

WAKE UP!! IT'S YER AND NOW THE WEATHER...



SchNEWS

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Issue 735

HIGH PRESSURE FRONT AS THE CAMP FOR CLIMATE ACTION MOVES FROM WALES TO SCOTLAND

CLIMATE CAMP CYMRU

Climate Camp Cymru kicked off on Friday (13th) in South Wales and continued until Tuesday (17th) with an eviction forcing a change of site.

The camp ran into problems on Saturday (14th) afternoon when it was evicted from its site. A disproportionately large police force consisting of 10 riot vans accompanied by dogs, helicopters and mounted police, was called into action to remove just 30 activists from a field.

The field in Glyn-Neath chosen for the climate camp was also the site of a Roman hill fort. Although permission to use the site had been granted by the land-owner, local police showed a heart-warming concern for the environment by claiming that the climate campers would damage the ancient monument.

Conversely, Cadw, the government body responsible for the historic environment of Wales, did not perceive any threat to the historical site by the climate camp. They held talks with camp organisers and the police before the eviction. Once they had ascertained that no damage had been done, they were happy for the camp to go ahead, provided it was monitored.

Disregarding advice from the experts, the police decided that the climate campers, whose record for leaving sites exactly as they found them is well known, had to go. According to one camper, police threatened to arrest everyone on the site for aggravated trespass after the land-owner was persuaded by police to withdraw permission for use of the land. "There was an overbearing and unnecessary police presence, we were intimidated and criminalized," said Penny Williams, one of the activists at the camp.

CLIMATE CAMP SCOTLAND

The Camp for Climate Action occupied a site in Edinburgh on Wednesday night. The site is directly adjacent to the headquarters of the Royal Bank of Scotland, whom the protesters plan to target. Three activists were arrested during the takeover of the site but have since been released without charge.

The site was occupied a day earlier than originally planned in order to outmanoeuvre the authorities. Its location was announced via text messages to campers. The climate camp is now well under way. Marquees, kitchens and eco-toilets have been constructed and hundreds of activists are expected to arrive over the next few days. The climate camp will involve workshops and sustainable living and will culminate on Monday (23rd) with a day of mass direct action against RBS.

RBS invests heavily in fossil fuels and underwrites loans to corporate baddies around the world who are busy trashing our environment for

Police seemed somewhat less concerned with the environmental crimes being committed in the surrounding countryside by coal giants Celtic Energy, who own the nearby Sesar and Nant-Helen opencast coal mines. Celtic Energy are seeking planning permission to expand the mine at Nant-Helen where around 450,000 tonnes of coal are dug from the ground each year. Climate campers had planned direct action against the company to highlight the destruction caused by the mining.

Despite the setbacks, climate campers managed to secure a second site on the Gower on Saturday night. Although many people had been discouraged by the earlier eviction, around 25 people regrouped on the new camp.

Early on Tuesday morning, two groups of activists occupied the Nant-Helen mine. Protesters said that they wanted to observe the scale of what was happening there and to show that they were still able to observe despite the earlier bullying by the police. They made their way to the bottom of the mine and took photographs of machinery before leaving. No police were involved.

Penny Williams said: "It was overwhelming to experience the phenomenal scale of the destruction of the landscape. It's just crazy to think that more opencast mines like this are being planned."

"It is unjust that corporations like Celtic Energy can carry on these operations in the face of today's climate change. Our economic system is based on an addiction to fossil fuels and on maximising profit at the expense of the environment. We need to rebuild the system based around greener jobs and stop this unnecessary destruction."

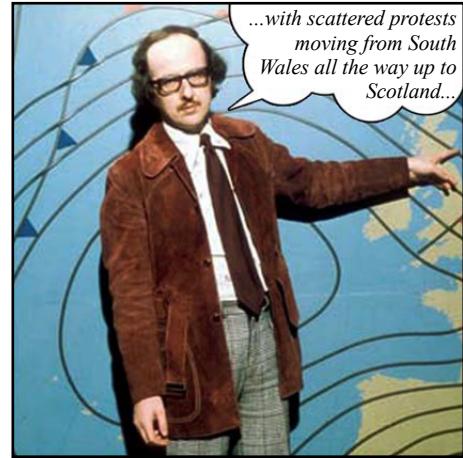
* See <http://climatecampcymru.org>

profit. It is estimated that they have stumped up \$12.7 billion in loans and finance since 2007 to oil giants whose projects include the exploitation of tar sands in Alberta, Canada, described as "the most destructive project on earth".

As part of the Climate Camp action, a one day protest against Scottish Coal is set to take place on Saturday. Scottish Coal have proposed to mine two million tonnes of coal around Airfield Farm near Cousland. Despite opposition to the mine that has been growing amongst the local community for the past two years, the local council look set to give the mining corporation the green light. A bike caravan will be heading up to Cousland from Climate Camp on Saturday.

Environmentally minded folk should get themselves down to Gogarburn Square in Edinburgh to join in on the action.

* See <http://climatecamp.org.uk>
<http://coalactionscotland.org.uk>



HOLY WATERS

Shell to Sea activists on the west coast of Ireland have got all touchy-feely in their battle against the boreholes (see SchNEWS 734, 733, 731) by engaging in a spot of "drill hugging".

Last Thursday (12th), a bagpiper and drummer led people from the local community alongside solidarity campers in a low tide march to one of Shell's drilling rigs. They surrounded the drill casing and after a quick dance, huddled round in a group hug, effectively shutting down the drill.

At around 5pm, I-RMS security guards forcibly removed the remaining drill-huggers and blocked their attempts to re-take it. Meanwhile, Shell fired the drill back up, even as the tussles continued.

* Shell to Sea campaigner Neil Harnett has been released after serving 118 days for putting his hand on a Garda who was dragging a protester caught up in fencing.

* See www.rossportsolidaritycamp.org

WREKIN HAVOC

The camp at Huntington Lane in Shropshire (see SchNEWS 734) is about to get busy. UK Coal are to be issued an Environmental License at the end of August so that mining can begin on the site. Things are moving quickly with farmers being asked to move their livestock, jobs being advertised locally and the water supply already connected.

The proposed mine is a major threat to the local environment as well as a blot on the landscape nearby the beautiful Wrekin Hill. It will cause noise and dust pollution to locals and the coal extracted from the mine will eventually be burnt at power stations, releasing millions of tonnes of CO₂ into the atmosphere.

The crew at the camp have been down there putting up defences and spreading the word for the last six months. The issue of an eviction notice is now imminent. The camp needs your support: bodies, tools, lock-on gear (padlocks, D-locks) water and food are all needed.

The site is at New Works Lane, Telford, Shropshire. Nearest train station is Wellington (Telford West). Call 07503 583419 or 07727 29523

* See <http://defendhuntingtonlane.wordpress.com>

HAMMERTIME

Smash EDO have announced their plans to lay siege to the Brighton bomb makers EDO MBM/ITT with a mass demo on October 13th. With the company reeling from the Decommissioners verdict and the scent of victory in the air, the campaign are to keep up the pressure with 'ITT's Hammer Time', which aims to shut down the factory (for the day at least). To receive updates email smashedo@riseup.net or text 07538093930

* See www.smashedo.org.uk

PARTY & PROTEST

For events listings updated weekly see
www.schnews.org.uk/pap

RATTLING THE COPPERS

Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) activist Tony Greenstein has been cleared of illegally collecting money on the streets of Brighton for PSC, something which the campaign has done unmolested for a decade.

During last week's hearing at Brighton Magistrates Court, it came out that Greenstein had in fact been caught up in a bungled undercover sting. The real target were the Smash EDO activists manning an adjacent stall. After hatching their devious plan, coppers arrived in Churchill Square on a January afternoon when both campaigns had set up stalls within metres of each other. Believing both stalls to belong to Smash EDO, they ordered all the activists to stop the collections, quoting vaguely from a fuzzily recalled law. Eventually, the campaigners agreed to put the tins out of sight to get rid of the pesky rozzers.

After the police had left, the tins came back out. Unbeknown to the campaigners, a concealed copper was watching. He immediately radioed in for backup. The police squad swooped and promptly nicked the Smash EDO and PSC tins. The PSC tin contained £10.22. The EDO tin contained a moth.

Greenstein was cleared as council regulations state that to be an "unauthorised collector", each person must have their own collection box where as in this case there, was just one box on the stall itself.

Animal rights campaigners have grown used to this kind of petty harassment, but this widening of the tactic has serious implications for all campaigns that fund themselves through voluntary street donations. Fortunately, this time round it was Brighton plod who looked a few pence short of the full shilling.

* See <http://azvzas.blogspot.com/2010/08/tony-greenstein-acquitted-of-unlawful.html>

GOING OUT ON A HIGH

After the success of last year's camp (see SchNEWS 686) at Highgate Farm in Lincolnshire - which breeds rabbits and ferrets for vivisection - another protest camp was held this week. Protesters occupied public land next to the farm but police said that due to previous protests and complaints from the Lamborghini-driving owner of the farm, Geoffrey Douglas, the camp would violate section 42 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 (brought out to stop home demos). To get around this the protest camp was to be between the hours of 7am-7pm each day. Like the previous camp, the protest was non-violent.

On the second day police arrested two protesters for using a megaphone - charging them with 'contravening a direction given by a police officer', and banning them from Lincolnshire until the case goes to court! Then they banned the remaining protesters from going to Highgate Farm for 28 days - presumably under section 42 of the CJPA - it remains to be seen whether this was lawful.

So the camp is gone, but the farm continues - and would probably love more visits from animal rights campaigners. It's at Highgate Lane, Normanby-by-Spital, Market Rasen, LN8 2HQ. For more call 07973722978 or 07973722978 or see www.closehighgatefarm.com

DIRTY SHEETS

Despite the plethora of websites, blogs, Arsebook and the like, it's good to know that some alternative media still realise that the best way to get into the pubs, chip shops and living rooms of a community is to print paper copies.

This month most of our favourite local newsletters have a new issue out: **Porkbolter** - digging the dirt in Worthing - have issue 97 out see www.porkbolter.com

MAPUCHE HUNGER STRIKES

MAPUCHE SOLIDARITY VIGILS AT CHILEAN EMBASSIES

Torrents of protests hit the globe in support of the Mapuche indigenous political prisoners in Chile.

The 12th of August saw the first wave of action initiated by the families of the prisoners take place outside Chilean Embassies worldwide, including London and Washington DC. The date fell on the one month anniversary of the start of a liquid hunger strike by the imprisoned Mapuche activists, who are being held under a Pinochet-era law that defines almost all political opposition as terrorism. Sound familiar? The notorious Chilean anti-terrorism law aims to squash discord under a dictatorship.

The Chilean Government has ignored protests from the UN and the Ethical Committee Against Torture over the warped use of this law and continues unhindered to try captives under a law that gives carte blanche to questionable means of prosecution such as anonymous witnesses, indefinite pre-trial detention and double simultaneous trials before both civil and military courts.

Thirty-two Mapuche prisoners are incarcerated in the prisons of Valdivia, Concepcion, Temuco, Lebu and Angol. They began the hunger strike as a means of drawing national and international attention to the violation of these people by entrenched government and commercial interests. Recent struggles are a part of an ongoing saga that began with colonialism. The Mapuche people have been abused in turn by European colonialists, multinational companies (yes that includes you Benetton),

the Chilean Government, industrial farming and the building of hydro-electric dams.

The second wave struck on the 18th of August across Chilean Embassies in Argentina, England, France, Norway and others. Amongst the demonstrators and supporters in London were UK based NGO, Mapuche International Link, the Association of Chilean ex-political prisoners in the UK, Colombian Solidarity Campaign, Latin American Coordination, Memoria Historica, and many independent pro-Mapuche sympathisers.

The peaceful protests taking place in Temuco, Chile, were violently disrupted by police interference. Arrests hit the 56 mark, including that of Catalina Catrileo, sister of Matias Catrileo, a Mapuche youth previously murdered by Chilean police during a peaceful land rights demonstration.

The hunger strike is now entering its fifth week and medical reports indicate the development of serious health conditions. The liquid protest is experiencing serious problems as the prisoners have started exhibiting symptoms akin to heart failure such as visual disturbances, nausea, dizziness, disorientation, stomach cramps and more. They have lost 'between 8-11kg in weight'. The denial of medical care for the prisoners further adds to the gravity of the situation as it increases the risk to their already deteriorating health.

* For upcoming actions and current information check www.mapuche-nation.org

NATIONALIST EXPRESS

The far right EDL plan to seize the streets of Bradford next Saturday (28th) in an attempt to intimidate the Asian population. Two days later, the race hate group English Nationalist Alliance think that they're coming to Brighton for a day out by the seaside on Monday August 30th.

Springing from the embers of the March for England group (see SchNEWS 720) the all-new ENA, (organised by exactly the same people) are heading for Brighton to take a stand against "Palestinian militants and socialist extremists" because apparently: "Anti-English activities and militant students need to know their place" and the group wish "to support the English people of the region against the constant anti-English activities in the area". Despite having been in the area for over sixteen years now, SchNEWS has still yet to witness any similar activity in its extremely white hometown. Check out their website at www.englishnationalistalliance.com, if for no other reason than to burst out laughing at their poetry - Beowulf it ain't.

At the moment, details of the event are pretty sketchy, apart from a 12.30pm start. Most of the far-right will be planning to be in Bradford the previous Saturday. Local anti-fascists have put out a call out for a counter-mobilisation. Contact brightonantifascists@riseup.net

* Leeds Anti-Fascist Network are calling for an independent counter demonstration against the EDL in Bradford city centre on the 28th. Assemble at 11am - for details see <http://srfnetwork.org> and <http://northern.indymedia.org>

* See SchNEWS next week for report.

GAZA DEFENDANT APPEAL

Supporters of a man imprisoned for his part in the protests in London against the Israeli attacks on Gaza in January 2009 have called for support as he appeals his sentence. They'll be holding a picket outside the Royal Courts of Justice on Tuesday 24th August at 9 am.

On 28th May 2010, Martin Askew was sentenced to 18 months in prison for violent disorder. He is alleged to have pushed over crowd barriers and thrown shoes at the Israeli Embassy. In return he received a savage beating from a riot copper that left him needing 70 stitches.

Martin pleaded not guilty at his trial and ran a political defence. He has some hope of success as a number of sentences have already been reduced on appeal. For more on the Gaza Protests and the subsequent court cases see SchNEWS 661, 710, 731.

TAKING THE CISS

While Titnore Woods are safe for the moment (see SchNEWS 714) - with a revised development plan for the area expected soon - a part of the South Downs near to the Iron Age fort at Cissbury Ring is not. Last autumn, Worthing Borough council tried to sell the land near Cissbury. The sale was only stopped at the eleventh hour by a massive public outcry, however the council promise to include the community in decision-making about the land seems hollow.

So to remind the council that the matter hasn't been forgotten, the Worthing Downlanders (previously known as Stop The Cissbury Sell-Off) are to hold a 'Protest And Picnic'. Meet at Broadwater Green (opposite the Fire Station, on the A24 one mile north of Worthing) at 12 noon, September 4th - bring banners and food. We must save our downland heritage.

* See www.worthingdownlanders.co.uk www.protectourwoodland.co.uk

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers, we're in for some heavy weather. Honest.

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SchNEWS, c/o Community Base, 113 Queens Rd, Brighton, BN1 3XG. Tel +44 (0)1273 685913 Email mail@schnnews.org.uk Web www.schnnews.org.uk