

PRESS RELEASE

FRAGOFF attended and consoled many residents from Formby who were upset and angry at the proposed development and exhibition put on by DWH on Thursday 13th December in Formby. Bill Esterson came over to see us later on in the day and to have a talk with us and he was left in no doubt of the effect that this is having on the residents. In fact one resident told our MP, Mr Esterson that she wakes up every morning feeling sick, what a way to feel just before Christmas. We would like to think the Spirit of Christmas is alive and kicking, but based on what we know of how the residents feel, we don't think many of them are going to have a happy Christmas.

What did surprise us was the very high presence of the police at the venue. We are not sure what David Wilson Homes thought we were going to do but obviously thought it would be mob rule however we do hope the police enjoyed their tea and mince pies and that their presence did not cost the tax payer too much.

With regard to David Wilson Homes' statement that they will create 240 jobs. We asked them how this would be achieved to which their response was "when we build the site it will need a milkman and window cleaner". We are not sure if they mean each house will need a milkman or window cleaner, but if that is the case then obviously it will create 240 local jobs.

We again informed Mr Esterson of our argument and all the facts and figures that challenge Sefton Council's ability to put together a Local Plan that benefits the residents of Sefton and how these have been ignored. We believe that they can no longer ignore these and it is they, Sefton Council, who have to justify their own facts and figures.

Take a look at the recent Agricultural Study carried out by Sefton Council. They informed us back in August of this year that they needed the study to definitively prove the grades of the land and that we should not expect Liverpool Road to come back as it currently is, it will be downgraded. We asked how they would know this would be the case if the study had not been done. The study has now been done and it shows that land in Maghull, Lydiate and Sefton has all been downgraded but the land surrounding Formby has been upgraded. What's the problem then? All the land that Sefton Council have included in their Green Belt Study to give up for housing has been EXCLUDED from this study. Why is that? Maybe because they have already decided that they are going to build here!

The Green Belt is at risk because the Council have not submitted to the Secretary of State an up-to-date Development Plan. Even David Wilson Homes agreed with us, at a meeting we had with them, that Sefton Council are at risk of losing if they refused planning permission which any developer appealed to the Secretary of State because of this. We asked the question if this was their opinion or the Council's to which he said they had discussed it with Sefton Council, that the Council know and this is why David Wilson Homes have come forward and intend to apply for permission to build on our Green Belt now.

The Council's existing development plan is out-of-date. At least one other council has lost green belt to a developer because their development plan is out of date. We raised a petition of over 5,000 signatures, in one week to address all 66 councillors. Our Council stood up in chambers, in front of the public and defended their existing out-of-date development plan and insisted that they were not at risk of losing green belt. Either they have been misinformed or they do not understand the implications either way this is not good for the residents of Sefton who rely on them to represent them.

At a meeting held on the 13th December all action groups across the borough came together, each one with their own story of how they have been treated by Sefton Council. We agreed that this situation will not be allowed to continue and that Sefton Council must get a Local Plan in place, using Option 1, which will protect the green belt and if they cannot or will not do this then we intend to bring down the full force of the entire borough on them to highlight the Council's true agenda, **which is to exploit the Government's New Homes Bonus Scheme that will reward Sefton Council for every new home that is built.** We will shine a spotlight on their inconsistencies and ability to change information to suit their own agenda.

We believe that Sefton Council are hanging their residents out to dry, leaving them to the mercy of the developers whose only interest is profit and the bigger the profit the better for them, regardless of the needs and wishes of the people who live in Sefton. Our website is updated on a regular basis with all the information we gather for the residents to make their own minds up what they think themselves.

Before Sefton Council start building on green belt to make money from the New Homes Bonus Scheme maybe they should look at the very large salaries they pay to themselves when deciding where budget cuts should be made, in particular the more senior members of the council.

As Mahatma Ghandi said "First they ignore you, then they ridicule you, then they fight you, and then you win." We have already been ignored and ridiculed so we would assume they have to fight us next.

Get in touch with us at www.fragoff.co.uk and keep up-to-date with what is actually going on in your own Borough and how we are working tirelessly, without pay, to protect our community.

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