

Film made to illustrate frustration with council at dilapidation Town's the star in music video nasty

A MUSICAL video that shows Southend at its worst is on its way to trouncing the opposition in a prestigious film competition.

Deadend-on-Sea: The Last Resort was filmed by two members of Westcliff Film and Video Club. It's only five minutes long, but it wastes no opportunity to put the boot in.

From the dilapidated Corporation Pier to the sealed-off bandstand, from the cliffside landfill to dog mess on the pavement, it's the "video nasty" version of Southend.

Over the top of it is a song which was specially recorded by comic singing duo Pier Talk, which says nice things about the town while the video shows the opposite.

The film has already won the first round of a

■ **By NICK HALLISSEY**

competition organised by the Institute of Amateur Cinematographers (IAC) and is now going on to a regional heat against other clubs from London, the South East and East Anglia.

Chris Taylor, from Ashington, who made the film along with fellow member Ken Pratt, from South Woodham Ferrers, said the film was an expression of frustration aimed at Southend Council.

Mr Taylor, 59, said: "I'm a great lover of Southend - I was born and bred here - but on this occasion we thought it wouldn't hurt to send the council up a bit."

"The council have been very unco-operative over a couple of projects lately, so perhaps it was payback time."

Mr Taylor's main complaint is the council's ask-

ing price of up to £200 to film in public places such as Belfairs Park.

The council also demanded the group take out public liability insurance of up to £5million to film in Southchurch Hall.

The pair's dislike for the council was compounded when they got a parking ticket while filming the video. The ticket now stars in the film as Pier Talk sing about excellent parking facilities on the seafront.

Other images include a pornographic magazine littering the ground beneath the statue of Queen Victoria, a sign saying "Danger - Keep Out" near the bandstand, and overflowing rubbish bins.

Mr Taylor admitted: "In a way, I feel slightly guilty these images will now be seen all over the region, in London, Cambridge and other places.

"But in view of the lack of co-operation from the council, maybe this will prod them into realising they haven't been very kind to us."

A spokeswoman for Southend Council said: "The council's policy is to insist people have a minimum public liability insurance of £5million.

"This relates to filming in a public place whether the group is amateur or professional. We have a duty to protect the public. The insurance is there to cover eventualities such as a member of the public injuring themselves on cabling, for example.

"We have a standard location fee of £200, but it is negotiable and has been waived in the past."

■ **Disgrace - stills from the film, right, illustrate the state of the town**



■ Putting the boot in - members of Westcliff film and video club

