

13th May 2008

'My quality of life will be destroyed'

By David Searle

A BLIND amateur radio user has been served a court injunction by Redditch Council to take down aerials outside his house which allow him to communicate with the outside world.

Robin Wood, 62, of Ombersley Close, Woodrow, is a licensed amateur radio operator who has had aerials in his garden for 17 years.

But the council is taking him to court to try and force him to reduce the size of the aerials, meaning he will no longer be able to communicate with his friends around the world.

"I'm blind and the radio is the only way I can communicate with the outside world. I use the radio as my social life," said Mr Wood.

"Without it, my quality of life will be destroyed.

"All my friends are from the radio and I don't want to lose them.

"I can't watch TV and I'm frightened of going out on my own. I think the council is being petty and spiteful."

Mr Wood uses the radio to keep in touch with friends from as far afield as New York, Australia and Canada but the reduced sized aerials would not be able to transmit that far.

"The council has already tried the bully boy tactics and have even sent an ASBO officer around," he added.

"There are kids running around our neighbourhood making noise all night but they're targeting a blind pensioner.

"I thought this was supposed to be a caring council but that doesn't sound very caring to me."

The council originally got involved following complaints from residents in Ombersley Close about the visual impact the aerials were having on the area and interference to electrical equipment.

Mr Wood is involved in talks with his lawyers and awaiting a date to appear in court.

A council spokesman said: "We haven't taken this issue lightly and neighbours have complained to us that they've been affected.

"They will be giving evidence as part of court proceedings, which are being brought in light of Mr Woods contravening his tenancy agreement.

"As far as the council is aware Mr Woods has never been the subject of an Anti Social Behaviour Order."