

CITY TREASURER'S LETTER REVEALS...

Council tenants bear the brunt of the rates burden in Liverpool. They pay, on average, over £8 (or nearly 20%) more in rates than the owner occupier or private tenant.

A detailed inquiry into the rate account tears to shreds the old, but still frequently repeated, middle class myth that council tenants are subsidised, and pay little or no rates.

Exactly the reverse is true. Owner-occupiers don't pay their fair share, even though the majority are much better paid.

Figures for 1969-70 given by the City Treasurer, Mr James Salt, to tenant Mr Charles Stocker, of 34 Domville Road, show that:

132,000 private properties produce £5,777,297. This is an average of £40.74 each.

But the 67,000 corporation properties within Liverpool produce £3,290,000. This is an average of £49.10 each. So the council tenant pays £8.36 more on average.

This is all the more extraordinary when it is considered that council tenants are treated like second-class citizens, living on huge bleak estates, in houses which are shoddily built, and often damp.

They are packed like sardines in a tin, sometimes at a rate of 140

Rates hit council tenants hardest

persons per acre, as in Netherley.

There are few amenities, a minimum of open space, and a desperate shortage of shops.

The reason why the tenants bear this unfair burden is because the rate valuation officers are sometimes wildly wrong in their estimates of the rateable value of council houses compared to private houses. A few examples soon make this clear.

Mr X owns a large semi-detached house near Sefton Park. There are

four big bedrooms (plus one box room), three entertaining rooms, a fair-sized garden, plus scullery and coal shed. The rateable value is £102.

Mrs Y lives in a three-bedroom council flat in one of the unpopular high-rise blocks near Sefton Park. The rooms are small to medium. There is central heating which often doesn't work. Rateable value of this flat is £104.

The semi-detached house takes up far more space, and is in a nice

One of Liverpool's highly-rated high-rise blocks - Heysmoor Heights, Toxteth.

[Picture: John Bossons]

quiet street, and yet the owner pays less in rates than the council tenant.

High-rise flats, in particular, are badly over-rated. Quite why - considering a block of them takes up more area than one large house - no-one can explain.

Not only are the rates assessed unfairly, but no account is taken of the difference in income between an owner-occupier or council tenant.

For instance, middle-class professional people such as solicitors, barristers, doctors and musicians, live in the luxury three-bedroom flats in Princes Park Mansions, on Croxteth Road. Their rates are between £98 and £106 a year. Just across the road is the council's high-rise block, Heysmoor Heights. There, tenants pay rates of £102 a year.

So, badly paid working people lose out in every way. They are worst off, and yet pay more in rates than the middle-class tenant or owner-occupier.

What was that about council tenants not paying rates?



Counter clerks in branches of the National Westminster Bank have been instructed to say: "How would you like your money?" instead of "How would you like it?" when cashing cheques.



Puzzled by a squeaking noise in his car, Cyril Kent, of Poole, Dorset, drove to the garage. Mechanics traced the noise to a small chicken perched on the rear axle.



Out for a day's shooting near Villacoublay, France, some local farmers took aim as a flight of pheasants passed overhead. But President Pompidou's personal helicopter happened to be passing low overhead at the same time and was peppered with buckshot. The pheasants escaped unhurt.



At a cockfight in the Phillipines, one of the cocks, fitted with razor-sharp claws, attacked and killed the referee.

Mr. Page's ministry comes under the umbrella of the Department of the Environment, which is responsible for pollution of rivers and the coasts.

Liverpool Echo

A report from Ulster in the London Evening Standard mentioned the Royal Anglican Regiment. Just the thing to keep those Catholics down?



A Walthamstow housewife with 29 years' cooking experience and a formidable reputation for baking sponge cakes was surprised when her entry in a local competition accidentally ended up in the children's section. She was even more surprised when her cake won only second prize - first prize went to a boy on nine.



South African security police who raided the flat of a Durban student in search of subversive literature seized a copy of Jane Austen's novel about 19th century middle-class life dangerously titled "Pride and Prejudice." A copy of "Winnie the Pooh" (the story for children about a boy and a bear) was allowed to remain, but only after close inspection. The student explained: "They possibly thought it had something to do with Winnie Mandela, wife of the African nationalist leader."

Waving the rules

The influence of yachtsmen on British politics is on the increase again.

Two of the judges appointed to the National Industrial Relations Court - set up to administer Carr's Act - are members of the Bar Yacht Club.

Along with the other judges - Mr Justice Brightman and Lord Thompson - Donaldson will be paid £14,000 a year, or about £285 a week.

Lay members of the court - composed of businessmen and the odd academic - will receive £30 a day when they are called upon, the equivalent of £7,500 a year.

Ah! It's a hard life stopping these strikers from holding the country to ransom and demanding exorbitant wages.

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How abortion clinics get their customers

Liverpool's only abortion clinic is the money-spinning, £150-a-time Lynwood Nursing Home in Parkfield Road. And the city's only pregnancy information bureau is the Pregnancy Information and Advisory Centre (PIAC) in dingy Chicago Buildings, Whitechapel.

On the surface they seem totally separate organisations. But a Free Press investigation has revealed some interesting connections.

Financiers who set up private abortion clinics face one major problem - how to advertise their services.

Barred from advertising, they have resorted to numerous underhand ways to attract customers.

The way some paid taxi drivers backhanders for each girl they brought to their clinic from airports is well known. But others have found a truly ingenious way of getting round the advertising ban.

They set up small pregnancy information and testing bureaux. They were free to advertise these. And having tested pregnant women they then referred them to their own private abortion clinics.

Liverpool's PIAC was set up at the same time as Lynwood abortion

clinic. While the Government was considering the application for a licence for Lynwood, the Northern Pregnancy Advisory Bureaux company was set up on February 22, 1971... its trade name was PIAC.

Lymbrook Ltd (which owns Lynwood) and the Northern Pregnancy Advisory Bureaux were set up by the same secretaries - Stanley Harold Davis and David Ordish, of 1-3 Leonard Street, City Road, London EC2.

Also, a company called Parviz Holdings Ltd had a hand in the creation of both companies.

As we revealed in Free Press No 5, Lymbrook Ltd received a £100,000 mortgage from Parviz Holdings on April 16 to finance the clinic.

Parviz Holdings is owned by Dr Parviz Feridian, who won an appeal against being struck off for advertising abortions abroad.

Parviz Holdings founded Northern Pregnancy Advisory Bureaux and owned 99 of the 100 £1 shares until they were passed to Baron Omid, an actor, of 27 Park Road, Chiswick, London, on June 1 last year. Mrs Sheila Johnson, of 43 Rutland House, Croxteth Road, Liverpool has the remaining £1 share.

The financial director at Lynwood is Mr Parviz Bigvand, of 31 Crompton's Court, Crompton Lane, Liverpool. He is known to be an acquaintance of Baron Omid, and they have been seen together several times at the PIAC checking their records.

Although PIAC is supposed to be independent, it does not normally direct pregnant girls to the nursing home in Brighton, which is run by Birmingham Pregnancy Advisory Service, a registered charity.

This is surprising. For the total fee for an abortion in Brighton is £60, which includes £15 travelling expenses. Girls pay more than double this sum at Lynwood.

What is alarming is that pregnancy information centres don't have to register. There is no check to see if they are independent of commercially-run abortion clinics, or that the advice they give is in the girls' best interests and not their own. In some cases, as at PIAC, it might turn out to be expensive advice.

Calling seamen

The Seamen's Charter is a useful magazine produced on Merseyside. Issue No. 6 contained an attack on the National Union of Seamen for registering under the Industrial Relations Act in defiance of TUC policy, and showed how transparent are the promises of the shipowners - 400 seamen were made redundant off the Empress of Canada, after repeated assurances that from Canadian Pacific that the ship would remain in service until at least 1973.

Seamen's Charter, price 3p plus postage, is obtainable from 26 Warton Street, Bootle 20.

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