

Trust us with your £15,000, say town hall campaigners

A CAMPAIGN group has put out the begging bowl to the community to pay a team of professional consultants to persuade the council that an independent trust should run Hornsey Town Hall.

Crouch End for People made the appeal for £15,000 at a public meeting, held in Christ Church, Crescent Road.

The group needs the cash to pay the fees of a team of experts, which include a top theatre designer, a catering consultant, a landscape designer and a structural engineer. The team would then present a report to Haringey Council's executive in December, to urge them to allow Hornsey Town Hall Trust Ltd to run the Grade II listed building as a cultural and community centre.

Sally Kendal, of Crouch End for People, said: "We must now bid for our own town hall. We must present a plan that is supported by detail and accurate costings. We must rely on the technical skill and professionalism of our team to maximise our chance of success."

"The team have offered their services at a greatly reduced cost, but it is still £15,000. Our only resort is to get you to contribute. Our need for funds is urgent. She added: "Raising this money does not guarantee success but without it, we are in danger of losing our town hall."

The campaign group revealed that Hornsey Town Hall Trust Ltd has been approved as a charitable company by the Charity Commission and by the Inland Revenue for Gift Aid.

Speaking after the meeting, Councillor Judy Bax, chairwoman of the Hornsey Town Hall advisory panel, said: "Some kind of trust is what is needed to run the town hall. Something that represents the local community is very important."

# Town hall WILL be kept for the people

By SALLY LOWE

**HORNSEY Town Hall will not be sold off to developers or turned into luxury housing, Haringey Council leaders have promised.**

The town hall in Crouch End Broadway has been at the centre of fierce campaigning and speculation since plans to re-open it were made public last year. Campaign group Crouch End for People fears the council plans to sell off parts of the Grade II listed building to pay for its overall refurbishment.

But council bosses insist the town hall itself will not be sold off and any development around the site will only be done to pay for essential work to transform the building for community use.

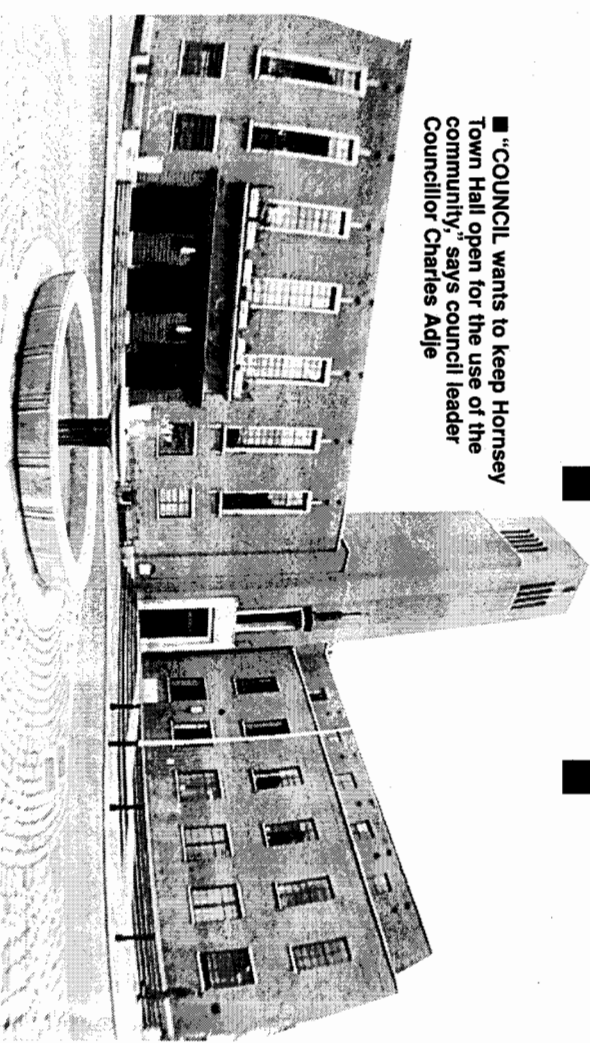
A final decision on the future of the site – and the scale of development – will be made by the council's ruling executive committee in December following recommendations from the Hornsey Town Hall Advisory Panel.

The panel – made up of councillors, council officers, experts and residents – has been holding regular meetings to thrash out possible uses for the town hall and draw up a list of suggestions.

Council leader Councillor Charles Adje said: "People have been floating the idea that the council wants to flog the site, but if we really wanted to do that we wouldn't be engaging with the community now, we'd have gone ahead and sold it off."

"The council really wants to keep the town hall open for the use of the community. That's the message."

■ "COUNCIL wants to keep Hornsey Town Hall open for the use of the community," says council leader Councillor Charles Adje



The advisory panel has been headed by Hornsey councillor Judy Bax who says the group has worked hard to draw up a list of possible uses.

She said: "We have had quite a range of people coming and talking to us about all sorts of aspects about how the town hall should be used."

"By and large most of those ideas have been shared. There hasn't been a huge disagreement."

"Everybody's very thrilled about using it and the crunch is how we raise the money and how the whole thing goes forward, but I think it's quite promising."

A decision on the level of development will be made once the cost of a final scheme has been drawn up, but the council insists a balance will be struck between the cost of refurbishment and the level of development.

# viewpoints

# People's plans are future for town hall

**I ATTENDED last Thursday's public meeting on Hornsey Town Hall and I sat humbled by the outstanding standard and volume of work that Crouch End for People – on behalf of our community – has put into an alternative proposal to Haringey Council's scheme.**

Contrary to Haringey Council's plan, CEfP's professional team – the Hornsey Town Hall Trust – proposed that a cinema was indeed viable.

In fact, their scheme made a lot more financial sense than the one proposed by the council's money men. It as thoughtfully designed to endure in the long term, bringing in a variety of revenue streams from the many proposed uses – theatre, arts and community space for all ages. As a charitable trust it would qualify for a range of grants – which a developer could never do.

The danger with the council's scheme is that we could end up with a public hall which would either close down, or become a drain on the taxpayer.

We could end up with a huge

block of flats right in the centre that we don't want. And a thriving local economy of individual shopkeepers that failed because it's only chance of a car park was sold off for ever. – *Miranda Watson, Crouch Hall Road, N4.*

● I HAVE very happy childhood memories of Hornsey Town Hall and, in particular, the annual show put on by "Diana's Dancing" which I appeared in with my sister.

So I was delighted to see such a good turnout at the meeting to consider the council's proposals.

I was shocked to see how the Town Hall had been neglected by the council and horrified to hear of their proposal to sell it to a developer. Thank goodness for Crouch End for People who have come up with an exciting vision for its future.

It seems obvious that Crouch End deserves to have its heart restored after years of neglect. Clearly the Council has neither the vision nor the commitment to do that. – *Vanessa Wilde, by e-mail.*

● I WAS extremely impressed by the proposals set out by Crouch End for People. The fact that the church was packed, that every speaker was rewarded with thunderous applause,

and that people were keen to donate to the fighting fund was heartening evidence that we want our town hall back.

We already have too many "luxury" flats and bland chain stores in the Broadway. Turning the town hall into a community and cultural centre for all will put the heart back into Crouch End. – *Julia Snell, Weston Park, N8.*

● WHAT IS behind the sudden attempt by Haringey Council to silence Crouch End for People's campaign?

Last Saturday, CEfP received a visit from two of the council's representatives telling them that they are not allowed to "erect a construction" (i.e. have a small table) on any pavement in Crouch End.

After half a year setting up their stall next to the town hall for just two hours on Saturdays to publicise their campaign, this visit appears highly suspicious after a very successful public meeting by CEfP.

As a supporter of Crouch End for People, I want to register my utmost protest against this new form of repression of freedom of speech. – *Claudio Solano, Oakfield Court, N8.*