

**Fuerteventura****Rapper fined for regal insult**

▲ **A member of a rap group** from Madrid has been found guilty of offending the Spanish King during a concert in Fuerteventura.

The country's Criminal Court ruled that Moisés Rivas, who plays in a band called Street Poets, had caused major offence with insults he aimed at the King and Royal Family in general towards the end of the gig, which took place over two years ago. The concert was staged in May 2005 near the main Civil Guard barracks in Puerto del Rosario. Officers reported the rapper for a stream of invectives hurled at them and the monarch during the closing number. Rivas was ordered to pay a fine of almost 1,500 euros for the offences caused to the force and the King.

**La Gomera****Plans for the future**

*There is still a lot of green and terraces of fruit trees*

▲ **The mayor of Valle Gran Rey in La Gomera**, Esteban Bethencourt, was on local radio earlier this month to announce the imminent, forty-five day consultation period before the Plan General de Ordenación Urbanística of Valle Gran Rey is made law. This long-awaited plan will herald a new, comprehensive set of

planning regulations for the town which, like most Canarian towns, has largely muddled along to date without. In the case of Valle Gran Rey, the last real attempt to deal with the problems inherent in guiding a small farming and fishing community (the memory of recent poverty and dictatorship alive and well) into its new future as a fledgling

tourist town, were made in 1979. The 1979/80 plan, drawn up by Ruben Enrique, was thankfully, largely forgotten. Enrique's vision of what was, at least to him, an attractively built up, high density development of four-storey high tourist apartment blocks à la Benidorm, never materialised. It was felt, luckily, that such a massive

building project was excessive. Since then, a series of so-called subsidiary plans has had to serve, with resultant problems and infighting.

The end result, present day Valle Gran Rey, is far from the disaster it could have been. There has, of course, been a fair amount of building done over the last thirty years, but it has been largely confined

to relatively low level, low density construction. Ninety-five per cent of the extra accommodation built for tourists is owned by locals. This is an unusual and fortunate state of affairs, as a glance at the monstrosities built by foreign companies in Mallorca, for example, will confirm.

There is still a lot of green, with the banana plantations hanging on, and terraces of fruit trees proliferating. It is still beautiful, but a solution is long overdue on how to proceed from here.

The local population has grown to just over five thousand. One of the two schools in the valley has thirty-three, three year olds this year. Not long ago, ten would have been considered a lot. This forty-five day consultation period gives everybody the chance to make suggestions and complaints, of what mayor Bethencourt termed "both a particular and general nature."

The next step will be a period of provisional approval, leading to definitive approval early next year.

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