

What's this 'social exclusion' stuff...

By Robert Batchelor
Resident

Social Exclusion is an abbreviated term to describe what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as, unemployment, poor skills, low income, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown.

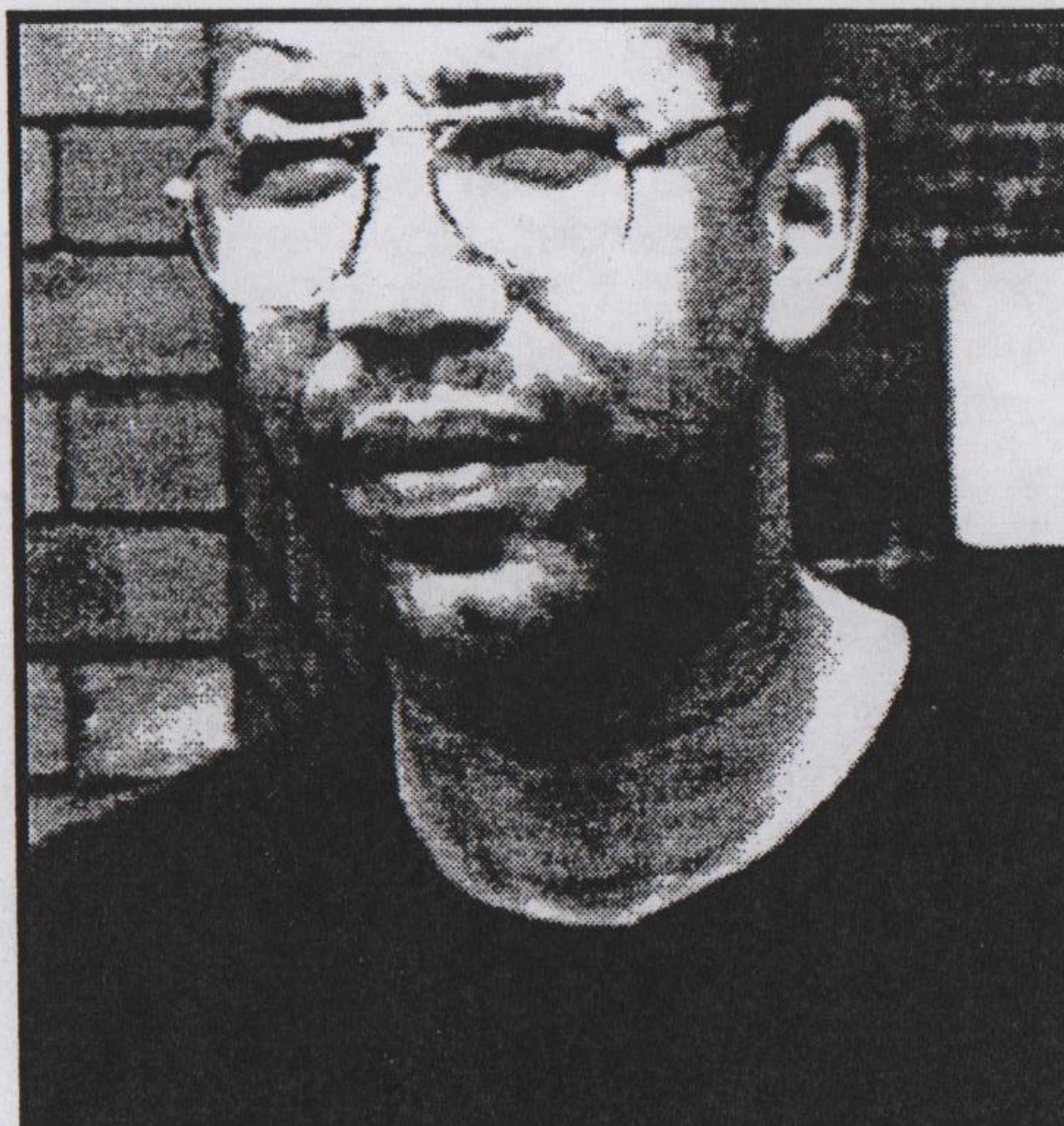
Social exclusion results in people being excluded from the normal exchanges and practices and rights of modern society. It principally relates to poverty, but also includes inadequate rights to housing, education, health and access to services.

Let's look at one aspect of social exclusion - unemployment. Having no job invariably means a lack of resources and difficulty in maintaining a reasonable or comfortable life-style. You are also reliant on means tested benefit, which are often inadequate or difficult to obtain.

Bureaucracy and poor communication between departments can and often does lead to difficulties in obtaining benefit entitlements.

The stigma that has gone with unemployment, over recent years, has made it almost fashionable to lay blame for all the problems in society at the door of the unemployed. We also had the campaign "know a dole cheat? Give us a ring" which at a stroke criminalised a large section of society through guilt by association. Added to this is the 'work worth' relationship. Often when you meet people for the first time an early query is what do you do? And you are 'graded' by your answer.

What does Social Exclusion do to you? It is difficult to describe the effect as it is dependent upon your personal circumstances and the sort of person you are. It is not just about a lack of money. Its also being able to make informed choices, exercising your rights, access to accurate and understandable information. Being aware of how your own involvement in issues local or national can effect change. It's also about having the confidence, knowledge or ability to challenge decisions that affect you.



This points to another fundamental part of social exclusion which often is missed. Social Exclusion can be about much more than a job or money. It can be about how you see yourself, what confidence you have and how your self esteem is.

These are things which affect your life more than the job you do. Moreover they are things which you build up over the years and experiences of your life, not just on five week training course.

For a practical example, I live in the NG7 area, and contacted a reputable insurance company over a promotion in my local supermarket. I was told, because of my postal address I could not get fully comprehensive insurance for my car. I returned to the supermarket and complained about the promotion which was immediately withdrawn!. It is destructive to stigmatise areas by their postcode and exclude the residents of those areas from services that people in other areas can take for granted.

Solutions

There has been an explosion of pressure groups, action groups, community groups and other organisations attempting to tackle social exclusion. Focusing on issues around parenting, youth resources, community action and more. The government has come up with its own Social Exclusion Unit to liaise with a number of departments to tackle some of the more difficult problems.

Are there answers to the problem of social exclusion? Well there are no simple ones. The problems are many and complex and interrelated. This is in fact the first step to an answer... to see that the problem is not simplistic, not just a matter of someone else changing something but that we are all interrelated in the problem and all need to contribute to an answer.

If we want people to fulfill their potential, give people a sense of value both in themselves and those around them and play an active role in their communities, then a seachange in thinking will have to take place.

That includes you and me because it's not going to just happen by itself.

"Its also being able to make informed choices, exercising your rights"

Community Involvement

Community Groups and organisations are invited to attend an interesting meeting about community involvement in the local Area 4 Committee area. There will be a chance to meet area four Councillors and staff and look at future work ideas. The meeting is on Tuesday 26th October at 7pm at the Radford Road Police Stations' social club. Those interested must contact Toni Price on 915 4750 as the Social Club must know who is attending.

Celebration of Volunteering

As part of 'Citizenship Week' an event has been organised by the Area 4 Community Development Workers Team. The organised event is a "Celebration of Volunteering in Area 4" which is taking place on October 14th at John Carroll Community Centre, Denman Street in Radford. It will start at 6.15pm and close at 8.35pm and will include a free buffet and entertainment. For more details contact the Worker Team on 978 1673.

Millenium goes off like a bomb.

Recent articles in the news have discussed worries from the French armed forces that the millenium bug might accidentally cause the odd missile to spontaneously launch. Much as these will generously add to the spectacle of numerous firework displays across Europe there are some worries that an accidentally launched nuclear missile might cause problems much larger than just a bad hangover.

So what do you do if you find a missile in your back yard or garden? We have not got any direct advice from the UK Armed Forces but our suggestion is to take it to a local police station, community centre or City Council. Say when and where you found it and ask for it to be returned to its owner.

If it happens to be a nuclear missile we suggest you carry it very, very, carefully.

Sept 99 . No.18

Partnership Council

one sheet

Situations vacant Partnership Council

Job & Secondment Opportunities

Team Leader Outreach & Partnership Building
(up to £21,000 pa)

*

Assistant Outreach Worker - Excluded Groups
(up to £10,000 pa)

*

Project Officer Urban Initiative
(up to £18,000 pa)

*

Administrative Assistant
(up to £9,000 pa)

"Never doubt that a relatively small but thoughtful group of committed citizens can change the world: indeed it is the only thing that ever does"

Margaret Mead

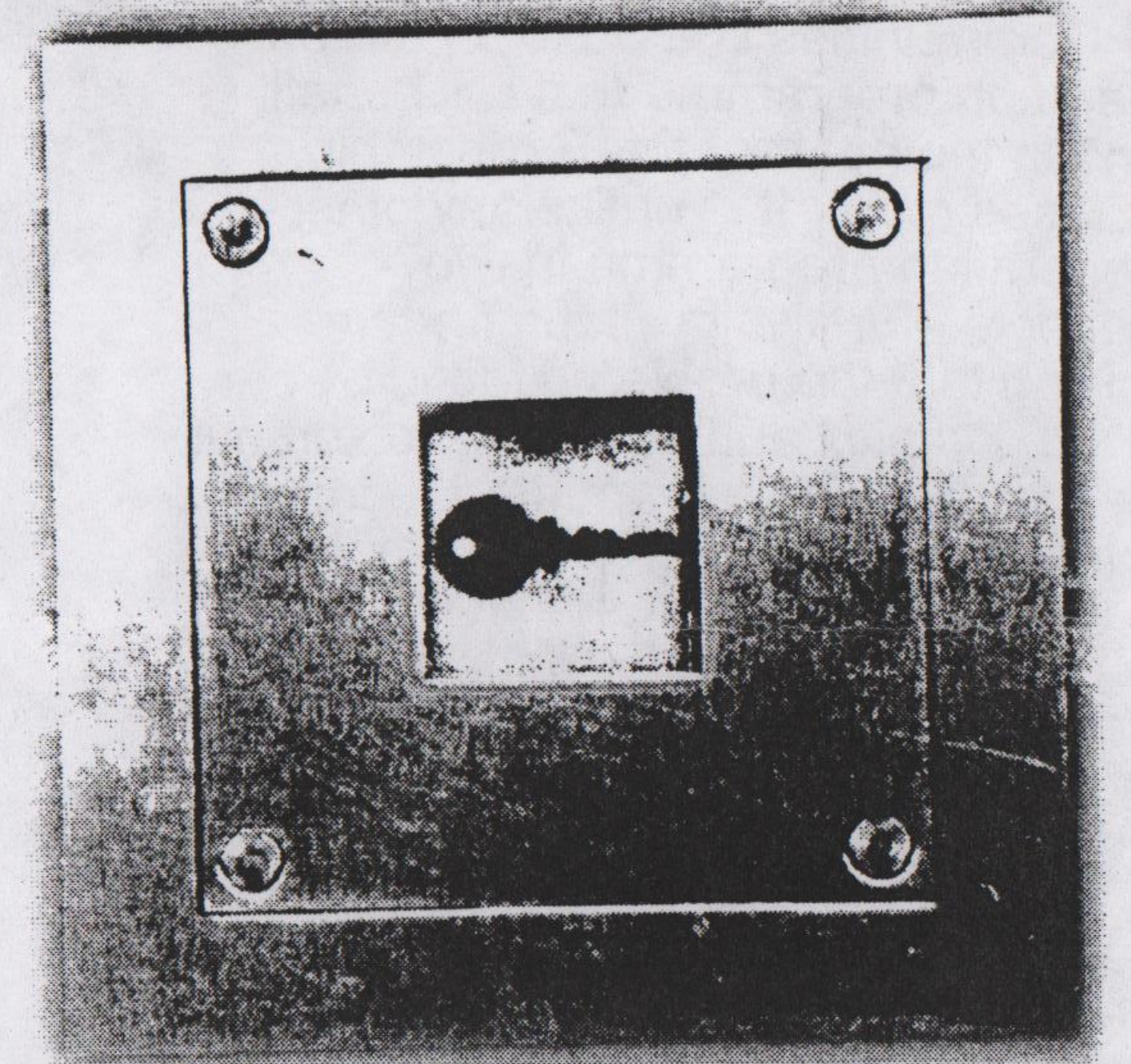
The Partnership Council is based in the Nottingham Communities of Radford, Hyson Green, Forest Fields and New Basford. It is working to raise the quality of life, opportunities and aspirations of local people by ensuring that the nature and quality of local services are informed by the views, knowledge and experience of those who live and work locally. The successful candidates will need to be self-motivated, effective communicators, diplomatic, assertive and have a positive & optimistic attitude.

The Team Leader will work towards increasing the influence participants have over decisions which affect their communities as well as building effective long term relationships with partner organisations. The Assistant Outreach Worker (Job Share applications welcomed) will, as part of a staff team, ensure that the Partnership Council is experienced as accessible by those from excluded groups, particularly members of the Asian & African Caribbean communities. The Project Officer - will assist in the effective delivery and accountability of a European Regeneration Programme. The Administrative Assistant - will work with the Administrative Officer to provide assistance to the staff team and other participants.

All posts are subject to an annual review and funding. Contracts will be to the end of 2001. For further information please telephone Nottingham 0115 9708200. Closing dates for applications Friday 15th of October. Interviews will be held on the 27th/28th of October.

New Deal Job opportunities inside

Community justice



Alternative solutions that work.

High levels of crime in our communities have a huge impact. They restrict our freedom and reduce our access to opportunities. Many people feel unable to take an active part in the life of the community or even feel safe in their own homes. They affect business confidence, inward investment and also damage the reputation of our area and our community.

Many attempts have been made to tackle this problem and many have had an impact. Gating and lighting projects have helped to increase people's sense of security and the Police and Nottingham City Council have worked with local groups, such as Birkin Patch Association, to make improvements to the local environment. Local Traders Associations have also worked hard to improve security for local businesses. Many similar schemes have already been supported by the Partnership Council through URBAN and others are in the pipeline.

But when residents were consulted about what they wanted out of the URBAN fund they argued that improvements to security are not enough. Resident Forum members were concerned that our community wasn't turned into a fortress and attempts were made to address the causes of crime. The Action Plan therefore included money put aside to work with offenders.

After two years of hard work and the commitment of all the members of Working Group five an innovative project has now been developed. The Restorative Justice Project's aim is to hold offenders directly

accountable to their victims. Their work will help offenders face up to the full consequences of their actions and offer them opportunities to make amends.

For some people the only action which should be taken against those who commit crime is to lock them up. However this approach often fails to prevent people from re-offending. Evidence from around the country suggests that restorative justice schemes have more impact in reducing re-offending behaviour as well as offering positive benefits to the victims of crime. The project is being targeted at young people between the ages of 10 and 24. It will work with those who are at risk of being involved in criminal activity as well as those who are currently subject to warnings or orders within the criminal justice system.

The scheme is also a good example of how residents views have had a direct impact on the type of services funded through URBAN. This project was drawn up to reflect the concerns and issues raised by local residents and was developed through a partnership with resident representatives and NACRO, the City Council's Youth Offending Team, the Probation Service and Victim support. The idea is about to become a reality thanks to their work and match funding from the Home Office. So you can make a difference.

If you would like more information about the project you can contact Paul Phillips from NACRO on: 985 7744

970 8200

47 Gregory Blvd . Hyson Green
Nottingham . NG7 5JA



EUROPEAN COMMUNITY
Structural Funds (URBAN)

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RADFORD AND HYSON GREEN FOREST FIELDS NEW BASFORD

Joint resident Forum meeting:

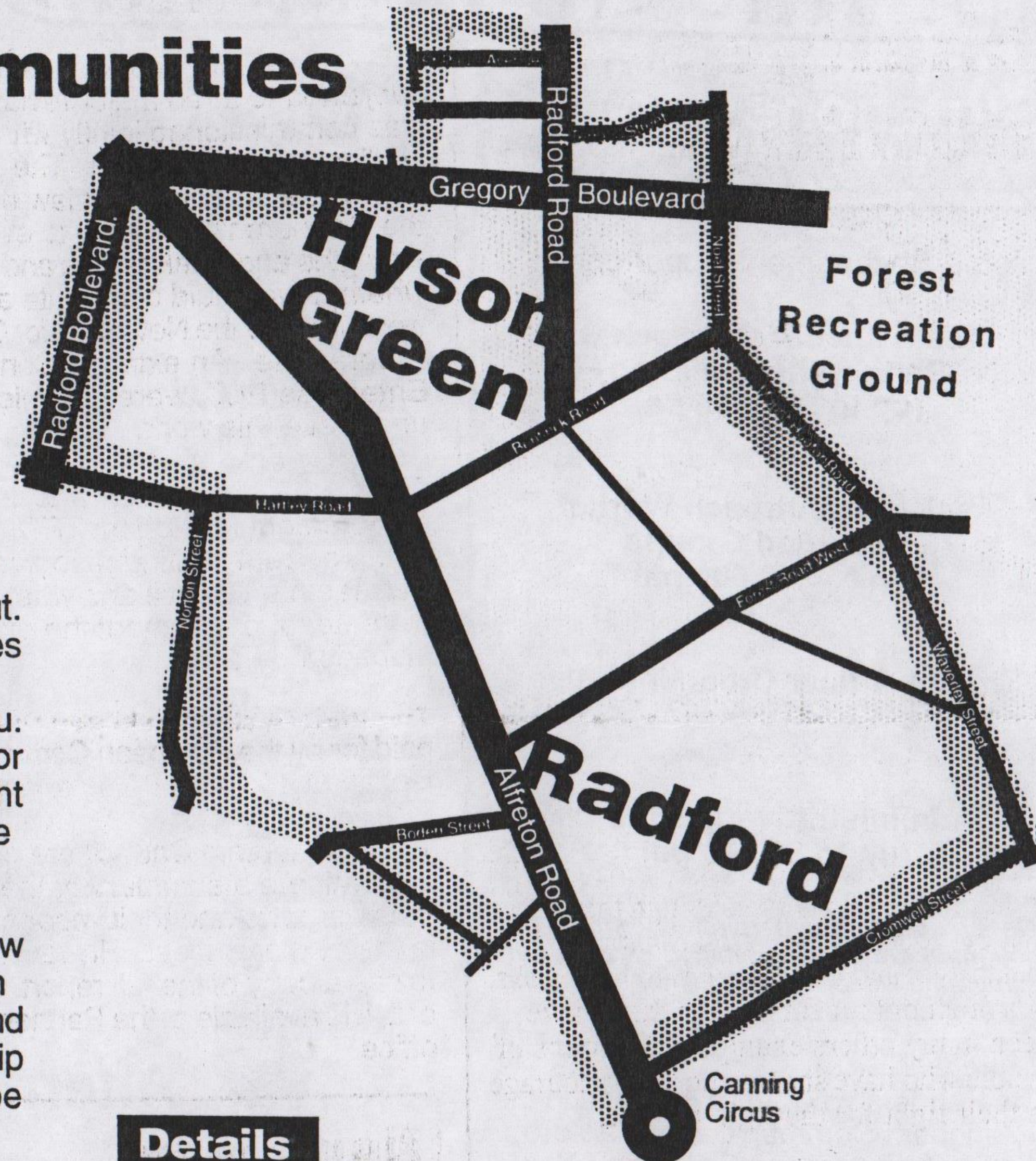
New Deal for Communities

What on earth is it & what will it do ?

New Deal for Communities is a 35 to 50 million pound regeneration programme that will benefit residents living in the heart of the Partnership Council area. (see map) It is unlike any other national regeneration programme in two important respects. Firstly, it will run for ten years recognising that the problems faced by our communities are complex and need time to sort out. Secondly, like the URBAN programme, it recognises that to get solutions which will work the whole community has to be involved. And that means you. The process of consultation to form the agenda for action is currently underway. The time table is tight and although it is not too late to get involved there is no time to waste.

You may have already read or heard stuff about New Deal but developing a plan to spend 35-50 million pounds is complex and many people don't understand what is going on or how they fit in. The Partnership Council Residents Forums thought that it would be a good idea to get together and find out what is going on. Once you know then you can at least have an informed choice about whether you want to take part.

If you are interested in finding out about New Deal for Communities then come to the joint Resident Forum meeting. If you don't live in the area of benefit you may still find it interesting as there are going to be knock on benefits for the whole area. The evening will also give you a chance to meet other Forum members and along with the New Deal bit there will be some refreshments and time for a good chin wag.



Details

Wednesday October 13th
Unity Primary School
Forest Road West

6.30pm Refreshments
7.00pm What's New Deal?
8.00pm End, & time to chat

Situations vacant . other

Some other local opportunities include:

New Deal for Communities Residents Development Worker (£20,355 - £21,549 depending on experience. Post is for 6 months (with possibilities of extension subject to funding being available).

The worker will be working with residents groups in the New Deal for Communities area. The worker must have good communication skills and be able to assist in the development and support of Residents Groups in the New Deal for Communities area linking them to local partnerships.

Additional

The worker will have a good knowledge of the New Deal for Communities area. Applications from the black and Asian community are particularly welcome.

New Deal for Communities Administrative Assistant

Salary £11,300 per annum. Post is for 6 months (with possibilities of extension subject to funding being available).

The worker will assist the New Deal for Communities team in the delivery and co-ordination of the New Deal for Communities strategy. The worker will prepare reports and letters and assist in the development and maintenance of databases and spreadsheets.

Additional

Must have IT skills to NVQ level 2 or equivalent and a minimum of 2 years in an office environment. Applications from the black and Asian community are particularly welcome.

For details contact Hyson Green Jobshop on 909 5910 and speak to either Donna or Judy.

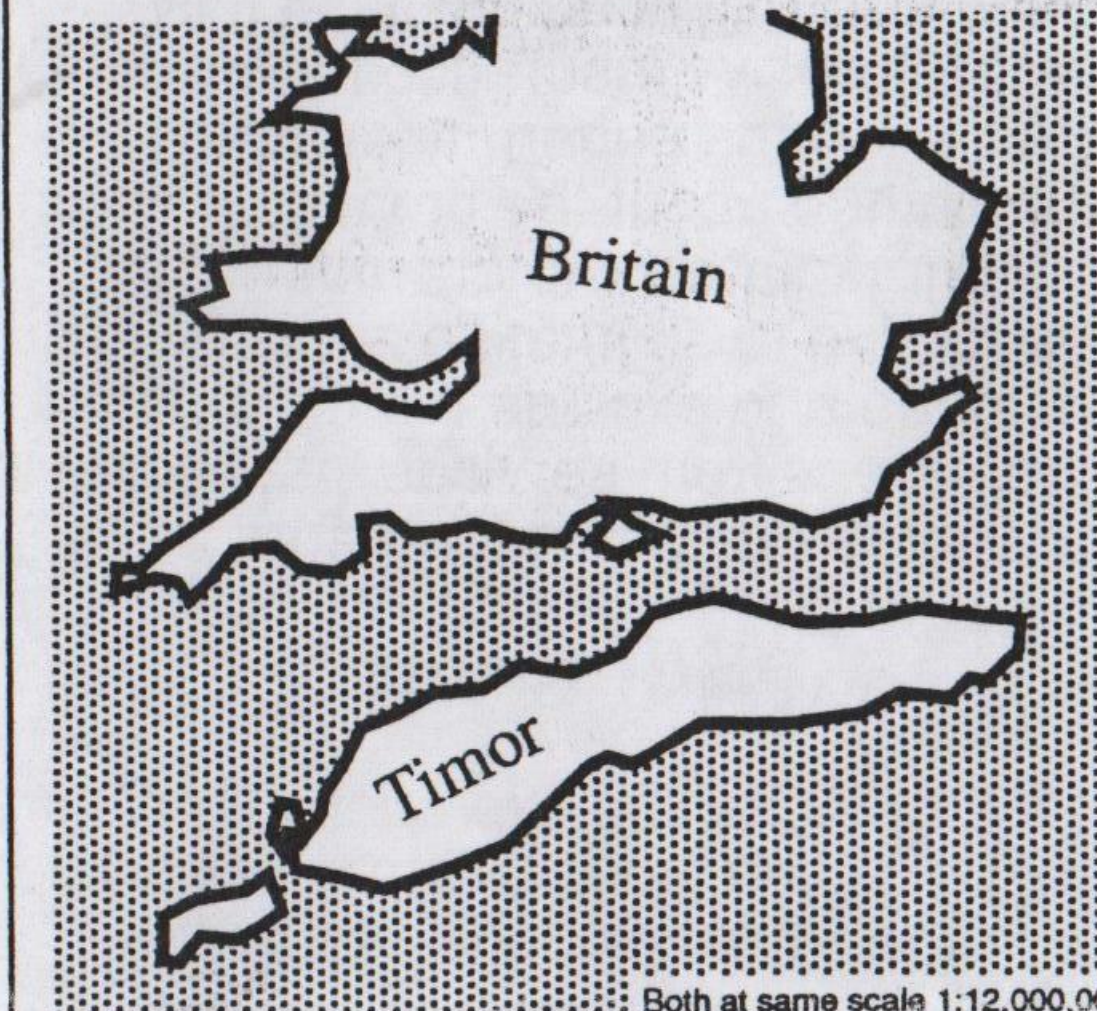
Partnership Council
Social

Wednesday 6th October, 7.00pm
PC office 47 Gregory Blvd.

Open to everyone involved in the Forums or our work. Bring a bottle or something to eat. Meet some new people and say goodbye to some people who are moving on.

(indoor space available in case of bad weather)

Voting changes nothing!



Recent reports from East Timor demonstrate the enormous risks that some people take to exercise the right to vote. A majority voted for independence in UN sponsored elections even though they knew that by doing so they would expose themselves and their families to huge risks. Through out recent history there have been many others examples of groups of people who have shown enormous courage in their fight for the right to vote.

Yet in the older democracies, in America and Europe, voting rates are falling. They are lowest in communities with high unemployment and low incomes. In the UK the poll tax resulted in thousands of people, mostly on low incomes, not registering to vote. You may think that this makes no difference but evidence suggests that where those on lower incomes don't vote political parties change policies to appeal to those who do. If we don't exercise our right to vote we do lose our voice.

If you want to exercise your right to vote make sure that you are registered. Information on registration is available from 915 4523 (24 hours) and details about where to obtain manifestos can be obtained by ringing the same number.

If you really don't want to vote for any of the parties you can still express that view by 'spoiling' your ballot paper by writing 'none of the above'. Spoilt papers are counted. So, as the slogan goes, Use your Vote or Lose your Voice.

Inner-city bloomin winner

Congratulations to Hyson Green in Bloom and all the hard work done by the Traders Association and the residents involved. From humble beginnings Hyson Green in Bloom has now just won the regional award for urban areas.

The Partnership Council office got some nice flowers this year and it makes such a difference walking through the area.

PC Evaluation

The Partnership Council has recently been subjected to three major reviews. The first was commissioned jointly with the Greater Nottingham Partnership. The purpose was to provide an objective view of the work of the Partnership Council, to evaluate our strengths and weaknesses and to determine whether we could contribute anything worthwhile to the New Deal for Communities Programme. An external Consultancy, Enterprise PLC, were commissioned to undertake this work.

The second evaluation was conducted by the Greater Nottingham TEC. This looked at the current staffing resources of the Partnership Council and whether these were adequate to meet the expectations placed upon them.

The third evaluation is part of an review paid for by the European Commission which looked at all 14 URBAN projects in the UK.

The Partnership Council are planning to disseminate a summary of the findings of these reports and their response to them in the next one sheet. However, if you want to see a copy of the full report, all 76 pages of it, it is available at the Partnership Council office.

New Jobs

As you will see from the front page the Partnership Council is expanding its staff team. This is in response to the findings of a recent evaluation report and a external staffing review.

The extra staff time enable the Partnership Council to help with the work which has been commissioned by the New Deal for Communities Interim Partnership Group and a small proportion of the funding has been provided by them. Other new members of the team will help us to speed up the URBAN process and make grants available sooner as well as supporting work with Forums and establishing opportunities for our Forum members to have real influence over the decisions which affect their lives.

When some people hear the name Partnership Council they sometimes think that we are a huge organisation with lots of resources. Some people have even thought that we had the same number of staff as the City Council with 14,500 employees! The staff team is currently made up of 6 full-time staff, a Board of Directors, and a team of very active volunteers. The new staff team will make that up to 10.

If you want to find out about the vacancies please talk to any member of the current staff team, your Forum representative or call into the office or the Hyson Green Job Shop.

Green fingered ?

Some of the Partnership Council staff are taking some unpaid time to tidy up the office garden before winter sets in. We are planning to start at 10am on 8th October. Any help would be gratefully welcomed.

Mark it on your calendar

27/28th
November

New Deal for Communities 1st CONGRESS - a local open event to see what ideas local consultation has come up with for the £35-£50 Million pound scheme. Keep an eye open for more details.

News

ASDA rumours

There have been some rumors going around that the ASDA superstore in Hyson Green may be going through some significant change in the new year - even that it might be closing.

We have contacted the store manager and head office in Leeds. The head office said there were no plans to close and the store manager said likewise. The manager added that the building of the LRT Tram meant they might have to review the business, but that closure was not in the pipeline.

Bluecoat School - Proposed Changes to Admissions Policy

At its last 2 meetings the Partnership Council has discussed the proposal currently before the Department of Education and Employment Adjudicator for Bluecoat School to change its admissions policy in the year 2000 and sever its links to Berridge School.

This issue has aroused strong feelings in the area and as a result the Partnership Council has written to the Berridge Action Group for Schools (BAGS), the Bluecoat Governors and the local Education Authority offering to organize and facilitate a meeting between them.

Partnership Council representatives also made this offer publicly at a meeting called by BAGS at the Vine Centre on the 15th September.

With the Adjudicators' decision due in the middle of October it is unlikely such a meeting might happen before then but we hope the Partnership Council can play a constructive role in the resolution of this issue.

Watch this space!