

# RAVING MADNESS

## AS UK TEKNIVAL 'RAVE SIX' FACE COURT ACTION AFTER BUST...

Around 2,500 partygoers descended on Dale Aerodrome in Wales last May bank holiday for the 2010 UK Teknival, only to be met with a massive police response. Police broke up the party on the first day, arresting 17 people in the process. Four remain on police bail and six have been charged.

Automatic number plate recognition, a police photographer, hand-held camcorders, helicopters and even a plane were used by police in a sophisticated surveillance operation which resulted in hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of equipment and vehicles being seized (not to mention a similar amount spent on the police operation no doubt).

The annual UK Teknival has emerged out of a long tradition of free festivals, its roots stretching back to the Avon Free Festival, one of a circuit of free festivals which emerged as part of the alternative and traveller scene in the 1970s. These gatherings were largely tolerated before the Criminal Justice Act, passed in 1994 (see SchNEWS 1-50), rendered them illegal.

Avon Free Festival took place each year on May bank holiday weekend, and culminated in the infamous 1992 Castlemorton party. Every year on the anniversary of Castlemorton, a teknival or large free party is held somewhere in the UK. The most notable of these was the 2002 Steart Beach party in Somerset, held on the tenth anniversary of Castlemorton, which coincided with the Golden Jubilee weekend and attracted forty soundsystems and over ten thousand people (see SchNEWS 363). Teknivals are now a global phenomenon, with an international circuit you can follow all summer, in the same way people used to be able to follow the free festival circuit around the UK. The French government actually permits two teknivals a year to take place unhindered.

This year as hundreds of vehicles congregated near the small village of Dale on the coast of southwest Wales, four policemen attempted to block the road leading to the disused aerodrome site, causing a massive tailback which brought traffic to a standstill for three hours.



One witness reports they were stuck at least five miles behind the front of the jam. Eventually, after someone brought out a 12 volt rig and people started dancing in the road, the policemen moved aside and actually directed everyone onto to the site, negotiating with a landowner to get a gate opened.

As a result of the blockade, soundsystems didn't begin setting up until the early hours of Sunday morning. By about midday the next day, police, the local council and the BBC were all on the scene. Fairly positively-slanted BBC interviews with partygoers were broadcast nationally and posted online, although the second has since been removed from the BBC website.

Mid-afternoon Sunday a helicopter flew overhead, broadcasting something that might have been the words of Section 63 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 over a loudspeaker. The message was inaudible due to loud music being played on the ground; even those straining their ears to hear only caught snatches of it, and witness accounts vary. It was apparently a warning to leave within between one, four, or twenty-four hours.

Whichever it was, at this stage the majority of soundsystems started packing their rigs into their vehicles as ordered by the police. It became clear then that the three day mega-rave everyone was expecting had been thwarted. The atmosphere of unease and fear generated by the authorities caused a mass exodus of ravers who would otherwise have stayed to help to clean up the site after the party.

Most people left the site in a hurry, although some efforts were made to clear rubbish. As each soundsystem drove off site their driver was stopped and arrested, their equipment was seized and their vehicles were impounded. Only the luckiest got away. Confiscated items include work tools, vinyl collections, several vehicles without sound equipment in them, a hire van, and hired and borrowed music equipment. Police deliberately kept the hire van for two weeks, making the total cost £950.

Along with one other soundsystem that left early on Monday morning, a well-known deep house music soundsystem stayed behind and continued playing music and partying until mid-afternoon on Monday, when more than twenty police, including the Chief of Dyfed-Powys Constabulary, came over and physically handed out a Section 63 notice, telling people to leave within one hour. They explained that they had drunk too much to drive and asked if they could stay until the next morning. The officers agreed that they could stay on site and drive home in the morning on condition that they packed their equipment into the van immediately.

Whilst negotiations were taking place, a dis-



abled traveller started to play punk music on his car stereo, which police then confiscated from his live-in vehicle. "He wasn't even playing repetitive beats," recalls one partygoer, "he was a disabled man playing music in his own home and the police seemed to illegally enter his home and steal his stereo."

Police then left the site, but an hour later, a low-loader recovery vehicle arrived to tow the van containing the soundsystem, followed by four riot vans and about fifteen police cars. There were less than fifty people left on site at this point. A woman whose partner was detained overnight was forced to sleep outside the police station as she awaited his release because their van had been impounded leaving her nowhere to sleep and no way of returning home. Despite this, the police refused to let her stay inside.

Four people were released on police bail pending further investigation and the 'Rave Six', as the mainstream media has dubbed them, have been charged under Section 136 of the Licensing Act for carrying out unlicensed licensable activity. The six have now been released on unconditional bail and are due to return to Haverfordwest Magistrates Court on 24th June.

Four of the six arrested were merely friends from the last soundsystem to leave the party and had nothing to do with the overall organisation of the event. (It's highly probable that the other two didn't either). Offenders under Section 136 are liable for up to six months in jail and/or a fine of up to £20,000. A Facebook group called 'Drop the Charges Over UKTek' has been created and has so far attracted nearly 3000 members. There is video evidence being uploaded all the time, including a clip of police leading the convoy to the party site, which would suggest that they actually allowed the party to take place.

\* If you can help the 'Rave Six' in the form of legal or financial support or if you witnessed events at the UK Tek then please join the Facebook group 'Drop the Charges Over UKTek' and contact the administrators, or if you're not on Facebook, please get in touch via by emailing rave\_six@yahoo.com

## WOOD YOU BELIEVE IT?

The Save Titnore campaign is celebrating a huge victory as developers aiming to build on Titnore Woods have decided not to appeal against the council's surprising decision in March to refuse development of the site (see SchNEWS 714). The campaign had planned a protest outside the developers Persimmon Homes regional HQ in Fareham on June 26th, but this has been cancelled due to the good news.

Campers resident at the site will now decide whether or not to remain there or if the threat of development is sufficiently distant to allow the site to be disbanded and the woodland to return to its uninhabited glory. A meeting to discuss the future of the Titnore campaign will take place at 8pm at the Jolly Brewers pub on Clifton Road, Worthing on June 24th.

\* See [www.protectourwoodland.co.uk](http://www.protectourwoodland.co.uk)

## SET THE CONTROLS FOR THE HEART OF THE SUN

Just before you strap yer back pack on and head out the door for a festival you might want to check the web before you set off for yer week-end bash, because unless the festival is sponsored by a phone company, protected by bulldog snarling security or hosting the likes of U2, it might just have been pulled by the police.

Three home grown stalwart festivals have been scrutinised, pulled up and shut down for utterly spurious reasons in the past year. The Big Green Gathering in 2009 was cancelled literally at the last minute by Mendip District Council and Avon and Somerset Police - citing the potential for 'crime and disorder' and safety concerns (see SchNEWS 685).

The same fate awaited Strawberry Fair in Cambridge this year (see SchNEWS 715). The Glade festival was to fall as well, again due to police intervention (see SchNEWS 722).

The organiser of the Thimbleberry festival in County Durham last September was arrested for allowing his premises to be used for cannabis smoking, and all the gate money - £3500 - confiscated as 'proceeds of crime' (see SchNEWS 715). The charge was thrown out of court and people are still hopeful the festival will be back on this September.

Free parties, raves and other illegal gatherings have more or less continued on over the past decade, but after the UK Teknival was busted in May (see main story), there has been other instances of an upsurge in police attacks on these events.

Festivals like Big Green Gathering - apart from those already mentioned which were actually stopped or made impossible by police - were already under severe financial pressure due to obligatory licensing and policing fees - bills which ran well into six figures for festivals like Big Green. Licenses for under-500-person events are still relatively obtainable, but any more than that and costs build up. One festival organiser told SchNEWS that these logistics point to having more, but smaller, festivals - and this is how it seems to be going (see the list below). Events on the scale of Big Green - which are not drenched in corporate sponsorship - are now nearly impossible. Having said that, rumour has it that Big Green may return next year - but we doubt it will be held anywhere near the county of Somerset.

But, perhaps we shouldn't be wide mouthed with shock... Let's Tardis travel 25 years back to another summer and materialise in a beanfield near Stonehenge. With travellers in a convoy of live-in vehicles on their way to the 11th Stonehenge Free Festival over the solstice, the massive Tory led Police clamp-down surrounded, impounded and violently

## ACHY BREAKY HEARTS

With a merry, "two fingers to the selfish landowner who wishes to remove a right of access that has taken 130 years to secure", Right to Roam ramblers descended on the downs in their campaign to open up the site of Breaky Bottom, East Sussex last Saturday (12th). The landowner had been using the 'safety hazard' of an unfenced chalk pit to exclude his farm from the statutory Access Land site. However, the walkers, from the Ramblers Association, Red Rope, and The Land Is Ours, braved the perilous chalk pit and made the site safe for all by fencing the pit off before decorating it with ribbons, banners and placards. Email [action4access@googlemail.com](mailto:action4access@googlemail.com)

attacked the convoy before they got there. The infamous 'Battle of the Beanfield' has since become a landmark in counter culture history (see SchNEWS 25, 678).

Since 1999 summer solstice events are now allowed again at Stonehenge, but hardly in the heady vein of the Stonehenge Free Festivals. Heavy policing, stop-and-searches, flood lights, burger vans, and highly coordinated, limited access to the stones is the extent of it. Summer solstice 2009 saw a massive police presence including toolled-up private security, and an unmanned drone flying overhead filming it - with 37 arrests and 300 searches with sniffer dogs (see SchNEWS 681).

Despite all that, and Glastonbury having long since become a theme park for people on drugs in wacky hats, the real spirit of DIY lives on. Here's a bit of a SchNEWS summer guide for all those who want to keep festivals real and fun. They are still out there and they're usually fronted by small crews who deserve support:

\* **Sunrise Celebration** - June 3rd-6th, Bruton, Somerset, [www.sunrisecelebration.com](http://www.sunrisecelebration.com)

\* **Glastonwick 2010** - June 4th-6th, Coombes farm, Coombes, West Sussex, [www.cask-ale.co.uk/beerfestival.html](http://www.cask-ale.co.uk/beerfestival.html)

\* **Workhouse** - July 9th-11th, Llanfyllin Wales, [workhousefestival.co.uk](http://workhousefestival.co.uk)

\* **Nozstock** - July 9th-11th, Rowden Paddocks, Bromyard, Herefordshire, [www.nozstockfestival.co.uk](http://www.nozstockfestival.co.uk)

\* **Larmar Tree** - July 14th-18th, nr Salisbury, Wiltshire/Dorset border, [www.larmertreefestival.co.uk](http://www.larmertreefestival.co.uk)

\* **Secret Garden Party** - July 22nd-25th, near Huntington, Cambridgeshire, <http://uk.secretgardenparty.com/2010>

\* **Truck Festival** - July 23rd-25th, Hill Farm, in Steventon, near Abingdon, South Oxfordshire, [www.thisistruck.com](http://www.thisistruck.com)

\* **Y-Not Festival** - July 30th - August 1st, Matlock, Derbyshire, [www.ynotfestivals.co.uk](http://www.ynotfestivals.co.uk)

\* **Endorse IT** - August 6th-8th, between Salisbury and Blandford, near the village of Sixpenny Handley, [www.endorseit.co.uk](http://www.endorseit.co.uk)

\* **Belladrum Tartan Heart Festival** - August 6th-7th, Phoinias, By Beauly, Inverness-shire, [www.tartanheartfestival.co.uk](http://www.tartanheartfestival.co.uk)

\* **Boomtown Fair** - August 13th-15th, Buckinghamshire, [www.boomtownfair.co.uk](http://www.boomtownfair.co.uk)

\* **Green Man** - August 20th-22nd, Brecon Beacons, Wales, [www.greenman.net](http://www.greenman.net)

\* **Beautiful Days** - August 21st-23rd, Escort Park, Devon, [www.beautifuldays.org](http://www.beautifuldays.org)

\* **Small World** - August 26th-30th, Headcorn, Kent, [www.smallworldsolarstage.org](http://www.smallworldsolarstage.org)

\* **Solfest** - August 27th-29th, Tarnside Farm, West Cumbria, [www.solwayfestival.co.uk](http://www.solwayfestival.co.uk)

\* **Shambala** - August 27th-30th, Hop Farm Northamptonshire, [www.shambalafestival.org](http://www.shambalafestival.org)

\* **Thimbleberry** - September - TBC - [www.thimbleberry.co.uk](http://www.thimbleberry.co.uk)

\* **Out Of The Ordinary** - September 17th-19th, Knockhatch Farm, Hailsham Bypass, Hailsham, [www.outoftheordinaryfestival.com](http://www.outoftheordinaryfestival.com)

\* **As that's just a few of the hundreds of festivals and gatherings going on this summer.** See [www.festivals.co.uk](http://www.festivals.co.uk), [www.realfestival-music.co.uk](http://www.realfestival-music.co.uk), [www.festivaley.com](http://www.festivaley.com) and look on [www.schnews.org.uk/pap](http://www.schnews.org.uk/pap)

## TURKEY SHOOT

Making a token gesture to an outraged international community, Israel launched its own investigation into the circumstances surrounding the killing by Israeli commandos of nine Turkish peace activists, aid workers and journalists on board the *Mavi Marmara* (see SchNEWS 726).

True to form, the Turkel inquiry will neither investigate the soldiers' actions nor question the politicians responsible. Not only that, but the youngest member of the three man committee is 75. Yaakov Tirkel, the young-un of the panel, doesn't believe that there should be an inquiry at all (quoted in Israeli army radio). 86-year-old former General Amos Horev, will no doubt provide a fair and impartial opinion on his own soldiers. The other member, Shabbtai Rozen, is the very definition of elder statesman, weighing in at an impressive 93 years young. As the Israeli news site Ynet put it, the inquest will need 'strong cups of tea and a loud bell' to function.

There are two international observers to monitor the inquiry. One of these is our very own David Trimble (former Northern Ireland First Minister), who joined the 'Friends of Israel Initiative' the day after the attack on the *Mavi Marmara*. The other observer is a Canadian general who helped ship Canadian citizens to be tortured in Guantanamo and then tried to cover it up.

Israeli-Palestinian MP Haneen Zoubi is facing a witchhunt for her decision to sail to Gaza with the flotilla. Israel's interior minister has called for her citizenship to be revoked, as part of Israeli ultra-right's policy of 'no citizenship without loyalty.' Currently she's been assigned bodyguards due to death threats against her.

Activist pressure from around the world is beginning to have some effect on Gaza's besieged status. Israel has finally agreed to allow all of the the 10,000 tons of aid aboard the flotilla in to Gaza, under UN supervision. There's also talk of Israel easing some of the blockade's restrictions (Tony Blair's unpleasant mush can be spotted in these negotiations). But these token gestures are beside the point. As the (normally unconfrontational) Red Cross pointed out on Tuesday - it's not a question of allowing some more goods in; the blockade itself is an illegal act of collective punishment, and the Palestinians wouldn't need humanitarian aid if they were allowed to import and export stuff the same way everyone else is.

Finally after the fog of misinformation has cleared, the truth about the attack on the *Mavi Marmara* is coming to light. Culturesofresistance.org has published dramatic and revealing footage smuggled out from the ship - see [www.culturesofresistance.org/gaza-freedom-flotilla](http://www.culturesofresistance.org/gaza-freedom-flotilla) For eyewitness accounts check out [www.counterpunch.org/lindorff06162010.html](http://www.counterpunch.org/lindorff06162010.html) <http://blogs.aljazeera.net/middle-east/2010/06/06/kidnapped-israel-forsaken-britain>

Undaunted, more aid ships are planning to sail to Gaza again next month - see [www.gazaflotilla.org](http://www.gazaflotilla.org) & [www.freegaza.org](http://www.freegaza.org)



## THE ITT CROWD

As the EDO Decommissioners trial goes into its second week, the defence celebrated their first victory when the case against one of the defendants was dropped.

Rosa Bellamy walked free on Tuesday (15th) when the judge ruled the prosecution's evidence lacked the substance it needed to prove she was part of a conspiracy to cause damage and directed the jury to find her not guilty. He said, "There is no guilt by association. The fact that she knows some of the co-defendants is neither here nor there." The defendant's silver dress brandished by the prosecution as a main piece of evidence didn't reel in the desired effect, as it was deemed not typical of the clothing anyone would wear if they were on their way to break into a factory.

This week also saw Paul Hills, managing director of EDO/MBM/ITT finish his statement, followed by the wrap up of the prosecution case. Hills was accused of lying by the defence and kindly warned by the judge of the risks of perjuring himself.

It is significant to note that the jury will be given access as background briefing into the case of a brief summary of the Goldstone report - an independent international fact finding mission to investigate violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law in the Occupied Territories, which investigated last year's military assault on the Gaza Strip. The defendants told the jury it highlighted how the democratic processes had failed to deal with the situation, which shows political inadequacy to deal with problems that will affect profit margins. They argued it provided a strong case for a moral and legal obligation to stop a greater crime through non-violent direct action in order to save a life.

On Thursday (17th), the defence case entered the arena with the first of the decommissioners to take the stand. To the SchNEWS court reporter, Ornella Saibene seemed clear and thor-

ough throughout without getting ruffled by the prosecution's cross examinations. Her answers came across with conviction and honesty. Proceedings continue at 10.30am Friday (18th), supporters and the public are welcome to attend inside and outside the court as the trial of the remaining decommissioners continues.

Decommissioner Elijah James Smith will remain on remand for the duration of the trial. Letters of support are welcomed at the usual address - A3186AM, HMP Lewes, 1 Brighton Rd, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1EA.

\* For updates see <http://decommissioners.co.uk> [www.smashedo.org.uk](http://www.smashedo.org.uk)

\* For Goldstone report see [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/special-session/9/docs/UNFFMGC\\_Report.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/special-session/9/docs/UNFFMGC_Report.pdf)

### MORE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

\* Four Christian peace activists who shut down a secret Australian military base have had charges against them dismissed by a magistrate. The members of the Bonhoeffer Peace Collective had swum to the base on Swan Island in March. They then infiltrated the base and spent several hours shutting down a switchboard and a satellite, causing a lock down on the base and interrupting Australian warmongering in Afghanistan. The charges of trespass were dismissed by the magistrate. According to one of the four, Simon Reeves, "(The) magistrate agrees sanctity of life is more important than unjust laws". For a video of the group explaining their actions see <http://paceebene.org/blog/jarrod-mckenna/breaking>

\* Nine Plane Stupid activists are also planning to defend themselves on the grounds that they were acting to prevent a bigger crime - the crime of escalating climate change. The nine face charges of breach of the peace and vandalism after they shut down Aberdeen airport for two and a half hours in March. The trial began on Monday (14th). See [www.planestupid.com](http://www.planestupid.com)

## UNION JACK THE RIPPER

There were clashes between the EDL and locals in Whitechapel on Tuesday (15th) despite the cancellation of a controversial Islamic conference and EDL counter-demo.

The UK Islamic Conference (UK-IC) scheduled for this Sunday (20th) was to have been a bigoted affair, with many speakers thrown out of Mosques for their extremist views condoning rape, paedophilia, killing homosexuals, military camps and anti-Semitism. The EDL reacted with plans to stage a provocative counter-demo taking them through parts of London with a large Muslim population.

The East End youth were readying themselves for some heated action. The Whitechapel Anarchist group alone had plans to get large numbers from all over the country out on the day and form a black bloc around the East London mosque area of Whitechapel to remind racist thugs that they are historically not welcome there. However, The EDL pulled out when the venue, the Troxy, decided to cancel the event.

But on Tuesday (15th), around fifteen EDL on their way back from a counter-demo in Barking against a 'Muslim's Against the Crusades' demo protesting against soldiers and the war were spotted in Whitechapel market.

Word got out and between 40 to 70 (and increasing as the day went on) Bangladeshi

youth rushed their way between Whitechapel tube and Aldgate East to confront them, only to get mixed up in the confusion and find out the police had escorted the bunch of angry drunk EDL yobs back on to the tube safe and sound out of harms way. It was reported beforehand they were on the loose allegedly spitting at both a Muslim man and woman.

As news spread like wildfire, hundreds came out to protect the mosque. The atmosphere was tense, with some even staying out over night just to be on the safe side. White skin heads were all suspect, according to the local youth and the police (who, some undercover, were also stop and searching many young Asian lads).

Unfortunately, four white local punk anarchists (who are actively against the EDL) were caught up in the atmosphere of paranoia and were attacked by 30 angry young Asian men.

By no means were all the teenage locals out for a fight though. SchNEWS spoke to a few gathering groups and the sense of solidarity was encouraging. "This is about the whole community coming together. Not just Muslims" said one youth standing outside the mosque. They came to defend and protect and to send a clear message that Whitechapel is strong.

\* See <http://whitechapelanarchistgroup.wordpress.com>

## HOTO FINISH

Croatian protesters have occupied a pedestrian street in Croatia's capital Zagreb and are demanding the mayor's resignation.

The occupation is around two weeks old and is the latest tactic in a two-and-a-half year campaign against a dodgy development by tycoon-owned HOTO Group. The development has the unconditional backing of city mayor Milan Bandic and was OK-ed by the Minister of Environmental Protection, Planning and Construction - unsurprising as she has shares in the construction company set to carry out the work. Spirits were high when SchNEWS visited the assortment of students, NGO representatives, disgruntled residents and dreadlocked activists camping out on Varsavska, a pedestrian street in the centre of Zagreb.

The latest stage of the campaign began early on Monday May 17th as contractors erected a metal fence around Varsavska - a public space soon to be privatised and turned into an access ramp for the private investor's underground car park. Straight away the entrance was blocked by activists, stopping any further work. At midday they were joined by several hundred city residents who hammered on the fence and eventually pulled it down and occupied the area. Now the fence has been used by protesters as the skeleton of a tent-like structure, over which they have draped clear tarpaulin. A long line of sleeping bags are neatly laid out inside. Activists are keen to stress the non-violent and alcohol-free nature of the space.

There is a huge amount of public support, and the protests have attracted numbers unheard of in Croatia. Local residents have been bringing food and hot drinks to support the occupation. On May 20th, 4,000 people marched to Zagreb City Council demanding the resignation of Mayor Bandic over the shady plans. In an effort to encourage him to 'pack his bags' and find a new job, protesters helpfully piled up suitcases outside the council building.

The site was previously occupied earlier this year using shipping containers. That occupation lasted 10 days but was evicted forcefully by riot police in the middle of the night with 23 arrests (five ultimately charged, none convicted). The real casualty was the trojan horse - a giant wooden structure built by activists and presented to the City Administration as a symbol of all swindles and deception related to the project. The horse was brutally broken apart using cranes in a two-hour long eviction in the snow.

Complaints against the development include concerns about restricted emergency vehicle access, increased traffic and of course the loss of a well-loved hang-out area, several large trees and protected cultural heritage buildings in the old part of the city. There is now a belated investigation by the state anti-corruption office USKOK of potential criminal liability in issuing the permits for the construction of the "lifestyle" HOTO Centre, luxury flats and car park. This follows several months of corruption charges against Croatian politicians, in which the Vice President and Minister of Defence are still awaiting court decisions.

The protesters, gathering under the banner "Right to a City", have vowed to continue their occupation of Varsavska for as long as is necessary to stop the project. They say, "this is not just about this street, this is a symbol of the fight against corruption in Croatia. The system is rotten".

\* For more (in Croatian) see <http://pravonagrad.org>



## NO CRS-PITE

Over 100 African migrants were left homeless when the CRS finally evicted the Africa House squat in Calais (see SchNEWS 726) on Monday (14th). A fleet of police vans descended on the site in the early afternoon when most of the migrants were at the food distribution centre. After forcing their way into the compound, the CRS hunted down hiding migrants, arresting six. The abandoned factory has now been sealed off and looks set to be demolished later this month.

The scattered migrants are now being pursued around the city. On Tuesday (15th) 25 were arrested after a police raid on a house they had moved to after the eviction. The remaining migrants are now sleeping rough under bridges, in parks and on the beach. No Borders activists are now working overtime to try and find them places to stay.

\* Demo in solidarity with migrants this Saturday (19th) at Churchill Square, Brighton, 12 noon, called by Calais Migrant Solidarity. For all group and individuals who oppose the repression and abuse of those who choose or are forced to migrate.

\* See [calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com](http://calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com)

## UNDER WHO'S ADVICE?

Refuge and Migrant Justice charity, the largest specialist provider of advice and representation to asylum seekers and other migrants, is going into administration. Severe cash flow problems are due to the funding system which delays payment of legal aid to it. A public campaign to save the legal service has gone effectively unheard. Other major charities such as Amnesty International, Mind and Barnardos also joined the campaign and wrote to ministers on RMJ's behalf.

Major concerns have been raised about the effect of RMJ having to close, which will effectively leave 10,000 asylum seekers without legal representation including those imprisoned in immigration detention centres. This is not a funding cut as such but a bureaucratic process that has brought an organisation to its knees. RMJ will cease to operate from 23rd June.

\* A dozen people were assembled outside the Legal Service Commission (who are the processing administration of RMJ) in Brighton Thursday (17th) to protest against the closure proposal.

## DETAINED SOMALI FREED

A Somalian national won the case against her unlawful detention case at the Scottish High Court last Friday (11th).

The Mogadishu born victim of our immigration laws was imprisoned for three years in removal centres across the UK. As things stand at the moment it is not possible to deport Somali nationals to Mogadishu as it is deemed an unsafe place to live yet the British Government continues to detain Somalians in deportation centres for indeterminable amounts of time. Even organisations supporting 'voluntary departures' have been refusing to accept applications from Somali nationals.

For those eventually released after challenging the government for unlawful detention freedom is still temporary and uncertain, without any official status or 'leave to remain' within the UK, they will be subject to removal when it is considered safe enough to deport people to Mogadishu again.

\* See [www.noborders.org.uk](http://www.noborders.org.uk)

## AL-BURN OUT

The Lewes Road Community Garden, which occupied the long-disused land of an ex-Esso garage in Brighton in May 2009, is under threat of eviction as plans push ahead to stick an unwanted Tesco on the site. Supporters have vowed to defend it to the last against Tesco, and there is a public meeting tonight (18th) and demo outside Brighton County Court on Monday.

Developers, Belfast-based Alburn Ltd, acting on behalf of Tesco and a betting shop also planned, want the gardeners turfed off and have applied for Monday's possession order.

However it's been discovered that covenants for the land state that no alcohol should be sold there and no building erected. So that's a spanner in the works for Sir Terry 'couldn't give a fuck about your community' Leahy, Tesco fat cat boss. Terry and his merry men are rumoured to have put a clause in the planning permission saying that they won't be liable for any subsidence to homes in nearby Edinburgh Road which makes the whole application look, well erm... shaky.

Meanwhile Brighton Council planners have been put in the frame for getting the original planning permission through on the sly last August when sympathetic councillors were away and consultation letters sent to empty student houses.

But gardeners and local residents - 3,500+ of whom have signed petitions supporting the

garden - are keen to play up the positive aspects of the project: a community compost scheme; 'plant up a pot' project for local school-kids; Sunday eco-fayres; gardening workshops; film nights etc etc...

One garden gnome told SchNEWS: "I thought the council were supposed to be doing this sort of thing - supporting urban green spaces in the city, especially in one of the most congested roads in the city. Didn't Mary Mears [Tory council leader] come out and say she didn't want a clone town of Tesco and Sainsburys. Put your money where yer mouth is Mary."

Caroline Lucas MP, last seen departing the European gravy train and moving to a new stop at Westminster, is supposed to be putting the gardeners' case to the higher powers in parliament, but the hardy perennials (that's gardeners to you and me) say they'll continue to get their own hands dirty (literally) and not rely on empty promises from politicians of any persuasion.

\* Save the Lewes Road Community Garden! Say No to Tesco! Public meeting, 7pm, June 18th, St Martin's Church Hall, Lewes Road

\* Demo at 9am on Monday 21 June at Brighton County Court, William St, (just down from Magistrates Court) Brighton

\* See <http://lewesroadcommunitygarden.webs.com>

## NIGHT MAYOR

The mood is still defiant in Parliament Square as the Democracy Village continues to resist eviction and wait for the high court judgement ruling in the case of Boris vs Democracy. The occupation began on Mayday and has remained since (see SchNEWS 724). The mayor failed in his first attempt to get activists evicted, by claiming in court that he had the right to evict anyone from the square, including the Queen, something that the judge flatly refused to agree with. A full trial was called and started this Monday (14th).

The legal mumbblings are occurring due to the fact that only the registered land owner can officially apply to the court to get people evicted, and Parliament Square belongs to the Queen and Crown - not Boris Johnson. As far as anyone knows, the Queen is neither amused or not amused, but indifferent to this people's assembly on her doorstep. The Mayor however, is getting pretty hot under the collar with this exercise in free speech. A temporary injunction is in place, instructing the camp to dismantle itself and threatening anyone who wanders onto the site or chats to a villager with criminal punishment. All of this comes in the same week Cameron pledged to 'restore rights to non-violent protest'.

The trial is expected to reach a verdict on Friday (18th) although delays are possible - check websites below for updates. In the meantime, an evening of song and poetry is scheduled for tonight (18th), and a citizen journalism workshop at 1pm on Saturday (19th).

\* For details on the injunction and the camp's reply see [www.democracyvillage.org/wp-content/upl/2010/06/IMPORTANT-NOTICE.pdf](http://www.democracyvillage.org/wp-content/upl/2010/06/IMPORTANT-NOTICE.pdf)

\* See [www.democracyvillage.org](http://www.democracyvillage.org) & [www.democracyvillage.blogspot.com](http://www.democracyvillage.blogspot.com)

## PARTY & PROTEST

For events listings updated weekly see [www.schnews.org.uk/pap](http://www.schnews.org.uk/pap)

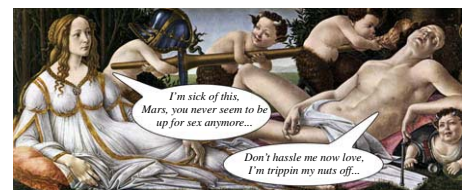
## ...and finally some high art

To the art world it's a moment similar to when you first realised the Magic Roundabout was all about a bunch of stoner hippies (just what was in those sugar cubes, Dougal?). Art historian David Bellingham has claimed that one of history's most revered masterpieces, Botticelli's *Venus and Mars* may not really have been a scene of uplifting godly piety and pure Christian-compatible romantic love - but more the scene of a comedown after an all out mind-bending blowout on drugs.

It seems that all previous scholars who have studied the painting have ignored a small plant depicted in one corner, probably more interested in the devilish imp figure pictured resting his hand on it. New research suggests that the plant in question is likely *datura stramonium* - a narcotic known for centuries and more recently called 'poor man's acid.'

Bellingham claims it has effects similar to "opium mixed with alcohol", causing hallucinations, thirst and even "speedy chattering." As a datura high is wearing off, the user eventually "swoons and falls asleep" - much like Botticelli's Mars. Other minor details also point to the psychedelic interpretation. Far out. Critics trying to deny this will line up alongside those who still believe that *Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds* was about a child's painting...

\* See the piece of obviously 'high' culture for yourself at [www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=127752216&ft=1&f=1146](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=127752216&ft=1&f=1146)



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