

Not Here! The Save Woolton Woods Campaign

On Saturday 19th July 2014 the weather was bleak, it was pouring with rain and an amber weather warning was in place across parts of the country. The rain stopped ever so briefly and then it rained some more, and it continued to rain all day long. Most people stayed indoors, not wanting to venture out at all, their warm dry homes was a much better option to that of going outdoors and getting a drenching - but this was not the case for over 200 local committed people who braved the weather conditions and came together to show some fantastic, overwhelming community spirit and resilience by taking part in a mass publicity photo event opposing the Mayor's appalling proposals to build a school on Woolton Woods.

The Mayor has made it clear that he wants to build on our green open space, but the people who turned out en masse to Woolton Woods on the 19th July laid down in the rain and literally spelt out to the Mayor and the Council - **NOT HERE!**

Two hours people waited for a break in the weather to get that perfect photo, wishing for the rain to stop, but it didn't. To help keep spirits high, Simon O'Brien, the brainchild behind this event, led an impromptu sing-a-long, "*If the Mayor goes down to the woods today.....*", - well you know the rest, and if you don't, ask someone who went!

Clearly this seemed to do the trick and lifted the spirits with calls for "moooore!" from across the field, but alas the weather got the better of us. I've never seen so many people booing at the prospect of having to leave the rain and dampness to go and get dry and warm!



Undeterred, everyone showed tremendous support and enthusiasm when they agreed to come back the following day and do it all over again! - we were determined to get the photo, come hail, rain or snow, and send a clear message to the Mayor and the Council that they cannot and WILL NOT take our green open space from us!

The fact that everyone returned on the Sunday, after a horrendous few hours the previous day, has probably sent a stronger message than we could have ever believed or hoped for, which is a show of strength and determination that people have to fight these proposals every step of the way. If local people were not so determined, they would not have even turned up on the Saturday let alone stay for nearly 3 hours soaked through and then come back for a second helping the following day! But they did, in their hundreds!

Sunday came, and we did it, the film and photo taken we accomplished what we set out to do - oh, and there was that song again!

The reaction that followed this event has been tremendous. Facebook and Twitter allowing people who took part to announce proudly how they were part of this event and in some cases what role they played, "*I was part of the T*", "*I was the underline*" were some of the comments, and much more. "Privileged", "proud" and "being part of it", probably sums up the thoughts of all who took part.

Everyone is literally talking about it and probably will do for days after, sharing their own photo's.

We have even ruined some people's Monday morning, with them having to get up and find they don't need to go and lie down in a soggy wet field!

Our most sincere thanks must go out to everyone who helped to make this happen, and to those who organised the day - you all know who you are! You have expressed on Facebook and Twitter how proud you are to have been part of this event. Hold on to those thoughts, you deserve to be proud.

Finally, we must not forget why we done it. We are all so passionate about saving our green open space and protecting the uniqueness that is Woolton Village from unwanted, selfish destruction. You can keep up to date with the campaign by going to www.wooltonwoodscampaign.com and continue to follow us on Facebook and Twitter at **Save Woolton Woods**.

A final word from a facebook user, "*Bring on the next event :)*" - Well, watch this space!

Thank you so much.

Malcolm Kelly
Save Woolton Woods Campaign Group