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SCOUTS OFFER FACELIFT FOR THREATENED PAVILION

A 20ft high concrete sculpture in Peterlee is to be cleaned up and repainted as a community project by local Scouts – even though “people” who live nearby have voted to have it demolished.

And at a public meeting last night residents from Oakerside Drive told council officials why the structure, designed by internationally famous artist Victor Pasmore, has to go.

They said old people are being terrorized by gangs of hooligans who gather at the pavilion, and many are afraid to leave their homes at night for fear of being attacked.

“It is not the fact that the sculpture is a monstrosity covered with graffiti that bothers us, it is the crowds of foul-mouthed louts who hang around it looking for trouble” said Mr Peter Ditchfield who lives only yards away.

Residents rejected suggestions that the sculpture, which also serves as a bridge over an ornamental pool, could be converted into something useful and claimed there was little point in cleaning it up since it would be covered with graffiti within hours.

But local Scouts said they are prepared to repaint the building as a community project.

“We’ll use a good quality anti-graffiti paint and I think residents will appreciate the improvement” said club leader Mr Jim Hayes.

But despite the vote for demolition, residents were told it could be a long time before Easington District Council has cash available for the work.

However in a bid to solve the hooliganism, local police are being asked to step up patrols in the area and “No Trespass” notices will be posted on the sculpture.

Peterlee Development Corporation is to be asked to arrange for its factory estate security patrols to call at the sculpture each night.

Meanwhile the artist is due to visit Peterlee next month for talks with Easington Council and the new town’s Development Corporation about the fate of his work of art. He will be told residents will not be satisfied until the sculpture has been demolished.