

# Town hall petition gets frosty reception

**A STILTWALKER presented a petition from over 3,000 people who want Hornsey Town Hall to be used as a cultural and community centre - but no council officials were there to accept it.**

Campaign group Crouch End for People got 3,300 residents to sign the petition, which was 170 pages long.

They tried to hand the petition in at Hornsey Town Hall, in Crouch End, but no official members of staff were there to accept it.

Sally Kendall, of Crouch End for People, said: "The petition was incredibly long.

"We taped the pages together and children used a rolling pin to unravel it.

"The town hall wouldn't

**By JANINE KELSO**

accept it, so we sent it over by courier to Councillor Charles Adje at the Civic Centre."

A Haringey Council spokeswoman said: "There was nothing to stop them from leaving the petition in the town hall, but there was no official person there to take it from them."

The petition was shown before the glare of TV crews, who were filming the town hall and campaigners as part of a programme called Restoration Nation which will be shown on BBC4 later this summer.

Film crews interviewed Hornsey and Wood Green MP Barbara Roche, Councillor Judy Bax, chairwoman of Hornsey Town Hall advisory panel, and

representatives of Crouch End for People.

Mrs Roche said: "I told the TV crews why I support this campaign and that it has got fantastic local support. I think it shows that local campaigns are important."

Elaine Finklet, of Crouch End for People, said: "Anything that highlights our campaign is really good. This takes our local campaign nationwide. It may encourage people in other boroughs to campaign for neglected buildings. It's inspiring."

Fellow campaigner Sarah Montgomery, of Oakfield Court, Crouch End, said: "If we get a lot of publicity, hopefully we will get more supporters."

"People will be made aware of our vision of the town hall"

# Panel independence plea

CALLS have been made for the panel set up to look at the future of Hornsey Town Hall to be made more independent from Haringey Council.

Hornsey Historical Society wants the make-up of the panel, put in place to look at

various options for the Grade II building, to be more representative of Crouch End people. At present, there are 24 members of the panel - councillors and activists with expertise in the arts, architecture and conservation.

Jacob O'Callaghan, of Hornsey Historical Society, said that more panel members should come from Crouch End for the People - the pressure group which wants the building taken out of council control altogether.

Mr O'Callaghan said: "The way that the panel's job is to be a channel for local feeling for local groups and their expertise and aspirations. Yet Crouch End for the People was given just one place, while unelected and unrepresentative cliques are allowed several places under various guises. This is simply unacceptable."

Councillor Judy Bax, chairwoman of the panel said: "I am rather reluctant to go back and redo the structure all again as it is only a short-lived committee and time is already running out - we have to report back in September."

"I just want to get on and look at the uses we think are appropriate to all parts of the building, and the really tricky bit of how the building can be financed so we can guarantee its future."

# viewpoints

Time to set the record straight...

THE passion of an overwhelming number of Crouch End residents about the future of their town hall is too important for the new Haringey Council leader, Charles Adje, to dismiss.

He seems to be following the old principle: if your opponent's policy is popular, make it yours.

This would not be a problem if the council did accept the common sense demands by residents that the town hall become a community centre.

Charles Adje's statements on this subject need to be exposed as unfortunate attempts to confuse the public. Saying that the residents' pressure group Crouch End for People "is blowing (this issue) out of all proportion", he added that "there aren't any proposals to flog off the Town Hall".

At a meeting of February 17 the council seemed ready to sell the town hall to developers, except for a representative of CEfP who questioned the figure of £15 million that would be necessary to restore the town hall.

Councillor Adje also says the council is "consulting the public". Even if such an action had been taken properly, the record of the council on consultation is not one that encourages confidence. — *Claudio Solano, Oakfield Court, Haslemere Road, N8.*

**WRITE TO:** The Editor, The Journal, 161 Tottenham Lane, London N8 9BU. E-mail letters will be accepted to [nnews@nuk.co.uk](mailto:nnews@nuk.co.uk) but please supply a postal address as well. The Editor reserves the right to shorten or amend letters at his discretion.

## Town hall fight: Let's give credit where it's due

**SURELY I cannot be the only one to smell a rat?**

If Sally Billot, Richard Reidy, Chris Warburton and Kevin Pinnock are all claiming to be "local residents" with one place each on the Hornsey Town Hall "advisory panel" and are disassociating themselves from Friends of Hornsey Town Hall then, apart from Councillor Dave Winskill, who are Friends of Hornsey Town Hall?

If I were cynical, I might start to ponder that the group was set up by councillors to put about a rumour that there were two groups working on the Town Hall, to discredit the work of Crouch End for People.

Crouch End for People

has one place only out of 20 on this advisory panel. Yet they represent more than 3,000 Crouch Enders. They were mandated by the community during public meetings in October and April, chaired by MP Barbara Roche. They have presented transparent documents and vision statements. They operate from the heart of the community, listening and talking with residents.

Friends of Hornsey Town Hall have never held a public meeting. To my knowledge they met only twice, on September 23 and on April 15 when David Bond, of Haringey Council gave a presentation.

Both the Friends of Hornsey Town Hall and the advisory panel seem to be



■ QUEUES for a sneak peak inside the town hall at Hornsey Town Hall open day

vehicles, set up to crush the voice of Crouch Enders who want their Town Hall back.

Until Crouch End for People, there were no public meetings, no articles in the press, no rallying, and

no advisory panel. In fact without Crouch End for People, the entire town hall site could have been sold by now. — *Miranda Watson, Crouch Hall Road, N8.*

## Transport vita

I AGREE with Anthony Charnley that we need to see the Hornsey Town Hall site put to good use for the community. My reason for raising the transport issue is that unless we get the transport aspects of any plan right – which includes public transport, facilities for cyclists and issues about car parking – then we cannot have a successful site marred by gridlock. I doubt anyone would welcome that! — *Councillor Lynne Featherstone, Civic Centre, Wood Green High Road, N22.*

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#### Across

1 and 4 Across. Carnivorous insect named after the way it sits whilst waiting for its prey (7,6)

4 See 1 Across

7 Colourless, odourless gas isolated by Rutherford in 1772 (8)

8 Channel Island whose parliament is called the Chief

