



WAKE UP!! WAKE UP!! IT'S YER JERRY BUILT...

SchNEWS

www.schnews.org.uk

Friday 9th June 2006

Free/Donation

Issue 547



PRICKS AND MORTAR

“I think this housebuilding thing started because Tesco came sniffing around and that’s where the big money is.” - a local resident speaking to SchNEWS at the Titnore Woods protest camp.

In a valiant attempt to put an even greater burden on dwindling water supplies, busy bureaucrats have come up with a scheme to build another 200,000 new houses in the South East by 2020, with government white-coats showing their dry wit by claiming that the new builds will only need an increase of 0.1% of water usage. Either way this plan is madness considering there are currently 84,000 empty properties in the South East, and almost 730,000 nationally.

But such senseless decision making becomes much easier to understand after a few backhanders from corporate cronies like Tescopoloy. Over in Titnore Woods, Sussex, where there is currently a protest camp to stop road and housing building developments (See SchNEWS 546), Tesco couldn’t resist the money making opportunity that is a plan to build 875 homes, trashing some ancient woodland along the way. Apparently the existing superstore which is plonked right in the middle of the adjacent estates just isn’t big enough for the Tescopoly investors who make their money by the square metre.

One third of the consortium building these new houses in West Durrington is Persimmon Homes. They offer a ‘pragmatic approach’ to corporate social responsibility and shares are up 34% since last August! Persimmon have their mucky paws in more than 250 development sites across the UK and their website actively requests that you give them a shout if you’ve got a greenfield site that you want to sell (land@persimmonhomes.com). Company bosses have been wheeling and dealing with likes of Bryant Homes, who say their “not just interested in building new homes - we’re creating sustainable places to live, with a real community spirit”, which is news to the hundreds of local residents opposed to the scheme.

The campaign to stop this destruction has been going strong since 2002, with a series of actions and demonstrations (see www.schnews.org.uk/sotw/titnore.htm). But now with bureaucratic means of defending the site exhausted, the camp has been set up with tree-house construction currently in full swing (literally). And the camp is enjoying good local support, with one of the many locals on-site lending a hand telling SchNEWS “All different kinds of people in Worthing are thinking and talking about it - people are really determined.”

The proposed Titnore road and house

building works would plough through rare ancient woodland as old as the ice age - but this doesn’t seem to bother the bods in The South Coast Multi Modal Transport study who were commissioned by the government to come up with a ‘radical’ plan to prevent gridlock. Guess what answer they came up with? Err... you guessed it, build more roads!

STAMMERING FIT

But even more profit can be extracted when the words ‘luxury’ and ‘housebuilding’ come together. That agenda, however, is currently being interrupted over at Home Farm in Stanmer Park, Brighton. Local renegades, known as Brighton Community Resource (BCR), had been running a community open house since squatting the building last month. The house had been empty for over a year, but now the council has leased it to the newly formed Brighton and Hove Estates Conservation Trust in another round of dodgy council dealings and nice little earners. According to the council’s own report it met its ‘consultation’ commitment by consulting with the leader of the council and leader of the opposition! Democracy in action!

The Estates Conservation Trust is formed of two local councillors and four members

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EYE OF HORRORS

Best known as an exotic holiday location, complete with yer sphinx, pyramid things and camels, don’t remain ‘in de Nile’ about the real state of affairs for the local people fighting to throw off decades of state repression over in Egypt. Our SchNEWS correspondent has been getting some Cairo-practice, recently and writes...

On Thursday 25th May, after a demo called to mark the anniversary of a constitutional amendment ‘allowing’ opposition figures to stand in elections, two activists were seized, beaten up and sexually assaulted. Mohammed El-Sharqawi and Karim El-Shair from the ‘Youth for Change’ movement were followed and kidnapped by plain clothes coppers after the demo at the Journalists Union, just over from the High Court in Cairo. They were remanded in custody for 15 days for ‘demonstrating without authorisation’. Their lawyer who visited them a few days later reported they had been beaten black and blue and seriously sexually assaulted. The pair refused interrogation until they had been seen by a doctor and had their injuries documented. They had been released from prison just a few days earlier on May 22nd after being held since 24th April (el-Sharqawi) and 7th May (El-Shair) on the same charge.

At the demo earlier in the day, a few hundred journalists and opposition activists had protested against the lack of democratic freedoms in Egypt; there are currently some 20,000 political prisoners in Egypt and 800 activists have been detained just in the last month. Despite pledges by the Mubarek regime not to persecute journalists, over 100 have been imprisoned in the last 6 years and photographers regularly have equipment seized or smashed. Thousands of riot police controlled junctions in neighbouring streets, monitoring the flow of traffic and pedestrians and sealing off the Journalists Union. People were allowed in and out of the cordon only after heated debate and in the presence of media. Groups of hired thugs, known locally as baltagua (axemen), stood around to add to the menacing atmosphere. These are the same thugs who had, the week before, beaten protesters at another protest following orders from the police.

Under Egyptian emergency law, in place since 1981, and renewed recently for 2 years pending the drafting of (surprise, surprise) anti-terrorist legislation, demos have to be authorised by the authorities - of course authorisation practically never given. A vigil was called the same day at Sa’ad Zaghloul

Square (Sa’ad being an Egyptian nationalist hero) but police sealed off the area with only a few foreigners and journalists allowed into the square. Others were ‘politely’ moved on. When confronted by a senior police officer as to his business there, SchNEWS’s correspondent played the naive tourist card and asked what was going on. Our friendly cop, who turned out to be a real Anglophile and visits England every year, replied that ‘some troublemakers just wanted to cause trouble’... (What else would troublemakers be doing?)

No doubt he’s referring to supporters of the banned pro-reform Kifaya movement, many of whom are in prison. The US recently murmured about the human rights abuses, but didn’t quite go as far as cutting its \$2bn a year worth of funding to the country, most of which ends up in the hands of the military. President Mubarek suggested that Bush stop meddling in Egypt’s internal affairs and allow “change to come from within”. But with poverty levels rocketing from price hikes and the virtual collapse of the social welfare system, he’s gonna need all the military hardware he got from Uncle Sam to keep his country from “changing from within” in a more radical way.

* Find out more on the current situation in Egypt at arabist.net and blogs such as abuavardvark.typepad.com and manalaa.net.

PRICKS AND MORTAR *continued...*

of the 'local community' who happen to include the relative of a councillor, the council's Kent based lawyers and the agricultural estate agents for the council! The trust was created under the council's remit to open up the South Downs for public access, and its stated aim is "to promote the conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment of South Downs". In reality, however, the trust is a front organisation which allows the council to utilise an asset protection loophole and charitable status to (in the council's words) "maximise income whilst at the same time avoiding the creation of secure tenancies with a right to buy".

Council and Trust spokespeople (not that there's much difference between the two) have repeatedly lied to the media, claiming that plans for the building were at an advanced stage, with planning and listed-building applications already lodged yet it is a matter of public record that no planning applications for Home Farm had been lodged, and work on its conversion into two (very profitable) 'cottages' due to begin in July. BCR fixed up the building, resumed gardening, hosted an art exhibition and managed to resist an earlier eviction attempt on Monday as 50 community members and a manikin made a 'Home Alone' style barricade. Not such good news later this week though, as the house was evicted early on Thursday (8th June) morning. But the fight's not over and campaigners are expecting more support to come from local community groups, such as the Friends of Stanmer Park, over the next few days. Where will BCR will pop up next?

* **The Titnore Woods protest camp needs your help now...** food, polyprop rope, building gear and most importantly - people. For directions to the camp see SchNEWS 546. See also www.protectourwoodland.co.uk.

* For more on **South Coast road building** programmes see www.scar-uk.co.uk

* **Camp Bling** at Priory Crescent (A1159), Essex, is stopping a road expansion which would destroy over 100 trees and the burial site of a Saxon King. see SchNEWS 514 and www.dragonnetwork.org/campaigns/bling site phone 07817 182394

* **Stansted Airport Expansion** - also in Essex, where evil Govt plans would see it grow larger than Heathrow is today, there has been a long running campaign helped along by well-heeled nimby's. This Saturday (10th) get along to the **5th Annual Runway Rumble** covering a 5 mile route around the proposed site. 10.30am at The Old Vicarage, Church End, Broxted. For more call 01279 870558, web www.stopstanstedexpansion.com

STOLEN FROM AFRICA...

Oh no, not another industry front group story! Yep, this time it's the "Investment Climate Facility for Africa" - an economic-air conditioning system for hyper-capitalists to: "create a more attractive business environment in Africa". Greedy investors include Niall FitzGerald, the big cheese over at animal testing fans Unilever, Benjamin Mkapa the former neo-liberal president of Tanzania, and Firmino Mucavele of corporate backed 'The New Partnership for Africa's Development' which has come under heavy criticism for being a little enthusiastic in the field of privatisation. One of the biggest supporters is Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo who likes to use his armed forces to attack civilians. But enough of that, the ICF is actually a bit more honest than other Greenwashers saying that its "Success will be measured solely by higher levels of investment, faster economic growth, enhanced business opportunities and sustained return on investments." Worker's rights, better standards of living and access to education are seen as potential threats to a 'sustained return on investments' and don't even get a mention. If you're looking to make a socially irresponsible mint in Africa, check out the hot air at: www.investmentclimatefacility.org

PARTY AND PROTEST

JUNE 10 Road Block national conference - central Birmingham. Workshops and guest speakers. For location see www.roadblock.org.uk ** **10 Norwich Anarchist Bookfair** - with meetings, food, bar & music. Blackfriar's Hall, Norwich, 10am-6pm. Free entry. Beards optional. www.norwichanarchists.org ** **10-11th Faslane Peace Camp Birthday Party** 24 years in defiance of the Naval base. Bands, dj's, food, bar etc. Accommodation available, but bring own just in case. Free/donation Call 01436820901 see also www.faslane.co.nr ** **10 Big Sexy Festy Party**. 12pm-10pm, Finsbury Park, London. A free festival celebrating 10 years of homeless charity Crisis with donations going to them. Call 07903 968975 ** **10 - BASS on the Beach**, party on the seafront, 12pm-9pm, The old paddling pool site, Brighton beach. By Brighton Alliance Of Sound Systems ** **11 - Rally for Justice, 2pm outside Scotland Yard, London**. Against police terror and Islamophobia following the botched June 2 police "terrorist raid" on Forest Gate involving 250 police which saw one innocent man injured by gunfire. Tube - St James Park. Call 07908 750 748 ** **15 Picket At Court - Four Palestine Solidarity Campaign** supporters are in court, charged under the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 for protesting at Downing Street. Picket of Magistrates Court, Horseferry Road, London SW1 at 9.30am. www.palestinecampaign.org ** **16-18 Projectile**: A festival of anarchist film and culture. Star & Shadow Cinema, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 2BB. £25/£5/ free for asylum seekers. Accommodation available. www.projectile.org.uk ** **16-21 Sunrise Summer Solstice Celebration** The next generation of global family gathering with music, permaculture and visionary culture. Fully ecologically-empowered. Site-wide organic policy. South Somerset, £50 E/B, £60, £15 parking, 01458 831358, www.sunrisecelebration.com

SchNEWS in brief

24 Greenpeace activists were arrested on Thursday morning for blocking the main entrance of NATO with a replica B61 nuclear bomb and dropping a banner from the main NATO building roof calling for "Nukes out of NATO". The protest coincided with the start of a NATO Defence Ministers meeting debating the future of NATO. www.greenpeace.org ** **The National Coalition of Guantanamo Campaigns** has launched the website www.guantanamo.org.uk to campaign for the issue of Imprisonment Without Trial in Guantanamo Bay and similar US prisons around the world. The campaign primarily fights for the release of the nine British detainees. ** **Occupied social centre, 'The Square'** faces eviction on 23rd June. There's a call out for support for solidarity and convergence on the weekend of the 23-25th June in Russell Square www.londonsocialcentre.org.uk ** Go to www.moneysavingexpert.com/index.phtml#vote and scroll down to the bottom of the page. There's a vote on whether **Animal Rights Activists** are justified in targeting shareholders

YOU CNT BE SERIOUS

Members of Spanish anarchist trade union, the CNT, who work at supermarket distribution centre Mercadona, are now into their 75th day of a strike. Things kicked off when company bosses gave three Barcelona workers the boot for trying to organise fellow workers. Expecting retaliation Mercadona brought in scab labour before a strike had even been declared (that's strategic business planning for you!) The union is calling for the reinstatement of sacked workers, agreement to negotiated working conditions, improved health and safety and recognition of the CNT for the purposes of worker negotiation. www.barcelona.cnt.es for more info

LOVE HANDLE(BARS)

Brighton's very first World Naked Bike Ride (WNBR) is taking place this Saturday, June 10th. The annual celebration of cycling and the human body is taking place in dozens of cities worldwide, to demonstrate the vulnerability of cyclists and protest against oil dependency.

After initially giving the go-ahead for the full frontal frolics, prudish Sussex plod have now made a complete U-turn. Chief Superintendent Jeremy 'Total' Paine has overruled the previous advice given out by the cops, demanding that all "rude bits" are covered up - under threat of arrest under Section 5 of the 1986 Pub(L)ic Order Act (that's for behaviour causing "harassment, alarm or distress" to the public, if you're wondering). This is in contrast to the London ride happening on the same day, where the Met are letting it all hang out (although we're not sure whether the Met's escort cyclists will be defrocked themselves). It seems that in Bohemian 'out there' Brighton, the sight of a naked person is just too much to bare.

Cyclists and skaters are therefore invited by Brighton's ride organisers to respond creatively by wearing fig leaves, fake topiary, "censored" signs and pubic wigs. Perhaps leaving the only tw**s on display to be Sussex Police.

* Following the pre-ride body and bike decorating workshop at 9am, the Brighton ride will start at 10am from The Level, and tour the sights before finishing at Black Rock naturist beach. The route avoids hills for riders' comfort!

* **The London ride** starts at 3pm from Wellington Arch. Both rides should last just over an hour and a half and you could take part in both rides if you travel (clothed) by train.

* See also www.worldnakedbikeride.org

ILLEGAL AID

Ministers have decided that it'd be a great money saving ploy if access to free legal advice is curtailed. Presumably responding to the news that over 98% of fast-track asylum cases from Harmondsworth detention centre are rejected, the Legal Services Commission has decided that unless a migrant has more than a 40% chance of success the case must be dropped. In another right wing response to racist news stories, these new 'performance indicators' are due to be introduced in October. Last Sunday (1st June) the News of the World was bragging about how they kidnapped "2 bus loads of illegal immigrants". Their undercover journalist had been out and about pretending to be taking people to jobs, instead picking up migrants in a bus and delivering them to Colnbrook detention centre (see SchNEWS 545). This Sunday (11th June), they'll be a demo outside News of the World HQ at 1 Virginia Street (Tower Hill tube). Check www.ncadc.org.uk for more info.

...and finally...

Although fast food restaurants may be more likely to be robbed by their own workers than any other industry in the world, middle school pupils have revealed something just as interesting. Twelve year old Jasmine Roberts' science project involved testing the quality of water in the likes of Burger King and McDonalds and found that the water in the ice contained more bacteria than the water in the toilets! Jasmine even went on to win the regional science competition for the quality of her research! To make it a hat trick SchNEWS found another top food fact: manufactured meat in the US contains so many potentially poisonous toxins that tests have revealed that kitchen sinks contain more e-coli bacteria than the rims of toilets! Check out www.sustainweb.org for tips on avoiding the Fast Food poison.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all nude bike riders - don't let anything get caught in the chain... honest.

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