

Picnic protest over golf club land sale

by Tom Rowley

RESIDENTS staged a picnic with a purpose in a protest over a possible sell-off of green space.

Sunday's event at Waldorf Fields in Hyde aimed to draw attention to the proposed sale of the Tameside Council-owned land to Dukinfield Golf Club.

Caroline Eastwood, organiser of the protest at the site off Matley Lane, said: "It went really well, I could not believe that 50-odd people turned up. But then the heavens opened — I think somebody was doing a ritual dance somewhere!

"We stayed for about one-and-a-half hours. It rained a bit then it rained a bit more, it was quite torrential really. Then we all went to the pub.

"We're going to have another picnic in a few weeks after we've arranged a meeting."

She added: "The concern is why is Tameside Council selling off community land without informing everyone. The only public notice was in one paper which not many get, unlike the Advertiser which everyone gets."

Objectors point out that the land was donated by Newton Mill Limited in 1973 with a covenant, which stipulates that it be used for recreational purposes by the people of Hyde.

A council spokeswoman



RAIN didn't stop play: Caroline Eastwood with fellow protestors

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said: "The golf club has approached the council with a view to exchanging an area of land to facilitate improvements to their existing facilities. This has involved extensive discussions, which have been ongoing for some time and have provided for the continued provision of open space for the use of the

general public, including all existing footpaths.

"We posted a public notice of the proposal, as required by the Local Government Act 1972 when dealing with the potential disposal of public open space, in the local press earlier this year and again at the end of April to invite comments or objections.

"The consultation period for any comments/objections closed on 29 May.

"All comments/objections received will be included in a report which will go to the cabinet deputy, who will subsequently make the final decision over whether the proposed exchange is to be progressed."