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'Beauty spot' a no-go eyesore

Get rid of it, say residents

A costly manmade beauty spot in Peterlee has been reduced to a shabby, rubbish strewn no-go area.

And now residents have demanded the removal of Oakerside's ornamental lake and architect designed footbridge, right.

The one-time showpieces were installed at vast cost by Peterlee Development Corporation several years ago and were envisaged as becoming major local attractions.

But that, say residents, is far from the case. The only people attracted to the area are local louts.

The lake has been reduced to a green slim-covered rubbish dump, and Mrs Jean Murray, who lives nearby, said this week: "It absolutely stinks, the stench is unbelievable, especially in this warm weather".

She added: "I am sure it is a health hazard and I have seen rats running along its edge. If the council is not going to clean it properly then why doesn't it drain it out and landscape the area".

Mrs Murray described the concrete footbridge as a "monstrosity", she said "it constantly attracts teenagers who throw bottles and rubbish from it into the water below."

Another resident living alongside the lake, but who did not wish to be named said; "it is absolutely appalling. The whole area is in a disgraceful condition. The smell from the water is unbearable".

She said "elderly people living in purpose built bungalows edging the lake were afraid to walk long paths during the day because they were covered in green slime, and at night they daren't go out because of the louts congregating on the bridge which also forms part of the public footpath."

Another resident Mrs Jean Wilson, said she knew some old people who were terrified.

"They daren't go out and tell these teenagers to go away. The bridge should be demolished and the lake drained".

She said the bridge had been designed as a local attraction but was now reduced to a lump of graffiti strewn concrete.

Local councillor Joan Maslin backed the residents' condemnation of the area. "They are right, it is a disgrace," she said. "Some time ago I asked Easington Council to clean the lake and it did. But really it needs cleaning on a very regular basis, particularly in the summer. I think Easington Council has got to come to terms with this problem. Either it keeps the lake clean and upgrades and patrols the bridge or it removes the lot."

Coun. Mrs Maslin added "I know we will be told it is a matter of cost, but the money is going to have to be found because this whole area is becoming one great big health hazard".