

# NEW TOWN JOLLY'S!

## See you at the bar!



**It** looks likely that campaigners in East Reading have won their battle to save the community pub, The Jolly Anglers.

The Jolly, on Kennetside in Newtown, was closed in June 2009 when owners Enterprise Inns flogged it off to service their debts to US Creditors.

Despite being profitable under the management of a local pub lover, like so many community pubs, it seemed destined to become more luxury yuppie flats. In a cynical attempt to cut competition, Enterprise even made sure it could not re-open as a pub, making this a condition of the sale.

Locals had other ideas though and quickly formed campaign organisation 'Jollydarity'. The campaign held events including a well attended BBQ party on the canal side, and a Halloween pub crawl. Most importantly, they put pressure on Enterprise Inns to drop the 'no-pub' condition and entered into a dialogue with the new owners. Eventually, Enterprise agreed to drop the 'no-pub' condition on the Jolly.

Despite a set back when publicity craving politicians spoke too soon and possibly ruined a deal, Reading Borough Council have now granted a pub license to the new owners. Local pubs like these used to be the heart of our communities. With the determination of local people, and the creativity of pub managers, they can be again. As we go to press, notices on the outside of the Jolly Anglers say it will reopen 1st March. We hope to see you there!

## BUILDING SOLIDARITY

Reading Shop Stewards Network (RSSN) currently involves workers from the RMT, Unite, Unison, IWW, Usdaw, PCS, NUT and CWU trade unions. RSSN aims to increase the strength of workers campaigns, by encouraging the sharing of ideas and advice, building communication across unions and organising solidarity and support activity. Basically, we aim to help workers win.

RSSN was formed in August 2009 as the newest chapter of the National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN). The NSSN, started by the transport union RMT and now including hundreds of people from most major trade unions, has over the last two years supported workers campaigns across the country, building strength and cooperation amongst unionised workers.

RSSN is the first major project to come out of the new 'Left of Reading' network. 'Left of Reading' brings together diverse people from across Reading, who are united by the vision of organising for better lives. Ranging from trade unionists, to community campaigners, to artists, environmentalists and more, Left of Reading allows all of us to share ideas and work together, becoming stronger and more successful. Even if you are not in a union or a job you can still be share in the progression and benefits of what we aim for and achieve.

Upcoming activities includes independent media projects, supporting new community organisation in Newtown and work based on 'The People's Charter', a charter of basic demands to improve working-class life in Britain. We hope to bring together even more people from all kinds of diverse groups and backgrounds, firstly to unite around these demands, but more importantly to get to know each other and support each other in future. Part of this project will involve organising a community event and party to celebrate Mayday - International Workers Day.

To get involved or find out more, get in touch! Contact Stu on 07956 104415 or at [rssn@live.co.uk](mailto:rssn@live.co.uk)

## Pensions are Everybody's Future

Growing older in our society can often be a real struggle. The British state pension is one of the least adequate in Europe and an increasing number of company pension schemes are failing to deliver.

Over 2.5 million older people already live below the official poverty line and millions more are struggling to meet the rising costs of living. Older consumers experience higher inflation because they spend a larger proportion of their income on those items whose prices are rising fastest. The fall in the Retail Price Index of inflation in the last year has benefited very few pensioners because most of this fall was caused by the reduction in the mortgage rate. The vast majority of pensioners have paid off their mortgage or live in rented accommodation. Many rely on income from savings and this has almost completely disappeared.

We need a state pension that takes older people out of poverty, not one that pushes them further into it. It is outrageous that those least able to pay are being expected to shoulder the biggest burden of the recession.

The Nazis regarded the infirm and senile as 'useless eaters' to be exterminated in their euthanasia programme. In Britain 37,313 older people died from cold related illnesses last year. The Winter Fuel Allowance of £250 now covers only 20% of the average bill and many more old people will die of cold this winter.

The National Pensioners Convention is fighting back. Contact [www.npcuk.org](http://www.npcuk.org) for further information.

**The  
People's  
Charter**

