

LOCAL NEWS

NOTTINGHAM ANTI-POLL TAX FEDERATION

The second meeting of the Nottingham Anti-Poll Tax Federation took place on the 14th of October. It was remarkable only for the inactivity of its officers.

The one good thing to come out of the meeting was a Nottingham march planned for December 2nd. It is important that we, as a group, mobilise to get people along to this and show the strength of feeling against the poll tax. We shall have to face up to the fact that the success of the march will depend on ourselves and other community groups organising. Going on past performance, the Federation won't be doing much.

While the Federation is still dominated by one particular political viewpoint, new groups are joining all the time (that is REAL groups with some basis in the community, not just groups on paper), and it's important that we keep involved to put the arguments for accountability, activity etc. Our group, and others like us, can act as a rallying point for those who want to defeat the poll tax and have a Federation which is democratic, open and active.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since this report was written, the Federation have reported that the march has been cancelled because they were unable to book the Market Square for a rally. However, the march will go ahead on December 2nd. It will not be organised by the Federation, unfortunately, but by a coalition of local community based anti-poll tax groups, including this one. Watch out for more information!

SHERWOOD ANTI-POLL TAX GROUP

The Sherwood group has now been running for two months. After petitioning around Sherwood for several weeks, a public meeting was organised which attracted 80 people. A member of our group spoke at this meeting.

Since then, the Sherwood group have been going from strength to strength. The group has regular meetings every two weeks, runs a stall on Mansfield Road, and now has around 240 members - catching up with us!

For the future, they intend to have another public meeting with a speaker from Scotland, and a benefit gig to raise some money. At present they are putting together a newsletter similar to the one you are reading now. Their next meeting is at Sherwood Community Centre at 7.30 pm on November 8th.

Good luck to them!

SNEINTON ANTI-POLL TAX GROUP

The newly formed Sneinton Anti-Poll Tax Group, which was set up after a meeting a few weeks ago of 35 people from the area, held its first public meeting on October 24th. About thirty local people listened to speakers from this group, and a representative of NALGO, the local government union, who talked about the role that local government workers can play in defeating the poll tax.

So far, Sneinton activists have been petitioning from door to door for several weeks, and have been running a stall in Sneinton market.

Axe the Tax

WHAT'S ON:

1. NOTTINGHAM AGAINST THE POLL TAX march and rally, December 2nd. Watch out for leaflets and posters with more details
2. SHEFFIELD AGAINST THE POLL TAX demonstration on November 4th. This group is taking along a minibus. Contact us soon if you're interested in going.
3. Forest Fields/Hyson Green Anti-Poll Tax Campaign meetings: our next two meetings are - TUESDAY 14TH NOVEMBER and TUESDAY 28TH NOVEMBER, both at 8 pm
4. Sherwood Anti-Poll Tax Group, next public meeting on November 8th at Sherwood Community Centre

URGENT - MONEY NEEDED !

Although we've still got some money left from the benefit in October, its dwindling fast. Ideally, we need money coming in steadily, to pay for the cost of rooms for meetings, and printing costs for leaflets and newsletters.

If you're working and would like to help, we'd like you to fill in the standing order form below. Its up to you how much you give, but we suggest £1 a month for every £1 000 a year you earn - or £5 a month if you can't work that out! Send the form to us, not your bank. We'll sort it out from there. Thanks.

STANDING ORDER

Name:
Address:

TO: BANK
BRANCH
ADDRESS:
ACCOUNT NO:

Please pay on receipt of this order the sum of £....., and on the first day of every month thereafter, to National Westminster Bank PLC, Nottingham University Branch, to the credit of Forest Fields/Hyson Green Anti-Poll Tax Campaign, account number 97052728.

SIGNATURE:
DATE:

POLL-AXE !

NEWSLETTER OF THE FOREST FIELDS & HYSON GREEN ANTI-POLL TAX CAMPAIGN

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FOREST FIELDS / HYSON GREEN



ANTI-POLL TAX CAMPAIGN

SNOOPER ALERT !!

Poll tax snoopers have been calling at homes in many parts of the city over the last few weeks. So far, one in every five people in Nottingham have failed to return their poll tax forms. Although there are people all over the city who haven't registered, there are more of them in areas like this one, where most of us would be worse off if the poll tax succeeded.

If you haven't sent back your registration form yet, get a copy of our "What to do next?" leaflet - available from our stall every Saturday morning at Hyson Green crossroads, at our meetings, or by post. Meanwhile, here's what to do if the snoopers call:

DON'T:

- open the door: pretend there's nobody in!
- tell them anything about previous poll tax forms, or other people sharing your home
- be intimidated. Remember, they CAN'T force you to fill in a form there and then.

You have to take a registration form from them, or you might be fined. They'll probably try to arrange a time to collect it : Pick a time when you know that nobody will be at home...

THEN:

- TELL your friends and neighbours that snoopers are in the area
- FOLLOW them around - this will worry them, and might stop them harassing people on their own doorsteps
- REMEMBER that the snoopers are nervous because they know they're unpopular

On some council estates in Nottingham, rent collectors are doubling up as poll tax snoopers - they get paid £1 for every name they get, so it's a nice little earner for them. This makes it harder to avoid them, though, since most people know and trust their rent collectors.

Looking on the bright side, we've heard that snoopers all over Nottingham are not bothering to knock on doors where an anti-poll tax poster is in the window. They say it isn't worth the bother. So all you people who haven't put up a poster yet - now is the time!

Just a reminder: It's probably not worth getting fined over refusing to register for the poll tax. The fines start at £50, and go up to £200 for further offences. Refusing to register is a criminal offence (unlike refusing to pay), and it won't stop the poll tax because they'll only get your name from one of their computers. Our aim is to make registration as difficult as we can without getting fined.

YOU MIGHT HEAR TALK THAT THIS MARCH IS NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.

IGNORE IT. THE MARCH WILL TAKE PLACE. IT WILL BE A SUCCESS.

MORE INFO VERY SOON



SCOTLAND - POLL TAX CRUMBLING!!

When the papers and television mention the poll tax, they always play down the size of the Scottish fight against it. People in Scotland got their first poll tax bills in April this year, and our Scottish "twin" group, Prestonfields in Edinburgh, keep us up-to-date on what's really happening.

In Lothian, the Edinburgh council area, the council admitted at the end of September that there should be at least 680 000 people on the Lothian poll tax register - but they've only got 580 000. A full 100 000 people have vanished!

So far, 120 000 Lothian people have completely ignored their poll tax bills. 40 000 more stopped paying after three months, and another 40 000 on top of that stopped paying after four months. Add on the 100 000 missed from the register, and that's 300 000 who aren't paying - nearly 40% of the people in the Lothian area.

Lothian council are in a mess. So far, nobody has been taken to court for non-payment, and nobody has had their belongings seized by bailiffs. Two local councillors have already admitted that the legal system can't cope, and that the cost of collecting the poll tax from these 300 000 people will probably be more than they actually owe.

