



Articles and contributions to Phoenix, c/o Cath, 62 Humberstone Ave, Hulme, M15 5FD

## Hulme Community Safety Action Day

It was generally agreed that the Hulme Community Safety Action day went ahead very successfully. Even freezing February rain didn't put off some 50 people including several children and pets from having a good day out improving Hulme's environment! Many thanks go to Iggy and to One Tree Island for the use of the marquee which provided welcome shelter in the day and a community kitchen come party tent in the evening.

The fencing around the old Will Griffiths Park was taken down because it created a perception of threat and was a safety hazard in its own right, but the Hulme Alliance did not propose and wasn't responsible for its removal. A brief meeting on site at 2.30pm explained that if the fencing was taken down it would be the responsibility of individuals.

Many people joined in to create new flowerbeds in the park (roses, irises, gladioli, and crocuses) and about 10 bin liners of rubbish were collected. The weather prevented fixing up bird boxes, but already the area looks much more attractive and less threatening!

The day's events have prompted people to nickname the area "the people's park" and more trees have since been planted (see article over page). These events have raised the serious proposal that the Will Griffiths Park area should be retained as well managed common land; well defined and overlooked by new buildings on Stretford Rd, Royce Rd, and Bonsall St. Watch this green space!

By Dan

## Grave Robbers Caught

The Leroy James Memorial Park could be the next victim of the developers in Hulme. Barbara McLoughlin, Partnership boss, circulated a letter announcing her plan to move the Spider's Web 'space net' to the new Hulme Park. This would be the first step towards turning the park into an industrial unit. In her letter Barbara said **five times** that the move was the result of lengthy, detailed, public consultation, that she was doing exactly what the public wanted! Well, Phoenix decided to go out there and ask the public was going on. No-one in the street or playing in the park had a clue what Barbara was going on about. Quite a bit of door knocking later and we still couldn't find a single person who had taken part in the in the 'public' debate. Then we wrote to Barbara and asked, who exactly did you talk to?, who on earth agreed that it was a good idea to give the park away? Her answer came back with a long list of well paid experts from architects to head teachers and City Council officers. Unashamedly there wasn't the name of a single tenant on the list, let alone a child.

Local mums and kids have been quick to point out that Barbara's consultation, even if it was totally public and fair, took place in 1994, almost six years ago. Those kids have grown up and most of the parents moved on. It's the kids who use the park NOW who should be consulted.



Kids jumping on the fence at the 'Hulme for Hulmans' action day

The Memorial Park is dedicated to two Hulme boys who drowned while playing alongside the canal. Grieved at the pointless deaths of two kids and outraged at the lack of decent play areas in Hulme, local grandmother Mo Mohan launched a campaign to improve the park, to make it a good place to play and to prevent any other kids from wandering off the estate. Local kids were taken round parks all over the country and they themselves hand picked exactly what they wanted in their park. Big Mo fought for every penny and was so successful that she was given a special award by Prince Charles. She and all the kids trooped off to Edinburgh for the ceremony and came back rightly proud of themselves and their park. Sadly Big Mo is dead now but the Park is still there to remind us all of just one of the things she fought for and won for our community. It is her grave and the graves of Leroy and James that are being robbed by the Partnership if they get their way.

There will be a meeting on Thursday 18th at 7.30pm in the Ascension Church to discuss what to do. Those of you who might not get this in time and want to do something can ring Bentley Tenants Association on 227 9223

By Paddy



## If you don't know what it is - don't eat it!

Recent scares about the safety of genetically modified food have come just at the right time for it all to be turned around. The truth is that you the consumer don't have a choice in what you eat, your choice has already been taken because you in fact don't know what you are eating. The government have failed to make it law that all food produce has to be labelled because they have a lot of money invested in genetically modified foods. Manufacturers can't really afford to label produce because then we would have a choice and rightly so, you wouldn't go for anything with genetically modified ingredients. So until the government are pressured to label all packaged foods the 'Big Xperiment' will continue and we are all innocent guinea pigs

Asda is said to be refraining from using GM soya or maize in new own label products and to use only certified non GM sources of soya and maize such as soya oil and lecithin. They also say that all GM soya and maize went through rigorous testing before being introduced into their own food labels - I'd like to see the results of those tests!

Fruit and vegetables have not evaded genetic tampering either, it's advisable to buy organic, full stop - especially the basics like onions potatoes and carrots - you know where you are with a carrot covered in dirt unlike the polished brand in Asda that has an uncanny way of not going off for weeks

Try and avoid the following ingredients on any food label: modified starch, maize starch, lecithin, soya bean oil, and rape seed oil. Recent food tests have revealed the following to contain GM ingredients: veggie mince, Linda McCartney burgers, Doritos, 'So Good' milk, vegetarian cheeses (soya based) and pet foods. Put pressure on our local Asda to take these foods off our shelves for good, because we don't really know what the repercussions might be.

By Rachel Harper

Don't Forget **Hulme People's Kitchen** - Every Tuesday 6.30-8pm, a plate of healthy food for £1, and a chance to meet your neighbours and dine out. RING to BOOK A PLACE BY MONDAY NIGHT - 227 9223

## Bentley 'Give and Take' book

On the Bentley Bugle notice board on the end of Hunmanby Avenue is a little pink booklet. The idea is that anyone who's got something to get rid of that might be of use to someone else, writes it in here. Similarly, anyone who wants anything should look there and see if someone is offering it. This way, we can all help each other out, without having to involve money.

## Hulme in History

### The Peterloo massacre

Hulme may have always had a thriving community of radicals and revolutionaries, but during the "Peterloo Massacre" in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, one of the most important days in Manchester's history, Hulme has a dirtier role to play.

The Peterloo massacre is the name given to the killing of 11 peaceful demonstrators and the injuring of 600, by the Manchester Yeomanry and Hussars, who were based at Hulme Barracks. The demonstrators were gathering in St Peter's Field (Peter's Square) in 1819, to call for voting for everyone (only the rich could vote in those days) and other political changes. Manchester, with its huge working class districts like Hulme, had become a centre of radical protest, setting the pace of change in the whole country. The demonstrators believed "the only source of legitimate power is the people....all governments not immediately derived from and strictly accountable to the People, are, usurpations and ought to be resisted and destroyed."

This may seem a reasonable demand, but then, just like now, anything which challenged the authority of the state, and challenged the rule of the rich, was violently suppressed. At the Peterloo massacre, the magistrates ordered the yeomanry to 'disperse' the peaceful crowd. Laws were made to prevent protest, marches were stopped, people who rioted to get food when their children were hungry were arrested and executed. You wouldn't be executed now, but apart from that, what else has changed. Here in Hulme, having the barracks here still, we'd better watch out at the millenium, as the government has said that the troops will be on the streets to 'keep the peace'. Will that be the same sort of 'keeping the peace' as at Peterloo??

The articles in Phoenix do not necessarily represent the views of the Hulme Alliance

## Tree moving at the People's Park

Just two weeks after the Hulme Community Safety Action day another important event took place at Will Griffiths' park. This time, a few people were moving trees to this beautiful site. The idea sprang from a group of local residents concerned about the future of the trees adjacent to Homes for Change (just alongside Old Birley Street). There was an urgent need to save these trees from the claws of the builders (who were to start clearing the site on monday, the 9th of March and are presently starting to build Homes for Change, phase II).

The area to be knocked down is full of beautiful and strong trees, such as Hawthorns, Blossoms,.... It is definitely a valuable and rare green space amongst the concrete world quickly growing around us.

Quick action needed to be taken, so a group of people decided to move as many trees as possible within two or three days, before more green life would be torn apart. And the chosen spot was the People's Park, a reflection of peoples' ideals.

A few spades and a fork, a (musical!) trolley, and these energetic and motivated hands were enough to move more than 30 trees (2 of those we planted in Leaf street). Although most of them were small, they will have more chance of survival; the scarcity of our technical means meant that we couldn't cope successfully with bigger ones!

We cannot forget the artistic contribution of the event. An ivy-covered sculpture was made in the park. The figures of a mother (hugging one of the old trees), a son at her feet, and a bird flying free are symbolizing the natural human instinct towards protection (hence, the respect for all creatures) and freedom.

The action was rounded off with the blessing of the planted trees, on the very night the builders started fencing up the future Homes for Change II area.

The peoples' park is definitely becoming a symbol for Hulmans' responsibility and freedom. But also a symbol of strength, specially before the eyes of the council city planners (if 4 or 5 people moved those trees, think what a whole community could do). We encourage everyone to be confident and to take constant action, reflecting it everywhere we are! The peoples' park can be a good example of achieving real quality of living.

By Ana

## Reiki Healing

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