

Close Supervision Centres - Torture Units in the UK #2

A Brief Follow Up



July 2013 ¹

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Introduction

After publishing **Close Supervision Centres - Torture Units in the UK** in April 2012, we received correspondence from people that had been held in CSCs or who had known family or friends who are or have been. A year on and conditions in the CSCs are no better. This is a brief follow up to serve as an accompanying publication to the original, keeping information coming out about what is going on...

A pdf version of the original publication and this update are available to download at: **bristolabc.wordpress.com**

To start with is an article written specifically for this publication from John Bowden, someone who been speaking out against the abuses of the industrial prison complex for many years.

Next are letters coming out of the CSC and the wider prison system from Kevan Thakrar, Ray Gilbert and Ross Macpherson in chronological order, detailing the continuing abuses and repressive techniques.

Kevan has been working tirelessly from inside Woodhill CSC to get information out about the abuses perpetrated in this regime. Without him the original publication would never have occurred and his constant and continuing struggle against the prison complex is an inspiration to many. Check out his website: **justiceforkevan.com**.

We have just found out that Kevan has been moved to the 'Specialist Intervention Unit' at HMP Manchester. Conditions, he says, are even worse than in the CSC at Woodhill. He had hoped, or been led to believe, that this unit might have been a pathway out of the CSC system; but it turns out it is nothing more than an annex to the CSC system and he was sent there just to provide a respite from his legal battle against them. He says it's a 4-man unit, with no natural light or ventilation, where he spends 22 and a half hours locked up every day. Worse than Woodhill it seems this unit is part of the expansion of the CSC system.

Please feel free to write to any of the contributors to this publication, correspondence is very welcome - a list of addresses appears at the end.

Finally, Kyle Major wrote an article in 2011 entitled 'Harsh and Psychological Torture Units' about conditions in the CSC units and the abuses to which he was subjected, which we printed in the original publication. It is great to hear the news that Kyle has been released from prison. Similarly, Ross Macpherson, whose letters appear later, should now be out, without licence, and it seems he is finally back in contact with Kevan Thakrar.

Bristol ABC - July 2013
bristolabc.wordpress.com

Prisons – Most Unlawful Places On Earth

by John Bowden

The governments Legal Aid and Punishment Act 2012 which came into effect in April 2013 represents one of the Tories most serious and vicious attacks on the poorest and most disadvantaged groups in terms of their relationship with an increasingly more repressive state, removing as it does the right to publicly funded legal redress for the already most powerless in society.

The Act also targets prison litigation, which right-wing Justice Minister Chris Grayling claims is “unnecessary and frivolous”. In fact, the Act attacks what were previously legally enforceable basic rights for people in prison and now creates a total legal vacuum as far as those rights are concerned whilst encouraging the prison authorities to do exactly as it pleases with those in it’s custody. Andrew Neilson of the Howard League for Penal Reform has warned that “without prisoners being able to access legal aid we may see a collapse in justice in the very place where it should be paramount – within prison walls”.

In the hidden and secretive world of prison there exists something that resembles a totalitarian society where those who hold the keys have an almost omnipotent degree of power over those whom they guard and lock-up; inevitably that power is frequently and often grievously abused. If prisoners are denied the right and opportunity to seek legal redress if their basic human rights are abused then they will exist in a condition of civil death.

In some places within the prison system prisoners do indeed exist in such a condition, like those held in the infamous “Close Supervision Centres (CSCs)”. Created in 1998 to supposedly manage the most “difficult” and “challenging” prisoners, the CSCs very soon descended into places of brutality and extreme cruelty, especially for the disproportionate number of mentally ill prisoners who were dumped in them. Those operating and managing the CSCs were confident that by labelling those confined within them as “the worst of the worst” the courts would turn a

blind eye to their treatment, and there would be few if any amongst the prisoners themselves psychologically capable of legally challenging their treatment.

In the case of Kevan Thakrar they were seriously wrong. An extremely intelligent, articulate and determined litigious prisoner Kevan has throughout his time in prison constantly confronted and challenged the prison system's abuse of power both on his own behalf and on the behalf of other prisoners. It was therefore inevitable that sooner or later he would be consigned to a CSC, and in his case by an extremely traumatic and dramatic route.

During 2008 Kevan was in the mainstream prisoner population at Woodhill Prison in Milton Keynes where he repeatedly questioned and challenged abuses of power by prison staff. On the 31st May 2008 a gang of prison officers decided to teach him a very direct and painful lesson in compliance to their authority, and entering his cell they physically beat him up. The incident, apart from the physical injuries, would leave him with the much more permanent mental scar of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Following his beating up he immediately complained to the local Thames Valley Police, who quite simply refused to investigate his complaint. He then tried to use the internal prisons complaint procedure, a mechanism that in terms of investigating fairly staff misconduct is wholly flawed and useless, basically because prison staff themselves determine and decide the extent and outcome of the "investigation". Predictably his complaint was treated with contempt and basically suppressed.

At this point most prisoners usually give-up on trying to air a complaint through the official channels, which is exactly the real function and purpose of the prison complaints procedure, providing of course that prisoners will then learn the lesson that complaining about their treatment is useless. Kevan, however, pursued his complaint to the Prisons and Probation Service Ombudsman, a body supposedly independent of the prison system and originally created following a recommendation from the Wolf report and investigation into the causes of the Strangeways prison uprising in 1990. By now a thoroughly compromised and discredited body it failed even to conduct an appearance of an investigation into

his complaint. So he took his complaint further, to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, Iain Stewart M.P., complaining specifically about the abject failure of the Prisons and Probation Service Ombudsman to conduct any sort of investigation into staff brutality at Woodhill prison. On the 29 June 2012 the Parliamentary Ombudsman upheld Kevan's complaint, describing the behaviour of the Prisons and Probation Service Ombudsman in relation to Kevan's complaint as "maladministration" and an "injustice" to Kevan.

The behaviour of the prison officers at Woodhill jail, however, went uninvestigated and unpunished. Soon after his beating-up at Woodhill Kevan was "ghosted" around the prison system for a while before being transferred to Frankland prison in 2010. Frankland, a Maximum-Security jail near Durham, long had a reputation for staff violence and racism, and to whom Kevan, a mixed-race prisoner with a reputation of making complaints, would represent an absolute focus and target for their hatred. It's probable that Kevan was deliberately sent there for exactly that reason. Predictably, soon after his arrival at Frankland Kevan indeed became a target for racist abuse by staff there, which he confronted and complained about repeatedly. And as at Woodhill a gang of prison officers one day entered his cell with the intention of teaching him a painful lesson concerning who's in charge, but this time he fought back. Re-enforcements were summoned and he was "restrained", i.e. brutally worked-over. He was then criminally prosecuted for seriously assaulting the 3 prison officers who had initially entered his cell. At his subsequent trial at Newcastle Crown Court during October/November 2011 Kevan pleaded not guilty on the grounds that his behaviour when the prison officers entered his cell at Frankland was conditioned by what had taken place at Woodhill, the cause of his PTSD. Dramatically, a psychiatrist originally hired by the prosecution effectively changed sides during the trial and supported Kevan's PTSD defence. He was acquitted by the jury, to the fury of the Prison Officers Association who initially threatened to try and instigate a private prosecution against him, and then no doubt decided to leave it to their members at the cutting edge of repression to extract a more personal revenge. After his trial Kevan was transferred to the CSC at Woodhill prison, despite the Not Guilty verdict and evidence that his psychological condition required proper treatment as opposed to repression and brutality, something that intrinsically defined and

characterised the regime in the CSCs. There was never any doubt that Kevan was sent to the CSC at Woodhill to be detained indefinitely, and not gradually “assessed” and “progressed” back to the mainstream prison population, the official rational and justification for sending “difficult” prisoners to the CSCs.

A crude Pavlovian system of “Rewards and Punishments” exists in the CSCs, provided with the necessary legitimacy by prison system employed and corrupted behavioural psychologists, who in fact rarely visit the CSCs, even to assess the condition of the many mentally-ill prisoners confined there; they are employed simply to provide a legitimate cover for the systematic abuse of human rights carried out within the CSCs.

The various levels of “supervision” or their intensity (the basic level of “supervision” involves the prisoner being held in clinical isolation, or solitary confinement, and denied all human contact, apart from that with a gang of prison officers clad in full riot gear whenever the prisoner’s cell is unlocked for his one hour of statutory exercise, weather permitting, inside an outdoor cage) are determined by how the prisoner responds to the austere and cruel regime operating in the CSCs. Compliance is rewarded with gradual “progression” to less punishing levels of “supervision” and control, until one graduates back to mainstream prison life. Defiance, on the other hand, is punished by a prolonged stay within the most repressive conditions; Kevan, predictably, has remained unassessed within these conditions since he was transferred to the Woodhill CSC in March 2010. Most of the prisoners who share this “level of supervision” with Kevan suffer with severe mental illness, confirmed by the operational manager of the Woodhill CSC, Claire Hodson, and the noise level (screaming, door hammering, wrecking of cells) fills and permeates the self-enclosed unit 24 hours a day. Kevan has endured this hellish place for over two years by focusing on litigation and trying to hold the prison system legally accountable for his treatment and that of all prisoners. Justice Secretary Grayling’s “populist” claim that most if not all prison litigation cases were “frivolous” was a blatant lie and motivated equally by an intention to deny prisoners the right to legally challenge the sort of conditions that exist within the CSCs (“I am proposing to take legal aid away from prisoners who don’t like the prison they are in, or don’t like the cell they are in, or don’t like a part of the regime”) as it is

about the financial benefits to cutting the legal aid bill during a period of “austerity”.

Denied the weapon of legal challenge to the serious abuse of human rights in the CSC system, Kevan is now completely at the mercy of the system and his guards determination to extract full revenge for his acquittal at Newcastle Crown Court. It is unlikely that he will ever return to “normal location” in prison. In his response to the governments removal of legal aid for the most powerless, the president of the Supreme Court, Lord Neuberger, warned that people who felt they were being denied justice could end up “taking the law into their own hands”.

Prisoners finally winning the right to be properly legally advised and represented at prisoner disciplinary hearings in 1982 initiated prison litigation cases in U.K. Courts and more or less concluded a period of rather more direct action by prisoners in the form of riots during the late 1960s, the 1970s and the early 1980s. Graylings desire to turn the clock back to a time when prisoners possessed no rights that the prison system was bound to recognise or respect might well prove correct the aphorism “be careful of what you wish for”.

John Bowden

May 2013

[John Bowden was arrested for murder in 1980 and sentenced to life imprisonment. After twelve years of institutionalised brutality and repression, he managed to escape in 1992 and was on the run from the police for a year and a half. He was recaptured in 1994 and has since been moved from prison to prison for constantly speaking out and acting against the prison industrial complex. He has become an effective prison organiser and an articulate spokesperson for prisoners' rights.]

Correspondence sent in anonymously to Bristol ABC.

Having been on Woodhill Close Supervision Centre (CSC) for under a month, prisoner Michael Parr set fire to his cell after 11pm in a deliberate suicide attempt. Unable to cope with the conditions of the CSC he set about barricading his cell at a time he knew nobody would check on him, then set a fire which took around 20 minutes before staff noticed it.

After about 45 minutes of extreme smoke inhalation, Michael Parr was dragged from his cell, unconscious, smoke blackened and dripping wet, having been hosed down. He was revived after a few minutes by the NHS nurse on night duty, before being carried downstairs and locked into another cell with no further treatment.

The cell he was put into is bare except for a bed, sink and toilet without a seat or lid. The door is made of a metal gate with see-through Perspex so he has no privacy at all. After a few days being watched 24 hours a day, under these conditions, Michael decided to starve himself to death. A few weeks later he's still eaten nothing, so weak he can't leave his bed and still in the cell and still in the CSC which he is unable to cope with.

To top it off, prison staff refuse to open his cell with less than 4 officers present as this man on his deathbed is dangerous...

Neither the prison officers or healthcare have helped this man in any way, but the officers love the overtime; they get paid to sit watching a man in bed all day. Notihin will change and he will soon die, victim to the Close Supervision Centre. How many deaths will it take before this inhumane tortuous prison conditions are shut down and England stops killing prisoners?

Anonymous
5th May 2012

Letters from Ray Gilbert

Response to CSC - Torture Units in the UK Publication

by Ray Gilbert

I notice a few events have been highlighted from the period I was housed there. It's very evident the inhumane, brutal treatment needs highlighting to bring about its closure, like the Wakefield Unit in 1974. Everyone acted differently and I would say used whatever strategy they thought best to get through, as it was a regime of intimidation, brutality and psychological warfare. Occasional set-ups and racism would surface against specific individuals by a system looking to destroy prisoners in whatever fashion seemed appropriate.

I witnessed several assaults on inmates by the system on A, B, C Wing to levels that were unacceptable. They were for no apparent reason other than to fulfil delusions of power by the staff. I witnessed racial prejudice by certain officials against a prisoner from Birmingham. The same official was involved in an incident with me that resulted in the CPS deciding that they did not have enough evidence to charge either me or him. A tactic employed by staff was to deliberately agitate prisoners to act up to demote them to bottom level when they required space to elevate someone from bottom level. A death in the family was used as an excuse to target individuals with assault as happened with myself and other prisoners at different times.

I found it a sad indictment of the prison system the way mentally ill prisoners were treated by a regime that was supposed to care for them. Some individuals persistently damaged themselves using blades to cut their leg or face open. One individual poured hot water over his head so as to be wheeled to healthcare. One stood all day staring at his cell wall until removed to a secure hospital. One used a green scourer pad to scrub his face before going out on visit rather than wash. The same person made many superficial cuts on 15 minute watches - these things mentally effect everybody on the same block.

There were several refusals to come in off the exercise yards, with control and restraint used on people like me, Sharkey, Rab, Charlie-B. McGill, Tommo and Schullz - at several times involving a lot of individuals. There were set ups to make entertainment for the screws, such as making people on exercise fight each other when they were new to the prison. They used other tactics like spreading rumours, as they did with me at Durham and Woodhill, as a way to divide prisoners against each other.

From when the CSC originally opened, it has become the most poisonous regime I have ever come across.

Ray Gilbert
26th June 2012

Woodhill Impunity

by Ray Gilbert

Since I was in the CSC system it has turned into a more austere and brutal regime. As such it definitely needs a full enquiry into conditions. A lot who have gone through CSC doors should never have been there; some with mental issues that require specific treatment, not a regime to dehumanize and debilitate. Some, that I would not classify as having disruptive or violent conduct, have been selected down to a length of time in segregation who were unable to cope on main wings.

I see a lot going on with severe attacks on prisoners. How come these people fail to be selected for segregation? The screws picked a load they had in a black book to mentally and physically destroy. Woodhill screws have had impunity to act in whatever fashion they deemed acceptable since 1998, without redress – just look at how many have been promoted for working on that unit.

Ray Gilbert
4th October 2012

Letters from Kevan Thakrar

FAO: Inside Time, Converse, MOJUK, FRFI.

by Kevan Thakrar

Back in March 2012, prisoner DWAINÉ PATTERSON – A5827A2 currently of HMP Full Sutton segregation unit, was involved in an incident at HMP Woodhill Close Supervision Centre, B-Wing.

The incident resulted in two blatantly racist officers named KEVIN RICHARDSON and KAYE HUGHES receiving minor injuries and Dwaine being transferred to Full Sutton.

These two officers were instrumental in the racism, which had grown out of control by this time and were heavily supported in their misconduct by Governors HELENA RAVEN and STUART GRAHAM. It was only an amount of time before they attempted a lynching, but these fools rushed in where angels fear to tread, or in other words, they picked the wrong ‘nigger’.

After the two morons were ‘smoothed out’, I became the only ethnic minority left on 6B. As a result, Stuart Graham had me moved off and all my security levels immediately increased. Today, some 4 months later, Graham puts in response to my complaint.

“You were moved due to the actions you had taken or not taken on the day of the incident with Dwaine Patterson. I.e. you received lock up of your own accord. Additionally you stated to security staff, ‘it was nothing to do with me’. Clearly you were not directly involved in the incident.”

So my risk level increases for not being “involved in the incident” and because I “remained locked up”? Right, so Dwaine defends himself somewhere whilst I am locked in my cell not involved, but I must be moved off the wing because of this? Seems to me that Graham just wanted 6B ethnically cleansed.

Under the management of Graham, the Woodhill CSC is the worst I have seen it since my arrival in March 2010. Repeated suicide attempts, injuries sustained during 'restraint', and openly racist abuse occurs on a regular basis. Unfortunately the option taken by Woodhill Governor NIGEL SMITH has been to appoint the most corrupt Governor to run the CSC so the abuse can be covered up without fuss. Without public knowledge of this and support, this will never change.

I urge every reader to write a letter of complaint about the CSC and send copies to Milton Keynes MP Iain Stewart at House of Commons, London, SW1 0AA, also to HMP Woodhill Governor Nigel Smith at Tattenhoe Street, Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK4 4DA, and the CSC Operational Manager Claire Hodson at the same address. Please, please do this; don't leave us alone suffering under the worst conditions in Britain.

Kevan Thakrar

15th July 2012

Nobody Deserves To Be Tortured

by Kevan Thakrar

How can those in power be comfortable with the torturous conditions of HMP Woodill's Close Supervision Centre?

Those who wish to justify torture don't do so by avoiding moral thinking; rather, they override the obvious immorality by the presumptive morality of the larger endeavor. If the endeavor is deemed important enough, there is little that can't be justified in their minds. There are no lengths to which one may not go.

The labeling of CSC prisoners as 'dangerous' and 'disruptive' allows them to believe the treatment of prisoners is correct. It is this argument which begins every slippery slope in the justice system, e.g., 'we must be able to stop and search terrorists', which led to ethnic minorities being targeted to have their personal autonomy invaded by law.

It is a logic without limits. Thomas More points out the dangers in a celebrated exchange in Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons*, when he asks his son-in-law, William Roper, if he'd be willing to cut a swath through the laws in order to ensare the devil. "I'd cut down every law in England to do that", Roper says. Thomas More replies, "Oh? And when the last law was down and the devil turned round on you – where would you hide, Roper, the laws being flat?"

Cutting through the laws to justify implementing the severe oppression in the CSC is an extremely dangerous prospect. Nobody deserves to be tortured no matter what they have or may have done, but without independent interference, the presumptive morality will continue to override the thinking of the vanguard.

Kevan Thakrar

19th July 2012

Psychology Sessions

by Kevan Thakrar

So, usually I don't write about what takes place in my psychology sessions every other week, but today I feel it's time.

Told I have two main areas of risk that I must address, being coping strategies, and cognitive distortions, I have been working with psychology on these for a few months now. Obviously I disagree I have cognitive distortions, but then the mad man always says he's not crazy!

I know what a cognitive distortion is, but fail to see any I have so continue to ask the psychologist to identify one for me to assist me to understand my flaws. After telling me she's unable to do this a good 50 times, I finally get a 'full' explanation... My previous psychology assessment performed by the trainee psychologist when I first arrived on CSC, also diagnosed cognitive distortions. "If two psychologists have diagnosed it, then it must be right." Excellent so now I know it's two psychologists (one trainee) who have said it, I know I am wrong and must start to see the distortions for myself! If only I had known having a psychologist

repeat what a trainee psychologist says makes it a fact, I wouldn't have been so confused...

“Right, so let's get to work on my cognitive distortions, where do we start?”... “Tell me about one of your cognitive distortions”... “I think it's best if I develop some serious coping strategies...”

Kevan Thakrar

20th July 2012

Money

by Kevan Thakrar

HMP Woodhill Close Supervision Centre (CSC) has developed a management style under Governor Stuart Graham that guarantees to prove all those referred to CSC are correctly located.

The trick is to give prisoners nothing unless they provide some sort of reaction first. Each victim takes a different length of time before resorting to their coping strategy, but ultimately they all do eventually. Whether it be aggression, suicide, self-mutilation, destruction of cell, or psychosis, it's inevitable that all will react.

In order to promote this strategy, prisoners get to see the disruptive ones progress through Woodhill to HMP Whitemoor, getting every benefit possible before finally being permitted to transfer. The frustration that amounts from the compliant prisoners is used to turn them into disruptive prisoners who earn the prison £300,000 a year each.

The scam goes further than that. HMP Whitemoor CSC now runs a psychology course named the Violent Reduction Programme (VRP). This VRP is then showered in praise (and funding), for reforming the prisoners and stabilizing them for a return to normal population. So what's the real purpose of each referral to the CSC, nothing to do with money of course...

Kevan Thakrar

20th July 2012

CSC - Dehumanising, Degrading and Demonising

Letter in Oct 2012 issue of Inside Time (National Newspaper for Prisoners)

by Kevan Thakrar

Prison officials like to claim that the Close Supervision Centre (CSC) exists to remove the most significantly disruptive, challenging and dangerous prisoners from ordinary location and to enable these prisoners an opportunity to develop a more settled and acceptable pattern of behaviour.

The 'worst of the worst' designation defines the inhabitants of the CSC as fundamentally 'other' and dehumanises, degrades and demonises us as essentially different from other prisoners. It provides an immediate, intuitive and unassailable rationale for the added punishment, extraordinary control and severe deprivation which prevail in the CSC. All the discomforts of life in a CSC unit have been brought upon prisoners by 'our own behaviour'. The Prison Service's frequent recourse to horror stories about prisoners' dangerousness also helps to 'shift' the blame over anything that happens to us in the CSC onto ourselves. This technique of 'condemning the condemners' allows prison workers to further neutralise any criticisms of their policies and practices and to justify, to themselves and others, the harsh treatment of CSC prisoners.

The fact that the design of the CSC is more likely to induce violence than to reduce it is not comprehensible by the corrupt Prison Service management or staff, with whom the temptation is strong to treat us as less than another human being. It is the same process that is brought to bear in wartime - the enemy, soldier and civilian alike, are demonised, and whatever happens to them is of little concern.

Prisoners are more isolated, observed and controlled, afforded less human contact and suffer more sensory deprivation than anywhere in Britain. According to criminologist Anthony Bottoms: 'to impose additional physical restrictions, especially of a severe character, will almost certainly lead to a legitimacy deficit, and that deficit may well in the end play itself out in enhanced violence.'

So the Prison Service's claims about the positive impact of the CSC on dangerous and disruptive prisoners are evidently false. It is impossible for any prison trainee psychologist to help CSC prisoners achieve a level to progress to normal location, whilst we are suffering under the conditions of the CSC itself. So why are we here?

Kevan Thakrar

October 2012

Letters from Ross Macpherson

Isolation techniques

by Ross Macpherson

CSC Suppression

Having wrote an article in the December issue of Inside Time in respect of my friend Kevan Thakrar's continued detention in CSC at HMP Woodhill. The Gruppenfuher of Woodhill's security department has made it their business to block all contact between myself and Kevan, therefore, trying to suppress the voice of those most isolated in the Prison system. This is a blatant act of administrative violence towards myself and Kevan in order to stop the creation of articles highlighting the Kafkaesque regime that is CSC. No amount of suppression is going to stop the voices of those held on CSC from being heard.

Ross Macpherson

23rd Januaray 2013

Freedom of Information request denied

by Ross Macpherson

CSC Statistics (Lack of)

In January 2013 I made a freedom of information (FOI) request asking for the following since its creation in 1998 - how many prisoners have:

- a) been on CSC
- b) been removed from CSC
- c) been transferred from CSC to a secure hospital.

Not surprisingly my request was not answered due to it exceeding the FOI cost limit of £600 (equivalent to 3.5 working days calculated at

£25 per hour). They also claim that the CSC committee does not hold this information centrally, nor is much of it thought to be available in an easily accessible electronic format. How can the prison service claim that CSC is a success when they can't even produce basic statistics like how many people have been on CSC. Most people would reasonably assume they're either complete idiots or have something to hide, my conclusion is both.

Ross Macpherson

4th June 2013

Information about the Contributors

Kevan Thakrar was sentenced in 2008 to 35 years in prison for murder. He appreciates letters of support, he is also an avid reader. He welcomes any help in publicising what is going on inside the CSC system. After a successful court case relating to events at HMP Frankland (where he defended himself against an attack by guards and was subsequently found not guilty of attempted murder) he should have been relocated from the CSC at HMP Woodhill into mainstream prison population, but is still trapped in the 'Kafkaesque nightmare.' He has just been moved to the Specialist Intervention Unit and HMP Manchester, where his struggle continues. Write to him at: **Kevan Thakrar - A4907AE, HMP Manchester, 1 Southall Street, Manchester, M60 9AH.**

John Bowden has been in prison since 1982, sentenced to life for murder. John should have been released over 10 years ago and his last parole board hearing, over 2 years ago, recommended he be in open prison conditions preparing for release. His next parole hearing coming soon. The prison system is now claiming that he represents an "unacceptable risk" because of his continuing "anti-authoritarianism" and links to what it describes as "subversive" groups on the outside. So his battle with the prison authorities and its minions continues however and he remains inside. John equally appreciates correspondence and discussion about the CSC and wider prison system. Write to him at: **John Bowden - 6729, HMP Shotts, Cantrell Road, Shotts, Lanarkshire, Scotland, ML7 4LE.**

Ross Macpherson should be released soon, but please write and if your letter is returned it means he is out. **Ross Macpherson - A6791AD, HMP Dovegate, Moreton Lane, Marchington, Uttoxeter , ST14 8XR.**

Ray Gilbert was convicted of murder in 1981, without any forensic evidence against him, and has now served over 31 years in jail. His original tariff was 15 years and he has spent a further 16 years inside after being given 5 years for attacking another prisoner and mainly for maintaining his innocence. He is quoted as saying that he is “not guilty and will not say he is just to make life easier for himself..... and will fight every inch of the way.” Please see this leaflet for further information: innocent.org.uk/cases/raygilbert/leaflet2012.pdf and write to him at: **Ray Gilbert - A68o6AJ, HMP Guys Marsh (Mercia), Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 0AH**

When writing to a prisoner you must include their prisoner number. You must also write a return address on the back of the envelope. Each prison has different ‘rules’ for the reception of mail, but they should receive incoming mail. Check each prison’s rules here: www.insidetime.org/info-regimes.asp

Internet and postal links for further info...

- justiceforkevan.com - Kevan Thakrar’s Website
- revolutionarycommunist.org - Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! BCM Box 5909, London, WC1N 3XX
- prisonersadvice.org.uk - Prisoner’s Advice Website PO Box 46199, London, EC1m 4XA
- mojuk.org.uk - Miscarriages of Justice Website
- spyholepress.com - Converse Prisoners Newspaper Website
- leedsabc.org - Leeds ABC
145-149 Cardigan Road, Leeds, LS6 1LJ
- insidetime.org/search.asp - Search ‘John Bowden’ for his articles
- 325.nostate.net - 325 Collective Website
- actforfree.nostate.net - Act For Freedom Now Website
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For further information from Bristol ABC and for electronic copies of this and the previous publication please visit: bristolabc.wordpress.com. For hardcopies please send an email to: bristol_abc@riseup.net or post to: **Bristol ABC, 14 Robertson Road, Easton, Bristol, BS5 6JY**. Thank you to everyone that has contributed to these publications. Respect to those continuing the struggle against the CSC system, inside and out...

Fire to the Prisons...

Bristol ABC - July 2013 19

