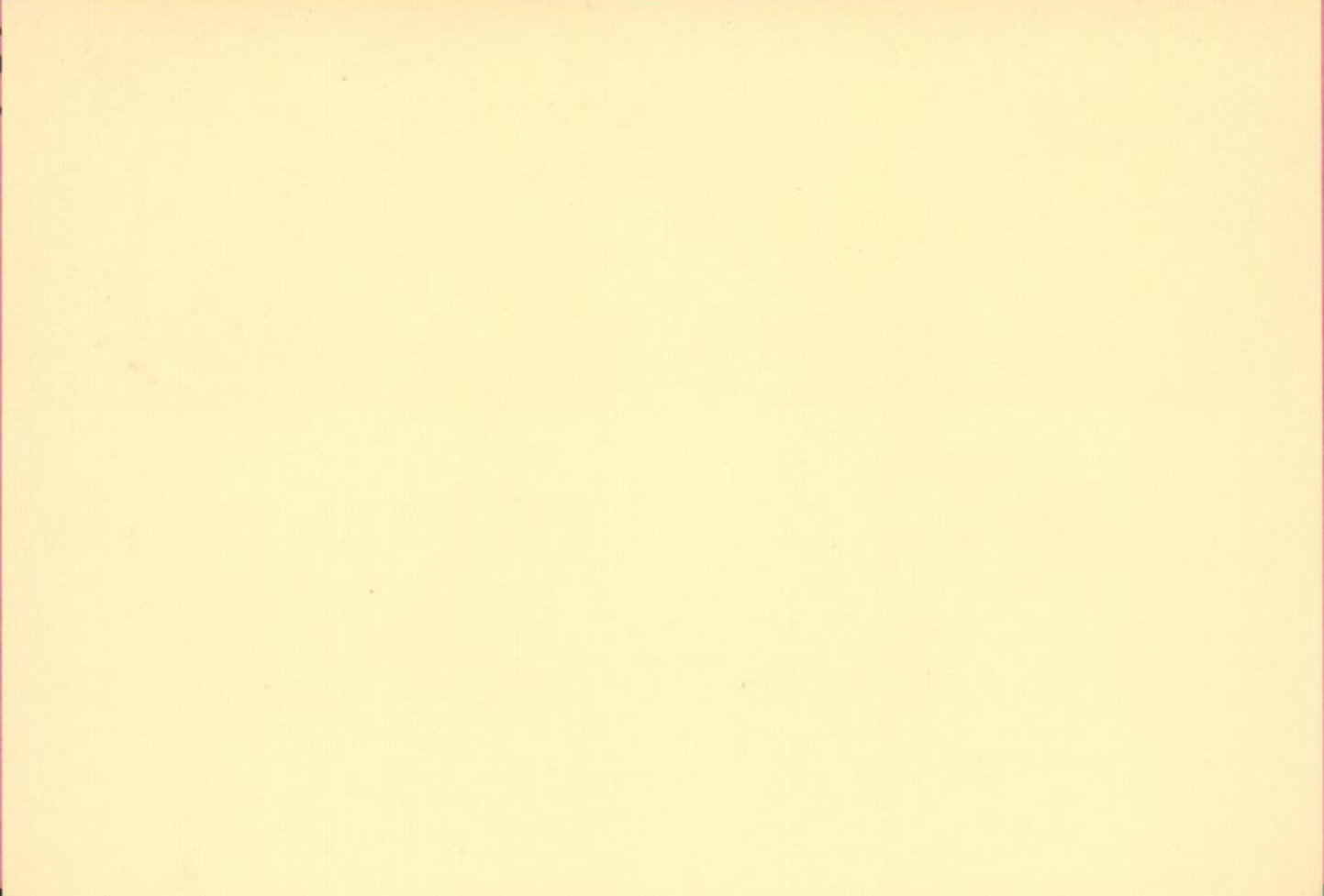
Beeston Anti-Poll Tax Union will only support a tax related to ability to pay, and a system of local government that is genuinely democratic. We cannot support these proposals.

Beeston Anti-Poll Tax Union believes that local democracy should be the issue in the council election. We have invited candidates from all parties to speak in this debate.

## ***THE END OF THE POLL TAX?***

***Don't Be Fooled - The Wreck Is Still Afloat***

**Beeston Anti-Poll Tax Union:-**





## THE END OF THE POLL TAX?

The Government claims they will replace the poll tax but the wreck is still afloat. The hated tax will be with us until at least 1993, perhaps until 1994 (they won't say), and then it will be replaced by a new tax - part rates, part poll tax. How much of a poll tax element will remain has yet to be decided, a decision that will have more to do with keeping the Tory Party together than uniting the country.

## A LOWER POLL TAX?

The chancellor has put up VAT by 2.5% to take 140 pounds off everyone's poll tax. Reduced bills are welcome, but....

- Only the better off will get the full 140 pounds. People on low incomes, income support or student grants may only get a few pence.
- The rise in VAT will put up prices in the shops. Poor people pay a greater proportion of their income in VAT than the better off.
- Extra VAT will put extra pressure on local businesses like corner shops, already hit by 1.6 billion pounds rise in business rates to keep down the poll tax in February's handout.
- Broxtowe families faced with four sets of poll tax bills could still have to find 1,000 pounds, while people in Wandsworth and Shetland will pay nothing.
- Re-assessing and sending out new bills is causing chaos for councils, a waste of time and YOUR money caused by a Government acting in haste and panic without any clear policy.

## LOCAL DEMOCRACY IS THREATENED

- They plan to abolish Labour-controlled County Councils, just like when they abolished London County Council, Greater London Council and the Metropolitan Counties because they couldn't win control at the ballot box.
- Further Education Colleges and Sixth Forms will be brought under central control, removing them from local accountability. If you are unhappy with these services you will have to complain to Whitehall. Decision making by local government is to be reviewed. It may need improvement, but do councils need a lesson from a Government that spent 15 years dreaming up the poll tax, then a year later, panics, dithers and rushes into more badly thought out plans for local government.

## DON'T BE FOOLED



# REMEMBER

## BAILIFF ATTACK

The bailiffs M A Julious have made several attempts to seize property owned by members of the Beeston anti-poll tax union with the following results :-

When the bailiffs approached Michael Fagan's house they suddenly found themselves surrounded, with the exit blocked by cars until the police came to their rescue. Inspector Doug Richards said "It was a peaceful demonstration with no damage caused." The bailiffs left empty handed and haven't returned since.

In a desperate attempt at intimidation three vans load of bailiffs with a police escort attempted to seize Jessika Raggett's car early in the morning. However thanks to Jessika's quick thinking and a few phone calls we forced the bailiffs to leave empty handed. Mrs Julious' parting comment was "There's more than one way to skin a rabbit." The bailiffs haven't returned.

To our knowledge nobody who has known their legal rights have had any property seized by the bailiffs. A measure of our success can be gauged by the fact that Broxtowe borough council are now turning to wage attachments in an attempt to collect unpaid Poll tax.

# BURROWS

## YOUR DEFENCE

The bailiffs M A Julious are a firm of private debt collectors, and as such have no powers to force entry. The bailiffs have been employed by Broxtowe borough council as a means of intimidating people into paying the Poll tax but if you know your legal rights there is nothing to be frightened off. The following precautions will be sufficient to stop the bailiffs seizing any of your property.

They can't force entry, but can enter through open unlocked doors or windows, so keep all doors and windows locked.

When answering the door keep a chain on so the bailiffs can't push pass you. If they do this is forced entry so either call the police or use reasonable force to evict them. A loud scream is a good defence.

The bailiffs can only visit during daylight hours, that is between 6:00am and 9:00pm. They usually call during the week but can call on Saturdays. They don't tend to write to you in advance.

The bailiffs have been known to look through windows and record what they can see, this isn't legal and is used to make you believe they have carried out 'walking possession', but keep the curtains drawn. If you see any bailiffs looking through your window phone the police and report them as peeping toms.

If the bailiffs do get in they can only take goods that belong to you. They can't take fixtures and fittings, goods on rental or HP, or goods sold to a friend.

The bailiffs must carry identification, if they don't, how do you know they really are bailiffs and not just a firm of cowboys.

Should the bailiffs get in once, they can force entry on future visits, so the best defence is to keep them out, they have no legal rights of entry.

Should you be intimidated by the bailiffs, contact your local anti-poll tax union first for advice on what you should do.

# CRESCENT

## BAILIFF BUSTERS

The bailiffs like intimidating people but like all bullies don't like to be intimidated themselves, that is why many anti-poll tax unions have set up bailiffs busting squads. The success of these squads depends on a number of factors :-

Getting to know in advance where the bailiffs are going, getting the information circulated quickly, and getting people to confront the bailiffs.

Should the bailiffs give you a time when they intend to call, or if you hear of somebody who has, then contact us with the information. Should you happen to see one of the bailiffs' vehicles about, contact us with the details. We would like to know.

To speed up the circulation of information we have set up a telephone tree. If you would like to help and are free mornings, afternoons, or evenings then why not join the telephone tree.

If you have a car/or would like to intimidate the bailiffs for once, then let us know. Past experience has shown that only a handful of people will scare the bailiffs away.

The bailiffs' vehicles are as follows :-

Blue Citroen 7cwt Van	F914 LNN
Red Citroen 7cwt Van	F915 LNN
Large White Citroen Van	F916 LNN
Red Citroen AX14RD	F917 LNN
White VW Box Van	E765 EAY
Metallic Blue Nissan Sunny	D323 UNU
Audi Saloon/Estate	C298 ---
Silver Daimler Saloon	E284 CAU

Beeston anti-poll tax union contact numbers are as follows :-

Mike & Lesley	257414
Jessika	431423
Alison & Stuart	222153

BEESTON ANTI-POLL TAX UNION SAYS DON'T LET THE BAILIFFS IN



# **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 as 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 yours 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 have got nowhere after 17 months! In Scotland the bailiffs — called sheriff officers — have a procedure to use force but still have not succeeded.

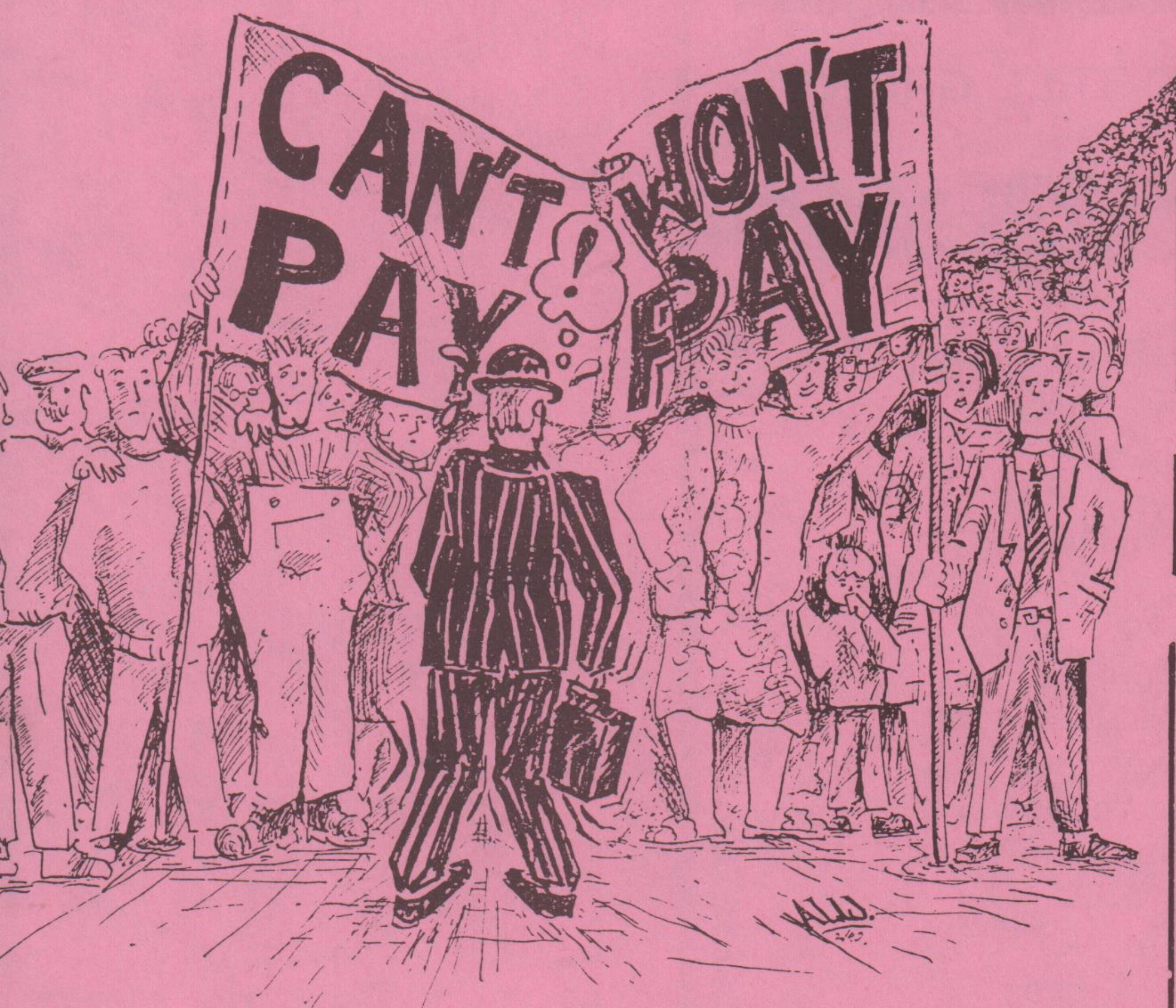
There are only 1,000 bailiffs for all the councils in England and Wales. They don't stand a chance against 14 million of us — the poll tax non-payers — as long as you know they can't get in unless you let them. The anti-poll tax unions are ready to back you up!

*For more information contact:*



# BESTWOOD ANTI-POLL TAX CAMPAIGN

## DEMONSTRATE!



### BESTWOOD ANTI-POLL TAX CAMPAIGN

#### OUR AIMS ARE.....

- To inform people about the poll tax and how it affects them.
- To build a mass campaign of non-payment, non-implementation, and non-collection of the poll tax. To lead to the abolition of the poll tax/community charge.

Interested?

### PUBLIC MEETING

NEXT MEETING  
➔ **MONDAY** ➔  
**19<sup>th</sup> MARCH**  
➔ **7.30 PM** ➔  
BESTWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE.

OR

Make it easy on yourself! Pay no poll tax! That is the message coming across loud and clear from Scotland, and into England and Wales.

On Saturday 20th January over ONE THOUSAND people joined a mass demonstration in Nottingham City centre to protest against the poll tax and to voice their anger and their willingness NOT TO PAY THE POLL TAX.

### WHAT THE POLL-TAX MEANS IN NOTTINGHAM

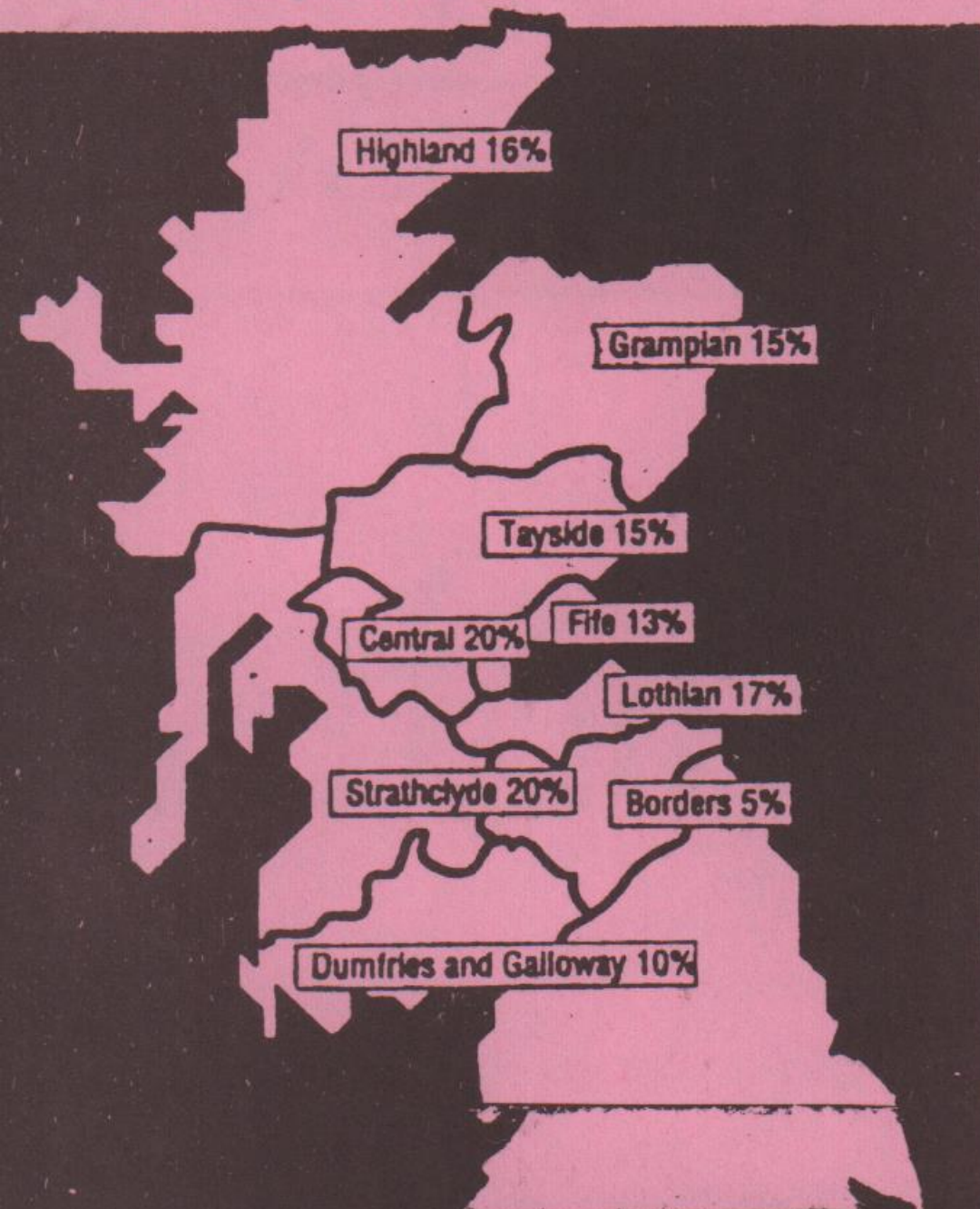
- \* The Government wants to use the Poll Tax to cut Council Service and jobs and reduce our living standards.
- \* The official Poll Tax Bill per adult in Nottingham was set at £247, next year those figures would mean £36 million worth of cuts and 2,000 redundancies.
- \* Also if the Poll Tax was already in this year the Council would have £27 million less in Grants and Domestic Non Rate Income we're paying more for worse services.
- \* IN SIMPLE TERMS, IF THE TORY GOVERNMENT POLL TAX IS INTRODUCED IN NOTTINGHAM 8 OUT OF 10 ADULTS LIVE IN HOUSEHOLDS THAT WILL BE WORSE OFF, OR WILL BE UNABLE TO PAY.
- \* Meanwhile, we will also suffer from reduced essential Council Services, and Council jobs will go.
- \* CAN YOU AFFORD TO LIVE?
- \* CAN YOU AFFORD THE POLL-TAX?

Cres.

GET INVOLVED IN THE MASS  
ANTI-POLL TAX CAMPAIGN NOW!



Scottish poll tax, non payers  
% paid nothing in first 3 months



## SCOTLAND - POLL TAX CRUMBLING!!

In Scotland as a whole, "official" estimates say that between 670 000 and 1 million people haven't paid their poll tax (there are about 4 million on the register). But these estimates - shown on the map above - don't include the hundreds of thousands who have paid a few instalments and then stopped. Nor do they include those missed from the register altogether!

In fact, all over Scotland the non-payment campaign is still growing. People see their friends and neighbours refusing to pay the tax, and realise that joining the anti-poll tax campaign is easier - and cheaper - than trying to find the money to pay it.

In truth, the poll tax in Scotland is crumbling. The government are worried. They're pretending to ignore the Scottish situation, and hoping that people will blame their local councils for the problems the tax is causing. In this country, they're spending billions of pounds to try and convince people that the the poll tax is a good idea. Our group, and hundreds of others like it, are going to make sure that they fail.

### NON-PAYMENT STILL GROWING

## FACTS

Can the poll tax really be defeated, even without the backing of the Labour Party? YES. Many Labour Party activists are in the campaign, and are involved in direct Non-payment

### NOT PARTY POLITICAL

Do I have to get involved with politics or any political party to get involved in the campaign? NO. The majority of people in Bestwood are not involved with any political group or party. Some don't even vote.

### COMMUNITY COLLECTIVES

The whole idea of the campaign is one of MASS non-payment, on a community level.

If you are in doubt about claiming a rebate, or if you are eligible for one at all consider

### HAVE YOU REGISTERED?

If the answer is no, one way they can get you to do so, without you knowing it, is to get you to apply for a rebate.

### ARE YOU GOING TO PAY?

In Scotland, no one has been put in prison for not paying the poll tax.

### POLL TAX WILL GO!

There are already 600 members of the non-payment campaign in Sherwood.

The poll tax will GO!

## PENSIONERS AND THE POLL TAX

Two of the country's richest pensioners, Denis and Margaret Thatcher, will gain £2000 a year from the "fairer" poll tax.

By the Governments own admission, the majority of pensioners will be £260 a year WORSE off. The pensioner and the poll tax are a lethal cocktail.

The Conservative Party, since coming to power has been paying the retired less and less in real terms. The poll tax is yet another blow to the standard of living for Great Britain's pensioners.

Many older people will simply not be able to afford the £5 extra a week or more, and even if they can just about manage it, why should they?

Jessie Thomson continues to speak out against the poll tax because the crippling affects it is having on the old could cost pensioners lives.

"Do you put an extra pound in the meter to keep warm, or do you save it to pay your poll tax bill?"

Despite suffering from arthritis, she (and many others her age) refuses to pay her poll tax, supporting those who couldn't afford to pay it if they wanted to.

Leaflet #1 - 26/2/90  
Bestwood Anti-Poll Tax Campaign.

# MAKE IT EASY: DON'T PAY!



# ARRESTMENT OF WAGES

## - WHAT TO DO NOW

### After Court What Next?

When the court have got a LIABILITY ORDER against you they will probably send you a SUMMARY OF MEANS form.

### DON'T PANIC DON'T PAY

#### What You Can Do - There Are Two Choices

1. YOU CAN REFUSE TO SEND BACK THE FORM AS 12,000 PEOPLE IN COVENTRY HAVE DONE. You take the risk of prosecution and fine of £100 *but it is unlikely* that there will be enough court time for the Council to do this.

2. You can return an incomplete SUMMARY OF MEANS form with a list of questions that need answering if you are to fill in the form correctly - it is your democratic right!

**DO NOT FILL IN YOUR EMPLOYERS NAME AND ADDRESS OR WHERE YOU ARE EMPLOYED**

#### The Questions

Some of the questions explain themselves but you could ask the council for more information on some of them.

#### Examples:

Question 1d) "In what capacity are you employed?"

You could ask - Does this mean.... am I a full time or part time employee? - am I on a permanent or temporary contract? - what is my actual job description? - what is my actual job title?

Question 2a) "What is your pay before deductions per week/month?" - Do deductions include rent/mortgage or trade union subs etc?

#### Remember - Avoid Details About Your Workplace

Put all these questions in a covering letter and return it with an incomplete form to the council (within 14 days). Remember this is just a delaying tactic.

#### At Work

Find out who the other non-payers are at your place of work. Arrange a meeting with them in a dinner break or after work. In this way you can compare notes and work out what approaches you could possibly make within the union or to the employers. Just making contact with other non-payers at work is useful.

#### Wages

There are maximum legal limits set down by law. These are based on your net earnings (i.e. after tax and

stoppages). **REMEMBER - UNLESS YOU GET A JOINT BILL YOU ARE NOT LIABLE FOR YOUR SPOUSE.**

weekly net		max deduct	
exceeding £65 but under £75		£3 per week	
" £90	" £95	£7	"
" £110	" £120	£11	"
" £150	" £160	£18	"
etc etc...			
monthly net		max deduct	
exceeding £260 but under £280		£11 per month	
" £340	" £360	£24	"
" £380	" £400	£30	"
" £560	" £600	£60	"
etc etc...			

#### What About My Employer?

Your employer may be liable to a fine (max £400) if they fail to provide information on you. Your employer can also deduct £1 from your wages each time a deduction is made (their costs).

#### What If I am Self-Employed?

If you are self-employed you would have to state this on the SUMMARY OF MEANS form. The council would then ask you to send them your latest income tax computation - a very difficult process to enforce!

#### What if I am on Income Support?

Deductions can be made direct from the DSS through the council. The most they can take from a single person is £1.75 per week; from a couple £2.75.

#### What About Me?

You will have to decide what course of action to take. It is unlikely that you will be taken to court for not returning the SUMMARY OF MEANS forms. You are more likely to get a nasty letter threatening you with bailiffs...in which case refer to our "How to Stop the Bailiffs" leaflet.

**REMEMBER YOUR CAMPAIGN WILL SUPPORT YOU AND GIVE ANY INFORMATION YOU NEED.**



# PUBLIC MEETING

RUSHCLIFFE AGAINST THE POLL TAX

TO ALL THE NON-PAYERS AND THOSE WHO SYMPATHISE

Dear Residents

By now you have probably received your Poll Tax bill for 1991-92.

This is written proof that the Poll Tax is still with us.

Worse still we have to finance the so called £140 reduction in 'published Poll Tax figures' by paying higher V.A.T. This is as intolerable as Poll Tax since the majority of low paid are hardest hit, and unless they stop purchasing their basic needs are unable to evade it.

We have won a great victory by forcing the government to admit its colossal mistake and announce a new system which might be implemented in 2-3 years time, i.e 'council tax'.

It is needless to say that this so called new system still favours the well off and the very rich to the tune of billions, and still relies on greater numbers of people contributing, whether they receive an income or not.

According to Rushcliffe Borough Council, which for the last six months has denied having any non-payers in this area, a mere £2 million! Poll Tax is uncollected.

That means that approximately upto 10,000 people have either not paid or only partly paid their last year's Poll Tax.

According to the Association of District Councils and also the Audit Office, now that the government has admitted the gross unpopularity of this unjust tax the number of non-payers will increase. Also the new figures published by the Audit Office show that not only are there 15 million who have not paid anything or very little, but also there are 3.5 million people who have not registered yet.

That brings the total to 18.5 million !

All this has been achieved through active or passive resistance to this hated tax.

But unless we stand firm and continue our fight we could stand to lose the initial gains.

The government will no doubt try every method to force people to pay. (Especially now that local elections are over). The councils throughout the country - irrespective of their political affiliation - have started deducting money from people's wages by illegal means, and have started jailing non-payers. The latest one an unemployed 19 year old - Lee Barrett from Uttoxeter.

We need to be informed and aware, not only of what the campaign is about, but also where it is leading. We request your presence at our next public meeting, to which we have invited speakers to discuss our next steps.

PUBLIC MEETING : WEDNESDAY, MAY 22nd, 7.30p.m., STUMPS BAR, TEST MATCH PUB