

The Park Protests (1)

Beware: The Council want your playground!!

1. The Council need to build a block of offices for their staff
 2. They have decided to use half of the school's playground and playing fields to do this
- Do you agree with the council's plan? What are your reasons?
 - What actions could the students at your school take to stop this happening?

Actions to stop the Council

Decide how effective the actions will be

Least 0 _____ 2 _____ 4 _____ 6 _____ 8 _____ 10 most

The Story of the Riverside Park in Newmarket

Riverside Park is the only large park in Newmarket and is in a beautiful spot next to the river. The park is very popular with people who live in Newmarket. People go there to play football and other ballgames, to walk along the river and have picnics. At weekends it is particularly busy with people of all ages going there to enjoy the outdoors. There is a play area for young children and an adventure playground for teenagers.



Plans to turn the beautiful park into a shopping centre

A building company called 'Newmarket Builders' want to build a big new shopping centre in Riverside Park in the town of Newmarket. Newmarket Council have decided to allow Newmarket Builders to build the shopping centre on the land where the park is currently. If the plans go ahead, the park will be lost forever.



Many people, are angry about the plans for the park. They think it is very unfair and completely wrong that their beautiful park should become a shopping centre. Two friends, John and Sara, have set up a group called 'Save the Riverside Park' to protest about the building plans.



Thinking Questions

1. Were the Council right to allow Newmarket Builders to develop the shopping centre? What might their reasons be for wanting the shopping centre?
2. What do you think about the plans to turn the park into a shopping centre? Do you agree with them?
3. Would you join the protest group to save the Park?

The Protests against the plans to build the shopping centre

One Saturday morning, the group organise a protest march through the park and into the town centre of Newmarket. They have done a lot of publicity to make sure as many people as possible know about the March and take part. They have put up posters around the town and given out leaflets. They have also created a Facebook page and used other social media to spread information about the march. They have contacted the local newspaper and the local TV station. They want to send a powerful message to Newmarket Council that the people of Newmarket do not want the shopping centre.

About 500 people take part in the march with banners that they have made saying 'Keep Riverside Green' and 'Hands off Riverside Park'. The local TV station films the march and reporters from the local paper are also there taking photographs and writing down information. The town centre is very busy and lots of people come out of houses and shops to watch the march and hear what the protesters are saying. This is exactly what John and Sara were hoping. People are paying attention to the protest and the protest is getting lots of good publicity.

The march ends in front of the town hall. John and Sara go into the town hall building with a petition signed by 1000 people. The petition says 'Please stop the building of the shopping centre in the park'.

Factual Questions

1. What actions did the protest group take to try and stop the building of the shopping centre?
2. Which of these actions did your class come up with to stop the Council building an office block in your playground?

Thinking Questions

1. Were the protest group right to try and stop the building of the park?
2. Is it right to take part in protests to try and change things you think are wrong?