

Earth First!

# Action Update

Dec 01/Jan 02

Issue 80

A monthly round-up of ecological and other direct action from around Britain

"Mumma told me to do it..." Julian Cope

## Doha, Doha, Doha!

Between Nov 9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, Governments met in Doha, the capital of Qatar for the latest round of WTO trade negotiations. Despite things looking shaky for "The North" following stubborn opposition from both India and the ACP (African/Caribbean/Pacific-Rim) countries, the mainstream media here has largely portrayed the talks as a victory for the EU. Of course it wasn't just in the talks that dissent against the free-trade steamroller was shown, demonstrations, actions and anti-WTO events happened in over 25 countries across the globe (including in Doha itself) and on the internet.

### UK round-up

**Bangor:** 150 people turned out for a rally followed by a march to the town centre (with a samba band)

**Bristol:** West Country Activist Gathering  
**Guilford:** Surrey Activist Group and some WOMBLEs went leafleting and mischief making

**London:** Picket of Qatar embassy, RTS benefit gig and teach in.

**Manchester:** People got suited up and went off for a day in the office. First on the list was the "nasty scummy lawyers firm" Addleshaw, Booth and Co. (heavily involved in PFI and the privatisation of

26-27<sup>th</sup> Jan sees the welcome

## Winter Moot 2002

failures and successes.

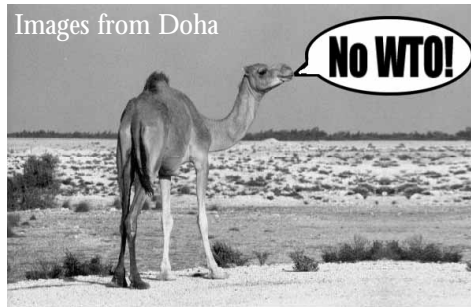
return of the EF! Winter Moot. The Moot is an opportunity for people involved in the Earth First! network to reflect on the issues that surround taking direct action like ideas, inspiration, focus,

Accommodation is available from Friday night. Friday afternoon will see a joint skill sharing session with DAN (Disabled People's Direct Action Network). Winter Moot 2001, 29a Beswick Street, Manc.

[mancef@nematode.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:mancef@nematode.freeserve.co.uk) 0161 226 6814

50p where sold

The EF! AU is produced to aid the sharing of news, information and ideas amongst those interested in taking action. It is edited by a different collective each year to avoid the centralisation of power and information. We welcome submissions and articles (max 150 words) so if you've set up a group, taken action or want to publicise a campaign or project please let us know. No matter how big or small it seems, we'd like to share your news and inspiration. Feature articles and ideas are also appreciated.



Images from Doha

Hackney education). They made it to the 8<sup>th</sup> floor and spent ten minutes explaining themselves to staff whilst helping with some re-filing, before making a hasty exit in the face of overwhelming security. Also hit were Price Waterhouse Coopers where the 6<sup>th</sup> floor was reached for some re-filing whilst security were cunningly distracted by (you guessed it!) a samba band!  
**Newcastle:** Over 50 people made a whistle-stop tour of anti-capitalism taking in the Army Recruitment Centre, Burger King, a lap dancing club, Starbucks, McDonalds, Nike and Esso with a samba band, whistles, skateboards and leaflets. This was followed by a number of events at the Eclectic City 3 squat opened specially for the occasion

Outside the UK events ranged in size from tens to thousands in locations as

The philosophy behind Earth First! is the use of non-hierarchical organisation and direct action to confront, stop and eventually reverse the forces responsible for the destruction of the Earth and its inhabitants.

It is not a cohesive group or campaign rather a convenient banner for those interested in these ideas.

diverse as New York and Tehran. Very few were met with serious repression. For more on global protests <http://protest.net/qatar.html> [http://uk.indymedia.org/front.php3?article\\_id=15759](http://uk.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=15759)

### New protest sites

A camp has set up on the route of the planned A46 bypass, near Alvaston, in Elvaston Park Coronation Plantation, Derbyshire. They set up on Nov 20<sup>th</sup> and are keen to get more people down there, particularly from the Derbyshire area. [dot@theadora.screaming.net](mailto:dot@theadora.screaming.net) 07812434217 01332 727237. Site mobile 07769534725.

**Also...**Rumours are circulating of an upcoming need to take direct action at Swiss cottage, Camden in opposition to plans for 170 luxury flats on top of public spaces and community facilities. There has already been a vigorous local campaign, including a three-week vigil. Recently, fences around the construction site were torn down two nights running. It is unclear what the immediate future is, however preparations are being made (all offers of tat welcome). For more info: <http://freespace.virgin.net/z.jordan/swisscottagecamp@mail.ru>

Anti-copyright - photocopy and distribute

## News in brief...

★ Digna Ochoa, a prominent Mexican human rights' lawyer who has defended several members of the Zapatista army, was murdered on Oct 19<sup>th</sup>.

[www.chiapaslink.ukgateway.net](http://www.chiapaslink.ukgateway.net) for the latest on the Chiapas situation

★ GAP Inc. recorded a \$178.8 million dollar loss last ¼ after 2 years of falling profits. [www.gapsucks.org](http://www.gapsucks.org)

★ 6 people arrested during a demo at Wales's only GM crop trial at Sealand, Flintshire last July have now been charged with criminal damage. (see AU 77)

★ On Oct 6<sup>th</sup> 3 animal rights protesters staged a roof top demo at the home of DuPont director, W.M. Barry. One protester, Kerry Whitburn, is now on remand. See **Prisoners**

★ A McDonald's in Ottawa, Canada was trashed on Oct 16<sup>th</sup> during protests against meetings of the policy-making committees of the IMF & World Bank.

★ The leaders of Tuvalu, a tiny island country midway between Hawaii and Australia, in the Pacific Ocean, have announced that they will abandon their homeland because of rising sea levels. This will create 11 000 environmental refugees.

★ An RTS group has formed in Paris: [reclaimlarue@hotmail.com](mailto:reclaimlarue@hotmail.com) they are in occupation of a building in Paris and are keen to hear from other activist groups

★ A McDonald's in Tucson, Arizona, USA, was torched on Sept 7<sup>th</sup>. The action was claimed by 'activists working in the interest of Animal and Earth liberation'.

**Other US ALF/ELF actions;** a new biotech lab in Long Island, NY sabotaged on August 21<sup>st</sup>; 200 wild horses freed from a holding facility in Corvallis, California on Oct 17<sup>th</sup>. The horses were contained to clear land for grazing cattle; The arson in October of a maintenance building connected to the Coulston Foundation research lab, which has the largest colony of captive chimpanzees in the world; Tree spiking 100's of trees in the Gifford Pinchot National forest, Randle, WA

★ The 3 Spanish anarchists being held for planting bombs (reported in last issues NIB) have thankfully been let out of prison. However they may still face charges [inforepresion@yahoo.es](mailto:inforepresion@yahoo.es)

★ The UK Mumia Abu-Jamal support campaign has a new website, detailing the legal case against Mumia's conviction <http://uk.geocities.com/mumiauk>. Radical black eco-activist, Mumia is still on death row and its asked that everyone uses this information to raise awareness and campaign for him in whatever way they can.

## Bristolians break stuff

### Against the war...

In response to the terrorist war being waged on the innocent people of Afghanistan, Bristol anarchists have taken action against state and corporate property. In the city centre in early October, the windows of the armed forces recruitment offices were graffitied with glass etching fluid; "War of Lies", accompanied by a paint bomb and glued locks. On the night of October 25<sup>th</sup> McDonalds was attacked, most windows smashed, anti-capitalist, anti-war graffiti sprayed and locks glued. It was shut the next day. Let "collateral damage" mean more property damage. No more capitalist war and terror. Sabotage the machine! To be continued...

### The real targets

As the murderous war machine continues to destroy the lives of innocent people in Afghanistan, anarchists in Bristol continue the struggle against our true enemy. The only just war is the war on capitalism, the real war against terrorism. On Nov 6<sup>th</sup> a city centre Starbucks café was smashed up and forced to stay closed the next day. Starbucks is an icon of capitalist progress i.e. abuse of workers and ruthless profiteering, and so presents itself as a natural target. The same night a Barclays Bank was spray painted. Sabotage the war/no peace under capitalism. To be continued...

### Eclectic City relived

One year ago, an empty building which had previously been a community resource centre was re-opened by the Eclectic City Collective in Newcastle. Evicted after a month, the Council and developers have done nothing since.

On October 1<sup>st</sup> this year, the collective held a birthday party to highlight this: "the fact that this building has been laying empty for over a year is a disgrace. They should be ashamed. We offered a free place for entertainment, meeting and information - these things just don't exist anymore in Newcastle's city centre."

The empty building, and other empties nearby were decorated with posters and slogans saying 'council shame', 'community space not derelict waste' etc, along with drawings of what the building could have been used for. The paint remains, pointing out to everyone who walks by that developers and the Council are more interested in profits than people. Contact 0191 272 4635.

## GM court victories

### Successful defence

After waiting over a year for their trial, on Nov 19<sup>th</sup> two people were found not guilty on two counts of criminal damage for cutting down Genetically Modified (GM) maize at Preston Wynn in Herefordshire. The project was part of a government experiment testing the effect of GM crops on other plants. The trial started on Nov 13<sup>th</sup> at Worcester Crown Court. The defendants say that their action on August 5<sup>th</sup> 2000, in openly cutting down the GM maize using sickles was lawful as they acted to prevent immediate damage to near-by crops, the environment and public health. This is the second jury acquittal for cutting down GM crops in Britain. Contacts: Media liaison 07905 771 174 /pager - 07666 723 818. Mike Schwarz, Solicitor 0207 8334433. Defendants 07890 899541.

### Appeal won

On Oct 16<sup>th</sup>, a GM puller won her High Court appeal against a charge of Aggravated Trespass. The judge decided the charge was not appropriate for someone who pulled up GM crops if no-one was in the field at the time, as nobody's lawful activities were being interrupted. The case relates to the pulling up of Aventis GM maize at Over Compton, Dorset after a rally on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2000. At least 19 other related cases may now never come to court.

Contact: 07973 953 446

[www.gn.apc.org/pmhp/gs](http://www.gn.apc.org/pmhp/gs)

### Visa-card 1: Charges dropped

Bad news...Almost a year after a field of GM oilseed rape was 80% destroyed covertly, police arrested the owner of a credit card found on the field (doh!!). He was charged with over £17,000 of criminal damage. Good news...In yet another blow to the biotech nasties, the charges were dropped the day before the Visa-card 1 was due in court. After a spate of victories in the courtroom (and in the fields!), the CPS seem unwilling to prosecute people caught destroying GM trials, this the latest in a run of dropped charges.

**For a list of damaged and destroyed GM trials in the UK last year, contact the Genetic Engineering Network: 0207 2721586. [gen@gn.apc.org](mailto:gen@gn.apc.org) [www.geneticsaction.org.uk](http://www.geneticsaction.org.uk). "My first little book of GM crop decontamination" is also available, including top tips on how not to get caught!**

**The new list of National Seed List trials for Aventis' Winter Oilseed Rape line MS8/RF3 is now on the GEN website**

## Action in Staffordshire!

November 3<sup>rd</sup> was a big day in North Staffs. It all started at 11am outside the Roebuck Centre in Newcastle-under-Lyme with Critical Mass-ers supporting a peace vigil against the war in Afghanistan. Shunning cycle lanes the group then took a busy road, almost going into Stoke itself. Motorists were less than understanding; they revved their engines, overtook on the wrong side of the road, cut up the Critical Mass and shouted abuse. Then at the end of the ride the first 'Voice of the People' street party took place in Hanley city centre. Supported by the 'SoundAction' samba band, dutch skipping, fire juggling, an information stall and a mass distribution of onion bhajis; local groups handed out info and networked. Numbers swelled to 150-200 people. North Staffs Critical Mass is the first Saturday of every month, meeting Queens Gardens, Newcastle-u-Lyme, Staffs at 11:30am. Further info 0775 162 8185 [www.actionnet-northstaffs.co.uk](http://www.actionnet-northstaffs.co.uk)

## Support Trash

On Halloween 2001 British eco-activist 'Trash' was caught 'trashing' quarrying equipment at the Nine Ladies quarry site. Judging by past sentencing for ecotage at this protest site, Trash is guaranteed a prison sentence. As far as we are aware, Trash is not yet inside. However, his supporters are asking that everyone send him letters of support straight away to help keep his spirits strong. See **Prisoners**.

## Manchester Thorntons

Four women from Manchester were stunned when they saw that Thorntons, the chocolate shop, claimed in their window displays that "1975 - women get equality" and "2001 - women finally got what they wanted- 5 new Belgium chocolates." Outraged by this offensive propaganda, they visited two Thorntons shops in central Manchester to show them what they thought and what they wanted! A letter was written to the manager explaining why they were there, their objections and demanding the withdrawal of the displays. The window displays were graffitied "2001 - women get what they want - freedom, justice and equality" and "Smash Patriarchy!". The shop windows had posters glued to them stating how women are still the subjects of domestic violence, rape and sexual harassment, and how we are seen as aggressive if we challenge oppression and discrimination. They got away from both shops before the police were called. A

spray glue used was very quick drying and strong! Visit your local store and show them what you think.

## DfID occupied

Twelve members of the anti-war group Justice Not Vengeance occupied the Department for International Development (DfID) for 3 hours on November 2<sup>nd</sup> to demand an immediate end to the bombing of Afghanistan and a massive aid effort to avert looming famine. The group displayed a banner reading 'A matter of conscience. FOOD NOT BOMBS. A matter of survival' and refused to leave. The group had planned to leave after two hours, but DFID officials offered them an 'on the record' meeting with Sir John Vereker, DFID Permanent Secretary, so they stayed a little longer. CALL Justice Not Vengeance on: 07947839992. [www.justicenotvengeance.org](http://www.justicenotvengeance.org).

## London sit-down

Around 500 people gathered in torrential rain on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October, for an anti-war march to Whitehall, where around 60-70 of them then participated in a 1.5 hr sit down protest blocking one side of the road. Police declined to arrest anyone and, after a group discussion, the group moved on to opposite the cenotaph to lay white flowers and hold a minute's silence in memory of all of those killed.

## Naval kidnapping

On Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>, 20 people from Brighton Against the War barricaded themselves in the Royal Navy Unit at the University of Sussex, taking a male officer hostage in the process. The protesters spent several hours in the building, hanging a banner from the window reading 'War IS State Terrorism!' Outside, 200 students who had been holding a daily peace vigil also threatened to storm the building at Falmer, near Brighton. Police negotiators spoke with the group who eventually emerged at 2.15pm after having shut the unit down for the whole day. No one was hurt but all 20 were arrested on suspicion of false imprisonment and Section 5 of the POA. For dozens of anti-war documents and general information <http://struggle.ws/stopthewar.html>. To join the haltWAR list, email: [haltWAR-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:haltWAR-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

## Everyone hates McDs

Local residents and New Forest Council have won their year long battle against McDonalds - after turning them down twice McDs time to appeal ran out in November. Also, McDs have pulled out

of a public enquiry in High Wycombe. For more info see [www.mcspotlight.org](http://www.mcspotlight.org). McSpotlight is also launching a new residents page - called Stop The Store (STS) to carry reports and details of local residents fighting against McDs as well as handy advice - so if you know about a local campaign then contact [stopthystore@mcibel.org](mailto:stopthystore@mcibel.org)

## OK KO'd - cafe evicted

The Manchester OKasional cafe was illegally evicted at the beginning of November. Builders and police kicked in the shopfront window to gain access before nicking all the occupants. The OKasional Cafe collective have been squatting empty buildings for the past four years and the current eviction is the most violent and heavy handed since the retaking of the Hacienda in 2000. All those arrested were charged with stealing electricity, despite the collective having contacted the electricity company. It has been conjectured that the raid could have been timed to clear the building (which had been acting as an anti-war info shop and is located opposite the cenotaph and peace gardens) before the major peace demo in the city the following weekend.

## Diary Dates...

### December 2001

26<sup>th</sup> 5th International pizza punk day- Anarchic Xmas alternative [em@eroding.org.uk](mailto:em@eroding.org.uk).

26<sup>th</sup> ANTI-HUNT DEMOS- Contact League Against Cruels Sports 020 7403 6155, Hunt Saboteurs Association: 01273 622827; or your local Hunt Sab group.

28<sup>th</sup> Critical Mass (London) 6pm South Bank, under Waterloo Bridge. 07801 703016 [criticalmass.london@virgin.net](mailto:criticalmass.london@virgin.net)

### January 2002

26<sup>th</sup> Prison Abolition or More Prisons? conference. 10.30 am-5pm, Conway Hall, 25 red lion sq. c/o BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX.

[prisonabolition@hotmail.com](mailto:prisonabolition@hotmail.com)

26-27<sup>th</sup> EF! Winter Moot 2002, Manchester. 0161 226 6814 [mancef@nematode.freemove.co.uk](mailto:mancef@nematode.freemove.co.uk)

### February

8-11<sup>th</sup> International Animal Rights Gathering. Filmacademie, Overtoom 301, Amsterdam. Targets: Biomedical Primate Research Centre (BPRC) [vrienden@groenfront.nl](mailto:vrienden@groenfront.nl)

The diary is looking a little empty this issue - make sure to send in your dates

## New spoof newspaper

The newest spoof offering from RTS – The Spun is now available online [www.the-spun.co.uk](http://www.the-spun.co.uk) or contact [rts@gn.apc.org](mailto:rts@gn.apc.org) for paper copies.

## ABC proposal

The Anarchist Black Cross Network (committed to the support of class-struggle prisoners) has published a new draft proposal aimed at consolidating and building the struggle against the prison system. All those involved in resisting the prison system are invited to get in touch and comment on the proposal with the hope of building the network. See <http://www.anarchistblackcross.org/>

## Ecotopia 2002

Plans for Ecotopia 2002 (the pan-Europe activist meeting) are underway and organisers are keen to hear from anyone in the UK who might be willing to host workshops – particularly ones with a radical 'Green and Black' flavour and a practical skill sharing focus. If you are interested contact [suckola@hotmail.com](mailto:suckola@hotmail.com). For info on previous Ecotopias visit [www.antenna.nl/eyfa](http://www.antenna.nl/eyfa)

## War Cry (?)

WAR CRY is a new radical newsletter for anyone living or working in West London. To get a free copy, send a SAE to West London Anarchists & Radicals, BM Makhno, London WC1N 3XX.

## May day 2001

An urgent request for any footage from Oxford Street, during the 2001, London May day protests – to build a case against the police action – has been recieved.

Contact [david@mawson.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:david@mawson.fsnet.co.uk) if you think you have anything useful.

## Mayday 2002

Never deterred, plans are underway for Mayday 2002 in London. Contact [londonmayday@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:londonmayday@yahoo.co.uk) if you'd like to get involved

## New group in Norwich

Norwich Anarchists is a new pro-direct action group which supports a range of social and environmental issues, including human emancipation, world peace, animal liberation and ecodefence. The group will be active in prisoner support and intends to produce its own newsletter for which people are invited to send articles and/or any local information. Norwich Anarchists, PO Box 487, Norwich, NR2 3AL. 0794 1657 485

## EF! Journal request

The Earth First Journal (US) would like photos (at least 200dpi) of the Chief Executive Officers of any corporate nasties you fell deserve attention. Please include their name, corporation and any other pertinent information [collective@earthfirstjournal.org](mailto:collective@earthfirstjournal.org)

## Job opportunities

Just a quick reminder for everyone planning to come to the Winter Moot in January, that this is bound to be a top chance to get involved (amongst other things) in those projects that hold the network together. Specifically plans for the EF! Summer Gathering will be getting underway (currently rumour is that it will probably be somewhere in the south-west). A collective will be needed for next

years Moot and of course it's nearly time to offer the Action Update to a new collective. So give some thought as to what you might want to do before you get there and the seamless transfer of these tasks may be possible. If you'd like to get involved with one of these things but can't make the Moot, it would be a good idea to get in touch with the relevant project before mid-January so your interest is known when they get discussed.

## E-activism

☪ As the AU went to press the EU summit in Belgium was about to get underway. We've be recommended <http://www.anarchie.be/eurostop/en> to keep up to date with progress.

☪ A new e-mail list aimed at global co-ordination of anti-war resistance has been launched. E-mail [peacenowar@lists.riseup.net](mailto:peacenowar@lists.riseup.net) to subscribe.

☪ Construction on the Lamberhurst/A21 bypass (20 miles up the road from Hastings) is due to start next spring/summer. [www.lamberhurstbypass.com](http://www.lamberhurstbypass.com) has been set up to oppose this and help, advice and support is wanted.

☪ The Blackwater Valley Environmental Justice Newsletter is now available online <http://www.bvej.freewebsites.com/>. If you were an e-subscriber re-subscribe online.

☪ ROOTS is the bimonthly newsletter of A SEED Europe, an action-oriented youth network working on economic globalisation. Read online at <http://www.aseed.net/> or subscribe by sending a mail to [aseedeur@antenna.nl](mailto:aseedeur@antenna.nl)

☪ Also recommended the spoof WTO website at <http://www.gatt.org/>

## Prisoners

If you know of anyone who you think we ought to be supporting get in touch with the AU or ELP (listed opposite), let us know as much as possible (what they're in for, how long, when they're due for release, details of any support campaign etc.). The AU prioritises listing new eco-prisoners ELP carry a more detailed list.

### UK

**Trash**, c/o Nine Ladies Anti-Quarry Camp, Lees Cross, Lees Road, Stanton Lees, Nr Matlock, Derbyshire. Trash is not yet inside, however, his supporters are asking that everyone sends him letters of support straight away to help keep his spirits strong.

**Kerry Whitburn** EM 8649, HMP Bedford, St Loyes St, Bedford, MK40 1HG

### Rae Newlands

GN6613, HMP Holloway, Parkhurst Rd, London, N7 ONU, England. On remand on charges relating to both anti-blood sports activity and anti-HLS campaigning.

**Heather Avery**, HMP and YOI, Highpoint, Stradis Hall, New Market, Suffolk, CB8 9YG

**Natasha Dellamaigne**, HMP and YOI, Highpoint, Stradis Hall,

New Market, Suffolk, CB8 9YG

**Greg Avery**, HMP Belmarsh, Weston Way, Thamesmead, London, SE28 0EB

These 3 SHAC organisers were sentenced to 12 months imprisonment each. Charges related to the publication of the SHAC newsletter that allegedly encouraged readers call, send unsolicited stuff to, and otherwise harass HLS employees and investors.

### Europe

**Geert Waegemans** Begijnestraat 42, 2000 Antwerp, Belgium. Serving five years for an attempted arson on the car of a Judge, two McDonalds arsons and two arsons against the meat industry has had some new charges placed against him. Write letters of support and for more information.

## Earth Liberation Prisoners support network

c/o BM Box 2407

London, WC1N 3XX

Online newsletter

[earthlibprisoner@mail.com](mailto:earthlibprisoner@mail.com)

[www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk](http://www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk)

Urgent ELP Bulletin sends out names of new prisoners as soon as ELP gets them [animalearthliberation@bigfoot.com](mailto:animalearthliberation@bigfoot.com)

### Writing to prisoners

Remember to include the prisoners number and a return address (prisons won't accept the letter without one, not all accept PO Box address) for more tips on writing contact ELP or Anarchist Black Cross c/o 6 Tilbury Place Brighton BN2 2GY

*"Any political movement that does not support it's political internees is a sham movement"*

*Ojore Lutalo, political prisoner*

Large heath butterfly feeding on bog rosemary



## Peat Processing & How to Stop It

Peat is stripped when the land is dry enough to support the machinery, which is usually between Easter and the beginning of October. The moors are criss-crossed with drainage ditches and channels (from under a metre to 2 or 3m wide and over 2m deep), and there are pumping stations at various points, which keep the water flowing out. Blocking these drains and putting the pumps out of action protects the hydrology of the peat.

During the cutting season the surface is scraped off and pushed into ridges by tractor-type things and then collected by harvesters, which are distinctive by their conveyor belts. There are only three harvesters and we

suspect they are not easy to replace. These move the now crumbly peat into dumper trucks, which leave it in a giant stockpile along the narrow-gauge rail lines. The stockpile is covered over to prevent it from becoming too dry in the summer or from soaking up water in the winter, which makes it more difficult to handle. There are two trains, which transport the peat back to the works at the northernmost edge of Hatfield Moor. They run through the summer, but are rarely used to full capacity in the winter as there is no other work done on the moors. They tend to derail themselves if they go too fast or if they get rocked too much. In the past the lines have been tampered with.

Once at the peat works the peat is filtered, washed and heat-treated before having the various chemicals/fertilizers added to make the various types of compost. Once it has been treated it would be completely useless (and probably ecologically damaging) to return it to the moor. It is wrapped and heat-sealed and then stacked on pallets for storage and distribution. There are vast stocks of wrapped up pallets of peat all round the perimeter of the works, waiting to be distributed.

There is only one entrance to the site, via a small metal bridge over a major drain. Every vehicle entering the works (i.e. staff cars and distribution lorries) uses this bridge. Plans & photos of the peatworks are on the web-site, along with comprehensive info on Scotts, other peat sites & campaigns, campaign updates, peat ecolog, etc.:

[www.peatalert.org.uk](http://www.peatalert.org.uk)

Large red damselflies, mating on a blade of grass



## What is Peat?

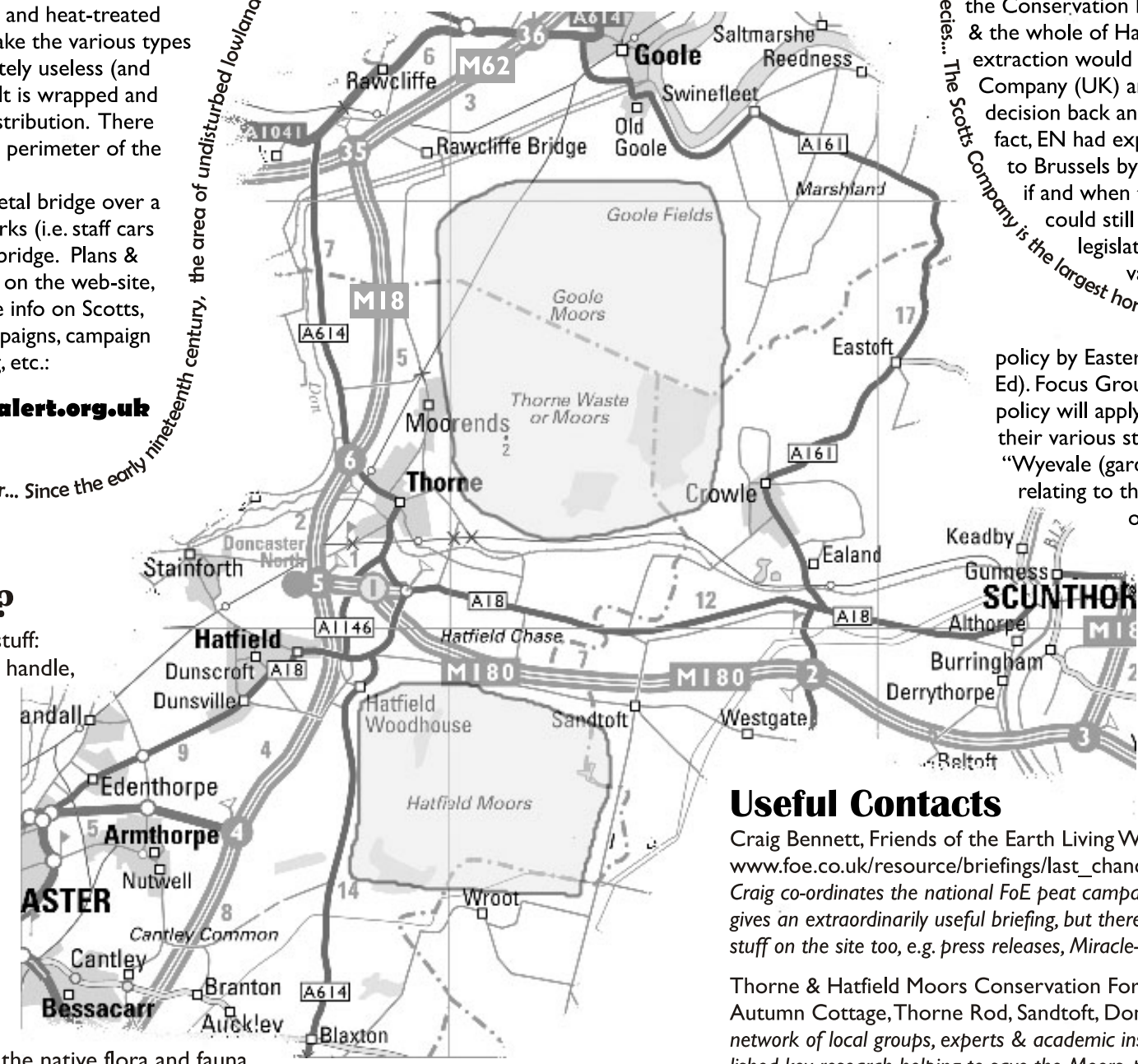
It is undeniable - peat is a wonderstuff: cheap, sterile, lightweight and peasant to handle, with good water and air holding qualities.

Peat forms in very wet or water-logged habitats such as bogs, where the dead vegetation is in effect preserved rather than decomposed. There are two basic kinds of peat: sedge and moss, or sphagnum. This is created by a slow build-up of sphagnum moss in a bog that is either 'blanket' or 'raised'. Raised bogs in lowland areas are of greatest interest to peat extractors as they can be many metres deep. They are also the ones environmentalists are most concerned about.

Theoretically a living peat bog can regenerate at about 15mm per year. Unfortunately, large-scale modern production has made this unlikely, because the land is drained before extraction. Not only is recolonisation by the native flora and fauna remote, but the delicate and complex water tables in adjacent undrained areas are also put under threat.

3.4 million cubic metres of peat are used in UK horticulture every year... Since the early nineteenth century, the area of undisturbed lowland 'raised' bog in the UK has shrunk by around 94%... Thorne & Hatfield Moors support over 5,500 species... The Scotts Company is the largest horticultural company in the world, with turnover approaching £2 billion and facilities in 63 countries and it's growing fast...

# peat alert



Location of Thorne & Hatfield Moors

## Aren't Thorne & Hatfield Protected?

Thorne & Hatfield Moors have been commercially milled for peat for about 50 years and there has been opposition of varying militancy since it started. By the early '90s the Peatlands Campaigns Consortium (PCC) had achieved a significant drop in sales of peat, which was threatening Fisons' (the then land-owners) business. The company was forced to do a deal in which the land was gifted to English Nature, although Fisons retained the lease and minerals extraction rights for 20% of Thorne & 80% of Hatfield. The rest of the land is now a nature reserve, being restored and managed by English Nature. The whole area is notified as an SSSI.

In 1995 the nature reserves were given SAC status (Special Area of Conservation) under the EU Habitats Directive, and some areas of both the reserves and the workings were given SPA status (Special Protection Area) under the EU Birds Directive. These give more protection than any British legislation.

In 1997 English Nature proposed de-notifying the workings, based on research funded by Scotts (who by then had bought out the company). They claimed that the hydrology of the site was so badly damaged by the peat working that it could no longer be restored and was not worth protecting.

The Thorne & Hatfield Moors Conservation Forum (a network of local & regional conservation groups & experts) produced research to counter their evidence and SSSI status was retained. The campaign to save the moors was reinvigorated from this point.

In 1999, after being told by the EU that the UK must propose at least another 100 sites for SAC status, English Nature (under pressure from the Conservation Forum and the PCC) proposed the rest of Thorne & the whole of Hatfield. Should the site be given SAC status, peat extraction would have to stop, so since that time The Scotts Company (UK) and the government have been battling the decision back and forth between them, via English Nature. In fact, EN had expected the proposals to have been submitted to Brussels by now, but DEFRA is delaying again. However, if and when the Moors are ever granted SAC status, it could still take up to 7 years to implement the legislation while Scotts go through the various legal appeals, etc.

policy by Easter 2002: "Peat does not have a long term future in our business" (going all out there - Ed). Focus Group is a recent merger of Wickes, Great Mills, Focus/Do It All and several others. The policy will apply to the whole group, but at the moment they're pretty confused about what exactly their various stores do sell.

"Wyevale (garden centre chain) is actively working with compost and plant suppliers on tests relating to the availability and use of peat-free growing media and will closely monitor the results of these tests. It is our intention to promote peat-free compost alternative products wherever possible... We will not recommend the use of peat as a mulch or soil improver"

Several supermarkets are expected to produce similar strategies in the near future. In the early 90s the Wildlife Trusts produced a "Peatland Protection Charter", to which 66 councils have signed up and several commercial growers, pledging to limit their use of peat. However, the sad truth is that 75% of peat sold goes to domestic gardeners via retail outlets, and most of the rest goes to commercial growers, e.g. for mushrooms, lettuces or golf courses. The only way to stop peat production is to get people to stop buying it.

## Useful Contacts

Craig Bennett, Friends of the Earth Living World Campaigner [www.foe.co.uk/resource/briefings/last\\_chance\\_see.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/briefings/last_chance_see.html)  
Craig co-ordinates the national FoE peat campaign. The web-site gives an extraordinarily useful briefing, but there is loads more useful stuff on the site too, e.g. press releases, Miracle-Gone info, etc

Thorne & Hatfield Moors Conservation Forum  
Autumn Cottage, Thorne Rod, Sandtoft, Doncaster DN8 5TB  
network of local groups, experts & academic institutions, has published key research helping to save the Moors, plus much lobbying.

The EF! Summer Gathering Write-Up will be appearing in the next issue of Action Update



Butterwort, a rare carnivorous plant

## Too Little Too Late

The years of lobbying by members of the Peatlands Campaigns Consortium have led to major DIY firms developing strategies to phase out peat products: B&Q (the market leader) doesn't stock any Scotts products and is committed to diluting all other products to 85% peat-free by 2006.

Homebase (#3 in DIY sector) is announcing a similar policy (probably within the next three weeks), but they're only committing to a 10 year timescale.

Focus Do It All (#2) are committed to producing a policy by Easter 2002: "Peat does not have a long term future in our business" (going all out there - Ed). Focus Group is a recent merger of Wickes, Great Mills, Focus/Do It All and several others. The policy will apply to the whole group, but at the moment they're pretty confused about what exactly their various stores do sell.

Since Northern EF! groups joined FOE's peat campaign last May, there have been 3 mass trespasses, 2 smaller trespasses, 3 site occupations and several night-time visits. For more information on these actions, resources to plan your own or to find out about future actions visit

[www.peatalert.org.uk](http://www.peatalert.org.uk)

c/o Leeds EF! CRC, 16 Sholebroke Ave, LEEDS LS7 3HB, 07971 073 282, info@peatalert.org.uk,

## Action Groups

are local EF! contacts some are active groups others need more people to get in touch

Bath EF!  
c/o PO Box 426  
Bath, Somerset, BA1 2ZD

Dartmoor EF!  
c/o PO Box 77, Totness  
Devon TQ9 5ZJ

Grampian EF!  
PO Box 248  
Aberdeen AB25 1JE  
grampianearthfirst@hotmail.com

Gwynedd & Mon EF!  
The Greenhouse  
1 Trevelyan Terrace, Bangor  
Gwynedd LL57 1AX  
01248 255 821  
bangor-werdd@yahoo.com

Leeds EF!  
c/o CRC, 16 Sholebroke Av  
Leeds LS7 3HB  
0113 262 9365  
leedsef@leedsef.org.uk

London Reclaim The Streets  
PO Box 9656  
London N4 4JY  
020 7281 4621  
rts@gn.apc.org

Manchester EF!  
Box29, 22a Beswick St  
Manchester, M4 7HS  
0161 2266 814  
mancef@nematode.freeseve.co.uk

(Newcastle) TAPP  
PO Box ITA  
Newcastle NE99 1TA  
ne991ta@yahoo.com

Norwich Direct Action Forum  
PO Box 487  
Norwich NR2 3AL  
07944 874 393

Nottingham EF!  
c/o 245 Gladstone Street  
Nottingham, NG7 6HX  
0845 458 9595  
nottsef@veggies.org.uk

Reading Roadbusters  
R.I.S. Centre  
35-39 London Street, Reading  
Berkshire RG1 4PS  
0118 954 6430  
roadbusters@gn.apc.org

Sheffield EF!  
c/o Brambles Resource Centre  
82 Andover St  
Sheffield S3 9EH  
0114 279 7164  
jimthackery@yahoo.co.uk

South Devon EF!  
c/o PO Box 77, Totness  
Devon TQ9 5ZJ

SWAN Network  
PO Box 70  
Newport NP1 0YD  
Swangroup@yahoo.co.uk

# Contacts List Dec 01/Jan 02

Warwick- the old group's folded but someone wants to set up a new one!  
Tomgreaves@hotmail.com

York LEAF  
C/o SU Centre  
University of York, Heslington  
York YO10 5DD

## Support Groups & Information Networks

Activists' Legal Project  
16b Cherwell Street  
Oxford, OX4 1BG  
01865 243 772  
activistslegal@gn.apc.org

Anarchist Teapot  
Mobile Kitchen Project  
6 Tilbury Place  
Brighton BN2 2GY  
katchoo22@gurmail.com

Blatant Incitement Project  
(outreach & small group support), c/o Manchester EF!  
doinit@nematode.freeseve.co.uk

CAGE Network  
(against the prison system)  
c/o 245 Gladstone Street  
Nottingham, NG7 6HX  
0845 458 9595

Corporate Watch  
16b Cherwell St  
Oxford OX4 1BG  
01865 791391  
mail@corporatwatch.org

Earth Liberation Prisoners support Network  
BM Box 2407  
London, WC1N 3XX  
earthlibprisoner@mail.com

Genetic Engineering Network  
GEN, Archway Resource C'tr  
1a Waterlow Road  
Archway, London, N19 5NJ  
020 7272 1586  
genetics@gn.apc.org

Primal Seeds  
Suite 305, 255 Wilmslow Rd  
Manchester M14  
www.primalseeds.org  
mail@primalseeds.org

URGENT  
(green field housing network)  
Box HN, 16b Cherwell St  
Oxford OX4 1BG  
01865 794 800  
info@urgent.org.uk

## Publications

Counter Information  
Autonomous Centre E'burgh  
17 West Montgomery Place  
Edinburgh EW7 5HA  
0131 557 6242

Do or Die  
c/o Prior House, 6 Tilbury Pl.  
Brighton BN2 2GY  
doorotp@yahoo.co.uk

FINs - for a full list of Free Information Networks, send SAE to: London FIN  
c/o 99 Torrino Avenue  
London NW5 2RX

Genetix Update  
c/o Totnes GenetiX Group  
PO Box77, Totness  
Devon TQ9 5ZJ  
01803 840 098  
info@togg.org

Green Anarchist  
BCM 1715, London  
WC1N 3XX

Peace News  
5 Caledonian Road  
London N1 9DY

Schnews  
PO Box 2600, Brighton  
East Sussex BN2 2DX  
01273 685913  
schnews@brighton.co.uk

The EF!AU has a list of local radical publications.  
Send an SAE or e-mail.

## Virtual News

<http://www.ainfos.ca>  
a multi-lingual news service by, for and about anarchists

Allsorts - UK based e-news for activists  
allsorts@gn.apc.org  
www.uk.indymedia.org

## Video

i-Contact video network  
76 Mina Road, Bristol  
BS29TX 01179140188  
i-contact@videonetwork.org

RadiX-video archive for direct action - new address in December  
radix@enviroweb.org  
www.enviroweb.org/radix

## Other Contacts

Advisory Service for Squatters  
2 Saint Pauls Road  
London N1 2QN  
020 7359 8814  
advice@squat.freeseve.co.uk

ALF Supporters Group  
BCM Box 1160  
London WC1N 3XX  
1003021616@compuserve.co.uk

Anarchist Federation  
c/o 84b Whitechapel High St.  
London E1 7QX

ChiapasLink  
Box 79, 82 Colston St, Bristol  
chiapaslink@yahoo.com

Disabled Action Network  
3 Crawley Road, Wood Green  
London N22 6AN  
020 88891361

DELTA  
Box Z, 13 Biddulph St  
Leicester LE2 1BH  
0116 210 9652  
lynx@gn.apc.org  
www.oneworld.org/delta

Friends of People Close to Nature (FPCN UK)  
33 Gould Close  
Welham Green, Hatfield  
Hertfordshire AL9 7EB  
01707 885 994  
rains@fpcn-global.org

GenetiX Snowball  
Box13, 43 Gardner St  
Brighton BN1 1UN  
rowantilly@gn.apc.org

Haringey Solidarity Group  
PO Box 2474  
London N8

Hunt Saboteurs Assoc.  
PO Box 2786  
Brighton BN2 2AX  
01273 622827  
hsa@gn.apc.org

Industrial Workers of the World  
75 Humberstone Gate  
Leicester LE1 1WB

The Land is Ours (TLIO)  
16b Cherwell St  
Oxford OX4 1BG  
01460 249204  
office@tlio.demon.co.uk

Legal Defence & Monitoring Group  
BM Haven, London  
WC1N 3XX

London GreenPeace & McLibel Campaign  
5 Caledonian Road  
London N1 9DX  
020 7713 1269  
info@mcspotlight.org

Making Waves  
PO Box 1377  
Sheffield S36 4BZ  
01226 764279  
pp3office@aol.com

No Platform anti-fascist network, PO Box 127  
Leeds LS3 1TS

Reclaim the Satyagraha!  
c/o 5 Caledonian Road  
London N1 9DX  
07973 539 390  
enquiries@satyagraha.org

Solidarity Federation  
PO Box 29, SW PDO  
Manchester M15 5HW  
0161 232 7889

Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty Campaign (SHAC)  
PO Box 38, Cheltenham  
Gloucs GL50 1YN  
0845 458 0630

Trident Ploughshares 2000  
42-46 Bethel St  
Norwich NR2 1NR  
0845 458 8366  
tp2000@gn.apc.org

## Protest Camps

Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp, 33 Heron Rd  
Bristol BS5 0LT  
0117 939 3746

Faslane Peace Camp  
Shandon, Helensburgh  
Dunbartonshire G84 8HT  
Scotland  
01436 820 901

9 Ladies Anti-Quarry Camp  
Lees Cross  
Lees Rd, Stanton Lees  
Matlock, Derbyshire  
Phone stolen - new no. soon!

Sellafield Women's Peace Camp, Box Z (as Leeds EF!)  
0113 262 1534

Vallee d'Aspe Camp  
Mobile+336 72634905

## ..and beyond

active campaigns that have had protest camps in the past

Action Against the Toll Motorway (AtoM)  
0121 643 9117  
actionagainstthetollmotorway@hotmail.com

Golden Cross Road Action Group (Essex), 01702 541 267  
07957 915 977

Hockley Housing  
01702 206 181

Third Battle of Newbury  
PO Box 5642  
Newbury RG14 5WG  
07000 785 201

## International

For International contacts we recommend the list in Do or Die 9 or ...

Peoples Global Action (PGA) against the WTO and neo-liberalisation, www.apg.org

Earth First! Journal  
POB 3023, Tucson  
AZ 85702 USA  
Tel: (520) 620-6900  
Fax: (413) 254-0057  
collective@earthfirstjournal.org  
www.earthfirstjournal.org

Every effort is made to keep this contact list as up to date as possible, but we haven't time to check every contact every month. If you have trouble using any contact on this list please let us know. Also please make sure you tell us of any changes. We appreciate receiving any ideas to improve this list and make it as useful as possible.

**All additions and alterations each month are shown in bold.**

The inclusion of a contact on this list in no way implies the support of the AU editorial collective for that group, it's ideas, actions or indeed anything else.

## BBC building scaled

On Oct 12<sup>th</sup>, a group went to the BBC on Oxford Rd, Manchester to protest media mis-information about the 'war' in Afghanistan. Four people climbed onto the roof with the aid of a long ladder and hung "Blair's Broadcasting Corruption", from the three flagpoles. Other banners hung included "Destroy Imperialism not Afghanistan", "Truth - the first casualty of war" and "Stop Warmongering Scum Corporate Media". Despite a struggle with police and security on the roof they managed to stay and secure the ladder for later escape. Below 800 leaflets were distributed whilst a Samba band played. Manc EF! 0161 2266 814

[mancef@nematode.freeseerve.co.uk](mailto:mancef@nematode.freeseerve.co.uk)

## Shortcuts visits Shell

The recently formed 'Shortcuts' society encourages students in Manchester to become involved in wider campaigns. On Sept 29<sup>th</sup> it organised a day of free workshops including talks on non-violent direct action, permaculture, and subvertising as well as active political street theatre and meditation workshops.

On October 9<sup>th</sup>, Shortcuts dropped in on a Shell careers conference to tell them: 'Get the Shell out of Nigeria'. Given the floor for five minutes, one of the activists gave a speech pleading with the students to wake up and consider the alternatives. Shell's attitude was "We're a company, and we have to make profit first!". Setting off a fire alarm provided a welcome relief from corporate brainwashing and gave activists a chance to tell the people there that a wind energy company were also recruiting in Brighton. Upcoming interventions include BP, Nestle and the Army. Contact: [shortcutz@yaho.co.uk](mailto:shortcutz@yaho.co.uk)

To find out what this box is for you're going to have to subscribe!

**Contact** EF!AU, PO Box 487  
Norwich, NR2 3AL  
★ us! ★ Tel: 01603 219811  
[www.eco-action.org/efau](http://www.eco-action.org/efau)  
[efactionupdate@bigfoot.com](mailto:efactionupdate@bigfoot.com)

## Hackney NOT 4 sale

On Oct 12<sup>th</sup>, five Hackney residents occupied the head office of Nelson Bakewell property services and refused to leave until their demands were met, including the withdrawal of all community properties from auctions the following Monday. 2 women locked on with d-locks. Accounts and finances workers were handed leaflets about Nelson Bakewell. At 4pm when all office employees had left to go home and leaflets had run out, the remaining two protesters unlocked and joined the rest of the group outside. There were no arrests. Nelson Bakewell are heavily involved with the selling off of vital community services in Hackney as advisors to the council. 07752 592 740

[hackney4sale@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hackney4sale@yahoo.co.uk)

## workers walk out

Also on October 12<sup>th</sup> workers employed by Hackney Council in London's East End went on strike against further planned cuts. Those striking included rubbish collectors, homecare assistants, parks and gardens workers and meals-on-wheels providers. Hackney Council workers face further cuts to wages and working conditions as the cash-strapped council opens up more facilities to the private sector.

## auctions protest

Oct 15<sup>th</sup> saw a lively and noisy demo outside the Langham Hilton where Nelson Bakewell were holding an auction which included some of Hackney's community properties. A handful of Hackney residents went inside and disrupted the auction, one woman loudly

announced that the auction was closed because the buildings belonged to the people of Hackney and were therefore not for sale. After she was removed by security, others stood up and also voiced their objections, and were all eventually removed. There was a samba band outside and a spoof estate agent display was set up. Hundreds of leaflets were handed out. There were loads of police and security in vans and on all the doors but anyone who wanted to get inside. see [www.indymedia.org.uk](http://www.indymedia.org.uk) for Hackney updates.

## Base Invaders

On Oct 10<sup>th</sup>, 30 people from the Just Peace coalition arrived at the RAF valley base with pictures of Afghani children in refugee camps which were tied to the fence with the words "collateral damage?" underneath. The protestors were prepared to blockade the base but the base commander came out and ran the gauntlet of questions and statements. After faxing a statement to the MOD there was more talking and he did appear to have a bit of a wobble at some points. Other actions are being planned. JUST PEACE is a Welsh coalition of various groups. Gwynedd & Mon EF! 01248 255 821

## SHAC takes on Shell

On Oct 20<sup>th</sup> 3 vanloads of protestors visited Shell petrol stations in Northern England. Shell's are being targetted because of their business dealings with Huntingdon Life Sciences. At Knutsford the protestors were met by some rather nasty Countryside Alliance types who tried to run a couple of people over. After this the protest moved to Northwich and then on to Middlewich and ended up at Congleton, protesting outside a Shell garage where they got pig-penned up. SHAC 0845 458 0630.

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