

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Your newspaper will regularly discuss different groups that exist in the areas where you live. At the moment the people in Umlazi are saying "What is this U.R.A.?" Your newspaper went to talk to U.R.A. and this is what we heard:

Umlazi Residents Association (U.R.S.) was formed in September 1973 when some concerned residents met and drew up a constitution that was accepted on the 25th November 1973 by a meeting attended by 1000 people.

A. VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

URS claims that they were dissatisfied with most of the Councillors who are meant to represent the residents. They say that eleven Councillors cannot represent 20,000 houses. "U.R.A. is the people of Umlazi," they said, and can therefore bring the problems of the people to the councillors. U.R.A. says that the councillors are too busy to listen to the people and that a person should not need an appointment to see his or her elected representative.

B. WHAT U.R.A. WANTS

We asked U.R.A. what they want to do about this. We were told that U.R.A. wants to make the dissatisfaction of the people known. U.R.A. also wants to start some practical self-help schemes and to do this they have formed 6 Progress Committees. The most important of these, we were told, would be the committees on Education and Social Welfare. U.R.A. expressed its concern over the standard of education, the lack of education for the mentally retarded, and the high numbers of unemployed people in Umlazi.

C. GETTING THE PEOPLE MOVING

U.R.A. wants to involve all the people of Umlazi in projects in these areas, and in Transport, REcreation and Labour matters, by having representatives from all the wards serve on the committee.

After the interview the reporters felt that U.R.A. was sincere about their aims but that they would only succeed if all the people of Umlazi were to be involved. If this happened the biggest problems in Umlazi would be clear and could then be tackled. U.R.A. claims that after a year the councillors had failed because they had lost the people. In a year's time maybe it will be clear wheth U.R.A. has succeeded in its aims for the improvement of the community in Umlazi.

D. WHAT DO READERS THINK?

We ask readers to send us their opinions about U.R.A. and also what they see as the problems in Umlazi or in any other community where they stay.