

Highfields Anti Poll Tax News

25744 P

Number 10 November/December '91

Bailiffs out of Highfields!

On the 23rd of September the Bailiffs were due to call on a local Anti-Poll Tax activist. We were ready for them! We leafleted the area and canvassed the street and found as always people were totally against the use of Bailiffs.

When the day came more and more people gathered to oppose the Bailiffs. Eventually there were about fifty or sixty local people ready to turn them away. They never showed up! Or maybe they drove past very quickly!

Conference

The number of people being jailed for non-payment of the Poll Tax is increasing. This has yet to happen in Leicestershire although there have recently been committal hearings (where the Council asks for people to be sent to prison) in Market Harborough District. The people were all given short suspended sentences and told to pay an amount each week. A conference has been called to organise effectively the opposition to jailings. In particular it will consider how to put pressure on local Councils, how to build opposition in the Trade Union movement, legal action etc.

Jobs and local services are being cut because of the Poll Tax and other Government legislation. The Conference will also look at how to fight these attacks.

The conference is open to anyone who supports Non-Payment of the Poll Tax

Invited speakers : ANDY WALSH Jailed non-payer from the Banking Union

: ABDUL OSMAN Highfields Community Centre
: LESLEY MAHMOOD Walton Real Labour

Candidate

DATE SATURDAY NOVEMBER 2ND 1991

PLACE MOAT COMMUNITY COLLEGE Maidstone Rd.

TIME 1.30pm - 5.00pm

COST Individuals £1waged/50p unwaged Creche available
Trade Union Branches £3 per delegate

Other Orgs. -APTUs, Shop Steward Committees £1.50

For further details contact Bob John on (0533) 547903

The demonstration showed that people in Highfields are willing to turn out to defend each other. Armed with this fact we can beat the Bailiffs!

The City Council, the Government, the Bailiffs could not call on five local people to support their policies in action let alone fifty or sixty!

How the Bailiffs work

Hundreds of people in the area have now received threatening letters from the Bailiffs. Most of them are from MADAGANS but some are from GAULTS. These two firms seem to operate differently. Madagans apparently work on the basis of sending out large numbers of letters threatening to come and sell peoples possessions but never actually doing anything. This is like shaking an apple tree, you get some fruit and don't have to bother climbing the tree!

Gaults on the other hand do visit - we hear that the Council pay them up front but Madagans only get what people give them. Gaults do go away if people refuse to let them in and we are committed to helping people organise support in their streets.

If you get a letter from the Bailiffs REMEMBER:

1. Call us for advice and support
2. Do not let them in - they have no right of entry
3. The Council has pledged not to use Bailiffs on people in particular circumstances. If you are; unemployed, a single parent, suffering severe financial hardship, have had a recent bereavement, have a disability, are a pensioner or have marital difficulties, the Council should not be using Bailiffs to recover your Poll Tax. Contact us or your City Councillor.

Benefits Protest

The City Council has started asking the DSS to take Poll Tax from people's Income Support. The law allows them to take about £2.00 per week. This shows that all their talk about only pursuing those who could pay but won't is rubbish!

The Anti Poll Tax Federation is organising a protest against benefit arremts at Norton St DSS on Tues November 12th at 12.00 noon.

Next HAPTU Meetings:

69 CHANDOS STREET THURSDAY 7.30pm
NOVEMBER 7TH DECEMBER 5TH JANUARY 9TH

Pete/Nici 553440 Ralph 551075