

sciennes/marchmont anti-poll tax news

May 1990



FIRST YEAR (AND A WEE BIT) OF NON-PAYMENT !

We are now approaching the first year of non-payment of the poll tax. It is estimated that in the Lothians alone there are 250 000 non-payers, and in Scotland as a whole over 1 million. The Anti-Poll Tax Movement has been successful in preventing poindings (the valuation of goods) all over the country.

England in Uproar

In England the response against the poll tax has been phenomenal, even in Tory heartlands. Councils have been occupied and there have been demonstrations of thousands of people.

The press has not managed to convince anybody that any violence is a result of "rent-a-mob". We know that there are millions of people in the country who are angry about the poll tax; pensioners, workers, the unemployed, young people every section of the population. Even Tory councillors in Oxfordshire and Humberside have resigned over the issue of the poll tax.

I Shot the Sheriff

Sheriff officers have been out and about, delivering letters and attempting poindings. About 200 people turned up to prevent a poinding in Jeffrey Street. The street was blocked and no sheriff officer came near. If they attempt to gain access to your home, phone one of the numbers at the top of this page immediately.

The Sheriff Busters

Anti-Poll Tax Federation Hotline

557 1595

or contact your local group

229 9552, 447 6593, 229 7220

667 8123, 447 7467

if you need information. We will stop poindings and warrant sales !

Rebate Round-up

If you are on rebate you may well have received a final reminder from the regional council. This is **not** the same as a summary warrant. It may well advise you that you have fourteen days in which to pay. Ignore this letter. It is simply a reminder. Given that they sent out an original 76,000 summary warrants and they haven't managed to get the poll tax out of those people, it is going to take them a long time to get round to chasing up people on rebates.

Remember 1 in 5 people in Scotland have not paid their poll tax. You'll never walk alone!

Dodging Debt Collection

There are three methods of debt collection open the Regional Council - freezing bank accounts, arresting wages and warrant sales. You may have already received a summary warrant from the sheriff. This is not the same as a warrant sale. Overleaf, the different stages before a poinding or a warrant sale are outlined - and the actions you can take when you receive one of these letters.

Letter 1 from Gray Scott & Co.

This will inform you that a "Summary Warrant against you at the Sheriff Court has been passed to this office for Enforcement and Collection. Unless payment in full, as detailed below is received at this office within five days the warrant will be enforced against you without further reference".

This is arrant nonsense. They sent out 100,000 of these letters in Lothian. They are not going to do anything after five days.

ADVICE
Ignore this letter

Letter 2 from Gray Scott & Co.

Yet another threatening letter;

"Having received no settlement or acceptable payment in response to the Demand Letter for the above noted Community Charge and Statutory Penalty it is now necessary that we proceed with enforcement by Poining and/or Arrestment in terms of the Summary Warrant granted against you"

Again, 40,000 of these were sent out so if you have one, you're not alone! It will take them years to enforce this letter, never mind having to deal with the rest of the 200,000 odd non-payers.

ADVICE
Ignore this letter

Letter 3 from Gray Scott & Co.

This one will say "IMPORTANT NOTICE" at the top, and may well have been put into your hand by one of the sheriff's men. It reads:

"Further to the Summary Warrant granted against you a Sheriff Officer called at your address today for the purpose of executing a Poining of your effects. As he was unable to gain access to the action authorised in terms of Paragraph 3 (1) of schedule 5 of the Debtors (Scotland) Act 1987 will be implemented. To avoid this Action either payment in full or an acceptable arrangement for payment must be made immediately".

Contact your local anti-poll tax group (see phone numbers on front page) or better still come to one of our regular meetings every Wednesday at 7.30 pm at Sciennes Primary School, Sciennes Road.

Letter 4 from Gray Scott & Co.

This letter makes the other ones look like jokes. It will tell you that they are authorised to break into lock fast places. However, it will also give you the date when they will be round. We can then organise people to come to your house to ensure that they cannot gain access. If you are worried, move your goods such as TVs, stereos etc. to a friends or someone in your local anti-poll tax group. Just by having a presence at the house is usually enough to stop them trying to gain access.

ADVICE
Contact your local group immediately.

Other Methods of Debt Recovery

The Royal Bank of Scotland have started the process of frezing people's accounts. The Bank of Scotland, TSB and Clydesdale will no doubt be following suit shortly. The National Savings Bank or large building societies are not immune either. Joint accounts can be frozen as spouses are liable for each others poll tax.

ADVICE
Move your account to one of the small building societies.
Open an account under a different name.

Don't be frightened by sheriff officers. Remember, there are about 50 of them and 200,000 of us. Join your local anti poll tax group - if we don't allow ourselves to become isolated we can win.

Sciennes/Marchmont APTG

Present the social of the year.

"The Sheriff Officers' Bash"

On Friday 25th May at 7.30pm

In the Pleasance Bar

60 The Pleasance

Tickets £2 waged/£1 unwaged from local group.

We're no payin' the
poll tax nah, nah
nah nah !

