

## **Street Fighters**

### **Dave & Elisa Hynes, Gipton, Leeds**

To fight the council is like David and Goliath isn't it.....?

Before they did the demolition, it was like living in a warzone. It's like living in the countryside now.

To me, the council seemed to lose interest in keeping their properties up to standard and gradually then it just went downhill until....and then they started putting problem families in, which made it worse.

You'd get gangs of young lads gathering up to 10 and 12 o'clock at night and if there was an empty house they'd break into it and maybe set fire to it or whatever. Gradually people moved out and then it became a run-down area.

The first we heard about that our house was going to be included in it, we got a letter saying that our house was within the regeneration area and would be demolished. But when we challenged them on that they said no, our house wouldn't be demolished, it would remain standing and the regeneration wouldn't affect it.

In 2003 they gave us a letter to that effect, saying that our property would remain standing. It was 2004 when they demolished around us, but we thought, right just let them get on with it because at that stage we thought our house was going to stay here.

But once they got them down they came back and told us, no we were going. We just thought no, we're not going to let them do it. And we've been fighting them ever since.

We got in touch with the MP, got a solicitor and took out a judicial review against them. Really, we don't want to move but if we do move we want a good deal out of it. We put a lot of time and effort into this house – 36 years in it.

But there's nothing you can do about it – you just have to keep fighting them and hope for the best outcome.