



The Beeston EXPRESS



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COVERING BEESTON, CHILWELL,
ATTENBOROUGH, TON and BRAMCOTE

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Protest grows against library cuts

OPPOSITION to cuts to library services continues to grow after more than 100 people attended a public meeting in Beeston.

At the meeting, protestors agreed to gather at 11am on Saturday, February 5 at Beeston Library to stage a 'Read In and Book Borrow' as part of the campaign for a "Good Local Library for All". The protest is in opposition to the county council's plans to reduce library opening hours and to slash the new book fund by 75 percent.

Under the proposals, Beeston Library's opening hours would be cut from 57 hours a week to 52, whilst at Inham Nook Library, Chilwell, the opening hours would be cut from 20 hours to just eight. Stapleford Library faces a 50 percent cut in opening hours, from 52 hours down to 26 per week, and Toton Library faces cuts from 37 hours down to eight hours*, a cut of 73 percent (*see page 2).

Book stocks, once removed from the shelf, will not be replaced as the 'new book' budget is slashed

from £8 million to £1.4 million. An order for large print and spoken word books has already been cancelled. The number of mobile libraries will be cut from seven to three.

Full time staff will be made redundant and the county council says that, if communities want their local libraries to retain longer opening hours, it will be up to them to provide volunteers to staff 'Community Partnership Libraries'.

Opposition

However, public opposition to the plans is escalating.

On Saturday, January 15, more than 500 people signed a petition against the cuts during just two hours of leafleting in Beeston town centre. More than 100 people attended the public meeting organised by the newly-formed Beeston and Chilwell Defend Library Services group, part of the wider Notts Save Our Services (SOS) campaign, at College

House Junior School on Thursday, January 20.

Ross Bradshaw, director of Nottingham publisher Five Leaves, told the meeting that when libraries and other services were facing cuts, major companies that avoid paying taxes should be challenged. Concern was expressed about what is seen as our local libraries being, "closed through the back door."

"Libraries are not a cost," he added. "They are an investment in the next generation."

Speakers at the meetings also included Gail Flack, the Unison representative for librarians and Mike Scott, Unison Regional Officer, who urged library users to join a mass demonstration outside County Hall on Thursday, February 24, when Nottinghamshire County Council sets its budget.

Greg Marshall, of Beeston and Chilwell Defend Library Services and Notts SOS, said: "It was highly-paid bankers who created the financial crisis and yet it is ordinary people who are being asked to bail them out by accepting devastating cuts to public services.

"Every day, more and more people are standing up and saying they value their public services and will not stand idly by whilst they are cut to ribbons because of a crisis not of their making."

Anyone who opposes the county council's plans for library cuts is asked to assemble at Beeston Library, Foster Avenue, at 11am on Saturday, February 5 for a "spontaneous expression of the enjoyment of books."

Myrtle Grove stab attack

POLICE are appealing for information after a 28-year-old Hungarian man suffered several stab wounds during an attack in Beeston.

The attack happened in Myrtle Grove at around 4am on Sunday, January 30, and left the victim with a punctured lung. He was taken to the Queen's Medical Centre, Nottingham, where he remains in a stable condition.

Two men, aged 29 and 31, have been arrested on suspicion of causing wounding with intent. Both the suspects have been granted conditional bail to February 16.

Anyone with information should call Nottinghamshire Police on 0300 300 9999 and ask for Carlton CID. Alternatively, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Chinese New Year Celebrations

Saturday, February 5

CHINESE New Year celebrations return to Beeston this year, thanks to a new partnership for Broxtowe Borough Council with the Beeston BID as well as contributions from Notts County Council.

Beeston Square

10am Stilt-walking Geisha
10.30am Lion Dance
10.45am Official Opening by the Mayor of Broxtowe
10.50am The London Chinese Acrobatic Company followed by parades along the High Road and performances by local schools around The Square.
11.30am Dragon Dance by the Chinese Student and Scholar's Association, followed by further performances from the London Chinese Acrobatic Company and traditional Mongolian and Chinese performances.

Chilwell Road Lantern Trail

10am - 3.30pm Follow the Lantern Trail along Chilwell Road, where businesses will be offering an authentic Chinese experience.

Chinese Cultural Event Bartons, 63 High Road, Chilwell 1pm - 4pm

Free workshops and performances throughout the afternoon include a Welcome Lion Dance at 1pm; puppet shows at 1.30pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm; Chinese classical music at 2.10pm and 3.10pm. Booking is not required. An adult must accompany all children under 16. For more information, call (0115) 917 3695.



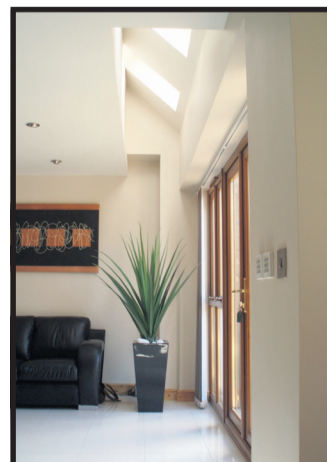
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