

Secret housing report

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and have reached the annual level of 3,000.

But the report says re-lets are irrelevant to the city's housing supply unless they are caused by people leaving Merseyside altogether.

The number of people who actually leave Merseyside when they move out of a corporation house is not known, although the housing department have commissioned a survey of this by a Birmingham University professor.

The improvements programme cannot contribute extra housing to the city supply in ten years. The vast majority of people who have their houses improved will still be living in them in 1980.

The report is critical of the Housing Department's policy. "It does not at present include an estimate of the total housing requirements, in Liverpool or the sub-region of the city's present population and its future natural increase."

Constantly the report argues that we should be looking at the housing problem in terms of the whole city, not just those houses in the ownership of the corporation.

Private builders are constructing 400 houses per year in Liverpool. At that rate they will provide 4,000 extra houses by 1980 - but that goes nowhere towards

meeting the 50,000 shortage.

The report also calls for an investigation into the housing waiting list. It says: "The waiting list could be quite inadequate.

"Beliefs about eligibility for council houses, chances of obtaining tenancies, and rents, all may contribute to families in real housing need not applying for council houses."

Callous

Making people re-apply annually to keep their names on the housing waiting list reduces the number of applications. Forms and red tape will always do that.

In the Town clerk's report on the waiting list in 1969 he states: "The obligation placed upon applicants to re-register their applications has had the overall effect of reducing the number of applications recorded."

This callous way of cutting down the waiting list has nothing to do with solving real housing need.

Liverpool's housing authorities claim that the waiting list inflates the real housing need.

The report's fears about the waiting list are backed up by damning evidence from the Shelter Neighbourhood Action Project (SNAP) in Liverpool 8.

SNAP figures show that 84% of the cases of housing stress with which they deal involve people who are NOT on the waiting list.

But Liverpool corporation is the largest landlord in the city. They have a vested interest in shortage.

What the planning department report shows is that the 'surplus' claim has been worked out on the fallacious grounds of re-lets, an inflated waiting list, and the improvements programme. The result has been a gross misrepresentation of the real housing problem in Liverpool.

A person who worked on the document and has since left the planning department clarified certain parts of the report, but was not prepared to make any statement about it.

He had understood that the report was available on request from the planning department for inspection by students.

He pointed out that the report was based on the assumption that every family should have a home of their own.

New LIP service

A group of people have come up with a radical idea to shake the tight grip of the Conservative and Labour parties on the city council.

The Liverpool Independent People (LIP) has been formed by residents determined to elect true representatives of their area to the council.

LIP believes that "we need genuine grass roots people to stand for council....people who live in the area they propose to represent."

One of the residents behind the scheme is Chrissy Maher, who helped to start the Tuebrook Bugle - a community newspaper;

Already, dissatisfied residents and tenants in inner-city areas have jumped at the idea...and offered to stand for council.

As yet, there are few detailed policies but LIP are determined to consult the people at all times - usually by referendum.

Anyone interested in LIP can write to Flat 3, Parkfield Road, Liverpool 17, or ring 051-220-4256.

Help for homeless

A self-help housing association has just been formed in South Liverpool. The idea is to persuade the Corporation to let homeless families move into empty houses which are waiting to be demolished.

In next month's Free Press we shall explain the association's programme ideas in more detail.

Meanwhile, anyone who is interested should contact: Dave Thompson or Nick Green at 8, Percy St., Liverpool 8. 051-709-3211.

We need to know what you think and what you are doing. And we need your support if you want the Liverpool Free Press to keep coming out each month.

Contact us at 107 Brookdale Road, Liverpool 15. Daytime: 709-0264. Evenings: 733-9238.

City of Liverpool

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The July issue of Liverpool Free Press has just come to my notice and while I have no wish to curb the freedom of the Press I feel bound to protest at three serious inaccuracies relating to this department.

First, on page seven, you state that Mr Walter Bor used 'intense pressure' to build cheaply and at high density. Exactly the reverse was the case. Mr Bor and his colleagues were under intense pressure from the central government, the council and citizens at large, to approve plans which were cheap and had a high density. There are a number of council reports of that time available for inspection, in which there is ample evidence that Mr Bor sought to reduce densities and to spend money on improved standards.

Motorways

Secondly, on page two, you refer to me as a motorway enthusiast; by which you infer that I strongly favour the building of motorways. Again, you could not be further from the truth. It is a fact that as more people own cars and use road transport, congestion reaches a point where some new roads are essential. However, if you refer to any of the transport planning reports prepared by either Mr Bor or myself, you will find that the city's policy is to limit urban motorways to the minimum and to dev-

elop public transport as much as possible.

Thirdly, on page two you say that the Merseyside Area Land/Use Transport Study "contains no explanation of what the M62 is for" The M62 stretches from Hull to Liverpool, and there is no reason why a national route planned by central government should be explained in its entirety in a local Merseyside study at one end of it. Nevertheless the MALT study does explain that this part of the M62 forms part of the major road system for Merseyside and the report very thoroughly explains this system.

Alternatives

I would not expect people whose homes are affected by any proposal to welcome it, and I am always prepared to listen to objections and consider alternatives. Your newspaper can obviously do much to ventilate opposing views and I am sure that this is a healthy, democratic situation. However, you do no good for either society or individuals to misrepresent people and facts, as in the cases instanced. I and my staff would always be pleased to check matters of fact with you before publication.

Francis J C Amos

COUNTERSPY

compiled by Arthur Townley

A CAN FOR ALL SEASONS

Supermarket shelves will be filling up with offers of cheap canned fruit during the next few months.

But think twice before you start stocking up your larder with these cheap cans.

The cans are old stock - in some cases as old as three years.

Yet canned fruit is generally acknowledged to have a shelf life of about one year.

Manufacturers caught with a glut of cans in their warehouses are selling cheap to sell fast.

Quantities of the cans may be deteriorating, and this can affect the quality of the fruit inside.

Princes, the Bibby's canned food subsidiary based on Merseyside, is one of the big six in the canned fruit market. They are known to have been caught with large stocks of old cans in their warehouses.

Their way of getting rid of these is to offer them cheap in trade offers to supermarkets and shops. The shops offer them as cut-price offers to the customer.

The other big canned fruit firms

are Libby's, Del Monte, S.P.C. Ardmona, and John West.

The company will not make a penny on the sale of these cans, an indication of how eager they are to get rid of them.



Return to sender

You know the small print on some food wrappers saying if there's anything wrong with the product you should send it back and they will replace it?

Well, a friend who once worked in the complaint department of a big firm tells me that not all customers are dealt with in the same way.

For instance, if your notepaper is a bit scrappy and you can't spell, you will just get a replacement. But if you use your firm's notepaper and have your letter done on a posh typewriter they will send you a whole hamper of goodies.

It seems to be a question of how big a stink they think you are capable of kicking up. Before we name this particular firm, we

would like to find out how much of this goes on at other firms.

Free Press readers can help by telling us what happened when they sent things back to the makers. If you're just about to send something back, why not send us a copy of the letter?

If you find any foreign bodies in food (I saw a piece of string in a chocolate biscuit last week) we can arrange to have a photograph taken before you send it off.



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