

## Bharat Nagar: The first new block

We started our part of this programme in the Yerawada area in September 1999, in two settlements where we already had worked and had some contacts.



The new block: that's the caretaker's room in front

Although the residents of Bharat Nagar, were pretty sceptical at first, they came to meetings and did contribute some ideas to the designs. By the time of the inauguration in February 2000 they had really got involved. Local community members watched over the site, cleared up the surrounding area, helped to carry materials and so on.

The local boys said that they wanted *their* community's new toilets to be the best kept in Pune and were prepared to compete for this honour!

The boys offered to take on the maintenance, but the local women were doubtful about this idea.



The women discuss maintenance options for the new toilet block

So right after the inaugurations, once the ceremonies were over and the dignitaries and other visitors had departed, the community held a meeting to discuss the issue.

A big point of discussion was how the caretaker's room could be used, and out of this discussion emerged the idea of it becoming a community room.

It was decided to let the boys try out the maintenance work on a trial basis, and see how they managed. The community would then meet again and decide collectively whether to let them continue.



The boys at Bharat Nagar: they're having a good time here, but they're also doing a job. Surjit's in charge, and at any time there's one or two boys keeping a constant eye on the toilets, and keeping them clean for their community.

The boys have made a very good job of it so far. There has always been one of them right there to keep an eye on the toilets and keep them clean. What's in it for them is the caretaker's room, which they are enjoying using as a gym. As long as the community's happy with the system and the toilets are well looked after, there's no problem.

There's a lot of interest in using the caretaker's room for the community. A caretaker already living in Bharat Nagar won't need the room. The women over on the other side of Bharat Nagar have already suggested using the caretaker's room at the second new block as a balwadi (playgroup) – at present the balwadi is cramped into someone's house... it all depends on what the community agree on together.