

CASE STUDIES

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SQUASH Campaign Issues

How the case studies are coded to help you find relevant information quickly.

KEY MESSAGES

- KM1 – Housing Crisis
- KM2 – Homelessness and the Vulnerable
- KM3 – Home Owners or Big Property Speculators?
- KM4 – Enforceability
- KM5 – Affordability

EVIDENCE FOR CONSULTATION

- EC1 – Empty Homes, Empty Properties, Wastefulness
- EC2 – Squatters improving and/or preserving the built environment
- EC3 – Squatters making a positive contribution to their community
- EC4 – Police ignorance and/or procedural failure
- EC5 – Property owners effectively using existing procedures
- EC7 – False Interim Possession Orders (IPOs)
- EC8 – Bad landlords
- EC9 – Media Misinformation and Anti-Squatting
- EC10 – Misuse of Displaced Residential Occupier (DRO)
- EC11 – Missues of Protected Intending Occupier (PIO)
- EC12 – Self-help Violence
- EC13 – Tenant Protection through Section 6

MISCELLANEOUS

- MI1 – ‘Protection by Occupation’
- MI2 – Bailiffs and Enforcement
- MI3 – Vocal public/state/union support for squatters
- MI4 – Squatting leaves a lasting legacy
- MI5 – Collateral effects (occupation, trespass, etc.)

Case Study 1: Lesly Street



Location LB Islington, UK
Date 1972
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
public like, inadequate housing, bad police

Campaign Issues
KM1, KM3, EC1

Description

From 'Squatting: The Real Story': 'Three houses in a redevelopment area, occupied by 19 squatters, including six children and four pregnant women, were threatened with eviction by Islington Council. Their response was defiant. On 26 June they erected barricades at both ends of Lesly Street to which a sympathetic lorry driver added strength by dumping several tonnes of old bricks. The following day the area social work team gave its backing to the squatters and... even marched down to the barricades to express their solidarity. Their spokesman remarked: "We refuse to act as social policemen. The squatters are being made scapegoats; it is not they who are driving people out of Islington but the speculators..." The families were eventually rehoused by the council, Student Community Housing given their first licensed homes, and the publicity led to much faster rehousing than originally intended.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p31 p48

Case Study 2: Colchester Probation Officer

Location Colchester, UK
Date 1970s
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
public like, state like, inadequate housing

Campaign Issues
KM1, EC1

Description

In 1972, the Senior Probation Officer for Colchester was quoted as saying that he and his colleagues could see no alternative but to suggest squatting to their ex-offender clients.

Sources

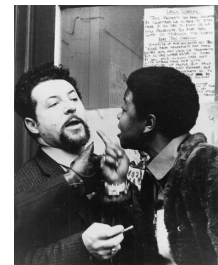
Squatting: The Real Story p33

Case Study 3: Railton Road

Location LB Lambeth, UK
Date 72-75
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
public like, anti-speculator, community reclaim

Campaign Issues
EC1, EC2, EC3, MI4



Description

The much publicised story of Olive Morris and Liz Turnbull, who became the first successful squatters of private property in Lambeth by occupying a flat above a laundrette in Railton Road, setting an example for hundreds. This led to the council buying properties owned by private speculators and to the formation of the Brixton Women's Centre, also in Railton Road. Brixton thus became a centre for squatters, many of whom achieved much popular support through their actions in reclaiming vacant properties from property speculators. See also Case Study 15

Sources

<http://rememberolivemorris.wordpress.com>
Squatting: The Real Story p33

Case Study 4: Camden High Street

Location LB Camden, UK
Date 73-74
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
public like, state like, anti-speculator,
community reclaim

Campaign Issues
KM3, EC1, EC2, EC3, MI3, MI4



Description

In a related case to Case Study 6: Tolmers Square, the story of Camden High Street involved the same developer, Stock Conversion, and widely-supported & successful squatter attempts to stop the wholesale redevelopment of the area for commercial premises- an area which is now a globally famous alternative destination and one of London's most popular areas. The squat began at 220 Camden High Street (pictured), with the full support of the previous residents who were forced out by deliberately heavy rent increases by the owners, Stock Conversion, who at the time owned about a quarter of the street. Police asked for fire brigade assistance to get on the roof of the squat, and the Camden Fire Brigade Union refused, saying that such a move would be 'the first step towards a police state.' Reasons for eviction were that the company wanted immediate possession for a new tenant, this proved to be lies when they ripped down the internal staircase and board. The building was reopened, with much local support, and remained a squat for two years, playing a role in preserving the character of this part of Camden.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p33-5

Case Study 5: Tolmers Square

Location LB Camden, UK
Date 73-74
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
public like, state like, anti-speculator,
community reclaim

Campaign Issues
KM3, EC1, EC2, EC3



Description

A renowned occupation of a pretty square of substantial houses behind Euston Station, planned for a massive commercial building by the same developers as Euston Station and Case Study 4, Stock Conversion. After a long struggle and much positive publicity, Tolmers Square was demolished but became London Borough of Camden Housing rather than commercial premises. A further, well-documented example of squatters altering the use, character and social structure of the city for positive social benefit. See also 'Goodbye to London' (ed. Astrid proll) and 'The Battle for Tolmers Square' (Nick Wates- then a student at the Bartlett and Tolmers resident, who subsequently became an influential community planner, and one of the authors of 'Squatting: The Real Story').

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p35
<http://www.nickwates.co.uk/tolmers/index.php>
<http://www.myspace.com/tolmers-square>

Case Study 6: Centre Point

Location LB Camden?, UK
Date 73-74
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
public like, official reaction, anti-speculator

Campaign Issues
KM1, KM3, EC1, MI3



Description

A hugely well-publicised and planned 'publicity squat' in the centre of London, occupying Centre Point, a skyscraper designed by Richard Seifert and then "the best-known empty building in Britain." (Squatting: The Real Story). Their squat was supported by a 3000-strong public rally and achieved national attention to developer greed in the face of homelessness. The developer, Harry Hyams, was in no urgent need to fill his building as it made enough money just sitting there. It had cost £5m in 1963 to build and was worth £50m by 1974. The demands of the activists that the council 'requisition' the building for better uses led to LB Camden trying to compulsory purchase elements of the building, but these were quashed. The building remained empty until 1980.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p35-6

Case Study 7: Hillman House

Location	Coventry, UK	Keywords
Date	May-74	anti-speculator
Current?	No	
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues
For public use?	Yes	KM1, KM3, EC1

Description

Inspired by the publicity squat described in Case Study 6, 60 people squatted in Hillman House in what was described locally as 'Coventry's Centre Point'.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p35

Case Study 8: Victoria Street Bristol

Location	Bristol, UK	Keywords
Date	May-74	anti-speculator, official reaction
Current?	No	
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues
For public use?	Yes	KM1, KM3, EC1

Description

"A coalition of radicals in Bristol (where the amount of empty office space quadrupled in less than a year) took over an empty office block in Victoria Street and stayed there a month. Several homeless families were moved in and Bristol Council shortly afterwards put a ban on planning permission for new office building." (Squatting: The Real Story)

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p35

Case Study 9: Prince of Wales Crescent

Location LB Camden, UK
Date 1972-5
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
inadequate housing, anti-speculaotr,
community reclaim

Campaign Issues
EC1, EC2, EC3, MI4

Description

In 1972 there were 280 (mainly young) people squatting in Prince of Wales Crescent, houses that had been empty for seven years prior to that. Squatters opened workshops in “electronics, engineering, silk-screening, jewellery and carpentry. A derelict site was turned into a park with a sand pit, paddling pool, café and treehouses. A crèche began and unused food was collected from nearby markets and distributed free.” ‘Squatting: The Real Story’ lists the various pioneering forms of community that were tested here, and by diverse groups such as the Community Supplies organic food supplier, London Film Makers Co-op, European Theatre Exchange and the Guild of African Master Drummers. Squatter families were rehoused by LB Camden.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p38 & 65

Case Study 10: Hebden Bridge

Location Yorkshire, UK
Date 1974-
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
community reclaim, inadequate housing

Campaign Issues
KM1, EC2, EC3, MI4



Description

“In April 1974... a group of young people took over houses in Queens Terrace, Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire. The local council was worried that too many young people were leaving the town, but had not accepted that it was partly due to housing shortage.” (Squatting: The Real Story) This was the beginning of much wider squatting in the area and the town’s reputation for testing alternative lifestyles which remains to this day and is a significant part of its appeal – including to young people. See also Case Study 18

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p39 & p63
<http://www.hebdenbridge.co.uk>

Case Study 11: Palm Court Hotel

Location LB Richmond, UK
Date 1975
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
homelessness policy, state fail, vulnerable people

Campaign Issues
KM1, KM2, EC1

Description

Goodhew Developers had deliberately left Palm Court, a four-star hotel in Chiswick to decay for three years. It was squatted from 1975 to 1979 by a group of thirty 'battered wives' and their children, organised through a woman's group. Such initiatives were undertaken on the basis that most councils did not consider women who were fleeing from domestic violence to be homeless, nor that their situation might require specialist support.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p40

Case Study 12: Cornwall Terrace

Location LB Camden (Regent's Park), UK
Date 1975
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
community reclaim, inadequate housing

Campaign Issues
EC1

Description

Of interest mainly because of the grandeur and scale of the squat- an architectural masterpiece designed by John Nash and previously left empty by the Crown Commissioners. It was rapidly occupied by 300 people, and has left a lasting legacy of happy memories recorded on websites like www.laslett.info/squatting/cornwall_terrace.htm



Sources

http://www.laslett.info/squatting/cornwall_terrace.htm
Squatting: The Real Story p40

Case Study 13: Bengali Housing Action



Location	Pelham Buildings, Nelson St, Varden St: LB Tower Hamlets, UK	Keywords	vulnerable people, inadequate housing
Date	1973-80	Campaign Issues	KM1, KM2, EC1, EC2, EC3, MI4
Current?	No		
Message	Positive		
For public use?	Yes		

Description

With the help of Tower Hamlets Squatters Union and Bengali Housing Action Group, many Asian arrivals into Britain squatted buildings in Spitalfields, Poplar and Stepney, notably including Pelham Buildings in E1 which was occupied by 200 families. This happened in reaction to insensitive housing policies which frequently placed vulnerable Muslim families in areas of known race crimes. The squatter action led to the establishment of a strong Muslim community in the Spitalfields area and to the preservation of much of the area's Victorian housing stock, much of which would have long ago been destroyed were it not for these actions. See also Case Study 66. Terry Fitzpatrick recalls: "I remember writing a leaflet, saying that, there were 3200 empty council owned residential properties in the borough, which would be enough to clear the entire housing list. For various reasons, the council just couldn't bring them into occupation. The sort of thing they did was-- there was a perfect little block of flats in Bow, built in the 1920s, but something called the Parker Morris Standards in terms of room heights and widths, said the rooms weren't sufficient, so they emptied the block and left it empty." See also Case Studies 27 and 66

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p42
http://www.swadhinata.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=173&Itemid=205

Case Study 14: NUS Recommendation

Location	Nationwide, UK	Keywords	public like, state like (semi), student housing, inadequate housing
Date	1975	Campaign Issues	KM1, KM2
Current?	No		
Message	Positive		
For public use?	Yes		

Description

The 1975 National Union of Students conference recommended its members to squat in the face of a crisis in student accommodation. In the present day as a point of comparison, students in London can face a £200/week bill for accommodation.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p46

Case Study 15: Brixton Womens Centre

Location	LB Lambeth, UK	Keywords
Date	1970s	state like
Current?	No	
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues
For public use?	Yes	MI3

Description

Brixton Women's Centre reported receiving 30-40 referrals in one week from Lambeth Social Services Department, an example of the local authority/state learning to work with, and benefit from, squat activity. Similarly, the Advisory Service for Squatters reported that housing aid centres, social services departments, citizens advice bureaux, probation services and even the police were regularly referring people to them.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p40 & 48

Case Study 16: Mercer's Estate, Stepney

Location	LB Tower Hamlets, UK	Keywords
Date	1970s	state fail, inadequate housing, gutting, empty homes
Current?	No	
Message	Negative	Campaign Issues
For public use?	Yes	KM1, EC1

Description

"Many squatters all over London were evicted without offers of alternative accommodation and frequently well before the buildings were needed for development... for instance, on Mercer's Estate, Stepney, there were 69 squatted flats as well as 177 empty ones – whose occupants faced eviction under the new GLC policy. For three years tenants had slowly been moved out in preparation for demolition, but then the DoE then imposed a preservation order on the flats and so new plans had to be drawn up." The GLC continued the eviction regardless, contrary to the statement by its Housing Committee chairperson Gladys Dimson: "Our policy is to use every possible empty house awaiting development."

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p53

Case Study 17: Charrington Street

Location	GLC, UK	Keywords	state fail, inadequate housing, state like, gutting, empty homes
Date	1973		
Current?	No		
Message	Negative		
For public use?	Yes	Campaign Issues	KM1, KM2, EC1

Description

An example of the Greater London Council (GLC) using 'back-door eviction' tactics to remove squatters, this time by preventing the London Electricity Board from entering squatted homes to provide electricity services. 'Squatting: The Real Story' p163 details the legal changes which allowed this to happen. Other consequences were Bengali squatters in the east end of London suffering through gas being cut off in buildings where it was the only safe means of cooking.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p56

Case Study 18: Royal Terrace

Location	Yorkshire, UK	Keywords	state fail, inadequate housing, empty homes
Date	1975		
Current?	No		
Message	Negative	Campaign Issues	KM1, EC1
For public use?	Yes		

Description

An example of councils lowering squatters' profile and status through claiming that squatted houses were just about to be let. "Squatters were therefore seen to be creating hardship... On one occasion Calderdale Housing Department allocated a house in Royal Terrace, Hebden Bridge, to a woman ten minutes after hearing that it had been squatted. The flat had been empty for a year and a half. Six months previously the same woman had asked the council if she could live there and had been told it was not for letting. In fact, the squatters moved out to make way for her but she did not take up the offer... Some of the houses in that street were still empty in 1980." (Squatting: The Real Story)

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p56

Case Study 19: Criminal Law Act

Location	Nationwide, UK	Keywords
Date	1974-7	policy change, law, public like
Current?	No	
Message	Negative	Campaign Issues
For public use?	Yes	EC13, MI3

Description

From 'Squatting: The Real Story': 'In 1974 the Law Commission published a proposal that any act of trespass should be made illegal, once the trespasser had been asked to leave. In response, the Campaign Against a Criminal Trespass Law (CACTL) was set up by All London Squatters. After much opposition from diverse organisations outside the squatter movement, ranging from the [Association of Chief Police Officers] to the trade union... [and the GLC, TUC and NUS] the Law Commission reported again in 1976 with less Draconian proposals that were to make squatting more difficult but not illegal.' This was the birth of Section 6, etc, in the form of the Criminal Law Act.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p57 +p87

Case Study 20: Grosvenor Road

Location	Twickenham, UK	Keywords
Date	1972-3	statistics, public like, bad media
Current?	No	
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues
For public use?	Yes	KM2, EC9



Description

The perception of squatter demographics can have more impact than the reality. In the case of Twickenham, squatters were seen as single, unemployed, lazy and from outside the area. A survey found that there were 16 children as well as 112 adults; "that 61 percent of the adults were working and only 10 percent had not worked since moving into the squat; and that while 12 months earlier there had been no squats, 67 percent of the squatters had lived in Twickenham for over a year and 13 percent had lived there for over 15 years." (Squatting: The Real Story)

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p58
<http://www.grosvenor-road.co.uk/>

Case Study 21: 35 Marsden Street

Location	LB Camden, UK	Keywords
Date	1973	public like, state fail
Current?	No	
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues
For public use?	Yes	EC1, MI3

Description

“On 19 April 1973, local ‘vigilantes’ threw out squatters from 35 Marsden Street, the only house in the road with a bathroom. Camden Council had stated that it intended to use the house for a family off the waiting list had gone, Camden’s first and only act was to tin up the windows and doors. A few weeks later the Francis family who lived next door and who had been prominent in kicking out the squatters apparently had a change of heart. They issued a statement saying that they had been misled by the Council and that in future they would work alongside squatters to fight bad housing.” (Squatting: The Real Story)

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p58

Case Study 22: Mrs Elizabeth Harper

Location	Kensington London, UK	Keywords
Date	1975	bad media, protected intending occupier, bad money
Current?	No	
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues
For public use?	Yes	EC9, EC11

Description

A 1970’s case of a deliberately distorted squatter story appearing in the press, in this case in the letters page of The Times. The first letter, from Miss Elizabeth Harper, who reported that police had failed to take any action to help her removed squatters from her home in Kensington, which had been locked 3 weeks earlier whilst Miss Harper was on holiday. The Metropolitan Police Solicitor refuted these statements: Miss Harper was in fact Mrs Such, had not been on holiday and her house was up for sale. The squatters had left without incident, and the telephone they had allegedly used had been disconnected some time prior. Nonetheless the damaging initial story – the predecessor of many – led to much negative press about squatter and similar comments from Tony Judge, GLC Housing Management Committee, related to Case Study 24.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p59

Case Study 23: Mid 70's Editorials

Location	Nationwide, London, UK	Keywords
Date	1975	bad media
Current?	No	
Message	Negative	Campaign Issues
For public use?	Yes	EC9

Description

Various editorials from the mid-70's backlash against squatting are described on pages 59-62 of Squatting: The Real Story which damaged squatting's reputation whilst using precious little facts. This is one from the London Evening News: 'An Evening News investigation has vividly revealed the true face of the new breed of squatters who seem to have taken over central London. And what a nasty face it turns out to be. Many of them are foreign scroungers here for the social security and free accommodation. It is not good the government waiting for the Law Commission report before amending the law to deal with these housing bandits. By the time MPs get back from their summer holidays, how many more of the world's waifs and strays will be enjoying their free stays in London?'

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p61

Case Study 24: Elgin Avenue

Location	London W9, UK	Keywords
Date	1975	public like, community reclaim, official reaction, inadequate housing
Current?	No	
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues
For public use?	Yes	EC1, EC2, EC3, MI3



Description

After a long battle with the Greater London Council, the squatters of Elgin Avenue managed to get all families into permanent accommodation and all the single people into short-life property. "The most significant factor in the Elgin Avenue victory was that that the squatters had organised over a period of years. They had build links with important local organisations and had gained the support of, amongst others, the local MP, the trades council and the federation of local tenants and residents associations." (Squatting: The Real Story). An example of sustained and open squatter action achieving its goal in the face of adversity, much documented by participant Piers Corbyn. "We won, you should fight them too. It's not what they say but what we do that counts." (Graffiti on the corrugated iron of Elgin Avenue in 1975)

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p64, 130-141
Piers Corbyn
(image via flickr: plumsteader)

Case Study 25: Camden Short Life Property

Location	LB Camden, UK	Keywords	state like, community reclaim, empty homes, gutting
Date	1975		
Current?	No		
Message	Positive		
For public use?	Yes	Campaign Issues	KM1, EC1, MI3

Description

Despite continuing some aggressive practices toward squatting, including gutting empty homes, Camden Council in the mid-late 1970's had softened its approach to squatters, and openly left squatters in short-life property 'providing they are not a nuisance to the neighbours and are not preventing the Council housing people off the waiting list.' The council issued a press statement (19.03.75) to this effect, an important concession: 'Camden takes the view that short-life houses are better in use than left empty'. N.B. 'short-life' does not refer to pre-fabs or similar, but to substantial buildings which may not be intended to exist for much longer, etc.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p82

Case Study 26: St Agnes Place

Location	LB Lambeth, UK	Keywords	state like, state fail, empty homes
Date	1969-2005		
Current?	No		
Message	Negative	Campaign Issues	KM1, EC1, EC2, EC3, MI2, MI3, MI4
For public use?	Yes		



Description

St. Agnes Place could be a dozen case studies, having resisted various evictions and threats over a period of 30 years. This case study focuses on the 1977 attempted eviction of the street in favour of leaving it empty for five years prior to the construction of a new park. (See also Case Study 67: Villa Road, part of the same story). UCATT, the building workers union, instructed its members not to work on projects involving the gutting of good homes, so the all eviction attempts involved expensive private contractors, bad news in a context where the council had no budget to actually built the park they wanted to replace the street with. Positive press coverage resulted, the Evening Standard headline read 'Council 'vandals' are defied by squatters', an opinion echoed in the Sunday Times and by various local councillors. On 19th January 1977, a huge wrecking ball and 200 police officers turned up. 10 houses were wrecked irrevocably but the moral victory had been won, and the incident proved a watershed in public opinion of squatting. The story of St. Agnes Place more-or-less ended with a major final eviction in 2005.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p82-83
<http://www.wussu.com/squatting/s0512021.htm>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Agnes_Place

Case Study 27: GLC Legitimation

Location	Greater London, UK	Keywords
Date	1977	state like, state fail, inadequate housing
Current?	No	
Message	Negative	Campaign Issues
For public use?	Yes	KM1

Description

At a time when squatter occupation of Greater London Council properties was at an all-time high, the GLC offered to legitimise the occupancy of every squatter on its premises by 25.10.1977, after which it would use 'all measures which the law allows' against future squatters. It would offer tenancies to anyone who registered. The scheme did not acknowledge squatting's roots in housing need and explicitly was about dealing with the 'problem' of squatting and was fundamentally short-term: If the squatters of the time deserved GLC tenancies, what about their successors? The case relates to Case Study 13 in that 150 families in Pelham Buildings, who were there because they were avoiding racial abuse in council estates, were offered GLC tenancies in the same estates they had begun squatting to escape from.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p89

Case Study 28: Dept of Environment Survey

Location	Nationwide, UK	Keywords
Date	1978	statistics
Current?	No	
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues
For public use?	Yes	KM1, KM2

Description

A 1978 survey by Mike Kinghan for the Department of the Environment provided clear evidence that 'The majority of people have squatted because of shortage of accommodation and not because they are opposed to law and order or they wish to live rent-free.' The survey was delayed by various leaks.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p90

Case Study 29: Goodbye Longfellow Road

Location	Nationwide, UK	Keywords	public like, good media
Date	1977		
Current?	No		
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues	KM1, KM2, KM3, EC1, MI3
For public use?	Yes		

Description

A TV documentary presented by Des Wilson, first director of Shelter. From the synopsis: 'Longfellow Road in LB Tower Hamlets, for 80 years as happy a community as any in the East End of London, has reached the twilight of its life. Declared a slum in the 1930s and earmarked for demolition in 1943, the street now mirrors all the problems, sufferings and frustrations of the desperate housing situation afflicting Britain's major cities... the programme highlights a grave social scandal, revealing the exasperation of the remaining tenants who have seen their old neighbours dwindle and now wait endlessly for the relief of rehousing. The demolition men hover, but it can be five years before they can raze to the ground a vacated dwelling, and a new wave of occupants can move in with surprising speed. The programme... discovers a bureaucracy whose efficiency would shame many a council... Even more remarkable are the revelations... of how fertile an area this is for profiteers and con-men who exploit the misery and swindle the authorities on an amazing scale. Favourable reviews and articles in the Evening Standard and Daily Telegraph.

Sources

<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/7812?view=synopsis>
Squatting: The Real Story p90
http://www.itnsource.com/fr/shotlist/ITVProgs/1977/03/08/Y06860001/?s=*

Case Study 30: GLC Homesteading

Location	Greater London, UK	Keywords	public like, state like, community reclaim, inadequate housing
Date	1977		
Current?	No		
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues	KM1
For public use?	No		

Description

Under this scheme, people could buy derelict houses on a normal mortgage basis, but had the first three years interest waived and were supposed to spend the money saved on restoring the property. The high cost of property meant that the scheme had limited effect, but 15,000 people responded to initial adverts, suggesting that self-build and restoration of existing properties were desirable alternatives for many Londoners.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p90
http://books.google.com/books/about/Rescuing_Old_Houses.html?id=29mPPQAACAAJ

Case Study 31: Sumner House

Location LB Tower Hamlets, UK
Date 1974
Current? No
Message Negative
For public use? No

Keywords
state fail, inadequate housing, co-ops and has

Campaign Issues
KM1, EC1, EC2, MI4



Description

A story (that ends badly!) of squatters 'going legit' through establishing co-operatives and other housing structures. 50 families via the Committee for the Faceless Homeless squatted Sumner House in LB Tower Hamlets and formed the Sumner House Co-op. Their original aims to rehabilitate Sumner House were frustrated by an eviction in 1976 but they finally formed the Poplar West Housing Co-operative. This was finally wound up by the Housing Corporation for alleged financial irregularities. Sumner House was influential in its early days as a pioneer of the wider co-operatives for squatters movement.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p90

Case Study 32: Seymour Buildings

Location LB Westminster, UK
Date 1975-
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
co-ops and has

Campaign Issues
KM1, EC1



Description

Seymour Buildings (or the Seymour Co-op) is known as the first successful translation from squat to co-op in the UK, and is fully documented in 'Squatting: The Real Story'. Many former-squatters followed suit.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p90, 150-155

Case Study 33: Winchester Road and Mews

Location	LB Camden, UK	Keywords	state fail, empty homes, bad mapping
Date	1977-79		
Current?	No		
Message	Negative	Campaign Issues	KM1, EC1, EC2, EC3, EC9
For public use?	Yes		

Description

A case study of a labour borough ignoring squatter communities in favour of its own unrealistic housing plans. "A thriving community of squatters and licensees in Winchester Road and Winchester Mews in Labour-controlled Camden met with little success. By 1977, over 70 people were squatting there, many of whom had put considerable energy into renovating the derelict buildings. The community spawned several craft workshops, youth organisations, and a wholefood café employing school leavers from the local youth club. A market sprang up on a vacant site and was used by people from all over the borough. Festivals were regularly organised. Yet Camden remained intent on its redevelopment plans, describing the site in its 1977 planning report, 'A Plan for Camden', as 'largely vacant, temporary.'" (Squatting: The Real Story). Squatters were evicted, houses turned into residential units and the mews were demolished. Plans for building new housing fell through and the council began negotiating with hotel developers. The site appears now to be developer-led housing.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p91, 178-9

Case Study 34: Frestonia

Location	Hammersmith, UK	Keywords	co-ops and has, anti-speculator, official reaction, community reclaim
Date	1977		
Current?	No		
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues	KM1, KM3, MI3
For public use?	No		



Description

120 squatters in GLC property in Freston Road made a unilateral declaration of independence from Great Britain and declared a 'Free Independent Republic of Frestonia'. 'Full membership of the United Nations and the EEC was applied for, and a telegram sent to the Queen.' The move came about after the GLC offered them tenancies but in a scattered way that would have broken up an existing community. The stunt garnered worldwide media coverage, most of it positive. A housing co-op was formed. The site was handed over to the Notting Hill Housing Trust and new homes were built- it appeared that many of the squatters stayed in the new scheme but their proposals to retain some of the old buildings and communal gardens were apparently ignored. It is not at present known if the squatters of Frestonia did remain after the site handover.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p91-94

(image via wikipedia)

Case Study 35: Lewisham Family Self Help

Location LB Lewisham, UK
Date 1969-77
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
co-ops and has, state like, official reaction,
community reclaim

Campaign Issues
KM1, KM2, EC3, MI3

Description

An example of relatively enlightened local authority practice on the part of the London Borough of Lewisham. 'Squatting: The Real Story': 'According to a paper by the Assistant Borough Housing Officer, when unlicensed squatting did occur, "no action is taken... until the properties are required for redevelopment or there is evidence of serious nuisance or annoyance to adjoining residents." The paper readily acknowledged that squatting had played a vital role in bringing the Council's attention to the need to provide housing to people other than nuclear families.' Lewisham Family Self-help Housing Association (formerly the Family Squatting Association) provided homes for 79 families at the time, and LB Lewisham were at this time also pioneers of the Walter Sefal self-build method, notably at Walter's Way, Lewisham, which saw the construction of self-build homes on local authority land which had proven impossible to develop by conventional methods.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p94

Case Study 36: Ideal Squat

Location London, UK
Date 1979
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? No

Keywords
public like, state like, good media

Campaign Issues
KM1, MI3

Description

Housing Action and the London Tenants Organisation's GLC group joined together with trade unionists to spectacularly occupy the GLC showhouse at the Daily Mail Ideal Home Exhibition, hanging a banner on the parapet which read 'Ideal Homes for All'. 'Squatting: The Real Story' describes this event as 'one of the liveliest pieces of protest theatre ever enacted over a housing issue,' and the story continues to provide evidence that squatters can link up with other groups in order to be better heard.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p96

Case Study 37: Ferry Lane Estate

Location Tottenham, UK
Date Late 1970's
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? No

Keywords
public like, state like, empty homes

Campaign Issues
KM1, MI3



Description

Housing Action, who had staged the Ideal Home occupation documented in Case Study 36, subsequently occupied a whole block of GLC flats on the Ferry Lane Estate in Tottenham, flats which had been empty for two years in preparation for their sale to private buyers. The occupation was supported by the local tenants association, the Labour MP and the Liberal parliamentary candidate for the area. Security guards paid to defend the properties against squatters also expressed sympathy for the occupation's message.

Sources

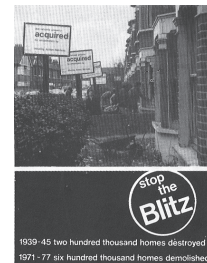
Squatting: The Real Story p96-8
Image via Wikipedia

Case Study 38: Stop the Blitz, Redbridge

Location LB Redbridge, UK
Date 1978-9
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
state fail, community reclaim, public like,
empty homes

Campaign Issues
KM1, EC1, EC9, MI3



Description

The Stop the Blitz Campaign occupied and repaired 50 empty homes in three streets in the LB Redbridge at the end of 1978- the same site as the London Squatters Campaign battles described in Case Study 65. In the ten intervening years, council policy had little changed and it continued to gut houses unnecessarily. 'Squatting: The Real Story': 'To cover up its wanton waste of resources, the Council consistently lied to the electorate, presented false figures to official surveys about empty property and harassed and blackmailed residents. So eager was it in pursuing its goals that on one occasion council workmen by mistake gutted a privately-owned house and boarded it up, preventing the owner from getting in.' The campaign did not last long but contributed to a rise in interest nationwide in the notion of squatting, as noted by LB Islington and elsewhere.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p98

Case Study 39: Rare Private PIO

Location	Unknown UK, UK	Keywords	protected intending occupier
Date	2009-10		
Current?	Yes		
Message	Negative	Campaign Issues	EC8, EC11
For public use?	No		

Description

A privately-owned squat in the London Borough of Islington. The squatters never had any contact with the owners. The letting agency who allegedly signed the tenancy were 'des res' letting agents. The 'local authority and landlord services (LALS) were also involved (ie sending dodgy letters to the squatters). Sections 7 and 12a criminal law act 1977 (amended by s73 criminal justice and public order act 1994) protect displaced residential occupiers and protected intending occupiers. PIO procedure is already regularly abused by councils and social housing providers because it is a quick and easy way of evicting squatters without going through the court process; leave now or risk arrest. should the law change to make trespass a criminal matter the scope for abuse would be limitless. Most PIOs are public, this is a rare example of a privately-owned PIO. It was not successful and the place remains squatted.

Sources

<https://we.riseup.net/save-squat-rights+research/case-studies>

Case Study 40: Kings Crescent Estate

Location	LB Hackney, UK	Keywords	state fail, inadequate housing, empty homes, good media, gutting
Date	2009-10		
Current?	Yes		
Message	Negative	Campaign Issues	KM1, EC1, EC4
For public use?	Yes		



Description

The Kings Crescent Estate in the Green Lanes area is owned by Hackney Council and managed by Hackney Homes. 8 of the flats were squatted in November 2009. Security with alsations arrived within hours, and a formal eviction happened in December 2009 under a 'Anti-social Behaviour Closure Order' closure order- usually reserved for crack dens, which functioned like an injunction against persons unknown. This is an example of the way homeless people are already criminalised under existing laws. In this case, there was no drug activity there and one family were there with a newborn baby having been denied accommodation by the council. During the eviction, workmen smashed fixtures in the flats and then cut the water piping in empty flats above, wrecking the electrics in the flats below and rendering the building unusable- whilst the squatters were still there, putting lives at risk. The 'Hackney Heckler' of Feb/March 2010 reported on the issue.

Sources

<http://www.hackneysolidarity.info/latest-news/hackney-heckler-no-2-now-out>
image via panoramio <http://www.panoramio.com/photo/5638765>

Case Study 41: Tenancy Fraud Victim

Location	Unknown UK, UK	Keywords	
Date	2010		court fail, bad landlord, state fail
Current?	Yes		
Message	Negative	Campaign Issues	
For public use?	Yes		EC8

Description

This is one example among many. If the law were changed, such cases would risk arrest and criminalisation. 'Barry' signed a tenancy, paid a deposit and rent for a flat. He believed it was owned by a private landlord who had given him a tenancy agreement. About a month later he was visited by the council who informed him that he was trespassing, though he produced his contract. The council stated that the property belonged to them and that he was an 'illegal' subtenant and would be taken to court if he did not leave immediately. Having paid substantial rent to live in the flat, Barry refused to go, and twice visited the council to try to negotiate. He could not get in touch with his "landlord". The council claimed for possession of the property which was against 'persons unknown' (ie trespassers). Such claims are only supposed to be land claims. However this particular council added a claim for mesne profits on top. There are strict rules about such charges and claimants certainly shouldn't get them in most claims. However, possession was granted and the defendant ordered to pay not only claimant's costs but also £1,000+ in mesne profits.

Sources

<https://we.riseup.net/save-squat-rights+research/case-studies>

Case Study 42: North Bradford

Location	Bradford, UK	Keywords	
Date	2009		owner like, empty homes
Current?	Yes		
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues	
For public use?	Yes		KM1, EC1, EC2, EC3, MI4

Description

A property in north Bradford, was empty for 10 years before it was squatted. Water was leaking through the roof, all the windows in the property were smashed, there was no running water and the house and garden were filled with rubbish. The owner of the building, which is part of a terrace, owned one other house that they lived in, and did not have the time or resources to make the former property rentable. It was squatted in 2009. The squatters refitted all the windows, redecorated inside, fixed the plumbing and installed a shower, put a Velux window in the roof, and cleaned up the garden. The squatters reached an agreement with the owner and are now paying a token rent to look after the property – it is now providing a home for four people. All the refurbishment work was done before the agreement was made. Of course in this case the squatters and the owner achieved a mutually beneficial arrangement that would not have come about without the initial initiative of the squatters.

Sources

<https://we.riseup.net/save-squat-rights+research/case-studies>

Case Study 43: White Abbey Road

Location Bradford, UK
Date Late 2000's
Current? Yes
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
owner like, empty homes, homelessness, co-ops and has

Campaign Issues
KM1, EC1, EC2, EC3, EC5



Description

An example of positive tolerance on the part of a housing association. 31 White Abbey Road is owned by a housing association. The building was empty for a year and half, in very poor condition and in an area in which it was in danger of becoming used for purposes of drug use or prostitution. It provided accommodation for 5 people over four years – these occupants established good relations with the neighbours, started a vegetable garden and kept the house in reasonable repair. For some of the four years they hosted a weekly community cafe in the house. Several of the squatters had come directly from sleeping rough in the streets. It is to be noted that the housing association allowed the property to be squatted for a very long length of time, likely because there had been no problems and they had not decided what to with the property. Although they did eventually take the occupants to court, relations were very friendly and this seemed to be something of a formality on the housing association's part.

Sources

<https://we.riseup.net/save-squat-rights+research/case-studies>

Image via Google Streetview

Case Study 44: Bradford Clergy House

Location Bradford, UK
Date Mid 2000's
Current? Yes
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
empty homes, community reclaim, public like

Campaign Issues
KM1, KM2, EC1, EC2, EC3, MI3



Description

The Clergy House near Bradford Cathedral was a large semi-derelict church property, Grade II listed and declared unfit for inhabitation by the church in 2004. It was squatted for 4 months, and it provided accommodation for a large number of vulnerable people. A skate ramp was built inside that was used by the larger community. It was evicted after 4 months citing insurance reasons. Six years later it is still empty and has now been heavily vandalised.

Sources

<https://we.riseup.net/save-squat-rights+research/case-studies>

Image via callsarchitecture.co.uk

Case Study 45: St. John's Nursery

Location LB Hackney, UK
Date 2011
Current? Yes
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
 public like, community reclaim, non-residential, good media, state fail

Campaign Issues
 EC1, EC2, EC3, MI3



Description

The Hackney Gazette reports on a Hackney GP and rector of a neighbouring church backing squatters fighting eviction: 'Jonathon Tomlinson, who works at the Lawson practice in Nuttall Street, said... attempts this week to remove his next-door neighbours were immoral. The squatters have been living in... St John's Nursery... for a month. The building has been sitting empty after the closure of the nursery amid angry protest in 2002 and then St John's Pupil Referral Unit on the site a year ago. It is now being considered for demolition. The council, which is the current landlord, took legal action on Tuesday (July 19) to evict the occupiers... But father-of-two Jonathon, 39, has backed the group... "When our neighbours started squatting last month, they introduced themselves to us and invited us around to see what they were doing with the building and grounds. We were delighted to see that they are taking care of where they are living and considerate of us, their next-door neighbours. For the first time since we have been living here, we have the security of neighbours we can trust." ...His appeal has been backed by Rev Rob Wickham, rector of St John's Church.

Sources

http://www.hackneygazette.co.uk/news/hackney_gp_backs_squatters_fighting_eviction_from_abandoned_school_1_972335

Case Study 46: Dale Farm Bailiffs

Location Basildon, UK
Date Yes
Current? Yes
Message Negative
For public use? Yes

Keywords
 state fail, bailiffs,

Campaign Issues
 KM5, MI2



Description

This case study provides much evidence in relation to 'enforcers' such as Constant and Co who make massive profits out of traveller and squatter evictions. Obviously this is only one case study among many that could be drawn out of the continuing Dale Farm situation. Via Corporatewatch: 'Constant & Co. said, in July, that it expected to win the £2 million contract, which would culminate in the biggest eviction operation in modern British history... Constant & Co. describes itself as "the most experienced" and "busiest" company in the country in recovering possession of land from "unwanted trespassers." Through such brutal evictions as the infamous Meadowlands and Twin Oaks evictions in 2004, Constant & Co. has gained itself a reputation as the country's most notorious anti-traveller bailiff firm.' The original Corporatewatch article lists countless inappropriate activities by Constant and Co and other companies including: 'Alpha Collections (based in Crawley), Safeguard Bailiff Services (Leicester), Secure Site UK (Worthing), Maltaward (West Sussex), Uniqwin (Warrington), M.S. Webb and Co. (Surrey) and UK Bailiff Company (Kent). It is worth noting that almost none of these companies is a member of the Enforcement Services Association.'

Sources

<http://www.corporatewatch.org/?lid=3454>
 Image via The Guardian website

Case Study 47: The Park Lodge Hotel

Location Tyne and Wear, UK
Date 1989
Current? No
Message Negative
For public use? Yes

Keywords
state fail, empty homes, bad money, bad media, good media

Campaign Issues
KM1, KM2, KM5, EC1, EC9

Description

'In summer 1989 the Daily Mail ran a story about Ellen Cunningham and her family, who... was reported to be "settling down with her six children for their 59th night in the Park Lodge Hotel, Tyne and Wear, as the bill for bed and breakfast alone rose to £6,785". Barred by government edict from the cheaper option of building new homes, councils were instead compelled to put up families in unsuitable... but vastly more expensive private hotels. The waste of public money and the strains it imposed on the families were the subject of much media attention... Ellen Cunningham had been rehoused in an £805 per week hotel suite by the same council that had evicted her because she owed £250 in rent arrears.' The article portrayed Mrs Cunningham as a 'scrounger' rather than attacking the council for evicting her over such a small and unsustainable sum. The story had been stored up to coincide with the government's announcement that same day of a new plan to cut benefits to people who "make themselves homeless" by moving away from their home area.'

Sources

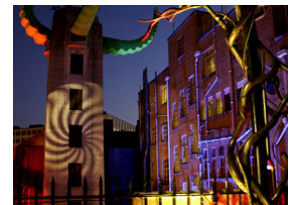
<http://www.steveplatt.net/squatting/hometruths.htm>

Case Study 48: ArtSpace LifeSpace

Location London, Bristol, UK
Date 1992-Present
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
state like

Campaign Issues
EC2, EC3, MI4



Description

ArtSpace LifeSpace is a highly regarded arts organisation based in Bristol that grew out of the squatter movement and who made a name for occupying vacant property for creative purposes. This first big scale creation centre project was opened by Sir Hugh Casson the ex-head of the Royal Academy of Arts in April 1992. Bridge House was given to ArtSpace Lifespace by Kensington Housing Trust after the success of the Exposure gallery in the Portobello market.

Sources

<http://www.artspacelifospace.com/index.php?/about/history/>
<http://www.homelessbob.org.uk/squatting.htm>

Case Study 49: 1-9 Huntley Street

Location London, UK
Date 1977-8
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
state fail, good media, empty homes

Campaign Issues
EC1, MI4



Description

Huntley Street was a famous central London squat which was once the home of the London Squatters Union. They were evicted in 1978 having occupied the former police flats for 18 months, in an eviction regarded as 'scandalous' by the Camden New Journal of the time. The then-chair of Camden's housing committee, a certain Ken Livingstone, saw to it that all the squatters were rehoused by the council. In 2003 the same newspaper reported on a 25-year reunion of the original squatters during which they visited Huntley Street to find the flats again empty. Nurses accommodation after the squat was closed down, the owner, UCL hospitals, originally tried to sell to a private developer, then to a housing association. English Partnerships bought the site in 2004, proposing to include some affordable housing.

Sources

http://www.camdennewjournal.co.uk/archive/n210803_5.htm

Case Study 50: Harry Hallowes

Location Hampstead, London, UK
Date 1987-Present
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
good media

Campaign Issues
EC9, MI3



Description

Rare contemporary Daily Mail story which tacitly approves of Harry Hallowes gaining title deeds to his squat in the grounds of Athlone House, Hampstead. 'Home for Harry Hallowes is a rickety shack surrounded by junk. Yet the 70-year-old Irish tramp is the unlikeliest of property millionaires. He has become the proud owner of a prime plot of land on the edge of Hampstead Heath ... Because he has lived there longer than the 12 years required by law, he has been declared the legal owner by the Land Registry. The plot... has been Mr Hallowes's home since 1986. If it were sold with permission for housing, ... it would fetch more than £2million. [Harry:] "I don't much care what happens to the land after I'm gone as long as they keep the wildlife... If I write a will I will leave the land to the Royal Family. They are the last bastion of refinement and sophistication so they'd know what to do with it. But there are a lot of greedy people behind the scenes who would love to get their hands on this." Over the years he has become a well-known figure in the community.'

Sources

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-457222/Tramp-given-2m-Hampstead-Heath-plot-squatting-land-20-years.html>

Image via the Daily Mail

Case Study 51: Birmingham Nursery

Location Birmingham, UK
Date 2004-5
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
public like, state like, community reclaim,
official reaction, state fail

Campaign Issues
EC2, EC3, MI3, MI4

Description

A case of a squat causing a council rethinking bringing a building back to use after a squatter campaign. Squatters left voluntarily but were disappointed not to be allowed to continue the programmes they had established. Via Schneus: 'After 6 months squatting an abandoned children's nursery in Birmingham, the council has agreed to squatters' demands that the building be returned to local community use. The former council nursery had been boarded up and deserted for two years before the Nursery Social Centre Collective took it over in August. They have been running it as a community centre with fair-trade café, meeting place for workshops, cultural events, housing for homeless people, and a community garden. The collective resisted three evictions successfully, dressed in santa suits for the last one, and won over the support of the local community, media, and even judges in the court case said 'they were doing a good job'. They have voluntarily agreed to move on as Birmingham City Council have agreed that the RITE project, which works with young people excluded from the education system, will take over the building.'

Sources

<http://www.wussu.com/squatting/s0503111.htm>

Case Study 52: Bristol North Swimming Pool

Location Bristol, UK
Date 2006
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
community reclaim, public like

Campaign Issues
MI3, MI5



Description

Local activists resorting to a squatting action to protest at the closure of a Bristol swimming pool. Via Schneus: 'For several years, locals have been campaigning against the closure of their swimming pool, Bristol North Pool. The issue was one of huge local concern: a petition with over 6000 signatures was presented to the council, and there was even a Save Bristol North Pool Party candidate in local elections. Nonetheless, in October last year, the council closed it. The huge building, which is grade II listed, and in a prime location, was left standing empty to fall derelict. Enquiries about its future to the council were met with the response that 'discussions have not yet taken place'. An action group came together and planned an occupation of the building. More people got involved, and came up with the idea of a community space. Finally, late last Friday night, eleven members of our group entered the pool through an open window. We stayed there overnight a public protest hit the streets outside the next morning. Eventually all the protesters were evicted. Nonetheless, our efforts this weekend were far from wasted. We gained an unbelievable level of community support.'

Sources

<http://www.wussu.com/squatting/s0601272.htm>

Image via <http://www.flickr.com/photos/brizzlebornandbred/4734800453/>

Case Study 53: Topple the Tyrants



Location	Hampstead, London, UK	Keywords	good media, public like
Date	2011		
Current?	Yes		
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues	MI3, MI5
For public use?	No		

Description

From 'The Guardian': 'It may be furnished, according to its new occupants, just as you would expect "when you have spent £10m of blood money on a house", but judging by the appearance mid-afternoon of a masked man in camouflage gear carrying two shopping bags from Budgens, no one had thought to fill the fridge. Perhaps when occupying the multimillion-pound London mansion of a tyrant's son, food is some way down the list of priorities. More pressing tasks, for the small group of protesters who have moved into Saif al-Islam Gaddafi's redbrick Hampstead home, were affixing banners to the roof reading "Revolution" and "Out of Libya, out of London", and summoning the press, to whom they declared their actions had been taken "in solidarity with the people of Libya, the people of Cairo, the people of Saudi Arabia". Spokesman Montgomery Jones told the Guardian that the group, called Topple the Tyrants, had been formed in response to the events of the Arab spring; this was their first action. How many of them were there? "We're not doing numbers." The property, the protesters said, was managed by Gaddafi through a holding company registered in the British Cayman Islands. They said they had been alerted anonymously to the address.'

Sources

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/mar/09/libya-muammar-gaddafi>
<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/house-and-home/property/home-truths-squatting-is-the-perfect-example-of-the-big-society-2288870.html>

Case Study 54: 10 years in local community

Location	UK, UK	Keywords	empty homes, state fail
Date	1987-1997		
Current?	No		
Message	Positive	Campaign Issues	KM1, KM2, EC1
For public use?	Yes		

Description

A personal testimony: 'I became a squatter in 1987, after the breakdown of my marriage, when my local council could only offer me b&b accomodation far away from my local community. I had a three year old daughter and work commitments, and could not have lived in such conditions without damage to my family and profession. I had been sleeping on friends' floors for months, and found a house that had been empty for many years, belonging to a local authority, in poor condition but habitable, and decided to move in... We lived there happily for nearly ten years, establishing strong bonds in the neighbourhood. It took a lot of work... to bring our home into good condition... I was devastated when my local council began legal proceedings to evict us... I fought the case through the courts and lost, despite having been given a verbal assurance that we could stay as long as the property was not needed. During the court hearing I was assured that the house would not be left empty. Sixteen years later it is unoccupied and ... I had to move away from the borough.'

Sources

<https://we.riseup.net/save-squat-rights+research/case-studies>

Case Study 55: Julia High

Location London, UK
Date 2011
Current? No
Message Negative
For public use? Yes

Keywords
 bad media, bad police (??bad landlord)

Campaign Issues
 EC4, EC8, EC9, EC10



Description

Suspiciously well-timed news story, reported widely, about squatters occupying Julia High's house whilst she was away. BBC: 'A woman who left her home in Leytonstone, east London, to enjoy a weekend away with friends returned to find squatters living there. Julia High says she found them sitting around her kitchen table, drinking her wine and wearing her clothes. She has now had them removed, but said her home and many of her possessions are ruined.' Squash Research have found out that Julia High had actually been out of the country for 'an extended period of time' as was therefore not counted as a DRO, and have tried to find out why the 'squatters' were not taken in for criminal offences. The suspicion is that MigrantWatch have leaked this story to the media, the various reports in which provide a various variations on the main story, one of which that she Julia High, an immigration officer, went to the Proms concerts and came back to find her home squatted by 'romanian gipsy squatters'. This is much more likely a dodgy tenancy story, if we are to believe it.

Sources

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-14564949>

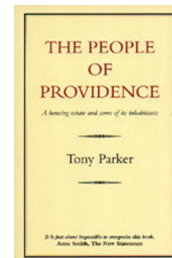
Image via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/8707490/Gang-of-Romanian-gipsy-squatters-targeted-several-houses.html>

Case Study 56: People of Providence

Location Kennington, London, UK
Date late 70's
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
 public like, official reaction, empty homes, state like

Campaign Issues
 KM1, KM4, EC2, MI3, MI4



Description

Though names were changed, this is an extraordinary oral history of the Brandon estate in Camberwell, and also includes interviews with squatters in what can only be the St Agnes Place squat (CS26) . On page 162-3 a health worker describes how the GLC was (c1983) aware of squatters in its premises and, to an extent, tolerated this. Pages 217-243 are interviews with squatters in 'Absalom Road' – a pseudonym for St. Agnes Place. On pages 308-9 the district Housing Manager describes squatters on the estate: "It seems ridiculous to have habitable property standing vacant, and anyway we couldn't maintain it – maintain the situation I mean – without people going on."

Sources

Tony Parker: The People of Providence (1983)

Case Study 57: Hannele Hiltunen

Location London, UK
Date 2011
Current? Yes
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
 good media, squatter ingenuity

Campaign Issues
 EC1



Description

Originally from Finland, Hiltunen has been squatting in Balham Bowling Green Clubhouse since graduating from Roehampton University in 2009. "I moved into the clubhouse in July 2009, so I've been there nearly two years. I live with Jada, who's a building-site labourer; Richard, who's a carpenter; and Emma, an independent film-maker. I'm kind of enjoying the free life. My main activity is squatting – it takes up a surprising amount of time – but I am looking for work." "We have no electricity and when our water was cut off in October, it raised a lot of concern as to how we could deal with the situation. We discovered we could collect rainwater from the roof to wash in and buy bottled for drinking and cooking. The fireplace only warms up so much of the room, which makes sleeping very difficult. The neighbours are quite friendly; the guy who lives on the corner here used to be a squatter himself." "I'm very happy here. I plan to stay indefinitely. But with squatting there is always a chance of getting evicted. I understand that a successful planning application takes eight weeks to clear, so you still have two months to move. I think they are putting in another application this year, so this could be our last summer."

Sources

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/house-and-home/property/home-truths-squatting-is-the-perfect-example-of-the-big-society-2288870.html>

Case Study 58: Peter Nahum

Location London, UK
Date 2010-1
Current? Yes
Message Positive/Negative
For public use? No

Keywords
 good media, mutual understanding

Campaign Issues
 EC5



Description

An art dealer, Nahum bought a townhouse in Bloomsbury last summer, which he is still renovating. It was occupied by the Really Free School for three weeks in January. "We were lucky with the squatters we got. They were essentially nice, middle-class kids, who would go and wash at friends' flats nearby. But they were completely insensitive to anybody else's time, values or problems. They cost me a lot of money, and I had to spend three weeks having coffee with them, persuading them to leave. Luckily I had the time to do it. And they do quite interesting things. But why have a free school in central London? Why not go to the poorer districts if you want to educate people? Their claims that they're doing it as property prices are too high is nonsense. They wouldn't be able to afford a property even if it was 57p. They squat because it's fun. One of their proverbs on the walls said, 'Unemployment for all (not just the rich)'. Well, if nobody did any work, who would support them? These people live off a system. If there wasn't a system, what would they live off? They'd have to get their hands dirty like everybody else. Just as I did for 40 years, which enabled me to save the money to buy an incredibly beautiful house."

Sources

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/house-and-home/property/home-truths-squatting-is-the-perfect-example-of-the-big-society-2288870.html>

Case Study 59: Catherine Brogan

Location London, UK
Date 2011
Current? Yes
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
 good media

Campaign Issues
 KM1, EC1, EC2, EC3, MI4



Description

A poet originally from Omagh, Northern Ireland, Brogan has squatted in London for more than three years. Squatting is the perfect example of the Big Society. It's about people taking matters into their own hands, looking after their own, and getting together in groups and putting on events that are of benefit to the whole community. They're not relying on the state to survive. In fact, they're saving the Government money by not signing on and claiming housing benefit. People leave properties empty because to them it's money in the bank. It's why rents are so high in London. Think how hard it is to get a flat. The demand is so great that you have to just take whatever you can get. Empty properties drive up the prices for everybody else. Squatting can help regenerate an area. Look at Dalston [in east London]: it used to be the dodgiest place and nobody would want to live there. Then people started squatting and it became cool. The same happened with Shoreditch. If people aren't living in an empty building, it's more likely to be vandalised. Whereas if you have squatters in, they're likely to secure it. A lot of squatters work. They have their own lives but just want to live somewhere, they just need a house.'

Sources

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/house-and-home/property/home-truths-squatting-is-the-perfect-example-of-the-big-society-2288870.html>

Case Study 60: Charlie Billingham

Location London, UK
Date 2008-10
Current? Yes
Message Positive
For public use? No

Keywords
 good media, protection by occupation

Campaign Issues
 MI1



Description

A Royal Academy student, Billingham lived in a privately rented office in Walthamstow at a knock-down rate for two years, before moving out in 2010. A group of businessmen had taken out a long lease on this office building but weren't using it, so they advertised it on Gumtree at a knock-down rate. We were on the second floor above a gym and a college. Our presence was a benefit for them, as they'd had squatter problems before. It ended up being cheaper than renting a flat or house, but we had the space, and didn't have to pay council tax, electricity or gas bills. The council aren't very happy about people living in non-residential spaces, partly because of the council tax, and also they worry about fire safety. If the fire brigade don't think there's anyone sleeping there, it's classed as a different kind of risk. It's not that we were opposed to paying council tax, we just weren't asked to. There was an art studio at the end and quite a lot of people worked in theatre, and used the main room as a rehearsal space. We built a cinema by painting a screen, putting in a projector and a curtain. Then we got pallets and made tiers with sofas up towards the back. It was a lot of fun, there was a lot of space, and we had some big parties."

Sources

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/house-and-home/property/home-truths-squatting-is-the-perfect-example-of-the-big-society-2288870.html>

Case Study 61: Free Hetherington

Location Glasgow, UK
Date 2011
Current? Yes
Message Positive/Negative
For public use? Yes

Keywords
 good media, community reclaim, protest, state like

Campaign Issues
 MI3, MI5



Description

The Independent: A student and prominent campaigner at the University of Glasgow, Connelly is one of several activists who have occupied the recently closed Hetherington Research Club for 100 days, in protest against the education cuts being imposed by the Government. She has been arrested twice and charged with one count of obstruction. An attempted eviction happened on the 50th day, and Connelly was pushed down a fire escape, sustaining concussion. After this, an e-mail from management giving the occupied temporary permission was sent, and Scotland's First Minister has openly condemned the University's reaction.

Sources

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/house-and-home/property/home-truths-squatting-is-the-perfect-example-of-the-big-society-2288870.html>

Case Study 62: Connan Gupta

Location London, UK
Date 2010
Current? Yes
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
 bad media, bad policy

Campaign Issues
 EC4, EC9, EC10



Description

From 'Nearly Legal': 'A hotelier moved out of his home for a week [actually two years] while it was being renovated and, coming back, found that it was occupied by squatters. He is now unable to access his own home and his possessions. First, it seems to me that the hotelier is a DRO, and can certainly use force to enter his own home and reasonable force to remove the trespassers. Even if he is not, he (with solicitors instructed according to the report) can quickly produce evidence that he is a "protected intending occupier", permitting him the same rights as a displaced residential occupier. The police are quoted as saying it was a "civil issue" — showing that the Metropolitan Police are as clueless about laws that protect freeholders as they are about those that protect tenants from unlawful eviction. Of course if the displaced Mr Gupta is able to demonstrate his status as either a DRO or a PIO then the squatters are committing a criminal offence and the Police could arrest them for it.' Two days after the ES story, Gupta via local MP Tessa Jowell persuaded police (Herne Hill Safer Neighbourhoods and CID) to evict under threat of arrest, which could only be for DRO. Deliberately misrepresented in various media, notably the BBC.

Sources

<http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/standard/article-23889633-i-moved-out-for-decorators-and-squatters-took-over-my-house.do>
<http://nearlylegal.co.uk/blog/2010/10/squatters-make-good-stories/>

Case Study 63: Vigilante Movement

Location UK, UK
Date 1945
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
 public like, good media

Campaign Issues
 KM1, KM2, EC1, MI3, MI4, Mi5



Description

Mass support for post-war squatting movement. Daily Mail: “robust common sense” ability “to take matters quietly but firmly into their own hands [...] a refreshing example of what ordinary people can do when they put their minds to it”. (Daily Mail 10.08.1946)

Sources

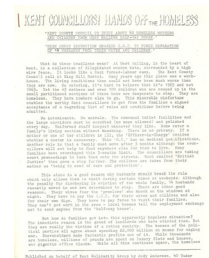
Bailey: The Squatters p21-24
 Ward: Cotters and Squatters
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2011/jul/13/criminalise-squatting-targets-gypsies>

Case Study 64: King Hill

Location Kent, UK
Date 1965-6
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
 public like, community reclaim, inadequate housing, state fail

Campaign Issues
 KM1, KM2, MI3, MI4



Description

Epic, well supported fight against brutally unfair rules and conditions in King Hill Hostel, West Malling - and the first of many.

Sources

Bailey: The Squatters p25-27
<http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/21cc/counterculture/livingdemonstration/livingdemonstration.html>
 Hinton: Self-help and Socialism (History Workshop Journal)

Case Study 65: London Squatters Campaign



Location London, UK
Date 1968
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
 public like, state fail, gutting, anti-speculator, inadequate housing, good media

Campaign Issues
 KM1, EC1, MI3

Description

Influential, public-supported campaign in Redbridge. Also a good story for how far a council can go.

Sources

Bailey: The Squatters
<http://www.steveplatt.net/squatting/realstory1.htm>
<http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/21cc/counterculture/livingdemonstration/livingdemonstration.html>

Case Study 66: Whitechapel



Location Pelham Buildings, Nelson St, Varden St: LB Tower Hamlets, UK
Date 1973-80
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
 vulnerable people, inadequate housing

Campaign Issues
 KM1, KM2, EC1, EC2, EC3, MI4

Description

Older housing stock on Myrdle Street and Parfett Street, Whitechapel, was some of the stock squatted by the Bengali Housing Action Group and Tower Hamlets Squatters Union- See also Case Studies 13 and 27. Such streets are now some of the only streets in the area to have been preserved from the 19th century and are important historical environments. They are also at the centre of a strong Bangladeshi community.

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p42 and Chapter 10

Case Study 67: Villa Road



Location LB Lambeth, UK
Date 1969-2005
Current? No
Message Negative
For public use? Yes

Keywords
state like, state fail, empty homes, community reclaim

Campaign Issues
KM1, EC2, EC3, MI3, MI4

Description

See also St. Agnes Place, Case Study 26, which is a related story. The area around Villa Road was intended by 1969 'The Brixton Plan' as a park and tower blocks. Over a complex story described in detail in 'Squatting: The Real Story', 'the change in relationship between Villa Road between 1974 and 1980 from a harsh anti-squatting policy to negotiations for a housing co-op could not have been more dramatic.' The existing housing stock subsequently provided homes for 1000 people more than the plan allowed for, 160 people formed a co-op and engaged an architect, twenty elegant 19th century houses were saved from demolition. 'Villa Road's real victory was to prove that plans are not inviolable, and that people can affect and be directly involved in planning processes that determine their living conditions.' All this only after half the street was destroyed by LB Lambeth teams, in a concession which learned from the trauma of St Agnes Place (26).

Sources

Squatting: The Real Story p142-149

Case Study 68: Bob Hughes MP

Location UK, UK
Date 1994
Current? No
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
state like, empty homes, community reclaim, good media

Campaign Issues
KM1, EC1, EC3, MI3

Description

Bob Hughes MP speaking on The London Programme in May 1989. "I want to help those responsible people who have put themselves into accommodation because they have seen that it is empty. I think it is fair to say that very deep in Conservative philosophy is that of self-help and if people are prepared to try to help themselves and if they see a property is empty and no one is using it and by moving in they are not going to hurt anyone, but they will protect and help their own family, surely we ought to encourage that ... you could argue they are perhaps more socially responsible in finding empty property and squatting in there and giving their family a home than putting them in bed & breakfast."

Sources

Squash documentation, 1994

Case Study 69: Lord Shipley

Location UK, UK
Date 2011
Current? Yes
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
vulnerable people, inadequate housing, good media

Campaign Issues
KM1, KM2, MI3



Description

Discussing the currently debated Localism Bill in the House of Lords, Liberal Democrat peer Lord Shipley said the following, which supports our claim that squatting is a critical last resort in the housing situation: 'Experience shows that single homeless people who approach their local authority for help are often given inadequate advice and assistance and can be left with no choice but to stay in overcrowded conditions or with friends or family, to squat or to sleep rough. One-third of single homeless people applying to their local authority did not even get to see a housing adviser, according to a report by Crisis earlier this year. Others may be given unhelpful advice, wrongly signposted, sent to hostels that are full or given written material that is not entirely helpful.'

Sources

<http://www.theyworkforyou.com/lords/?id=2011-09-05a.18.0&s=squat#g39.0>

Image via <http://www.parliament.uk/biographies/john-shipley/48343>

Case Study 70: Downham Road

Location LB Hackney, UK
Date 2011
Current? Yes
Message Positive
For public use? Yes

Keywords
protection by occupation, tenancy

Campaign Issues
MI1, MI5

Description

'I was an Ad-hoc guardian in a building owned by LB Hackney, Downham Rd. 12 people live there paying £270p/m. I've been a guardian for the past 16 months, having been at Downham Road for 2.5 months. In our first building we were inspected a couple of times in a year. We maintained the building really well, looked after the garden and made sure it was always occupied. When we moved to Downham Rd it was only a few days before Ad-hoc inspected at which time they had just moved 13 people into a building with little notice, so everyone's belongings were in the hallways. Since then we have been inspected constantly, on one occasion I returned home to find my electrical items had been dug out and PAT tested, without warning. Since then I have felt harassed, bullied and feel my human rights have been infringed. The nature of my work means I have lots of materials, tools and fabrics. This was singled out as a main problem when evicting us: 'The property was not being maintained to a high standard, and fell well short of Ad-Hoc's requirements.' Ad-Hoc's final reason for eviction was that the Mayor was personally disappointed with the condition of the property as were the other representatives present. I have been in touch with one of these who didn't

Sources

personal

Case Study : MANY MORE NEEDED - particularly

Location ,
Date
Current?
Message
For public use?

Keywords

Campaign Issues

Description

Sources

Case Study : neals yard shops in covent garden

Location ,
Date
Current?
Message
For public use?

Keywords

Campaign Issues

Description

Sources

Case Study : bonningtons cafe in vauxhall

Location ,
Date
Current?
Message
For public use?

Keywords

Campaign Issues

Description

Sources

Case Study : fitzrovia community centre

Location ,
Date
Current?
Message
For public use?

Keywords

Campaign Issues

Description

Sources

Case Study : islington community housing coop

Location ,
Date
Current?
Message
For public use?

Keywords

Campaign Issues

Description

Sources

Case Study : Hannah Barry Gallery

Location ,
Date
Current?
Message
For public use?

Keywords

Campaign Issues

Description

Sources

Case Study : 56a info shop

Location ,
Date
Current?
Message
For public use?

Keywords

Campaign Issues

Description

Sources

Case Study : 144 Piccadilly

Location ,
Date
Current?
Message
For public use?

Keywords

Campaign Issues

Description

Sources

Case Study : Kebele Community Co-op

Location Bristol,

Date

Current?

Message

For public use?

Keywords

Campaign Issues

Description

Sources