

Clifton Area 9 Panel Chair's Letter for February 2011

At this time many of us are wondering what the future holds and how we will cope, with the various changes which Central Government is introducing in the hope of getting the country out of its present financial position.

Many workers have had to take a cut in their wages and at a time when the price of food and fuel is spiralling even higher.

Nottingham has been hit hard with the Government cuts, which amount to £62.4 million, and though we understand what an enormous task it must be for Nottingham City Council to preserve the services which we have come to rely on, we have to accept that changes must be made.

I am part of the tenant lobby group in Nottingham regarding the funding for Decent Homes, which includes the installation of new bathrooms, heating and windows to Council Homes. The lobby group are continuing our Nott Decent Campaign to try to persuade Grant Schapps the Housing Minister to release the balance of the money which was granted to us to bring all of the council houses up to the decent homes standard. Nottingham City Homes was guaranteed a further £91 million and if we do not receive it then the programme of repairing and updating may not go ahead as planned. On a positive note the Housing Minister has written to Chris Langstaff, Chief Executive of Nottingham City Homes, and in the letter he has acknowledged that Nottingham City Homes as an ALMO (Arms Length Management Organisation and landlord agent for Nottingham City Council) is working well in terms of the partnership between council tenants and staff.

Some of you may not know that our last Area 9 Panel which took place on Tuesday 25 January was the Annual General Meeting and so Mr. Dennis Stevens and I had to resign our positions as Chair and Vice Chair. However the good news is that we were both then voted back in as Chair and Vice Chair for a further year, and I am sure that Dennis will join me in thanking all of those panel members who voted for us to continue in these roles which we do enjoy.

The last meeting in January was well attended and many local issues were discussed, among those present was Councillor Mr Ian Malcolm. Ian lives in Clifton and has a vast and long established knowledge of local issues and is always keen to help. Sheryl Fraser, Manager of the Caretakers who look after the Flats and High Rise blocks across the City, came along at our request to explain the proposed changes to weekend working which may be made, Sheryl promised to listen to the comments of the tenants who will be affected by the changes and is keen to attend another meeting.

The police were represented by the local Crime Prevention Officer who gave us an overview of crime in the area. Our local police team are performing well and are keeping crime and vandalism under control, it was noticed that we do have some unlicensed bikers racing around the streets and that dog fouling is on the increase not only on the parks but on the pavements as well, the police are aware of this and taking measures to catch the offenders. Littering is also a problem and many of you can help with this just by taking your rubbish home or by using one of the many bins placed around the area. I would also like to say a word of thanks here to the gentleman with the dog who spends many hours picking up litter around Clifton. He carries a bin bag and picking stick, and his name is Michael and he told me that he has cleared tons of trash and litter from our streets and brooks. Michael also went on to tell me that his dog is getting on a bit now and so he only brings her out in the afternoons. If you see Michael working and he is nearby, then I am sure that he would appreciate a cheery word of thanks for his efforts and his community spirit.

You will see from letters in the Clifton Local News that some issues are still uppermost in people's minds such as the Tram, the wind turbines, which are to be installed by the river; and also the state of the local top shops and the flats above on Southchurch Drive. These items are among the many things that we discuss at the Area Panel meetings, so if you are interested in doing something to make Clifton a better place then Dennis and I extend a warm invite you to come along to take part, and if the time of the meeting is not suitable to you then you could hand a letter with your comments to the staff at the ASK desk in the Cornerstone for the attention of Clifton Housing Office. You can also be placed on the mailing list and/or can request a copy of the minutes from previous meetings.

Thank you for taking the time to read this

Ennis Peck Chair of Area 9 Panel