

Phoenix

newsletter of the Hulme Alliance
for tenants + residents of Hulme

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

FUN DAY IN THE PARK

If you remember, the last Phoenix had an article about the plans to take away the Leroy James Park, which was created by local effort in memory of 2 young boys who died. The parents were told that no one really used it anymore, but when several members of the two families turned up at the funday on 11th April, they saw that this park actually means a lot to many people. They don't want to lose a great park, because it is part of people's history and daily life, and could be part of their future, rather than being replaced by industrial units.

The day was organised to celebrate the park and remember the reasons why it is here, and it was a great success, especially for the families of Leroy and Jamie, who met up with old and close friends, and were really glad they'd come. It was an inspiration to keep working on community spirit; together we are stronger, and really can fight for the things that are important to us.

The fight goes on....

On Monday 26th May, workmen came to take down the spider net, but were foiled by residents who poured from their homes, and occupied the net. Cllr Murphy called the police, but the workmen gave up and went home, and have not been heard of since! *Victory*, but only for the time being. Banners have been made, and people are keeping an eye out for when they might return to grab our park. If you see anything please ring 232 8014 immediately.

STOP PRESS! Spider Park to stay for foreseeable future, says Barbara McLoughlin & Neil Swanson at last Hulme Alliance meeting, 4 May - *Victory!*

To all local residents

After reading a couple of 'phoenix newsletters' I wrote expressing my admiration - it's the first newsletter I've seen in the past 8 years or so that was written by real people highlighting relevant local issues. I realised that since City Challenge engulfed everything - I like many others decided to "not get involved" after the manipulation, betrayal, and dirty tricks campaigns. My partner and myself were thoroughly 'ripped off' by City Challenge - they smiled to our faces and stuck knives in our backs. Until the Phoenix newsletter came along I had forgotten how much I used to enjoy living here in Moss Side / Hulme. All the friendly faces in the precinct, local shopkeepers who I knew, neighbours with a deep sense of respect and dignity - a community with self worth - everyone trying their best. Real life - not a rehearsal. People here don't have time for self-pity or recriminations - no one wants to be a loser - you put on your best face and get on with it. That's what I love about this place! I for one feel that the council etc... loves to isolate us all - none of the community projects (even the shops) are going to let us meet together like we did in the precinct. Because we all feel so overwhelmed by the council's betrayal - we are all remaining angry which is what they want.

Remember how we used to view the council: a useless, clueless, unprofessional outfit - that can't even run a housing estate - just a joke operation. I am not going to become one of those individuals that the press and outsiders are fond of labelling Moss Side and Hulme residents. I never was, nor were any of my neighbours losers of anti-social delinquent. Let's all remember why we wanted to and still want to live here.

Respect and all the best, *A Proud Resident*

Homes for Change Phase 2 update

Homes for Change housing co-operative is getting bigger! 25 new flats and affordable workspace for small business has started construction, thanks to everyone who attended the launch event on Saturday 27th March. The highlight of the day was City Council Leader Richard Leese and our resident drag queen in 6 inch platform shoes turning the first sod of earth! The event was rounded off by a countdown for Phase 2 and explosion of a deafening confetti canon!

We are hopeful that Phase 2 will provide homes and jobs for local people and a reminder to developers that Hulme deserves better than little boxes to live in. There is always the opportunity to apply for membership of the co-operative and a flat, please call Liz Harrison, HfC administrator on 232 9801 for details.



Kids on the spider web at the fun day

Reclaim the Streets spills into Hulme

The Mancunian Way in Hulme was blocked for over 2 hours on Friday 30th April, after police attempted to close a little street party against pollution on Brunswick Street by the University. The party was peaceful and fun, until police baton-charged their way in to try and put a stop to the music at about 3pm. A struggle ensued, and fortunately, no party-goers were hurt, but 10 police officers sustained injuries. The crowd, angry at the unnecessary violence of the police, were determined to win the day and keep the party going, and marched down Oxford Rd, Princess Parkway and onto the Mancunian Way, where they danced and played football in the sun. Police were stumped.

How fitting that this motorway should be blocked in Hulme - they always put their dirty polluting roads through the poorer communities. You wouldn't find a motorway running through the middle of the Didsbury community! but for once, the area was peaceful, quiet, and free of fumes. Ten people were arrested, many of whom live in Hulme. There will be some kind of protest around their court appearance in June. Keep your eyes open for follow-up events (or phone 226 6814), and join in. Together we can run circles round the authorities and it feels great!!!!

Chevassut Fights Back

On hearing that David Blunkett (the Secretary of State for Education) had upheld the decision to close Chevassut county primary, the parents, children, and friends of the school decided, in true Hulme spirit, that they weren't going to get upset and defeated. Instead they would fight back. The very next morning after the announcement of the closure, March they were out in force on Chorlton Rd, blocking all four lanes of traffic. Banners proclaimed 'save our school', and a local woman scaled a 20 foot tripod to ensure that cars couldn't force their way through. Police arrived on the scene, but were powerless to stop the gathered children, parents, grandparents and locals from sitting in the road, as more people came from their houses to join in. "They close our school - we close their roads!" said one defiant mother.

It was truly inspirational to see how this community refuses to take anything on its knees. There was no sitting being miserable about the decision taken on high - this was time for taking back control, and how it transformed the atmosphere of the people who'd been campaigning for the school for so long.

So successful was this first day, that it was decided to stop traffic every morning until the end of term. Every day before the Easter hols, before school, kids and supporters gathered and halted traffic, moving onto different roads and junctions to outwit police. Only once did police try to remove people from the road, and they were the subject of so much anger and complaints that they never tried it again. During the half term, pupils, parents and supporters went to the Education department off Deansgate, walked straight in and leafleted workers, had lunch in the foyer, and handed over a letter of complaint against the closure.

Parents are now working towards applying for Education Action Zone status, which means that as a group of schools in Hulme and Moss Side, they will apply to the government for money to raise the standards in local schools. This commitment to improving the education for local children in the area, may be the last chance to save Chevassut from closure.

Putting some Green on the Urban Scene with permaculture Manchester

We are happy to announce the re-birth of Manchester Permaculture Group. Its latest incarnation will spend its life on the redbricks (what did it do to deserve that?) and it's dream in a nutshell, follows: To involve the community as far as possible, in designing and creatively using the green spaces around the redbricks; to create beautiful and sustainable living systems which provide local people with food.

Inspired? You should be. It's about turning those dreams into reality. And we have all been doing much dreaming. So, how do we set about it?

Well, over the last year, 5 permaculture introduction courses have been held in Hulme, that's about 50 people with the basics. This June we will hold a Full 72 hr Permaculture Design Course in Hulme. The course is offering training in the creation of sustainable communities with a special focus on urban environments. The course is recognised internationally and now has Open College accreditation. It is being funded by the Workers Educational Association so that means people on benefit can do the course very cheaply. The course will run for 4 days a week between 12th and 30th June. It will include a weekend away at a rural permaculture centre (oh ay).

People always ask "What is permaculture?" The most succinct description I have heard is: "designing sustainable systems for living"

It begins with understanding that those in power don't seem to be able to design human environments without destroying the building blocks of life which we depend on for survival. Permaculture is about equipping ourselves as designers with ethics, to each take care of our own backyards and communities.

Wot no April Phoenix?

Some of you may have noticed that there wasn't an issue of Phoenix in April. This is because an article appeared in the last issue of Phoenix that Barbara McLoughlin as director of the Moss Side & Hulme Partnership took offence to as she felt it was a personal attack. Up to this point, Phoenix hadn't edited any articles, in order that people's voices can be heard without us cutting or changing them. However, the Hulme Alliance took a decision that the content of Phoenix had to be seen and agreed by the officers before printing, so due to meetings and schedules we couldn't do an April edition.

We take care of each other, of the earth, we limit our consumption, and we share the excess.

For design, we look to nature as the best teacher. She has evolved many resilient, flexible and cyclical systems to provide us with the information we need to build our own communities, economies, and gardens. There is a phenomenal consciousness on the estate, boundless creative potential and loads happening on the ground already. A training in permaculture design would create an organic structure with which to plant that potential and nurture its growth. Posters are about with more info, or contact Jennie or Rob @HQ 226 6979, Redbricks Neighbourhood centre, 51 Humberstone Ave. E-mail permaculture@redbricks.org.uk website: www.redbricks.org.uk/permaculture

Permaculture Manchester's other branch of activity is 'on the ground' week by week action. We meet on Thursdays between 6-8 @ the address above to enjoy food and decide on the weekends action. So far we made a composter for community use, and sowed springtime seeds and made some raised beds. Come down any time.

THE CELEBRATION OF A NATURAL LIFE

ITAL 2000

**FREE community club night
Mighty Messenger Sound
System**

Supper at 8pm for donations, provided by the Yellow Brick Cafe, Recycling by Emerge. Find out about upcoming direct action events.

**at the NEW ARDRI DANCE CLUB,
COUPLAND ST, HOLME, June 5th**

Reiki Healing

A complementary Therapy for Stress Release
Mondays 1-5pm (drop-in), 7-8.30pm, St Johns Hall,
Junction of St Johns & Ayres Rd, Old Trafford
Home visits by arrangement - Amina 226 3324, or
Colin - 228 0593

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