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Pet shop finally loses fight against Tesco *by the Editor*

A PROMINENT local landmark is due for destruction at the end of this month. Pet Mart has been in the heart of Beeston on Station Road, neighbouring the recently demolished Pearson Centre, for more than 30 years. In recent times the building has been a lonely island, surrounded by a sea of destruction.

Now, despite the hopes of the owners, staff and thousands of loyal and concerned customers, it is having to close its doors forever on June 28 to make way for a car park for the planned Tesco.

Pet Mart is an excellent example of the kind of smaller independently owned shop that has helped Beeston to become a unique and interesting place to shop. It has always been a veritable Aladdin's cave of pet care products and pets. A range of items from specially brewed dog beer to more exotic pets such as snakes, lizards and tortoises has meant that customers travel from all over Nottinghamshire to

the store. Many Beeston and Chilwell residents visit weekly just to show their children the cuddly and scaly pets, now often bringing their grandchildren as well. Parents often declare: "My dad and mum use to bring me in when I was little," as the staff teach a new, younger generation how to care for their pets. Owners Carol and Steve Zlotowitz have always tried to be involved in the local community and over the years have visited many local schools and libraries to give children a chance to see, touch and learn about caring properly for animals. Now, thanks to what some may see as progress, that will all be lost.

The late and well-known local property owner Sidney Glanfield owned the Station Road premises. Despite numerous offers for the building he always refused to sell, and it was only with his recent death at the age of 102 that big business seems to have been able to get its own way. Carol

and Steve confirmed that the local council has never been in touch to offer support, advice or help on relocating. This does raise the question: does Broxtowe Borough Council devote too much energy to solving the problems of bigger business that *might* be affected by proposals for the town centre, and not enough thought into encouraging smaller independent businesses that are the true life blood of the community? Are we all doing enough to prevent Beeston becoming a clone of so many other towns? Whilst free enterprise is a positive thing, with the competition it brings driving down prices, in this case is it enriching the community or merely making it poorer? When large corporations move in, might it only hasten the demise of the specialised independent store as well as the aesthetic and community feel of a town?

Pet Mart's closing is a loss to the whole community and Beeston will be poorer for its passing. Its unique place in

the history of the area will live on. With that in mind, Carol and Steve want to ensure the shop ends with a bang, not a fizzle. They are inviting customers past and present to a final goodbye open day on Saturday, June 28, when folks are invited to bring photos and memories to share.

Next issue

THE BEESTON EXPRESS now moves to its monthly schedule for the summer. The next issue will be available on **Friday, July 4** – and it will be a bumper one, so look out for it.

Subsequent issues will be published on the first Friday of the month: August 4 and September 5.

After then, we'll have a clearer view of where we're going and we'll let you, our loyal *Beeston Express* readers, know what the plans are. One thing is sure. We fully intend to take this brief respite from perpetual deadlines to prepare for a bigger, better *Beeston Express* later in the year!

Time to select Beeston's Carnival Princess!

ON page 2 of this issue, you will find the nominations for this year's Beeston Carnival Princess.

The Princess, selected only by *Beeston Express* readers, will lead the carnival parade from Beeston Square and along the High Road to the carnival venue, Broadgate Park, on July 12.

She will be dressed in clothing fit for a princess – but more news of that

in the July 4 issue of *The Beeston Express*.

What we need *you* to do now is vote for the youngster you think should lead the parade. Each *Beeston Express* reader is entitled to one vote. Votes will be accepted either by phone or by completing and posting the coupon on page 2. This is the only way we will accept votes – no email votes!

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