



**LIVERPOOL**  
city of change & challenge

**Tenants tapped for new baths**

Many tenants in Gilmoos and Norris Green are puzzled by the way their council homes are being modernised. All their homes have bathrooms and toilets, but these are so old that they are mostly unusable. So the Corporation, who embarking on their programme of modernising 1,000 houses a year, are adding a bathroom unit in the back gardens of the houses. Now the Corporation call this modernisation and warn that rates will go up. But tenants say that these alterations are nothing more than repairs which the Corporation have failed to do over the years. So they want to know why the rates should go up. Also they are upset that the Corporation are taking out two of their fires (either gas or open fires) and not giving them anything towards the cost of new ones.

**Car hire lessons**

Mr Oxford hired a van for a week-end in August this year. He may still be paying for it in a year's time. For Mr Oxford has received a letter from B & B Car Hire Ltd demanding the immediate payment of £123. The van broke down on the return journey. An AA man was called, who diagnosed a major engine fault, too serious to deal with on the spot. After spending a night in the van Mr Oxford had to hitch part of the way home, leaving a representative of the car hire firm to deal with the van. A week later he received the letter demanding £123 for loss of hire and a reconditioned engine. Fundamental repairs that hardly seemed the responsibility of Mr Oxford. Yet because of the hiring agreements signed by him, Mr Oxford has no legal claim. A clause in the agreement stated "I agree I am fully responsible for the first £50 of any damage caused, no matter whether it be my fault or not." "I further agree to be responsible for the full loss of hire whilst the van undergoes repairs caused by

accidental damage or theft. I have the necessary funds available to pay on demand without any dispute." The hirer had also agreed that the vehicle was in good order. Although he was not shown the van till after the agreement had been signed. This is not an isolated case. There is no statutory control of the industry. Self-drive car hire operators make their own rules and set their own standards. **A.A. investigation** A recent AA investigation into the the car hire business concluded that: Many rental cars are unroad worthy or potentially dangerous. Insurance cover is often inadequate and vaguely defined in misleading language. Control by the industry is ineffective and by the law almost non-existent. Insurance experts said that only the large national firms and a few smaller ones offered adequate insurance cover in straightforward language. They stressed that cover for passenger liability is often assumed to exist in these policies. It rarely does. Anyone can set up a car hire business. All that is legally needed is

- a road fund licence and a third party insurance cover. The AA suggest asking the following questions when hiring a car:
- 1 Has this firm's insurance policy been issued by a member of the British Insurance Association or Lloyds?
  - 2 Am I covered against claims for damages by any passengers I carry?
  - 3 If not, can I obtain cover by paying an extra premium?
  - 4 Is personal accident coverage available for me and for my passengers?
  - 5 If I return the car in a damaged condition, am I free of responsibility for the cost of repairs?
  - 6 If not, can I pay an additional premium to cancel this excess?
  - 7 In the event of an accident involving a third party claim, am I free of responsibility for paying any amount that might be eventually settled by the hire company's insurers?
  - 8 If not, can this be deleted for an additional premium?
  - 9 Has the car been examined for roadworthiness since it was last hired out?
  - 10 If it is more than three years old, can I see its current MOT certificate?

**Beating the bookie**

First of all we should establish that the bookie makes his living because the majority of us, the punters, are greedy. When we are losing we tend to follow our losses by backing heavier, going for long prices and dreaming of that big win we all feel we will get some day. This is an illusion created by the bookies and other interested parties so that we will continue to swell their bank books. So what should we do? If we must have a bet we have got to cut down the odds that are in favour of the bookmakers and take full advantage of anything that is in our own favour. The first thing that comes to mind is each-way betting. The majority of bookies offer 1/4 odds for horses finishing in the first three places in races with eight runners or more, and one-third odds for the first two places if there are six or seven runners. The advantage for us is mainly in the first instance, where if we only take fields with eight runners and no more, the odds against us getting a horse placed are 5 against 3. Common sense tells us therefore that we should always back in these races and if possible avoid handicap races. Add to this a serious study of form, trainers, jockeys etc and your chances of getting some return for your money are increased. So if we stick to these simple rules we know at least that we will lose less cash to the bookie:

1. Never be greedy.
2. Only back horses each way in non-handicap races with eight runners.
3. Study form, trainers and jockeys.

**NEXT MONTH:**  
A look at favourites.

**Heath to be made nature reserve**  
*Evening News*

**Warning!**  
The Free Press people are hoping to join in the Christmas and New Year festivities like everybody else, and it is possible that they may not have recovered to bring out an edition by the first week in January, so the next edition may be a little later than usual. However, we must warn our readers in high places that their activities will not go unnoticed - and anything they say or do may be taken down and used in evidence in Free Press No 6.

**Kensington Fields forever**

Kensington Fields Community Council have hemmed Liverpool corporation into a tight legal corner in their fight against plans to drastically reduce the amount of open space in the district. The corporation are about to swallow up Kensington Gardens - the last patch of green in the area - as a site for four new reservoirs. The reservoirs will replace the present two, which are considered serious health risks. By law the corporation must give compensation acre for acre whenever they take over open space for other purposes and it must be included in a statutory appropriation order, under the 1946 Land Act. In both cases the corporation have attempted to sell the residents short - and only the work of two local men has exposed the corporation's manoeuvring. Russ Hamilton, a dockworker, living in Jubilee Drive, opposite Kensington

Gardens, and Norman Byrne, who lives in Guelph St., started the legal fight earlier this year; In August they lodged a formal objection to the pitifully inadequate compensation being offered for the loss of about seven acres of open space. In September the community council received an unusually frank letter, carelessly sent out by the Town Clerk conceding every point to them, virtually admitting that the 1946 Act was being violated and giving them enough evidence to ensure a defeat for the corporation at any public enquiry. The compensation offered was initially a three acre site at Minto Street on the side of the Gardens furthest away from Kensington Fields. To reach this site the 900 living in Kensington Fields have to walk down a main road. The compensation laws lay down that land offered to replace lost open space must be developed to the same extent, must be as convenient to reach, and similar in size. Liverpool corporation have tried to evade giving full compensation on every point as the town clerk's letter showed: "Two areas of open space recently have been provided in the vicinity at Hall Lane and at Minto St.....these areas can be regarded as compensatory ...

"However, it is not denied that the amenities of Kensington Fields will be affected adversely during the construction of the proposed reservoirs, since the open space available will be neither as large nor as convenient as the present Kensington Gardens, but ... the officers do not think it would be right to amend the recreation and open spaces programme by the addition of a further project at this time." The community council vehemently disagree that Hall Lane can be counted already as open space: "Hall Lane is a quagmire at the moment," said a spokesman. Hall Lane isn't just a quagmire, it is an undeveloped site less than an acre in size. Added to the three acres at Minto St., it would still leave the amount of compensation inadequate, without considering the state of the land. Flustered by the residents' knowledge of their legal rights Liverpool's Town Clerk's department have sent more than one high-powered messenger to London to plead for help from the Department of the Environment. As the spokesman for the community council pointed out: "All we wanted was the proper development of the open space facilities that we had been promised. And the corporation have got themselves into a real old legal tangle over the whole business."

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. **Liverpool Free Press** Contact us at 107 Brookdale Road, Liverpool 15. Daytime: 709-0264. Evenings: 733-9238, between 7 and 9 p.m.