



WAKE UP!! IT'S YER STOP BADGERING ME

# SchNEWS

www.schnews.org.uk

Friday 15th November 2013

Free/Donation

Issue 852



## BADGER HONOUR

### BADGER KILLINGS IN DETAIL

When the Badger Trust threatened Natural England with legal action for extending the badger cull, Natural England said the the claim was based on a fundamental confusion, but can you blame them, when those involved in the cull have been so, well, confusing. Between the secrecy, the lying, u-turns and even the blaming of the badgers for not co-operating with being shot. Schnews attempts to digest the badger farce a little...

#### Trigger Warning

The theory is that killing badgers will reduce TB in cattle by 16%. Previous trials used traps to catch the animals before shooting them, but this was vetoed as too expensive and too vulnerable to disruption. This time, they've gone for the economy version where the badgers are shot while free running. Vaccinating badgers has been dismissed by government as too expensive though several independent groups are vaccinating. The whole policy ignores the real problems around bovine TB, which you can read about here (SchNEWS 836).

One of the important criteria of the cull is that at least 70% of the badgers in a given area must be killed, to minimise the number of disturbed survivors roaming about spreading the disease further afield - the so-called 'perturbation' effect.

The main problem with this was pretty clear from the beginning; nobody knows how many badgers there in the first place. Previous data showed more about the distribution of badger enthusiasts than badgers.

In 2012, Defra postponed the cull, using the excuse that the badger population was far higher than expected. when their population estimate shot up suddenly. This year, when half way through the process it was clear the cull was floundering, they revised the population estimate down - the famous 'pesky badgers moved my goalposts' moment. In a statistical manipulation worthy of anybody's Five Year Plan, Paterson's Politburo announced that 940 badgers amounted to 65% of the population (Un-

molested populations of badgers have shown no sign of these wild oscillations in numbers)

Stalin Paterson has been caught out fibbing about more than the numbers though. On 10th October he stated in parliament that '...some of the animals we have shot have been desperately sick-in the final stages of disease...' Mark Jones vet and executive director of Humane Society International said: "As a vet I find Mr Paterson's claim that badgers shot in the pilot culls were 'desperately sick' highly suspicious. I know of no evidence to back this up, indeed all the available data suggests that even where bovine TB is rife among cattle, only a tiny proportion of badgers will be suffering any symptoms of the disease. The figure is perhaps as low as one in a hundred. As Mr Paterson has refused to have the badger carcasses tested for TB, he cannot possibly have any scientifically credible data to support his assertion and nobody will be permitted to challenge his claim because DEFRA is having all the bodies incinerated"

In Somerset they have killed 940 badgers, which with the current population estimate of 1450 is 65%. But at one point they said the population was 4300, which meant they had to kill 3000 badgers. If we've got the maths right, 940 is only 22% of 4300. At the end of the original Gloucester period, only 30% had been killed.

The Somerset cull has now stopped but the Gloucester cull zone has been granted an eight week extension.

#### Action against the cull

The sustained level of resistance to the cull has been impressive, never leaving shooters to operate in peace. Hundreds of people have been spending their nights in the cull zones, often travelling long distances. A single badger killed is clearly one too many but the determined work of so many has helped make the cull a failure. Whatever the government spin says, shooters on the ground have been admitting there was 'no point even turning up most nights.'

SchNEWS spoke to a regular traveller to the cull zones "One of the best things about the cull is how it has brought together such a diversity of people together for the sake of the badgers. There has been good co-operation and acceptance of different tactics with those going on legal night patrols on footpaths working alongside those directly sabotaging the shooters with noise and torches. Meanwhile, the Badger Trust have been fighting the cull in court and the likes of Brian May have been doing the media bit. There have been lively pro badger marches in towns all round the country. Hunt saboteurs have reported an increase in support since sabotaging the cull. Those sorts of alliances and radicalising of the animal loving middle england could be a bit of an own goal for the shooting lobby."

#### Info for Action

Policing tactics in the two cull zones have been very different but they haven't in either case succeeded in disrupting the sabotage. Gloucestershire policing has been a lot more pro-active, more arrests and harassment of activists, than in Somerset.

"In terms of tactics, the hardest part has generally been finding the shooters. Good sett surveying beforehand, recording and communicating sightings and sheer numbers of people out looking have all proved helpful. The groups walking footpaths with torches have made certain areas impossible to shoot in and noisy disruption of shoots have stopped them as well. When cage traps are used you can squash them or cut them open with bolt cutters. The cull is still going on in Gloucestershire so get on down there to practice your trap destruction skills."

#### Next

The licences for these two cull zones last for four years, but other pilot culls may be started next year. Top of the list is Dorset. Culling has to stop over the winter but may start again in the spring.

An 'independent panel' is supposed to be evaluating the evidence to decide if the trials are successful. Indications suggest that Owen 'shoot the buzzards' Paterson will not accept any thing but approval of the cull.

**INFORMATION FOR ACTION**

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#### PARTY & PROTEST

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[www.schnews.org.uk/pap](http://www.schnews.org.uk/pap)

# HOSPITALITY HOSTILITY

## **SolFed announces the launch of the Brighton Hospitality Workers network**

The hospitality trade is one of Brighton's largest and most lucrative sectors, and not coincidentally just happens to have one of the worst records when it comes to the pay and conditions of its employees. Wages as low as £3 per hour, no holiday pay, hired and fired at a moment's notice, no breaks, unsafe and unsanitary conditions are commonplace. Much of the work in Brighton's hospitality trade (work in bars, cafés, restaurants hotels etc) is performed by foreign workers who are particularly vulnerable to exploitation as a result of speaking little or no English, uncertain visa status or both. It's these staff who ensure that Brighton maintain its reputation as the go to location for beered up decadence on the south coast. Things may be about to change however, as workers organise and fight for their rights.

October saw the launch of the Brighton Hospitality Workers network. Under the banner of those stalwart anarcho-syndicalists, SolFed, the network plans to bring hospitality workers into regular contact with one another to promote workers' rights, solidarity and mutual support. The initiative was launched with a poster campaign and visits to some of the most notorious employers, where contact was made with front-of-house and kitchen staff to discuss their rights at work and promote the benefits of organisation in combating illegal practice and poor pay and conditions.

Challenges that face organising in this sector include high staff turnover, workers' lack of awareness of employment law and business owners eager to exploit a ready supply of labour, often immigrant, dependent on casual or precarious work to scrape by in one

of the UK's most expensive places to live. Another challenge - the constant presence of managers in most workplaces we visit - can, we believe, be turned into a strength where there are customers to inform and reputations at stake - in this sense the precariousness of a business becomes a potential weakness to organise around.

As well as meetings, the network is keeping a record of bad practice through interviews with workers and will produce a map showing where the worst employers are-

### **From a recent poster:**

Do you work in hospitality? Bar, cafe, restaurant or hotel?

Issues in the workplace? Join Brighton Hospitality Workers Network

The hospitality industry in Brighton & Hove is notorious for long hours, low pay and precarious conditions. Common issues we've come across include:

Below minimum wage pay / Long shifts without breaks

No contract, written or verbal / Unpaid overtime

Unlawful deductions from wages / No holiday entitlement

We're building a network of hospitality workers dedicated to organising around workplace rights and providing mutual support. We believe that by acting together workers who lack official representation can directly tackle issues and demand rights from management. We're planning to arrange meetings where specific issues can be shared and collectively acted on.

If you're a hospitality worker and interested in discussing a workplace issue or joining the network - get in touch! A website is on its way. Meanwhile, Brighton Hospitality Workers can be contacted via Brighton SolFed: [brighton@solfed.org.uk](mailto:brighton@solfed.org.uk)

## **ANONARCHY IN THE UK**

### **V-signs for Vendetta as Anons launch firework barrage at Buck House.**

"As the tide of social change forever moves forward and undermines the strangle hold of huge corporate interests. Anonymous emerge from all corners of our society. We empty the dustbins laden with your waste, we nurse the soldiers returning from your wars and offer them the shelter you promised, We are the cleaner you see scuttle from your office as you arrive in the morning and we are the accountant that knows your crimes but is yet to speak out. "- Operation Vendetta press release

The 5th of November exceeded all expectations as our Guy Fawkes mask toting friends Anonymous managed to leg it round various towns causing havoc and even shot a few fireworks at Buck House.

Brighton's gathering saw three banks invaded with awkward questions, free huggz and plenty of lulz. In Manchester the main mall was raided by hundreds of protesters carrying the banner

of Lulz. However, in London so much went on that it looked almost as if someone was behind all of this... however, none of what is about to be said had been previously planned.

At 6pm (the announced gathering time) there were just a handful with a banner and a live feed camera. It was looking hopeless as it came to 6:00 and not many others had arrived until only about 10 minutes later crowds of people in masks started to walk over. Although everyone was together, there were a few coherent groups. Police seemed unprepared for the number of Anons on the streets and totally failed to kettle the demo. One of the groups, perhaps best described as "Anonarchists", shot fireworks at Buckingham Palace and burned energy bills. Further through the night they also decided to block roads leading up to the Palace's gardens.

A new network of Anons has emerged called RAM3 which has emerged from the south. They are now starting to plan meet ups every July of each year where each provinces (e.g. West Sussex) will meet for general promotion.

"You should have expected us."

## **TO RUSSIA WITH LOVE**

Throughout history LGBTQ+ people and communities have had to fight for basic acceptance into society. In some parts of the world that fight is more evident now than probably ever before. Putin's Russia in the vanguard of the attempt to delegitimise non-conformist sexualities.

The Winter Olympics at Sochi, taking place next February will be a major showcase for Russia. However there has been a worldwide mobilization of angry voices (gay, straight and anything else in between) in protest against the policy of hate in Russia that has stripped away the basic human rights of the LGBTQ+ community.

With the blessing of the Russian state and Russian church, the fascist group known as Occupy-Pedofilyay are allowed to spread their vile homophobic mantra to children in schools, whipping up a storm of hatred against the gay community. Gay people are regularly humiliated, beaten, tortured and in some cases much worse while the state looks the other way. Gay people regularly 'go missing' and suicide rates have risen dramatically.

While the International Olympic Committee hides behind its completely misleading statement of inclusion, calls to change the host of the Winter Olympics. Millions of people have signed petitions and protests have been held worldwide against the main Olympic sponsors who are now concerned about the damage that is possibly being done to their product branding. A message to them, 'that is the purpose of protest - get used to it - we are not going away'. All of these actions must continue as other countries are now openly following the lead set by Russia in denying basic human rights to their own LGBTQ+ communities. In localised states, LGBTQ+ communities aren't that big based on national borders but on a global level we have power, we have influence and we have financial clout, it's not called The Pink Pound for nothing!

Whilst it's important that the worldwide gay community does everything it can to stand up for others who are persecuted it should be noted that this is not just a 'GAY' ISSUE - it is a human rights issue - and it affects everyone. The abuse of many in Russia, including immigrants and prisoners, is appalling and justice is rare. You only need to look at the 'Pussy Riot' case, the 'Bolotnaya' case and recently the Greenpeace activists detained as pirates by Russia who now face many years in prison.

In conjunction with other individuals, Brighton members of the Public & Commercial Services (PCS) trade union have created a Facebook page - To Russia with Love, Brighton/UK - that will be used to post information that will be of interest to people locally and nationally. It will also link up with other sites worldwide to condemn events in Russia. There is also a demonstration of solidarity with all who are persecuted in Russia planned for 30th November. All who believe human rights are for everyone are welcome to attend

Meet at New Steine Gardens 12 noon Sunday 30th November

**CHECK OUT: [WWW.SCHNEWS.ORG.UK/STORIES/BOHEMIAN-RHAPSODY/](http://WWW.SCHNEWS.ORG.UK/STORIES/BOHEMIAN-RHAPSODY/)**

### **Disclaimer**

SchNEWS warns all readers, the revolution will not be televised, it will be twitted and chirped, honest.

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