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# Indymedia London



# Offline

## & InfoUsurpa

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1st May - 15th May 2008

## **London Revolting: Against the Mayoral Elections**

We all know politicians are lying, corrupt, self-serving parasites - it's time we let them know. This is our London not theirs, their party's, or their paymasters'. On Friday May 2nd we will confront our class enemies at the Mayoral election results, reviving a great radical London tradition. The history of London and Londoners is a culture of rebellion and discontent - organising ourselves against the domination of the privileged few - from the Peasant's Revolt to the Battle of Cable Street and the Poll Tax riot.

We're told London is one of the wealthiest cities in the world, playground to the super rich, a global financial centre where city workers, paid in excess of £19bn, keep the institutions of power going. But London has some of the poorest, most deprived areas in the country (50% of children here are living on or below the poverty line). As ordinary Londoners we are being priced out of our own city - either exiled to the outer reaches or pushed together in cramped expensive living conditions. Local councils sell off our housing to get-rich-quick developers, breaking up communities and further alienating us from each other as we struggle with increasing debt, fear and security.

The BNP are standing candidates for both London Mayor and the London Assembly. On May 2nd they will, along with the other candidates, be at City Hall for the election results. Anti-fascists are determined not to allow them to take the platform (or get anywhere near City Hall).

Police Forward Intelligence Teams (FIT) will also be looking forward to their annual overtime, following predominately known anarchists around London. This year *Fitwatch* are asking people to join them to employ a range of tactics to show we will not tolerate FIT presence on our demonstrations.

We want our city back from THE CROOKS, THE TOFFS, THE FASCISTS and THE COPS!

May 2nd, 6pm, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, Tower Bridge(South side of the river).

[fitwatch.blogspot.com](http://fitwatch.blogspot.com)

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### MAYORAL COSTS - HOW WE PAY FOR THE PRIVILEGE:

- £100 million a year spent on publicity
- £33 million a year to staff City Hall
- £120 million a year on the 'Core GLA Budget' (ie, Mayor's personal projects)
- £300 a year average London household pays for the office of Mayor.

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## **Hackney Social Centre update**

Hackney social centre is still under threat of eviction. In March, the building's owners were given a Warrant of Possession by the courts. The Social Centre's scheduled eviction was successfully resisted on Monday 21 April by over 60 people - both inside and outside the building. Bailiffs are now expected to return to the building at any time.

Responding to the threatened eviction, lots of people turned up prepared to resist. Those inside the centre climbed on the roof and raised the black flag as well as dropping a number of banners. After a few hours news filtered through that bailiffs had been and said they would be back at some point before Friday. Soon after this there was word that the police were outside the Wominspace so all bailed down there to check it out.

This is Hackney Social Centre's first eviction. Usually, this means County Court Bailiffs come to execute the warrant of possession. The county court bailiff eviction was scheduled several weeks ago for 10:20am on Monday April 21. However, last week, two squats in Hackney successfully resisted their first evictions, despite a large police presence and persistent police intimidation. This is seen as a response to last week's successful resistances, and as an aggressive, escalation tactic.

We know that the police read the website and monitor our activities. The Hackney Social Centre has only been open since February. And greedy property developers, hand in hand with the police, are trying to shut it down before it even really begins.

[hackneysocialcentre.blogspot.com](http://hackneysocialcentre.blogspot.com)

## **SOCPA Update**

The Government announced a "public consultation" on governing protest around Parliament and activists rallied to respond in various ways. *The Campaign for Free Assembly* took to the streets in January and 200 people defied the law on an impromptu walkabout of the SOCPA zone, ending with a Whitehall sit-in eventually split up by some TSG henchmen, during which Brian Haw was badly assaulted and then arrested. The consultation raised concerns that while SOCPA would be repealed in a blaze of publicity, the following harmonisation of public order laws would effectively make every protest in the country notifiable - a sort of SOCPA by the back door. Whether this was their intention or not, the large campaign of negative responses have led to an announcement in a constitutional white paper that the government proposes the repeal of sections 132-138 of SOCPA 2005.

While this may be cause to celebrate, caution and vigilance should be exercised. Almost at the same time as the announcement, Jack Straw was saying "we invite the views of Parliament on whether additional provision is needed to keep open the passages leading to Westminster and to ensure that, for example, excessive noise is not used to disrupt the workings of Parliament". This is more of an admission that quite frankly SOCPA has not worked in its main aim to stop peace protestors causing embarrassment in and around Parliament Square, and he is desperately looking for new ideas.

In the meantime, the campaign of harassment continues against the Parliament Square peace protestors. Brian Haw and co are in and out of courts every week, both answering charges, and laying judicial reviews and appeals. Barbara Tucker has spent two weeks in Holloway for missing one of many police bails. Brian is pursuing the cop that injured him in January. SOCPA, despite announcements is still being used as a means to arrest, and just last month, Barbara and two others were held at Belgravia police station for nearly 20 hours on a SOCPA arrest.

The next *Day of Action for Free Assembly* will be Saturday 3rd of May, 1pm at the 'Charles I Island', the roundabout on the South side of Trafalgar Square (fyi: this place is just on the border with the SOCPA exclusion zone). Come with your mates and decide with them what you want to do with the day. Bring placards, banners and anything else you can think of. Let them know you won't be easily silenced.

'This seems to be the first step in the introduction of more legislation that will further restrict our freedom to assemble and protest. We need to respond not on paper but on our streets. Our message is simple: we claim the freedom to assemble without prior notification or permission and this freedom is not open to negotiation.'

[freedomofassembly.blogspot.com](http://freedomofassembly.blogspot.com)

## **Street Blitz London**

After a moderately successful first run last July the fortnight of street-art returns to London. The concept is simple but potentially very effective and by utilising the power of the Internet it opens up the whole city as a gallery space; and not confining it to internal, controlled and possibly inaccessible spaces.

During the two weeks everyone who wants to participate gets out there, installs some art (or any act of creative subversion), documents it and then marks its place on a map on the *Street Blitz* website - along with photos, description and any other details.

The broad appeal of Street Blitz means it doesn't have to be illegal works of art going up - decorating the exterior of your squat, finding a legal wall to decorate, street actions, outdoor cinema - all forms of art fully accessible to the public are welcome. What Street Blitz want to stress is that a large part of the point of street-art is documenting it, before some irksome busybody comes and removes it.

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

## **London Critical Mass 14th Anniversary Ride**

Early in the ride police blocked the front at traffic lights and prevented movement, even when the lights were green. This is a familiar tactic which is done to compress the ride into as small a space as possible, with officers and a van at the back hassling stragglers to keep up, which slows things down and holds up traffic as well as making cycling difficult.

Several riders deep managed to completely encircle Parliament Square and perform at least three or four circuits before police put a stop to it and diverted the ride into Whitehall. Beyond Downing Street, and well out of earshot of Parliament, someone turned their cycle sound system on and was quickly made to turn it off again by one of the police who then attracted shouts and criticism from nearby riders. Currently the law on sound systems within the SOCPA exclusion zone is under review but this doesn't stop the cycle police trying to spoil the fun, despite there being no ban outside of the zone or on car sound systems within the zone. Throughout the ride several individual riders were picked on and argued with by the cycle police, who number 25+ on every ride.

*Critical Mass happens every last Friday of the month; 6pm NFT cafe, under Waterloo Bridge.*

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

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### **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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