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# RESISTER

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LEEDS ANARCHIST-FEMINIST PAPER

Shooting through cinema window

Sex shop fire!

£1,000 reward

COME-UNITY COLLECTIVE  
ASIAN-WEST INDIAN-EUROPEAN  
WE SHALL STOP  
THIS SHOP  
DON'T TRY AND BRING US  
DOWN TO YOUR LEVEL!

More than 200 women  
were to sex shop

Glad to see it's gone!

no. 25

Blaze hits 'sex case' sauna

He started video shop fire - 'Angry Women'

Woman faces anti-porn conspiracy charge

Double sex shop fires

25p



# cover resisters: angry women

1978 - 84. Feminists in England will remember these as the angry years, when women went on the offensive to fight violence against women, reclaimed the streets to make them safe, and a group calling itself *Angry Women* took direct action against the peddlars of pornography. With tremendous success. They attacked over 25 targets - sex shops and video shops that did a brisk business in violent and misogynist propaganda... till *Angry Women* struck, causing half a million pounds worth of damage in all.

How did they organise? Why did they resort to direct action? Why did they stop? And how do they assess their actions?

Four years after they ceased to be active, *Angry Women* record their history in an exclusive interview sent to *Outwrite*, a documentation that bears testimony to their courage and commitment, a history that time must not be allowed to obliterate.

How did *Angry Women* first come together? And how did you get involved with them — did you find them or did they find you?

A group had been in existence since 1978 and had attacked a couple of sex shops. In 1981, I was invited to speak with a group of women about my politics, violence against women, and direct action. At the time, I didn't know that they were *Angry Women*; I had agreed to meet them because the ideas and issues interested me, as did the idea of different kinds of direct action. It was only after I was approached by them a second time that I was told that they were involved in taking direct action against sex shops as well as individual men who violated women, and I decided to join them.

Were you completely aware of what you were getting involved in at the time?

Absolutely. I knew I was joining a group to take direct action, probably in the form of arson attacks, and that this inevitably involved the destruction of property — a criminal activity. It's not as if I didn't sweat about it! But the group spent a long time explaining what it involved, and how it made them feel and how it would probably make me feel. And that's important, simply because women don't often do that sort of thing, we're not used to it and so you really need to psyche yourself up in preparation.

What form did this preparation take?

Mainly talking. We would discuss our feelings and responses, the fear that we experienced, the guilt that we felt. Talking it through helped enormously, and we always maintained that any one of us could withdraw at any time and no judgments would be made, and that if one of us felt uneasy then she would never be forced to go ahead. So really it was about talking everything through, from beginning to end, listening to each other, paying attention to objections, discussing risks.

Attacks like the ones you carried out obviously took meticulous planning and organisation. Did you draw on others' experience, or did you experiment on a trial and error basis?

It was mostly on a trial and error basis. We did try and read

whatever we could lay our hands on from and about groups taking direct action, but didn't really learn very much as they didn't divulge details! Also, US groups like *Preying Mantis* used explosives, we only ever used petrol.

As far as organising our attacks went, we ensured that we knew what each of our roles was going to be, and we prepared ourselves with alibis. Our principal concern was that there should be nobody on the premises that were going to be attacked. We took great precautions to assure ourselves of this: we watched buildings, sometimes for as long as three months, often weekly, sometimes daily, to establish patterns of the comings and goings, to see if the curtains had moved, and if there was anybody on the premises at nights. We were also vigilant about policing patterns in the area. It's surprising, but there are an awful lot of people around at night, even in small towns. . .!

For the attack itself, we would wear very dark clothing, cover our faces with balaclavas or hats, and take only what we needed. Depending on the location, we would either travel in one or two cars (some of which we hired or stole), and always in pairs. Once we had finished what we started out to do, it was home and a hot bath to get rid of the smell and any remnants that would point to our activity.

Obviously we kept our activities to ourselves, and that was very difficult. How do you explain to your lover where you've been and what you've been up to?!

What feelings were you confronted with at the time of your first attack?

I was totally terrified. The target was a sex shop in Skipton, it was a freezing cold night and there were only two of us — the senior-most member of the group and the novice — me! A sort of trial run really. I remember sitting in the car for ages constantly wanting to go to the toilet. I was so terrified of getting caught. Anyway, we did it, successfully, and the whole place just went up! We couldn't get in the car quick enough to get out of there!

Did everything always go off, or should I say 'up', without a hitch? Or did you have some frightening moments?

Well, there was one really freaky incident. A particular shop in Leeds city centre had bragged openly about the sadistic pornography they stocked — they had posters displaying the most violent abuses of women. It was very provocative, certainly very provocative to us, and we wanted to get in there. By this time, a lot of the video shops stocking porn had dispensed with letter boxes for obvious reasons — those had been our access points — and had installed security grilles, locks, bolts, the works. We used these massive bolt cutters to cut our way in; it took half an hour, and we knew that the place was alarmed and that we had 30 seconds to do what we had to. Just as I was about to light a match, my partner slipped and fell! That was frightening — I had to drag her out, throw the match, and in seconds the place just blew! You can always hear the sound of breaking glass, that's what goes first, and of course we never stayed very long to hear what follows!

Did your attacks always follow a similar pattern?

Yes, except we got a bit more sophisticated. . . We graduated from using petrol-soaked rags and started using tubing, funnels and tapers to gain access when there was no letter box available to communicate our message through. We did one shop where the grilles were only a quarter of an inch apart, and it took a long time, but it worked. It all sounds amateurish, and it was, but it had the desired effect!

You had fairly consistent press coverage for your actions. Did you find the press sufficiently responsive?

With a few exceptions, the *Yorkshire Evening Post* (YEP) published the statements that we would telephone through immediately after an attack. Sometimes we would send typed statements, typed on machines that we would buy and immediately sell. The reports themselves were fairly neutral, the YEP would also inform us about the extent of the damage we had



caused, and no judgments were made. The local alternative paper, *Leeds Other Paper*, gave us sympathetic coverage, but derived their stories from the YEP — we only ever maintained direct contact with the YEP.

Disappointingly enough, the feminist press reported unevenly. *Spare Rib* stopped reporting our actions and of course we weren't in a position to ascertain why. Local feminist newsletters carried items about us now and then. *Outwrite* was the only paper that gave us consistent and supportive coverage and placed our actions in a political context of the overall fight against male violence, which is what they were and which is what we wanted recognised.

**What was your most active period?**

Well, during 1979 - 85, in which period there were about seven of us involved, although not all at the same time, we must have attacked more than 25 porn and video shops. Some we attacked repeatedly, like the sex shop in Chapeltown which local people had complained about and which feminists in Leeds had campaigned to have its licence revoked. Also, we didn't confine ourselves to operating in Leeds but attacked sex shops in neighbouring areas — Halifax, Bradford, Huddersfield, Skipton.

**Why did *Angry Women* prioritise direct action and not, say, campaigning against violence against women?**

Firstly, we were united in our belief that pornography is a form of hatred towards women; it abuses women and children; it thrives on vile stereotypes. I remember *SS Experiment Camp* with particular horror. A sex shop that opened on one May Day in Leeds had its window plastered with posters depicting an SS officer with a naked woman, strung upside down, in front of him. I saw that film — it was an unending catalogue of humiliations and violations and was revolting. Women had tried to get rid of it legally by using the Indecent Displays Act, a miserable piece of legislation which relies entirely on the discretion of the constable in charge. Nothing happened. And so we attacked it.

We have to make demands that pernicious propaganda of this nature has to be stopped — how can we do this politely? We thought our actions would contribute to discussions, that publicity we gained would influence attitudes, that some pressure would be put on the industry itself. Of course, we weren't naive enough to think that we would smash pornography — we know that it is an international multi-million dollar industry that thrives on the support of big business, the law makers, the law enforcers. . . But we felt that our actions were a way of doing something to those men who frequented sex shops every day, who watched violent porn films every night, simply because we had choked off their supplies, temporary though it was. *Angry Women* ensured that the porn brokers knew that not all women are passive, that there was strong opposition to them.

Secondly, campaigning against violence against women was not a lesser activity — *Leeds WAVAW* (Women Against Violence Against Women) were strong at the time, and we needed them and their campaigns to provide the political context in which we operated. So they were crucial to our existence.

**How did you select your targets?**

We made it our business to know who the pornographers are, and that was easy because pornographers like to brag about their activity and you could read about them in the *News of the World*. We knew who owned what, their retail outlets, and so on, and we had done extensive surveys of Leeds and surrounding areas to map the locations of sex shops and video shops selling porn.

The targets themselves — pre-1982 there were only the sex shops and they could be attacked easily enough. Post 1982

we had the beginnings of video shops — these sold what then were referred to as video nasties, child porn, sm stuff, and mostly over the counter and visible to the punters. The video porn industry really took off, and although by 1982 sex shops needed licences to do business, video shops provided lucrative outlets to pornographers, and many of them also offered a mail order service, not just in porn, but really horrific violent films that showed rape, murder, mutilation of women.

The mail-order business is particularly dangerous — its sheer volume and potential. There are also less controls that can be exercised to curb it — not that I believe that existing legislation, eg. the *Obscene Publications Act*, are of much use. I am convinced that more business is being done through mail order than through the shops, but there has been no research, and therefore no way of proving that.

Anyway, our targets were quite clearly defined: there were the sex shops like the *Private Shop* chain owned by David Sullivan (who incidentally offered £1000 for knowledge of our identities) and those video shops that brazenly sold porn and violence over the counter.

We always made it our business to know what was on offer at the shops. That was very important. We spent hours in the shops and pouring over the mail order catalogues.

In recent years I haven't checked out what's in the shops in the way we used to. But I know that porn has increased, that thresholds have changed and what was once totally outrageous is today quite commonplace. Even in the period that we were active, there was a marked increase in child porn, racist porn, sadomasochism, bestiality.

**Was any target ever doubted?**

No. We trusted each others' judgements implicitly.

**Did your actions have a noticeable effect?**

Temporarily, yes. But many of them came back, and continued to deal. However, I think two shops did close down completely following our intervention! They did all take greater security precautions, though.

**When you did a job successfully, what were your immediate feelings?**

Jubilation! Absolute jubilation! We would do the job and then be off, often without knowing the extent of the damage we caused. We once tried to estimate the extent of the damage we did, in a sense a useless activity, but still. . . and we calculated that it was about half a million pounds' worth. That's quite a bit of porn up in smoke!

**What kind of support did you get from the women's movement, and from outside it?**

Although we did get support, there were objections too. The main one being that by our actions we were endangering the feminist community in Leeds because of police surveillance, interrogation, raids. . . all of which happened. After we had attacked twin sex shops, the police interviewed some feminist academics, and took their house to pieces. What killed us was that they thought it was academics that had done it! It was apparent that they hadn't a clue as to who we were. Still, the academics responded very supportively, they wrote about it, they made public the fact that their rights had been infringed, and this in turn alerted the feminist community to be prepared in case of a visit from the police.

The *Leeds W.L. Newsletter* also carried articles about the importance of being aware of your rights, and this was very important for us, as we were in no position to protect anybody ourselves, and this preparation was exactly what we wanted.

Other objections included the fact that we were breaking the law, and that we were also censoring material. This last objection is one I don't have much patience with — why should films showing the systematic mutilation of women, murder, rape, humiliations and so on be available to men? The objection that was hardest to deal with was that we were endangering life. . . But on the whole, we did get support, not only from feminists but also some leftists, and liberals.

**Did police interference and the fact that they obviously wanted to find you deter you in any way?**

No. We knew we were breaking the law, in fact several laws — criminal damage, arson, conspiracy, endangering life — and we were well aware that the consequences could be ten years in prison. But we were resolved to continue.

**By taking direct action, what level of politicisation amongst feminists did you hope to achieve?**



We had hoped there would be other groups taking direct action, but there weren't. There were a few spin offs, eg. when women in Leeds (not us) took direct action against an exhibition of pornographic sculptures and against individual men. But there was nothing concerted or consistent.

Why do you think your actions didn't have a snow-balling effect?

Perhaps it's because women are traditionally not used to taking that kind of action. Or because it all seems frightening and difficult.

Did *Angry Women* engage in political debates about the actions you were taking?

No, we didn't really have any political debates — we were clear about what pornography was, and what it did, and how

we wanted to deal with it. Our discussions revolved around strategies, tactics, the whys, wheres and hows. If there were disagreements, they were more about the way we did something or planned to, rather than whether we should or not. All of us were white, lesbians and, unusually, mostly working class. As and when other issues related to our actions did surface, we would discuss them, eg. the time when one of our targets was owned by an Asian man, which prompted discussions on racism, the possible treatment he would get from police, and so on.

How were new women recruited?

Primarily on the basis of their politics around violence against women, and their views on pornography. We also considered their general behaviour in the community — was she responsible? Could she be trusted? Could she keep her mouth shut — that was most important. Politics in other spheres also mattered, of course. But there was no recruitment of anybody already in an existing group, or anybody who had a high public profile.

After 1984, we didn't hear any more about *Angry Women*. Why was that?

By the end of 1984, we were down to three members. Others had either got burnt out and left, or were too frightened to sustain the level of activity. Out of the three of us, one was particularly vulnerable for other reasons, so we mutually decided to stop. Carrying on with just two was risky, and it was difficult to find new recruits. Also, *WAVAW* had more or less stopped being active — the defence trials had taken their toll. Without the support of a campaigning group constantly raising the political issues, we would have been a lone voice. So, the low membership, the difficulty in recruiting and the demise of *WAVAW* forced us to stop. That was a difficult decision, simply because we didn't want to.

In the five years that you were active, how close did the police come to finding you?

Not close at all. The Superintendent of West Yorkshire Police once told the press that he knew we had a lot of support and thought that we might be feminists! And that is as close as they got. When they picked up Connie O'Donovan, whose car had been stolen and driven through the window of a sex shop, they put immense pressure on her because they thought she would lead them to us. Which of course she couldn't. The Millgarth police station had a map on the wall on which all the sites of our attacks were marked, and despite quite a trail of women being questioned by them, they couldn't get their hands on this so-called bunch of lunatics, i.e., us! When Connie's case was thrown out at pre-trial stage, it was a great humiliation for them. I think they were really pissed off that they never found us.

Today, we have a booming pornography industry, an escalation of violence against women, and in recent years, the emergence of evidence of very widespread abuse of girls within the family. At the same time, we have witnessed the demise of *WAVAW*, there is no direct action against violence against women, and existing campaigns and networks are stagnant. Why do you think we have become so inactive?

Well, perhaps Thatcherism is one answer...although why our resistance should weaken in the face of increased repression is difficult to understand. I did see a lot of women burnt out from working at fever pitch, and there was nobody to replace them. A lot of middle-class women have gone off into careers — they have had the privilege to opt out. But all this certainly doesn't explain it, and it puzzles me that younger women have not joined in. Also, that some national networks still exist, like *Women's Aid*, for example, but we don't have any campaigns any more to raise awareness about the issues. I'd like to see a national network, like *WAVAW*, but something that involves a wider spectrum of women.

Was your involvement with *Angry Women* the most rewarding political activity you engaged in?

No. It was satisfying in one way certainly, and that was that you could see the results instantaneously before your very eyes! And yes, we did make a dent in the porn industry in Leeds — they knew we could strike, and would strike, and we did. But it didn't have a lasting effect. By the very nature of the activity, it couldn't. Not unless there is a strong nationwide feminist campaign that will campaign on every front.

The target of your attacks — pornography — has also increasingly become a source of pleasure to lesbians who claim to be feminists and believe that engaging in practices like sm sex is about a liberation of sexuality. What is your response?

It angers me intensely. It reminds me of politics about gay male sexuality and pornography, and I am mortified that lesbians are now adopting the same and that they are attempting to make me feel prudish etc., much as men tried to make women feel in the '60s.

I don't know how we tackle this — it's male defined politics as far as I can see, and I have no idea why it has mushroomed. But then, I also know the power that a small group, or even one individual, can wield. It just saddens me that there is no greater resistance to it. But so far, I think it's peculiar to London — I cannot imagine a debate on sm taking place in Leeds, because there is already such a climate of opinion against violence against women.

I find it deeply ironic that today we are not fighting about taking action against male violence in all its manifestations, but debating the political validity — if there can be such a thing — of violent sexual practice between lesbians! And today we have magazines like *On Our Backs*, which I would happily take action against, increasing their circulation.

I think there is an urgent need that we remind ourselves about how much men hate us. It is easy to put it out of your mind because it is so horrific and there is a deadly combination of widespread ignorance of porn as well as the refusal to acknowledge its violence that operates in making us retreat into a false self-contained safety. What we need to do is confront this violence, and confront our fears about it, and turn that fear into anger.

This interview first appeared in *Outwrite Women's Newspaper*, December 1988.



# CAMPAIGN AGAINST PORNOGRAPHY & CENSORSHIP

On 17th April, the Campaign Against Pornography & Censorship (CPC) was officisally launched, with press and TV coverage. Essentääally it's a campaign to bring in legislation to make at least some porn illegal, but members of CPC seem to be realistic about this, and don't see it as a way of bringing an end to porn,. Rather, legislation against pornography. because it is discriminatory agaist women and provokes "sexual hatred" (rather than campaigning on any moral or religious grounds, like Mary Whitehouse), creates a social climate which states what is and isn't acceptable, as does the Race Relations Act. This must be its main value. Effective campaigns against porn must be campaigns against the whole of capitalism and patriarchy, as pornography is so integral to our preseny system.

Because anti-porn campaigns seem to have been virtually non-existant in recent years, any new group like CPC is quite welcome. One reason for lessening of activity seems to have been accusations from some theorists that to be against porn means to be for censorship, so by campaigning against porn you would lose more freedom than you would gain.

Thus CPC has specified its opposition to censorship. This idea is rubbish anyway Pornography so censors the lives and liberties of women that any opposition to it is well justified. Eliminating porn would serve to increase the freedom of women rather than limiting freedom, as censorship implies.

Catrherine Itzin, CPC's co-ordinator and editor of the forthcoming book, "The Case Against Pornography", said, "We believe pornography silences and censors the freedom of women. We also believe in free speech , free expression and freedom of information. We think pornography should be eliminated on the grounds that it contributes to sex discrimination, sexual inequality, sexual violence and sexism."

Michael Moorcock, author, anarchist and Cpc steering committee member said, "Pornography desensitises sexuality, promotes an image of women as sex objects, second class citizens and willing victims. The establishment of CPC is an important and historic step towards establishing a genuine egalitarian society".

Quite a statement - we'll see if those words come true. However, CPC will hopefully do some valuable work against pornography, which few other groups are doing these days.



## SOME OF OUR VIEWS ON PORNOGRAPHY

\*The images of women in porn mags don't seem like real women to me. Whose fantasies are they? They make me feel unsafe because there's no love, just a want in the minds of the men that read them.

\*I feel vulnerable sometimes walking as a woman and somehow I know it's linked with the images of women.

\*Seeing women in porn mags, degraded, chained, etc. chains us all.

\*Pornography is not just violence against the women in the picture and does not just promote porn but is violence in itself coz it is destructive to any woman's sexuality and lays down rules of sexual expression.

\*Pornography makes me angry cos it promotes masochism in women - self-hatred

\*The men who create porn can't possibly be caring humans in the way they sell women's bodies.

\*Stop porn crippling our identity!  
Don't let them degrade us anymore!  
They hurt us in many ways, don't let

\*Porn is sick!

\*Porn is a sexual factory churning out plastic images of our sexuality - robot sex for dead heads/hearts grounded in death and rape - women are made into nothing, the fools that buy it are made into nothing - only the pornographers profits benefit.



\*Pornography rapes women of their individuality, their identity. What is there left?. Porn= the theory, rape= the practice. One more natural (?) progression in this society.

\*Pornography is made for and used by men. Another way to control and manipulate - denying the feelings and emotions of women - degrading and passifying. The ultimate abuse of women's minds and bodies.

\*Porn shows women being raped and makes it acceptable. It makes my body feel like hacked up meat, frightened, humiliated.





The 'soft' stuff in the corner shop.

Anti porn campaigners are getting a bit tied up with defining porn as opposed to erotica, rather than the usual definitions between soft and hard porn. It's so that they aren't accused of being prudes, or being against sex and enjoyment. It seems odd to me, I never worry about differentiating between porn and erotica because you so rarely see any genuine erotica. It's not much of a problem. What is a problem is getting people to include such things as fashion spreads and advertisements in women's magazines (and elsewhere) as porn. The women in these may have clothes on (or they may not), but their depiction is still the same as in porn mags, etc. - women are seen as vulnerable, as "sexy", as childlike, as having no life or existence outside the magazine page, as selling commodities and with them a false idea of womanhood,

and often only parts of their bodies are shown, which is common in pornography.

Editors of women's magazines may feel they have no control over the adverts which they have to accept to keep their magazine financially afloat. They may also feel that other compromises they make (e.g. using porn distribution companies) are outweighed by any important campaigns against porn or sexism that they run. However, without exception, from time to time they produce their own kind of porn to sell fashion, and this they do have control over.

Just as there is no point in distinguishing between "hard" and "soft" porn, so women's magazines (and others, e.g. Blitz, The Face, Sky, I.D.) needs to be included in any definition of plus any image that is seen from the male viewpoint of wanting women to look like they are there for sex and nothing else.



# tenants fight back

Despite boasting of the huge 'success' of its housing policies in the past, the Government has recently been forced into retreat on the issue, due to community action.

The major plank of the Conservatives' line on housing has not been to cut waiting lists or the massive homelessness figures. It has been to do with what housing minister David Trippier called 'municipal fiefdoms' of local authority housing, & in one way or another, put homes into the private sector.

They have had some degree of 'success' in privatising housing stock through a number of measures including:

- introducing (in 1980) council tenants 'right to buy' their homes at Knock-down prices, which has reduced local authority housing stock by over one-fifth.

- pushing councils into selling whole estates to private developers to renovate & then re-sell at prices most of the original tenants can't afford.

- coercing local authorities to transfer their entire housing stock to non-public bodies, ie. housing associations or private companies.

It has pushed all this along by imposing a severe financial straight jacket on councils so that they can't invest in new housing or maintain their existing stock. This has resulted in British local authority house building to be reduced from 58 434 in 1979, to 20 278 in 1987, that's a drop of 65% since Thatcher arrived on the scene... compared with a rise in private housebuilding of 48% !!!

The result of the governments policies has been a massive rise in the numbers on council house waiting lists. In England they went up by 170% in just four years. And since 1979, there has been an almost doubling of the officially recorded number of homeless households.

Following the 'success' of right to buy the government introduced further measures to privatise local authority housing: -the 1985 Housing Act allowed councils to dispose of their entire housing stock, known as 'voluntary transfer'.

- the 1988 Housing Act established

the concept of Housing Action Trusts (HATs) which are unelected, government run bodies set up to take over council estates for renovation & ultimate disposal to new ownership -the 1988 Act also introduced the 'pick-a-landlord' scheme whereby tenants can switch to a new land lord/lady if sufficient tenants on their estate do not object. This involved the notorious ballot procedure in which tenants abstaining were counted as voting in favour of the switch.

But in all these measures the government is facing major setbacks.

A large number of local authorities are having to retreat on voluntary transfer proposals in the face of tenant opposition. Financial problems plus tenant antagonism may force the government to abandon its HAT plans & the 'pick-a-landlord' scheme is making headway on only one estate.

Tenants in vast numbers are rejecting any proposals for privatisation. The first proposal for a 'voluntary transfer' of councils entire housing stock from Torbay District council to two housing associations ended in fiasco in January with a major U-turn by the government.

For voluntary transfers, councils are not obliged to hold a tenants ballot. Torbay held one anyway, 42% of the tenants DID NOT vote, these were accepted as 'YES' votes.

The Councils decision caused uproar, & secretary of state Nicolas Ridley was forced to criticise the ballot as it would otherwise have drawn too much attention to the unfair ballot. However, he criticised the 'low turnout' (59%), rather than the rules adopted, & Torbay council wasted £240,000 of public money on the exercise.

So far only two voluntary transfers have got as far as gaining approval from the secretary of state

A number of councils have had to retreat after tenant ballots rejected transfer proposals:

- 92% of tenants in Rochford voted 'NO' to the councils plans to transfer its 2,400 homes to Crouch Valley Housing Association

- 75% of tenants voted 'NO' in



Salisbury to plans to transfer 7,800 homes

-77% of tenants in Arun also voted 'NO'.

A number of other authorities have also been facing problems & have been forced to drop transfer plans.

Some authorities however, are going ahead with transfer plans despite clear tenant opposition. Warrington Runcorn Development Corporation's proposal to transfer management (& probably, eventually ownership) of its stock to four housing associations is proceeding despite the lack of mandate from tenants. Its second round of 'consultation' with tenants resulted in only 11 responses from 5000 letters.

Aberconwy District council is going ahead with plans to transfer its stock to a newly created housing association in spite of a survey showing tenants were satisfied with their present arrangement. And the Scottish Special Housing Association is insisting on transferring its Shetland Island stock to Hjatland Housing Association, even though tenants opted for a council as their new landowner.

But the govt. is about to suffer a more direct humiliation in the form of a major setback to its proposed Housing Action Trusts. The HATs idea has been riddled with problems since the beginning. The first was when the govt. tried to designate Hulme in Manchester as a HAT area. Nine local tenants associations grouped together to create the Hulme Tenants Alliance which mounted a vigorous campaign against the proposal. It eventually won the govt.'s approval to have a feasibility study carried out which would suggest alternative methods of improving the area - thus scrapping the HAT.

The Govt. subsequently designated HATS on 20 estates - all non Tory so that votes wouldn't be effected. The plan was for these HATS to be set up without gaining the tenants' approval, which fuelled already

mounting nationwide opposition. Unofficial canvassing on the designated estates indicated over 80% of tenants were opposed to the HATS. Eventually the Govt. had to back down, & in November last year gave tenants the right to a ballot on

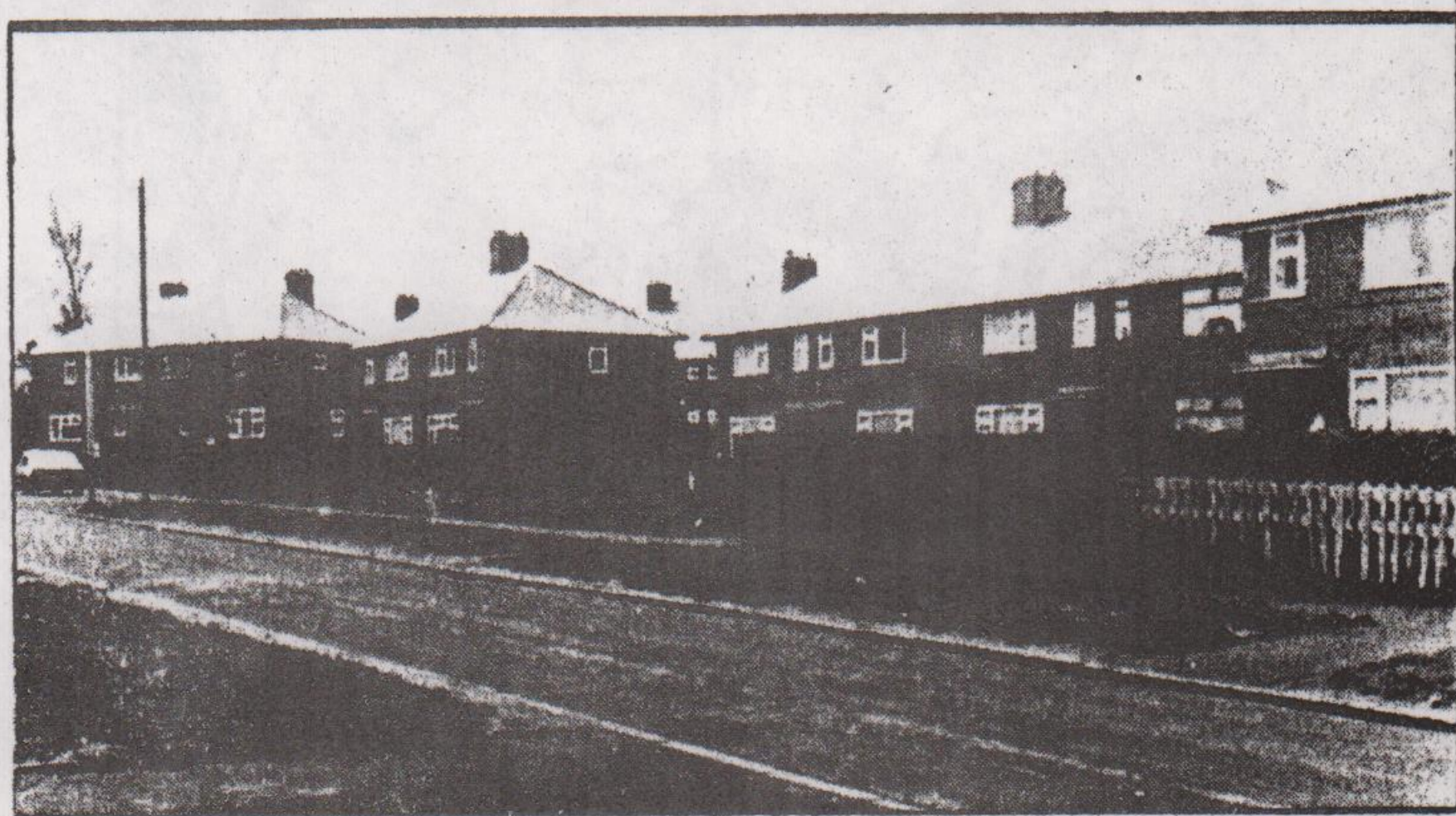
the issue.

Meanwhile another controversy was brewing - this time over the consultants which the Govt. had hired to assess the suitability of the 6 proposed HAT areas. The Govt. had claimed these assessments would be independent. But a leaked letter from one of the consultants to the Dept. of the Environment spoke of 'our single minded focus on the results which the Dept. needs after the studies are complete, ie. a fast, surefooted & successful implementation of the HAT programme.'

Despite such optimism, last month the Govt. announced that 11 of the 20 HAT plans were to be dropped, including 2 of the 3 in Leeds. The Dept. of the Environment however, insists that 'the govt. is committed to the concept of HATs'.

HOWEVER, even if the govt. is forced into a U-turn, the problems for tenants are not over. While the Govt. is pumping money into HATs, it is cutting the money allocated to Local authorities for Public housing. This means that 1 in 5 programmes of estate renovation will have to be cancelled, workers will be laid off & people will have to wait even longer for home improvement grants. It seems that the intention is to make council housing so run down that the tenants, 85% of whom have resisted change over to private housing - will eventually be driven into doing so.

Self rule for tenants on the Belle Isle estate





THE ADVENTURES OF



TINTIN

## BREAKING FREE

BOOK REVIEW:

'BREAKING FREE'

J. DANIELS

ATTACK INTERNATIONAL

Now this is an adventure I'd really like to join in!! Tintin has become politicised, He's pissed off with the dole office, lack of money, housing situation. His uncle the Captain helps him get a job on a building site, there's an accident, a bloke called Joe gets killed-& that's the beginning of what you might call a revolution!

As workers get organised, the whole community joins in-strikes start up left right & centre, leaflets get published, support groups set up, there're pickets, demos & meetings gallore. All the links are made.

I really enjoyed it. A dead easy read, being in cartoon form & all. Just about all the 'right on' issues are covered, so every page you turn over, you're thinking, 'what's gonna happen now?'

Women are prominent, lesbian & Black women included, infact, the only thing missing is Snowy!

Tintin's a bit of a jerk, all mouth & machismo, but he's surrounded by people who channel his energy & challenge his attitudes on all sorts of subjects, including, racism, sexism, heterosexism, agism, & many more!

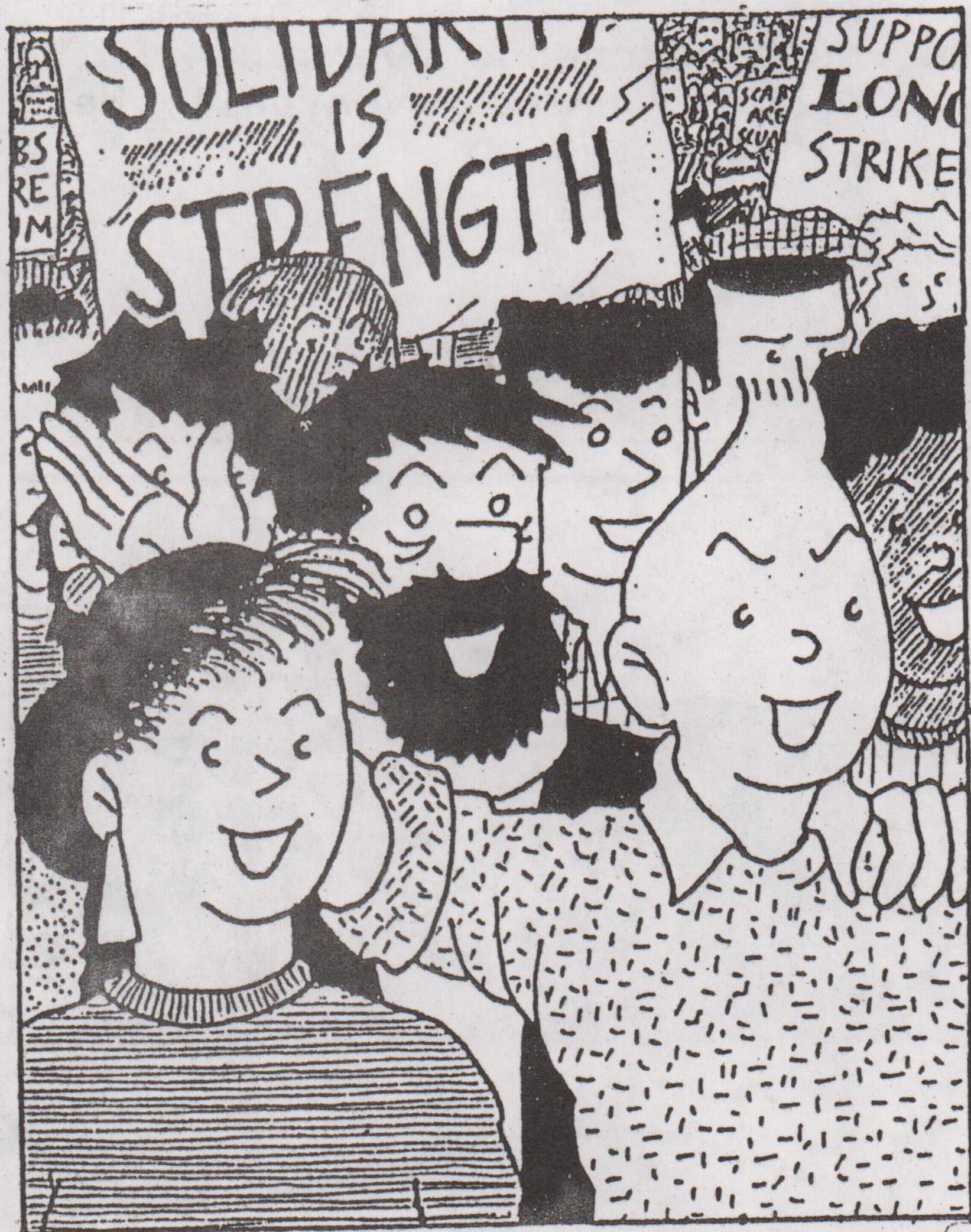
The Class war erupts, & the book ends, or does it...

Worth a read at just £2, it'd make a good pressie for the unenlightened too.

'Breaking Free' has been accused of being anti-union, I don't agree, it's anti-union bureaucracy & sell out shop stewards.

The book's been dedicated to 'all those fighting against capitalism, & it makes you feel that anarchy really is possible,

although it is what you might call over the top!!!!





## A black and white illustration of a baby in a cradleboard, with a sign that reads "id Aromatics" featuring a stylized oil lamp. The baby is shown from the side, nestled in a cradleboard with a circular pattern on the front. Above the baby is a bundle of what appears to be dried herbs or roots. To the right, a rectangular sign with a rounded border contains the text "id" in a large, lowercase, sans-serif font, followed by "Aromatics" in a smaller, similar font. To the right of the text is a stylized illustration of an oil lamp with a flame.

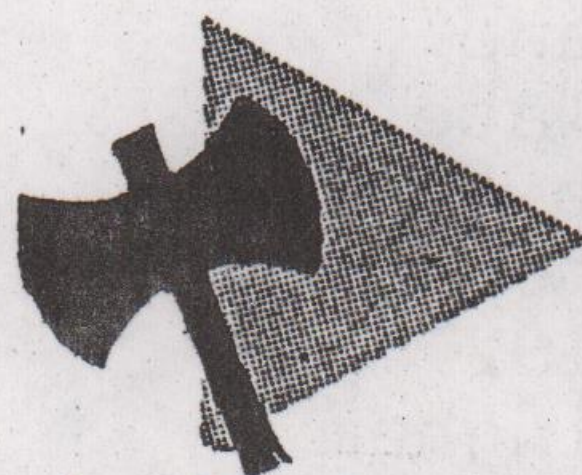
Their definition of Alternative Healing is 'any form of healing or therapeutic work which falls outside the standard medical model...they tend to treat the whole person, rather than just trying to abolish a disease..'

The directory provides a list of healing practitioners in Leeds & area, who responded to circulars asking them to appear.

Some work with women only, & some operate a sliding scale on charges & a number of them will arrange a free initial chat before any commitment is made. The Practitioners haven't been vetted, so choosing who to turn to is entirely in your hands.

(Available from 9 Avenue Crescent, Leeds 8, £1.50)

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SISTER/RE-SISTER/RE-SISTER/RE-SIS  
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The idea for a non-party political, lesbian and gay politically progressive group began around Christmas. The idea was publicised in lesbian and gay, green and anarchist press. So far the group is small, but there has been one meeting, and further meetings are planned for once a month. (For details of the 2nd see the Whats On page). Aims and principles are being worked on, including

- making links with other lesbian and gay organisations
- fight for equal rights for lesbian and gay men
- providing lesbians and gay men with information on the law
- informing people about lesbian and gay oppression
- strive to support all other oppressed groups
- to challenge trade unions, councils, etc. on equal rights
- to oppose hierarchical bureaucratic structures and to provide positive alternatives

The group has a stall in Kennington Gardens for Pride 89, selling books, posters, badges, the newsletter and maybe T-shirts. The deadline for articles for the newsletter is May 13th - address for this is the same as for the next meeting (see Whats On).



2nd May and first Tuesday of every month - Women's Performance Night & disco, The Leadmill Sheffield 8pm-2am. Come along and perform if you want!

2nd May and every other Tuesday - Leeds Campaign Against the Poll Tax, Trades Club LS7 8pm.

4th May - Woodhouse Against the Poll Tax, meet Woodhouse Community Centre, 7pm, for canvassing in Woodhouse.

5th May and every other Friday - Women only disco, Checkpoint, Bradford.

Until May 6th every evening at 8pm, Trouble & Strife present "Next to you I Lie", at Drill Hall Arts Centre, 16 Chenies St, London WC1. Tel 01-637 8270. £5/£3.50. Good access, free childcare under 5's Fri/Sat.

6th May Irish Hunger Strike Commemoration Committee - March & Rally, assemble 12 noon Oozells St. (off Broad St.) Birmingham - creche available. Transport from Leeds 9am (Trades Club), 9.15am (Parkinson Steps), 9.30 am (Corn Exchange). Tickets, £6 (waged) £3 (unwaged).

Until 6th May Charlotte Mellis, Anne Forde. Designs in black & white. Piece Hall Art Gallery, Halifax.

13th May Women's Reproductive Rights Campaign, 11am-5pm, Quaker House, Woodhouse Lane.

13th May, from 11am till late 2nd meeting of the Revolutionary Lesbian & Gay Group. For more info, contact Box 4, 190-192 Almrock Rd, Saltley, Birmingham, W. Mids. (please send SAE)

18th May, 7.30pm, Public meeting with homeopath Dr, Blanfield, covering older age groups and their respective ailments. St. Michaels Parish Hall, Headingley. 50p (members) 75p (non-members).

27th May, 10am-5pm - National meeting of the Anti-Nuclear Network, will be held at St. Werburghs Community Centre, Horley Rd, St. Werburghs, Bristol Creche facilities provided. For more info contact ANN, PO Box 30, 187, High Rd, Wood Grn, London N22

#### REGULAR MEETINGS

##### SUNDAYS

Parents friend. 1st sunday of the month. Tel: Bradford 674627.

Bradford Lesbian/Gay youth Gp. 7.30pm

Womens football, Hyde Park moor, Leeds. 2-4pm

Leeds claimants union business meeting, every sunday. Tel 753160 or 426148

MONDAYS WOMENS SPORTS NIGHT. Manningham Sports centre, Bradford.

York Lesbian & gay solidarity. 7.30pm

##### TUESDAYS

Leeds Lesbian & Gay youth Gp. 7.30pm

Leeds Mozambique Gp, 3rd Tuesday of every mth. 8pm. 130 Harehills Ave.

Leeds campaign against the poll tax.

Alternate Tuesdays. 8pm. Trades Club. (starting 10th Jan.)

Leeds women & Ireland Gp. Meet Tuesdays, Civic Hall, Leeds. Contact Box 173, 52 Call lane.

##### WEDNESDAYS

Lesbian with children/in relationship with partner with children - Contact, Jennie, C/O Leeds other paper, 52 Call Lane.

DAM meetings, Woodpecker pub, Marsh Lane, 8pm.

##### THURSDAYS

Irish in Britain Representation Gp. meets 2nd & 4th Thurs. of month. 8pm, Trades club, Saville Mt.

Womens Action on benefits, Open Thurs. morn - ings, 9.30-12.30. 202 Bellevue Rd, Leeds

##### FRIDAYS

Lesbian social Gp, First friday of month. Tel: 453588

SATURDAYS Leeds lesbian & Gay youth Gp. Leeds lesbian & Gay youth Gp. 2-4pm Box 300, C/O LOP.

The word is out lesbian writers Gp. Leeds 0532 43300

