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IndyMedia London

# Offline

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16th - 29th June 2008



## **Bowl Court: Battlelines Drawn in City Squat Eviction**

On the front line of London's expanding city fringe, opposing sides are squaring up for battle. On 4th June at Gee Street Magistrates Court, property giant Hammerson sought a possession order on a Victorian warehouse that has been left empty and open to the elements since attempts to gain consent to demolish the building failed.

Located in the Shoreditch High Street Conservation Area, the warehouse at 6 Bowl Court has been occupied and run as an autonomous social centre since March with non commercial events such as films screenings, concerts, art exhibitions and public meetings. The group running the community space attempted to initiate negotiations over the building, which Hammerson have indicated they have no immediate plans for, but the property giant has refused to engage.

Thursday 12th saw Bowl Court in court...visit [indymedia.london](http://indymedia.london) for follow-up information and reports.

[bowlcourt@riseup.net](mailto:bowlcourt@riseup.net)

## **Peckham Spike Under Threat**

A community-based free space in Peckham is under threat of closure because the Southwark Council Executive has taken the decision to sell off the property. Peckham, one of London's most deprived areas, needs such local-driven initiatives that provide an outlet for local talent to create, collaborate and practice.

*The Spike Surplus Scheme*, which has served the South London community for over a decade thanks to support from local people as well as the Council itself, faces termination of its lease in August. Presently the Spike is negotiating with the Council for its survival and is requesting a year in which to organise a financial package to enable it to continue. If this is not successful, the Spike may be forced to close as early as August.

The Spike is largely self-sustaining and furnished with recycled and donated equipment. It relies on donations from local users, albeit mostly in terms of time and skills rather than cash in such a poor neighbourhood. In the 1990s, the site was used by the South London Children's Scrap Scheme, which recycled industrial and office waste into arts and craft materials for schools and kids projects. Unfortunately it lost its funding and was forced to vacate in 1998.

From its inception, the Spike Surplus Scheme took up the recycling challenge and in many ways went beyond the remit of the original scheme. The site was reclaimed from its abandoned fly-tipped state and the land opened up for community activities.

[spikesurplus.org](http://spikesurplus.org)

## **Food & Climate Change Action**

For the *Food & Climate Change day of action*, Whitechapel Food Not Bombs and Brixton Reclaim Your Food teamed up to serve free vegan food in front of a McDonald's in Camberwell.

The groups had a stall right in front of a McDonald in Camberwell for two hours, serving out freshly skipped, lovingly cooked free vegan food to passersby, and engaging people in conversation about the link between the food they eat and climate change. For good measure, the group was accompanied by a bicycle sound system, to liven up the atmosphere. All in all, over a hundred servings were given out, countless more people saw the stall and were given leaflets highlighting some of the links between food and climate change on the following topics: waste; veganism; organic food; locally produced food.

Unsurprisingly, the McDonald's managers weren't too happy about people giving out free food in front of their shop - but the police seemed to decide otherwise. The groups were asked to remove a banner from the McDonalds window, but were otherwise permitted to stay there as long as there wasn't too much obstruction.

[londonfnb@lists.riseup.net](mailto:londonfnb@lists.riseup.net)  
[londonfnb.org](http://londonfnb.org)

## **Marie Vesco RIP**

Marie Vesco, a French activist involved with the London direct action groups Whitechapel Food Not Bombs and Brixton Reclaim Our Food (amongst others) was killed whilst cycling to the Carnival Against the Arms Trade on Wednesday.



## Protests Against Beckton Agrofuel Power Plant

On 31st May and 4th June, banner protests were held against plans to build the UK's first agrofuel power plant in Beckton, London. Around 500 local residents signed a petition against those plans, which was handed to the mayor on 2nd June (with around 100 further signatures having been added since then). The protests were organised by *Biofuelwatch* and the *London Food Not Fuel Group*.

On 4th June, Newham Council recommended approval of the company Blue NG's planning application for an agrofuel CHP plant which would burn 56,000 litres of virgin vegetable oil per day, despite hundreds of residents having signed a petition against those plans, despite strong warnings that the plant threatens to worsen air pollution and its health impact in an area which already has one of the highest asthma rates in the UK, and despite the strong evidence that agrofuels from monocultures worsen climate change, help to push up food prices, and threaten biodiversity and communities' control over and access to land in the global South.

[biofuelwatch.org.uk](http://biofuelwatch.org.uk)



## Camden Deadly Disease Lab

London residents are acting against the proposed building of 'the world's largest ever, high level, virus containment facility and animal testing lab' by a UCL / Wellcome Trust / Cancer Research / MRC consortium on a Camden council estate. The government have been trying to persuade the people of London to accept this deadly lab near Kings Cross in "return" for flats on the Hampstead Road site, currently owned by the NIMR. If built the lab will see the Somers Town estate and surrounds patrolled by armed police.

Camden desperately needs council homes and community facilities, not a germ lab. The site is very close to Kings Cross/St Pancras and Euston which have seen bombings. People are concerned that the area could become a target. The site is also a potential health and safety hazard, Foot and Mouth disease was a laboratory leak from government lab Pirbright, such a leak would be catastrophic for London.

[londonagainstblisslab@yahoo.com](mailto:londonagainstblisslab@yahoo.com)

## Anti-Bush Demo Banned from Whitehall

The *Stop the War Coalition* has been informed by the Metropolitan Police that a proposed march, co-organised with *CND* and the *British Muslim Initiative*, to protest George Bush's visit will not be allowed.

"George Bush has been dictating British foreign policy for many years. Now it appears his security services are determining our rights of protest. This is a disgrace and we will challenge the ban." - Lindsey German, Convenor *Stop the War Coalition*.

[stopwar.org.uk](http://stopwar.org.uk)

## Women and Trans DIY-SQUATTING Weekend

There is a callout to all women and trans-folk that would like to be involved in a weekend of workshops around diy-squatting. The plan is to take advantage of all the usual challenges that semi-derelict buildings pose as a platform for sharing knowledge, skills, and experience in all the tasks related to opening and maintaining a healthy and happy squat!

All levels of experience are welcome, and even if you have no experience in any of the practical, diy-related areas, they hope to have a platform to share experiences, stories and advice related to all aspects of squat-living from a trans/woman's perspective.

This gathering will be held on the weekend of the 28th - 29th June.

[diy\\_squatting@riseup.net](mailto:diy_squatting@riseup.net)

### **Indymedia London welcomes your involvement:**

*This is an open invitation to participate in Indymedia London - from the technical aspects, or helping to maintain the open newswire and producing features, to a variety of offline activities such as film screenings, stalls at events, reporting from the streets and whatever else you may come up with. The London collective has regular meetings, often at LARC. Please feel free to come and share your ideas, knowledge and skills.*

[indymedia.org.uk/en/regions/london](http://indymedia.org.uk/en/regions/london)

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