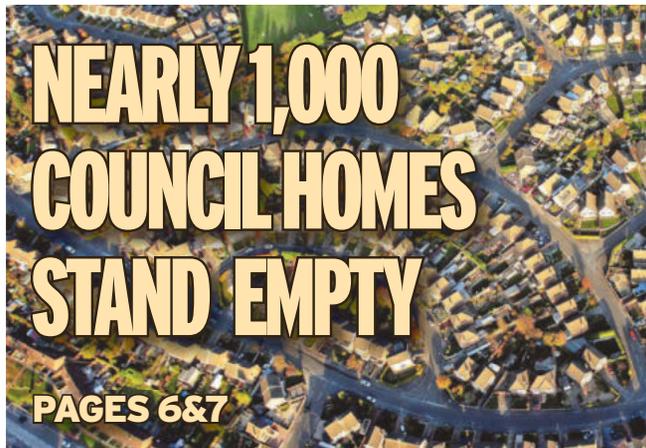
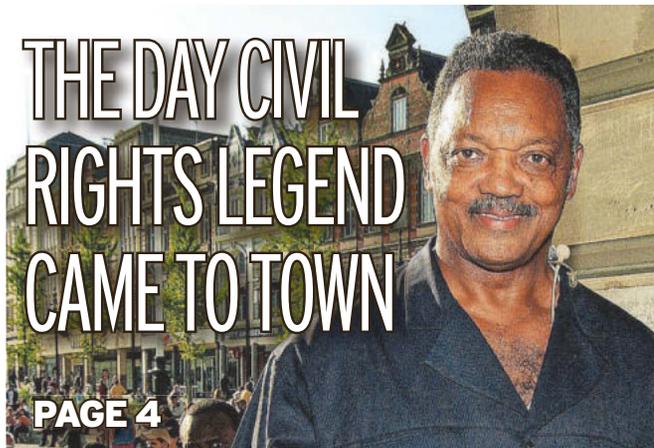


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YEARS OF OVERGROWTH CLEARED AT CITY'S CEMETERIES

Graves tidied up, but campaigners call it 'vandalism'

By LOUIS CORBETT

HUNDREDS of graves can now be seen again after clearance work at two of the city's cemeteries, but environmentalists claim it has "devastated" biodiversity at the sites.

The £80,000 clean-up, carried out by Nottingham City Council at the General Nottingham Cemetery, off Alfreton Road, and Church Rock Cemetery, in Forest Road East, has been praised by historians.

The work has also been commended by

the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, which found that dozens of hidden graves had been made accessible again.

But, following the first significant clearance in 18 years, environmentalist group Wild.NG have issued an open letter to the council expressing their concerns that biodiversity has been subject to "ecological vandalism".

Kevin Powell, 76, of the Nottingham Civic Society, has been conducting tours of the Church Rock Cemetery for the past 18 years,

and said that he was moved to tears after finding numerous sections of the Grade II listed site uncovered after the clearance.

He said: "In a sense, these are the lungs of the city, and they should be kept as that, but they need to be maintained - they haven't been for years, and they have gone a bit wild. Things were getting slowly worse, I was having to trim back bits of vegetation on graves that I talked about."

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