

SAVE THE MOUND!

EXCLUSIVE Brighton's latest community garden, The Mound, coming to you courtesy of 30-plus hardy annuals, is on the ropes and may have even moved to a new site in Hove by the time you read this.

Odds on how long the space can remain a vegetable garden/wildlife haven/skill swap/ meeting area are shorter than a stunted leek. The eviction is rumoured on Wed April 27 but could be 26th or 28th for anyone fancying holding it.

In a novel twist, the High Court bailiffs are trying to meet the gardeners 'for a coffee' beforehand. Even by developer standards, Hargreaves and their property holding arm Summerbrook are particularly snidey, specialising in out-of-town monstrosities.

Their two previous attempts to develop here (in front of the Earth and Stars pub) in 2007 and 2009 as a seven and then six storey office block failed and although they still have planning permission for offices, their more lucrative residential plans plus piazzas, shops etc have been thrown out.

But since it's all collateral in the meantime (worth between £10-12m), they can't be all that bothered.

In March they got a possession order, despite a colourful crew turning up to William St County Court, to hear the judge trot out the same old 'every sympathy but' horseshit. He did kick out Hargreaves request for costs against a named gardener representing the Mound - raising the spectre of victimisation of the two named Lewes Rd Gardeners (still ongoing).

And as per usual nearby residents, numbering 3,000 and represented by their local action team, have no voice - their recent unanimous support for the garden amounting to nothing but a hill, or should that be mound, of beans.

In a new twist - possibly the great crested genus - have been spotted in the wildlife conservation area: as a protected species they could pose a big problem for Hargreaves. The Mound has workdays from 11-5 up until the likely eviction date.

Mayday, Mayday!

Our lives are under attack. Our future is being sacrificed to increase the power of an elite.

The bankers' crisis is being used as an excuse to push through a far-right agenda of vicious cuts - cuts which will hurt the poorest and line the pockets of the rich. The NHS, Education and Welfare systems are being stripped back while the bankers are being paid million pound bonuses.

Their only answer to the disaster is more of the same, capitalism with the gloves off. More wars, more ecological devastation and we're being asked to pay for it.

We are being robbed blind - it's time to reclaim what is ours.

Join us for a mass street party & protest
Saturday 30th April 2011
 details to be announced nearer the time

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THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

It seems like a long time ago that the Lewes Rd Community Gardeners saw off a Tesco invasion. Now they're back on the scene trying to tempt local residents to the dark side.

For starters, builders working for site developers, Alburn Minos Ltd, offered a case of wine and £50 to one irate resident after he complained about work starting at 6.45am.

Meanwhile, mealy-mouthed Tesco - who promised they wouldn't build on the site following the outcry over the garden's closure - have gone back on their word and have secretly tried to bribe residents' groups (the Triangle, etc) into allowing them to set up shop with sweeteners of community centres etc.

They've come out with a lot of garbage like: "Here, have this community centre for a while, until we can get another chain in."

The development is set to open in June, but as for the promised roof garden - forget it, the pitched roof which towers illegally(?) above other buildings in the area would be good for a Himalayan terrace but that's about it.

At a meeting in mid-April, Triangle members and other residents put forward the alternatives of a people's supermarket, a caff or local food market. But Alburn with determined to bring in the big bucks, they've threatened to sue the ubiquitous blue and white giant unless they make good on their 15-year lease of the building. Now the community's plans look about as likely as another decent George Lucas film.

Once again an anti-Tesco boycott and campaign is set to kick off. Go to the Facebook group: Say No To Tesco On Lewes Road.

X FACT TOUR

Where's your X going when the council elections come around on May 5?

RM reckons that all you need to know is that a Tory council means cuts of £5m from adult social care; £500,000 from children and families welfare provision; £100,000 from the Youth Offending Scheme; £400,000 from drug and alcohol rehab; and £500,000 from Connexions.

But don't worry coz £4.5m is going on repairing car parks and £150,000 on reducing parking permits. Mmm. Cars. Lovely cars... Tick!

Labour is pretty much in the same boat but the cuts would come slower, as for where the Lib Dems stand - we've no idea and nor do they.

In some places the Greens look promising, although one candidate was not even sure which ward she was meant to be standing in. Hey, why not stick to what you do know? Like muesli.

However, if you feel that RM's research (largely derived from anecdotal hearsay) isn't solid enough grounds on which to base your choice, there's always a wealth of reliable party pamphlets to inform you.

While the literature Labour sent out to Moulsecoomb constituents was slyly presented as an impartial generic community newsletter, the Tory equivalent (named, in a textbook case of double-think, 'intouch') made no bones about where it stood on their party politics - ranting of a Lab-Green conspiracy committed to "wasting your money".

As for their opinion of the alternative vote referendum, they were no less blunt. Using reassuring bloke-in-pub speak to put the case for the current first-past-the-post system, the piece then switched to a rambling and confused description of the AV proposal. You decide!

In the interests of journalistic fairness, RM had planned to quote some of the newsletter's guff at length - but found that someone had already used our only copy as an emergency toilet accessory. Seems an apt end for something so full of shit.

What Is Rough Music?

Rough Music has been played for centuries as the downtrodden's discordant wail against oppression. Civil War Roundheads played merry hell with the bones of deposed aristocrats and we aim to resurrect this tradition with a vengeance!!!

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ROUGH MUSIC

Issue 26

Free/Donation

www.roughmusic.org

Apr/May 2011

A TALE OF TWO MARCHES

STOP THE JOB CUTS!

STOP THE NUT JOBS!

Summer is a comin' in and what better way to celebrate than to gather in central Brighton and kick off against the cuts? Yep, it's Brighton's very own May Day.

Actually happening on Saturday 30th April (no doubt so that those glued to the google-box for Kate&Will's happy day can make it along) the plan is to gather in the centre of Brighton and have it large against the cuts.

Spokesman Danny Beltane told RM exclusively: "We invite everyone to come and celebrate May Day 2011 on the streets of Brighton. In the spirit and tradition of International Workers' Day and the May Day demonstrations of recent years, there will be a mass celebration and demonstration.

The day will see action against banks, financial institutions and others responsible for the current financial crisis now being used by the government to target ordinary working people."

Organisers are aiming for a carnival atmosphere and a "show of mass opposition to the unjust and self-serving elite in our society".

Those pledging their support so far include SMASH EDO, UK Uncut, the Industrial Workers of the World and of course yer very own RM. Activists have produced a zine explaining why each of the groups is involved.

The location for the main event is being kept secret for the time being - mainly to avoid the kind of kettling tactics deployed by Brighton cops as a matter of routine. However, if you're happier on two wheels then at least one official start point has been announced - Brighton Critical Mass are gathering at 10.30 on the Level before joining the main protest.

There will be soundsystems, a riot of colour, games, frolics and maybe even the odd bit of paint.

Brighton MayDay Collective, midday start.

CARRY ON CLIMATE CAMPING

Ok so the national climate camp may have imploded in a welter of shaking hands and blocked processes but that doesn't mean to say regional groups have packed it in.

The South Coast Camp for Climate Action will take place from the Easter weekend through to the May Day bank holiday somewhere on the all new South Downs National Park.

Expect workshops from, Plane Stupid, SolFed, Smash EDO, No Borders, Grow Heathrow, Transition Towns, the Rebel Clown Army and UK Uncut (refreshments courtesy of a stolen Fortnums hamper). Skill shares will be held on permaculture, guerilla-gardening, workers' rights and resistance tactics - among other stuff.

Direct Actions are being planned against some of the numerous climate criminals on the South Coast.

Hoo-fuckin'-ray, here they come again - the shambling hordes of the "not the English Defence League, honest guv" March for England.

Now RM has got nothing whatsoever against real ale, cricket, queuing, cream teas, moaning about the weather and washing the car on Sunday afternoons and all the great traditions that make this island nation what we are (we draw the line at Morris Dancing though), but we can't help but feel that sieg-heiling through Brighton shouting "Allah is a paedo" and "You all take it up the arse" isn't perhaps the best way to celebrate our patron saint's day.

Not actually on St George's Day this time round - the March for England is meeting at Brighton train station at 11.30 on Easter Sunday. Gathering to oppose them will be a coalition of Brighton anti-fascists and indeed all right-thinking folk. In previous years they've marched from the station to the King&Queen on Victoria Gardens. This time however they're unlikely to have a pub to hide in as they've all been petitioned and the King&Queen will be barring the doors.

The MfE flag up themselves as a family day-out - but at the heart of the organisation lurk members and supporters of the far-right EDL. One poster on their Facebook page demands "when will the gas chambers be ready for the genocide of all Muslims who do not deserve to share the same air or be on the same planet as we humans?" The comment has not been removed despite it being there nearly a month. The MfE have promised the Argus that there will be no EDL on their march - this was greeted with howls of protest on their forums however and was quickly revealed to be a PR strategy by frontman Matt Silva.

Following last year's counter-demo the even more odious English Nationalist Alliance (see below) picked up the gauntlet and tarnished the streets over the August Bank Holiday last year - under the glorious leadership of Bill Baker. His motley crew were spotted recently brandishing a Brighton&Hove Albion EDL flag in Reading, during an EDL demo there. Something we guess they wouldn't have the balls to do at Withdean.

Here at RM we can only promise the MfE one fine old English tradition - we're gonna give 'em some Rough Music!!

**MfE enthusiasts, The English Nationalist Alliance, put in a brief appearance on Tuesday 7th April when they tried to ambush an Unite Against Fascism meeting held at the Friends Meeting house on Ship Street. Despite coming as a surprise, the attack was beaten off by stewards. Lurking near the back was Brighton's very own "Face of Hate", a.k.a Mark Crosby (see photo). These unsavoury characters also promise to be in Brighton on the 24th. See you on the streets!!



COPYLEFT - ROUGHIN' IT UP ON THE STREETS OF BRIGHTON

YOU DON'T NEED A WEATHERLY TO KNOW WHICH WAY THE WIND BLOWS

Hove's very own Mike Weatherly MP (see Wanker's Corner) is 'spearheading' a campaign to make squatting a criminal offence in England and Wales.

So far he has made numerous speeches and entered an Early Day Motion saying "This house believes that squatting should be criminalised" which has the support of 22 other MPs, including Brighton Kempton, and former anarchist, Simon Kirby.

EDMs rarely even get debated and are more a publicity stunt than serious attempt at legislation. Even so, it's worrying that many leading Tories are keen to clampdown on homelessness.

In Holland a squatting ban came into effect in 2010. This was in the face of protests from one of the most organised squatting movements in the world, division within government and opposition from the four big cities. As things stand, the chances of that happening here are diddly squat.*

This law is being sold as a sop for uppity middle-classes and a crackdown on those who abuse the system. In reality it is designed to give big business greater protection from legitimate protest and would result in minorities facing further persecution from the police and the possibility of people going to prison for the 'crime' of being homeless.

If people can get their shit together to mobilise against this law then it could be killed before it sees the light of day. Whether by highlighting the number of empties, networking between existing squats, explaining how new legislation could affect tenants rights, or even just staying off the K for five 'kin minutes.

Can a small bunch of short-sighted, self-serving tossers really destroy 20,000 people's way of life without at least a minor insurrection? Hope not.

* RM Factfile: Squatting highlights include the 1381 peasants' revolt, the 17th century Diggers, the post-war Vigilante movement (of which Brighton's Harry Cowley was a leading figure) up to today's protest sites, convergence spaces and thousands of homes.

The benefits of squatting and its history should not be overlooked, yet the right-wing press are too busy pointing out that some squatters are posh, educated or even foreign. If they just wanted to ban posho second-homers from squatting then RM might be behind it.

WHO GIVES ATOS?

Brighton Benefits Campaign (BBC) has lined up to blast how locals are assessed for their 'fitness to work', by profit hungry racketeers Atos Ltd. With the Condemns pushing hell for leather for the 'halt, lame and blind' and insane to be put back on the factory floor BBC have hit back with ... a pantomime.

The play 'Dick Whittington and his Work Capability Assessment or the Computer Says No!' is based on real responses generated by LiMA, the 'Logical Integrated Medical Assessment'

Cos when you're assessed for your fitness to work these days you don't get to see a real doctor - your responses are entered into a computer by a supervised assessor.

This all-seeing Omniron is prone to making impersonal, illogical and surreal medical assessments. Examples of unfair or surreal sentences used by LiMA against real claimants are: "the customer usually can do light gardening for 1 minutes", "the customer can take adequate care of his goldfish", "customer does pottery all day" (the claimant actually said she was pottering about), and "the client's amputation of upper limb is mild".

Despite complaints and damning reports from the Citizen Advice Bureau, in November 2010 Atos had a £300m contract renewed for three more years. Only part of this money will pay the company's medical and non medical staff: a significant part of it will cover the cost of creating and managing LiMA.

As if this is not enough, Atos will receive more millions to develop a computer-based test for a new disability benefit (the Personal Independence Payment), which will replace Disability Living Allowance.

For more info: www.brightonbenefitscampaign.wordpress.com

SUPER-FURRY-ANIMAL-MAKES-THEM-ANGRY-ROAD-ENTS

Tim Lawson-Cruttenden, lawyer to those with deep pockets and guilty secrets is set to make an unwelcome return to Brighton.

Star of the failed attempt to gain an exclusion zone around Brighton's favourite bomb-builders EDO MBM (see RM#3), Tim is now acting on behalf of Beyond Retro - the pretentious 'vintage' clothes chain in Vine St.

Caught out for selling new rabbit fur from China rather than the vintage coats they claimed, the shop has resorted to the vivisection's lawyer of choice. Brighton animal activists are convinced that the hidden paw of the fur industry must be behind the legal manoeuvre, estimated to cost £50,000 even in the initial stages.

Sussex Action for Animals are named on the injunction, for protesting in the road outside the store. If it succeeds it will prevent, among other things, more than eight protesters a month gathering within eighty-metres of the shop - and each protester will have to phone Beyond Retro and tell them they're coming. (Doesn't say anything about penalties for not turning up though.)

Join the Facebook group for more info on the activities of Sussex Action for Animals. Demo are on Sundays, from midday until 2pm outside the store on Vine St.

NO HAVEN IN NEWHAVEN

Newhaven's West Beach will be closed for the summer putting out thousands of Sussex visitors all because French owners, Newhaven Port and Properties, can't be derriere'd to make some steps safe.

They fear a huge compensation claim should someone fall down said stone steps leading to the beach and are quite happy having it unused anyway - so much so they've stuck two jack up barges on the beach blocking access and closed down the car park.

Oh, but don't worry, people who've been coming for generations have been told that these are 'temporary measures' - the barges have been there for the winter and will be soon be removed.

Locals have recently taken matters into their own hands by smashing up fencing blocking access and have had previous success in getting the beach granted village green status - which effectively means it's common land.

However NPP are appealing against this by judicial review and it'll take the High Court till June or July to decide whether to grant the appeal. After that, fuck knows how long we'll have to wait to hear if it's successful or not.

If they simply put in a hand rail and made a few steps safe everyone would be happy. The beach area is unique with kittiwakes, fulmars, peregrine falcons, jackdaws, ravens, wildflowers, fossils, the lot.

BOFFINS BOTHER BOBBIES

Top eggheads at Brighton University have confirmed what we all suspected: Brighton cops are a bunch of politicized thugs.

In a report called "Political Protest and the Police: Young People in Brighton" three academics outraged the filth with their analysis of police reaction to the student demos in November last year.

It's not surprising that the home truths have caused the cops to kick off - the report is pretty straightforward "On the student demonstrations of the 24th and 30th of November 2010, Sussex Police used... physical force enhanced with weaponry, technologies of surveillance and criminal legislation. ... This report presents evidence that Sussex Police exploited their powers, used violence and were the cause of confrontations." We couldn't have put it better ourselves.

The demos were in response to the Con-Dem attacks on education allowances. Far from being a crowd of the usual suspects, the protests were made up almost exclusively by those in the 16-20 age bracket. They marched out from their schools into the town centre. For the most part they just ran through the streets in high spirits - something the thin blue line simply can't stand.

The police response was predictable - both demos were repeatedly kettled while cops lashed out with batons and pepper spray and bent the law to obtain names and addresses of kids who'd been penned-in for no reason.

To read the full report : www.artsresearch.brighton.ac.uk.

TRAVELLERS LEFT OUT IN THE COLDEAN?

It's an example of council logic at its finest: they're spending thousands evicting travellers while they're sat on a cool £1.7m grant to build a permanent site. Travellers on a Coldean site are the latest to play the eviction waiting game after the council got a possession order this month.

The grant was given with a particular site on Wilson Avenue in mind, but the proposed site was found to be too contaminated to develop (helpfully, the toxicology tests were done after the money was given).

Even if it had gone ahead, the site would have had only 14 pitches, which is, as one traveller told RM, "laughable for a city this size". Like one giant, tax payer-funded NIMBY, the council prefers booting people back onto the road rather than have a few vans spoiling their vision of a sterile and rule-abiding city.

Now no-one knows exactly when the bailiffs are going to come a knocking. RM spoke to one traveller who said, "The Council were rabid about enforcing evictions before the change in government, but now we don't know. They might've run out of money."

The truth is that when small sites are left unmolested, things tend to tick over just fine, particularly when people know drawing attention to yourselves or causing trouble is going to get you moved on.

In another frustrating bit of semantics, the council seem to be willing to recognise the Coldean group's traveller status only when it suits them. It called them 'travellers' when they did a gypsy head count and successfully applied for the government's grant.

However, when it comes to respecting cultural choices in offering housing things are different. Some of the 'new-agers' on the Coldean site are second generation travellers who've always lived on the road, but are being denied 'gypsy' status which would oblige the council to provide pitches for live-in vehicles.

RM's travelling mate has a problem with this: "The argument is that you can't force gypsies into bricks n' mortar housing because they've only experienced living on the road. They don't take into account that exactly the same applies to my brother, and some of the children on the site. We're anxious to preserve that purity."

It's unclear whether the council already have the £1.7m in their grubby paws, but if so they'll be making money on interest - while shelling out for evictions of the people they're supposed to be helping. They wouldn't be so underhand, surely?

Rough Music Gig List

Fri April 22
Pre-Fringe Showcase: Cabaret fundraiser for Brighton Peace Centre
The Lectern, Lewes Road 8.30pm

April 23 - May 1
South Coast Climate Camp
A mystery location somewhere on the Downs

Sun April 24
Anti-Fascist Demo Against March For England
Brighton Station 11.30am

April 26-28
Possible Eviction Of 'The Mound' Community Garden
The Mound, next to the Earth and Stars Pub

Sat April 30
May Day Demo: Mass party & protest against the cuts
Central Brighton 12 noon

Wed May 4
Gabriel Kuhn: A talk on Gustav Landauer & Early German Anarchism
Cowley Club 7pm

Wed May 11
David Berry: A talk on homophobia on the left
Cowley Club 7pm

Fri May 13
Primeval Soup & Clear As Mud: Anti-fascist benefit gig
Cowley Club 8pm

Sat May 14
Keep Our Forests Public: Rally & Walk
Whiteways car park, A29 north of Arundel 12 noon

Sun May 15
Burma Soldier: Film about a junta member turned activist
Duke of York's Cinema 1pm

Every Tuesday
Sussex Action For Animals: Anti-meat stall *Churchill Square 11.30am*

Every Sunday
Sussex Action For Animals: Anti-fur demo *Vine Street 12 noon*

ROUGH MUSIC'S NEW WEB ADDRESS: www.roughmusic.org

WANKERS CORNER

A regular column featuring our favourite Brightonians



Above: a rapacious moronic monster

Mike Weatherly is the Tory MP for Hove. That alone is enough to get him into Wankers Corner, but wait, there's more...

Mike and his second wife split recently, presumably giving him more time on his hands. Mike 'party boy who loves the ladies' Weatherly met Carla while on holiday in Rio where she was a sex worker. Obviously it would be below RM's standards (not to mention our legal budget) to hazard a guess at how they met.

Standard Tory sleaze aside, there are more pressing reasons why Mike is squatting in wankers corner this time round. He says he wants "to dispel the myth once and for all that squatters and homeless people are one and the same". He has a point since, for a short period, squatters technically have a home.

It seems he's unaware of the legal definition of homelessness which states that people can only stay where they are on a temporary basis and those who don't have permission to live where they are. At the same time he also seems very keen to conflate squatters and the 'genuine' homeless through the criminalisation of trespassing.

Keen to appeal to his multi-home owning, traveller-hating, Thatcherite constituent, Mikey-boy has jumped on the anti-squatting bandwagon so much he now thinks he's "spear-heading the campaign". He praises local charities who combat homelessness, while aiming to remove people's ability to house themselves.

So - he wants to give the charitable sector a fresh batch of homeless people with one hand and take away their funding with the other. Who said the Big Society was just a gimmick?

Mike recently listed the crimes which go hand in hand with squatting: breaking and entering, breach of the peace, drug taking, criminal damage, anti-social behaviour, council tax avoidance, arson, robbery and fly-tipping.

So in the interest of balance here are just some of the offences which go hand in hand with being a Tory: forgery, fraud, moats and duck-ponds, indecency, perverting the course of justice, and, of course, being a wanker.

WOOD IF THEY COULD

Rallies and walks are planned in Sussex forests during May over the continuing battle to keep them in public hands.

Following the 130 rambling massive who pitched up at Friston forest in March, a bigger one will take place at Arundel on May 14 (see listings). Why? Despite the embarrassing Con-Dem U-turn on selling them all off, it could still happen by stealth with 15% going each year.

The decision on what will happen depends on the so-called Independent Panel on Forestry* with an Autumn report and final recommendation in Spring 2012. Either way the Forestry Commission face 25% cuts, meaning worse woodland management overall. To get involved go to: www.saveourwoods.co.uk.

(*RM glossary: for 'independent' read no public representation at all!)